



1938

Some Aspects of Education in the English Novel of the Nineteenth Century

Dorothy M. Bailey
Loyola University Chicago

Recommended Citation

Bailey, Dorothy M., "Some Aspects of Education in the English Novel of the Nineteenth Century" (1938). *Master's Theses*. Paper 35.
http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/35

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/).
Copyright © 1938 Dorothy M. Bailey

SOME ASPECTS OF EDUCATION IN THE ENGLISH
NOVEL OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Dorothy M. Bailey
Loyola University
January, 1938

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	ii
CHAPTER I	1
The Influence of Rousseau Upon the Educational Novel of the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries--Henry Brooke--Thomas Day--The Edge- worths--Mrs. Inchbald.	
CHAPTER II	37
The Education of Women As Depicted In the Novel From Rousseau to George Meredith.	
CHAPTER III	81
Dickens and His Attack Upon All Forms of Coercion.	
CHAPTER IV	107
The Public School and University in the Novel From Thomas Holcroft to Samuel Butler.	
CHAPTER V	124
The Revolt Against Victorian Parental Tyranny As Expressed in George Meredith's <u>The Ordeal of</u> <u>Richard Feverel</u> and Samuel Butler's <u>The Way of</u> <u>All Flesh</u> .	
EPILOGUE	142
BIBLIOGRAPHY	148

PREFACE

Aspects of education as we define them in this study include all phases of the training of youth, parent and child relationships, and varying attitudes towards the status of women in the educational scheme.

We have obtained our evidence concerning these aspects from purely literary sources. The limited scope of our paper has prevented us from adding to the novel other types of literary material. Thus we are eliminating from consideration such valuable contributions to educational thought as Wordsworth's The Retreat and Tennyson's The Princess, or Matthew Arnold's Culture and Anarchy, Cardinal Newman's The Idea of A University, Thomas Henry Huxley's Science and Culture, and John Ruskin's Unto This Last.

Because the didactic novels of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are the only works that can be classified as pedagogical in the true sense of the word, we are devoting to them a large proportion of our study. They propose definite schemes of education and are written for the instruction of child as well as parent. The influence of Rousseau upon novels of this type is unmistakable.

In the other phases of our study we have, without making an exhaustive survey, selected certain outstanding works that most clearly illustrate the aspects we are presenting.

In our epilogue we have sketched briefly these phases as they are recurring in some novels of the present century.

CHAPTER I

THE INFLUENCE OF ROUSSEAU UPON THE EDUCATIONAL
NOVEL OF THE LATE EIGHTEENTH AND EARLY NINETEENTH
CENTURIES--HENRY BROOKE--THOMAS DAY--THE EDGEWORTHS

MRS. INCHBALD

An adequate conception of the aspects of education, presented in the novels of the nineteenth century is not possible unless we give some consideration to the didactic novel of the last quarter of the eighteenth century which had its inception with Rousseau, whose ideas dominated this type of literature even into the next century.

The didactic view of fiction upon which Richardson had set the seal of his authority was encouraged in England by the success of Rousseau.¹ By his popularization of sentimentalism he supplied an emotional appeal which converted democratic theory and humanitarian argument into the material of which fiction is made.²

Two lines of thought about men and the universe were converging by the end of the eighteenth century. First, the rationalism of science offered a conception of man born without predisposition but capable of growth through the use of his senses and the training of reason.

From these premises it came to be argued that through wider knowledge, and a better understanding of social law, the perfectibility of both man and society could be realized. Secondly, the doctrine of the sentimentalists, though far from dispensing with reason, insisted on the fundamental importance of feeling and innate ideas.³

¹Cross, Wilbur, Development of the English Novel, p. 85.

²Lovett, Robert Morse and Hughes, Helen Sard, The History of the Novel in England, 1932, p. 130.

³Ibid., p. 133.

The two conceptions, rationalism and sentimentalism, assisted by political events and economic conditions generated a series of popular revolutionary movements persistently illustrated and debated in the English novel of the last thirty years of the eighteenth century.

The theorists supported ideals and certain practical reforms: (1) democracy; (2) humanitarian reforms; (3) the "return to nature"; (4) educational reform, seeking both to insure the development of innate virtues, and to emancipate the reason and will of the individual man; (5) the glorification of feeling.⁴

In writing his important contribution to educational fiction, the Emile, Rousseau only obeyed the tendencies of his time in choosing a theme. There was an eager effort to pour young character into a finer mold. An age touched as this was by the spirit of hope inevitably turns to the young for with the young lies fulfillment.⁵

There was a reaction against the example in the upper classes of society (who alone could enjoy education) of a superficial culture and an artificial politeness, which covered the most cold-blooded egotism. The tone of such a culture may be found in the maxims of LaRochefoucauld and also in the letters of Lord Chesterfield to his son written during Rousseau's age and largely under the influence of the aristocratic French idea. Your young master under Louis XIV was an embroidered, gilded, pompadoured, and powdered little gentleman wearing a toy sword, making you a nice reverence, offering

⁴ Ibid., pp. 133-34.

⁵ Morely, John, Rousseau, 1875, p. 193.

his hand, striking charming poses, repeating compliments learned by heart from the tailor, the hairdresser, and the dancing master. And the grandes dames of six would be even more astounding to us, compressed as they were in whalebone, weighted down by panniers, wearing rouge, and decked out with a headdress two feet high. These little puppets who were to grow up into big ones for the splendid puppet shows in the halls of Versailles were dandled by their parents for a few minutes a day and then consigned to the company of chambermaids and valets.⁶

Emile, then, represented an original, a violent reaction against a passive and artificial education. However, Rousseau had his precursors. His indebtedness to Montaigne, Rabelais, Fenelon, and Abbe de Saint Pierre, and most of all Locke cannot be overlooked. The germs of many of his ideas were in the air when he wrote and Turgot anticipated by more than a decade his central doctrine of a return to nature in education.⁷

Education by these and other writers was being conceived of in a wider sense. It slowly came to be thought of in connection with the family--to comprehend the whole system of the relations between parents and their children from earliest infancy to maturity.⁸ It began to figure less as the suppression of the natural man than his strengthening and development. What had been the most drearily mechanical of duties was transformed into a task

⁶ Josephson, Matthew, Jean Jacques Rousseau, 1931.

⁷ Hudson, William Henry, Rousseau and Naturalism in Life and Thought, 1903, p.15

⁸ Morby, John, op. cit., p. 195.

that surpassed all others in interest and hope.⁹

Rousseau dealt with these thoughts suggested by others but he made them entirely his own by a new method of presentation. The doctrines of Rousseau were cast into the form of a didactic romance--a treatise thrown roughly into the form of a story. Strictly speaking, Rousseau declares that the natural and only proper teachers for a child are its parents--in infancy the mother, and afterwards the father. If the father cannot undertake the charge, a tutor must be carefully chosen to fill his place. Emile, an orphan, is placed in the hands of a tutor who is a sage, a demigod, who lives and sleeps with him, who by dint of watching and instructing him night and day inspires him with wisdom, moderation, self control, and the power of reflection.¹⁰

The mentor is an absolute law for the child but the novelty of his method resides in the fact that he accords the child utter freedom in his growth. He would have the child grow up in "ignorance" that is keeping books as far away as possible, teaching him only "negatively" by "suggestion" rather than by futile "reasoning".¹¹

One must not bring the ready maxims and rules of adults to the infant mind and expect them to be understood. The child, Rousseau says, has a totally different set of interests. This realization that the child should be treated as such rather than as a miniature adult was one of Rousseau's

⁹Ibid., p. 197.

¹⁰Hudson, W. H., op. cit., p. 182.

¹¹Josephson, Matthew, op. cit., p. 364.

chief contributions to modern educational theory. Almost a century later Dickens pictured Paul Dombey replying to Dr. Blimber's promise to make a man of him "I would rather be a child."

The game, then, is to let Emile "find his place here on the earth". The tutor would take him to the country and set him free to wander at random seeing to it that the child learns everything for himself.¹²

In attacking the prevailing method of pouring "reason" and ready information into a "barrel which had no bottom", Rousseau filled the Emile with examples of children taught against their will, who repeat fables or moral tales with a totally wrong conception of their intent.¹³

The first book of the Emile deals with the boy's life up to the age of five, giving much advice on baths, milk, the cutting of teeth and the like. Already the dominant purpose is to make the child simple and rugged. By five he can eat, walk, and talk. He now passes into the hands of his tutor.

The second book deals with the most critical period of human life "the years between five and twelve". Emile is to learn nothing by heart (so much danger lurks in mere verbal knowledge). So far from his being taught languages he will hardly at twelve know what a book is. Reading, he will simply pick up of his own accord by being artfully encouraged by the sagacious and tireless tutor in the desire to read.

The boy is to learn to judge things, their feeling, size, danger, or value for him through his senses. His chief pleasures now are to be his

¹²
Ibid., p. 364.

¹³
Ibid., p. 364.

occupations, his activities in the garden or the workshop. His life is to be simple and busy. He is independent, courageous, without servility. True happiness for him will consist of having few wants and strong faculties for attaining those wants. For happiness in life one must strike "a perfect balance between one's power and one's will. Thus the sense of liberty is truly won".

"To live," he says, "is the trade which I would teach my pupil. To live means not only to breathe but to act".

At twelve, Emile has learned his geography out of doors; he has learned to distinguish the points of the compass by getting lost; he has become interested in gardening through seeing his seeds sprout; he has taken to chemistry through making amusing little experiments with invisible ink. His body is strong; he knows how to use his hands; he is candid, and quite ignorant of the routine compliments which the boys of his age learn in the cities. The only book he has been permitted to read is Robinson Crusoe.

An instinctive love of simplicity rises in his young soul simultaneously with a hatred of rank, servility, and authority. Emile was being equipped for a new order of society:

You who trust in the present order of society can scarcely conceive that this order is subject to inevitable revolutions whose effects upon your children are impossible to foretell. The great one becomes small; the rich turns poor; the monarch becomes a subject.¹⁴

That a child of good station should learn a trade was an astounding idea

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 361-65.

in those days. But Rousseau wishes him to learn a trade if only to overcome prejudice against such trades, "To work is the indispensable duty of the social man". Rich or poor, strong or weak, each citizen who is idle is a rogue.

There are certain fundamental inconsistencies in the plan. A plan of education to be practical should be devised with a view to the ordinary and normal conditions of life. Rousseau's representative child instead of being trained by his parents in the common circumstances of the home circle is carried away to a remote country village and brought up in artificially maintained isolation. This is not typical.¹⁵

Nevertheless, in spite of these inconsistencies, the Emile represented an epoch in the history of educational thought not only because of the new light it cast upon some of the defects in the old educational scheme but also for the influence which it exerted upon leaders in the pedagogical field like Pestalozzi, who carried out many of Rousseau's best theories in a saner and more practical fashion.

The central theme of the Emile, a return to nature in education, meant the simplification of the whole scholastic regime which had been handed down from the past. It meant the reassertion of wholesome childhood at a time when it was unrecognized and when boys and girls were forced by hot-house pressure into premature manhood and womanhood.

In any estimate of Rousseau's contribution to the work of educational

¹⁵

Hudson, W. H. op. cit., p. 199.

reform, the following points are, perhaps, most worthy of attention. He was the first to base education on a study of the child to be educated; the first to break away completely from the Renaissance conception of man as a learning and remembering animal; the first to treat education not as synonymous with the imparting of knowledge but as a process of culture and discipline having as its object the making of a well-rounded human being. He proclaimed the importance of physical training not only for its own sake but also for the sake of the moral nature. He denounced the bookishness which was a tradition and taught that the child should be sent direct to fact. He advocated the substitution of natural discipline for the arbitrary methods of government then in vogue. He urged teachers to watch nature and adjust their machinery to its requirements. And he laid down the principle that education, beyond all things else, must be progressive--a process of spontaneous growth and unfolding to be assisted but not interfered with by art.¹⁶

In England that odd personage, Henry Brooke, author of the nondescript novel The Fool of Quality, enlarged the sentimental creed into a vague theosophy and made it the basis of an educational scheme like that proposed in Emile. The Fool of Quality (1766) is the first of the pedagogic novels in English. Brooke agreed with Rousseau's Emile that the basic principle of education should be to bring out the healthy original instincts, to foster and develop the spontaneity and truth of nature.¹⁷

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 204.

¹⁷ Baker, Ernest, History of the English Novel, Vol. V, 1934, p. 115.

In The Fool of Quality we have the whole course of the education of an ideal nobleman by an ideal merchant prince. The framework has given Brooke room for all his speculations on theology, political economy, the relation of sex and family, and the training, moral and physical, of a Christian gentleman.¹⁸

It is one of the very first novels containing a rational and sympathetic study of childhood. Not until nearly a century later did a better picture of true boyhood appear. The chapters on Harry's infancy and boyhood are the tenderest and most fascinating in the whole book. In many of the social and ethical ideas the influence of Rousseau is to be traced but most of all, of course, in the educational ideas. Harry's upbringing by his uncle, the natural mode of education which brings out the child's inborn tendencies and powers, is contrasted with the false and artificial methods to which Lord Dickie falls a victim in the hands of his unwise parents:

Richard was not permitted to breathe the rudeness of the wind. On his slightest indisposition the whole house was in alarms; his passions had full scope in all their infant irregularities; his genius was put into a hotbed, by the warmth of applause given to every flight of his opening fancy and the whole family conspired from the highest to the lowest to the ruin of promising talents and a benevolent heart.

Young Harry, on the other hand, had every member as well as feature exposed to all weather; would run about, mother naked for near an hour in a frosty morning; was neither physicked into delicacy nor flattered into pride; scarce felt the convenience and much less understood the vanity of clothing and was daily occupied in playing and wrestling with the pigs and two mongrel spaniels on the common; or in kissing, scratching, or boxing with children of the village.¹⁹

¹⁸Ibid., p. 115.

¹⁹Brooke, Henry, The Fool of Quality, p. 2.

The contrast has been created by the circumstances in which the boys have been placed. In spite of the fact that both boys are sons of the Earl of Moreland he dotes on the elder, Dicky, and has left Harry, to whose existence he is indifferent, in the care of an old nurse.

Harry is considered an imbecile by the earl's frivolous acquaintances because he does not care for glittering toys nor fine clothes but acts in a simple, natural manner--the typical Rousseau tradition. The Emile influence persists in the scheme of having the boy kidnapped by his wealthy uncle in order that the uncle may educate him carefully according to his cherished principles.

In describing various phases of Harry's education at the home of his uncle, Brooke satirizes the tyrannical schoolmaster typical of the past regime in the person of Vindex. After a thorough display of petty persecution upon his part, Harry and his friend turn the tables upon him neatly and youth's right to freedom in education is thus vindicated.

Meanwhile, Harry is being trained in benevolence by his uncle who sets the example by befriending sundry persons in distress who invariably tell heart rending narratives of the manner in which they reached such dire straits. Stories such as these together with proverbs, narratives of the past experiences of Harry's uncle, and numerous moral disquisitions by the author make up the bulk of the work.

Time passes and Harry, the quintessence of all the nobility of character that proper training can inspire, is presented at court where he immediately causes a sensation by his handsome bearing, his modesty, and his intelligence.

Brooke's work is criticized for its incoherence, exaggeration, and fondness for improbability. The story is a succession of episodes which Brooke's quixotic idealism pushes beyond the utmost margin of belief. Everything is in excess, the hero's perfections most of all.²⁰ For prigs Brooke had no love, but with the usual ill luck of those who put ideal heroes on a realistic stage he does not always escape the pitfall of making young Henry Clinton look priggish. The goats are as jet-black and the lambs as snow-white as in the works of any melodramatist of our own sentimental fiction; if this is nature, it is not human nature, although in this respect the book is infinitely superior to the moralistic stories that were in vogue then and later, not excepting the improving fiction of Maria Edgeworth.²¹

The exploits of Harry's boyhood and deeds of charity are extravagantly overdone; so are the calamities of the blameless unfortunates and the marvelous turns of fortune by which innocence is at last rewarded.²²

Pathos and tears are carried to preposterous lengths. Brooke's hero and his friends burst into tears alike in sympathy with grief and at any example of human affection or of nobility of soul. One feels often as if the victims of ingenious villainy by their unparalleled stupidity deserved all they got and that we should like the hero and his friend a great deal better if they were a little less demonstrative of their emotions, a little less effusive in their love of rectitude.²³

²⁰Baker, Ernest, op. cit. p. 115

²¹Brooke, Henry, op. cit., Intro., p. xxix.

²²Ibid., p. xxix.

²³Ibid., p. xxix.

Henry Brooke's Fool of Quality may have been the first of the pedagogical novels in England but Thomas Day's Sandford and Merton (1783) surpasses it in importance.

Thomas Day was a devoted apostle of the faith of Rousseau and few have personified in their own lives as thoroughly as they preached in their works the cult of the Noble Savage. In his scorn of the conventions, in his carelessness of dress and the externals of society, in his simplicity of taste and his desire to live apart ("to exclude my self from the vanity, vice, and deceptive character of man") and most extraordinary of all in his strange plan to train two girl foundlings according to his theories with the purpose of making one of them his wife, we see many of Rousseau's pet doctrines externalized.

Day has expressed his admiration for Rousseau in a letter to Richard Lovell Edgeworth:

Were all the books in the world to be destroyed except scientific books (which I except not to affront you) the second book I should wish to save after the Bible would be Rousseau's Emilius. Behold a system, which, preserving to man all the faculties and excellencies and the liberty of his nature preserves a medium between the brutality and ignorance of a savage and the corruption of society.²⁴

In his own education, Day as a thoughtful and sensitive boy could not help being impressed by the evils of the established system and to contrast these in later life with the remedy for these conditions offered by the doctrines of Rousseau.

²⁴ Edgeworth, Richard Lovell, Memoirs, 1821, p. 158.

Thomas as a boy was enrolled at the famous Charterhouse School under Dr. Crusius. The public schools of the eighteenth century were chambers of horrors--a condition that continued far on into the nineteenth century. The students were an undisciplined bunch of half-starved young ruffians. The commons of bread were a pittance; meat was often putrid and always bad. Shortly before Day's time this food had caused an insurrection of boys which had been suppressed by turning hunger into starvation. The teaching at Charterhouse was supplied by a school master with a salary of one hundred pounds a year, an usher, assistant usher, and a writing master. At five in the morning the boys rose. School continued from six to six with short intervals.²⁵

At sixteen Day went to Oxford as a gentleman commoner. Here again he could observe the decadence of learning. In Thomas Holcroft's Hugh Trevor, we have a picture of Oxford as it was then. The once proud university of the middle ages had fallen on evil days. Even in numbers it ranked below the seventeenth century. The Fellows were sunk in bibulous sloth bent only on maintaining High Church principles and excluding Dissenters.²⁶ The young nobility were a set of Sir Fopling Flutterers spending the greater part of their days and nights in the polite vices of the period. Religion had dwindled to a roll-call and education could be found anywhere save in the lecture-room.

After leaving the university, Day swept up in a tide of enthusiasm for

²⁵Scott, Sir S. H., The Exemplary Mr. Day, 1935, pp. 21-23.

²⁶Ibid., p. 27

for the ideals of Rousseau determined to train two girls from a foundlings' home under his own supervision in order to provide himself with an ideal wife. Although Day did his utmost to implant in his proteges the virtues of the simple life and to inspire a repugnance for elaborate dress, fine people, and fashionable way the "noble experiment" was a complete failure. Day was forced to search for his ideal woman elsewhere.

The embodiment of all these humanitarian ideas was the educational novel, Sanford and Merton, published in 1783.

James Keir, a friend of Day and author of a eulogistic biography published shortly after his death, has given us what he considers to be Day's purpose in writing Sandford and Merton.

In consequence of his opinion of the prevailing manners and with a view to guard the rising generation against the infection of the ostentatious luxury and effeminacy which characterized the age, Day wrote Sandford and Merton. Despairing of the effects of reason or ridicule on those who have already acquired their habits, he hoped to make some impression on the untainted minds of youth. He did not consider the age as defective but rendered ineffectual by habitual expense and imaginary necessities. The evil to be guarded against was effeminacy of manner. Men failed more from want of strength and firmness than sensibility, more from defect of habits of fortitude, patience and self control by which men are enabled to be what they approve, than from the prevalence of any vicious propensity.²⁷

Day intended Sandford and Merton to be a part of another book for children, Harry and Lucy, written by his friend, Edgeworth in collaboration with his wife Honora. However, the work lengthened into a book and was published separately, the first volume in 1783, the second in 1786, and the

²⁷ Keir, James, An Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Day, Esquire, 1791, pp. 80-81.

third in 1789.

Young Tommy Merton is the badly spoiled son of a rich Jamaica merchant living in England. He has received the type of training Rousseau condemns so severely--too much cherishing. As a result Tommy is always ill, is helped first at the table, disturbs the company when it pleases him and generally makes a thorough pest of himself. His doting mother fears that reading will injure Tommy's eyes; hence he is illiterate.

Fortunately for Tommy's salvation Harry Sandford, a child of nature, saves Tommy from a snake and as a result is invited to the Merton's for dinner. Like young Henry Clinton in The Fool of Quality, Harry preserves a philosophical indifference to his ostentatious surroundings.

Mr. Merton is quite impressed with Harry's common sense, and struck by his praise of Mr. Barlow, Harry's mentor--a minister--interviews him with a view to entrusting him with Tommy's education. Tommy, like Emile, is to be removed from the baneful influence of civilization, into the quiet of country life and like Emile, his tutor is to remain in the background and permit his pupil to work out his own salvation. However, Day, in the person of Mr. Barlow is too fond of obtruding his views to be satisfied with the self-effacing role. Tommy receives a great number of disquisitions upon morals from Mr. Barlow during the course of his training.

The first lesson that young Tommy learns under the new regime is the value of work. Tommy refuses to assist Mr. Barlow and Harry in digging a garden. He is not urged any further but treated with indifference in the best Rousseau tradition. When dinner is served, however, Tommy finds himself without any because he has not worked for it.

Day diverges rather widely from the attitude toward reading advocated in the Emile. Tommy Merton, inspired by a desire to equal Harry's achievements in reading, learns to read at the age of six. Rousseau feels that reading is a scourge to a child and that until the age of twelve his Emile will not know what a book is. Up to this time, reading engenders only contradictory ideas. However, both agree on the idea that a desire to learn is the best motive. Because Tommy had this to a marked degree, in two months he is able to read "The History of the Two Dogs" for his tutor.

The story that stirred Tommy's desire to read was one of the moral stories that Day has inserted throughout the book and which most critics consider the nucleus of Sandford and Merton rather than mere excrescences. In fact some compare the arrangement to a picaresque novel--a series of stories connected by a narrative. The majority of these stories illustrate one of Day's central beliefs that poverty hardens the weakling and luxury in turn enervates the strong.

Attention in Tommy's training is turned also toward the useful arts. Many stories center around the theme of men in wild countries able to live only by their industry. Tommy is led to the idea that "man should know how to do everything in the world". Rousseau has promulgated the same theory in Emile. We should not educate man for one condition because that might change. Each man owes a duty to society even if his father is wealthy. An artisan is the most independent of men because he possesses an insurance against the vagaries of fortune. Hence the knowledge of a useful trade is essential to every man.

Tommy learns many useful things by incidental rather than formal instruction. He has now learned to work, to be humane, and to acquire both courage and endurance. The perseverance of Tommy in these newly acquired virtues is severely tested when he returns to a house party at his home. The sturdy, independent Harry stands out in strong contrast to Tommy's friends, Master Mash and Master Compton who present the "horrible examples" of the vices of a public school education. Their palpable dislike and ridicule of Harry influence Tommy to revert to his old habits.

Tommy is brought sharply to his senses and realizes the injustice and ingratitude of his attitude toward Harry when that noble lad saves him from a maddened bull. Tommy, however, must be reduced to a feeling of true humility through various moral stories before the touching reconciliation is effected.

Tommy concludes the book with this statement:

You have taught me how much better it is to be useful than rich or fine; how much more amiable to be good than to be great. Should I ever be tempted to relapse even for an instant into any of my former habits I will return hither for instruction and I hope you will again receive me.²⁸

In general the things taught and the methods used in Tommy's education are similar to those of Emile. However, while Tommy is given the education of the senses advocated by Rousseau he has a greater knowledge of theoretical subjects such as history and geography. Emile was to learn largely by experience; he was to discover things and to judge facts for himself, his lessons were to be doing rather than talking; he was not to be reasoned with,

²⁸

Day, Thomas, Sandford and Merton, Vol. II, p. 492.

to be given long explanations nor to be ridiculed. Day let his pupil learn many things by experience but he explains the meaning of the experiences, moralizes in stories, reasons on gentlemanly prejudices, and utilizes ridicule to correct Tommy's errors.²⁹

Harry is a prig. Tommy is more natural but must be made over into an image of Harry. Tommy is pictured in one situation as a very immature individual and in another as readily understanding the underlying philosophy of some lengthy moral story.³⁰ Judged by modern standards the book has many flaws. The idea that virtue is immediately rewarded is misleading. The language is declamatory, pompous, and rhetorical. The characters of the boys lack verisimilitude.³¹

Yet there is much about the book that is admirable. Day hoped through this work to instill in the younger generation all the hardy virtues their effeminate elders lacked. It does make attractive and impressive kindness to animals, racial tolerance, the superiority of the laborer to the idle rich, and the necessity of useful knowledge.

Although Day himself had expected criticism and sneers, the reviewers of the period received the work auspiciously. In The English Review, November, 1783, a critic states:

²⁹ Gignilliat, George Warren, The Author of Sandford and Merton, 1932, p. 291.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 296.

³¹ Ibid., p. 296.

This author deserves praise both for the plan and the execution of his work which is the best we have seen and adapted to the capacities of very young children.³²

In general, reviewers found it excellent. The language was elegant but clear. The stories were well adapted to juvenile amusement and instruction. They approved of the virtues inculcated and the methods used to inculcate them. In opposition to the view that the boy should receive only instruction for his rank, one reviewer was glad that Day educated a man rather than a nobleman and praised him for advocating hardy education for women; another praised him for having taught what was useful to both mechanic and aristocrat.³³

For a century after its publication, Sandford and Merton was a popular children's book. Edward Dowden said that it had probably a larger number of readers than any other work of the period. Examinations of editions in the British Museum, Bodleian, and New York Public Libraries would show that it had a tremendous popularity in three waves (1786-1798), (1808-1830), (1850-1890). It was published in Ireland in 1787, and in America in 1793. In 1788 it was translated into German, and in 1789 into French.³⁴

In the second period of popularity, the literary reputation of the work was high. A biographical sketch prefixed to the 1808 edition spoke of the condescension of eminent writers in composing "books adapted to the infant understanding nor can we mention many that have been more generally approved

³²Ibid., p. 299.

³³Ibid., p. 299.

³⁴Ibid., p. 337.

or more widely circulated". Thackeray has Amelia Sedley in his Vanity Fair sell a fine India shawl so that she may buy Georgy a suit of clothes and the Sandford and Merton he longed for.³⁵

Leigh Hunt absorbed Sandford and Merton into his radical philosophy:

The pool of mercenary and time serving ethics was first blown over by the fresh country breeze of Mr. Day's Sandford and Merton, a production that I will ever be grateful for....It assisted the cheerfulness I inherited from my father, showed me that circumstances were not a check to a healthy gayety or the most masculine self-respect, and helped to supply one with a resolution of standing by a principle not merely as a point of lowly or lofty sacrifice, but as a matter of common sense and duty and a simple cooperation with the elements of natural warfare.³⁶

After the Napoleonic wars parents could overlook the radical ideas implied in Sandford and Merton and buy it as Amelia Sedley did. In the Mid-Victorian years it marched triumphantly on. One writer said that it was the first book given to him. Since the Bible and Sandford and Merton both warned against wickedness, he had the hazy idea that both had been written by the same author.³⁷ Sometimes parents took Day's philosophy seriously. Mrs. Gaskell in the Life of Charlotte Bronte discusses the severe training given her aunt as a child, the rude food and clothing, and the tossing in a blanket. A quarter of a century after, Charlotte Bronte's father firmly believed in inculcating the doctrine of simplicity and hardness into his children.³⁸

³⁵ Ibid., p. 339.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 347.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 348.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 348.

At last the English people were aroused to the risible nature of many things in Sandford and Merton. Literary historians began to speak amusingly of it as the one time reputed delight of the school boy. Bernard's burlesque of it became more popular than the original. Finally both vanished. Thomas Day's spirit with all its priggishness, benevolence, and manliness was dead.³⁹

One of Thomas Day's closest friends, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, was like him an ardent admirer in his youth of the principles of Rousseau. He believed that everything could be achieved by education. Given the individual it was possible to make of him whatever the instructor pleased. He educated his oldest son according to the strictest principle laid down in the Emile, but his failure with the boy convinced him of the necessity of modifying these theories.

His description of the experiment follows:

I dressed my son without stockings, with his arms bare, in a jacket and trousers such as are quite common at present but which were at that time novel and extraordinary. I succeeded in making him remarkably hardy. I also succeeded in making him fearless of danger, and, what is more difficult, capable of bearing privation of every sort. He had all the virtues of a child bred in the hut of a savage, and all the knowledge of things, which could well be acquired at an early age by a boy bred in civilized society. I say knowledge of things, for of books he had less knowledge at seven or eight years old than most children have at four or five. Of mechanics he had a clearer conception, and in the application of which he knew more invention than any child I had then seen. He was bold, free, fearless, generous; he had a ready and keen use of all his senses, and of his judgment. But he was not disposed to obey, his exertions generally arose from his own will, and, though he was what is commonly good-tempered and good-natured, though he generally pleased by his looks, demeanour, and conversation, he had too little deference for others.

³⁹Ibid., p. 343.

He showed an invincible dislike to control. With me he was never anything but what he wished to be himself. He was by all who saw him, whether of higher or lower classes taken notice of; and by all considered as very clever.⁴⁰

Although Edgeworth had not seen as clearly as he was to later, the ill effects of this type of training upon his son's character, we have an inkling of it in the passage from his Memoirs quoted above.

Later he took the boy to France and had an opportunity to bring his son to Rousseau's attention. Rousseau took the boy for a walk and reported the result of his observations. He praised the young Edgeworth's abilities, in particular his answers to some questions on history which proved, contrary to the opinion given in the Emile, that history can be advantageously learned by children if it be taught reasonably and not merely by rote. However, the blemish he finds in the boy's character is that of party prejudice.⁴¹

Edgeworth soon found further defects in the education of his son. Whatever regarded health, strength, and agility had amply justified the system of the master, but he found difficulties with regard to his child's mind and temper. The boy was generous, brave, and good-natured, but was difficult to control. The spirit of independence engendered in him by his training a la Rousseau led him to do anything that suited his fancy.

This salutary experience convinced the elder Edgeworth that the educational philosophy of the Emile was ill-adapted in many respects to the exi-

⁴⁰ Edgeworth, Richard Lovell, op. cit., p. 175.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 253.

gencies of practical life. Although his faith in Rousseau's philosophy underwent modification he did not abandon it altogether especially with respect to learning by doing. Maria Edgeworth claims for her father the merit of having been the first to recommend, both by example and precept, what Bacon would call the experimental method in education.⁴²

She points out that the variety of her father's employment never prevented him from attending to his great object--the education of his children. He gave instruction without formal lectures or lessons. At the time when he was building or carrying on experiments he constantly explained to his children whatever was being done, and by questions adapted to their several ages and capacities exercised their powers of observation, reasoning, and invention.⁴³

Her father's decision to publish some of the observations made upon his own children's education drew the following comment from Maria:

To produce before the public, in a serious work, a number of apparently trivial anecdotes of children, even from infancy upwards, was an undertaking so obvious to commonplace mockery, and to the imputation of parental and family egotism that it required for its execution his decision and strength of mind. To all who ever reflected upon education, it must have occurred that facts and experiments were wanting in this department of knowledge while assertions and theories abounded.⁴⁴

No man who knew the world as well as he did would have put his name to such books had his object been literary celebrity. He thought no labor, however humble, beneath him if it promised improvement in education.⁴⁵

⁴²Edgeworth, Maria, Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth (Cont.), Vol II, p. 166.

⁴³Ibid., p. 160.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 165.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 166.

With respect to public and private education he was confirmed in his decided preference of private education for girls; but for boys he never recommended private tuition except "when there is a concurrence of favorable circumstances which cannot often happen".⁴⁶ There was no material alteration of his practice or principles with respect to intellectual education. With regard to moral education we mark the result of enlarged and longest experience.⁴⁷

Finding the bad effects which resulted from following this system, from trusting too much to nature, liberty, free will, and the pupils' experiments in morality, Edgeworth inclined to the extreme of caution, and became more apprehensive than was necessary of the effect of trifles, or small accidental temptations.⁴⁸

Further experience convinced him that it is impossible in the world in which we live to exclude from the sight, hearing, and imagination of children everything that is wrong. Such a seclusion would be dangerous because it would leave the judgment and resolution uninformed and unexercised. The best chance of avoiding danger is to give as early as possible means of comparison and habits of resolution. He felt that his children were not hurt by seeing a greater variety of people.⁴⁹ There should be a freedom from all appearance of unnecessary vigilance and of small regulations or restraints which would prevent the children from feeling what the pupils of private

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 168.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 170.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 172

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 173.

education should never feel--that they have been managed in any peculiarly strict manner.⁵⁰

Edgeworth seemed to see in education the panacea for all the ills of the period. His daughter, Maria, was also a practical teacher and her strong sense of responsibility impelled her to correct the rash and erring. She saw as clearly as her father that the principal need of all classes was education with a view to the cheerful and efficient performance of their duties in the world. Her mission was to be a teacher and she carried out the task with zeal and conscientiousness.⁵¹

However, she was very conservative and unlike Thomas Day never divested herself of some prejudices in regard to rank and station and often in her edifying tales for children seems to be bidding them to do what is proper to the state of life to which Providence has called them. The general happiness, social services and the call of duty, rather than an assertion of rights, are the outcome of her lessons.⁵²

- Her tales collected in The Parent's Assistant (1796-1800) began in "wee-wee stories" written on slate to please her sisters at Edgeworthstown. She had ample opportunity to test her work on the numerous brothers and sisters comprising the family of Edgeworth. Four wives had given her father twenty-one children ranging in age from forty-five to one.⁵³

⁵⁰ Baker, Ernest, op. cit., Vol. VI, p. 18.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 17.

⁵² Ibid., p. 19.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 23.

Her father and his wife had written the first twenty chapters of Harry and Lucy, a counterpart of Thomas Day's Sandford and Merton. Maria completed it many years afterward.⁵⁴

Theory and instruction overweight all her stories. The bearing of every incident, every impulse, or resolve, or failure upon practical life had to be methodically demonstrated. She eliminated the obscure element in human character; all is clear definition. Each is allotted his or her due proportion of goodness and badness, wisdom and weakness. The whole framework has the clearness of a diagram. Life is practical. The moral is above everything. Follies and pretences are not so much comic as absurd, unfortunate and regrettable.⁵⁵

In all her moral stories she uses the time worn method of contrast. The good, affectionate, industrious boy in Lazy Lawrence is contrasted with the bad boy who will not do his lessons, idles away his time, and falls into the snares of a thorough-paced young rascal. Susan's modesty and integrity in Simple Susan require the foil of Barbara's pride and arrogance. The prudent and generous Laura in The Birthday Present is set over against the vixenish Rosamond. Miss Edgeworth identifies ill-temper with what was called sensibility.⁵⁶

Nevertheless, as tales for children, these stories are none the worse for the obviousness of the difference between the good characters and the

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

⁵⁶ Baker, Ernest, op. cit., Vol. VI, p. 25.

bad and all the better for the clocklike regularity with which conduct is rewarded, according to merit. Every tale is based on a convention but Miss Edgeworth can see the child's point of view. Older people can read them as works of applied art, teaching their lesson with certainty and efficiency. Glaring contrasts are not only tolerable but precisely what is required. Self-consciousness is not here a virtue as in similar productions of the sentimental age such as The Fool of Quality and The Man of Feeling wherein the heroes applaud themselves for their good deeds. Goodness is natural. Although there is some degree of poignancy there is no affectation nor condescension. Everything is regulated. It is a child's world. Youth believes that naughtiness brings its own punishment and that ill feelings entail unhappiness. The abnormal is eliminated along with the complicated and obscure.⁵⁷

Harry and Lucy, which Maria remarks she was anxious to finish well as it was her father's own and first book, is the story of the training of a brother and sister at different ages according to the principles advocated by Edgeworth.

Maria states in her preface to the work that she is carrying out her father's object--to exercise the powers of attention, observation, reasoning, and invention rather than to teach anyone science or to make any advance beyond first principles. By utilizing the attractive framework of a story of domestic life she hopes to "sugar coat" the dose of knowledge she is

⁵⁷
Ibid., pp. 25-27.

administering. She draws attention to the fact that children learn more readily from each other.⁵⁸ Realizing that Harry may be considered a thought too learned for his age, she defends her characterization by pointing out faults and foibles which redeem Harry from the charge of priggishness or pedantry. On the other hand, Lucy may appear a trifle too childish or volatile, but she thereby contributes to the action and amusement necessary.⁵⁹

Harry and Lucy is made up of conversations between children and parents and friends, and between the children themselves. In the course of these are acquired the rudiments of science, especially chemistry and physics and application of these to the common purposes of life.

Common objects and experiences are utilized to show Harry and Lucy the working out of the principles of the barometer, hygrometer, air pump, and other common machines. Harry does much of the explaining but in the approved Edgeworth manner permits Lucy to work out her own problems by a Socratic form of questioning. An amusing and natural contrast is drawn between Harry and Lucy. Lucy's attention often wanders; she delights in dragging into the most prosaic scientific discussions--literary allusions--a branch of learning in which she is evidently much more adept than Harry. Harry's staid and practical common sense is often shocked by this flippant frivolity of his sister.

Near the conclusion of the work Lucy sums up the moral of the story in a trenchant speech:

⁵⁸ Edgeworth, Maria, Harry and Lucy, pref. p. iii.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 308.

I begin to feel the truth of what you have often said to me that the more we learn of what are called the works of nature and of the wonderful inside of our own minds the better we must become and the more pious.⁶⁰

Harry and Lucy is heavy, especially the latter half. First principles are well explained and popularized because instruction and tale are so skilfully blended. Its main idea and chief merit is that of enforcing in a popular form the necessity of exercising the faculties of children so that they should be in part their own instructors and of adding to those more common incentives to study (rewards and punishments) the surer, nobler, and more effective stimulus of curiosity kept alive by the variety and pleasure of successful invention. It aims to show with what ease the faculty of thinking may be cultivated in children.⁶¹

The Edgeworths saw the importance of science to the future. To their mind science is best suited to the growth of the child's mental powers.⁶² The novelty and **variety** arouse curiosity without suspicion of design and avoid idea of task. Leading principles are unfolded in familiar experiments which give delight. The pleasure of success is an inducement to knowledge.⁶³

There is enough nonsense in the book to make the sense work well. **Sir** Walter Scott did not like the book because he considered it too technical with its bridge building and such. The work exacted much. It brought

⁶⁰ Edgeworth, Maria, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 308.

⁶¹ Zimmern, Helen, Maria Edgeworth, 1884, p. 67.

⁶² Ibid., p. 68.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 69.

brought rational morality to the level of the comprehension of childhood and combined ethics with entertainment. Marie Edgeworth is not a poet and seer but carries out her aim, faithfully and conscientiously to teach utilitarianism.⁶⁴

Mrs. Inchbald's Nature and Art is another work stemming from the cult of Rousseau. In its structure it is rather a formal story with its direct contrasts of rich and poor, fortunate and ill-fated. It is a parallel study of two cousins, one educated in England in the orthodox way abhorred by the Rousseauists; the other brought up among African savages with his native simplicity, candor, and goodness of heart unspoiled by the foolish discipline and cultivated affectations of the so-called civilized world.

The story opens with a history of the parents of the boys--two brothers. One of them, Henry, is a happy-go-lucky fiddler, generous and unselfish; the other, William, is a cold, clever, unscrupulous hypocrite who accepts his brother's bounty by means of which he has been educated and has received a living as a clergyman, until he has acquired an independent position in life. This he accomplishes by marriage into the peerage and the acquiring of a deanship. The brothers are estranged. Henry, whose wife has died, takes his infant son to Africa.

The story now proceeds with its primary purpose--to show the training of the second generation. The younger William's education is described as follows:

Young William passed his time from morning till night with persons who taught him to walk, to ride,

to talk, to think, like a man--a foolish man instead of a wise child, as nature designed him to be.

This unfortunate youth was never permitted to have one conception of his own--all were taught him--he was never once asked what he thought but men were paid to tell him how to think! He was taught to revere such and such persons however unworthy of his reverence; to believe such and such things, however unworthy of his credit; and to act so and so, on such and such occasions, however unworthy of his feelings.

Such were the lessons of the tutors assigned him by his father. Those masters whom his mother gave him did him less mischief; for though they distorted his limbs and made his manners effeminate they did not interfere beyond the body.

He could talk on history, on politics, and on religion, surprisingly to all who never listened to a parrot or magpie, for he merely repeated what been told to him, without one reflection upon the sense or probability of his report. He had been praised for his memory; and to continue that praise he was so anxious to retain every sentence he had heard or had read, that the poor creature had no time for one native idea but could only re-deliver his tutors' lessons to his father, and his father's to his tutors. But whatever he said or did was the admiration of all who came to the house of the dean and who knew he was an only child. Indeed, considering the labor that was taken to spoil him he was rather a commendable youth; for, with the pedantic folly of his teachers, the blind affection of his father and mother, the obsequiousness of the servants, and flattery of the visitors, it was some credit to him that he was not an idiot or a brute though when he imitated the manners of a man he had something of the latter in his appearance--for he would grin and bow to a lady, catch her fan in haste when it fell and hand her to her coach as thoroughly void of all the sentiment which gives grace to such tricks as a monkey.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Inchbald, Maria, "Nature and Art", in The British Novelists, Vol. XXVII, 1810, pp. 232-33.

Into this family circle brightened by the presence of the thirteen-year-old prodigy mentioned above a bomb-shell bursts with the advent of young Harry, the dean's nephew. Harry's father has sent Harry to his brother because he himself is in dire peril from the savages among whom he lives.

Harry immediately displays the naivete of his character by opening comments. He imagines that the wig upon the dean's head grows there. When his uncle tells him that it is a badge of distinction he remarks innocently that the savages wear similar marks of distinction such as brass nails, wires, buttons and entrails of beasts. Lady Clementina, William's mother, is gratified to see how much superior her son's intelligence is to that of his cousin.

William jests with Henry's ignorance upon every occasion. Henry, impressed with everything, which appears new, expresses his sensations, without reserve. He never appears offended or abashed when laughed at though he is commonly termed a poor silly boy, a simpleton, and an idiot.

When the boys become men Henry still retains his natural simplicity; William all his good breeding even if sincerity must be sacrificed to it. True to his character and training, William has attained a brilliant position on the bench through a loveless marriage, after abandoning a poor village girl to the ruin he has made of her life. Harry, on the other hand, is content with a life of rustic peace with his wife and with his father whom he has rescued.

The philosophy of the book is summed up in the words of the elder Henry. He and his son have been discussing the blessing of honest toil and their amazement that the poor should rail against it.

But this is the fault of education of early prejudice. Our children observe us pay respect, even reverence to the wealthy while we slight or despise the poor. The impression thus made on their minds in youth is indelible during the more advanced periods of life and they continue to pine after riches and lament under poverty.⁶⁶

Three other didactic novelists of some distinction, Robert Bage, Thomas Holcroft, and William Godwin, were more concerned with the advancement of political freedom and justice than with education as such. However, since most of their heroes received their early training according to the Noble Savage ideal they deserve some consideration in our study.

Hermesprong, the hero of Robert Bage's Hermesprong or Man as He Is Not, was brought up among the American Indians and had been inured to simplicity of life, the practice of virtue, muscular prowess, and above all sincerity and truth-telling. He is the critical observer from another sphere, who has read Rousseau and Voltaire, watched the course of the French Revolution and sees through the pretences of English conservatism and the veneer of respectability. He is a terrible and utterly fearless plain-speaker, and being rich he has no scruples about saying what he thinks.⁶⁷ Concerning his education Hermesprong says:

It is six years since I have been endeavoring to acquire European arts. Of my progress I cannot boast. I cannot learn to offer incense at the shrines of wealth and power, nor at any shrines but those of probity and Virtue. I cannot learn to surrender my opinion from complaisance or from any principle of adulation. Nor can I learn to suppress the senti-

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 375.

⁶⁷ Baker, Ernest, op. cit., p. 239.

ments of a free-born mind from any fear, religious or political. Such uncourtly obduracy has my savage education produced.⁶⁸

Hermesprong defends the savage life by pointing out that the civilized person tends to revert to boredom on many occasions--the savage, never.

Holcroft's hero, Hugh Trevor, of the novel of that title acquires physical hardihood as a very small child through the arduous training given him by his father. His father's bankruptcy results in his being bound apprentice to a farmer with an ungovernable temper who treats Hugh with such cruelty that he runs away. After hardships on the road and persevering attempts to gain an education, the boy is adopted by his rich grandfather and sent to Oxford. But he finds that the rascality of low life is no worse than the conduct of the undergraduates or the shameless depravity of tutors.⁶⁹

In Fleetwood or the New Man of Feeling (1805) William Godwin has his hero reared in the romantic fastnesses of North Wales, delighting in the magnificence of nature and the virtue of the simple life. A scholarly father endows him with a love of books. Nature is his supreme passion. He has never seen a city but shrinks with instinctive horror from the grossness, the craft, and the contentiousness of the noisy mart.

His wildness does not imply any lack of benevolence. He does good deeds among simple cottages, saves a peasant from drowning and gives him enough money to marry his sweetheart. These acts are not dictated by a coldly selfish morality. He has an instinctive kindness even to dumb animals and will not hunt or fish.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Bage, Robert, "Hermesprong" in The British Novelists, Vol. 48, 182-, p.103.

⁶⁹ Baker, Knest, op. cit., p. 242.

⁷⁰ Fairchild, Hoxie, The Noble Savage, p. 151

Attendance at Oxford causes a sad change. For the first few weeks he behaves like the typical "Noble Savage" in contact with civilization, but he finds it impossible to adapt phrases which were those of enthusiasm and heart to the thin sharpness of undergraduate wit. Not for long does Fleetwood withstand the contagious influences of his environment. Gradually he sinks in a mire of hazing, drunkenness, and debauchery.

In Paris he continues a career of dissipation but the faithlessness of a mistress turns him back upon himself and his inherent integrity, and he finds solace and renewed faith in humanity through a sojourn among simple Swiss peasants.⁷¹

In none of our later studies do we find the tradition of naturalism in education so clearly and simply expressed. Yet, there is a strong undercurrent of the ideas which it engendered running through all the literature which pertained to educational thought.

⁷¹
Ibid., p. 152.

CHAPTER II

THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN AS DEPICTED IN
THE NOVEL FROM ROUSSEAU TO GEORGE MEREDITH

While expressing the gravest anxiety concerning the need for a complete revision of the artificialities of the old educational system, few of the pedagogical novelists gave the slightest consideration to the education of girls.

However, women of intelligence were coming to realize more and more keenly that only through a more enlightened system of feminine education could woman be elevated from her position of utter dependency.

Miss Dorothy Gardiner in a study of trends in the education of women has summed up the difficulties which women had to face in such a struggle:

When developments in the education of women are followed from stage to stage it is possible to realize the significant features; to observe the susceptibility of girls' training (compared with that of boys') to the influences of passing modes of thought, and its dependence on fashion--often the caprices of a particular generation; or again to mark the place which religion has at all times held, or the recurrent phenomenon of few women of exceptional ability who stand out from a confused crowd of the ignorant and untrained. The word "education" as applied to women must be given a liberal interpretation. In it must be included technical training in handicraft, as well as the reading of classic literature; the "knowledge of courtesy" as well as the cultivation of musical or artistic talent. The consciousness that some kind of preparation for life is necessary for every girl, can be traced in many directions; although the close connection between the training of women and an adequate fulfillment of their duties to society was but slowly realized. The story of female education had its melancholy aspect, due not least to the constant ebb and flow of hopes of improvement, a condition which sensitiveness to the time--spirit made inevitable. There is melancholy also, during the later and more self-conscious stages, in that sense of deprivation, unfulfilment, undeserved, contempt and stunted opportunity of which many capable noble-hearted women were painfully aware. The great enemy of progress was probably that fundamental "falsehood" on

which Mary Wollstonecraft insisted, the uncomfortable sense, that women were somehow out of joint, ill-placed in the social organism.¹

Rousseau, the writer who had been most revolutionary in his attitude toward the training of boys, was most reactionary in his treatment of the education of girls. According to Rousseau's doctrines, woman's training is significant only in relation to man. A man is active and strong; a woman, passive and weak; the one has power and will; the other, little power of resistance. Since women do not have the same careers as men they should not receive the same education.² Woman should preserve her own qualities and not attempt to usurp those of man.³ The whole education of women ought to be relative to men--to please--to be useful--to educate when young--to console--to make life agreeable and sweet.⁴ The development of personal charm is one of the first qualities in women.

Sophie, the heroine of the Emile, should be healthy and not delicate, love sewing but not reading and writing. She should be encouraged in learning embroidery and designing but not landscape or portrait painting because these are not useful.⁵ Again for the sake of utility she should be taught ciphering before reading.⁶

¹Gardiner, Dorothy, English Girlhood at School, pref. pp. vii-viii.

²Rousseau, Jean Jacques, Emile, p. 260.

³Ibid., p. 261

⁴Ibid., p. 262.

⁵Ibid., p. 263

⁶Ibid., p. 267.

Her teacher must always justify the duties imposed upon her but never fail to impose them. A girl should be useful and industrious and early brought under restraint because this must be expected later in life. One should prevent her from becoming tired of her occupations and enamored of her amusements.⁷ She should be taught singing and dancing but not too formally.⁸ A talent in speaking holds first place in the art of pleasing.⁹ Because girls cannot aspire to a concept of religion every daughter should assume the religion of her mother and every wife that of her husband.¹⁰ They need not learn abstract truths or how to search for scientific principles. Everything that they learn must be practical especially with a view to pleasing men.¹¹

Rousseau's ideal as depicted in Sophie educated expressly for marriage to the paragon, Emile, was thoroughly assimilated to the conditions of English life in the flamboyant Sermons to Young Women (1765) by Dr. James Fordyce, a Presbyterian minister of London; and she was made attractive in fiction by Frances Burney and Maria Edgeworth. Serious objections were urged against her by the advanced women of the century. She was over passive, soft, and delicate; she dissembled too much; her airs were too enticing, and her foot made too pretty. The attributing to her of what were called peculiarly sexual virtues which differentiated her from man, was especially distasteful.

⁷Ibid., p. 268

⁸Ibid., p. 271

⁹Ibid., p. 273.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 275.

¹¹Ibid., p. 281.

Why a girl should not receive the same education as a boy was not quite clear.

Although Thomas Day subscribes to Rousseau's ideas in his own futile experiment to educate an ideal wife for himself he protests against the delicacy of Rousseau's Sophie in his Sandford and Merton. As with the two boys, he presents two contrasting types of girls. One is Miss Matilda, the product of a young ladies' seminary, who speaks French better than English, draws figures of gladiators, and sings Italian airs that put Harry to sleep; the other is Miss Sukey Simmons who has, in Day's opinion, been properly educated. She is inured to cold baths and long walks, is acquainted with the best authors in French and English, has some knowledge of natural philosophy and geometry; and has been fully instructed in domestic science though not in music.

Day had attempted to carry out this hardening policy in his experiment with Sabrina, the more intelligent of the two orphan girls whom he had adopted. He endeavored to fortify her mind against the dread of suffering and the acute sense of danger to which so many of her sex are liable. All his experiments were, however, doomed to failure. In vain he dropped melting sealing-wax on her arms; she could not endure the pain without flinching; he fired pistols at her skirts, loaded with powder, which she believed to be loaded with ball; and she started and screamed at the report. He invented imaginary situations to test her self-control and told her pretended secrets which she betrayed to the servants. At last he gave up the idea of finding in her his ideal wife and married Esther Milner who had received an ordinary boarding school education. For her benefit he renewed his experiments, har-

dened her into robust health, allowed her no servants, and made her put away her harpsichord and music-books.¹²

Edgeworth has in his treatise Practical Education devoted a chapter to the question of female accomplishments. He believes that mothers had pushed the teaching of dancing, music, and drawing too far by expecting their daughters to become professionally expert in these subjects. He cites the opinion of the woman of the world, Madame Roland:

The study of fine arts considered as a part of female education should be attended to much less with a view to the acquisition of superior talents than with a desire to give woman a taste for industry, the habit of application, and a greater variety of employment, to aid us to escape from ennui and the dangers of vice.

According to Edgeworth, every girl, even the landlady's daughter, could draw a little, play a little, speak French a little. Their great-grandmothers had made carpets, needle work pictures of Solomon and Sheba, tapestry, and embroidery; but that taste had passed.¹³

We note in all the foregoing statements that no reference is anywhere made to a more serious education for women--one that would train them to think for themselves. Everything they learned was merely a pretty accomplishment.

In Harry and Lucy, Maria Edgeworth, does not concur entirely with this view of things. It was legitimate for a woman to have a wider knowledge of science or literature provided she did not attempt to display it on any and every occasion. Its main value lay in rendering her a better and more under-

¹²Gardiner, Dorothy, op. cit., pp. 451-452.

¹³Edgeworth, Richard Lovell, and Edgeworth, Maria, Essay on Practical Education, p. 46.

standing companion to her husband. (Shades of Sophie).

This attitude is epitomized by Lucy in a conversation with her mother. Lucy had been telling the company at the home of her aunt that her father gave her scientific lessons as well as Harry. One of the gentlemen present laughed.

And he said that it was well for me I had left off such learning. That I should be a much more agreeable woman without it; that ladies had nothing to do with science; or ought to have nothing to do with it. He said that scientific ladies are always displaying what they know, or that they do not know-- that scientific ladies were his abhorrence.

The wise mother replies that when women pretend to understand what they do not they are absurd and ridiculous, or if they do understand and speak merely to display their knowledge they must be troublesome and disagreeable. However, by acquiring knowledge women not only increase their power of being agreeable companions to the men they love, but they increase their own pleasure in reading and hearing of scientific experiments and discoveries; they acquire a greater variety of means of employing themselves independently and at home.

Lucy's mother also points out that ignorant women are as vain and often more so than those who are well informed, and now when almost all are so educated that they have a taste for literature and some acquaintance with scientific subjects there is less danger that any should be vain of what is no particular distinction.¹⁴

Lucy's mother's statement that the majority of women knew literature and

¹⁴ Edgeworth, Maria, op. cit., p. 157.

the graces to your sons. Let your children be brought up together, let their sports and studies be the same....the wisdom of your daughters will preserve them from the bane of coquetry....Your sons will look for something more solid in women than a mere outside.¹⁷

The little taper which Mrs. Macaulay had set burning was caught up into abler hands, and her vision crowned by the loyal admiration of a younger writer--Mary Wollstonecraft.¹⁸ In 1792, The Vindication of the Rights of Women, a valuable document for the story of women's education, was published. It marks brilliantly the close of a prolonged period of gloom and points forward to a happier future.¹⁹

Mary Wollstonecraft felt that the root of all the trouble was a false conception of women's relation to their environment:

In the minds of men--in our own minds even--they were "insulated"; their place in human society was determined by right only of certain functions; outside of these their existence was meaningless, aimless, a weary round of days to be shuffled through into kindly oblivion.²⁰

She reveals her attitude in her Introduction when she states:

The education of women has of late been more attended to than formerly; yet they are still reckoned a frivolous sex, and ridiculed or pitied by the writers who endeavor by satire or instruction to improve them. It is acknowledged that they spend many of the first years of their lives in acquiring a smattering of accomplishments; meanwhile strength of body and mind are sacrificed to libertine notions of beauty, to the desire of establishing themselves--the only

¹⁷Ibid., p. 456.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 456.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 458.

²⁰Ibid., p. 458.

way women can rise in the world--by marriage. And this desire making mere animals of them when they marry they act as such children may be expected to act,--they dress, they paint, and nickname God's creatures. Surely these weak beings are fit only for a seraglio. Can they be expected to govern a family with judgment or take care of the poor babes whom they bring into the world?²¹

She advises bodily **exercise** for women--a sedentary life only serves to render a naturally weak creature weaker; why should women boast of their delicacy and sensibility, their want of appetite as proof of this exquisite sensibility.²² Women are denied the only true knowledge, the power of generalizing ideas, of drawing comprehensive conclusions from individual observations. Their sensibility has been overexercised. All their thoughts turn on things calculated to excite emotion. Sensibility is increased at the expense of reason. Without strength of both body and mind how can women hope to carry out adequately their duties in life?²³

She propounds several revolutionary theories. Why should women be educated for mere idleness and parasitism? They might study the art of healing and become physicians as well as nurses. They might also study politics, and settle their benevolence on the broadest basis. Business of various kinds, they might likewise pursue, if they were educated in a more orderly manner, which might save many from common and legal prostitution. Women would not then marry for a support, as men accept of places under Government and neglect

²¹Wollstonecraft, Mary, Vindication of Rights of Women, pp. xxxv-xxxvi.

²²Ibid., p. 67.

²³Ibid., p. 77.

the implied duties; nor would an attempt to earn their own living sink them almost to the level of those poor abandoned creatures who live by prostitution.²⁴

How many women waste life away the prey of discontent, who might have practiced as physicians, regulated a farm, managed a shop, and stood erect, supported by their own industry, instead of hanging their heads surcharged with the dew of sensibility?²⁵

She has not attempted to extenuate women's faults but charges them to their education and station in society. She firmly believes that if woman shares the rights she will emulate the virtues of man; for she must grow more perfect when emancipated.²⁶

Mrs. Inchbald in A Simple Story points out the evils that result when a girl receives an improper education. She presents two contrasting pictures--mother and daughter. Miss Milner is the one who has had the poor training; her daughter having had a good one is to be proper and virtuous.

Miss Milner, the heroine of the first half of the story, is an eighteen year old heiress at the time the story begins. She is consigned to the guardianship of her late father's friend, Dorriforth, a young Catholic priest.

The description of her education is as follows:

She had been **educated** in a boarding school for Protestants whence she returned with merely such ideas of piety as ladies of fashion at her

²⁴Ibid., p. 209.

²⁵Ibid., p. 210.

²⁶Ibid., p. 281.

age mostly imbibe. Her little heart, employed in all the endless pursuits of personal accomplishments, had left her mind without one ornament except such as Nature gave; and even they were not wholly preserved from the ravages made by its rival, Art.²⁷

On the point of death her father realized that opening a ball or delighting hearers with wit or song were but frivolous qualifications--that the something essential lacking--moral tutelage must be supplied by Dorri-forth.

We learn more about Miss Milner's failings:

From her infancy she had been indulged in all her wishes to the extreme of folly and started habitually at the unpleasant voice of control. She was beautiful. She had been too frequently told the high value of that beauty, and thought every moment passed in wasteful idleness during which she was not gaining some new conquest. She had a quick sensibility which too frequently discovered itself in the immediate resentment of injuries or neglect. She had besides acquired the dangerous character of a wit; but to which she had no real pretensions although the most discerning critic hearing her converse might fall into this mistake. Her replies had all the effect of repartee, not because she possessed those qualities which can properly be called wit, but that what she said was delivered with an energy, an instantaneous and powerful conception of the sentiment, joined with a real or well counterfeited simplicity. Her words were but the words of others but the delivery made them pass for wit.²⁸

Her secret love for her austere guardian is about to be brought to a happy fruition when he is absolved from his vows upon becoming heir to a peerage. However, vanity and a certain instability of purpose almost create

²⁷ Inchbald, Elizabeth, "A Simple Story" in The British Novelists, Vol. 28, p. 24.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 25.

havoc with her happiness. Even after her marriage her continued lack of self-control finally causes her downfall.

Her daughter, Matilda, bred in different circumstances succeeds in overcoming her stern father's obduracy and in being reconciled to him:

Educated in the school of adversity and inured to retirement from her infancy, she had acquired a taste for all those amusements which a recluse life affords. She was fond of walking and riding; was accomplished in the arts of music and drawing by the most careful instructions of her mother and as a scholar she excelled most of her sex.²⁹

Mrs. Inchbald concludes her book with a little homily:

The reader has beheld the pernicious effects of an improper education in the testing which attended the unthinking Miss Milner. On the opposite side what may not be hoped from that school of prudence though of adversity in which Matilda was bred.

And Mr. Milner, Matilda's grandfather, had better have given his fortune to distant branch of his family as Matilda's father meant to do, so that he had given to his daughter--A Proper Education.³⁰

What exactly Mrs. Inchbald means by a proper education is not, one must confess, absolutely clear. It may be a challenge to the parade of useless accomplishments and the cultivation of an unnaturally timid and blushful demeanor in the presence of the male species which was so often considered an "education" among girls of that period.

Mrs. Inchbald was not the only writer of the period to criticize the education given in girls' boarding schools. In Thomas Holcroft's Hugh Tre-

²⁹ Ibid., p. 176.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 243.

vor, Hugh Trevor's uncle who has been left a widower with an infant daughter decides to remarry for her sake because he dreads the harmful effects of a boarding school

where everything is taught and nothing is understood; where airs, graces, mouth primming, shoulder setting, and elbow holding are studied and affectation, formality, hypocrisy, and pride are acquired; and where children the most promising are presently transformed into vain, pert misses who imagine that to perk up their heads, turn out their toes, and exhibit the ostentatious opulence of their relations in a tawdry ball-night dress, is the summit of perfection.³¹

An attack on the useless parade of female accomplishments was made by Hannah More in her Stricture on Female Education and Coelebs in Search of A Wife. Miss More was the daughter of a schoolmaster and herself a teacher, a devoted philanthropist, and a practical exponent in fiction of utilitarian ethics strongly tinged with Christian piety.³²

Her purpose in writing Coelebs as she states in her preface is not only to show

how religion may be brought to mix with the concerns of ordinary life without impairing activity or cheerfulness but also to point out that material defects exist in fashionable education and that females of the higher class may combine more domestic knowledge with more intellectual acquirement, that they may be at the same time more knowing and more useful than has always been thought necessary or compatible.³³

In Coelebs a young man makes the round of various households, and in-

³¹Holcroft, Thomas, The Adventures of Hugh Trevor, 1801, p.33

³²Baker, Ernest, op. cit., Vol. VI, p. 50.

³³More, Hannah, op. cit., p. 10.

interviews mothers, fathers, and their marriageable daughters. Being well brought up, an orthodox Christian, and a graduate of Edinburgh, he is a severe examiner, and discovers endless moral and social defects in the homes where he is entertained. The result is a criticism of manners, of intelligence, of taste, education, and prevailing attitudes toward religion.³⁴

His mother describes the ideal of feminine education to Coelebs.

I call education, not that which tends to smother a woman with accomplishments, but that which tends to consolidate a firm and regular system of character; that which tends to form a friend, a companion, and a wife. I call education, not that which is made up of the shreds and patches of useless arts, but that which inculcates principles, polishes taste, regulates temper, cultivates reason, subdues the passions, directs the feelings, habituates to reflection, trains to self denial, and, more especially, that which refers all actions, feelings, sentiments, tastes, and passions, to the love and fear of God.³⁵

At the first house he visits Coelebs finds that the young ladies are acquainted with such masterpieces of literature as Tears of Sensibility, Sympathy of Souls, and Perfidy Punished.

He meets another group who, though strictly trained in religious theory by a mother who thinks education can do nothing, know nothing of systematic provision for charity or the woes of the less fortunate. They spend their days at the harp or the piano, copy indifferant drawings, gild flower pots, and net white gloves and veils. He meets their antitheses, girls whose mother thinks that education can do everything and who neglects the principles of religion.

³⁴ Baker, Ernest, op. cit., Vol. VI, p. 52.

³⁵ More, Hannah, op. cit., p. 10.

The scatter brained Amelia gives us an idea of the vast number of superficial accomplishments that a girl of the period might think it necessary to learn:

One has so many things to learn, you know. I have gone on with my French and Italian, of course, and I am beginning German. Then comes my drawing-master; he teaches me to paint flowers and shells, and to draw ruins and buildings and to take views.And then I learn varnishing and gilding, and japanning; and next winter I shall learn modelling, and etching, and engraving in mezzotints and aquatints for Lady Di Dash learns etching; and mama says, as I shall have a better fortune than Lady Di, she vows I shall learn everything she does. Then I have a dancing master who teaches me the Scotch and Irish steps; and another who teaches me attitudes, and I have begun to learn the waltz, and I can stand longer on one leg already than Lady Di. Then I have a singing master, and another who teaches me the harp, and another for the piano forte. And what little time I can spare from these principal things I give by odd minutes to ancient and modern history, and geography, and astronomy, and grammar, and botany. Then I attend lectures on chemistry, and experimental philosophy. And I run so delightfully fast from one thing to another that I am never tired. What makes it so pleasant is, as soon as I am fairly set in with one master, another arrives. I should hate to be long at the same thing. But I shan't have a great while to work so hard, for as soon as I come out, I shall give it all up, except music and dancing.³⁶

Coelebs finds his paragon of women in Lucille Stanley who spends a typical day--by rising at six, reading the best books two hours, checking over the accounts, making breakfast, teaching her younger sisters, and visiting the poor. Charles, our Coelebs, admires her because she is not a professed beauty, not a professed genius, not a professed philosopher, not a professed wit, and not an artist.

³⁶More, Hannah, op. cit., pp. 224-225.

Her mother tells him that Lucille is merely what ten thousand other young women with natural good sense and good temper might be with the same education, the same neglect of what is useless, and the same attention to what is necessary.

Lucilla has learned Latin but her father has taken care to keep her free from pretension. The knowledge that a woman is a scholar might render her unpopular unless she is modest enough to hide her light under a bushel. Coelebs finds this no drawback. He feels that a man of taste with an ignorant wife cannot think his own thoughts nor speak his own language.

Each of Mr. Stanley's daughters is furnished with some one interesting accomplishment, mathematics, natural story, music, or drawing with which she may amuse herself independently. But none tries to be everything. Otherwise every girl would have all her time occupied about things which would be of no value to her in eternity.³⁷ Because religion is Miss More's main theme Lucilla's perfections are the results of her practical piety.

Another and more subtle attack on the ornamental feminine accomplishments was that delivered by Jane Austen. She cast her clever ironic barbs at the sentimental, romance-reading Lydia Languish, the clinging-vine type of heroine, but, unfortunately, she did not remove her from English literature. The men were still fond of her. Witness Amelia Sedley, Lucie Manette and others of their ilk persisting through the Victorian period. Until the advent of George Meredith we must look to the women writers for the best portrayals of heroines--provided that we do not classify Becky Sharpe as a heroine.

³⁷ More, Hannah, op. cit., p. 438.

An immense improvement had taken place in the position of women just before Jane Austen's birth. Slowly an idea was taking shape that a woman might not only have sense herself but might prefer that it should be spoken to her, and that because the minds of women had long been left uncultivated they were not on that account unworthy of cultivation.³⁸

In the curriculum of the school attended by Mary Mitford and Jane Austen we find included French, history, geography, Italian, music, dancing, and as much science as it was thought requisite for a young lady to know.³⁹ Miss Mitford describes the students as "healthy, happy, well-fed, and kindly treated", and that "the intelligent manner in which instruction was given had the effect of producing in the majority of the pupils a love of reading and a taste for literature".⁴⁰

Yet in spite of the high praise given to the school and the few opportunities of earning a living offered in Jane Austen's day she has one of her heroines say "I would rather do anything than be a teacher at a school".⁴¹

There are four questions and four only on which Jane Austen ever expressed her own private opinions:

One moral standard for the sexes, the education of girls, "those places in town for the sale, not quite of human flesh, but of human intellect" and the "privilege claimed for women" of loving longest when existence or when hope is gone.⁴²

³⁸Mitton, G. E., Jane Austen and Her Times, 1905, p. 7.

³⁹Ibid., p. 32.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 33.

⁴¹Pollock, Walter Herries, Jane Austen, Her Contemporaries and Herself, 1899, p. 29.

⁴²Johnson, R. Brimley, Jane Austen, 1927, p. 2.

In her first novel Sense and Sensibility Jane Austen gibes at the sentimental heroine through the contrast drawn between two sisters, one, impetuous, incautious Marianne Dashwood, the representative of the old sensibility; the other, Elinor, the personification of good sense and right feeling who becomes her sister's instructress by precept and example.

The true mettle of the two sisters is displayed in their contrasting reactions toward similar disappointments in love. The whole world knows that Marianne has been jilted; she droops, pines, and becomes ill. Her sister Elinor, knowing that her own love affair cannot turn out happily, succeeds in concealing her grief so well that even her mother and sister do not suspect. Marianne finds that she has much to reproach herself with when she learns the truth. Her excess of sensibility, the result of over indulgence in the sentimental literature of the previous century, has caused the greater part of her pain and heartbreak.

In Pride and Prejudice, the Bennet girls provide us with various types of femininity as object lessons. At the head of the list stands the incomparable Elizabeth, who appears to be the first heroine (of our study, at least) who has enough independence of spirit to confront the opposite sex with ideas of her own, without being worsted in the encounter. Her oldest sister Jane is a girl of natural, equable temperament cultivated to the utmost extent by the discipline of self-control. Jane Bennet may seem touched with prudery but she is a product of the manners of the time when a certain stateliness haunted the air. Lydia, a younger sister, possessing high animal spirits, flirtatious propensities, a natural self consequence and little

common sense, is thrust by the doting fondness of a foolish mother into contact with the world before she is capable of coping with it.

The mischief of neglect and mistaken indulgence towards Lydia result in her **imprudent** elopement with Wickham. Elizabeth explains Lydia's lapse from grace thus:

She is very young; she has never been taught to think on serious subjects and for the last half-year she ~~has~~ been given up to nothing but amusement and vanity. She has been allowed to dispose of her time in the most idle and frivolous manner and to adopt any opinions that came in her way.⁴³

Kitty, the fifth Bennet daughter, who has given indications of being another Lydia becomes by proper attention and management less irritable, less ignorant, and less insipid.

Jane Austen takes a sly dig at the too erudite female in the person of Mary who, being the only plain one in the family, worked hard for knowledge and accomplishments. She has a pedantic air and conceited manner. Her family twit her about the large tomes which she reads and of which she makes extracts.

The tradition of excessive delicacy in a heroine is upset by Elizabeth who shocks the Misses Bingley by walking alone in dirty weather on a country road.

The traditional feminine accomplishments do not escape her shafts. Bingley gives Darcy and Elizabeth an opening by remarking in all good faith:

⁴³ Austen, Jane, "Pride and Prejudice" in The Works of Jane Austen, p.399.

It is amazing to me how young ladies can have patience to be so very accomplished as they all are. They all paint tables, cover screens, and net purses. I scarcely know anyone who cannot do all this, and I am sure I never heard a young lady spoken of without being informed that she was very accomplished.⁴⁴

Darcy counters with the assertion that he knows but half-a-dozen whom he could call really accomplished. He comprehends in his idea of accomplishments not only a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing and the modern languages, a certain something in a women's air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expressions, but also an improvement of her mind by extensive reading.

Elizabeth remarks sarcastically that she is not surprised at his knowing only six but rather wonders at his knowing any who meet these requirements.

Jane Austen tacitly admits that marriage is still the career for women when she permits Charlotte Lucas to marry that unutterable bore, Mr. Collins in order to escape the greater evil of spinsterhood:

Mr. Collins, to be sure, was neither sensible nor agreeable; his society was irksome, and his attachment to her must be imaginary. But still he would be her husband. Without thinking highly either of men or of matrimony, marriage had always been her object; it was the only honorable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune, and, however uncertain of giving happiness, must be their pleasantest preservative from want.⁴⁵

The quiet, self-controlled Jane, and the quick-witted charming Elizabeth are because of their superior virtues rewarded with husbands superior

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 253.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 306.

both in worldly goods and in nobility of person.

In Mansfield Park, the Bertram girls think their young cousin Fanny incredibly stupid because she cannot speak French, play duets, put the map of Europe together, name the principal rivers of Russia or tell the difference between water-colours and crayons. It was some years since they themselves had repeated the chronological order of the kings of England, with the dates of their accession and most of the principal events of their reigns, or the "Roman emperors as low as Severus; besides a great deal of the heathen mythology, and all the metals; semi-metals, planets, and distinguished philosophers". The odd Fanny does not even care to learn music or drawing.⁴⁶

The coercion that parents or guardians could exercise to force children into prearranged marriages shows that they were, in this period, if not tyrants, at least despots as regarded their feminine belongings.

Sir Thomas has had success in engaging his daughter Maria to the rich Mr. Rushworth in spite of his lack of breeding because the marriage will increase Sir Thomas's respectability and influence. However, in the ordinarily mild Fanny he catches a Tartar; Sir Thomas cannot understand why a mere lack of love should stand in the way of a match so advantageous from a worldly point of view. Her refusal exasperates him to the pitch of delivering this sententious utterance:

I had thought you peculiarly free from wilfulness of temper, self-conceit, and every tendency to

⁴⁶ Johnson, R. Brimley, op. cit., p. 112.

that independence of spirit which prevails so much in modern days, even in young women, and which in young women is offensive and disgusting beyond all common offence.⁴⁷

He terms poor Fanny wilful and perverse to decide for herself without any consideration or deference for those who have a right to guide her. He paints for her the advantages her family might gain from such a match and concludes his burst of oratory by calling her ungrateful. However, not being the heavy uncle of the melodrama, he does not force her inclinations further.

Back at her own shabby home, Fanny undertakes the training of her younger sister, Susan, who though brought up in the midst of negligence and error had framed many proper opinions of what ought to be. Susan had read nothing, but Fanny sets about the task of inspiring her with a taste for the biography and poetry which she delights in herself. Susan never becomes as fond/as Fanny because "the early habit of reading is wanting". But she does improve and is safely established at Mansfield Park as an indispensable companion when the book closes.

In Emma, Jane Austen gives us a heroine handsome, clever, and rich, with rather too much her own way and a disposition to think a little too well of herself. She has too many servants to permit her to work and too few dependents to exercise her charity. She possesses no religion, no zeal in pursuit of study, and no serious intellectual interest. An indef-

⁴⁷ Austen, Jane, "Mansfield Park" in The Works of Jane Austen, p. 662.

finite leisure has produced an untilled mind--a mind capable of seriousness but not capable of finding its own occasions for seriousness that has drifted into levity through defect of schooling and excess of freedom.⁴⁸

Emma's lack of other serious purpose in life draws her on to the arranging of the lives of her friends. The matches that she attempts to arrange for them provide the plot intrigue of the novel. Emma herself is not tempted to marry because unlike the great majority of girls of her period there is no necessity for her to do so.

As she expresses it:

I have none of the usual inducements of women to marry. Without love I should be a fool to change such a situation as mine. Fortune I do not want; employment I do not want; consequence I do not want; I believe few married women are half as much mistress of their husband's house as I am of Hartfield.⁴⁹

Harriet, her friend, however, thinks it a dreadful fate to be an old maid. Emma asserts that it is poverty that makes celibacy contemptible.

I do not perceive why I should be more in want of employment at forty than one-and-twenty. Woman's usual occupations of eye, hand, and mind will be as open to me then as they are now. If I draw less, I shall read more; if I give up music, I shall take to carpet-work.⁵⁰

Emma is severely rebuked by Mr. Knightley, the hero of the novel, for her lack of courtesy to an elderly lady of the village. Conditions of

⁴⁸Pirkins, O. W., Jane Austen, 1920, p. 11.

⁴⁹Austen, Jane, "Emma" in The Works of Jane Austen, p. 814.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 840

social intercourse in that day admitted reproof without severity or pedantry from a man of experience and judgment to a girl with whom, as with her family, he had long been intimately acquainted.⁵¹

In spite of her liberality of thought, nothing could have been more shocking to Miss Austen than the kind of independence advocated for women in these latter days. She had an old-fashioned belief that, no matter how superior the woman is to the man in many things, the fit relationship of the sexes lies in the recognition of man's general superiority in judgment and strength which makes him the master although, of course, in the spirit of Christian courtesy and forbearance. Thus her wittiest and most independent heroine, Emma, is made "inferior" to the hero.⁵²

Yet Jane Austen's men realize that a proper education is a quality much to be desired in a wife.

Mr. Knightley says:

She is not a sensible girl, nor a girl of any information. She has been taught nothing useful, and is too young and too simple to have acquired anything herself. Men of sense, whatever you may choose to say, do not want silly wives.⁵³

Another of the female boarding schools is pictured in Emma:

Mrs. Goddard was the mistress of a school-- not of a seminary of or an establishment, or anything which professed, in long sentences of

⁵¹ Pollock, Walter Herries, op. cit., p. 114.

⁵² Ibid., p. 116.

⁵³ Austen, Jane, op. cit., p. 800.

refined nonsense, to combine liberal acquirements with elegant morality upon new principles and new systems--and where young ladies for enormous pay might be screwed out of health and into vanity--but a real, honest, old-fashioned boarding school, where a reasonable quantity of accomplishments were sold at a reasonable price, and where girls might be sent to be out of the way, and scramble themselves into a little education without any danger of coming back prodigies.⁵⁴

Catherine, the heroine of Northanger Abbey, has through an excessive fondness for the eerie Gothic romance, developed an overstimulated imagination, which leads her into all sorts of absurdities:

As a child she was fond of all boys' play. She never could learn or understand anything before she was taught, and sometimes not even then for she was often inattentive, and occasionally stupid. Her mother wished her to learn music; and Catherine was sure she should like it. She learnt a year and could not bear it; and Mrs. Morland, who did not insist on her daughter's being accomplished in spite of incapacity or distaste, allowed her to leave off. Her taste for drawing was not superior. Writing and accounts she was taught by her father; French by her mother. Her proficiency in either was not remarkable, and she shirked her lessons in both whenever she could. With all these symptoms of profligacy she had neither a bad heart nor a bad temper, was seldom stubborn, scarcely ever quarrelsome, and very kind to the little ones with few interruptions of tyranny. She was noisy and wild, and hated confinement and cleanliness.⁵⁵

However, from fifteen to seventeen, our Catherine was in training for a heroine; she read all such works as heroines must read to supply their memories with those quotations which are so serviceable and so soothing in

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 773.

⁵⁵ Austen, Jane, "Northanger Abbey" in The Works of Jane Austen, p. 1064.

the vicissitudes of their eventful lives.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, that Catherine is somewhat doubtful about the value of her reading is revealed when speaking to the hero, Harry Tilney, she expresses surprise that he has read novels because "they are not clever enough; gentlemen read better books".

The serio-comic aspect of the attitude towards the education of women is expressed in an ironic comment:

She was heartily ashamed of her ignorance--a misplaced shame. Where people wish to attach they should always be ignorant. To come with a well-informed mind is to come with an inability of administering to the vanity of others, which a sensible person would always wish to avoid. A woman, especially, if she have the misfortune of knowing anything, should conceal it as well as she can.⁵⁷

Jane Austen refers to the advantages of natural folly in a beautiful girl--advantages which have been already set forth by the capital pen of a sister author. The sister author is Fanny Burney who, especially in Evelina, gives us a picture of a young lady amiable and inexperienced who is continually getting into difficulties from not knowing or not observing the established etiquettes of society.

With a pen dripping with irony, Jane continues her observations:

In justice to men I must add, that though to the larger and more trifling part of the sex, imbecility in females is a great enhancement of their personal charms, there is a portion of them too well-informed themselves, to desire anything more in woman than ignorance.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 1064.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 1124.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 1124.

This appears to be a somewhat paradoxical statement when we remember that Jane Austen had had one of her heroes say that men of sense never desire silly wives. Which of the two statements expresses the writer's real views should not be difficult to judge. One of her observations she has put into the mouth of a character; the other she has written as an intrusion of her own into the book.

Jane Austen was content to reveal her views in mild satire. She lacked the feeling of passionate resentment that animated two of her sister author-esses of a later period, Charlotte Bronte and George Eliot.

The circumstances of Charlotte Bronte's life--circumstances which she has depicted in Jane Eyre and Villette--have been subjects of much violent controversy. Some biographers think that the Brontes owed to the restraint of a stern father their ruined health and broken nervous system due to the chronic underfeeding and coercion, the hopeless crippling of self-confidence due to the Christian discipline beneath which their spirits struggled, and the monotony of their existence.⁵⁹ Others have charged that such allegations are unfounded in fact. Nevertheless if Charlotte Bronte in describing Lowood in Jane Eyre is giving us a picture of the school at Cowan's Bridge which she and her sisters attended she is piling up a strong case for the prosecution. Two of her sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, died as a result of the gross neglect of health.

Lowood is presided over by Mr. Brocklehurst, a clergyman, probably a prototype of Mr. Carus Wilson, who conducted the Cowan's Bridge School for

⁵⁹ Langbridge, Rosamond, Charlotte Bronte, p. 5.

heroine.

Like Dorothea Brooke, her heroine in Middlemarch, George Eliot from childhood on struggled after the unattainable. The meanness of her opportunities galled her. She was oppressed by self-consciousness and the weight of ideals too high for her surroundings. Women had not found themselves as yet. There were many Dorotheas whose high aims and glorious possibilities were partially stifled by a social medium which had no demand for them.⁶¹

George Eliot herself says on this subject:

Some have felt that these blundering lives are due to the inconvenient indefiniteness with which the Supreme Power has fashioned the natures of women; if there were one level of feminine incompetence as strict as ability to count three and no more, the social lot of woman might be treated with scientific certitude. Meanwhile indefiniteness remains, and limits of variation really much wider than anyone would imagine from the sameness of woman's coiffure, dress, etc.⁶²

She felt that women should endeavor to make some distinctly feminine contribution to intellectual pursuits. It was her opinion that French women had far surpassed English women in this endeavor.

Yet none was more critical than she of the feminine writer who wrote what she termed: mind and millinery and cracular novels. She objected to these as the work of destitute women who turn novelist as they turn governesses because there is no other ladylike means of getting their bread.⁶³

⁶¹Blind, Mathilda, George Eliot, p. 242.

⁶²Eliot, George, Middlemarch, prelude, p. vii.

⁶³Bonnell, Henry H., Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot, and Jane Austen, p. 197.

Nothing in her opinion could so soon turn a sensible man against feminine education. Men who are inclined to see their daughters educated are likely to say after a few hours' reading of the cracular book, "No, the average nature of woman is too shallow and feeble a soil to bear much tillage; it is only fit for the very lightest crops".⁶⁴ She went beyond Arnold in holding up the warning that until women were given a chance for education and some kind of satisfying occupation, Philistinism would continue to flourish.⁶⁵

However, in her attitude toward what the education should be she remained somewhat conservative. She became a feminist late in life and was always more partial to the educational movement than to the political enfranchisement of women. Towards the latter she never took an open position but she interested herself in all the projects which concerned the education of women and applauded their entry into the university and the amelioration of their social situation.⁶⁶

Yet there were mental reservations in her attitude. She always had the sense of the physical and physiological differences between men and women that the younger generation were beginning to think exaggerated. She considered that it required much and careful thought to understand their influences and dreaded rash experiments in the direction of equality in education. She stressed the value of the moral influence that might be

⁶⁴Williams, Blanche Colton, George Eliot, 1936, pp. 125-26.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 269.

⁶⁶Cazamian, Madeleine, Le Roman et les Idées en Angleterre, p. 149.

exerted by woman. The new doctrine of higher education for woman seemed to overlook these facts. She had a fear of "unsexing" woman.⁶⁷

George Eliot herself was singularly fortunate in her teaching as a girl. According to Miss Haldane, education even for girls cannot then have been at such a low ebb as we are apt to imagine, for not only was her instruction at school good, but a practical and somewhat sharp-tongued mother encouraged it. Miss Rebecca Franklin was an old fashioned preceptress of the best sort, ignorant of science, geometry, or psychology--untrained to teach and yet a real inspirer. To these people a child was just a less-developed grown-up person.⁶⁸

But as J. Lewis May points out in his study, chance in an unscientific manner often brings about good results. Although it was not the modern method of a Mrs. More or a Montessori, it worked even better with Mary Ann Evans, than the more progressive system might have. She was the prize pupil, was summoned to the parlor to show off for visitors, and was especially skilful in the writing of compositions. The institution was a forcing ground for the production of perfect prigs, but in an age that flourished on Sandford and Merton self-conscious piety and goodness were at a premium.⁶⁹

Mary Ann acquired from her schools the ability to read and speak, a fear of unknown terrors and a possibly weakened body; drill in composition, religious enthusiasm joined to an eagerness for serving humanity; history,

⁶⁷ Haldane, Elizabeth, George Eliot and Her Times, 1927, p. 84.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 24.

⁶⁹ May, J. Lewis, George Eliot--A Study, 1930, p. 28.

French and training in music. Largely unaided she read history and poetry, studied Latin verbs, geometry, entomology, chemistry and metaphysics. Other languages she attempted to master were Greek, German, Italian and Hebrew.⁷⁰

When after the death of her mother and the marriage of her sister the household duties devolved upon her she carried them out efficiently but with an inner feeling of rebellion. She balked at "the slavery of being a girl" because she had in her the force to do something big--the pain of the spirit of the times.⁷¹

Matilda Blind believed that Middlemarch is the only work of George Eliot's in which there is a distinct indication of her attitude toward the aspirations and clearly formulated demands of the women of the nineteenth century. Her many sarcastic allusions to the stereotyped theory about women's sphere show on which side her sympathies were enlisted.⁷²

Already with regard to Hetty Sorrell in Adam Bede she had denounced the dangerous puerility of certain masculine illusions about women.

Ah! what a prize a man gets who wins a sweet bride like Hetty. How the men envy him...Her heart must be just as soft, her temper just as free from angles, her character just as pliant. If anything ever goes wrong it must be the husband's fault there; he can make her what he likes that is plain. The little darling is so fond of him, her little vanities are so bewitching he wouldn't consent to her being a bit wiser. The husband will look on, smiling benignly,

⁷⁰Williams, Blanche Colton, op. cit., p. 23.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 29.

⁷²Blind, Mathilde, op. cit., p. 251.

able whenever he chooses to withdraw into the sanctuary of his wisdom toward which his sweet wife will look reverently and never lift the curtain. It is a marriage such as they made in the golden age when the men were all wise and majestic, and the women all lovely and loving.⁷³

Perhaps we might say that such an outpouring concerning the pretty, kittenish, soft type of woman is only to be expected from a woman of George Eliot's intellectual calibre. Sir Leslie Stephens is uncharitable enough to say that it is a homely woman's jealousy of a pretty woman. However, it does indicate that George Eliot revolted against the conception of the ideal woman.

Rosamond Vincy in Middlemarch is the heart of the subject. Mr. Hutton says of her:

This exquisitely painted figure is the deadliest blow at the commonplace assumption that limitation in both heart and brain is a desirable thing for women, that has ever been struck.⁷⁴

Her entire education, family and social pressure, the traditional code of morality and convention, the playing up of material and worldly success worked together to develop before all a being with qualities most superficial and brilliant. She had learned to live according to the sentiments without giving them interior discipline and counterweight. She had inculcated an amiable softness in her graces, her bearing and conduct. Her intellectual attitude was made up of passivity and of exterior deference. Her moral individuality was necessarily atrophied and falsified.

⁷³ Eliot, George, Adam Bede, pp. 130-31.

⁷⁴ Hutton, Richard Holt, Essays on Some of the Modern Guides of English Thought in Matters of Faith, 1887, p. 268.

associated with certain finicking notions which were the classics of Mrs. Lemon's school.⁷⁸

Lydgate, at any rate, saw in her the perfect companion. He did not see that the sentiments of Rosamonde had acquired their delicateness, their irreproachable finish only through the barrier erected around them by an impenetrable egotism. Her apparent neutrality toward all that which remained outside interests properly feminine hid an idea of the world and life, narrow, scornful, irremediably closed to all generous enthusiasm. She expected a brilliant, worldly future from a marriage with Lydgate. When she found herself deceived it was necessary for him to sacrifice his ideal of years of research.⁷⁹

Rosamonde hated and scorned the profession, the ideals and the thoughts of her husband. She looked upon him as a being of curious and mistaken ideas required to be brought out into correct conventional paths of life by one like herself who had all the recognized virtues and commonsense besides.

But she considered it not lady-like to quarrel or use harsh language; she got her way by far more subtle and certain methods, by concentrating on herself all his thoughts and all his pity. She opposed to him a gentle and inflexible obstinacy before which he was helpless.

Lack of money had paralyzed him; he permitted himself to be imprudently and cruelly compromised in local intrigues. Struggling desperately

⁷⁸Bonnell, Henry H., op. cit., p. 268.

⁷⁹Cazamian, Madeleine, op. cit., p. 149.

against the snares of Lilliput--crushed--failing, he learned to see in her an implacable enemy. The world of which she was an irresistible ally carried him away. He gave up his work as one loses honor, left Middlemarch, acquired a brilliant clientele and gave his wife the luxury which was indispensable to her.⁸⁰

Lydgate suffered through exalting mere outward grace to a pinnacle, the rarefied atmosphere of which only the grace of the inward and spiritual sort could bear.⁸¹ Many readers felt that he should have married Dorothea Brooke. But he was afraid of her. She was a little too earnest. In his own words:

It is troublesome to talk to such women. They are always wanting reasons. Yet they are too ignorant to understand the merits of any question and usually fall back on their moral sense to settle things after their own taste.

But of Rosamonde he thinks:

She is grace itself; she is perfectly lovely and accomplished; she produces the effect of beautiful music.

Miss Brooke did not fill his ideas of adornment, the first necessary qualification in a wife:

She did not look at things from the proper feminine angle. The society of such women was about as relaxing as going from your work to teach the second form instead of reclining in a paradise with sweet laughs for bird notes and blue eyes for heaven.⁸²

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 150

⁸¹ Bonnell, Henry H., op. cit., p. 269.

⁸² Eliot, George, Middlemarch, p. 243.

He got his bird notes with a vengeance, and checkmated by the utter insensibility to all true value of that perfectly lovely and accomplished product of Mrs. Lemon's school his noble ambitions were wrecked. Reduced to a treatise on gout he called his wife the basil plant--a plant which had once flourished wonderfully on a murdered man's brains.⁸³

George Eliot sums up the conclusion of her drama:

His friends envied him a wife so charming and nothing ever happened to shake their opinions. Rosamonde remained sweet of character, inflexible of judgment, careful to admonish her husband and to use stratagems against him.⁸⁴

The contrast between Dorothea and Rosamonde is that between the high-minded woman who does not understand the small things of life and the would-be smart woman.

Woman's place in the world was one of the greatest preoccupations of George Meredith. In a letter to the Times he wrote:

The choicer spirits of men do now see that women have brains and can be helpful to the hitherto entirely dominant muscular creature who allowed them some degree of influence in return for subtle flatteries. Women must have brains to have emerged from so strong a bondage.⁸⁵

He inquires what man had made of woman? Is she a helpmate, or is she still a bird within a cage, thoughtless, frivolous, and aimless because man has not desired that she be anything else?⁸⁶

⁸³ Cazamian, Madeleine, op. cit., p. 150.

⁸⁴ Eliot, George, op. cit., p. 453.

⁸⁵ Bailey, Elmer James, The Novels of George Meredith, 1908, p. 124.

⁸⁶ Crees, J. H. E., George Meredith, 1918, p. 215.

As a protest against that something in man that dreads the liberation of women he creates a score of shining and celestial women, only a little lower than the angels.⁸⁷

His feminine characters are womanly in their sweet girlishness, gay yet not boisterous, witty yet not pert, keen intellects yet no bluestockings, receptive, and true mates of their partners in every mood. They are no dainty Lydia Languishes but creatures of flesh and blood, nurtured on "good beef and good bread", with sound digestions and healthy appetites, not frail and sickly but of perfect health, spirited yet no hoydens, pure but no prudes, reverent yet keen questioners of the world's deeds, brave, devoted, resolute, and nobly sincere. They are devoid of the petty and narrow, and lack sentimentality because they have too clear a vision of realities and their intuitions never fail them. They have the charm of many of Shakespeare's conceptions, but the progress of refinement and the advance of intellect have added charms lacking in some of Sheakespeare's women.⁸⁸

All his heroines insist on thinking things out for themselves, on being at least a trifle heedless of conventions, on being most delightful in their womanly or their girlish charm, but yet resolute and courageous in their desire to pierce to the depths of things.⁸⁹

He is not blind to the temptations and individual shortcomings of the sex. He detests the masculine woman, and has no use for the faddish woman

⁸⁷ Follett, Helen Thomas and Follett, Wilson, Some Modern Novelists, 1918, p. 36.

⁸⁸ Crees, J.H.E., op. cit., p. 87.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 215.

who goes in for religion or little dogs. Nor does he contend that woman is generally either greater or better than man. In creating women of the grandest stature he creates them for the education and chastisement of men.⁹⁰

Men have not succeeded in shunning the "grossness of the overdainty. They desire to have a still woman, who can make a constant society of her pins and needles. They create by stoppage a volcano and are amazed in its eruptiveness".⁹¹

So long as man acts upon the tacit understanding that woman exists as a coy but willing victim of his pleasure, woman will remain a temptress. The long continued and widely extended acceptance of this interpretation of the use of women had produced a false balance in society. Meredith felt that it was his mission to point out that the resulting evil was working its own punishment. Women who accepted these conditions either actively or passively, knowingly or blindly, must have seen that they themselves perpetuated the degradation from which they suffered most; and men who persisted in believing that women had not grown beyond what they were in the childhood of the race retarded thereby not only their own advancement but the progress of the world as well.⁹²

The Egoist is the epic of Meredith's protest against the enslaving of women. Sir Willoughby Patterne is a man who struts and poses before the mirror of his own vanity and requires that his women folk be always holding

⁹⁰ Follett, Helen T. and Follett, Wilson, op. cit., p. 36.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 37.

⁹² Bailey, Elmer James, op. cit., p. 122.

up the mirror before him in subtle flattery. He does not want them to expand or change lest they see him in some new compromising light or become less accessible or demand more in return.⁹³

Sir Willoughby's egoism is satirized by Meredith in his hasty engagement to Clara Middleton, his desire that she should reflect him and him only, his determination to mold her mind, his fear that she would escape, his wish to be a conqueror, and his **agony** of thought at being made a subject for contemptuous laughter.⁹⁴

Meredith pictures Sir Willoughby's attitude in some gems of comment:

She would not, though a purer poetry is little imaginable reduce herself to ashes, or incense, or essence, in honor of him and so marry. She preferred to be herself with the egoism of women.⁹⁵

You are mine, my Clara, utterly mine; every thought, every feeling. We are one; the world may do its worst.⁹⁶

Clara fell in her own esteem less because she was the betrothed Clara Middleton than that she was a captured woman, of whom it is absolutely expected that she must submit.⁹⁷

⁹³Follett, Helen T. and Follett, W., op. cit., p. 37.

⁹⁴Bailey, Elmer James, op. cit., p. 142.

⁹⁵Meredith, George, The Egoist, p. 46.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 57.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 58.

When Clara tells him that she is breaking her engagement:

His ideal, the common male Egoist ideal of a waxwork sex, would have been shocked to fragments had she spoken further.⁹⁸

Meredith's deflation of Sir Willoughby is devastating.

Cecilia Halkett endured the assumption of her father and of Everard Romfrey that women are incapable of deep thought of clear insight. Her strength of character in abstaining from self defence threw the burden of proof upon them. It became evident that they were sentimentalists blindly accepting the traditional ideas about woman's place in the world.

Colonel Durance declared that woman because of her education in unfitted to speak an opinion on any matter external to the household. Nataly Radnor saw that society gives an exotic fostering to the senses of women, instead of the strengthening breath of vital air, and that as a result the model women of men must make peasant slaves not true mates.⁹⁹

So true it is, so thoroughly is woman the slave of existing conventions; so surely is she the artificial production of a state that exalts her while she sacrifices daily and hourly to the artificial, that Victor Radnor's opinion may be regarded as being those of the entrenched majority:

What, he thinks, should be the result if men could de-orientalize the gleeful notion of women and **dis-Turk** themselves by inviting woman's voluble tongue to sisterly occupations in the world as in the domestic circle? The old argument arises. Is she moral?

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 150.

⁹⁹ Bailey, Elmer James, op. cit., p. 120.

Does she mean to be harmless? Is she not untamable Old Nature? Would she not when once on an equal footing with her lordly half show herself that wanton old thing, the empress of disorderliness?¹⁰⁰

Meredith sees in woman the saving grace and the regenerative power to help the world.

And on the note of hope for women of the nineteenth century we conclude.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 164.

CHAPTER III

DICKENS AND HIS ATTACK UPON ALL FORMS
OF COERCION

In our previous chapters we have dealt with aspects of education that define new systems, embrace what is to be taught or how to teach it, and express the changes in attitude towards the important subject of female education.

Now we present Dickens, a man concerned not with curriculum or ideal systems but with the correction of abuses in systems already existing--the overthrow of a coercion which made the child a mere piece of property in the hands of parent or teacher.

Dickens believed in education as a supreme remedy and declared that ignorance and crime were mother and child.¹

In one of his earliest novels, Nicholas Nickleby, Dickens indicates in his preface that he is about to launch an attack on the lowest round in the educational ladder--the Yorkshire schools.

This was but the first of a series of such attacks which were to strike out at all forms of coercion: the perversion of authority in the parent or guardian as well as in the school; forms of mental violence as in the cramming system of Dr. Blimber or the repressive gloom of the Murdstones; and the extremes of physical cruelty in Squeers and Creakle.

The opening gun of this cannonade was fired in the preface to Nicholas Nickleby:

Of the monstrous neglect of education in England,
and the disregard of it by the State as a means of form-
ing good or bad citizens, and miserable or happy men,

¹
Walters, J. Cuming, Phases of Dickens, p. 189.

come in. He manages to squeeze in some favorable publicity while covering up the tears of a boy whose ears he has just boxed.

"My dear child, all people have their trials. This early trial of yours that is fit to make your little heart burst, and your very eyes come out of your head with crying, what is it? Nothing; less than nothing. 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 Gretna Bridge in Yorkshire where youth are boarded, clothed, booked, washed, furnished with pocket money and provided with all necessities.³

In the gentleman who has come to interview Squeers we get a striking revelation of the clientele of Dotheboys Hall. The two boys he has with him are his step sons. He is, therefore, looking for a school some distance off where there are no holidays and not too much writing home. The boys' mother has a little money and he is afraid that she may be injudicious enough to spend it on them. Squeers is able to satisfy all his requirements even that of being a moral man about which (ironically enough) the gentleman seems to be concerned.

The cruelty of Squeers is further displayed when after eating a sumptuous breakfast while the little boys look hungrily on he gives them milk well diluted with water and divides three orders of bread into five portions.

Nicholax Nickleby who has been engaged to teach under Squeers in Dotheboys Hall is shocked at the sights he sees when he arrives.

But the pupils--the young noblemen! How the last faint traces of hope, the remotest glimmering of any good to be derived from his efforts in this den, faded from the mind of Nicholas Nickleby as

³Dickens, Charles, op. cit., p. 40.

he looked in dismay around! Pale and haggard faces, lank and bony figures; children with the countenances of old men, deformities with irons upon their limbs, boys of stunted growth and others whose long meagre legs would hardly bear their stooping bodies, all crowded on the view together. There were the bleared eye, the hare lip, the crooked foot, and every ugliness or distortion that told of unnatural aversion conceived by parents for their offspring, or young lives, which, from the earliest dawn of infancy, had been one horrible endurance of cruelty and neglect. There were little faces which should have been handsome, darkened with the scowl of sullen, dogged suffering; there was childhood with the light of its eye quenched, its beauty gone, and its helplessness alone remaining; there were vicious faced boys brooding with leaden eyes like malefactors in a jail; and there were young creatures on whom the sins of their frail parents had descended, weeping even for the mercenary nurses they had known, and lonesome even in their loneliness. With every kindly sympathy blasted in its birth, with every young and healthy feeling flogged and starved down, with every revengeful passion that can fester in swollen hearts eating its evil way to their core in silence; what incipient Hell was breeding there.⁴

The pupils are given brimstone and treacle to spoil their appetites for breakfast and dinner. All are attired in ill-sorted garments with a foul appearance of dirt, disorder, and disease.

This appalling picture, touched and colored as it may be with the sentimentality of the Dickens manner, preserves enough of truth to bring us to a realization of the utter neglect and brutality to which children could still be subjected in a supposedly enlightened age.

Squeers even robs the pupils of the poor consolation of letters from

⁴Ibid., p. 107

their "benevolent" relatives by concocting some of his own in which the pupils are advised not to complain of their lot but to obey the kind Mr. Squeers in all things.

Nicholas noticed the abnormal quiet of the boys.

There was none of the noise and clamor of a schoolroom. The children sat crouching and shivering together and seemed to lack the spirit to move about.⁵

Squeers believes in the "practical mode" of teaching. The first boy in the class is cleaning the back parlor window. C-l-e-a-n, clean, verb active, to make bright, to scour. W-i-n, win, d-e-r, der, winder, a casement. When the boy knows this out of books he goes and does it. The second boy is weeding the garden to get a knowledge of "bottiney".

Nowhere else in the novels of Dickens do we find another individual entrusted with the care of children who possesses the sheer physical brutality and callousness of Squeers. His closest approach in type is presented by Mr. Creakle, the master of Salem House, the first school attended by David Copperfield.

David learns from the boys that Mr. Creakle is a Tartar, the sternest and severest of masters, who lays about him right and left every day of his life charging in among the boys like a trooper and slashing away unmercifully. And Dickens who never passes up an opportunity to hurl a gibe at the teaching profession shows how poorly qualified the majority of teachers were in describing Mr. Creakle's qualifications. "Mr. Creakle was more ignorant

⁵Ibid., p. 109.

than the lowest boy in the school. He had been a hop dealer and had taken to the schooling business after going bankrupt."⁶

Dickens points out what a great trust Creakle is abusing. He would have done much less harm in the positions of Lord High Admiral or Commander-in-chief.

"Miserable little propitiators of a remorseless Idol, how abject we were to him! What a launch in life I think it now, on looking back to be so mean and servile to a man of such parts and pretensions."⁷

The little boys sit in constant terror staring at the master's eye, wondering upon whom the next blow will fall. When a victim is brought up to the slaughter, Mr. Creakle cracks a joke before he beats him at which David says, "We laugh, miserable little dogs, we laugh with our visages white as ashes and our hearts sinking into our boots."

The only parallel to this physical cruelty to be found elsewhere in Dickens is that of the parish officials, notably Mr. Bumble, the beadle, towards Oliver Twist and that of Mr. Murdstone toward David Copperfield.

The day that Mr. Bumble comes to the branch workhouse to take Oliver to the main building, we find Oliver spending his ninth birthday in the coal cellar with a select party of two other young gentlemen, who, after participating with him in a sound thrashing had been locked up for atrociously presuming to be hungry.

⁶ Dickens, Charles, David Copperfield, p. 103.

⁷ Ibid., p. 107.

Over in the other workhouse Oliver commits the supreme crime of asking for more of the gruel. For this heinous offence he is shut up in a dark and solitary room for a week.

However, let it not be supposed by the enemies of "the system" that during the period of his solitary incarceration Oliver was denied the benefit of exercise, the pleasure of society, or the advantages of religious consolation. As for exercise it was nice cold weather, and he was allowed to perform his ablutions every morning under the pump, in a stone yard, in the presence of Mr. Bumble who prevented his catching cold, and caused a tingling sensation to pervade his frame by repeated applications of the cane. As for society, he was carried every other day into the hall where the boys dined and there sociably flogged as a public warning and example.

And so far from being denied the advantages of religious consolation he was kicked into the same apartment every evening at prayer time and there permitted to listen to, and console his mind with, a general supplication of the boys containing a special clause, therein inserted by authority of the board in which they entreated to be made good, virtuous, contented, and obedient, and to be guarded from the sins and vices of Oliver Twist; whom the supplication distinctly set forth to be under the protection of the powers of wickedness and an article direct from the manufactory of the Devil himself.⁸

Mr. Murdstone, David Copperfield's Nemesis, displays not only physical cruelty towards the boy but mental as well in his reliance upon "firmness". He informs David that he will treat him as if he were an obstinate dog or horse, i. e., beat him until he breaks him.

Because he has had to recite his lessons in the presence of the gloomy Murdstones, always ready to pounce at the slightest slip, David has become

⁸Dickens, Charles, Oliver Twist, p. 18.

steadily worse and worse. One day he goes in to recite and finds Mr. Murdstone preparing a cane for use upon him if he falters.

"This was a good freshener to my presence of mind, as a beginning. I felt the words of my lessons slipping off, not one by one, or line by line, but by the entire page."⁹

Mr. Murdstone formally escorts David upstairs and prepares to beat him. Goaded to desperation David turns wild beast, bites Mr. Murdstone's hand to the bone, and as a result is shipped off to Salem House.

The Murdstones are not the only advocates of the repressive and gloomy sternness displayed by many parents of great moral rectitude. Arthur Clennam, the hero of Little Dorrit, is the product of such a training. To Mr. Meagles he says:

"I have no will. Trained by main force; broken not bent; heavily ironed with an object on which I was never consulted; always grinding in a mill I always hated; what is to be expected from me in middle life, Will, purpose, hope, All those lights were extinguished before I could sound the words.

I am the son, Mr. Meagles, of a hard father and mother. I am the only child of parents who weighed, measured, and priced everything; for whom what could not be weighed, measured, and priced had no existence. Strict people as the phrase is, professors of a stern religion, their very religion was a gloomy sacrifice of tastes and sympathies that were never their own offered up as a part of a bargain for the security of their possessions. Austere faces, inexorable discipline, penance in this world and terror in the next-- nothing graceful or gentle anywhere and the void in my cowed heart everywhere. This was my childhood if I may so misuse the word as to apply it to such a beginning in life.¹⁰

⁹Dickens, Charles, David Copperfield, p. 68.

¹⁰Dickens, Charles, Little Dorrit, p. 25.

clock on the sideboard which he used to see

bending its figured brows upon him with a savage joy when he was behind-hand with his lessons and which when it was wound up used to sound as if it were growling in ferocious anticipation of the miseries into which it would bring him.¹⁴

His mother and father had been at variance from his earliest remembrance. The child would sit speechless himself in the midst of rigid silence, glancing in dread from one averted face to the other.

We learn later that Mrs. Clennam's righteous sense of justice towards one who she knows is not her son has been to some extent the cause of her attitude. She has been stern with him through a belief that the transgressions of the parents are visited upon their offspring. However, the training of her own childhood has impressed the gloomy sense of sin indelibly upon her mind:

"I was brought up strictly and straitly. Mine was no light youth of sinful gaiety and pleasure. Mine were days of wholesome repression, punishment, and fear. The corruption of our hearts, the evil of our ways, the curse that is upon us, the terrors that surround us--these were the themes of my childhood. They formed my character and filled me with an abhorrence of evil doers."¹⁵

Thus were produced one very large section of what Matthew Arnold has termed the "Philistines". Smug, hidebound, they never abated a jot from their lofty position as arbiters of manners and morals, and true Christian charity towards the less fortunate was a concept far beyond their grasp.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁵ Dickens, Charles, Great Expectations, Vol. II, p. 433.

Arthur Clennam's life has been practically ruined by these influences and were it not for the refreshing stimulus of Little Dorrit's love and his concern for her welfare he would have never recovered his independence of thought and will.

The "repressive firmness" school is further exemplified by Mrs. Joe Gargery of Great Expectations the champion of the "children must be seen and not heard" adage. She boasts of having brought her young brother Pip up "by hand",--a hard and heavy hand that was often laid upon him. When Pip evincing the natural curiosity of an observant boy begins to ask questions about the convicts and prison ships, she silences him with a withering retort:

"I didn't bring you up by hand to badger people's lives out. It would be blame to me and not praise if I had. People are put in the Hulks because they murder, because they rob, and forge and do all sorts of bad, and they always begin by asking questions."¹⁶

The constant badgering to which Pip has been subjected has made him sensitive. There is nothing so finely perceived and finely felt in the children's world as injustice. It may be only a small injustice but the child is small, its world is small, and its rocking horse stands as many hands high, according to scale as a big-boned Irish hunter.

Pip has sustained a perpetual conflict with injustice. He has known that his sister in her capricious and violent coercion is unjust to him. He has cherished a profound conviction that her bringing him up by ~~hand~~ gives her no right to bring him up by jerks. Through all his punishments, dis-

¹⁶Ibid., p. 15.

graces, fasts, and vigils he has nursed this assurance.

However, this physical violence and stern repressive firmness are not the only dangerous weapons in the hands of educators as Dickens points out in Dombey and Son. Here he exposes the evils of the "cramming system" at Dr. Blimber's school--a system which pandered to the pride of well-to-do parents who would never permit their children to be subjected to the extreme brutality of a Squeers.

The school to which little Paul Dombey is sent was

a great hothouse in which there was a forcing apparatus incessantly at work. All the boys blew before their time. Nature was of no consequence at all. No matter what a young gentleman was intended to bear Doctor Blimber made him hear to pattern somehow or other.¹⁷

This was all very pleasant and ingenious but the system of forcing was attended with its usual disadvantages. There was not the right taste about the premature productions and they didn't keep well. Moreover, one young gentleman, Toots, suddenly left off blowing one day and remained in the establishment a mere stalk.

The tone of this admirable establishment is grave. Not a sound echoes through the house except the ticking of a great clock and sometimes a dull crying of young gentlemen at their lessons like the murmuring of an assemblage of melancholy pigeons.

The character of the teachers is in keeping with the awful majesty of the establishment. Dr. Blimber is such an impressive personage that when

¹⁷ Dickens, Charles, Dombey and Son, p. 174.

grinding out his Virgil stop to four young gentlemen; two others grasping their foreheads convulsively in an effort to solve mathematical problems; one, with his face like a dirty window from much crying is endeavoring to flounder through a hopeless number of lines before dinner, and one sits looking at his task in stony stupefaction and despair which it seems has been his condition ever since breakfast time. The other young gentlemen deplore Paul's lack of a strong constitution and the fact that he is going to begin with Cornelia.

At dinner no boy is allowed to speak while Dr. Blimber discourses learnedly on the customs of the Romans. Woe unto him who has the temerity to be inattentive! For recreation the young gentlemen are permitted to loiter up and down a small piece of ground behind the house. But nothing happens so vulgar as play.

In their sleep, poor Briggs and Tozer two unhappy products of this system, have nightmares in which they talk scraps of Greek and Latin.

Little Paul, under the tutelage of Miss Blimber, staggers under a mass of information. When he learns the second lesson he finds that the first has slid away from him. The tragedy of it is that Dr. Blimber and his daughter, unlike Squeers and Creakle, mean well. Cornelia merely holds the faith in which she has been bred. The Doctor regards all the young gentlemen as if they were born grown up. Comforted by the applause of the young gentlemen's nearest relations, and urged on by their blind vanity and ill-considered haste, Dr. Blimber continues in his error.

When a boy is clever like Paul his parent is only more bent on his

being forced and crammed. When he is dull like Briggs his parent is just as inexorable in his demands. Dreary as the school is to them the boys hate to go home for vacations. Tozer has an uncle who constantly badgers him with questions; Briggs has a father who has driven him almost to the verge of suicide.

Thus the stubborn pride of parents who are concerned chiefly with the exaltation of their vanity in the persons of their children causes the death of one boy, Paul, and the reduction of another, Toots, to a state of innocuous vacuity.

The mechanistic type of education which denies the child any of the golden leaven of fancy but devotes itself to hard facts also comes in for Dickens's censure.

Mr. Gradgrind opens Hard Times with a pertinent discourse upon this topic addressed to the pupils of Mr. McChoakumchild's school.

Now what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts; nothing else will ever be of any service to them. This is the principle on which I bring up my own children.¹⁹

The schoolroom is a bare monotonous vault filled with an inclined plane of little vessels ready to have imperial gallons of facts poured into them until they are full to the brim. Mr. Gradgrind seems a kind of cannon loaded to the muzzle with facts and prepared to blow them clean out of the

¹⁹ Dickens, Charles, Hard Times, p. 1.

regions of childhood at one discharge---a galvanizing apparatus charged with a grim mechanical substitute for the tender young imaginations that were to be stormed away.

He calls on "girl number twenty"²⁰ to define a horse. It happens that the girl Sissy Jupe, whose father is a circus rider, knows more about horses than anyone present. However, because she cannot define one to his satisfaction he calls upon Bitzer who gives the following classic definition:

Quadruped. Gramnivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinder, 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 by marks in mouth.²¹

Another gentleman of the board asks Sissy why she would not carpet a room with a representation of flowers. Sissy insists that she would like to do so because she is fond of flowers. The gentleman tries to convince her that since she does not walk upon flowers in fact she should not walk upon them in carpet. In the course of the argument Sissy is unfortunate enough to use the word "fancy" which elicits the following:

You are to be in all things regulated and governed by fact. We hope to have, before long, a board of fact, composed of commissioners of fact who will force the people to be a people of fact and nothing but fact. You must discard the word the word Fancy altogether.²²

²⁰Ibid., p. 4.

²¹Ibid., p. 5.

²²Ibid., p. 8.

Mr. McChoakumchild is himself a mechanical product. He 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. He had been put through an immense variety of paces, and had answered volumes of heart-breaking questions. Orthography, etymology, syntax, and prosody, biography, astronomy, geography, and general cosmography and so on interminably--all were at the ends of his ten chilled fingers. Ah, rather overdone, McChoakumchild! If he had only learnt a little less how infinitely better he might have taught much more!

Dickens wonders if M'Choakumchild does fill each jar to the brim like Morgana in the Forty Thieves he will kill outright the robber Fancy lurking within or sometimes only maim him and distort him.

Mr. Gradgrind's children as well as his school are models of his ideas. From their tenderest years they have been made to run to the lecture-room where a monster in a lecturing castle took childhood captive and dragged it into gloomy statistical dens by the hair.

No little Gradgrind had ever seen a face in the moon; it was up in the moon before it could speak distinctly. No little Gradgrind had ever learnt the silly jingle "Twinkle, twinkle, little star". No little Gradgrind had ever known wonder on the subject, each little Gradgrind having at five years old dissected the Great Bear like a Professor Owen, and driven Charles's Wain like a locomotive engine-driver. No little Gradgrind had ever associated a cow in a field with that famous cow with the crumpled horn who tossed the dog who worried the cat, etc.; it had never heard of that celebrity and had only been introduced to a cow as a grammivorous ruminating quadruped with several stomachs.²³

²³Ibid., p. 10.

The two oldest Gradgrinds, Thomas and Louisa, who have been trained to mathematical exactness and exposed to the circle of the sciences are discovered by their father (horrible to relate) peeping in at a circus side show. Their father is as shocked as if he had discovered them reading poetry. He is afraid that their imagination which he has done his best to kill is not as dead as he thought. Perhaps they have, in spite of all precautions, read an idle story book.

When she had been half a dozen years younger Louisa had been overheard to begin a conversation with her brother one day by saying "Tom, I wonder" upon which Mr. Gradgrind stepped forth and said "Louisa, never wonder!"²⁴

Herein lay the spring of the mechanical art and mystery of educating the reason, without stooping to the cultivation of the sentiments and affections. Never wonder. By means of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, settle everything somehow, and never wonder.

The eighteen denominations in Coketown who disagree upon every other point all agree upon this--that the child should never wonder. Body number one said they must take everything on trust; body number two, on political economy; body number three wrote leaden little books for them, showing how the good grown-up baby invariably got to the Savings-bank and the bad grown-up baby invariably got transported. The good men like Mr. Gradgrind were very much concerned about what people read in the library of Coketown. Much to his chagrin they still persisted in wondering about human nature, human

²⁴
Ibid., p. 54.

passions, human hopes and fears, the struggles, triumphs and defeats.

Louisa Gradgrind realizes the lack of warmth and emotion in her education. She regrets that she cannot amuse her brother better to reconcile him more to his home. She cannot play nor sing nor talk to lighten his mind because she has never seen any amusing sights nor read any amusing books. Tom wishes savagely that he could collect all the facts and figures and the people who found them out and blow them up with a thousand barrels of gunpowder.

When Mr. Gradgrind tells Louisa of Mr. Bounderby's proposal of marriage he states it as a question of fact and is gratified by Louisa's reply whose tragic irony he does not perceive.

"You have been so careful of me that I never had a child's heart. You have trained me 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 child's fear."²⁵

Tom, one of the products of this excellent training, grows up to be a thief and a coward who permits an innocent man to come to his death under suspicion of his crime.

Bitzer, another of the old pupils, ferrets the truth and refuses to be impressed by Mr. Gradgrind's appeal for his sympathy and gratitude. "My schooling was paid for; it was a bargain; and when I came away, the bargain ended."²⁶

It was a fundamental principle of the Gradgrind philosophy that everything was to be paid for. Nobody was every on any account to give anybody

²⁵ Ibid., p. 113.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 318.

anything, or render anybody help without purchase. Gratitude was to be abolished and the virtues springing from it were not to be. Every inch of the existence of mankind, from birth to death was to be a bargain across a counter.

Louisa leaves her husband to elope with a plausible villain but repents in time to go to her father's house instead. There she humbles that righteous man's pride to the dust by reproaching him for the training she has received which has led her into this loveless marriage.

How could you give me life and take from me all the inappreciable things that raise it from the state of conscious death, Where are the graces of my soul, Where are the sentiments of my heart?

It has been my task from infancy to strive against every natural prompting that has arisen in my heart. You have doomed me to the frost and blight that have hardened and spoiled me. You have robbed me of the immaterial part of my life, the spring and summer of my belief, my refuge from what is sordid and bad in the real things around me.

If I had been stone blind; if I had groped my way by my sense of touch and had been free, while I knew the shapes and surfaces of things to exercise my fancy somewhat in regard to them; I should have been a million times wiser, happier, more loving, more contented, more innocent, and human in all respects.²⁷

Mr. Gradgrind realizes his responsibility for this debacle, realizes that he has sacrificed the wisdom of the heart for that of the head.

Sissy the girl whom they have tried in vain to fill with statistics furnishes the hopeful note on which the story ends.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 239.

But Sissy's happy children loving her; all children loving her; she has grown learned in childish lore; thinking no innocent and pretty fancy ever to be despised; trying hard to know her humbler fellow creatures and to beautify their lives of machinery and reality with those imaginative graces and delights without which the heart of infancy will wither up, the sturdiest physical manhood will be stark death.²⁸

The neglect of the development of the imagination in the Smallweeds in Bleak House produces several generations in which no children but complete little men and women bearing a likeness to old monkeys are born. They have accomplished this by discarding all amusements, discountenancing story books, fairy tales, fictions, and fables and banishing all levities whatsoever.

The works cited above are the locus classicus of our discussion but they are not by any means the only references made to education in the novels of Dickens.

Other types of inferior training are mentioned in different works. Uriah Heep acquired his "umbleness" as did his mother and father before him in a foundation school where "umbleness" was dinned into their ears from morning until night. Uriah and his father won medals for their mastery of the art.

Poor Biler, Polly Toodle's son in Dombey and Son suffers so many woes and tortures in his attendance at the Charitable Grinder's school that he begins to "wag" or play truant and only good fortune saves him from a life of crime.

Dickens expressed the prevailing tone of schools for the poor:

For they never taught honor at the Grinders'
School where the system that prevailed was particularly

²⁸Ibid., p. 329.

strong in the engendering of hypocrisy; insomuch that many of the friends and masters of past Grinders said if this were what came of education for the common people let us have none of it.²⁹

In Great Expectations, Mr. Wopsle's great aunt keeps an evening school in the village. She is a ridiculous old woman who goes to sleep every evening in the society of youth who pay twopence per week each for the improving opportunity of seeing her do it.³⁰

These schools for the poor are described in greater detail in Our Mutual Friend, Charley Haxam, whom education made only a hypocrite and a prig, attends the school at which Bradley Headstone, another of the schoolmaster villains of Dickens, teaches. The school is full of the ghastliest absurdities. Young women, old in vice, are expected to be enthralled by the good child's book, Adventures of Little Margery. Hulking mudlarks are referred to the experience of Thomas Twopence who having resolved not to rob his friend is rewarded and lives a shining light. The youngest children, who cannot object, always are handed over to the the prosiest and worst teachers. It is a perfect jumble of a school, where all sorts of spirits are jumbled together. School buildings, school-teachers, and school pupils are all according to pattern and all engendered in the light of the latest Gospel according to Monotony.

Bradley Headstone like Mr. M'Choakumchild has a mind that is arranged like goods in a warehouse so that it may be produced on demand. The habit

²⁹ Dickens, Charles, Dombey and Son, p. 379.

³⁰ Dickens, Charles, Great Expectations, p. 49.

of questioning and being questioned gives him a suspicious manner. There is a troubled look in his face--that belonging to a naturally slow intellect that has toiled to get what it has won.

Here and there among his ugly characterizations of the school teaching profession Dickens has dropped a few rays of light and hope in the persons of Dr. Strong in David Copperfield, Mr. Marton in The Old Curiosity Shop and Esther Summerson in Bleak House.

Mr. Marton is a fine picture of a sympathetic teacher. His school is not well equipped and his methods are old-fashioned but he has true sympathy with childhood. His appreciation of his favorite pupil's love; his asking Nell to pray for the boy; his giving the boys a half-holiday because he could not teach on the day of the boy's death are all instances of that sympathy. The bachelor who gives him his second school has similar virtues. He realizes that many of the things for which boys are often rebuked are the best evidences of their strength. He makes a pretence of not letting the boys know that they are good fellows but comments so favorably on their shortcomings that they cannot help being aware of his real opinion.

Dr. Strong is the idol of his school. He is not coercive nor restrictive; he is an inspiration to effort and to manliness of conduct. He is the kindest of men with a simple faith in him that might have touched the stone hearts of the very urns upon the wall. He trusts his boys in a frank, unconventional way and they prove themselves worthy of trust.

The boys are taught politeness, courtesy and consideration for the feelings of others. They have independent self activity and do not abuse the

privilege. Each feels that he has a part in the management of the place and in sustaining its character and dignity. In addition to all this Dr. Strong is well prepared for his profession. He is an original investigator and not an accumulator of knowledge.

When Esther Summerson leaves Miss Donny's school where she has taught for six years her departure causes great sorrow. All the little girls surround her with their parting presents and cling to her weeping "What shall we do when dear Esther's gone?"

But the instances of poor training are far more numerous. Dickens proves himself more skilled at hurling invective than in meting out praise.

Paul Dombey's early education with that of other unfortunate infants is presided over by Mrs. Pipchin, a lady who is a great manager "of children". The secret of her management is to give them everything they do not like and nothing that they do. As Miss Pankey is afraid to sleep alone in the dark Mrs. Pipchin always makes a great point of driving her upstairs herself like a sheep; and it is cheerful to hear little Miss Pankey moaning long afterwards. It is also part of her system not to encourage a child's mind to develop and expand itself like a young flower but to open it by force like an oyster.

The type of parental training that leads to moral disaster is instanced in Jonas Chuzzlewit and Steerforth. The education of Mr. Jonas had been conducted from his cradle on the strictest principle of the main chance. The very first word he learns to spell is gain; the second, money. He has been so long taught by his father to overreach everybody that he has ac-

quired a love of overreaching even his parent. Because his father stands in the way of his greed he makes an abortive attempt to remove him which succeeds indirectly.

Steerforth is ruined by the misdirected love of his mother. He is a boy of unusually good ability and great attractiveness but his mother substitutes indulgence for guidance and makes him vain by yielding to his caprices. She fails to distinguish between license and liberty. He is trained to consider himself as a member of a select class superior to humanity and taught to despise work. Yet his mother has devoted her life to his upbringing.

It would seem that in this vast gallery Dickens has presented every phase of the educative process. Nevertheless in omitting any discussion of the public school and university he has left a large gap in the understanding of the English educational system as presented in the novel. To fill these gaps it is necessary to turn to other novelists of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER IV
THE PUBLIC SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY
IN THE NOVEL FROM THOMAS HOLCROFT TO
SAMUEL BUTLER

The "Great Public Schools" are England's most distinctive contribution to the educational system. They supply their graduates with an inflexible code of ethics, and an unquestioned philosophy of life, and bear an almost incredible share in shaping the policies and destinies of the British church and government.

Although the student body of this group of schools is drawn from a limited financial and social class and constitutes but a small percentage of the population, it has supplied the nation in the last one hundred years with most of its cabinet ministers, governor-generals, and bank directors.

Rousseau, Henry Brooke, Thomas Day, and Richard Edgeworth had all stressed the value of private training. Their educational ideals were almost the antitheses of those advocated in the "public schools". They pleaded for individuality and freedom from restraint and artificiality. The "public schools" submerged the individual in the group and did their utmost to turn out products bearing their distinctive seals, alike as so many coins fresh from the mint.

Thomas Day had in his Sandford and Merton depicted Masters Mash and Compton as horrible examples of "public school" training. Both aped the manners of their elders and were complete "bucks" in miniature--rude, profane, and swaggering. Harry Sandford knocked a great deal of the ego out of Master Mash who fancied himself with his fists.

But of the "public school" represented in a favorable light we find no evidence until Thomas Hughes wrote Tom Brown's School Days in 1857.

J. J. Findlay says that with the exception of Pestalozzi's Leonard

and Gertrude, Tom Brown is the only work of fiction which has exercised a world wide influence on education.

It is the story of Rugby--the great middle-class "public School"--written with a tender sentimentality by one of the "Old Boys". Perhaps even more it is the story of the great Dr. Arnold who, though by no means so successful a teacher or so learned a scholar as some of his contemporaries in similar positions, made the most distinct impression as master of a "public school" of any man in his generation in England.¹

An important characteristic of the English "public school" is the community life of the boys. They live in groups in houses under the charge of masters, and though there are also day scholars, the stamp is given by those who for years live domiciled there under customs and rules of the school itself. The school forms a little kingdom and this it was which gave Dr. Arnold his opportunity.

He was an earnest whole-souled man who had an intense zeal for the promotion of righteousness. He was a born teacher and poured all his ardent love of teaching into his daily duties at Rugby. Above all, he understood the fundamental value of character.

The heart of his scheme was the substantial education of his boys on a Christian basis. He shrank from pressing on the conscience of boys rules of action which he felt they were not yet able to bear, and from enforcing actions which, though right in themselves, would in boys be performed from wrong motives.

¹ Hughes, Thomas, Tom Brown's School Days, Introduction, p. ix.

Hence his wish that as much as possible should be done by the boys and nothing for them. He treated the boys as gentlemen and reasonable beings, making them respect themselves by the mere respect he showed to them. He appealed and trusted to their own common sense and conscience.²

In his preface Thomas Hughes draws attention to the resultant character of Dr. Arnold's boys and defends them against the charge of priggishness and hypocrisy. According to many critics the Rugby undergraduates they remembered at the Universities were "a solemn array", "boys turned into men before their time", "a semi-political, semi-sacerdotal fraternity" giving the idea that Arnold turned out a set of young square-toes, who wore long-fingered black gloves and talked with a snuffle. Hughes says that their acquaintance must have been limited and exceptional--that Rugby boys lost nothing of the boy that is worth keeping but built up the man on it.³

In speaking of Tom Brown's year at a private school Thomas Hughes mentions what he believes are the main differences between public and private education.

The private school was a fair average specimen kept by a gentleman, with another gentleman as second master. They merely came into school when lessons were prepared and all ready to be heard. The whole discipline of the school out of lesson hours was in the hands of the two ushers, one of whom was always with the boys everywhere. The theory of private schools

²Ibid., p. xi.

³Ibid., pref., p. xxiv.

was constant supervision out of school; therein differing fundamentally from that of "public schools".

Hughes criticizes this system because it leaves the most important part of the training--the supervision--in the hands of inferior men. If he were the head master he would let who will hear the boys their lessons but would himself live with them at play and rest.

The two ushers were not gentlemen and were poorly educated. One of the methods they used to make their work easy was to encourage tale-bearing. Another was to favor the biggest boys who alone could have given them much trouble; whereby those young gentlemen became most abominable tyrants, oppressing the little boys in all the small mean ways which prevail in private schools.

Squire Brown sends Tom off to Rugby with these simple words of advice:

"If schools are what they were in my time, you'll see a great many cruel blackguard things done, and hear a deal of foul bad talk. But never fear. You tell the truth, and keep a brave and kind heart!"⁴

Tom Brown arrives at Rugby on the day of a big football match and is initiated early into the love of sport which is one of the outstanding characteristics of the school.

Of "fagging" that institution most peculiar to the English "public school" he experiences no more than his just share for a year or so until the departure of the Brooke brothers, the "cocks" of the school, who have exerted a manly influence for good.

⁴ Ibid., p. 67.

The school then falls upon evil days. Not only do the lower school boys have to "fag" i. e., perform all sorts of menial service for the sixth form boys, their lawful superiors (according to "public school" tradition) but because of the lack of leadership by the sixth form and the preponderance of brute strength in the fifth form they are bullied into serving them, also. Flashman, the bully and sneak, renders life particularly unpleasant for Tom and his friend, Harry East. At length, Tom decides that he will not fag for the fifth form boys, come what may. His revolt is successful, but during the course of it, we come upon some unpleasant pictures of brutality.

Thomas Hughes was censured for the mildness with which he deals with this bullying. An indignant critic points out that in describing the tossing of the small boys in a blanket he does not suggest that it should be stopped. Animal courage is not possessed by some who have great moral courage and a finely organized brain and nervous system. One night's tossing or bullying may ruin such children for life.⁵

The small boy in a "public school" has much to contend with; he is at the mercy of larger boys, is deprived of the protection which the weak have in physical society because he may not complain and has no protector but public opinion of the lowest grade--the opinion of rude and ignorant boys. This critic suggests the separation of boys of different ages into different schools.⁶

⁵Ibid., pref., pp. xxiv-xxvi.

⁶Ibid., pref., p. xxv.

Hughes defends his position by quoting another commentator who says it is strength rather than age that makes the difference. There are other ways to fight bullying--by getting the sixth to put it down, by encouraging the lower school to scorn it, and by eradicating mercilessly the incorrigible.⁷

However, there is one scene in addition to the blanket tossing that is brutal in the extreme. In order to force Tom to relinquish a winning lottery ticket, Flashman and his friends hold him up to roast at the fire until Tom faints from the pain. Yet Hughes seems to feel that Tom has displayed great virtue by not "peaching" on his persecutors.

Tom has several encounters with Dr. Arnold in which the great man always appears as the possessor of a sympathetic and understanding heart. Worried about Tom's tendency to mischief, Dr. Arnold gives him as a roommate a boy with a weak and delicate body but a fine moral character, George Arthur. Tom's chivalrous nature leads him to ~~champion~~ the delicate boy just as the Doctor had hoped. Tom never realizes the Doctor's share in this scheme until it is related to him by one of the masters, years later.

The master explains the other reforms which the Doctor has accomplished in a quiet, unobtrusive way--reforms that if attempted openly would have brought the wrath of the whole school, hidebound as it was in tradition, down on his head.

Through his friendship for Arthur, Tom has had many of his rough edges, including the cribbing of Latin and Greek exercises, smoothed down. He finishes his school career gloriously as captain of the eleven and Nestor

⁷ Ibid., p. xxvii.

of the school. The overwhelming grief displayed by Tom now at Oxford, at the news of Dr. Arnold's death, indicates something of the great love and admiration that he inspired in his boys.

All writers do not deal as kindly with the "public schools" or Dr. Arnold. His own son was far from accepting the smug creed by which the educator lived and a portion of his criticism of Philistinism and Hebraism may well have been inspired by the public school's dependence upon what he termed as "machinery".

The "public school", no doubt, did foster bullying and caused many a sensitive boy among whom Shelley is the most notable to revolt against brutal tyranny. Nevertheless, because so many English writers are themselves "public school" products we find little adverse criticism in literature. The schools were safe from the shafts of Dickens because neither he nor the social circle with which he was familiar were "public school".

The university has been the subject of more direct criticism. In an earlier discussion of the education of Thomas Day the decadence of the Oxford of the late eighteenth century was pictured. The novel Hugh Trevor makes this picture even more vivid.

Hugh Trevor goes up to Oxford with high expectations--Oxford, the seat of the muses, the nurse of wisdom, the mother of virtue!

But the first sight that greets his eyes is the spectacle of Hector Mowbray, the coarse son of the country squire riding up in a hunting outfit with dogs at his heels and emitting a stream of the most vulgar oaths--twenty to a minute. Hugh's heart sinks and he awakens from a delightful

dream to a disgusting reality. He finds that Hector's companions are almost his equals in turbulence, profaneness, and folly. They all curse, bluster and behave with insolence in proportion to the money they spend or the time they have been at the university.

One session of these choice spirits attended by Hugh is typical of the Oxford of the day, Lord Sad-dog and his tutor, with a junior fellow and a master of arts--all prime bucks are gathered together. Hugh listens to their conversation with ardor, his expectations of learning and virtue entirely forgotten. He finds that dogs, horses, gluttony, drunkenness, and debauchery are the grand blessings of life. The lord and the squire glory in braving and breaking the statutes of the university, the tutor, fellow, and master of arts, in eluding them.

The history they give of themselves is that the former can ride, drive, swear, kick scoundrels, commit adultery, and breed riots; the latter can cant, lie, act the hypocrite, hum the proctors, and protect their companions in debauchery.

Hector boasts of having been five times in one week reprimanded for having neglected lectures and prayers and having worn scarlet green and gold instead of his cap and gown. The more heroic Lord Sad-dog tells how he has been twice privately rusticated for a love affair with a barmaid.

Turl, one of the serious students, tells that the manners of the place are such as must be expected from a multitude of youths who are ashamed to be thought boys and who do not know how to behave like men.

There are no people appointed to teach them; the proctors, deans, and

other superintendents are concerned mainly with supervising the type of gown worn, reprimanding those who wear red and green and taking care that the gownsmen assemble at proper hours to hear prayers gabbled.

The exhibitions, fellowships, presentation and professor's chairs are bestowed on those who have municipal or political influence, or who by servility and **effrontery** can court patronage. Few men of worth and genius meet their due reward. Sloth, inanity, and bloated pride are here too often the characteristics of office. Fastidiousness is a virtue, and to keep the poor and unprotected in awe a duty. The rich are indulged in all the licentious liberties they can desire.

When Hugh inquires why so many young men of family come to Oxford, Turl replies that some come to get what is to be given away; others are sent by their parents who imagine the place to be the reverse of what it is; and a third set intended for the church are obliged to go to a university before they can be admitted into holy orders.

Turl would not advise a young person to come to Oxford unless he possesses extraordinary fortitude and virtue. Otherwise he should avoid it as a contagion. There are certain advantages--leisure, books, and learned men. The last benefit would be the greatest were it not publicly discountenanced by the arrogant distance which both the statutes of the university and the practice of graduates and dignities prescribe. The greatest advantage to the sensible man in an attendance at Oxford may be the exciting of contempt for the insolence, haughtiness, sloth, and sensuality.

Turl himself is an example of the intolerance displayed. He had ob-

tained an exhibition but having expressed his thoughts too freely has incurred the disapprobation of his seniors. Hugh is warned against him because he is an anti-trinitarian.

Hugh takes the oath of allegiance and supremacy and swears to observe the statutes of the university and to subscribe to the thirty-nine articles. However, he is "rusticated" for two terms because of attending Methodist lectures. He is fairly confident of obtaining his degree in spite of the setback because the learning which the general forms of taking a degree requires so little that a man of genius is inclined to treat it with contempt. Hugh has not reckoned on the rule which provides that any member of a convocation or an M. A. may without assigning any cause for his conduct object for two terms to a person who shall ask leave to obtain his degree. Hugh's influential enemies, an earl and bishop, invoke this rule to punish him, and Hugh departs from Oxford, minus a degree but enriched by some choice worldly experience.

Almost half a century after the advent of Hugh upon the Oxford scene, Arthur Pendennis goes up to the university with the same feeling of eager expectancy. As Thackeray phrases it:

The young man's life is just beginning, the boy's leading-strings are cut, and he has all the novel delights and dignities of freedom. He has no ideas of cares yet, or of bad health, or of roguery, or poverty, or tomorrow's disappointment.⁸

Pen's heart beats fast as he enters the wicket of the venerable ivy-mantled gate of the College. He is fitted out with cap and gown, and as-

⁸Thackeray, Willian, The History of Pendennis, p. 127.

signed to comfortable chambers. When he sits down in the hall with his brother freshmen and eats his commons he finds himself among a group of grave and decorous young gentlemen. The only jarring note is that produced by Pen's friend, Foker, and his associates, who sit giggling and talking as if they had been in so many stalls at the opera.

Arthur has been trained to be a selfish snob by a doting mother. As a result he leads an elegant, dilettante life at the university. During his first terms he attends classical and mathematical lectures with tolerable assiduity. But the fact that one or two very vulgar young men who did not even use straps to their trousers so as to cover the thick and coarse shoes and stockings which they wore, beat him in the lecture room is too much for his amour propre. He decides to devote himself to Greek and Roman literature.

His fond mother is very satisfied that her pride and joy should pursue the branch of learning for which he has the greatest inclination. She only beseeches him not to ruin his health by too much study for she has heard the most melancholy stories of young students, who, by over fatigue, have brought on brainfevers and perished untimely. Pen promises faithfully not to sit up reading too late of nights. Needless to say, he keeps his promise.

Just as the students in mathematics were too bright for him he finds those in the classical lectures too dull. Mr. Buck, the tutor, is no better a scholar than many a fifth form boy, Pen grows weary of the full students and tutor and decides to do private reading. Mamma is always quite content with any of Pen's arrangements.

What Pen does acquire at Oxford (or Oxbridge as Thackeray terms it) is a complete set of expensive tastes. When he comes home for his vacation he is the possessor of wonderful shooting-jackets and gorgeous velvet waistcoats.

The life that a young country gentleman with a good allowance might lead at Oxford is pictured. Boat racing had not risen to its present peak. Riding and tandem driving are the fashions of ingenious youth. Pen rides well to hounds, appears in pink and manages to run up a fine bill at the livery stable. He has almost every taste to a considerable degree. He is very fond of rare editions and has a keen relish for prints of a high school.

The tale of his youthful passion for Miss Fotheringay lends him an aura of romance that with the aid of his elaborate attire causes him to cut quite a swath. He has his school, his faithful band of friends, and his rivals. Whenever the young men hear that Pendennis of Boniface has just ordered a crimson satin cravat, immediately a couple of dozen similar ones spring into view.

Hence, Pen acquires a prodigious reputation in the university and though Jones of Jesus wins the English verse prize for which Pen was contending, the undergraduates all think Pen's a much finer poem and he has the verses printed at his own expense and circulated among his acquaintances.

He is one of the brilliant orators of his day. From having been an ardent Tory in his freshman year, his principles takes a sudden turn and he becomes a liberal of the most violent order. He avows himself a

Dantonist and asserts that Louis the Sixteenth was served right. He and Lord Magnus Charters are the most truculent republicans of their day:

In this way Pen acquires a reputation of a sort in the republic of gowmsmen independent of the collegiate hierarchy. A man may be famous in the Honor-lists and entirely unknown to the undergraduates who elect kings and chieftains of their own whom they admire and obey. Pen becomes famous and popular--not because he does much but there is a general determination that he could do a great deal if he should choose. He was backed for the Greek Ode won by Smith of Trinity; everybody was sure he would have the Latin hexameter prize which Brown of St. John's however, carried off. In this way one university honor after another is lost by him until after two or three failures Pen ceases to compete.⁹

Poor Foker, Pen's harum scarum friend, gets into one difficulty after another. He persists in attending races on the neighboring Hungerford Heath in spite of the injunctions of his academic superiors. He never can be prevailed upon to frequent the chapel of the college with that regularity of piety which Alma Mater demands from her children. He is a reckless driver and has many upsets in his tandem. His crowning exploit is the painting of Mr. Buck's door vermilion, in which freak he is caught by the proctors. He is expelled.

The extravagances of the fashionable, gaming set with which Pen is associated plunge him deeper and deeper into debt. The duns gather round in great numbers. Pen shuns all his former company and wanders around the campus, a forlorn figure in a battered cap and torn gown.

⁹Thackeray, William, op. cit., p. 141.

At last the degree examinations arrive. Many a young man whose hobnailed shoes Pen has derided--many a man whom he has treated with scorn in the lecture room or crushed with his eloquence in the debating club--many of his own set who have not half his brains but a little regularity and constancy of occupation take high places in the honors or pass with decent credit. Pen the superb, the wit, Pen the poet and orator is plucked, i. e., refused his degree.

He gets his mother to settle his debts, swallows his pride and goes back. A plucked man is a dismal being, belonging to no set of men and owned by no one. He goes regularly to morning chapel and shuts himself away in his room of nights, away from the noise and suppers of the undergraduates. This time he passes his examinations with ease.

A comparison of the two pictures of Oxford here given shows a marked improvement in conditions. In Hugh Trevor, Hector Mowbray and his set carry rudeness, brutality and licentiousness to extreme lengths; in Pen-dennis, Pen's greatest sin is extravagance, and Harry Foker is dismissed for a foolish but comparatively harmless prank--the type still played by college boys the world over. Hector and his companions are almost illiterate; Pen and his friends though not overly studious shine in debate and are interested in all types of political questions. Favoritism seems to have been eliminated. Hugh Trevor, a brilliant, serious student, fails to get a degree because he has powerful political enemies; Pen fails because he has not applied himself to study. Opinion seems to be more liberal. Hugh Trevor was rusticated for attending Methodist lectures; Pen and his friends

hold the most extreme republican views.

Pen's set, like the set with which Hugh Trevor was associated, was composed of well-to-do young gentlemen who attended the university because it was the thing to do and because it provided them with congenial companionship. In The Way of All Flesh, Ernest Pontifex attends Cambridge because he intends to be a clergyman--one should say rather that his father intends him to be one. There is a vast difference in his manner of living.

Ernest receives his allowance at the beginning of a term, incurs a few modest liabilities, and lives penuriously until next term when he immediately pays his debts and starts new ones. He joins a boat club and never takes more wine and beer than is good for him. He attends chapel as often as compelled, and communicates two or three times a year because his tutor tells him he ought to. In his third year he wins some reputation for an essay on the Greek drama published in the college magazine. In his last year he overworks himself but manages to be one of the first three or four senior optimes.

The life of the poor student at the university is vividly described. A group of students called Simeonites are reading for ordination. They live in a labyrinth of dingy tumble-down rooms and are dependent upon sizarships and scholarships for the means of taking their degrees. Of all ages ranging from mere lads to grey-haired old men, they are rarely seen except in hall, chapel, or lecture room where their manner of feeding, praying, and studying are alike considered objectionable. Even one-half of Ernest's most expenditures would seem to them an exceeding measure of influence.

Ordination opens fields of ambition to them and enables them to rise in caste. However, there is a certain uncouthness about them that never departs until they are dons and tutors and sometimes not even then.

However, most of the poor never even realize their ambition for a higher education. Thomas Hardy's Jude the Obscure relates the poignant story of a son of the poor, Jude Fawley's fruitless attempt to gain entrance to Oxford, thinly disguised as Christminster.

The tragedy of his hopeless yearning reveals the serious lack of higher educational opportunity for the poor in England.

CHAPTER V

THE REVOLT AGAINST VICTORIAN
PARENTAL TYRANNY AS EXPRESSED IN GEORGE
MEREDITH'S THE ORDEAL OF RICHARD FEVEREL
AND SAMUEL BUTLER'S THE WAY OF ALL FLESH

In her psychological study of Charlotte Bronte, Rosamond Langbridge has said:

Her long catalog of moral miseries was compiled from filial piety that stagnant blight on character and judgment which mildewed the Victorian era visiting alike both child and parent.¹

Two writers were to strike a blow for youth, for the preservation of its individuality in the face of an accumulated tyranny of centuries.

One, George Meredith, was in a tolerant, kindly manner always preserving the sense of the Comic Spirit, to expose the folly of a father's forcing a rigid system of education upon a son.

The other, Samuel Butler, striking a stout blow for liberty was to launch a vitriolic, devastating attack--an onslaught on cant and cowardice which exposed a whole generation and the ideals of an age.

Other writers had expressed their disgust at the selfishness and smugness of the Victorian parent.

Dickens describes Joe Willett in Barnaby Rudge as a broad-shouldered strapping young fellow of twenty whom it pleased his father, the inn-keeper, still to consider a little boy and to treat accordingly.

When Joe has attempted to reply to a stranger at the inn and is silenced by his father he rebelliously asks when he may speak.

The father replies:

The proper time for you to speak is no time, sir. When I was your age I never talked. I never wanted to talk. I listened and improved

¹Langbridge, Rosamond, Charlotte Bronte, A Psychological Study, p. 4.

myself, that's what I did. When your opinion's wanted you give it. When you're spoke to, you speak. When your opinion's not wanted and you're not spoke to, don't give an opinion and don't you speak.²

When, because of his father's attitude, Joe has been struck with a whip by a stranger, he reveals how much he has chafed under the treatment:

I can bear with you, but I cannot bear the contempt that your treating me in the way you do brings upon me from others every day. Look at other young men of my age. Have they no liberty, no will, no right to speak, Are they obliged to sit mumchance, and to be ordered about till they are the laughing stock of young and old, Before long I shall be driven to break such bounds and when I do, it won't be me that you'll have to blame but your own self, and no other.³

John Willett had the typical Victorian parental attitude although the events of the book take place in the eighteenth century.

The more young Joe submitted, the more absolute old John became. On he went trimming off an exuberance in this place--shearing away some liberty of speech or action in that and conducting himself in his small way with as much high mightiness and majesty as the most glorious tyrant that ever had his status reared in the public ways.⁴

All John Willett's cronies of the inn praise his stand and say that Mr. Willett is a father of the good old English sort and that when they

²Dickens, Charles, Barnaby Rudge, p.19

³Ibid., p. 34

⁴Ibid., p. 39

were his age their fathers thought no more of giving them a parental kick or a box on the ears, or a cuff on the head, or some little admonition of that sort, than they did of any other ordinary duty of life. Finally, Joe runs away from the unbearable tyranny of his home.

Another type of parental tyranny over a grown-up son is displayed by Mr. Chester (a prototype of Lord Chesterfield) in the same novel. Edward Chester has been bred by his father in idleness and luxury so that he may make a rich marriage and recoup the family fortunes. The very uselessness of Edward's training, as his father has foreseen, makes him utterly dependent upon his father. It is only with a violent effort of will that he can break away.

Eugene Wrayburn's father in Our Mutual Friend extended his parental care and forethought for his children not only by choosing their professions without the slightest possible regard for their natural aptitudes for the work to which they were assigned, but by considerately selecting wives for his sons without regard for their individual tastes.

In The Ordeal of Richard Feverel George Meredith has a problem to propose: Given a child, what is his best upbringing? Shall we devise some cunning system and imprison him knowingly or unknowingly within four walls of precept or aphorism, formula and theorem, or shall we yield to haphazard methods and fling him headlong into the maelstrom of Public School to sink or swim as best he can? Shall science rule or chance?⁵

⁵Crees, J. H. E., George Meredith, p. 38.

The system inaugurated by Sir Austin Feveral, a father who desired to play Providence to his son, Richard, provides that the boy must be segregated from everyone and everything unfit. The very servants must be modest in their love passage. Every moment is sedulously devoted to his perfecting, and no impure influence is permitted near him nor aught that might excite or stimulate unlawful impulses.⁶ Richard goes to neither school nor college because Sir Austin feels that schools are corrupt.

A dose of the world is furnished on his fourteenth birthday through companionship with Ripton Thompson, a boy of his own age. Richard and Rip embroil themselves in a rather serious misdemeanor, in the burning of Farmer Blaize's rick. This incident frightens Sir Austin who feels that a gulf has opened between him and his child.

This child, for whom he had prayed nightly in such a fervor and humbleness to God, the dangers were about him, the temptations thick on him, and the devil on board piloting. If a day had done so much what would years do, Were prayers and all the watchfulness he had expended to no avail?

A sensation of melancholy overcame the poor gentleman--a thought that he was fighting with a fate in this beloved boy.⁷

But Richard is safely rescued from this scrape and for a time he and his father grow closer to each other. Sir Austin feels that to those who bring up youth according to a system this period is the malleable moment. To those who objected to his system he answered that he was only trying to make his son a Christian.

⁶Ibid., p. 39.

⁷Meredith, George, The Ordeal of Richard Feverel, p. 35.

Richard goes through various phases. The bread-and-water phase lasted a fortnight; the vegetarian (an imitation of his cousin Austin) little better than a month; the religious somewhat longer; the religious propagandist (when he was for converting the heathen of Lobourne and Bursley, and the domestics of the Abbey including Tom Bakewell) longer still.⁸

Adolescence comes on and the system seems to be flourishing. Richard is tall, strong, bloomingly healthy and takes the lead of his companions on land and water. But there are signs of change. Richard grows abstract and downcast and clings to solitude. Sir Austin subjects the youth to an examination every night, ostensibly to give an account of his studies but really to recapitulate his moral experience of the day. Yet Sir Austin despite his rigid watch and ward knows less of his son than the servants of his household. Richard is writing poetry.

A friendly Oxford professor of poetry is called in to tell Richard that his poetry is poor. A London phrenologist crushes Richard's soul by feeling his head and declaring him the animal that he is. His father asks him to destroy his works. For a youth in his Blossoming Season who fancies himself a poet, to be requested to destroy his first-born without a reason is a piece of abhorrent despotism and Richard's blossoms wither under it. Thus ends all confidence between father and son.⁹

Richard's marriage is all planned in advance. He is now eighteen. He

⁸ Ibid., p. 93.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 101-102.

is to marry when he is five and twenty. Meantime a young lady, some years his junior, is to be sought for in the homes of England, who would be every way fitted by education, instincts, and blood to espouse so perfect a youth. The baronet proposes to leave his son for the first time in his life in order to search for this paragon.

Sir Austin has closed a safety valve when he stopped the writing of poetry. The nonsense that is in the youth might thus have poured harmlessly out. As it is Richard is torn by strange fits of passion proper to the Magnetic Age. Just at this dangerous moment Richard encounters Lucy Desborough and Sir Austin's well laid plans begin to go astray.

Meanwhile Sir Austin is in London, on his quest for the perfect wife for his paragon. Sir Austin speaks complacently of the success of his plans with Richard:

I find there are fathers who are content to be simply obeyed. Now I require not only that my son should obey; I would have him guiltless of the impulse to gainsay my wishes--feeling me in him stronger than his undeveloped nature up to a certain period, where my responsibility ends and his commences.¹⁰

This tyranny of soul that Sir Austin proposes is worse than any tyranny of body.

Benson spies upon Richard's meetings and writes to Sir Austin. After requesting his son to come to London the father warns him against women as the root of all evil. Appealing to the great love and tenderness he has

¹⁰Ibid., p. 142.

he has displayed toward him, Sir Austin is winning Richard over when, unhappily for his argument, he sketches the Foolish Young Fellow who falls in love when he is raw and green.

Lucy is sent away, Richard becomes ill, but Sir Austin is satisfied that when he recovers he will no longer love her. Sir Austin seems to be right, much to the astonishment of Lady Blandish, Sir Austin's brilliant friend. Richard is composed, courteous, and filled with a strange indifference. Certain that the embers of Richard's passion are dead, Sir Austin decides to introduce his son to the world. He believes that his indifference can be removed through occupation.

Fate wrecks all his plans, throwing Lucy in Richard's path, and they are married. Sir Austin does not blame this failure on his System but blames the world which is too evil to receive it.

Meredith criticizes Sir Austin's theory:

If instead of saying, "Base no system on a human being", he had said, "Never experimentalize with one", he would have been nearer the truth. He had experimented on humanity in the person of son he loved as his life and at once, when the **experiment** appeared to have failed, all humanity's failings fell on the shoulder of his son.¹¹

He decides to bide his time. Playing upon Richard's love for him he assumes the injured father attitude and fosters a separation of wife and husband while he keeps Richard dangling in London. Thwarted nature takes its revenge when Richard succumbs to the wiles of the siren, Mrs. Mount.

¹¹Ibid., p. 344.

Sir Austin comes to town almost ready to forgive his son. His deep love for him has well-nigh shaken loose from wounded pride and more tenacious vanity. But the world must not suppose him soft; the world must think he is still acting on his System.

When Richard who has not seen Lucy since the debacle presents himself to his father he appears cold and reserved. Again the baronet does not blame this on himself. He convinces himself that his marriage has debased him.

He pursues his reflections:

I see in him the desperate maturity of a suddenly-ripened nature and but for my faith that good work is never lost what should I think of the toil of my years? Lost perhaps to me! lost to him! It may show itself in his children.¹²

He feels bitterly the injury to himself.

When in a chance encounter Richard maneuvers to prevent Lucy from recognizing him and Sir Austin sees his agony, he still remains obdurate:

"All will be right with him tomorrow", he replied; for the game had been in his hands so long, so long had he been the God of the machine, that having once resolved to speak plainly and to act he was to a certain extent secure, bad as the thing to mend might be.¹³

Adrian gives him a clue to the difficulty in that he has allowed Richard too much liberty during probation.

Sir Austin's is an order of mind that will accept the most burdensome charges, and by some species of moral misery make a profit out of them.¹⁴

¹²Ibid., p. 467.

¹³Ibid., p. 485.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 486.

The knowledge of the birth of his child causes Richard to return but unfortunately he becomes involved in a duel. He is wounded.

Lucy succumbs to a brain fever resulting from the anguish she has experienced during Richard's illness. Sir Austin has refused to permit her to see him because the strain might be too great.

Lady Blandish expresses her indignation at the callousness displayed:

Oh how sick I am of theories and Systems and the pretensions of men. There was his son lying all but dead and the man was still unconvinced of the folly he had been guilty of.....

He even thought her (Lucy) to blame for not commanding herself for the sake of her maternal duties.

His mad self deceit would not leave him. He saved his son's body but gave the death blow to his heart. Richard will never be what he has promised.¹⁵

Elmer Bailey in his study The Novels of George Meredith compares Sir Austin's failure with Richard to Austin Caxton's success with his son, Pisastratus, in Bulwer Lytton's The Caxtons.

Pisastratus was sent to school that by mingling with his fellows he might become a man. Richard was kept at home that he might escape corruption. He was under constant surveillance. It was a fundamental theory with Sir Austin "that young lads might by parental vigilance be kept secure from the Serpent".

Both parents hoped to retain the confidence of their sons by inviting it and by assisting though not dictating in the choice between good and evil. In carrying out this plan, Austin Caxton never for a moment forget that he was dealing

¹⁵Ibid., p. 554.

with a human being and through this sanity of attitude was able to keep his child as a companion. Sir Austin wished to be Providence to his son and failed at the crucial moment.

Sir Austin deserves our sympathy. His love for Richard was deep and strong. He did nothing but what he thought was best. Unhappily he was born without laughter. The system must prevail though the boy be sacrificed. His nature was cold and hard.

Austin Caxton was moved by sympathy and pity in his dealings with the world. Sir Austin Feverel stood aloof and regarded the world with contempt and scorn.¹⁶

Richard and his wife Lucy are sacrificed to his theories.

George Meredith was not violent but gently ironic in his criticisms.

Samuel Butler in The Way of All Flesh perfectly expressed the challenging and iconoclastic temper of the nineties and summed up the reaction against the Victorian Age.¹⁷

He pictures the pontifical attitude of Victorian parents. The father Theobald's strongest characteristic is a feeling of infallibility engendering a subtle and righteous cruelty. Christina, the mother, is full of sudden exaltations and dreams and is in a constantly recurring state of self laudatory hallucination. The native iniquity of the child Ernest is to be trained until it evolves the virtues convenient to parents. Ernest's boyhood, schooling, and ordination proceed under this superimposed morality which like the system in The Ordeal of Richard Feverel bears the strain un-

¹⁶ Bailey, Elmer, op. cit., p. 53.

¹⁷ Lovett, Robert Morss and Hughes, Helen Sard, The History of the Novel in England, p. 375.

till adolescence bursts disastrously through it to get at the fresh air of reality.¹⁸

Butler presents his thesis in a comment on the attitude of George Pontifex, grandfather of Ernest:

It must be remembered that at the beginning of the nineteenth century the relations between parents and children were still far from satisfactory. The fathers and sons are for the most part friends in Shakespeare nor does the evil appear to have reached its full abomination till a long course of Puritanism had familiarized men's minds with Jewish ideals as those which we should endeavor to reproduce in our everyday life.

Mr. Pontifex may have been a little sterner with his children than some of his neighbors, but not much. He thrashed his boys two or three times a week and some weeks a good deal oftener, but in those days fathers were always thrashing their boys. If his children did anything which Mr. Pontifex disliked they were clearly disobedient to their father. In this case there was only one course to take. It consisted in checking the first signs of self-will while his children were too young to offer serious resistance. If their wills were "well broken" in childhood they would not venture to break through till they were over twenty-one years.¹⁹

George Pontifex harps constantly upon the ingratitude of his children. He feels that he is too lenient with them; he pities himself for the expensive education which he is giving them. He does not see that

the education costs the children far more than it costs him; inasmuch as it costs them the

¹⁸Young, W. T. "George Meredith, Samuel Butler, and George Gissing" in The Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol. XIII, p. 454.

¹⁹Butler, Samuel, The Way of All Flesh, pp. 26-27.

power of earning, their being at the mercy of their father for years after they have come to an age when they should be independent. A public school education cuts off a boy's retreat; he can no longer become a laborer or a mechanic.²⁰

He has the boys in every now and then "shaking his will at them" and threatening to cut them off without a penny. Butler ironically advises parents who want to lead a quiet life to make their children think that they are naughty, and impress them with a sense of inferiority. This is called moral influence and will enable one to bounce them as much as one pleases.²¹

All the dice are loaded against the children, the parents hold all the trump cards. George Pontifex decides that one son must be a clergyman. Theobald is selected and made the victim. George gives the neighbors to understand that his sons have been given a freedom of choice of their profession. Yet when Theobald realizing his lack of aptitude for the position of clergyman writes from Cambridge requesting that he may be permitted to give it up, his father writes a letter, a furious reply threatening to cut him off without a penny. Theobald has not only a vocation but a wife thrust upon him as well.

Thus Theobald becomes a clergyman and forevermore his children are to feel the brunt of his distaste for his calling.

Theobald never liked children. If Christina could have given birth to a few full grown clergymen in priest's orders there might have been more sense in it.²²

²⁰ Ibid., p. 29.

²¹ Ibid., p. 32.

²² Ibid., p. 105.

There is a conviction in Theobald's mind that the first signs of self-will in children must be carefully looked for and plucked up by the roots at once before they have time to grow.

Ernest has hard tasks imposed upon him before he is four years old. If his attention flags or his memory fails him he is whipped, or shut up in a dark closet. The boy never regards his father with anything but fear and shrinking. Butler satirically observes that it takes Christina a long time before she can destroy all affection for herself in the child's mind. But she perseveres.

They feel it is painful to whip their child. All is done in love, anxiety, stupidity, and impatience. They are stupid in little things, but he that is stupid in little will be stupid also in much.

The children are not permitted to cut things nor use their paint box on a Sunday. The evening is spent in singing hymns. One memorable Sunday evening Theobald beats Ernest for not saying "come" instead of "tum". He believes that the child is obstinate and self-willed.

Christina writes a letter before her confinement in which she expresses the hope that her husband will find his sons obedient, affectionate, attentive to his wishes, self-denying and diligent. She shows maternal solicitude lest the offspring should come to have wishes and feelings of their own.

At twelve Ernest knows his Latin and Greek grammars by heart, and he is sent to school under the famous Dr. Skinner of Roughborough. Theobald and Christina discuss their child after they have left him at school. Theo-

bald calls him idle, ungrateful, and selfish. He feels that it is an unnatural thing for a boy not to be fond of his own father.

At school Ernest displays a certain amount of cowardice, and because of the greater liberty he is allowed goes around with a debatable class between the sub-reputable and the upper reputable.

His wealthy Aunt Alethea becomes very fond of the boy and takes a house in Roughborough to be near him. They share a passionate enthusiasm for music. Alethea realizes that the boy has certain weak spots in his character. Consequently, just before her death from a sudden illness she calls in Mr. Overton, Ernest's godfather, (who is relating the story) and makes a strange will. Ernest is not to know that he has inherited any money until he receives it at the age of twenty-eight.

Theobald blames Ernest for his omission from his aunt's will and when he comes home from school examines his school bill closely. Already in disgrace, Ernest incurs the wrath of his father by lying about the presenting of his watch to a servant girl, Ellen, who has been dismissed. When Theobald is going to deduct the price of the watch from Ernest's allowance, he finds that he has also committed the sin of getting into debt.

Theobald and Christina proceed to put Ernest through a form of third degree. So badgered is he that he reveals not only his own peccadilloes but those of his schoolfellows.

Butler points out that on the preceding Sunday Theobald had preached a sermon upon the horrors of the Inquisition.

No matter how awful was the depravity revealed to them, the pair never flinched, but

probed and probed, till they were on the point of reaching subjects more delicate than they had yet touched on. Here Ernest's unconscious self took the matter up and made a resistance to which his conscious self was unequal, by tumbling him off his chair in a fit of fainting.²³

Theobald turns over all the information thus acquired to Dr. Skinner. Ernest is ever after heartily ashamed of his cowardice, but when one considers the tremendous pressure to which he was subjected one can forgive him much.

Ernest's life at Cambridge is not remarkable. Becoming a clergyman without much knowledge or inclination on his part, he is ordained to a curacy in London. He associates with the wrong sort of company, and the crowning debacle occurs when he is thrown into prison for insulting a girl.

Butler voices his opinion in the thoughts of Mr. Overton on the subject

I remembered the long and savage cruelty with which he had been treated in childhood--cruelty none the less real for having been due to ignorance and stupidity rather than to deliberate malice; of the atmosphere of lying and self-laudatory hallucination in which he had been brought up; of the readiness the boy had shown to love anything that would be good enough to let him, and of how affection for his parents, unless I am much mistaken, had only died in him because it had been killed anew each time that it had tried to spring.²⁴

After the first shock of his imprisonment is over Ernest is relieved because he need no longer be a clergyman and because he can refuse to see his father and mother. One of his friends has absconded with Ernest's

²³ Ibid., p. 221.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 328.

money, and he knows nothing of his legacy. He decides to become a tailor when he leaves prison.

Meanwhile, Theobald and Christina have been making other plans. They resolve not to leave him out of their sight. However, Ernest forestalls them by refusing to go with them when he comes out of prison.

He makes an unfortunate marriage with Ellen, their former servant. She is a heavy drinker, and all efforts to reform her fail. He finds that their marriage is not legal because she has a husband living.

Just at this time Ernest comes into his inheritance. He decides that he will not make the same mistake with his children as his father has done. He places them with a family who live near the sea and pays for their upbringing.

Ernest receives a letter from his father informing him of his mother's serious illness. Theobald thinks that Ernest is in dire circumstances. He is disappointed when he sees a well-dressed Ernest arriving full of health and vigor. He had hoped for a typical prodigal son return.

The book concludes with the death of Theobald. Ernest is surprised at the expressions of condolence and respect for his father's memory.

Butler analyzes the points of difference between Ernest and his father. Theobald disliked Ernest, not because he had been imprisoned. He forgot all about that much sooner than nine fathers out of ten would have done.

Partly, no doubt, it was due to incompatibility of temperament but I believe the main ground of complaint lay in the fact that he had

been so independent and so rich while still very young, and that thus the old gentleman had been robbed of his power to tease and scratch in the way which he felt he was entitled to do.²⁵

Samuel Butler's challenge to the smug complacency of Victorian filial authority ushered in a new era of revolt against established traditions. The next century was to see this revolt assume new forms of questioning.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 483.

EPILOGUE

By his example Samuel Butler set in motion a school of fiction with a new educational motive and a new criticism of life.¹

In the twentieth century we find a recurrence of the educational theme in the school and college stories of Hugh Walpole and Compton Mackenzie as well as in more critical portrayals such as Alec Waugh's The Loom of Youth, H. G. Well's Joan and Peter, and E. M. Forster's The Longest Journey. Robert Morss Lovett notes of modern literature that in England alone has the fiction of school and college life achieved distinction.²

Hugh Walpole's Jeremy and Hamlet and Jeremy at Crale continue the Tom Brown public school motif. Jeremy and Hamlet initiates Jeremy Cole's adventures at school, his befriending of a sneaking new boy who promptly snubs Jeremy when he makes good at cricket, and Jeremy's own success at football.

Jeremy at Crale finds Jeremy, now fifteen, trying to make the first football team. The school is divided into two cliques. It is the "swell" thing to admire and follow Staire, the son of a baronet, and the rebellious and defiant thing to believe in Stocky Cole.³

We find the fagging system still in full swing as it was in the days of Tom Brown. Some one must bring the lordly sixth form senior hot water every morning.

Jeremy, like Tom Brown, is reminded of his duty to the school and to the smaller boys. Later the younger children are to be separated from the

¹Lovett, Robert Morss, and Hughes, Helen Sard, op. cit., p. 375.

²Ibid., p. 326.

³Walpole, Hugh, Jeremy at Crale, p. 79.

older, but in Jeremy's time this is not yet true. Jeremy befriends Charles Morgan, one of the new boys.

Bullying still persists. Walpole says:

The great merit in our public school system is it stiffens your back for anything. The students are made free for ever of life--of its brutalities, selfishness and unconsidering cruelties.⁴

Little Charles Morgan is too imaginative, and his days are filled with two forces, Fear and Bewilderment. But Jeremy's friendliness wins his admiration. Morgan is bullied and tortured by Staire and his set for being on Cole's side. They finally threaten to roast him as Tom Brown had been roasted at Rugby. He runs away. When Morgan is found he refuses to give anyone away. Jeremy is publicly blamed for the bullying by Parlow, one of the masters. Jeremy challenges Staire to fight. He wins by pluck and rage, and regains his popularity.

Again as in Tom Brown there is the emphasis on sports. Jeremy plays on the First Fifteen and helps to beat the rival school.

Michael Fane in Sinister Street by Compton Mackenzie continues the Oxford and Cambridge line of heroes that began with Hugh Trevor.

Life at Oxford is described in almost minute detail. The ecstasy at the promise of intellectual romance and adventure that Michael feels reminds one of the raptures of Hugh Trevor.

One sees the preponderance of the great public school, Eton, Harrow, Winchester, and Charterhouse, among the freshmen. The graduates of the

⁴Ibid., p. 99.

various schools begin to thaw out and condescend to find some good in their fellow students from rival public schools.

Every minute of Michael's time for his first term seems to be catalogued here--his introduction to the Senior tutor, the decision as to the course he shall adopt, his visits to the shops, his strolls among the spires and towers, the pranks of the undergraduates, and the attempt to initiate a new periodical containing discussions of the various "isms" that have existed from time immemorial.

In no other novel of this study have we found Oxford life so faithfully recorded. But it is the Oxford that Michael dreams of. He is not disappointed as were Hugh Trevor and Pendennis.

H. G. Well's Joan and Peter makes education a concrete motive through the lives of two young people. Joan and Peter are cousins but Joan, the illegitimate daughter of the brother of Peter's mother, has been adopted by her. Orphaned by the sudden death of Peter's parents, the children are left in the care of four guardians. For a time the children go to a school selected by the aunts where all the educational fads of the day flourish. Rousseau's ideals have again come to the fore. Physical well being and physical happiness are the watchwords but mental training is of a lower quality. Miss Mills teaches reading by a method, the essence of which is one never learns one's letters. Regular teaching is unimportant. The school is constantly putting on shows.

Lady Charlotte, another of the guardians, interferes and puts Peter in a sound public school of the regular sort. Peter's vigorous unfettered

mind is soon in conflict with the foggy pretence at learning and the deadening discipline and routine. He runs away from school.

Oswald Sydenham the fourth guardian, now found to be the only legal one, rescues the children from this situation. He is a brilliant scientist and explorer and determines to find schools for the two where their intelligence will be respected and trained. He has a discouraging search. All the schools are still addicted to the Classics, and Oswald wants his wards to know the events of the world. He finally hits upon Caxton because it is lopsidedly modern with big business-like chemical and physical laboratories. On the other hand, Caxton teaches no history of any sort, ignores logic and philosophy, and excludes even that amount of Latin which is needed for a complete mastery of English. Games are relegated to a secondary place.

Oswald, visiting Oxford and Cambridge, feels that they are failing in their duties as leaders. The only worthwhile place in his estimation is Ruskin College for working men. But the rest of the university despises these students and graduation in any of the Oxford Schools is impossible to them.

Most of the real educating among young people Oswald finds is being done incidentally through conversations and the newer books. Oswald feels that "the generations are running to waste like rapids".

The World War provides the necessary shock. Peter who has been frittering away his promise of brilliance at Cambridge comes out of the war with a shattered leg. He and Joan, now his wife, build a new life together—Peter doing research and Joan planning better homes for the common people.

H. G. Wells appears to hope that science will solve the problems of humanity.

What the educational trends in the novels of the future may be is difficult to determine in an age when dictators in a majority of countries are fostering mass education of youth along predetermined lines in an effort to maintain their power.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

- Arnold, Mathew, Culture and Anarchy, The Macmillan Company, 1883.
- Austen, Jane, "Emma" in The Works of Jane Austen, The Modern Library, New York, 1933.
- "Mansfield Park" in The Works of Jane Austen, The Modern Library, New York, 1933.
- "Northanger Abbey" in The Works of Jane Austen, The Modern Library, New York, 1933.
- "Persuasion" in The Works of Jane Austen, The Modern Library, New York, 1933.
- "Pride and Prejudice" in The Works of Jane Austen, The Modern Library, New York, 1933.
- "Sense and Sensibility" in The Works of Jane Austen, The Modern Library, New York, 1933.
- Bage, Robert, "Hermsprong" in The British Novelists, Volume 48, London, 1820.
- Bronte, Charlotte, Jane Eyre, Downey, London, 1898.
- The Professor, Downey, London, 1898.
- Brooke, Henry, The Fool of Quality, George Routledge and Sons, London, 1906.
- Butler, Samuel, The Way of All Flesh, Grosset and Dunlap, New York, 1903.
- Day, Thomas, Sandford and Merton, London, 1786-89.
- Dickens, Charles, "Barnaby Rudge" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volumes 12-13.
- "Bleak House" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volumes 16-17.
- "David Copperfield" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, n. d., Volumes 14-15.
- "Dombey and Son" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volumes 8-9.
- "Great Expectation" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volume 22.
- "Hard Times" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volume 25.
- "Little Dorrit" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volumes 19-20.
- "Martin Chuzzlewit" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volumes 6-7.
- "Nicholas Nickleby" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volumes 4-5.
- "Oliver Twist" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volume 3.
- "The Old Curiosity Shop" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volumes 10-11.
- "Our Mutual Friend" in The Works of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Edition, London, n. d., Volumes 23-24.
- Edgeworth, Maria, Harry and Lucy, R. Hunter, London, 1825.
- Edgeworth, Richard Lovell and Edgeworth, Maria, Essays on Practical Education, Hunter, London, 1815.

- Edgeworth, Richard Lovell, Memoirs, R. Hunter, London, 1821.
- Eliot, George, "Adam Bede" in Novels of George Eliot, New York, 1876-1877, Volume 1.
- "Middlemarch" in Novels of George Eliot, New York, 1876-77, Volumes 6-7.
- "The Mill on the Floss in Novels of George Eliot, New York, 1876-1877, Volume 2.
- Godwin, William, Caleb Williams, London, 1794.
- Hardy, Thomas, "Jude the Obscure" in The Works of Thomas Hardy, Wessex Edition, Macmillan and Company, London, 1912-1913.
- Holcroft, Thomas, The Adventures of Hugh Trevor, Robinson, London, 1801.
- Hughes, Thomas, Tom Brown's School Days, Houghton Mifflin, The Riverside Press, Boston, New York, 1895.
- Inchbald, Maria, "Nature and Art" in The British Novelists", London, 1810, Volume XXVII.
- Inchbald, Elizabeth, "A Simple Story" in The British Novelists, F. C. and J. Rivington, 1820, Volume 28.
- Mackenzie, Edward, Montague Compton, Sinister Street, Appleton and Company, New York, 1925.
- Meredith, George, Diana of the Crossways, The Modern Library, New York, 1931.
- "The Egoist" in The Works of George Meredith", Westminster, 1897-1906.
- "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel" in The Works of George Meredith, Westminster, 1897-1906.
- More, Hannah, Coelebs in Search of a Wife, T. Caddell and W. Davies, London, 1808.
- Newman, John, (Cardinal), The Idea of a University, Longmans Green and Company, 1902.
- Rousseau, Jean Jacques, Emile, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1893.
- Thackeray, William Makepeace, The History of Pendennis (edited by George Saintsbury), London, n. d., Volume 12.
- Walpole, Hugh, Jeremy at Crale, Grosset and Dunlap, Chicago, 1927.
- Wells, H. G., Joan and Peter, Macmillan Company, New York, 1925.
- Wollstonecraft, Mary, Vindication of the Rights of Women, London, 1892, The Scott Library, Volume 70.

Secondary Sources

- Baker, Ernest, History of the English Novel, Volume V, (Edgeworth, Austen, Scott), H. F. and G. Witherby, London, 1934.
- History of the English Novel, Volume VI, (The Novel of Sentiment and The Gothic Romance), H. F. and G. Witherby, London, 1935.
- History of the English Novel, Volume VII, (The Age of Dickens and Thackeray), H. F. and G. Witherby, London, 1936.
- Beach, Joseph Warren, The Comic Spirit in George Meredith, Longmans, Green and Company, London, 1911.
- Blind, Mathilda, George Eliot, Roberts Brothers, Boston, 1885.
- Bonnell, Henry H., Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot, and Jane Austen, Longmans Green and Company, New York, 1902.
- Canaan, Gilbert, Samuel Butler, A Critical Study, Martin Secker, London, 1915.
- Canning, Albert Stratford, George Dickens Studied in Six Novels, T. F. Unwix, London, 1912.
- Cazamian, Louis, A History of English Literature (1660-1914), J. M. Dent, London, 1927.
- Cazamian, Madeleine, Le Roman et les Idées en Angleterre, H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1923.
- Chesterton, Gilbert K., Charles Dickens, A Critical Study, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1911.
- Chislett, William, George Meredith, Richard G. Badger Company, New York, 1911.
- Crees, J. H. E., George Meredith, B. H. Blackwell, Oxford, 1918.
- Cross, Wilbur, The Development of the English Novel, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1927.
- Crotch, William Walter, Charles Dickens, Social Reformer, W. Walter Crotch Chapman and Hall, London, 1913.
- Dark, Sidney, Charles Dickens, T. C. and E. C. Jack, Ltd., London, 1919.
- Fairchild, Hoxie, The Noble Savage, Columbia University Press, New York, 1928.
- Firkins, O. W., Jane Austen, Henry Holt and Company, 1920.
- Follett, Helen Thomas and Follett, Wilson, Some Modern Novelists, Henry Holt, New York, 1918.
- Gardiner, Dorothy, English Girlhood at School, Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1929.
- Gardner, Charles, The Inner Life of George Eliot, London, 1912.
- Garnett, Mrs. R. S., Samuel Butler and His Family Relations, J. M. Dent, London, 1926.
- Gignilliat, George Warren, The Author of Sandford and Merton, Columbia University Press, New York, 1932.
- Gissing, George, Charles Dickens, A Critical Study, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1898.
- Haldane, Elizabeth, George Eliot and Her Times, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1927.
- Henderson, May Sturge, George Meredith, Methuen and Company, London, 1907.
- Hudson, William Henry, Rousseau and Naturalism in Life and Thought, Clark Edinburgh, 1903.

- Hughes, James L., Dickens as an Educator, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1901.
- Hutton, Richard Holt, Essays on Some of the Modern Guides of English Thought in Matters of Faith.
- Johnson, R. Brimley, Jane Austen, Sheed and Ward, London, 1927.
- Josephson, Matthew, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Harcourt Brace and Company, New York, 1931.
- Keir, James, An Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Day, Esquire, Stockdale, London, 1791.
- Langbridge, Rosamond, Charlotte Bronte, A Psychological Study, Doubleday Doran, New York, n. d.
- Lovett, Robert Morss and Hughes, Helen Sard, The History of the Novel in England, Houghton Mifflin Company, Chicago, 1932.
- Lunn, Hugh Kingsmill, The Sentimental Journey, A Life of Charles Dickens, W. Morrow and Company, New York, 1935.
- Masson, Flora, The Brontes, T. C. and E. C. Jack, New York, 1913.
- May, J. Lewis, George Eliot--A Study, Cassell and Company, London, 1930.
- Metton, G. E., Jane Austen and Her Times, Methuen and Company, London, 1905.
- Morley, John, Rousseau, Chapman and Hall, London, 1873.
- Pollock, Walter Herries, Jane Austen, Her Contemporaries and Herself, Longmans, Green and Company, London, 1899.
- Scott, Sir S. H., The Exemplary Mr. Day, Faber, London, 1935.
- Sencourt, Robert Esmonde, George Meredith, Methuen and Company, London, 1907.
- Stephens, Leslie, "George Eliot" in English Men of Letters, Macmillan Company, New York, 1902.
- Stillman, Clara G., Samuel Butler, A Mid-Victorian Modern, The Viking Press, 1932.
- Thomson, C. Linklater, Jane Austen, H. Marshall and Son, London, 1929.
- Walters, J. Cuming, Phases of Dickens, Chapman and Hall, London, 1911.
- Williams, Blanche Colton, George Eliot, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1936.
- Young, W. T., "George Meredith, Samuel Butler, and George Gissing" in The Cambridge History of English Literature, Volume XIII, p. 454.
- Zimmern, Helen, Maria Edgeworth, Roberts Brothers, Boston, 1884.

#