
**Peter Blake**  
*University of Sussex, UK*

The success of William Thackeray’s shilling monthly periodical, *The Cornhill Magazine*, which first appeared in 1859, spawned a series of imitators in the 1860s with titles drawn from London landmarks. *Temple Bar, St Paul’s, Belgravia* and *St James’s* all attempted to court the same metropolitan middle-class family readership that Thackeray had enjoyed with his inclusion of apolitical and non-controversial articles, serialized novels, and poetry. The editor of *Temple Bar*, George Augustus Sala — one of Dickens’s ‘Young Men’ — promised in the prospectus that his periodical would be ‘full of solid yet entertaining matter, that shall be interesting to Englishmen and Englishwomen . . . and that Filia-familias may read with as much gratification as Pater or Mater-familias’. But, paradoxically, Sala decided to surround himself with a team of contributors hand-picked from his own bohemian circle, London journalists whose political and social outlook were at odds with those of a family readership. This article will argue that Sala, along with sub-editor Edmund Yates and publisher John Maxwell, deliberately and cynically packed the first edition of *Temple Bar* with material designed to ensnare a ‘respectable’ middle-class family readership. With selective anonymity and a serialized novel later described by Yates as ‘Trollope-and-milk’, along with articles of a conservative and London-centric nature, 30,000 copies of the first edition were sold. Once this readership had been established, the editorial team began to introduce content of a more liberal nature. Serialized sensation novels, such as Sala’s *Seven Sons Of Mammon* and Mary Braddon’s *Aurora Floyd*, attacked the dominance of the domestic realist novel, while hard-hitting articles and poems alerted readers to the misery and poverty to be found on the streets of London. Sala slowly created a periodical that, for a time at least, was the most unconventional of the shilling monthlies. This article will reveal the difficulties and subtleties involved in creating a brand personality for a monthly periodical, and by doing so will highlight the complex relationships that existed between nineteenth-century London journalists.
In the 1860s, there appeared a spate of middle-class shilling monthly family magazines with names derived from London topography. Building on the success in 1859 of the *Cornhill Magazine*, edited by William Thackeray, magazines such as *Temple Bar*, *St Paul’s*, *Belgravia* and *St James’s* were not only alike in nomenclature; they were also all inherently paradoxical products. Able to provide excitement, sensation and novelty in their readers’ middle-class humdrum existences, they simultaneously gave stability and repetition to a readership conscious of the changes that they believed were threatening to undermine society. *Temple Bar* was the first of these magazines to present this paradox, and the most radical. This was because its editorial staff and contributors were, for the most part, bohemians; men and women who rejected the bourgeois, middle-class preoccupation with the acquisition of wealth, respectability, and rearing a family. Although English bohemians, unlike their French counterparts, were not overtly political, their personal experience of poverty (many found themselves eking out a living writing in damp, dingy and desolate garrets) meant that they fraternized and empathized with the lot of the poorer classes and desired social change. Above all, bohemians detested the restrictive and hypocritical rules and laws practised by the middle classes and their obsession with status and money. This article will argue that the nominal editor, George Augustus Sala, along with sub-editor Edmund Yates and publisher John Maxwell, deliberately and cynically packed the first edition of *Temple Bar* with material designed to ensnare a ‘respectable’ middle-class family readership. Once this readership had been established, the editorial team began to introduce content of a sensational nature. Not only was this content more suited to their bohemian tastes, but they also believed that their respectable readership secretly craved this more salacious and sensational material. Serialized sensation novels, such as Sala’s *Seven Sons Of Mammon* and Mary Braddon’s *Aurora Floyd*, attacked the dominance of the domestic realist novel, while hard-hitting articles and poems alerted readers to the misery and poverty to be found on the streets of London. The alternative posited to the domestic novel, sensation fiction, paradoxically hinged on an extreme use of realism that was deemed unpalatable to many of the so-called realists. This article will reveal the difficulties and subtleties involved in creating a brand personality for a monthly periodical, and by doing so will highlight the complex relationships that existed between nineteenth-century London journalists.

**Thackeray and the *Cornhill Magazine***

At the heart of the *Temple Bar* project was the paradoxical relationship between Sala, Yates, and William Thackeray. In 1855, Henry Vizetelly had founded the *Illustrated Times* and Yates began a series called ‘The Lounger At The Clubs’.¹ It has generally been accepted that this column initiated the new style of ‘personal journalism’ in England. It was while writing in this ‘personal’ style for a weekly gossip-sheet called *Town Talk*, published by John Maxwell, that Yates penned his infamous portrait of Thackeray that would result in the Garrick Club Affair. Yates wrote that: ‘No one meeting him could fail to recognize in him a gentleman; his bearing is cold and uninviting, his style of conversation either openly cynical, or affectionally good natured and benevolent’.² Thackeray was furious that Yates could have used private
conversations in the Garrick Club as a basis for a journalistic article. He promptly inserted Yates into the latest instalment of his novel, *The Virginians* (1859), as ‘Young Grubstreet, who corresponds with three penny papers and describes the persons and conversation of gentlemen whom he meets at his “clubs”’. The Garrick Club Affair resulted in Yates’s expulsion from the Garrick Club and an enmity between the two men until Thackeray’s death in 1863.

Paradoxically, given their later disagreements, it was Thackeray’s novel *Pendennis* (1848–1850) that first attracted Yates to literary bohemia, which he defined as ‘a delicious sense of lawless freedom’. Towards the end of his life, Sala would assert that ‘Paradoxical as it may seem, I really think that, were I asked to name the most competent person to write a Life of Thackeray, I should at once indicate Mr Edmund Yates’. Sala claimed that nowhere was there ‘a more careful and appreciative student of Thackeray’s works than Yates’. The great paradox of Yates’s life was that, despite surrounding himself with bohemians, Yates never considered himself to be a fully fledged member of the fraternity. In his autobiography he writes:

> From the circumstances of my life — my early marriage, the regular habits formed by, and necessary for, my holding my appointment in the Post Office, and from a certain distaste for a good deal of what formed an integral portion of the career — I was never a real Bohemian.

P. D. Edwards agreed, and stated that ‘although never a real Bohemian himself, he [Yates] shared many of the tastes and pursuits of those who were, and was gratified that he was able to win their “regard” and form many close and lasting friendships with them’. One of those ‘tastes and pursuits’ that both Sala and Yates shared was a disdain for authority. Joel Weiner believes that together they ‘deplored the crassness of those people who wielded economic and political power, whether they represented landed or moneyed wealth’. London’s bohemian community was always more fragmented than its Parisian counterpart, less political, and restricted to literary types. Developing from the Grub Street tradition, which represented ‘the capitulation of writers to commerce’, London bohemia did not promise a ‘new order’ but concentrated on the hardships involved in ‘opting out’ of the mainstream. Many so-called bohemians, Thackeray among them, saw this lifestyle as a necessary part of youth and one that was swiftly discarded once commercial success arrived. It was an idealism, both politically and romantically, that set Parisian bohemia apart from its London counterpart; along with a greater sense of cooperation between artists, writers, musicians, and philosophers. But there were some similarities between London and Parisian bohemia. Looking back in 1885, Yates noted that:

> Our British Bohemia [...] differed in many respects from that fanciful territory inhabited by Schaunard [Henri Murger’s hero in *Scenes de la vie des Bohemes* (1849)] and his comrades. It was less picturesque, it was more practical and commonplace, perhaps a trifle more vulgar; but its denizens had this in common with their French prototypes — that they were young, gifted, and reckless; that they worked by fits and starts, and never except under the pressure of necessity [...] and that greatest item of resemblance — they had a thorough contempt for the dress, usages and manners of ordinary middle-class civilisation.
By the end of the decade, Sala was living in the heart of the ‘literary-journalistic Bohemian’ milieu of London, the area between Catherine Street and Wellington Street, and had become identified as its king.13

In 1859, Thackeray became editor of a shilling monthly designed to appeal to the whole (middle-class) family, and by doing so renounced his early flirtations with bohemia. The new periodical was christened the *Cornhill Magazine*, and the first edition rolled off the presses in January 1860. Its name signified its urban, modern, sophisticated outlook, while its cover — black and orange with images of labouring men ploughing, sowing, reaping, and threshing — represented an attractive pastoral idyll to town dwellers, perhaps also attracting readers from surrounding rural areas. Thackeray’s shrewd inclusion of the ladies and even children in his open letter to the magazine’s readership, his realization that articles of a controversial nature would deter readers, and his ability to attract the very best writers ensured that *Cornhill* was a runaway success. Anthony Trollope began the serialization of his novel *Framley Parsonage* in the first edition. The novel’s ideal realism, in which the main characters serve as moral role models for the middle-class audience, was perfectly suited to Thackeray’s changing perception of what the novel should be. Both Thackeray and Trollope felt that England’s social stability ‘depended on social change being controlled or managed by leaders who were gentlemen whose consciously moral behavior provided a way of living that was challenging and consoling’.14 The novel’s ideal realism also fitted seamlessly into the meta-narrative of didacticism, which suffused the pages of *Cornhill*. The magazine was thus able to carve out for itself a niche in the hearts and minds of the middle class that no other periodical had hitherto been able to find.

Sala’s paradoxical relationship with Thackeray stemmed not only from their differing stance on bohemia, but also from the fact that they were socially and professionally intimate; Thackeray actually proposed Sala for membership of the Garrick Club and invited him to contribute to *Cornhill*.15 Sala initially imitated Thackeray’s formula while editor of *Temple Bar*, but subsequently attacked the style of the domestic novels that Thackeray was then producing. After reading Sala’s first essay for *Household Words*, ‘The Key Of The Street’ (1851), Thackeray had remarked ‘I think it’s almost the best magazine paper that ever was written [. . .] I talked about Sala a hundred times to Dickens and admired his extraordinary power’.16 Sala’s work for Dickens’s *Household Words* during the 1850s, along with his series in the weekly periodical *Welcome Guest*, entitled ‘Twice Round the Clock’, had made his name among the journalistic profession. But Sala had also fallen foul of Dickens’s editorial policy with a proud proclamation of his own bohemian tendencies in an article entitled ‘A Tour In Bohemia’.17 In the article, Sala aligned himself with bohemia’s informal and relaxed ways: ‘I have traveled in Bohemia, and have been of it: a Bohemian. I know its ways and means, its larger iniquities and lesser foibles’. Dickens judged this endorsement of unconventional values to be unsuitable for family reading. This did not deter Thackeray, however, whose own early bohemianism perhaps enabled him to witness something of himself in the young Sala. When he was offered the post as editor of *Cornhill* and began looking for contributors, the name of Sala loomed large. Thackeray duly wrote to Sala, stating: ‘About to start new magazine. First-rate bill of fare. Want rich collops from you. Come and see me. W.M.T. P.S.'
Don’t forget Hogarth’. The letter referred to the series of biographical sketches of William Hogarth that Thackeray wanted Sala to contribute to Cornhill. (Sala’s nine essays on the life of Hogarth began in the second edition of Cornhill, dated February 1860, and ran until the 10th edition, dated October 1860. They were published in book form as William Hogarth: Painter, Engraver and Philosopher. Essays on the Man, the Work and the Time by Smith Elder in 1866.)

Temple Bar begins

Sala notes in his autobiography that Thackeray was so impressed with his Hogarth articles that he had demanded further copy on any themes of Sala’s liking. Sala was in the process of deliberating what form these articles should take when John Maxwell informed him that he was thinking of beginning a new magazine ‘on the same lines as the Cornhill’. Maxwell proposed to Sala that he would be the editor of the new venture. Sala was impressed at the offer, not only out of an artistic duty to produce a first-class magazine, but also because of its altruistic opportunities: ‘I thought the proposal was not one to be slighted, as it would bring me not only a handsome salary as editor, but remuneration at the rate of thirty shillings or two pounds a page for my contributions’. (Although bohemians disdained the rabid pursuit of money, they were not averse to demanding financial rewards for their own artistic endeavours, and believed that ‘artistic creations ought to be a paying profession’.) Maxwell was just as confident as Sala that the new magazine would provide a generous return. He had known Sala and Yates from his days as an advertising agent for the Illustrated Times, and he had managed Town Talk for a period. He had bought the Welcome Guest in the previous year, despite its flagging sales and loss of money. By changing its format, lowering its price, and commissioning Sala’s ‘Twice Round the Clock’, Maxwell was able to re-ignite interest in the magazine. Vincent C. De Baun depicts Maxwell as ‘mercurial, effusive, strong-willed, and ever ready to enjoy good brandy, conversation, a cigar, and a Bohemian evening’. Sala himself had become known as ‘king of the bohemians’ by this time, and we can picture these two bohemians realizing, over their postprandial cigars and brandy, that the momentum provided by Cornhill meant that the market was ripe for another shilling monthly.

It would be natural to suppose that Thackeray was not pleased at having this rival to his magazine, particularly as Yates had been continually denouncing the contents of Cornhill to the readers of the Illustrated London News in his ‘Art and Literature’ column. (For example, in the 10 August 1861 edition, Yates criticized Trollope’s latest serialized novel, The Struggles of Brown, Jones and Robinson by one of the Firm, by claiming that it gave only ‘modified satisfaction to the readers of Cornhill’, since ‘nobody can understand what Mr Trollope means’.) But, possibly because he was confident in maintaining his own readership, and probably because he had yet to hear of Yates’s inclusion as sub-editor, Thackeray wrote a generous and friendly notice in his ‘Roundabout Papers’. He pronounced that:

Our course has been so prosperous, that it was to be expected other adventurers would sail upon it, and accordingly I heard with no surprise, that one of our esteemed companions [Sala] was about to hoist his own flag, and take command of a ship of his own. The
wide ocean has room enough for us all [...] The old days of enmity and exclusiveness are long over; and it is to be hoped buyers and vendors alike will profit by free trade, friendly courtesy, and fair play.\textsuperscript{25}

This is a good example of an exterior dialogue taking place between different periodicals. Communication between literary counterparts was often imparted through the pages of a periodical. Thackeray’s liberality in this instance may have been a way of signifying his standing as a gentleman, but once Sala demanded Yates as his sub-editor and Maxwell agreed, it is likely that tension between the two camps increased. Maxwell and Sala would have exacerbated this tension by imitating not only the concept of \textit{Cornhill}. The title of their new venture, \textit{Temple Bar; A London Magazine for Town and Country Readers}, looked to \textit{Cornhill’s} use of a particular site in London and also tried to attract rural readers with its title, just as \textit{Cornhill} had done with its bucolic cover. But \textit{Temple Bar} was to be much more of a self-consciously metropolitan enterprise. Sala’s articles for \textit{Household Words} in the 1850s, articles such as ‘Down Whitechapel Way’,\textsuperscript{26} ‘Jack Alive in London’,\textsuperscript{27} and ‘Leicester Square’,\textsuperscript{28} had been predominantly centred on depicting London life, and Dickens was quick to recognize in the youthful writer someone who could take over his mantle as the delineator of London. Sala not only inserted a series of ‘London Poems’ into each edition of \textit{Temple Bar}, but also contributed series such as ‘Travels in the County of Middlesex’ and ‘Breakfast In Bed’, in which the joys of \textit{flaneur}-like perambulations around the capital were emphasized. Articles that strayed from the milieu of the metropolis, such as ‘In the Mining Districts’,\textsuperscript{29} ‘Ramble about the Hebrides’,\textsuperscript{30} and ‘The Pitmen of the North’,\textsuperscript{31} tended to be focused on the landscapes and mores of the northern extremities of the British Isles, thus providing metropolitan readers with a literary escape from quotidian life in the capital.

It was paradoxical that Sala should name the magazine \textit{Temple Bar}. Unlike the name ‘\textit{Cornhill}’, which brought to mind notions of modernity and finance capitalism, the Temple Bar monument was increasingly seen as restricting the constant circulation of goods and traffic that was becoming so emblematic of modernity. Ten years previously, Dickens in \textit{Bleak House} (1852) had written: ‘The muddy streets are muddiest, near that leaden-headed old obstruction, appropriate ornament of a leaden-headed old corporation: Temple Bar’.\textsuperscript{32} Ironically, in the 1870s Sala would be at the vanguard of a movement to demolish the ancient monument. In 1876, he wrote that it was ‘a grievous obstruction to metropolitan traffic’, something no Londoner could deny, but he also considered the monument detestable because it was associated with ‘nothing save that which was gloomy, deplorable, and disgraceful in English history’.\textsuperscript{33} Sala was referring to the Jacobite skulls that had been stuck on pikes on the monument. In a series of leading articles for the \textit{Daily Telegraph} in 1877, Sala wrote that ‘if the thing be unique, it is so only in its unsightliness, its uselessness and its rottenness’, and described it as a ‘repulsive monstrosity’ and a ‘foul and hideous old anachronism’; he was pleased to witness its removal later that year.\textsuperscript{34} But in 1860, when all his efforts were focused on portraying the magazine and the monument as respectable and vital to the historic associations of London, Sala wrote in \textit{Temple Bar}’s prospectus that: ‘We have taken this world-known structure as our title, because the great tide of cosmopolitan humanity is forever flowing through its arches; because the country and the town, the island and the continent, on foot, on horseback, and in carriages, give each other rendezvous by Temple Bar.’\textsuperscript{35} (See Figure 1.)
Temple Bar.

Prospectus.

We cannot plead as an excuse for calling our new Monthly Miscellany “Temple Bar,” that it will be either written or printed in the edifice which divides London from Westminster. The books of an eminent banking firm are, we believe, kept in Temple Bar; while, according to some City legends, it is there that the unhorsed man-in-brass has his hermitage, and, eschewing the vanities of Lord Mayors’ shows, perpetually polishes his brazen panoply. Yet we have, as we think, as clear a right to christen our Periodical after Sir Christopher Wren’s architectural whim as Sylvanus Urban had to place a woodcut of St. John’s Gate on the title-page of the “Gentleman’s Magazine.” For while Temple Bar is essentially metropolitan, and is a link connecting the glories of the Strand and Fleet Street, our Editor will abide in the first, and our Publishing Office will be in the last-named thoroughfare. Temple Bar belongs not only to London, but to England. Indeed, those born within the sound of Bow bells have grown so habituated to the sight of the gray old structure as scarcely to regard it; whereas never a country cousin comes to town without gazing at Temple Bar with mingled curiosity and affection; and when that long-promised New Zealander visits the metropolis, it may not be on a ruined arch of London Bridge that he will fix his camp-stool, but rather in the room above Temple Bar—by permission of Messrs. Child—that he may set up his cased, and whence he will be enabled to sketch Somerset House towards the West, and the Temple Gates towards the East.

This Magazine, then, shall be called

Temple Bar,

because the great tide of cosmopolitan humanity is for ever flowing through its arches; because the country and the town, the island and the continent, on foot, on horseback, and in carriages, give each other rendezvous by Temple Bar; because we consider a woodcut of the Bar, by way of frontispiece, to be far more significant of our purpose, in establishing a Magazine for Town and Country Readers, than an engraving of the Royal Arms, or of the Rose, Shamrock, and Thistle, or of the Marble Arch, would be. We might have fixed on the “Great Bell of St. Paul’s,” or on “Gog and Magog,” or on “London Stone,” as a title, but we are content to adopt Temple Bar. We could give five hundred reasons for our choice. The Bar is not only associated with much that is famous in English history, but with nearly all that is memorable in English literature; and from our pictured window in Temple Bar we shall see brave old Doctor Johnson strolling up Fleet Street with James Boswell; and haughty Bishop Warburton coming to visit Oliver Goldsmith; and Mr. Spectator gliding towards the Temple Gardens, with Sir Roger de Coverley; and young M. de Voltaire, on his first visit to England, taking shrewd notes of the eccentric people who cut off the tails of horses and the heads of kings. We shall remember that, in Temple Bar, we are close to the renowned haunts of Raleigh, and Jonson, and Massinger, and Shakespeare—of Wycherley, of Congreve, and of Pope; that the immortal wits who used to haunt the “Mermaid,” the “Duell,” and the “Apollo” Taverns all passed beneath Temple Bar; that it was at the “Cook” that Alfred Tennyson beheld the plump head-waiter, tasted that old Port, and felt that eternal lack of peace which vexeth public men; that the “Rainbow” and the “Mitre” yet flourish; that the old thoroughfare to Ludgate is yet the centre and head- quarters of English thought and English art, and teems with printing houses, booksellers’ stores, newspaper offices, engravers’ studios, and booksellers’ warehouses; and that to our immediate right, looking eastward, stands yet the grand old monastery of Law and Learning and Chivalry, where the Knights of the Temple yet ride on one horse, where Mr. Arthur Pendennis is yet chatting with Mr. George Warrington at chambers in Lamb and Flag Court, and whence, we trust, many a “young gentleman of the Inns of Court” will bring that surplus erudition and brilliancy, not too highly appreciated in the special pleader’s chambers, and see what we can make of them at Temple Bar.

The price of our Magazine will be One Shilling. We believe that the days of Half-Crown Serials are fled. Ours we wish to place within the means of every section of the reading community; and our patrons will soon be in a
Sala went on to stress the literary associations of the monument: ‘[. . .] with Johnson and Goldsmith, with Mr Spectator and Sir Roger de Coverley, it is close to the renowned haunts of Raleigh and Johnson, and the chambers tenanted by Arthur Pendennis’. The inclusion of Thackeray’s eponymous hero may have been deliberately used to assuage any enmity between the two camps, and the rest of the prospectus was intended to appeal directly to middle-class sentiments. Whereas later in his career the thought of Jacobite skulls on Temple Bar would horrify Sala’s liberal sensibilities, in the 1860 prospectus the literary associations were highlighted to illustrate the importance of the monument in creating notions of an English national tradition.

Sala and Maxwell also used the template of *Cornhill* when producing their political philosophy. Thackeray’s comment that all political controversy was to be avoided was taken up by Sala, who wrote in the prospectus: ‘As for politics, there will not be any, unless there should be aught political in the dominant tone of our journal, which, from head-line to imprint, will strive to inculcate thoroughly English sentiments, — respect for authority, attachment to the Church, and loyalty to the Queen’. Sala was going all out to entice the staunch middle-class reader towards *Temple Bar*, despite his own lack of respect for authority, his well-known bohemianism, and his radical persuasion. Vincent C. DeBaun qualifies this: ‘This statement was only a gesture in the direction of objectivity or neutrality, for the editor was well-known for his detestation of Tory principles and had frequently identified himself as among the fiercest of Radicals’. Sala was suppressing his own political persuasions in order to attract readers to the periodical.

Sala endeavoured to obtain the best in the business to design the front cover, and wrote to George Cruikshank in October 1860, desperately trying to secure his services. Sala wrote: ‘I am sure there is no one who knows Temple Bar or could depict it so graphically as yourself’. But Cruikshank declined, owing to prior commitments, and Sala fell back on the talents of Percy Macquoid for the cover design. Macquoid supplied a pen and ink sketch of the monument with the title on the upper arch and the date in the lower arch (see Figure 2). The cover was cardboard, tinted a light purple, with advertising material closely crowded on the reverse side. Sala had wanted illustrations throughout the magazine in a similar fashion to *Cornhill*, but for financial reasons it was decided to do away with the pictorial, and *Temple Bar* boasted 144 pages, 16 more than Thackeray’s monthly. Sala also included on the title page a ‘quotation’. It read: ‘Sir’, said Dr Johnson, ‘Let us take a walk down Fleet Street’. Thirty years later in his autobiography, Sala admitted:

> As a motto I imagined a quotation from Boswell [. . .] To the best of my knowledge and belief Dr Johnson never said a word about taking a walk down Fleet Street; but my innocent supercherie was, I fancy, implicitly believed in for at least a generation by the majority of magazine readers.

This imagined quotation displays a recklessness towards authority and historical accuracy, but it also shows how far Sala was prepared to go to make *Temple Bar* a success. Associating his periodical with one of London’s favourite literary sons was a deliberate ploy to entice more readers. Yates supports this view in his memoirs. When he was asked on board as sub-editor, he claimed that ‘an office was to be
engaged, good terms offered to contributors, the magazine was to be largely advertised, and everything was to be done to promote its success.\textsuperscript{43} Although no figures are available, it seems that Maxwell was prepared to invest a great deal of money in the venture.

Another example of this untrammelled desire to ensnare the respectable middle-class reader can be seen in Sala’s choice of which contributors to name. In an advertisement printed in the \textit{Athenaeum} a week before the first edition, Sala had provided a list of contents of the edition along with three named contributors. These were John
Oxenford, J. M. Bellew, and ‘The Editor’. Sala believed that his own name was prominent enough to promote the magazine, and he included Oxenford and Bellew because of their respectability. Oxenford was a noted German scholar; he was known to the reading public as dramatic critic of *The Times*, and had worked with Yates and Sala on the *Comic Times*. J. M. Bellew was at that time a well-respected clergyman, incumbent at his church in Hamilton Terrace and at the height of his popularity. This was before Bellew ‘went over’ to Roman Catholicism and alienated his followers. Sandwiched between these men of distinction and respectability were the anonymous bohemian and metropolitan writers that Yates and Sala had become familiar with throughout their careers: men such as Blanchard Jerrold, Mortimer Collins (a poet also known in his flamboyant younger days as ‘the King of the Bohemians’), Charles Kenney, T. H. Sotheby, Charles Williams, Charles Thomas Browne, and W. S. Austin. Kenney would write a biography of Michael Balfe, composer of *The Bohemian Girl* (1842), and Sala described Austin as ‘managing, unhappily, to muddle away a life which was full of splendid promise, and who died prematurely’.

There were also new arrivals on the scene, men such as Robert Buchanan, just arrived in London from Scotland and ‘leading a precarious and bohemian existence in a garret room at 66 Stamford Street in the dingy neighborhood of Waterloo Bridge'. These men, along with female contributors such as Eliza Lynn Linton and Mary Elizabeth Braddon, were to be the mainstay of *Temple Bar*. Undeniably bohemian, they managed nevertheless to produce a magazine that, initially at least, pandered to the tastes and whims of a similar readership to that of *Cornhill*.

When deciding the contents of the first number, Sala wrote to Charles Kenney on 19 October 1860 with a specific request designed to appeal to the conservative lady reader:

> Will you do a series of studies of celebrated women? For a title I have thought of ‘Daughters of Eve’ [...] Write and say if you will have a fling at the fair pippin-eaters. Understand, I want the fair, graceful, airy *femme licite*, not the *femme criminelle*. No Lucretia Borgia, No B. Cenci’.

Sala’s realization that the ‘fair pippin-eaters’ were integral to the success of the magazine was a direct result of observing the fortunes of *Cornhill*. It was also a highly cynical account of how one was to attract readers into the midst of one’s magazine. Sala went on to suggest other non-controversial female subjects, such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Madame de Maintenon. He added: ‘where they have been, poor things, sexually naughty, do soften down their little piccadillies [sic] and treat of their good qualities [...] the first must be a thoroughly virtuous woman else the *Saturday Review* will slant *Temple Bar* for a lupanar [brothel]’.

Sala was displaying his knowledge of the journalistic milieu; along with Dickens, he had already suffered at the hands of the conservative critics affiliated to the *Saturday Review*, and he realized that respectability was essential for the success of a family magazine. By taking a closer look at the very first number of *Temple Bar*, we can see just how far Sala and Yates were able to suppress their own natural inclinations in order to achieve good sales figures.
The first edition of Temple Bar

In his autobiography, Yates wrote that ‘the magazine kept me constantly occupied; for Sala had so much literary and journalistic work to do that, beyond giving his name to the cover and the supervision to the printed sheets, he left most of the detail to me’. Vincent C. De Baun acknowledges that during the last three months of 1860 Sala had written 71 leading articles for the Daily Telegraph, 13 for the Illustrated London News, five for the Welcome Guest, one for Cornhill, and two for Weldon’s Register. With this intense workload, it was not surprising that Yates would perform most of the editorial duties, including the task of finding a suitable novelist to write the first serialization in the magazine. As Yates reminisced in his autobiography:

I had some difficulty in getting a serial story, for the leading lights of those days were most of them engaged [...] At last I obtained from a lady who had never written previously for the press, and who was the wife of a provincial clergyman, a by no means brilliant, but quite sufficiently interesting ‘makeweight’ story, without much incident, but remarkably well written, and giving a curious insight into Quaker life [...] It was called ‘For Better, for Worse’ and perhaps may be best described as Trollope-and-milk.

The author of For Better, For Worse still remains a mystery, but the novel itself was representative of the editorial team’s determination to make the first edition of the magazine respectable and amenable to the middle class. Yates’s description of the novel as ‘Trollope-and-milk’ refers to the ideal realism that forms its content and to the portrayal of gentlemen as moral leaders. In the novel, we are first introduced to Ralph Atherton, the personification of Trollope’s ‘ideal hero’. Ralph’s upbringing amidst the Quakers has inculcated a mature, commonsense and thrifty attitude towards money; in particular, the need for it and the dangers inherent in possessing it. Ralph sums up this stance when he says to Margaret: ‘poverty is not so great an evil as we are often led to believe, it is a very good discipline for the heart’. These were popular sentiments at the time, coming only a year after the release of Samuel Smiles’s Self-Help (1859), in which was stressed ‘the vital importance of industry, thrift and self-improvement, encapsulating precisely the ethos of Victorian bourgeois individualism’. Ralph decides to plan for the acceptance of a curacy, while Margaret determines to become a schoolmistress.

At the other end of the social spectrum is the aristocratic Sir Philip Leigh, who has fallen in love with Ethelind, Ralph’s precocious younger sister. There is consternation within the Leigh family at the arrangement, because of Ethelind’s relative poverty. But Sir Philip is not to be assuaged, and he announces his intention to marry Ethelind. The novel goes on to depict the conflicts between the Leigh and Atherton families caused by this abandonment of the doctrine of strict non-interference between the classes.

When the action moves to the Crimea, Ethelind and Philip are suddenly and surprisingly reunited after having undergone a separation. At the end of the novel, Guy Vyvian, Margaret’s new husband, tells of the ‘deep regret with which he heard the sad tidings of the Indian Mutiny, grieving that he could not join the eager throng of brave men who so nobly rescued the living and avenged the atrocities perpetrated on helpless women and children’. Ultimately, then, everyone performs their duty,
whether that duty be to their military superiors or to their marriage ties. The title, *For Better, For Worse*, denotes the importance of the institution of marriage, and the novel promotes working hard at the matrimonial state, even when it is to all intents and purposes doomed to failure. The ideal realism of the novel comes in the form of Philip and Ethel’s seemingly unlikely appeasement, and the ideal gentleman hero is Ralph, whose steadfastness and discipline are there to be unequivocally admired. *For Better, For Worse* conforms to all of the precepts that Sala had outlined in his prospectus, namely ‘respect for authority, attachment to the Church, and loyalty to the Queen’. The novel also conforms to Thackeray’s theory of domestic life and literary realism, as espoused in his novel *The Newcomes* (1855): ‘a novelist must go on with his heroine, as a man with his wife, for better or worse, and to the end’.

The first piece of poetry in the first edition of *Temple Bar* was ‘The Northern Muse’, written by William Stigand. In his autobiography, Yates denied all responsibility for procuring the poem and was scathing about its quality: ‘Sala, influenced by kindness rather than a strict adherence to his duty, insisted on my accepting a long poem by a Mr Stigand [...] otherwise we were strong in verse’. Sala’s kind acceptance of the poem was a reflection of the fact that it suited the first edition’s claims to respectability rather than being an aberration in his editorial faculties. In the poem, King Olaf of Norway is relieved of his ennui by the undulating strains of a harp far out to sea. The harpist is ‘a maiden of low degree’ whose ‘mantle of serge had a russet hue’. The king is offended by her lowly demeanour, but he kisses her robe, and her shoddy garments are left behind, revealing her true identity as the Northern Muse. The king looks on her with a ‘love-like’ rapture; in her previous incarnation as a lowly maiden, he would never have been inclined to do this. The poem perpetuates the ideology of *For Better, For Worse* that love is best conducted between those from the same station in life.

Yates’s first contribution to *Temple Bar* was a 14-line poem entitled ‘Two Rocks’. The poem contrasts the fortunes of two men destined to live under two very different rocks. The first is ‘a despot’, who is ‘fettered to that barren shore,/Uncrowned, unkingdomed, friendless, and alone’. The second man is ‘Fanned by soft winds in Nature’s sunniest clime’ and is therefore deserving of the poet’s praise. The last three stanzas enlighten the reader: ‘With Saint Helene is linked NAPOLEON:/Caprera’s name shall ring in verse sublime/Where GARIBALDI rests, his deed of duty done’. Yates’s poem plays on the anti-revolutionary tendencies of his readership while simultaneously praising the Italian fight for independence. Whereas French radicalism was frowned upon by the middle classes, because of its revolutionary nature, Margot C. Finn points out that ‘Garibaldi’s nationalist exploits appealed broadly to different classes in the 1860s’. The middle-class readership of *Temple Bar* would have ‘imbued him with all the traits of a successful businessman. Frugal, sober, and industrious [...] he was a natural exemplar of the virtues of political economy, and thus a caution to the improvident proletariat’. Yates realized that by writing a poem in praise of Garibaldi and in antipathy towards Napoleon, he was on safe ground as far as upsetting his envisioned readership was concerned.

Sala made his initial appearance in the pages of *Temple Bar* with the first of his series of articles entitled ‘Travels in the County of Middlesex’. He informs his readers that his own hero in his ‘salad days’ was John Howard. Howard (1726–1790) was
best known as a penal reformer, uncovering the abuses inherent in the system and undertaking ‘gruelling tours of inspection of prisons, bridewells, and houses of correction in Britain and on the continent’. But Sala distances himself from this aspect of Howard’s work; he does not want to appear too radical a reformer at such an early stage in the magazine’s life. It is rather as a traveller that Sala wants Howard to be remembered: not as an aristocratic taker of the Grand Tour, for that would not sit well with Temple Bar’s readership, but as an adventurous man of small means and thrifty virtues. When the site of Temple Bar is finally reached, Sala wastes no time in promoting the monument, and proudly displays his knowledge of William Hogarth’s work: ‘“Poor Bar”, I mused [. . .] “thou hast been much abused in thy time [. . .] They sneer and say that there are no historical memories associated with thee[. . .] No memories, O Bar! Why, thou fornest the background to Hogarth’s crowning tableau to Butler’s Hudibras, ‘Burning Rumps at Temple Bar’’. Temple Bar is thus conveniently linked to an artistic history of England as well as a literary and political one. Sala has written cautiously in his first article as editor, endeavouring not to provoke any controversy and pandering to what he believed were his readership’s wants and needs.

Charles Williams supplied an article on the Volunteer Movement at a time when the volunteers were coming in for much ridicule in the pages of Punch because of their appearance and lack of military bearing. On 22 June 1860, however, Queen
Victoria had reviewed 21,000 volunteers in Hyde Park. ‘Soldiers and Volunteers’ responds to Punch’s attacks and denies that funding of the volunteers will necessarily increase taxes and swell the already large ranks of the army to an unmanageable mass. Williams then invokes nationalistic pride in the recent campaigns in which the army has fought:

We imagine the comfortable classes may find very deep sources of congratulation in our new institution of social defence. They may be assured that [...] even that terrible invader the income-tax collector may be kept off the premises [...] Then we have still alive amongst us the memories of the Crimean war, the Indian campaign, and the Lucknow heroism. These have infected us anew with admiration for the noble deeds and the perilous adventure of the soldier’s life, — granted a new flower of chivalry upon old stock.65

The Volunteer Movement is thus comfortably assimilated into the requirements of the middle class. The remaining articles in the first edition were a signed travel piece by J. M. Bellew entitled ‘Over the Lebanon to Baalbeck’, in which the snobbery of aristocratic travellers is disparaged, and a literary criticism of the Finnish epic ‘The Kalewala’, signed by John Oxenford. Oxenford displays considerable scholarly acumen in his detailing of the epic’s history of publication, and considers its main theme to be ‘maternal affection’, thus continuing the meta-narrative of upholding family values.

Throughout this first edition, then, the editor and sub-editor were engaged, through the ‘dynamic intertextuality’ of the essays, fiction, and poetry, in creating an ideology that was beneficial to the respectable middle classes, both male and female. There was nothing here to upset this readership’s stable and dominant image of the world. The paradox is that the contributors were bohemians; men who thought in an alien manner from the middle-class family readership they were writing for. They managed to suppress their natural impulses, and in this first edition they created a literary environment designed to ensnare the readers of Cornhill. But just as the magazine is about to be put back on the family reading table, there is neatly tucked away between the pages of the last two articles the final poem of the first edition. Written by F. D. Finlay, it is called ‘Always With Us’, and using Christian metaphors and ideology it raises the spectre of the poor and dying on the streets of London and the hypocrisy shown to them by so-called Christians: ‘We shrug our shoulders when we meet,/Our garments gather lest we touch;/We will not own that any such/Are more than dust below our feet’.66 The poet uses the example of Christ’s forgiveness of the prostitute Mary Magdalen to instruct his readers to realize that the poor are sinners but that they are ‘always with us’ and are of ‘Christian-kind’. Although the poem’s ideological content was not new, Thomas Hood’s ‘Song of the Shirt’ from 1841 had similarly attacked and shocked bourgeois complacency; its positioning at the end of the first edition of a respectable, family, middle-class monthly was, I contend, deliberately provoking to its readership. It was the first indication in the pages of Temple Bar that editorial policy from this point would not pander to middle-class respectability but would highlight the plight of the poor, and stress the fluidity of class relationships.
Bohemia beckons

In a letter to W. H. Wills written in December 1860, Sala wrote: ‘We have not set the Thames on fire with Temple Bar, but we have sold excellently well, and No. 2 will I trust be better than No. 1’.67 In his autobiography, Yates wrote: ‘our first number was [...] nothing like so good as its successors’.68 Sala was confident in the quality of the forthcoming issues, and Yates retrospectively admired everything that succeeded the first edition, because they both knew that ensuing editions would be more to their bohemian tastes than the conservative matter of the first copy. The circulation figures for the first edition had topped 30,000, and once the initial readership had been obtained, the overt pandering to middle-class respectability, although never completely eradicated, would never again occupy centre stage, as the more subversive material slowly gained precedence. Admirers of the first edition could be comforted in seeing in the second the ongoing serialization of For Better, For Worse, along with light factual pieces in articles such as ‘Pantomimes’ and ‘A Visit to the Iron-Clad Ship’, the latter of which dealt with the Warrior, a newly built warship in harbour on the Lea Creek. But freely interspersed with these conservative essays were hard-hitting articles such as Yates’s ‘The Houseless Poor’, David T. Ansted’s ‘What Our Coals Cost Us’, Robert Buchanan’s next ‘London Poem’, simply entitled, ‘The Dead’, and the initial part of Sala’s long-awaited serialized novel, The Seven Sons Of Mammon. These factual and fictional pieces introduced a more radical and liberal element into the Temple Bar meta-narrative.

Yates’s article begins with an exhortation to the middle classes to leave behind their comfortable surroundings and to witness the life of the houseless poor: ‘quit the snug study, where the new publications lying on the desk diffuse a pleasant odour [...] shun the club smoking-room and come with me into the streets’.69 Yates makes his way to the ‘Night Refuge for the Homeless’, where the lack of a ‘safety-net’ in nineteenth-century society is vividly portrayed: ‘Here is the agricultural tramp, the threadbare London clerk, who has seen better days, the stout country girl and boys of the smallest size indeed, but with, oh, such old men’s faces! Men from all parts of England, of all ages and professions, are to be found among them’.70 This description of the fluidity that exists between the classes is a challenge to the comfort and stability of the middle-class milieu: ‘Oh, my brother [...] on whose easy couch the crumpled rose-leaf is a source of annoyance, and to whom the most trivial error in domestic detail is a wrong and a curse, take one half-hour among these people, and return a wiser and a better man’.71 Yates ascribes this poverty to ill fortune:

when one minute’s reflection shows us the mere accident of birth, and how that ours might have been the rags, the squalor, the hunger, and the ignorance, theirs the warmth, the broadcloth, the cheerful home, and the well-stored mind, we should be more readily inclined, not merely to pardon their shortcomings, but to think more gratefully of those blessings vouchsafed to us.72

Yates echoes Dickens’s pronouncements in his novels and journalism throughout the 1850s on the growing gulf between the classes and the need for social reform. Yates’s piece was immediately followed by Buchanan’s poem ‘The Dead’. This editorial decision served to reinforce Yates’s message of how perilous life in the metropolis could be if poverty descended:
In David T. Ansted’s article ‘What Our Coals Cost Us’, death is a natural consequence of mining for that mineral. Ansted describes the process whereby coal is extracted from the earth, before going on to describe the terrible cost in human life that this entails. The blame is squarely laid on the government:

when, from time to time, the newspapers inform us of some colliery accident more fatal and terrible than usual, by which a large number of lives have been sacrificed, we know by experience that an inquest will be held [. . .] and finally, that, no practical conclusion or suggestion being arrived at, the whole affair will in a short time be forgotten.74

Ansted exacerbates and sensationalizes the horrors of a fatal explosion underground: ‘the poison […] brings on a peculiar and convulsive action at the back of the throat […] and soon not one living being remains to tell the tale and explain the history’.75 This mixture of the sensational and the factual resembles Yates’s article, as Ansted concludes: ‘As it is, we certainly obtain our coals by methods involving a very large and increasing sum of human misery’.76 This highlighting of human misery and the need for investment in its removal is prevalent in all of these articles, and is what makes the second edition of Temple Bar so different from the first. It is evidence of a more humane and liberal outlook coming into the magazine, an outlook that shows concern for its fellow human beings and aims to reform society. The introduction of a sensational element into the factual articles would be taken to its fictional extreme in the serialization of Sala’s novel The Seven Sons Of Mammon.

The Seven Sons Of Mammon was the very last piece of writing to be found in the second edition, which went to press in January 1861. The editorial team considered it to be so important that it opened the third edition, thereby demoting the other serialized novel, For Better, For Worse, from opening slot to a place near the back of that edition. The Seven Sons of Mammon also occupies a literary space at the opposite end of the spectrum from the ‘Trollope-and-milk’ domestic realism of For Better, For Worse. Sala’s novel begins with the introduction of Sir Jasper Goldthorpe, ‘the richest man on “Change”’.77 From modest beginnings — his father had been a small tradesman in a country town — Sir Jasper now owned property in Beryl Court, a palace in Onyx Square, and a ‘fine house’ at Kemp Town, Brighton. From these magisterial heights, Sala slowly brings about the destruction of Sir Jasper and his fortune. The novel is concerned with satirizing the Mammon worship prevalent among the nouveau riches and the middle classes, and in delineating the questionable motives and origins of society’s most ‘respectable’ citizens. At the heart of the novel lies the evil, scheming seductress Florence Armytage. She is described as ‘exquisitely gantée [gloved]. Her bonnet is a paragon. Her face is very pretty’.78 But behind the ostensibly respectable exterior, Florence is engaged in fraud, forgery, blackmail, and even murder.

Society is portrayed as being in a constant state of flux; people ascend the social ladder as quickly as others descend from its heights. Sir Jasper’s wife, Lady Goldthorpe, comes from a particularly low background and admits that ‘when I married my
Goldy, I hadn’t an h in my alphabet’.79 Ruthyn Pendragon, the curate of Swordsley, and Letitia Salusbury, daughter of Lord Chalkstonehengist, are both of ancient lineage and impeccable ancestry but are irredeemably coarse and vulgar. The narrator informs the reader that ‘By lineage Ruthyn was a gentleman of the most ancient descent. But he was a very vulgar person. He looked like a vulgar person. He talked like one. He ate and drank like one. He dressed like one’.80 But Ruthyn is actually one of the heroes of the novel: ‘his wit, his humour, his learning, his eloquence, were admired by hundreds of thousands of weekly worshippers’.

Sala is questioning the notion of the ‘ideal hero’ as laid down by the champions of domestic realism, Thackeray and Trollope. Sala is also questioning the assumptions of what a ‘gentleman’ should be. He refutes the notion that birth defines one’s position, becoming openly demotic on occasion: ‘The best-bred men of modern times have often been of the most plebeian extraction’.82 The stable and fixed notions of feminine gentility are also questioned. Letitia is raised in the highest of families but is decidedly ‘fast’ and has no interest in pursuit of the arts or literature: ‘She had the dreadful heresy to declare all poetry a bore [...] It is terrible to tell, but the Honourable Letitia Salusbury was an assiduous student of Ruff’s Guide To Turf and the Racing Calendar’.83 All of this must have been slightly disconcerting for middle-class family readers confident that their monthly periodical would reflect their notions of what constituted a stable and secure society. But it is when Sala begins depicting the low-life of London, the money-lenders and beggars of the streets of the metropolis, a world far removed from the comforts of middle-class life, that he really starts to provoke his readership.

Sala speaks directly to his feminine readers in a remarkable authorial aside just after he has introduced the two money-lenders, Mr Sims and Mr Tiggs, into the novel. ‘Dear ladies’, he begins, ‘don’t you think there is a great deal too much about money and not half enough about love in this story?’84 Sims and Tiggs are not the sort of characters one finds in novels of domestic realism. The tenants are described as being ‘cloudy and mysterious’, and the third floor, where Sims resides, has a door so huge that:

you might have murdered a man behind that door, and nobody on the staircase would have been the wiser for it; nor if, by holding the ear to the letter-slit, the screams of the dying man had been heard, could any one without a dozen sledge-hammers have burst the massive portal open.85

Sala realizes that all this is not particularly appealing to what he would consider to be some of his more delicate readers. But he is unapologetic about the difference between his novel and those of his rivals:

Ladies, you must be just. If you want love-making novels, Mr Mudie will pile up your carriage-cushions with any amount of three-volume sentimentality [...] This story is not about the Seven Sons of Venus. It is called the Seven Sons of Mammon. It treats of the low and squalid, the sordid and the base, of dross-getting and dross-spending; it tells of the good and evil that by money may be wrought.86

By deliberately teasing and flirting with his feminine readership, Sala believes that he is finally providing them with the salacious and sensational material that they have all along desired from his magazine. Sala is also revelling here in what P. D. Edwards
describes as Sala’s ‘rebellion against English standards of fictional realism’. For Sala, the real paradox in his notion of sensational fiction was that his depiction of life was far more real than that of the so-called domestic realists. Sala did not make a calculated decision that this sensationalist form of writing would prove to be popular. Sensation novels were not yet considered to constitute a popular sub-genre; writing material such as this was rather a reaction by Sala to the domestic realism that he believed was threatening to suffocate the very life-force of the novel. Thackeray had written:

we cannot show the gentlemen of the age as they are, with the notorious foibles and selfishness of their lives and their education. Since the author of Tom Jones was buried, no writer of fiction among us has been permitted to depict to his utmost power a MAN. We must drape him, and give him a certain conventional simper. Society will not tolerate the Natural in our Art.

Sala disputed this premise, and by placing a woman in her natural state at the centre of his novel and by portraying real characters with real flaws Sala was committed, like Dickens, to removing the novel from the constraints of domestic realism.

There was a clear shift in editorial policy once The Seven Sons Of Mammon had commenced its run. The short fiction, poetry and even many of the articles all bore the stamp of sensationalism. There was also a marked increase in the number of female contributions. In the third edition, Eliza Lynn Linton contributed a short story entitled ‘The Countess Melusine’. The eponymous aristocratic Countess is a dangerous, calculating, scheming character who tries to usurp the mundane and predictable Nelly Blair. Linton’s story is a warning to her sex not to be too consumed by domestic duties. At the end of the fourth edition of Temple Bar there was a poem by Edward Wilberforce entitled ‘Death-bed Secrets’. A wife lies near to death and wishes to tell her husband the great secret of her life. She has been unfaithful to him with his best friend. On hearing this, the husband shows no outward sign of emotion, and replies ‘Confidence similar confidence earns./Thanks for yours; now for mine: I knew/Your love and your guilt — and I poisoned you!’ Including domestic homicide because of a sexual transgression was certainly not in Sala’s prospectus for the first edition, but after four issues this form of sensationalism was now becoming the norm in the pages of Temple Bar. The series of ‘London Poems’ inserted in each edition were also becoming darker and more insistent on social reform, more London-centric, and more idealistic concerning life outside the confines of the metropolis. In the third edition, ‘Outcasts’ portrays misery and poverty as a condition to be found only in the city. Outside of the city is ‘Where the blue fresh rivers run,/There, in the pastoral homes whose hearths/Are smiled upon by the sun’. In ‘The Destitute’ for the fourth edition, London is increasingly portrayed as the site of gross exaggerations of poverty and wealth. ‘The heart of the City is black with sin,/Black in its inmost core;/For Sorrow, God’s shadow, falls dark within/The hopeless homes of the poor’. And while ‘The rich man hoardeth his nobler woe/To savour his pleasure and love’, it is becoming harder to traverse the metropolis without stumbling upon scenes of woe, ‘Ah, me! — to wander with ears and eyes,Thro’ alley, and street, and lane,/To see the visions of paradise/Obscured by the grosser pain’.
Braddon and sensation

Although Sala and Yates were perfectly happy to insert sensationalism into the periodical, there is evidence that Maxwell was not so pleased with the direction that Temple Bar was taking. In August 1861 he wrote to the novelist Anthony Trollope, offering him £1000 per annum for ‘three or five years, with the ostensible editorship of Temple Bar, if you will undertake to supply a novel and fill the position that Mr Sala now occupies’. Trollope refused, probably owing to his wariness of Yates, whom he had known as a co-worker in the Post Office, and because of his involvement in the Garrick Club Affair. It is interesting, and not impossible, to speculate on how different the format of Temple Bar would have been under Trollope, the acknowledged master of domestic realism. For when Trollope did eventually become the editor in 1867 of his own shilling monthly, Saint Paul’s: A Monthly Magazine (1867–1874), its short run was due to a lack of flair, character, and personality. Trollope was more willing than Thackeray to insert political articles into his magazine, and he introduced the London name place for its title because he suggested: ‘if they were to make themselves peculiar they would not wish to do so by their name’. In fact, the early reviews of Saint Paul’s in The Spectator found it to be ‘a readable magazine, a cultivated magazine’ but ultimately ‘tame, colourless’ and lacking in the ‘variety and vivacity’ of ‘some of its contemporaries’. Michael Sadleir qualifies this contemporary view: ‘Events showed that magazine editing was not a part of Trollope’s genius. Saint Paul’s was an uninspired production — worthy, serious, but lacking in editorial personality, and insufficiently individual […]’95 If Trollope had become the editor of Temple Bar, it would be most likely that the periodical would have returned to the respectable and conservative tenets of the first edition, and it would certainly have lacked the individuality and ‘colour’ of Sala’s production. Maxwell’s desire to procure Trollope was intriguing and paradoxical, given that he had just begun an ‘irregular union’ with the ‘queen of sensation fiction’, Mary Elizabeth Braddon.

In a letter to Sala from 1861, Braddon commented on the female characters from The Seven Sons of Mammon: ‘Mrs Armytage is as delightful in April as she was in March — and I adore the honourable Letitia because she has a snub nose and talks slang and I daresay could put me on to a good outsider for the Derby’. It is not difficult to see why Braddon would have appealed to Sala and Yates. Her conversational, intimate style of letter-writing and her affinity with the ‘fast’ and racy female characters in Sala’s novel would have singled her out as being of a bohemian bent. Braddon’s first contribution to Temple Bar was a short story entitled ‘The Mystery at Fernwood’, published in the November and December issues of 1861. All of the elements of her later sensation fiction are included, and there is a shocking climax when Laurence Wendale is stabbed to death in the neck by his insane twin brother, who has been incarcerated from the age of three years for attempting a similar feat. The first novel that Braddon contributed was Aurora Floyd (beginning in January 1862), in which Sala and Linton’s device of placing a naturalistic woman who engages the sympathy of the reader at the heart of the story is mirrored in the depiction of her eponymous heroine. Aurora’s overt sexuality, violent actions and violent changes of heart are all portrayed as being more realistic and endearing than the ‘angel in the house’, Lucy, whose cold and sterile marriage to Talbot Bulstrode is
held up as an affront to the needs of passionate and emotional women. Jenny Uglow acknowledges that ‘Braddon’s prime targets are the feminine ideal and the conventional marriage’. Sala and Yates were delighted in discovering an author who was able to both ‘satirise institutions, attitudes and fashions’ and also single-handedly increase the circulation figures of *Temple Bar*. Braddon would contribute three more novels, *John Marchmont’s Legacy* (beginning in December 1862), *The Doctor’s Wife* (January 1864) and *Sir Jasper’s Tenant* (February 1865) before becoming editor of *Belgravia* (1867–1899).

Sala resigned the post as nominal editor of *Temple Bar* in October 1863, owing to an offer to act as a reporter on the American Civil War for the *Daily Telegraph*. Yates took over the position that he had been occupying anyway, and proceeded to publish fiction by the sensational writer Mrs Henry Wood and the dramatist Henry J. Byron, as well as embarking on his own career as a novelist with the story of a ‘fast’ lady addicted to horse-riding in *Broken To Harness* (1864). Sala went on to write a series of travelogues for *Temple Bar* on his return from the USA, entitled ‘The Streets of the World’, which can be viewed as a prologue to his subsequent career as special correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph*. He also wrote a series of discursive essays for the magazine, entitled ‘Breakfast In Bed; Or Philosophy Between the Sheets’. He admitted that they could be viewed as ‘a wretched imitation of Thackeray’s *Roundabout Papers for Cornhill*’, but Sala knew that his essays were of a more bohemian nature, revelling as they did in the joys of late rising and abstinence from work.

In 1866, *Temple Bar* was bought by the publishing house of Richard Bentley & Son, who displayed on the frontispiece of each edition the proud legend ‘Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen’. George Bentley took over as editor when Yates assumed the same office for *Tinsley’s Magazine* (1867–1892). Bentley remained in the role for nearly 30 years, and introduced a more conservative and less sensational element to the magazine. Ironically, he brought in quality writers, such as Anthony Trollope, Charles Reade, Henry Kingsley, and Edmund Gosse, but circulation figures would only ever average about 13,000. Articles were not so oriented to the metropolitan reader, and the periodical that had once, as Julia M. Chavez acknowledges, ‘advocated a uniformly skeptical attitude towards social, political, and cultural authority’ was, in an 1874 edition, producing articles such as ‘Vice Of Reading’. In the article, reading is described as an idle occupation and a poor substitute for hard work. Jennifer Phegley describes how it ‘even goes so far as to declare the invention of croquet the saviour of many women who have, as a result, avoided contributing to the “deterioration” of the human species through improper reading activities’. The magazine had come full circle, and was now producing the same conservative material as Sala’s first edition. The days when *Temple Bar* could be seen as bohemian and unconventional were well and truly at an end.

London readers still looking for the fast thrills and sensation that they had found in *Temple Bar* were forced to turn to new monthly magazine ventures, such as Yates’s *Tinsley’s Magazine* and Mary Braddon’s *Belgravia*, which was edited by the novelist from 1867 to 1876. Yates’s editorship of *Tinsley’s* meant that it would be ‘more willing to take on controversial topics than its competitors’. With its respectable London name, Braddon carried on the tradition begun by *Cornhill* and imitated by
Temple Bar, and also hoped to attract upper-class as well as middle-class readers. She produced a shilling monthly that, like Temple Bar in its early days, offered readers ‘a lively mix of poetry, social satire and topical essays’ and benefited from the serialization of the editor’s own novels. Braddon carefully constructed a magazine that blended topical and scientific articles with concepts of ‘sensation’. When she was attacked in the pages of Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine (1817–1980) for doing so, she turned to Sala to mount a stirring defence of sensation fiction. Sala duly responded by declaring that sensation had always been a part of art, literature, and society; that Shakespeare and Dickens were eminently sensational, and that those who did not appreciate sensation were dull and devoid of life. He wrote: ‘In the opinions of dolts and dullards and envious backbiters, everything is “sensational” that is vivid, and nervous, and forcible, and graphic, and true’. Sala ended his diatribe by stating that if there was no such thing as sensationalism, then: ‘let us write sonnets to Chloe, and play madrigals on the spinet, and dance minuets, and pray to Heaven against Sensationalism, the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender: and then let

FIGURE 4  An Old Bohemian — G. A. Sala in the 1880s.
Dullness reign triumphant, and Universal Darkness cover all’. Sala seems to have been willing to suggest that sensationalism was a constant cultural presence that had existed long before his bohemian circle arrived on the London scene in the 1850s, particularly when referencing his former mentor Charles Dickens. But it is worth remembering that while Sala had adopted Dickens’s reforming zeal and spirit in the articles that he commissioned for Temple Bar, he had also provoked Dickens’s ire with his article ‘A Tour in Bohemia’ and with his bohemian lifestyle. Sala’s defence of sensationalism can be seen as a validation of this lifestyle and the Temple Bar project, which had initially courted the conservative middle-class readership of Cornhill with staid and conventional contributions, but had gone on to become, for a time at least, the most unconventional of the shilling monthlies.

Notes

1 P. D. Edwards, Dickens’s Young Men (Aldershot, 1997), 41.
2 Cited in Edmund Yates, His Recollections and Experiences (1885), 238.
3 Cited in Edwards, Dickens’s Young Men, 65.
5 George Augustus Sala, Things I Have Seen and People I Have Known (1894), 3.
6 Ibid., 4–5.
7 Yates, His Recollections and Experiences, 206.
8 Edwards, Dickens’s Young Men, 31.
11 Ibid.
12 Yates, His Recollections and Experiences, 204. On 10 October 1857 in the Illustrated Times, Yates responded to Sala’s inability to produce copy and pay off his debts, and Robert Brough’s description of literary bohemia in a chapter of his serialized novel, Marston Lynch, by exclaiming: ‘the clever, dirty, drunken denizens of that territory [bohemia], men who bring their profession into such contempt, that all the members of it are compelled to suffer from their recklessness and dishonesty’. Sala responded angrily to this sneer in a letter to Yates dated six days later, and it was to be his most fervent affirmation of bohemianism and his greatest rebuff to its detractors: ‘Do you want Bohemia to open upon you with its great guns? Do you want to be utterly demolished by the saeva indignatio of such men as Brough, as Hannay, as Edwards, or as a dozen others of equal powers? Do you want to be told that you are not a professionally literary man, that you are not a member of the press; that you have no right to impugn the motives or to blacken the character of men who, whatever they may be in private life, do their duty fearlessly, honestly, and ably to the public; — who have served a long and painful apprenticeship to a thankless craft, and who look upon literature, not as a polite passetemps, but as a serious mission? Believe me, my dear Yates, that even “respectability” is evanescent, and that in your own heart [...] you would rather be a Goldsmith than a Beauclerk, rather a Savage than a Chesterfield. If you have anything to say to or against me or any other Bohemians say it at once, but in its proper place. Don’t make the columns of the IT an arena for the exposure of your personal piques or private wrongs’. Cited in Edwards, Dickens’s Young Men, 45–6.
13 Edwards, Dickens’s Young Men, 19.
15 Letter from Charles Delapryne to Sala, 19 Apr 1894, Beinecke Library, Yale University.
16 Cited in Philip Collins’s introduction to George Augustus Sala, Twice Round the Clock (Leicester, 1971), 9.
18 Cited in Ralph Straus, Sala: The Portrait of an Eminent Victorian (1942), 156.
19 Sala, Things I Have Seen, 429.
20 Ibid.
23 Ibid., 25.
25 William Thackeray, Roundabout Papers, etc. (1900), 80.


Augustus Sala, ‘In the Mining Districts’, Temple Bar (Aug 1861).

Augustus Sala, ‘Rambling about the Hebrides’, Temple Bar (Mar 1862).


Quoted in De Baun, The Story of Temple Bar, 33.

G. A. Sala, Things I Have Seen and People I Have Known, vol. 2 (1894), 250.

Daily Telegraph (1 Nov 1877); Daily Telegraph (1 Dec 1877); Daily Telegraph (24 Dec 1877).


Ibid., 7.

Ibid., 8.

Ibid., 333.

Letter from Sala to G. Cruikshank, 4 October 1860, Beinecke Library, Yale University.


For more on Saturday Review, Sala, and Dickens, see Philip Collins’s introduction to Sala, Twice Round the Clock.

Yates, His Recollections and Experiences, 273.


Ibid., 34.

Sala, Things I Have Seen, 431.


For more on Saturday Review, Sala, and Dickens, see Philip Collins’s introduction to Sala, Twice Round the Clock.

Yates, His Recollections and Experiences, 276.


Temple Bar (Sep 1861), 235.


William Thackeray, The Newcomes (1921), 66.

Yates, His Recollections and Experiences, 274.


Margot C. Finn, After Chartism (Cambridge, 1993), 203.

Ibid., 205.


Augustus Sala, ‘Travels in the County of Middlesex’, Temple Bar (Dec 1860), 79.

Charles Williams, ‘Soldiers and Volunteers’, Temple Bar (Dec 1860), 104.

F. D. Finlay, ‘Always With Us’, Temple Bar (Dec 1860), 133.


Yates, His Recollections and Experiences, 274.


Ibid., 227.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Ibid., 261.

Ibid., 266.

George Augustus Sala, The Seven Sons Of Mammon (1864), 1.

Ibid., 26.

Ibid., 18.

Ibid., 121.

Ibid., 465.

Ibid., 115.

Ibid., 134.

Ibid., 172.

Ibid., 150.

Ibid., 173.

Edwards, Dickens’s Young Men, 82.


Temple Bar, 1 (March 1861), 544.


Spectator (5 Oct 1867), 1120–1.


Letter from Braddon to Sala, April 1861, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

Jenny Uglow, introduction to Mary Braddon, Aurora Floyd (1984), xiv.

George Augustus Sala, Breakfast In Bed; Or Philosophy Between the Sheets (1863), 6.


Jennifer Phegley, Educating the Proper Woman Reader; Victorian Family Literary Magazines and the Cultural Health of the Nation (Columbus, OH, 2004), 4.

Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (eds), Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism (Gent, 2009), 629.

Ibid., 45.


Ibid., 458.
Bibliography

Anon. 1860/1861. For Better, For Worse. Temple Bar, 1.
Jeffreson, J.C. 1851. The Key Of The Street. Household Words, III.
Sala, G. A. 1851. The Key Of The Street. Household Words, III.
Yates, E. 1860. Two Rocks. Temple Bar, 1: 44.

Notes on Contributor

Peter Blake has published articles in the Dickens Quarterly and 19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Nineteenth Century, and has contributed entries to the Dictionary of 19th Journalism. He is currently working on related projects as he finishes his PhD thesis in the English department at Sussex University, with the title; ‘George Augustus Sala: The Personal Style of a Public Journalist’.