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‘A Power to Bite upon the Imagination’:
Ecclesiastical, Ideological, and Cultural Controversies
In the Domestic Novels of Charlotte Mary Yonge

In Partial Fulfillment of the Ph.D. Degree
Department of History and Humanities

Emily Pickering

Supervised by Dr. Maryann Valiulis

December 2012
DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work.

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Summary

Methods and Arguments

This dissertation investigates and interprets the ways in which Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901), one of the most popular and prolific authors of the nineteenth century, was read, represented, reviewed, and remembered. It scrutinises the ambition and reception of her domestic novels in order to develop a deeper and more detailed sense of the rivalries and reciprocities that existed between her ideals and dominant contemporary ideologies. The narratives were devised to be deployed in incendiary ecclesiastical, ideological, and cultural crises that erupted in confrontations over “Papal Aggression,” Catholic “perversion,” the Crystal Palace, the Great Census, “surplus” women, school commissions, Indian insurrection, Irish immigration, ecclesiastical innovation, sanitary reform, cholera prevention, purity preoccupations, and contamination panics, all conspicuous participants in the unruly processes of secularisation, industrialisation, urbanisation, and modernisation that complicated and contested previous constructions of the British identity at midcentury. This dissertation places her novels within broader disciplinary and interdisciplinary concerns, and aims to be especially attentive to the anxieties and antagonisms that surround contingent categories of gender, class, and race.

This study considered four of her most celebrated novels, *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853), *The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations* (1856), *Hopes and Fears* (1860), and *The Clever Woman of the Family* (1865) within the context of these contentious disputes, secure in the proposition that the purpose and value of scholarly inquiry is to disturb received ideas and disrupt conventional certainties and complacencies. Of especial interest is the uneasy intersection of imagination and ideology. In the course of my arguments, which rely on close textual analysis within wider literary, cultural, and historical contexts, I identify the ways in which imaginative works such as the novel interact with ideological constructs, and investigate how each affects and alters the other, often causing apprehension and anger but also anticipating and at times accelerating change.

Feminist scholarship has profoundly influenced and informed my analysis. In a pioneering essay Elaine Showalter exhorted the reader always to examine fugitive images and fragmented arguments that unsettle and even sabotage a text, and to expose rather than ignore the inconsistencies and instabilities that inevitably emerge. Such strategies, she maintained, enable us “to see meaning in what has previously been empty space,” an astute observation that has been enormously inspirational in this inquiry. More than a century earlier George Eliot remarked that when reading the novels of Charlotte Yonge “one has a sense ... of the incomplete narrative that cries out for further exploration.” Her apparent perplexity, never elaborated or explained, also provided intellectual impetus for this project. What Eliot envisioned, Showalter endorsed, and this dissertation emphasises, is that these narratives, resolutely anchored in the domestic, both overtly
and obliquely entered and extended contemporary debates, not only to promote but also to protest and provoke.

Inspiration and instruction also was found in the studies of post-colonial, transatlantic, and transoceanic scholars, especially Antoinette Burton, Catherine Hall, Stephen Arata, and their predecessor Edward Said, all of whom have encouraged the reader to identify and interrogate subtle, at times subterranean, codes and correspondences embedded in the text without prejudice or preconception. One of the central challenges, if not crucial responsibilities, of such studies is to recognise and “restore conflict, ambiguity, and tragedy to the center of historical process, to explore the varied and unequal terms upon which genders, classes, and races participate in the forging of a common destiny.” My analysis aspires to act on that advice and affirm that enterprise as well, seeing Yonge’s novels as sites of struggle and subversion rather than stability and certainty.

In these novels, the most celebrated of her sixty-year career, Charlotte Yonge strenuously sought to establish authority in “the forging of a common destiny.” She was a persuasive advocate whose narratives cajoled and compelled readers to accept a cluster of countercultural assumptions and assurances. As child and champion of the controversial Anglican revival known as the Oxford Movement, Yonge presented herself as the ordained ‘instrument” of God, anointed to defend church, community, and country against an array of adversaries, both actual and metaphorical, both within the nation and beyond its boundaries. At the same time her novels persistently proposed a monumental new myth of British identity. On occasion she achieved her aims, but often her efforts faltered and failed in the collision of her aggressions and anxieties. In any case her audience was always attentive and responsive. *The Church Quarterly Review* observed that the novels of Charlotte Yonge were read in “thousands of quiet homes, full of cultured women and carefully educated daughters, upon whom the effect [of her appeal] was manifest.” As I argue here, however, the extent of her influence was much greater than that demure description suggests.

The novels of Charlotte Yonge have seldom been recognised for their immense and informed involvement in contemporary controversies, or for their resistance to, and radical revision and restatement of, prevailing orthodoxies and ideologies. The aim of this dissertation is to interrogate the evidence of both text and context and to insist on an acknowledgement and appreciation of the ambition and audacity that inspired her achievement.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Maryann Valiulis, for her advice and encouragement.

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, with love and gratitude.
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**Appendix**
Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901) has always been a considerable conundrum, if not a complete cipher, to generations of readers who have been alternately enticed and dismayed by the austerity of her existence, the ardour of her Anglicanism, and above all, the abundance of her published prose. This curious response of admiration and exasperation, encompassing the extremes of both adulation and animosity, has had a contentious history of its own, but it is difficult to deny the enormity of her contemporary celebrity or dispute the authenticity of her enduring status as an archetypal Victorian, firmly established in the British middle classes and fiercely committed to the radical Anglo-Catholic resurgence known as the Oxford Movement. In an extensive appreciation that appeared in The Guardian on 6 April 1903 the anonymous author emphasised the importance of Yonge’s achievement, and the impact of her influence, insisting

[when the history of the great revival of the Church of England is written in completeness, and effects are traced back to causes, and the real actors in that great drama emerge, a considerable amount of attention will be given to the work of Miss Yonge. Few women have played a really greater part in a great religious revival.]

Ethel Romanes (1908) agreed, adding “she does indeed deserve a place among the leaders of religion in the Church of England. No-one who really wishes to know something of the history of that extraordinary revival of life and devotion in the Anglican Communion ought to ignore Charlotte Mary Yonge.” Cause and career were closely interwoven and perhaps inseparable. Her contemporary Charlotte Anne Elizabeth (C.A.E.) Moberly contended (1911) “whether amongst her neighbors, or in stories meant to influence a wider circle, the comprehensiveness of the spiritual contest inspired all Charlotte Yonge’s undertakings.”

Nevertheless there has often been a considerable reluctance, and almost a refusal, to consider the origins and implications of her commitment to her chosen cause, the repudiation of a rampant secularisation and the regeneration of a corrupt and contaminated church and country. Such studied avoidance has allowed novels and novelist, once so extravagantly admired, to be disparaged or dismissed as insipid and irrelevant, relentlessly didactic and in the end deeply dispiriting. Instead it is far more instructive, and in fact imperative, to affirm the assertion of the historian Raymond Chapman (1970), who admonished that “Charlotte Yonge . . . needs to be taken on her own terms if she is to be understood.”

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and appreciate the audacity of the author, who deployed her novels not only as instruction, entertainment, or example, but as sustained attempts to insinuate her arguments into, and assert and impose her authority upon, incendiary contemporary controversies.

This was an enterprise that was emphatically collaborative. Charlotte Yonge was the child and champion of a radical religious community, denounced by some as a cult, that was engaged in a conspicuous countercultural campaign. Its immediate aim was to agitate for the acceptance of alternate ideals and identities in the pursuit of its ultimate ambition: the establishment of a pure and perfected society whose ideologies were purged of all error and sin. In certain respects Yonge and her colleagues were spectacularly successful, as Anglo-Catholic practices and principles eventually became a powerful presence in the church, the nation, and indeed the world. Nevertheless it was a passionate, prolonged struggle against an impressive array of adversaries and alternative orthodoxies.

A close examination of contemporary cultural, intellectual, and ecclesiastical contexts and concerns is essential to an appreciation of Charlotte Yonge’s extraordinary confrontation of these enemies, often the established structures and systems and of privilege and power. It is also essential as an answer to persistent allegations of her ignorance, isolation, and insularity. Yonge’s exposure to, and engagement with, some of the most acrimonious disputes of the age was both the reason for and the result of her involvement with some of the most eminent men and women not only of Anglicanism and England, but of the British Empire and beyond. It has been claimed that everyone knew Charlotte Yonge, or had read her novels; certainly her correspondence and celebrity were immense. Over time, contemporary response to author and text became inseparable, if not identical. At the time of her death novelist and novels were absorbed and indeed fused into a single idealised identity, a national icon recognised and revered as a “British institution.” It was a remarkable reputation for a woman writer of religious tales who had spent her existence resolutely sequestered in a remote corner of Hampshire.

In a recent study Julia Courtney (2004) investigated several sources said to have influenced or inspired *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853), the novel that was “the foundation” of Yonge’s fame. Courtney concluded that “her expression, like its content, is more powerful in context than in isolation.” A similar claim surely should be made for the remarkable life and rich literary achievement of Charlotte Yonge.


1.2. Sources and Scholarship

The literary historian Robert Lee Woolf has observed that Charlotte Mary Yonge "has never been wholly forgotten, and she is perpetually being rediscovered with new enthusiasm."7 In this instance retrieval requires reclamation as well: her professional and personal reputation has only recently begun to recover from the ravages wrought by a dispiriting and dismissive account distinguished only by the author’s apparent compulsion to emphasise -- at whatever cost to her own reputation for coherence and credibility -- “the innocence, the simplicity, the scrupulous conscientiousness of the writer’s mind.”8 A critical biography is therefore essential, as is a complete bibliography9 and a comprehensive edition of her correspondence. Three scholars, Charlotte Mitchell, Ellen Jordan, and Helen Schinskie, are currently engaged in the arduous enterprise of locating, editing, and publishing Yonge’s personal and professional paper, although more work is required to identify names and explain references. The initial installment of letters (ending in 1859) is available on a website maintained by the Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship (www.cmyf.org.uk). The Fellowship also produces two sets of publications every year, a review and a more scholarly journal; and sponsors a series of seminars and excursions.10 A collection of essays organised and edited by Julia Courtney and Clemence Schultze commemorating the centenary of Yonge’s death appeared in 2008. Three years later a special issue of Women’s Writing concentrated exclusively on Charlotte Yonge and was recently reissued as a book. Articles and essays also appear with more frequency in established scholarly journals such as Victorian Studies, published by Indiana University; and Victorian Literature and Culture, published by Cambridge University.

Despite this recent resurgence of scholarly scrutiny, many of Yonge’s novels remain unobtainable except for costly and poorly produced, photocopied versions. In 1996 Oxford University Press reissued The Heir of Redclyffe; Virago Press and Beautiful Feet Books reprinted The Daisy Chain (1988, 2004). More recently Broadview Press released a critical edition of The Clever Woman of the Family, accompanied by appendices of documents that illuminate contemporary controversies such as the Oxford Movement, the Sepoy “Mutiny,” and the “Surplus Women” debate. Smaller independent publishers have occasionally offered additional titles, including The Trial and The Long Vacation. The Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship has established a lending library that circulates copies of some of the more obscure domestic novels, including Heartsease, Dynevor Terrace, The Young Stepmother, and The Six Cushions. Sixty-seven titles,

10 The Charlotte Mary Yonge Society remains active as well, meeting regularly and maintaining a library and an electronic archive.
including *The Dove in the Eagle’s Nest*, *The Little Duke* and *The Lances of Lynwood*, are available on the Internet through the auspices of Project Gutenberg, which provides access to texts whose copyrights have expired. Issues of *The Monthly Packet*, however, are notoriously impossible to procure, although The British Library and the Women’s Library in London have complete sets. In 2006 Gavin Budge of the University of Central England announced the inauguration of a project to produce an electronic copy of the early issues of *The Monthly Packet*, which would then be made available on the academic website *Romantic Circles*, www.rc.umd.edu., sponsored by the University of Maryland.

In the United Kingdom Girton College at Cambridge University has an impressive collection of Yonge’s published work, as well as an important archive of papers from various sources. Most of these papers consist of correspondence, including personal letters to William Heathcote (1801-1881), Squire of Hursley and Member of Parliament for Hampshire North between 1837 and 1849 and for Oxford University between 1854 and 1868; and exchanges with her London publisher A.D. Innes. Of particular interest is her correspondence with Elizabeth Missing Sewell (1815-1906), a frequent contributor to *The Monthly Packet* with whom Yonge collaborated on a set of primary and secondary school texts entitled *Historical Selections* (1888); and with Emily Davies (1830-1921), founder and first Mistress of Girton, who unsuccessfully sought her assistance for a series of educational initiatives involving access to higher education for women. The Girton archive also includes a small collection of personal photographs, primarily of Charlotte Yonge but also of a few of her acquaintances. Examples of published material, some with Yonge as author, translator, or editor, may also be inspected; in a few instances these include biographical information. These papers were acquired as gifts or bequests from three sources: A.N.D. Atkinson (date and other details unknown); Charlotte Ridding (1862-1946; Girton 1883) in 1935 and from 1941-1944; and Harold James Ruthven Murray, brother of Hilda Murray (Girton 1915) and father of K.M.E. Murray (Girton 1938), both avid readers and ardent admirers of the novels of Charlotte Yonge.

Many of Yonge’s personal papers are scattered amongst the collections of several Oxford colleges, including St. Hilda’s, St. Hugh’s, Somerville (the Marghanita Lanski Collection), and Keble; the original *Barnacle* papers are in the possession of Lady Margaret Hall. Yonge family papers also are held in the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office; the Hampshire Record Office has several “scrapbooks,” which consist of stories, poems, essays, and illustrations created and collated by members of the Heatcote family. Much of the material in these local archives remained uncatalogued but is available for inspection upon written request.

In the United States Widener Library at Harvard University and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (The James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection) of Yale University contain a few personal papers, but the most impressive collection by far is that of Princeton University (The Morris L. Parrish Collection of Victorian Novelists), which includes nearly two hundred letters. Princeton also has in its possession the full manuscripts of five novels (*The Carbonels*, *The Constable’s Tower*, *The Cook and the Captive*, *The Crossroads*, and *The
Wardship of Steepcombe), as well as the partial manuscripts of six others. It is of course entirely possible that these institutions will add to their archives by acquiring additional papers and photographs, many continue to be offered for sale on the Internet.

One of the most significant sources of information on Charlotte Yonge are the papers held in the archives of the Charlotte Mary Yonge Society, some of which were selected and edited by Georgina Battiscombe and Marghanita Lanski and published as a collection entitled *A Chaplet for Charlotte Yonge* (1965). I wish to thank Mary Shakeshaft, the Secretary of the Society, for her generosity in allowing me access to the unpublished essays and appreciations, many of which were inspirational to my own research and reading of the novels.


These studies address an impressive array of subjects from an assortment of perspectives, but one of their common aims is to place Charlotte Yonge in precise historical, intellectual, or cultural contexts, assuredly an essential prerequisite for any informed appreciation of her inspiration, achievement, or influence. All too often, however, they seem intent on containing or even contorting the text, dismissing evidence, discounting ironies, or disregarding implications that are sometimes subtle but on occasion quite conspicuous. This inquiry intends something altogether different, steadfastly resisting the allure of a single methodology or set of meanings, insisting instead that a robust interdisciplinary interpretation of the novels of Charlotte Yonge will inexorably result in a richer analysis that affirms, rather than avoids, their ambition and indeed audacity.11

In the end I hope to present accurate and attentive readings that are anchored both in history and literature, seeking to establish linkages and examine lacunae that recognise rather than retreat from apparent anxieties and antagonisms and thus complicate and challenge single dimensional and perhaps simpler responses to the narratives. In his influential study *Deconstructing History* (1997) Alan Munslow has observed that “viewing history as a literary artifact recognises the importance

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11 In this inquiry I define “interdisciplinary” as “a knowledge view and curriculum approach that consciously applies methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central theme, issue, problem, topic, or experience.” See Heidi Hayes Jacobs, *Interdisciplinary Curriculum: Design and Implementation*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1989, 8.
of narrative explanation in our lives as well as in the study of the past, and it ought to liberate historians as we try to narrate the disruptive discontinuity and chaos of the past for and in the present.’’ He added “[b]ecause today we doubt ... empiricist notions of certainty, veracity, and a socially and morally independent standpoint, there is no more history in the traditional realist sense; there are only possible narrative representations in, and of, the past, and none can claim to know the past as it actually was.”

Intriguing possibilities for interdisciplinary inquiry of multiple narratives were suggested at conferences organised by the British Association of Victorian Studies and the North American Victorian Studies Association. The enormous success of a symposium (2001) in central London that commemorated the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Crystal Palace signaled the vigor and vitality of Victorian scholarship, and in the versatility of its interests was as visionary and inventive as the Great Exhibition itself. Inspired, influenced, and instructed by several of the papers presented in these sessions, my arguments here are intent on repudiating and rupturing the rigid boundaries that separate disciplines, domains, and discourses, seeking to investigate and impose order on the unwieldy and unstable spaces that exist among highly artificial categories, classifications, and cultural constructs. Perhaps no dominant or even entirely distinct trajectory has emerged, although several may be discerned and documented, as I have here. In any case it can be argued that this is a preliminary and perhaps provisional but not permanent consequence to be celebrated rather than deplored, for it demonstrates the emerging and evolving state of Yonge scholarship: poised to pursue many possibilities, some of which I will describe in my conclusion.

Postcolonial and transatlantic studies provided instruction and in some instances structure for this analysis (see Chapter Four), but the innovative strategies of feminist scholarship have suggested some of the greatest possibilities for a reconsideration of the life and legacy of Charlotte Yonge: interrogating established systems and structures of power and illuminating, rather than ignoring, the inconsistencies, implausibilities, and other imperfections of that restless and recalcitrant construct we call the text. Elaine Showalter has argued that such practices enable the attentive reader to “see meaning in what has previously been empty space,” or as George Eliot remarked, to resolve “the incomplete narrative that cries out for further exploration.”

To describe Yonge’s novels as empty or incomplete may on the surface seem deliberately provocative, or as Talia Schaffer might argue, decidedly “perverse;” their dense domestic detail and “deafening” dialogue seem to omit nothing. It may be more appropriate to consider them, as several scholars have, as sites of confinement, congestion, and claustrophobia. Neither reading of these troubled texts, however, is entirely adequate, appearing at times partial, problematic, and perhaps

13 Ibid., 16.
even perfunctory. Evidence is often equivocal or elusive; the narratives seem to hesitate, halt, and
double back on themselves, either repeating or repudiating the absolutes that are strenuously
endorsed elsewhere. Arguments and assumptions continuously emerge, retreat, and are replaced.
Resolutions are deferred, displaced, or denied. As a result the novels are often compromised or
in crisis: marked by multiple inconsistencies of characterisation, doubling of patterning and
perspective, cryptic or coded references, and enforced, sometimes incongruous, closure.

Several scholars have discerned this undercurrent of unease, and it is remarkable how
often the word “double” recurs in their analyses. Catherine Sandbach-Dahlstrom addressed “the
psychology of the double” in which, she argued, “the reader senses the presence of two presences:
the didactic presence of the author and the creative presence of the implied author.”\(^{15}\) David
Brownell, in “The Two Worlds of Charlotte Yonge;” Barbara Dennis, in “The Two Voices of
Charlotte Yonge;” and Julia Courtney in an essay on *The Heir of Redclyffe* also have discerned
“dual discourses” that threaten to disrupt the narratives.\(^{16}\) Some critics have contended that the
incompatibility of Yonge’s spiritual and secular influences created serious discrepancies of style or
sympathy.\(^{17}\) However, a more profound and persistent ambivalence is also present. Showalter (1986)
and others have identified the “double-edged discourse” of women’s writing, in which an apparent
acquiescence to authority is unsettled by a subterranean systematic resistance. Such a discourse,
Showalter asserted, “embodies the social, literary, and cultural heritages of both the dominant [male]
and the muted [female].”\(^{18}\) Perhaps this is similar to Talia Schaffer’s sense of the “intemperate
tameness’’ and “curiously addictive”\(^{19}\) quality that in her estimation characterises the texts. This also
suggests the inadequacies of a single approach in attempting to analyse such rich and restless
narratives.

In the course of this dissertation I will demonstrate that despite their reputation for simplicity and
insularity the novels of Charlotte Yonge are documents of both profound resistance and powerful
affirmation, of deference and defiance that reflect and resonate with the anxieties and antagonisms
of the age. I intend to analyse four texts that appeared at midcentury, the period in which Yonge
established and consolidated her celebrity (1853-1865). I will investigate how each interrogates
incendiary issues of allegiance, authority, and identity, including complex and often contradictory
constructions and categories of gender, race, class; and investigates contested affiliations and
associations with church, community, and country.

\(^{15}\) Catherine Sandbach-Dahlstrom, *‘Be Good Sweet Maid:’ Charlotte Yonge’s Domestic Fiction: A Study

\(^{16}\) Julia Courtney, “‘Sintram’ and ‘The Heir of Redclyffe,” *Review of Charlotte M. Yonge Fellowship*
18 (Spring 2004), 7.

\(^{17}\) Brownell, “The Two Worlds of Charlotte Yonge;” Barbara Dennis, “The Two Voices of Charlotte
Yonge,” *Durham University Journal,* n.s 34 (1973), 181-188.

Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature, and Theory,* 261.

\(^{19}\) Schaffer, “The Mysterious Magnum Bonum: Fighting to Read Charlotte Yonge,” *Nineteenth Century
Chapter Three will center on the novels of the 1850s: *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853) and *The Daisy Chain* (1856). In these narratives Yonge introduced and celebrated the High Church countercultural experiment in her portrayal of an idealised Anglican community in the provincial parish, the symbolic core of England and Empire. Imaginative spaces are scrupulously separated and sedulously sealed to prevent disruptions of and dangers to static sites of sanctuary and sufficiency, each narrative ending almost as it began. Implications of events that prompted enormous anxiety from that decade, the Papal Aggression Crisis, the Great Exhibition, and the Great Census, will also be examined, as will the ideological instabilities and cultural uncertainties exposed and exacerbated by the prolonged and increasingly problematic processes of the imperial enterprise.

Chapter Four will consider two novels of the 1860s: *Hopes and Fears, or Scenes from the Life of a Spinster* (1860), and *The Clever Woman of the Family* (1865). The Anglo-Catholic community is apparently confident and increasingly assertive in these novels, aggressively establishing and exporting ideologies and organising initiatives and institutions in city and colony. As the fierce Tractarian sense of triumph begins to falter, the narratives are conspicuously troubled with and tested by themes and tropes of temptation and transgression. Two conspicuously contentious phenomena of this period, the Ritualist riots in the inner cities and the imperialist crisis created by the reverberations of catastrophic events in India, actual and imagined, will inform my interpretation of these texts.

Chapter Five will present conclusions and suggest possibilities for further study, concentrating on a pair of domestic novels that appeared in the 1870s: *The Pillars of the House, or Under Wode, Under Rood* (1873) and *The Three Brides* (1876). Both are essentially narratives of resignation and retreat that ironically take refuge in utopian visions of a secure if not sequestered community, seeking renewal of lapsed confidence and lost certainties. Both are characterised by tropes of suffering and survival and share an almost pathological preoccupation with the ideals of purity and perfection. Yonge repeatedly invokes images that signal contemporary controversies over the causes and containment of contagion and contamination, especially the “Asiatic Cholera” that came, it was alleged, from India, and was carried by, it was claimed, the Irish immigrants of inner cities. The published proceedings of International Conferences on Cholera and other Pestilent Diseases (Constantinople, 1866; Vienna, 1874) and the principles and popularity of the Purity Movement sponsored and supported by the Anglican Church will provide essential cultural and ideological context.

During these three decades, the most celebrated of her career, Charlotte Yonge deliberately sought to establish and extend her influence and authority. As child and champion of the controversial Anglican revival known as the Oxford Movement, she imagined and presented herself as an instrument ordained to defend church and country against an array of insidious cultural, moral,
and ideological adversaries. Yonge was a formidable advocate herself, a persuasive propagandist whose narratives exhorted readers to accept and affirm a cluster of controversial assumptions and assurances. Her novels persistently promoted a monumental new myth of national identity, one at least partially based on the impulses and imperatives of sectarian strife and imperialist othering. Her aim was to relocate power and authority and so regenerate a contaminated and corrupt (both a dissolute and a diseased) order. In the end, she imagined an alternate vision of a more exalted existence, one based on her own carefully constructed identity: English, Anglican, female. At times her efforts failed in the collision of her aggression and her apprehension. Her novels therefore are often sites of strife and struggle rather than stability.

The narratives of Charlotte Yonge have never been recognised for their immense and informed resistance to, and radical restatement of, prevailing ideologies and orthodoxies. The aim of this dissertation is to interrogate both text and context in order to initiate an acknowledgement and appreciation of the ambition and audacity that inspired her achievement. In the course of my analysis I will assert that Yonge may indeed be recognised as a feminist, instrumental in presenting and promoting abundant and authentic intellectual opportunities for women, even if, as seems inarguable, her existence and her endeavours often do not easily conform to or comply with our preconceived and perhaps unnecessarily partial notions of what ‘feminism’ might (or even should) involve or imply.
Belief or unbelief
Bears upon life, determines its whole course,
Begins at the beginning.
  Robert Browning, 'Bishop Blougram's Apology'

The most common question (often presented as a criticism or complaint) concerning the life of Charlotte Mary Yonge is why she was apparently content to have so little of it. She was born where she was to live and to die, "in the shadow of Otterbourne Church," in the Hampshire village of Otterbourne, near Hursley. Otterbourne lies four miles to the southwest of the cathedral city of Winchester on what was once the main route from London to Southampton. In the nineteenth century this provincial community, prosperous and placid, had numerous ancient associations with the University of Oxford, in particular with Magdalen College.

One of the independent and most prominent local landowners was William Crawley Yonge (1795-1854), a veteran of Waterloo and the Peninsular Wars, whose wife, Frances Mary Bargus Yonge (1795-1868), gave birth to their only daughter, Charlotte Mary, on 11 August 1823. Both parents were the children of clergymen, and their early affection was established on and enriched by similar religious sympathies and susceptibilities, ardent but austere, that would determine and dominate all other interests and enthusiasms during their marriage. The Yonge establishment was admired for an atmosphere of exemplary earnestness and intellectual and spiritual energy and exactitude. Charlotte Yonge, an only child until the birth of her brother Julian (1830-1891), was educated at home on the formidable Edgeworth system, by both parents.

Eventually additional masters were engaged, but most of her instruction was devised and directed by William Yonge, a strict disciplinarian "who believed in higher education for women but deprecated any liberty for them." Under his stern tutelage her first texts included Rollin's Ancient History (1730-1738); instructional primers by Sarah Trimmer such as Sacred History Adapted to the Comprehension of Young Persons (1784); and cautionary tales such as The Fairchild Family (1818) by Mary Martha Sherwood. The Christian allegory The Pilgrim's
Progress from *This World to That Which is to Come* (1678) by John Bunyan, was also read, both for reference and recreation. The struggles of the protagonist Pilgrim against his perpetual adversaries, Pope and Pagan, provided readers with a powerful literary context for contemplating the causes and consequences of contemporary sectarian strife.

The Edgeworth system of childhood education was inherently moral; it commended application and industry and admonished and condemned idleness as “the greatest evil.” Lessons were scrupulously prepared and strictly monitored; at the age of five Charlotte Yonge had “done since the first of August 1016 lessons: 537 very well, 442 well, 37 badly. Reading, spelling, poetry one hour every day; geography, arithmetic, grammar twice a week; history and Catechism, once.” In addition she was required to learn at least the rudiments of Latin, French, Spanish, German, Italian, and classical Greek. Conspicuously absent was the standard set of ornamental “female accomplishments,” the demonstrable proficiency in dance, music, and needlework that often defined women’s education at that time, although instruction in the elements of drawing, the “exact and minute copying of line engravings,” was provided by Frances Yonge. Also missing was the mindless and meretricious memorisation of minute detail evoked by Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her poem “Aurora Leigh” (1864):

> I learned the royal genealogies  
> Of Ovideo, the internal law  
> Of the Burmese empire,—by how many feet  
> Mount Chimborazo outsoars Teneriffe.  
> And I draw ... costumes  
> From French engravings, nereids neatly draped,  
> (With smirks of simmering godship)—I washed in  
> Landscapes from nature (rather say, washed out).  
> I danced the polka and cellarius,  
> Spun glass, stuffed birds, and modelled flowers in wax....


26 Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 62.

27 Battiscombe once observed, without elaboration, that “[i]t is odd that this most insular of writers should have so thorough a grounding in foreign languages.” *Charlotte Yonge*, 54.


29 Elizabeth Barrett Browning, “Aurora Leigh,” 1864; Book One, lines 420-430.
Only once did Charlotte Yonge express, or at least record, a mild objection to the extreme rigour of this idiosyncratic regimen, observing that “there was nothing to make me think myself important; I was repressed when I was troublesome, made to be obedient or to suffer for it, and was allowed few mere indulgences ... and no holidays....” Excellence was the expectation. Yonge admitted plaintively, “I was haunted occasionally by doubts whether I were not deficient, till I was nearly grown up.” These arrangements continued for more than fifteen years, and evidently ended at her father’s request rather than her own: “[a]nd we went on till I was some years past twenty, and had worked up to the point of such Greek, Euclid, and Algebra as had furnished for the Etonian and soldier of sixteen, till his eyes were troubled by Homer and Algebra, and his time too fully occupied.” Perhaps both recognised that she was at the point of surpassing him.

Yet for Charlotte Yonge intensive intellectual endeavour, informed by the precepts and practices of Anglicanism, would continue to be the centerpiece of her existence. Her knowledge of classic and contemporary literature, both in the original and in translation, was prodigious; C.A.E. Moberly, who knew her well, contended “she read everything and forgot nothing.” Her favorite authors were the greatest of British poets, playwrights, and novelists, Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare (in the expurgated edition of Thomas Bowdler, first published in 1807 as *The Family Shakespeare*), and Walter Scott, whose literary achievement would inspire her own passionate interest in historical and antiquarian research.

Yonge’s meticulous investigation of early archival sources from France, Germany, Italy, and Greece, as well as England, constitutes her greatest claim to serious scholarly status. Her efforts are evident in her many historical and scriptural studies, but several of her novels, some set during the European Renaissance or Reformation, also demonstrate an extraordinary erudition. In the preface to *The Armourer’s ‘Prentices* (1894), which opens in 1515, Yonge presented an extensive array of primary printed sources, declaring perhaps as a disclaimer “I mention all this because I have so often been asked for authorities in historical tales that I think people prefer to have what the French appropriately call ‘pieces justicatives.’” For this single volume she consulted several contemporary surveys and accounts of London, biographies and appreciations of Sir Thomas More, chronicles of the Tudor dynasty, and histories of Winchester, England, and Spain. In an article on “Authorship” that appeared in a collection of essays entitled *Ladies at Work: Papers on Paid Employment for Ladies by Experts in the Several Branches* (1893), Yonge counseled her readers on their professional responsibility to spurn slovenliness and superficiality.

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30 Yonge, autobiographical fragment quoted in Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 56.
31 Ibid., 108.
32 Moberly, *Dulce Domum*, 10. Moberly (1846-1937) became the first principal of St. Hugh’s College, Oxford (1886-1915); she also wrote under the name of Elizabeth Morrison.
33 Her taste was not exclusively exalted, however; Yonge also delighted in the nonsense verse and humor of Lewis Carroll (1832-1898) and Edward Lear (1812-1888). The titles of many of her novels involve wordplay.
in their scholarship; and above all else, she commanded them to “[v]erify whatever you have set down.” This advice was than always heeded herself. Early in her career she had access to excellent local libraries at Hursley and Winchester, and later to the great national collections at Oxford, Edinburgh, and London. On occasion she asked her publishers for advice or assistance in pursuing any sources that confounded or eluded her.

More comprehensive and exhaustive still her were inquiries into etymology and philology for an exploration of the origins of names. As with so much of her work, early enthusiasm evolved into sustained serious study. The History of Christian Names (1863) considered “the capabilities of the subject of comparative nomenclature ... as an illustration of language, national character, religion, and taste.” Yonge examined Greek, Hebrew, Celtic, Gaelic, Teutonic, and Slavonic sources, among others, and corresponded with and consulted authorities of national and international renown; the result is a massive work whose magisterial scholarship has seldom been superseded.

Yonge maintained somewhat less esoteric interests as well. Accuracy and precision also were essential to her studies of local botany and conchology. Her extensive collections of plants and shells, scrupulously classified and sedulously catalogued, and her reference materials, were bequeathed, first to a favourite niece, Helen Emma Yonge, and upon her death to Winchester College, where they remain. Her last published work was an essay on flowers that appeared after her death in Friendly Leaves, the magazine of the Girls’ Friendly Society, in June 1901.

Little seemed to disrupt the rhythm and routine of her early existence, dismissed as “uneventful” and “most insular” by Georgina Battiscombe and described as “very quiet” by her cousin.

38 In the preface Yonge indicated that the subject had been of interest to her “for at least twenty years, from the time when it was first taken up as a matter of amusement.”
40 See “The Egyptian Origin of Some Personal Names,” in The Journal of the American Oriental Society (1936), 189-192. In the introduction to The Oxford Dictionary of Christian Names E.C. Witherby described The History of Christian Names as “a great deal better than anything that had gone before and, indeed, than most of its successors.... It has ever since remained the standard work on the subject in English.” Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945, iii. The study was also much admired by John Ruskin.
41 Botany and conchology were considered “appropriate” sciences for women. See Emanuel D. Rudolph, “How It Developed that Botany was the Science Thought Most Suitable for Victorian Young Ladies,” in Children’s Literature 2. Storrs: University of Connecticut Press, 1973. For examples of Yonge’s own contributions see John Keble’s Parishes: A History of Hursley and Otterbourne (1898), which includes a catalogue of local plants and animals; The Herb of the Field (1887); and The Instructive Picture Book, or Adventures in the Vegetable World (1857).
colleague, and collaborator Christabel Coleridge. In reality, however, the tumult of the times resonated even in the remote recesses of Hampshire. The passionately contested passage of the Great Reform Act of 1832, which enfranchised a greater proportion of the adult male population of the manufacturing cities of the midlands and thus expanded the electorate, caused much consternation in Otterbourne and, it was claimed, “cast a gloom over the hereditary Toryism of the Yonges.” Yonge recalled wryly that “the first political event I remember at all was the Reform Bill, and the mournful predictions my uncle used to make about it, till I expected to see a repetition of the Reign of Terror.” She also alluded to the great agricultural unrest that erupted throughout England in the 1830s, the result of recurrent cycles of crop failure and the return of the cholera epidemic. Yonge remembered the distress of her nursery maid, Charlotte Mason, whose brothers were convicted of a series of seditious activities, including rioting and rickburning, and sentenced to death. Later both men were granted reprieves and transported to Australia. These national crises were perhaps among the reasons that the Yonges invariably avoided the anxieties and alarms of London and remained resolutely at Otterbourne.

Nevertheless in 1857 Charlotte Yonge crossed the Irish Sea to take part in the wedding of her cousin, Jane Seaton, the daughter of John Colbourne, Lord Seaton, then governor of the Royal Hospital in Dublin. On 1 October she visited Trinity College, Dublin, and especially admired the “new museum with green Galway marble columns” and the ancient sacred manuscripts it contained, including the Books of Kells and a fifteenth-century missal from St. Agnes’s Convent. There was a far less favorable impression of “a wonderful chapel of Dr. Newman’s;” its famously flamboyant frescoes dismissed as “melancholy work.” But such opportunities were rare; Yonge was to venture abroad only once more, to France, in 1869, after the death of her parents.

Still, occasional excursions were made to the Devonshire homes of Bargus, Coleridge, and Yonge cousins, but the close connection was chiefly sustained through constant correspondence. The most common and compelling topics were not national or even local political and ecclesiastical concerns, but the chronic illness or invalidism of a kinsman or kinswoman, delicately referred to as the result of an “affection,” “atrophy,” “issue,” or “effusion,” described in detail and discussed

42 Coleridge, Introduction to Charlotte Mary Yonge, v. In a posthumous appreciation in the Church Quarterly Review in January 1904 the anonymous author referred to Yonge’s existence as “tethered” and “stifled;” 104, 355.
43 Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 41.
44 Quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 80.
45 Yonge later depicted these disturbances in My Young Alcides (1875) and The Carbonels (1895). She also wrote a short story for children entitled The Little Rickburners (1886).
46 Quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 215. Newman was the rector of the Catholic University in Dublin from 1851 to 1858. Yonge also visited the Lakes of Killarney, the ruins of the religious settlement at Glendalough, and the seaside at Bray before returning to Dublin. Some of her experiences were subsequently recast in fictional form in the novel Hopes and Fears, or Scenes from the Life of a Spinster, published in 1860. Yonge’s relationship with Ireland and the Irish would remain complicated; see Chapters Four and Five below.
with interest.\footnote{47} Such exchanges signaled what would become another recurrent theme, both in her life and in her narratives. Yonge's own constitution remained robust and her industry remarkable until her final illness, but for some critics her intimate involvement with a series of permanent invalids implied a dependency or deficit of her own.

For the most part, however, the members of the extended and extensive Yonge family were engaged, enterprising, and accomplished. Many, including William Yonge, had successful military careers. As a young man he had served with the Duke of Wellington in the celebrated 52nd Light Infantry Division, which saw action in the battles of Corunna, Salamanca, and Toulouse, in the Peninsular campaign of the Napoleonic wars, and again at Waterloo. Sir John Colborne, later Lord Seaton (1778-1863), also served his country in the Peninsular Wars, and at Waterloo commanded the regiments responsible for the decisive defeat of Napoleon’s most elite troops, the fabled Old Guard. Despite her reputation for reticence and reserve, Charlotte Yonge delighted in the reminiscences of these martial exploits and reportedly “loved to discuss the Peninsular War, and every detail of the battle of Waterloo, as she had heard of it through her uncle, Lord Seaton,”\footnote{48} whom she repeatedly heralded as a “hero,” not only of the army, but of a more formidable fighting force, “the Church Militant.”

Members of Yonge’s immediate or extended family fought not only in every war but in every significant battle that involved British armed forces in the nineteenth century,\footnote{49} including imperialist engagements in the Crimea, the Sudan, India, and the Transvaal. All were enthusiastic exponents of Empire. Julian Yonge enlisted with the Hampshire Rifle Brigade during the Crimean conflict, but was almost immediately invalided home with a severe case of sunstroke. Near the end of her life Charlotte Yonge learned with sorrow of the death of his youngest son from wounds sustained at the battle of the Limpopo River, a campaign waged in the opening weeks of the Second Boer War (1899).

Other relations also went abroad as agents, administrators, or ambassadors for the Colonial and Foreign Services Office. Lord Seaton again was a most celebrated and conspicuous example: at various times he served the Empire as lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada (1828-

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\footnote{47} According to Margaret Mare and Alice M. Percival “[i]llness, as well as death, played a vastly important part in the lives of Victorian families and is described by Miss Yonge as accompanied by a quite incredible series of symptoms…. She frequently made up in imagination what she lacked in knowledge.” \textit{Victorian Best-Seller: The World of Charlotte M. Yonge.} London: Harrap, 1947, 262. Alethea Hayter emphatically disagreed, contending that Yonge “described symptoms with a clinical perspicacity worthy of her medical ancestors,” one of whom was renowned for his expertise in the controversial new surgical procedure of trepanning. \textit{Charlotte Yonge,} 36. Yonge was surrounded by invalids, both male and female, including her mother, her brother, John and Charlotte Keble, her close companion and colleague Marianne Dyson, and her permanent houseguest Gertrude Walter. For a contemporary account of invalidism see “Vapours, Fears, and Tremors,” \textit{Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine} 1140, 105 (February 1869), 228-237. See also Pat Jalland, \textit{Death in the Victorian Family.} Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, and Mia Chen, “‘And There Was No Helping It:’ Disability and Social Reproduction in Charlotte Yonge’s ‘The Daisy Chain.’” \textit{Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies,} 4.2 (Summer 2008).

\footnote{48} Moberly, \textit{Dulce Domum,} 103; Battiscombe, \textit{Charlotte Mary Yonge,} 81.

\footnote{49} Dennis, \textit{Charlotte Yonge,} 13.
1836), commissioner of the Ionian Islands (1843-1849), and governor and commander of the Royal Hospital in Dublin (1855-1860). He continued to receive awards and accolades, and in 1860 was appointed a British field marshal. Yonge reveled in his celebrity.  

Anecdotes illustrating public and private examples of service and sacrifice, and of their inverse, selfishness and cowardice, were to appear again and again in Yonge’s correspondence and in her narratives. Her first hero outside her immediate family was probably Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington (1769-1852), subsequently head of those national institutions (apart from the Anglican Church) most revered by the Yonge family: the Army, the University of Oxford, the Conservative Party, the Government. As England’s greatest soldier, statesman, and champion, his was a presence and persona so powerful and pervasive that it was considered iconic, the supreme symbol of Britain itself. It was under his command at Waterloo, the historian Linda Colley has suggested (1992), that Britain first found its modern identity: assertive, aggressive, tenacious, truculent, and ultimately triumphalist, a stalwart sovereign state “aided by its Protestant ally, Prussia, and arrayed against its greatest enemy, Catholic and increasingly atheist [and revolutionary] France.” For the Yonge family, which had personal connections with Wellington as well as with Waterloo, affection and admiration were suffused with adulation and awe. It is scarcely surprising that one of the very few instances that William and Frances Yonge could be induced to leave Hampshire was to attend the installation of the Duke as Chancellor of Oxford in July 1834; and their daughter, also in attendance, never forgot the solemn pageantry of the ceremony.

Charlotte Yonge may have had another reason to recall that first encounter with greatness: in time and with encouragement she came to consider herself a sort of champion as well—a steadfast and seasoned combatant in the sectarian strife that threatened to shatter the faith and intellectual and spiritual fortitude that she saw as so integral to the foundation of England and the formation of English identity. She too, would have an iconic, national presence, one that she herself, by enterprise and example, had deliberately done much to construct, consolidate, and circulate.

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51 Wellington was of Irish extraction, as were many of the men under his command.
1.3.1. The Oxford Movement

I learned the collects and the catechism,
The creeds, from Athanasius back to Nice,
The Articles, the Tracts against the times...

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 'Aurora Leigh'
Book I, lines 392-394

I have been a companion of the Saints, whatever I am myself.
Charlotte Mary Yonge

The Yonges had always been known for a formidable, even a fanatical, devotion to Anglicanism, which had been established as the national Church of England in the sixteenth century. Its original aim was to establish a *via media*, a middle way between the rampant excess (it was said) of Rome and the irreverent error (it was said) of the Reformation. Over the years, however, some alleged that the Church had squandered its early energies and had become increasingly somnolent and indeed senescent. In response to this general climate of atrophy and indifference a radical resurgence of Anglicanism appeared in the early 1830s, initially known as The Oxford Movement, for its place of origin, or as Tractarianism, for its most famous publications, *The Tracts for the Times* (1833-1841). The founders of the Movement, scholars and churchmen, argued aggressively for a renewal of an authentic, “pure and Catholic” Christianity based on ancient ecclesiastical authority, a greater reliance on the rubric of the Anglican Prayer Book, and a revival of public and private devotional discipline. Even more contentious was their combative call for a new emphasis on social activism, which would be based in the parish but aimed at the world. Tractarian churchmen and churchwomen pursued these aims within a precise ideological and denominational space, placing themselves, as R.H. Hutton put it, “between the narrow crypts of Low Evangelical doctrine and the venerable decay of the High Church towers above.”

William and Frances Yonge had been early and ardent adherents of this High Church, or Anglo-Catholic, Movement, as it would eventually be known. In time other names were devised and deployed by those who regarded the Tractarians as members of a secret cult with a surreptitious agenda based on dangerously schismatic attitudes and allegiances.

Opprobrium and opposition seemed only to strengthen the resolve of the early Movement, which was conceived as an audacious countercultural experiment and sustained by anger and

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From the first it sought controversy and soon found it, attracting both impassioned adherents and implacable adversaries. The Evangelical clergyman James Garbett (1802-1879), who succeeded the Tractarian John Keble in the prestigious and very public position of Professor of Poetry at Oxford, concluded a lecture entitled “Christ, as Prophet, Priest, and King: Being a Vindication of the Church of England from Theological Novelties” (1842) with a comprehensive condemnation of High Church principles:

The system is Romanism; not partially, but essentially; not yet Romanism, indeed, as historical recollections have expressed it, or as the conclusions of reason have demonstrated it to be; not Romanism in all its palpable and revolt ing incongruities to the heart and understanding. But — Romanism, as it has, in all ages, represented itself to the young and to the devout — Romanism, as it is when purified by elevated feelings, and minds originally trained in Scripture truth — Romanism, as it combines with itself all that is grand and beautiful in art, specious in reason and seductive in sentiment ... Romanism, still perverting the truth of the Gospel while it decorates it — Romanism, which though it looks paternally and benignly in the amiable spirits of its present advocates, involves principles ever fatal to human liberty and progression — Romanism, with the establishment of whose theory the Articles of the Church of England cannot co-exist, and whose unseen and unavow ed operations in practice will paralyse her spiritual power and destroy the Church of Christ, by substituting human forms for her Prophet, Priest and King.

Garbett reluctantly conceded that the leaders of the Oxford Movement had “successfully struck some deep chord—had hit on some real wants of the period ... they possessed ... occasionally a moving and almost tragic eloquence; and a rich scattering over them of really profound thoughts, which probed unsparingly the religious and political deficiencies of the times.” Such power, however, derived not from a compelling agenda or convincing argument. As Raymond Chapman observed, the Oxford Movement succeeded because its priests and partisans were “certain where their contemporaries were doubtful; impassioned where they were indifferent.”

Certainly the Yonges were entirely persuaded: their energies, enthusiasms, and even existences were often dictated by and dedicated to Church causes, in England and throughout the Empire. Charlotte Yonge’s cousin, William Gibbs (1790-1875), of Somersetshire and London, was an astute entrepreneur whose immense fortune, amassed in the guano trade in the former

57 Chapman, Faith and Revolt; 2.
Spanish colonies of South America, enabled him to establish and endow many Tractarian enterprises, including schools, churches, and missions, both in Britain and abroad.\(^{58}\) After his death his widow, Blanche Crawley Gibbs (1818-1887), continued this financial support, and in certain instances increased it.\(^{59}\) Their daughter Alice was the wife of the Tractarian clergyman Alfred Gurney (1843-1898), who served as vicar of one of the most celebrated and controversial High Anglican (later known as Ritualist) churches in London, St. Barnabas, Pimlico (see Chapter Three below). A cousin, John Coleridge Patteson (1827-1871), the first and most famous missionary bishop of Melanesia, was martyred in the Loyalty Islands, in the South Pacific. Still other cousins, male and female, were instructors and administrators involved with educational institutions and initiatives founded on, and meant to further, Tractarian ideals.

William Yonge’s own conspicuous contribution to the Oxford Movement consisted of a campaign of churchbuilding in Otterbourne and in Ampfield, an adjacent parish, both of which belonged to Hursley.\(^{60}\) His daughter later delicately described his original and somewhat awkward effort at Otterbourne as deliberately designed in the “old decorated style,” that is, early English, and emphatically neither classical nor continental.\(^{61}\) Frances Yonge, for her part in this enterprise, established an affiliated church school, persistently promoted parochial visits among the poor, and published a popular collection of poems and hymns for children.

Their most significant involvement with the Oxford Movement, however, would be their enduring influence on the character and concerns of their daughter, whose initiation and indoctrination into the Tractarian cause came at an early age. Attendance at church services and affiliated schools was at first deemed satisfactory and sufficient, but a sense of restlessness,\(^{62}\)

\(^{58}\) During his lifetime Gibbs was generally considered the richest commoner and one of the most generous philanthropists in England; he is said to have provided the money for at least nineteen new churches in London as well as in the country. Christabel Coleridge described him as “one of those great merchant princes of whom it may truly be said that ‘their merchandise and their hire is holiness to the Lord.’” Charlotte Mary Yonge, 273. Gibbs’s estate of Tyntesfield, seven miles south of Bristol, was designed by Arthur Blomfield (1829-1899), a son of Charles Blomfield, the Bishop of London. It is a flamboyant example of the school of Gothic Revival, complete with oratory and private chapel licensed for the administration of communion. It also features a portrait of Charlotte Yonge (not currently on view), who was a frequent visitor. See Victoria Couslon, “Tyntesfield House and Charlotte M. Yonge: Sacralizing the Domestic in Victorian Gothic Representation,” available through the Charlotte Mary Yonge Foundation website, www.cmvf.org.uk; and James Miller, Fertile Fortune: The Story of Tyntesfield. London: The National Trust, 2006.

\(^{59}\) Blanche Gibbs later provided funds for the endowment of St. Matthew’s Church, Otterbourne. Charlotte Yonge had hoped and intended to do so herself, but was instead obliged to discharge the substantial debt incurred by Julian Yonge in a series of unsound commercial speculations involving the failure of a coal mining company. Yonge sold the publication rights to several of her most popular novels in order to settle his distressed accounts. Charlotte Mitchell, “Charlotte M. Yonge’s Bank Account: A Rich New Source of Information on Her Life and Work,” in Tamara S. Wagner, editor, Charlotte Yonge: Rereading Domestic Religious Fiction. Abingdon: Routledge, 2012, 168-188.

\(^{60}\) Otterbourne was established as a separate parish in 1875.

\(^{61}\) Yonge, John Keble’s Parishes: A History of Hursley and Otterbourne and Hursley, Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, n.d., 55. Yonge wrote that her father had “a great admiration for York Cathedral,” and wished to design the local parish church on similar lines. St. Matthew’s Church was consecrated on 30 July 1838. The historical, symbolic, and aesthetic significance of Church architecture and interior appointments were of great interest to the Tractarians. See Barbara Dennis, “Charlotte Yonge: Novelist of the Oxford Movement,” in Julia Courtney and Clemence Schultze, editors, Characters and Scenes: Studies in Charlotte Mary Yonge, 5-21.
scarcely realised, emerges from her autobiographical fragment. “I remember,” Yonge confided, “being very happy on the whole, though with a dull yearning at times for something to look forward to.”

As it happened she was to have her wish. The event that was to disrupt the quiet complacency of her life, as well as that of Otterbourne and Hampshire, was the appointment of John Keble (1792-1866) as rector of Hursley in January 1836. Through strenuous example and steadfast encouragement Keble demonstrated to Charlotte Yonge the possibility of exerting a pervasive and profound influence on the community, the Church, and indeed the entire country. He was the nationally acclaimed author of *The Christian Year* (1827), the most popular volume of verse of the early Victorian Age. Keble’s intellectual abilities and academic accomplishments were legendary. At Corpus Christi College, Oxford, he had gained a rare double first in classics and mathematics at the age of eighteen, and won both the Latin and English essay prizes before his election as resident fellow of Oriel College. In 1815 he was ordained an Anglican priest; eight years later he resigned his prestigious academic post to serve as an unpaid curate for his elderly and increasingly infirm father in the parish of Coln St. Aldwyn, near Fairford, Gloucestershire. In 1831 Keble was elected unopposed to a ten-year term as Chair of Poetical Studies at Oxford, primarily as a result of the enormous success of *The Christian Year*, an unexpected and unprecedented publishing phenomenon that would appear in ninety-five editions during his lifetime, selling nearly 400,000 copies by 1873. Designed as a companion piece to the Book of Common Prayer, *The Christian Year* was a collection of meditative verse arranged around the annual sequence of Sundays and saints’ days of the Anglican ecclesiastical calendar, and the disciplined devout could order and organise their days, weeks, and months according to its directives. Its immense popularity seemed to indicate, or perhaps even initiate, a renewed interest in Anglican practices and ideals. According to Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish, an admirer

62 Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 94-95.

63 The full title is *The Christian Year: Thoughts in Verse for the Sundays and Holydays Throughout the Year*. Although it consists of one hundred and nine poems, G.B. Tennyson has observed that “in one sense the collection is a single poem, a poem on the Book of Common Prayer.” He added, “[i]n a characteristic form for a poem in the collection is a meditation or reflection on nature or daily life seen from a Christian perspective, or a retelling of a Christian story (normally one appointed for the day), both generally concluding with an explicit prayer.” *Victorian Devotional Poetry: The Tractarian Mode*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981, 80, 81-82.


65 See Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry*, above. Copies of *The Christian Year* were among the most popular wedding presents for Anglicans in the nineteenth century. Amy Cruse’s representative Englishman “had given [his betrothed] *The Christian Year* for a birthday present … at Christmas he would give her Newman’s *Lyra Apostolica*, or perhaps a volume of Wordsworth’s.” *The Victorians and Their Books*, 19. In her novel *Salem Chapel* (1863) Margaret Oliphant, decidedly no Tractarian, satirised the seemingly endless variety of editions, available in a range of colors and sizes. Yonge was well aware of the enticement of such embellishments; in *The Daisy Chain* (1856) the heroine Ethel May exclaims with delight over a new edition of *Lyra Innocentium*: “It is just what I wished for. Such lovely binding—and those embossed edges to the leaves. Oh! They make a pattern as they open! I never saw anything like it” (143).
of Charlotte Yonge and her novels, the poems were known to and "beloved by thousands of all opinions," including, she insisted, "dissenters."  

The most eminent of its early enthusiasts was the charismatic and controversial churchman John Henry Newman (1801-1890), once Keble’s closest spiritual companion and colleague. Newman considered the author "the first man in Oxford," whose achievement "did for the Church of England that which none but a poet could do: he made it poetical." In his spiritual autobiography, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1864), Newman contended that

> when the general tone of religious literature was so nerveless and impotent, as it was at that time, Keble struck an original note and woke up in the hearts of thousands a new music, the music of a school, long unknown in England.  

But Keble was better known for a more abrupt and adversarial awakening. On 14 July 1833 he shattered the calm and composure of both Oxford and Anglicanism with an incendiary sermon entitled “National Apostasy,” preached at the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin. In his argument Keble denounced what he perceived as ‘erastianism,’ the pernicious interference of an “Infidel Government” with established ecclesiastical power and privilege. He was especially incensed over the recent repeal of the Test Act, which allowed the admission of dissenters and Roman Catholics to Parliament. Such access, he argued, would permit ancient and avowed enemies of the state, “any number of whom may be heretics,” to ravage and perhaps ruin England from within.  

Keble could not have chosen a more public place or a more provocative moment. The incumbent of St. Mary the Virgin, John Henry Newman, at that time perhaps the most famous churchman in England, always regarded both the sermon and the firestorm it ignited as the opening blasts that announced the advent of the Oxford Movement. Keble’s defiant demeanor, that of an aggrieved Englishman defending the citadel of Christianity and country from the incursions of doubt and dissent, was designed to capture the attention of the entire nation. Both the disaffected and the devout within the Anglican community responded to his impassioned appeal, many seconding his recriminations and clamouring for redress. In an instant the revered poet and scholar became renowned for entirely new reasons. Some saw abundant ironies in his campaign and celebrity. Georgina Battiscombe (1943) marveled that “the man round whom the whole Oxford Movement centred was not the brilliant [and charismatic] Newman but the retiring

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69 Keble also vehemently objected to the Government’s proposal to suppress eight of the eighteen sees in Ireland, as well as two of the four bishoprics. Pamela K. Gilbert has observed that Keble’s sermon “is specifically couched in a rhetoric of alienation—to become ‘as the heathens, the aliens’ within one’s own nation.” *Cholera and the Nation: Doctoring the Social Body in Victorian England*. Albany: State University of NY Press, 2008, 20.
Keble. He was, she said, “the first in the field,” and she contended that both the origin and evolution of the High Church revival, a countercultural enterprise that would divide congregations and devastate communities, destroying long established alliances and allegiances, are best understood as “the story of Keble’s friendships.”

Keble and Newman had originally met in 1822 in the common-room at Oriel, and with their former students Richard Hurrell Froude (1803-1836), Isaac Williams (1802-1865), and Robert Wilberforce (1802-1857), would constitute the leadership that would determine both the doctrine and the direction of the Oxford Movement. In 1834 they were joined by Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882), an austere scholar and antiquarian of immense erudition (and prodigious wealth), whom Wellington had earlier appointed to the prestigious position of Regius Professor of Hebrew and canon of Christ Church, Oxford. Froude, ascetic and adversarial, urged his clerical colleagues to act upon their alienation and anger, arguing “we must make a row in the world.” He invariably found the most memorable metaphors, guaranteed to make his meaning accessible and to antagonise the opposition: the Reformation, he maintained in his memoirs, was no more than “a limb badly set. It must be broken again in order to be righted.”

The most accomplished orator among them, Newman, was accordingly commissioned to prepare the Movement’s manifesto, the first of a series of position papers that would proclaim the presence and philosophy of an ambitious new power in the Anglican Church. “And so,” according to Isaac Williams, Keble’s student and Newman’s curate, “on September 9, 1833, the row in the world began with the issue of the first of what were called the Tracts for the Times, Mr. Newman leading off with the first, entitled “Thoughts on the Ministerial Commission, Respectfully Addressed to the Clergy.” Despite this demure description, the document, like Keble’s sermon, was deliberately designed to provoke. Newman initially addressed his audience with apparent diffidence and deference: “I am but one of yourselves … and therefore I conceal my name, lest I should take too much on myself by speaking in my own person.” Almost immediately, however, his wrath and indignation asserted themselves and his appeal accelerated accordingly: “Yet speak I must; for the times are very evil, yet no one speaks of them.” Newman proceeded to remind his readers of the essential spiritual and ecclesiastical responsibilities of their vocation. “Is it not our very office to oppose the world?” he demanded. He cautioned that an acute spiritual and secular crisis was imminent, presaging the catastrophic collapse not only of the Church, but of the nation.

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70 Battiscombe, John Keble, 49, 269. C.A.E. Moberly also considered Keble to be the most influential and inspirational of the early Tractarian leaders. She maintained that “[t]he Oxford Movement is said to have arisen in great measure through the influence of John Keble’s holy life, which arrested the attention of his friends.” Dulce Domum, 2-3.
Only immediate intervention by the clergy could avert this calamity. He continued

The times will soon drive you to do this.... But wait not for the times. Do not be compelled, by the world’s forsaking you, to recur as if unwillingly to the high source of your authority. Speak out now, before you are forced, both as glorifying in your privilege, and to ensure your rightful honour from your people. A notion has gone abroad, that they can take away your power. They think that they have given it and can take it away. They think it lies in the Church’s property, and they know that they have politically the power to confiscate that property. They have been deluded into a notion that present palpable usefulness, produceable results, acceptableness to your flocks, that these and such like are the test of your Divine commission. Enlighten them in this matter.

Instances of martial metaphor multiplied. Newman proudly proclaimed that for a fortunate few suffering and death in the defense of the Church was a possibility, and that to experience such persecution was a privilege. He implored his audience to

Consider a moment. Is it fair, is it dutiful, to suffer our Bishops to stand the brunt of the battle without doing our part to support them? Upon them comes ‘the care of the Churches.’ This cannot be helped: indeed it is their glory. Not one of us would wish in the least to deprive them of the duties, the toils, the responsibilities of their high Office. And, black event as it would be to the country, yet (as far as they are concerned) we could not wish them a more blessed termination of their course, than the spoiling of their goods, and martyrdom.

Finally, in capital letters for added emphasis, he ended with an extraordinary exhortation to the Anglican clergy to forsake their former lassitude and laxity.

CHOOSE YOUR SIDE. To remain neuter [sic] much longer will be itself to take part ... abstinence is impossible in these troublous times. HE THAT IS NOT WITH ME, IS AGAINST ME, AND HE THAT GATHERETH NOT WITH ME SCATTERETH ABROAD.

With its Biblical imagery and intonations, Tract One was intended as both appeal and assault, an urgent call to arms in an apocalyptic conflict. The Church was besieged from within and without, Newman alleged, by an array of adversaries: sloth, schism, skepticism, secularisation, doubt, dissent. The Tractarians, who positioned themselves as the authentic and anointed champions of Anglicanism, now signaled their intention to respond, swiftly and savagely. It was clear there could be neither compromise nor concession.

This truculence was characteristic of much Tractarian argumentation, expressed in sermons and speeches and in correspondence, both personal and professional. Amy Cruse has argued that they wrote and acted “as a man might give notice of a fire, to startle all who heard
him. Keble, the priest and poet, was as confrontational and combative as Newman, the polemicist (and eventual pariah), and perhaps even more obdurate. His indignation becomes intransigence in a letter dated 8 August 1833:

I cannot take the Oath of Supremacy in the sense which the legislature now puts upon it. I cannot accept my curacy or office in the Church of England, but I have not made up my mind that I am bound to resign what I have.... I think we ought to be prepared to sacrifice all or any of our endowments, rather than sanction it. Take every pound and shilling and penny and the curse of Sacrilege along with it, only let us make our own Bishops and be governed by our own laws.

Keble was prepared to renounce permanently all privilege and preferment if the Government continued its “profane” pretensions regarding the authority of the Church. He had never valued such advantages anyway; perhaps his air of austerity and asceticism was the reason for his enduring reputation as a reserved and reclusive scholar, sequestered in his remote provincial parsonage. As one critic (1943) has noted, however, “[s]o much has been written about “the gentle saint” of the Oxford Movement that it is well to remember that in reality gentleness was a mark neither of the Movement nor of Keble himself.” A reviewer for Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine observed that Keble was “one of the moving spirits of the age;” he had strong and sincere convictions, “put forth with a quiet pertinacity from which nothing could divert him.” C.A.E. Moberly remembered the “fiery eagerness, the indignant remonstrances poured out, and the sternness of his judgement when he thought Church doctrine was being endangered.”

John Taylor Coleridge also recalled, “It is hard to describe the eager youthful energy, the strong indignation and resentment at wrong, especially at anything which threatened to touch the sacred deposit of truth, that mingled with his gentleness and humility. If anything of the sort was said before him, his whole countenance changed, and he looked for a moment as if he would annihilate the speaker.”

The historian S.A. Skinner has examined evidence (2004) in Keble’s extensive correspondence that illustrates his eager engagement in temporal matters, including his “constant animation over tactics of resistance to parliamentary reform, the political unions, and

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74 Cruse, The Victorians and Their Books, 23.
75 Quoted in Nockles, The Oxford Movement in Context, 441.
76 Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 53. In some branches of the Anglican communion Keble is memorialised in the calendar of saints.
77 “John Keble,” Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine 642, 105 (April 1869), 400.
78 C.A.E. Moberly, Dulce Domum, 78. She added, “Mr. Keble was tender, kind, very stern, and very self-disciplined. We were much afraid of him. He had such a high standard.” Quoted in Edith Olivier, Four Victorian Ladies of Wiltshire. London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1945, 29.
ecclesiastical legislation; his long agitation to secure editorial appointments or obstruct episcopal ones; and his near-daily denunciations of the “heretics” (dissenters) and “socialists” (liberals) who populated his extensive demonology. |nor were his public pronouncements as preacher or poet more conciliatory or circumspect. In a sermon preached at Winchester Cathedral (1836), Keble maintained “we are beset on every side (the clergy more especially), with conflicting difficulties and temptation to unworthy compromise.” |And in “The Angel of the Church” (1836) Keble described the “twin abysses” that imperil the via media of High Church Anglicanism:

The floodgates on me open wide  
And headlong rushes in the turbulent tide  
Of lusts and heresies; a motley troop they come;  
And old imperial Rome  
Looks up, and lifts again half-dead  
Her seven-domed head,  
And Schism and Superstition, near and far,  
Blend in one pestilent ear,  
And shake their horrid locks against the saints to war.

Keble had other resentments that he was reluctant to relinquish. When he restored the church at Hurstley he obliterated the remnants of the tomb of Richard Cromwell (1626-1712), the son and successor of Oliver Cromwell. As commander of the Parliamentary armies in the civil wars and “Lord Protector” of the Commonwealth the senior Cromwell had signed the death warrant of Charles I two centuries earlier, and was reviled by the Tractarians as a renegade and regicide. His son had never retained the confidence of the country and had rapidly retreated from power, living and dying in relative obscurity; but the irascible Keble never relented. |J.A. Froude contended that because “his mind moved in the groove of a single order of ideas, he could not place himself in the position of persons who disagreed with him, and thus he could never see the strong points of their arguments.”

Still, the essence of Keble’s character remains elusive. A subtle clue is contained in the scriptural citation that appeared on the frontispiece of the first edition of The Christian Year. It reads “In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength,” an aphorism applicable to both poetry and poet. Robert Meux Benson (1834-1915), fellow of Christ Church, follower of Pusey,

82 John Keble, “The Angel of the Church,” in Lyra Apostolica (1836). This volume was a popular collection of sacred poems, originally published in the British Magazine, that was a collaboration of Keble, Newman, R.H. Froude, Isaac Williams, and Richard Wilberforce.  
83 Richard Cromwell briefly appeared in A Reputed Changeling.  
85 Isaiah XXX, 15.
and later founder of the Anglican organisation of St. John the Evangelist, spoke for many when he maintained “[w]e cannot have a biography of Keble. His life was not before the world ... its secret power operating far and wide is what none can tell.”

As it happens Benson was mistaken. In one regard at least Keble’s influence and authority are quite open and obvious. It was Keble who prepared Charlotte Yonge for what she always considered “the most important event of her life:” her confirmation into the Anglican faith. In a passage from her unfinished autobiography she asserted that “at fifteen I became a catechumen of Mr. Keble’s, and this I would call the great influence of my life did I not feel unworthy to do so; but of this I am sure, that no-one else, save my own father, had so much to do with my whole cast of mind.” In an early novel entitled *The Castle Builders, or The Deferred Confirmation* (1854), she archly but obliquely acknowledged the power of Keble’s presence at Hursley when a minor character observed that “a country curate is a mere nobody; in such a remote place [there can be no possibility of] bringing yourself into notice” (128). The career of Keble decisively disproved any such assumptions.

In countless ways, some small and some significant, the circumstances and sympathies of John Keble and Charlotte Yonge were similar, if not the same. They lived in adjoining villages, the centre of an extraordinary intellectual and clerical community that was also an elaborate social and spiritual experiment. The squire of Hursley Park, Sir William Heathcote (1801-1881), an ardent Tractarian who had studied with Keble at Oxford, was renowned for his spirited and strenuous churchmanship. Heathcote was interested in secular issues as well, but the two were never entirely separate in his mind. His most enduring enthusiasms involved educational initiatives intended to promote elements of the Tractarian agenda. In 1864 he was appointed to chair the Clarendon Commission on Schools, which had been established to investigate and improve the English public school system, and for many years he represented Oxford as a Member of Parliament.

Charlotte Yonge always admired Heathcote the perfect example of “an almost ideal”


88 Yonge, autobiographical fragment; quoted in Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 9.

89 They even shared a biographer, Georgina Battiscombe, whose unprepossessing subtitles, *Charlotte Yonge: The Story of an Uneventful Life* (1943), and *John Keble: A Study in Limitations* (1964), would establish the dispiriting tone and dismissive theme of much subsequent scholarship.

90 The Clarendon Commission (1861-1864) investigated the English public school system, which at that time consisted of nine institutions exclusively for boys: Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Charterhouse, Westminster, Rugby, Shrewsbury, St. Paul’s, and Merchant and Taylors. The report was sharply critical of contemporary pedagogical practices and formed the basis of the Public Schools Act of 1868.
Englishman, “the highest product of a class and school of thought that is fast disappearing.” She cited the testimonial of the Earl of Carnarvon, who considered him “intimately acquainted with the subjects and interests which formed the heritage of English country gentlemen . . . the very representative and pattern of the class.” According to another of his colleagues, John Coleridge, “a finer type of Englishman . . . is hardly possible to conceive . . .” He had an “inflexible integrity, stern sense of duty, stainless honour . . . the soundest and strongest judgement, and yet was full of the most perfect candour and full of forbearance and indulgence for other men . . .” Heathcote was an inspiration to all who knew him; in sum, Coleridge claimed, “[h]e lifted one up and made one better.”

Heathcote’s domain, described as “a beacon for those in search of the Tractarian message,” was also reputed to be as perfect as was possible. No other parish, proclaimed a contemporary, could surpass Hursley as a place in which “Anglican privileges could be enjoyed in their plentitude.” Over the years Heathcote built and endowed asylums, almshouses, schools, hospitals, and jails (“on the then-approved principles”) but the improvements and innovations he cared for most involved a series of churches conceived and constructed with the advice and assistance of William Yonge. He abolished ecclesiastical abuses such as the pew rent system, in which landowners were segregated from the general congregation, and during services conspicuously seated himself among his tenants. As squire he considered the appointment of seasoned churchmen of sound character and sympathetic opinion to be a sacred obligation and his most solemn responsibility. Thomas Mozley (1806-1893), a Tractarian priest, observed that when he installed John Keble as rector of Hursley, Heathcote “created the most beautiful picture . . .

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91 Yonge, John Keble’s Parishes, 71. Keble himself considered Heathcote most similar to “a Christian knight.”
94 The county hospital was constructed “on Mr. Butterfield’s plans, in a more healthy and airy situation, in the year 1868, with a beautiful chapel for the nurses and patients.” Yonge, John Keble’s Parishes, 74. In 1858 William Butterfield (1814-1900) had also designed the school and chapel at Pitt, a village near Otterbourne, which was later built with funds provided by Charlotte Yonge. He was a favored architect of the Tractarians; his most famous commissions included High Church monuments such as Balliol College Chapel, Oxford (1856-1857); All Saints Church, Margaret Street, London (1859); Rugby School Chapel (1875); and Keble College, Oxford (1876) (see Chapter Three below). He was an enthusiastic reader of Yonge’s novels who once remarked that he was looking for a wife like Ethel May, the heroine of The Daisy Chain. He remained unmarried. See Hayter, Charlotte Yonge, 3.
95 S.A. Skinner declared that “[t]his sort of collaboration between clergyman and squire . . . was the personification of the Tractarian ideal of the relationship between church and state: the squire exercising his temporal responsibilities under comprehensive guidance from the vicarage.” Tractarians and the Condition of England, 134.
96 Nevertheless, nepotism also prevailed. Heathcote appointed his cousin, William Harris Walter Bigg-Wither (1809-1899), curate in charge of Otterbourne, where he served for more than thirty years. Other Hursley curates included Peter Young, married to Keble’s adopted daughter, and Robert Wilson, married to Heathcote’s niece. As a rule Heathcote investigated the churchmanship of potential tenants and adamantly refused to lease any of his land to dissenters. It also was a condition of tenancy that all children regularly attend Anglican Sunday School and confirmation classes. See Frances Awdry, A Country Gentleman of the Nineteenth Century: Being a Short Memoir of the Right Honorable Sir William Heathcote, Bart., of Hursley 1801-1881. Winchester: Warren, and London: Simkin, 1906.
of English society that this century can show." Charlotte Yonge concurred, commenting "many years were granted in which Hursley saw the Church and the secular power working together in an almost ideal way." In later life she maintained "the impression left was always ... of a kind of being on holy ground." This sentiment emanated from an exalted sense of purpose. Georgina Battiscombe concluded that for the High Church community at Hursley "[t]heology was ... a thrilling interest, and they moved and spoke and thought with unseen presences around them." It was, C.A.E. Moberly recalled with reverence, a precious and sublime experience and existence, "the golden age of our lives."

Moberly’s father, George Moberly (1803-1885), former fellow and tutor of Balliol who became headmaster of Winchester College and later Bishop of Salisbury, shared Heathcote’s interests in ecclesiastical and educational concerns. He was the head of a family of eight daughters and seven sons that had so many correspondences to the children in one of Yonge’s novels that they were sometimes referred to as “The Daisy Chain family.” The brothers attended Winchester and Oxford, but the sisters were educated by a series of governesses at home. Four eventually married Anglican clergymen. Anne (C.A.E.) Moberly, who remained single, became the first principal of St. Hugh’s College for Women, Oxford. In her history of the “severely spiritual” High Church community at Hursley she remembered that “[f]or thirty years Mr. Keble, Charlotte Yonge, and my father, each being, in differing degrees, centres of Church teaching and influence, lived in the closest intimacy and friendship.” Moberly was Charlotte Yonge’s special charge, and always contended that her own higher education had its source and found its spirit in

97 Thomas Mozley, Reminiscences, Chiefly of Oriel College and the Oxford Movement. London: Longmans, 1882, three volumes; Volume One, 220-221. Mozley’s father’s firm first published some of Yonge’s earliest works. Thomas Mozley was married to Harriet Newman, (1803-1852), the author of several books for children (The Fairy Bower, 1841; The Lost Brooch, 1843) and the younger sister of John Henry Newman. Despite his Tractarian sympathies, Yonge distrusted Mozley’s churchmanship and dismissed his memoirs as “somewhat discursive.”
98 Yonge, John Keble’s Parishes, 69. Earlier, however, the Bishop of Winchester was the Evangelical Charles Sumner (1827-1869), who questioned Keble closely on his theological convictions when the latter first presented himself as the candidate for the cure of Hursley. His son, George Henry Sumner, the rector of Alresford, in Hampshire, was far more sympathetic to the Tractarian cause. He married Mary E. Sumner, founder of The Mothers’ Union (see Chapter Five), and later became Bishop of Guildford.
99 Yonge, John Keble’s Parishes, 74, 78. C.A.E. Moberly maintained that “[t]he impression of the whole is of an atmosphere of holiness....” Dulce Domum, 7.
100 Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 105.
101 Moberly, Dulce Domum, 301.
102 Amy Cruse observed that “[i]t would be difficult to find another writer whose characters and whose readers bore so close a resemblance to each other as did those of Charlotte Yonge in the early days of her fame. It is, indeed, quite possible to imagine them changing places.” The Victorians and Their Books, 43. The youngest daughter, Margaret Helen Moberly (1852-1939), was Yonge’s godchild; Yonge named four characters ‘Margaret’ in The Daisy Chain (1856), perhaps to atone for the unpleasant Margaret Morville Henley of The Heir of Redclyffe (1853; see Chapter Three). One of the sons, Robert Moberly, was appointed Regius Professor of Pastoral Theology at Christ Church, Oxford, and served as Honorary Chaplain to the Queen. He preached the memorial sermon for Charlotte Yonge at St. Matthew’s, Otterbourne, on 31 March 1901 (see Chapter Five).
103 Moberly, Dulce Domum, 4.
the Sunday afternoons spent in quiet study with her. Yonge in turn considered St. Hugh’s “in many respects a training for the Church,” and in her late novel *Modern Broods* (1900) based the fictional college St. Robert’s on it. During her tenure at St. Hugh’s Moberly was especially famous for her Sunday evening divinity lectures, particularly her series on the Apocalypse of St. John, subsequently published as *Five Visions of the Revelation* (1939).

Another of Yonge’s connections, her godchild Alice Mary Coleridge (1846-1907), became the first Lady Warden of another Tractarian establishment for young women, the School of S. Mary and S. Anne, Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire. According to her cousin Christabel Coleridge, Alice Coleridge was a brilliant student who had acquired “a boy’s education” as the result of academic opportunities available at her father’s school in West Sussex. Under her direction Abbots Bromley was especially known for its ambitious curriculum, extreme austerity, and ardent missionary spirit. This somewhat idiosyncratic combination of emphases, and the school motto, “That Our Daughters May Be as the Polished Corners of the Temple,” surely echo the example and expression of Charlotte Yonge.

Another colleague and correspondent of Charlotte Yonge’s, Elizabeth Missing Sewell (1815-1906), also was involved in the expansion of educational opportunities for young Anglican women. A popular and prolific novelist (*Amy Herbert*, 1844; *Margaret Perceval*, 1847) and a regular contributor to *The Monthly Packet*, Sewell collaborated with Charlotte Yonge on at least one educational text, *European History, Narrated in a Series of Historical Selections from the Best Authorities* (1870). She was also the author of a treatise with the formidable title *Principles of Education, Drawn from Nature and Revelation and Applied to Female Education in the Upper Classes* (1871), intended for female students in schools founded on High Church principles, including her own establishment, Bonchurch, on the Isle of Wight. Her elder brother, William Sewell (1804-1874), fellow and tutor of Exeter College, Oxford, founded the first Tractarian public school for boys, St. Columba’s College, at Rathfarnham, near Dublin, in 1843, and Radley,
in Oxfordshire, four years later. Other Tractarian academies for boys established at this time include St. Nicholas, Lancing, in Sussex (1848); and St. John’s College, Hurstpierpoint, in West Sussex (1849); all of these institutions still exist.

Also a member of this close community was another Coleridge, Charlotte Yonge’s distant cousin Sir John Taylor Coleridge (1790-1876), of Ottery St. Mary, East Devonshire, an eminent lawyer and magistrate and a nephew of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge. He too had known Keble at Corpus Christi and in 1869 published a somewhat reverential biography of him. The fortunes of his sons were closely followed in Tractarian circles: the elder, John Duke Coleridge, was Keble’s godson and became Lord Chief Justice of England in 1880; the younger, Henry James Coleridge (1822-1893), abandoned Anglicanism for Roman Catholicism in 1852 and became famous as a Jesuit author and apologist. At Hursley and Otterbourne he was seldom spoken of and never without sincere sorrow.

Through personal and professional connections Heathcote, Coleridge, and Moberly were well known to another devout High Churchman, George Lyttelton (1817-1876), also a member of the Clarendon Commission on Public Education and later chief of the Endowed Schools Commission. The eccentric Lyttelton, Lord Lieutenant and Colonel of the Queen’s Yeomanry in Worcestershire, vigourously advanced the Tractarian agenda. He was one of the first effective advocates of higher education for women, although his own daughters, like the Moberley girls, were taught at home. In size and success (tempered over time with terrible losses) the Lytteltons were to rival the Moberlys as the quintessential Tractarian family, and their history also reads as if it were conceived and written by Charlotte Yonge. Perhaps in a sense it was: one of the daughters recalled that in their childhood library Evangelical treatises were shunned in favor of standard Tractarian texts such as The Christian Year, John Mason Neale’s stories of saints and martyrs, Francis Edward Paget’s Tales of the Village Children series, and the novels of Elizabeth Sewell and Charlotte Yonge. In an epilogue to Ethel Romanes’s study (1908) entitled “The Secret of

108 Sewell was also the author of several novels, including the Hawkstone (1845), a cautionary tale for the spiritually uncertain. Kathleen Tillotson recalled the calamitous end of certain characters condemned as a consequence of dubious churchmanship. She noted that “[t]he Evangelical is allowed to repent after many sufferings, but the atheist falls into melted lead, and the Jesuit is eaten by rats.” The Novels of the Eighteen Forties. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954, 118.

109 Barbara Dennis has noted that Coleridge was involved in some of the most notorious cases of the Victorian Age. He had served on the Queen’s Bench when the Hampden controversy convulsed the Church in 1848, and was the “reluctant arbiter” when Newman was sued for libel by the renegade Roman Catholic priest Giacinto Achilli (1851-1853); Dennis, Charlotte Yonge, 23. Coleridge also was lead counsel for the plaintiff in the scandalous suit Sister Scholastica versus Mrs. Starr, in which a Roman Catholic nun sued her superior for conspiracy to expel her from the community. Charlotte Yonge, a stern judge herself, was displeased with Coleridge’s biography of John Keble, deeming it “[m]ore the history than a life ...” and declaring “there is too much about the Judge himself.” Quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 259.

110 This was another example of an enormous Tractarian family: Lyttelton and his first wife, Mary Glyne, had four daughters and eight sons; he had three more daughters with his second wife, Sybella Mildmay.

111 Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish, “The Secret of Miss Yonge’s Influence,” in Romanes, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 196-197. John Mason Neale (1818-1866) was also the author of the popular novel Aynton Priory, or the Restored Monastery (1843). Francis Edward Paget (1806-1882) and William Gresley (1801-1876) were the most successful early Tractarian novelists. See Wolff, Gains and Losses: Novels of Faith and Doubt in
Miss Yonge's Influence,” Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish maintained that

Not much in the way of ‘High Church’ doctrine was ever definitely taught to us as children by word of mouth, but the utmost care was taken as to the choice of our books and hymns. The quaint doggerel by which Watts thought it necessary to stoop when writing for children, the dismal Calvinism of The Fairchild Family, the irreverent familiarity of the Peep of Day and Line upon Line, were unknown in our nursery and schoolroom.  

For the Lyttelton family, however, reality was not to be managed quite so expeditiously. Lyttelton’s first wife, Mary Glynne Lyttelton (1813-1857), sister of Catherine Gladstone, the wife of the prime minister, died of heart failure shortly after the birth of their twelfth child. A harrowing account of her last illness, referred to only as “The Record,” was originally written by Lyttelton, extensively revised by the older children, and periodically read and reread (and copied and recopied) by them all. Nearly sixty pages long, it was a peculiar but powerful document of Tractarian devotional discipline, intended as an aid to comfort and consolation: “The memory of her life and the eloquence of her death will be all of your mother that you have left,” advised John Talbot, who was to marry Meriel, the eldest. As in The Daisy Chain the despondent widower depended on his children, and particularly on his daughters, for spiritual solace and domestic support. Two of them would eventually marry prominent Tractarians: Lavinia (1849-1939) became the wife of Edward Stuart Talbot (1844-1934), the formidable founder and first warden of Keble College, Oxford, and later bishop of Rochester, Southwark, and finally Winchester. Her elder sister Lucy (1841-1925) accepted Frederick Cavendish, second son of the Duke of Devonshire and a Member of Parliament for West Riding, in Yorkshire. In 1882 Cavendish, appointed the Government’s Chief Secretary in Ireland by Gladstone, was assassinated by Irish extremists in the Phoenix Park on the afternoon of the day he took his oath of office.


Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish, “The Secret of Miss Yonge’s Influence,” in Romanes, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 196. The Peep of Day, by Mrs. F.L. Mortimer (1792-1878), was a popular cautionary tale for children in the nursery. Dangers were depicted in graphic and grisly detail: “If a great knife were run through your body, the blood would come out. If a great box were to fall on your head, it would be crushed. If you were to fall out the window, your neck would be broken. You can see that you have a very weak body” (14). A harrowing hereafter was promised: “The devil hopes very much that you will come and live with him when you die. If you are bad like him, you will live with him” (26). The Peep of Day, n.d., Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2000. Yonge ridiculed the style of such morbid tales in her portrayal of the “strong-minded” Theresa Marstone, in HeartEase, or The Brother’s Wife (1854), who composes an unpleasant allegory for children entitled Folded Lambs.


Edward and Lavinia Talbot were reportedly the first to envision the Oxford Hall of Residence for Women. According to Georgina Battiscombe, Lavinia Talbot had visited Cambridge and demanded “[w]hy should the Church not be for once at the front instead of behind in this new development?” Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 24. Edward Talbot also had proposed Elizabeth Wordsworth as the first principal of Lady Margaret Hall, the new college for women at Oxford.

Cavendish’s undersecretary and the head of the Irish Civil Service, Thomas Henry Burke, was also murdered by the members of a secret society who called themselves “The Invincibles.” Despite Lucy
Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish thereafter devoted her remaining years and considerable income and celebrity to the promotion of Anglo-Catholic causes, including higher education for women.\(^{116}\) She established a series of scholarships and lent her name to the Cambridge college for mature women students.\(^{117}\) In all the afflictions of her life she was sustained by her affection for the works of Charlotte Yonge. Cavendish fondly recalled that

> [o]ld-fashioned Sunday habits reigned in our home, relieved, however, from the gloom of earlier times by special joys and little indulgences which made Sunday the happiest day of the week … Miss Yonge’s stories were its crowning attraction….. I would certainly place in the first rank of books that influenced my girlhood Miss Sewell’s and Miss Yonge’s.\(^{118}\)

The Lyttelton sons were also devoted readers of the novels of Charlotte Yonge. Several, like some of Yonge’s characters, were famous for their dedication to cricket and the classics, markers of the interests and avocations of elite Englishmen, and eventually attained a measure of greatness in almost every Anglo-Catholic endeavour imaginable, both in Britain and abroad. One was provost of Lancing and offered the wardenship of Selwyn College, Cambridge, a new institution named for the great Tractarian missionary bishop of New Zealand, and became a bishop himself; another was a general and the governor of Chelsea Hospital; another was headmaster of Eton; another was Colonial Secretary; and one, perhaps to his family the most admirable and accomplished of them all, was the impoverished rector of a remote “tin biscuit-box” of a church in South Africa.\(^{119}\)

Yonge’s own connection to the enterprise of the Anglican Church in South Africa was strengthened through her acquaintance with Anne Mackenzie (1820-1877), the older sister of Charles Frederick Mackenzie (1825-1862), a Scottish clergyman\(^{120}\) who had served as archdeacon under John William Colenso (1814-1883), the controversial Anglican Bishop of Natal, before his own consecration as Missionary Bishop of Central Africa in 1861. Charles and Anne Mackenzie established a sisterhood that staffed a school and an orphanage, St. George’s Home, in Cape Town.\(^{121}\) Anecdotal accounts appeared occasionally in *The Monthly Packet* as an appeal to readers

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Cavendish’s repeated pleas for clemency the assassins and some of their accomplices were hanged. Senan Molony, *The Phoenix Park Murders: Conspiracy, Betrayal, and Retribution*. Cork, Ireland: Mercier Press, 2006.


\(^{117}\) Lucy Cavendish College for Women, Cambridge.

\(^{118}\) Cavendish, “The Secret of Miss Yonge’s Influence,” in Romanes, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 197.


\(^{121}\) There were twelve sisters in the organisation under the direction of Bishop Robert Gray (1809-1872), a Tractarian churchman who deposed and later excommunicated John Colenso. Gray was an accomplished linguist noted for his ministry among the Zulu peoples; he was the author of a *Zulu grammar*, an English-
for contributions; Yonge herself sent out a complete set of her works as foundational texts for the mission library. The Established Church had responded to the immense interest in Africa generated by the publication of David Livingstone’s (1813-1873) book, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (1857), and accompanying lecture series. In 1860 Charles Mackenzie founded the Universities’ Mission to South Africa (UMSA), the first such initiative organised and operated solely by a coalition of Anglo-Catholic clergymen. The UMSA also was unique in that it was directed by a missionary bishop rather than by a London committee. Mackenzie did not survive to see the success of his efforts, for in 1862 he succumbed to malarial fever following an ill-advised and under-equipped expedition on the Zambesi River. The only personal effects recovered were his worn copies of the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and *The Christian Year,* which his sister later presented to John Coleridge Patteson. Anne Mackenzie herself was to become a formidable and indefatigable advocate for church causes in Africa and the Antipodes. She was the founder and editor of one of the foremost missionary magazines, *The Net Cast in Many Waters; Sketches from the Life of Missionaries,* which ran from 1866 to 1896 and raised over thirty thousand pounds in support of the Anglican effort in Central and South Africa, India, North America, Melanesia, and Australia. In her preface to *The History of the Universities’ Mission in Central Africa* (1897), Charlotte Yonge acknowledged with admiration Anne Mackenzie’s staunch commitment to her brother’s legacy. Yonge wrote that

Anne, already an invalid when she had set out to join in his enterprise, returned in shattered health with the one purpose of doing all that in her lay to carry out his work. Twice she had passed his grave on an island of the Shire on her dreadful voyage in an open boat, when the sailors had prepared ... a grave for her, and she came home sick with African fever, in addition to all her former maladies.... Yet she had energy to become the very heart of African missions....

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2. Yonge admired Livingstone’s “courage and endurance” but not his churchmanship: she once darkly declared “all that one could wish is that he knew what the Church meant.” Quoted in Romanes, *Charlotte Mary Yonge,* 93. Livingstone, a Scottish Congregationalist, famously maintained that “as far as I am myself concerned, the opening of the new central country is a matter for congratulation only insofar as it opens up a prospect for the elevation of the inhabitants. As I have elsewhere remarked, I view the end of the geographical feat as the beginning of the missionary enterprise.” Quoted in Romanes, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa,* reprinted in Rosemary J. Mundhenk and LuAnn McCracken Fletcher, *Victorian Prose: An Anthology.* NY: Columbia University Press, 1999, 210. In his lectures Livingstone challenged the undergraduates and fellows of the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, and Trinity Dublin to “found a mission, and found it they would, on a truly grand scale, commensurate with their wealth and numbers.... Crowded meetings were held at each University, and the enthusiasm produced by the appeal of Dr. Livingstone, a Scottish Presbyterian, to the English Universities, as the only bodies capable of such an effort, produced unspeakable excitement.” Yonge, *Pioneers and Founders, or Recent Workers in the Mission Field.* London: Macmillan, 1871, 296.
3. Ibid., 311.
Shared sympathies resulted in a sustained literary collaboration. In 1868 Mackenzie came to stay at Otterbourne as Yonge researched and wrote her novel *New Ground* (1863), “to act,” according to Barbara Dennis, “as an encyclopedia of African information and supply the novel with accurate details of trees, flowers, and missionary routine.” Yonge’s gratitude was genuine and generous: she donated all the proceeds of *New Ground*, set in “Kaffirland,” to the Mackenzie mission in Kwamagwaza, in the territory called Zululand, in Central Africa. In the 1 June 1872 edition of *The Net* Anne Mackenzie emphasised that the purpose of the enterprise was to “lay the chain of native mission stations from Zululand to the Zambesi.”

Commitment to the missionary enterprise was a core tenet of the Tractarian cause. The arrival of missionary deputations was eagerly anticipated and energetically advertised. Clergymen at the start and the end of their voyages were received with enthusiasm at Hursley and encouraged to initiate and continue a correspondence with members of the Church community there. C.A.E. Moberly recalled that “the subject of Church Foreign Missions was nearest to their hearts. They were not so much a duty as a predominant interest.” Missionaries needed no introduction; even when not personal friends, their names were all known and honoured. Letters from New Zealand, Melanesia, Hawaii, and Africa were eagerly handed from one to another. Many missionaries asked for a service at Hursley Church before going out, and nothing could exceed the warmth and welcome to any who returned. It was the natural thing for Miss Yonge to give the proceeds of her books to foreign missions, and they were given with enthusiasm.

Reports from the mission field were read with intense interest. According to Charlotte Yonge “[l]etters from those engaged in such work were about the greatest treat that could be given … the home letters respecting the Auckland, the Kwamagwaza, and the Melanesian missions were frequently lent and almost lived in.” Winchester, four miles from Otterbourne, was the site of an annual assembly attended by the colonial bishops; in 1854 it was there that Charlotte Yonge quietly presented George Augustus Selwyn, Bishop of New Zealand (1809-1878), with a sealed envelope containing nearly one hundred and fifty pounds, the proceeds of the sale of *The Heir of Redclyffe*, which had appeared in the previous year. She had written only the words “Towards the vessel for the Island Missions,” and the money was used to purchase a small schooner that would be called *The Southern Cross*. Yonge later reported with delight that Selwyn responded “I suppose

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126 Dennis, *Charlotte Yonge*, 90.
129 On 15 September 1864 Keble preached a farewell sermon at Hursley in honor of three sisters of the Anglican Holy Trinity order setting out to establish a girls’ school in Hawaii.
131 Ibid.
I am joint heir with *The Heir of Redclyffe*.  

In time Yonge’s connection with Selwyn, whom she considered another “hero of the Church Militant,” would become deeply personal. She and Selwyn’s wife became close correspondents, but more significantly Selwyn ordained Yonge’s cousin, John Coleridge Patteson (1827-1871), as a priest in the Anglican Church. Patteson originally served as chaplain to Selwyn, and later as the first missionary bishop of Melanesia.

There were still others, equally energetic and accomplished, who came to Hursley for inspiration and instruction. John Mason Neale (1818-1866), the churchman, novelist, and author of *The Salisbury Hymnal* (1857), a precursor of *Hymns, Ancient and Modern* (1861), often consulted Keble on doctrinal and ecclesiastical questions. In later life Neale cofounded the Community of S. Margaret, an early Anglican sisterhood located in East Grinstead, Sussex. Another of Keble’s colleagues, William John Butler (1818-1894), Tractarian vicar of Wantage and later Dean of Lincoln, also established one of the first Anglican female orders, the Society of S. Mary the Virgin (1848). Despite local resistance the sisterhood at Wantage had originally dedicated itself to the rescue and rehabilitation of prostitutes and female alcoholics; later it directed its emphasis to the education of teachers, both in England and abroad, especially in India. In 1869, following the deaths of John and Charlotte Keble and her widowed mother, Charlotte Yonge became an associate, or exterior sister, of this community, and instituted its devotional discipline in her daily life. Butler also established a local chapter of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) at Wantage, another organisation with close connections to Charlotte Yonge. This SPG affiliate hosted an annual convocation in support of overseas missions that was regularly attended by many eminent Anglo-Catholic churchmen and churchwomen, including the Bishop of South Africa, the Bishop of New Zealand, the Bishop of Brechin, Scotland; and Charlotte Yonge, spinster of Otterbourne, whose celebrity would equal, and eventually eclipse, them all.

Some in the Hursley community, however, had little interest in public appearances or professional assemblies, and led more private lives. Nevertheless their influence on Yonge and the Tractarian

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133 Ibid., 91. In 1854 Frances Yonge presented her daughter with a gold pendant in the form of a St. Andrew’s cross with an enameled daisy in the center. The gift was intended to recall Selwyn’s visit and to recognise the writing of *The Daisy Chain*, which at the time was appearing in installments in *The Monthly Packet*.


135 According to H.P. Liddon (1876) Keble was considered “the court of final appeal” in all complicated or controversial theological and ecclesiastical matters. Charles Smyth, writing ninety years later, referred to Keble as the indisputable “oracle” of the Anglican Church. “No man,” he asserted, “did more to form the moral and pastoral ideal of the Oxford Movement, or to prepare the minds of his fellow-countrymen to receive it.” “Personality of Keble his Chief Gift to Church,” *The Church Times*, 25 March 1966.

136 Earlier in his career Butler had served as curate to Charles Dyson at Dogmersfield. Yonge had apparently considered becoming a residential member of the Wantage order, but was persuaded, perhaps by Keble, that her public presence as an author and editor was too important for her to abandon. For more information on the sisterhood at Wantage and an excellent account of Anglican nuns and nunneries see Susan Mumm, *Stolen Daughters, Virgin Mothers: Anglican Sisterhoods in Victorian Britain*. London: Cassell, 1999.
cause was also profound. Marianne Dyson (1809-1878) was Charlotte Yonge's closest companion, confidante, and correspondent. Dyson was a confirmed spinster and a chronic invalid, the first in a series with whom Yonge surrounded herself and supported, emotionally, intellectually, and in some instances financially. She suffered, as did many of Yonge's imagined heroines, "from no disease or disorder but peculiar nerves that are affected by anything that lowers the system." Her half-brother, Charles Dyson, was the rector of Dogmersfield, an adjacent parish, and a former college classmate of John Keble. Brother and sister shared the twin Tractarian enthusiasms for early education and the establishment and endowment of local schools. Christabel Coleridge considered Marianne Dyson, who taught several Sunday School classes and wrote a series of instructional stories for children "almost the first pioneer of middle-class education for girls."

Charlotte Yonge's mother, Frances Yonge, also taught young women in the church school; she had originally donated the land and resources for its construction and raised additional funds for its maintenance with the royalties from the publication of a hymnal entitled *The Child's Christian Year* (1841), meant to allude to Keble's collection. The volume originally appeared anonymously, as had Keble's; the preface was signed with "the most famous initials and parish in early Victorian religion," "J.K., Hursley, Nov. 6, 1841;" and the author's note, which followed, "F.M.Y., Otterbourne, July 1, 1841." Keble's remarks are addressed to an adult audience:

> This compilation pretends to no more than to be one among many humble, but it is trusted not unavailing efforts, which are now being made in different quarters, to bring the whole body of our Church's teaching into line with the Prayer Book, and by consequence with that of the Ancient Universal Church.

Later he asserted that the aim of the collection was to "gradually raise and purify the standard by which the poor judge of religious poetry," a statement that signals a strong sense of class


141 Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 147.


consciousness but also suggests the comprehensiveness and ambition of the Tractarian commitment to social, spiritual, and educational concerns.

The list of contributors again emphasises the close contacts and connections of the Tractarian community: it includes the Oxford classical scholar and translator Joseph Anstice (1808-1836); “Mrs. Mozley,” probably Harriett Mozley (1803-1851), Newman’s elder sister; and an array of Anglican clergymen and missionaries. Hymns composed by dissenters or other nonconformists were rigorously excluded. The censorious Keble explained to his readers that “the word Hymn ... has been too long associated with productions both in doctrine and manner very unworthy of that sacred name. It will be something, if in only one parish, we can pre-occupy the minds and ears of the young with strains of a somewhat higher mood.” Five of the featured hymns (“chosen for piety, not poetic skill,” he cautioned) were the work of Frances Yonge, and Charlotte Yonge herself, then seventeen years old, apparently contributed two more, one on baptism and another for the Feast Day of St. Thomas the Apostle.

145 Banished hymns included those written by Isaac Watts, a nonconformist; Charles Wesley, associated with Methodism; and John Newton and William Cowper, affiliated with the Evangelicals. Cowper’s sectarian allegiances were especially deprecated; he was the son of an Anglican clergyman.
1.3.2. ‘Catechumen’ and ‘Champion’ of the Church

One reads Miss Yonge for the Church.

Margaret Oliphant, ‘Phoebe Junior’ (1876)

The rarefied atmosphere of the Tractarian community at Hursley was intimate and intense, inspired and sustained by these shared enthusiasms and enterprises but in a sense imperiled by them as well. Even, and perhaps especially, those within the Anglican Church regarded the Oxford Movement with doubt and distaste, increasingly suspicious of what they perceived as a dubious orthodoxy and a dangerous and damaging zeal. It was widely acknowledged, as one senior churchman cautioned the Reverend Robert Francis Wilson of Oriel College, Oxford, “that if you become Keble’s curate you will lose all chance of preferment for life.”147 In the early days of the Movement this was advice, Charlotte Yonge observed mournfully, “which proved a correct augury.”148 But it was not only a question of Church politics. The practices and pursuits of Tractarians, spiritual, ecclesiastical, and even artistic and architectural, were so singular and strange that the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, began to regard them with suspicion as the secret agents of an alien ideology, and perhaps even the emissaries of a foreign power. In a letter (1850) to the Queen he maintained that "[t]he matter to create national alarm, as your Majesty says, [is] the growth of Roman Catholic doctrine within the bosom of the Church. Dr. [Thomas] Arnold said very truly, “I look upon a Roman Catholic as an enemy in his uniform—I look upon a Tractarian as an enemy disguised, as a spy.”149

Apparently it scarcely signified that Thomas Arnold (1785-1842) had himself once been an ardent Tractarian who had so admired John Keble that he asked him to stand as sponsor to his eldest son.150 Arnold had separated himself from his former colleagues after a series of increasingly savage doctrinal disputes, and in an intemperate, almost abusive, article entitled “The Oxford Malignants and Dr. Hampden” (1836) accused them of a “moral wickedness” caused by “the fanaticism of foolery.”151 “The extravagances at Oxford,” he admonished, “would result in “evil

147 The Reverend Mr. Norris of Hackney; quoted in Yonge, John Keble’s Parishes, 54.
148 Ibid. Henry Phillpotts of Exeter was considered sympathetic to High Church causes, but the first bishop regarded as a staunch “Puseyite” was Walter Kerr Hamilton, appointed to Salisbury (by Aberdeen) in 1854. In Scotland Alexander Forbes, a Pusey disciple and one of the first incumbents of St. Saviour’s, Leeds, was Bishop of Brechin from 1848. It was not until the late 1860s and early 1870s, after their strenuous activism in the inner cities, that Tractarians were given preferment to higher ecclesiastical positions, partly owing to the patronage of William Gladstone.
150 This child was Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), who would become one of England’s greatest poets and literary critics. See Chapter Three below.
151 Thomas Arnold, “The Oxford Malignants and Dr. Hampden,” The Edinburgh Review 63 (April 1836), 225-239. J.B. Mozley observed caustically that Arnold “wielded a pen as if it were a ferule.” Quoted in
consequences to the nation that are not to be calculated.”¹⁵² Charles Kingsley (1819-1875), then an undergraduate at Cambridge, issued a more precise indictment, insisting “whether willful or self-deceived, these men are Jesuits.”¹⁵³ The suspicion that the Tractarians were a secretive cult with covert ambitions and a clandestine agenda, possibly with surreptitious allegiances to the Church of Rome, had seized the popular imagination.

The Tractarians themselves did little to contradict this perception, and by some accounts seemed actively to court it. Every action and ambition, especially the conspicuous emphases on “Catholicism,” communion, church-building, and charity, signaled a practical or philosophical support of their cause. Charlotte Yonge’s comprehensive catalogue of the contributions to the restoration of Keble’s church at Hursley (1848) provides a vivid example of the shared vision and sacramental and ceremonial values of this close community:

The altar of cedar-wood was the gift of Robert Williams, Esq.; the altar plate was given by Mrs. Heathcote; the rails by the architect [William Harrison, “a relation of Archbishop Harrison, a very old friend and contemporary”]; the font by the Rev. William Butler and Emma his wife, and the clergy and sisters of Wantage.... The lectern was the offering of the friend of his youth, the Rev. Charles Dyson, Rector of Dogmersfield, copied from that at Corpus Christi College, where they first met.... It was proposed that the glass should be given by the contributions of friends and lovers of The Christian Year.¹⁵⁴

A final, and costly, addition, the church spire, was given by the squire, William Heathcote.

Yonge observed that “[t]he whole work was an immense delight to Mr. Keble, and so anxious was he that the whole should be in keeping, that the east window was actually put in three times before it was judged satisfactory.”¹⁵⁵ It is scarcely surprising that he was especially exacting about design and decoration, for his own share of the expenses was substantial. All the proceeds of his new book of devotional poetry, Lyra Innocentium (1846), conceived and sold as a companion volume to The Christian Year, were donated to establish the endowment of All Saints, Hursley.¹⁵⁶

For all that, the occasion of this church consecration was not entirely joyous. Many in attendance remembered the dedication of St. Mark’s Church, Ampfield, seven years earlier, another testament to the collaboration of William Yonge and William Heathcote. On 21 April 1841 several of the most prominent men of the Oxford Movement had been present, including

Joshua G. Fitch, Thomas and Matthew Arnold and Their Influence on English Education. NY: Charles Scribner, 1898, 139.
¹⁵³ Charles Kingsley; quoted in Cruse, The Victorians and Their Books, 39.
¹⁵⁴ Yonge, John Keble’s Parishes, 62, 64-65, 67.
¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 65.
¹⁵⁶ In the advertisement that accompanied its publication Keble described Lyra Innocentium as “a sort of Christian Year for Teachers and Nurses, and others who are much employed about Children.” It is difficult to decide if this was intended as criticism, complaint, caveat, or compliment.
Edward Pusey, Alexander Forbes (vicar of St. Saviour's, Leeds, and later Bishop of Brechin, Scotland), Isaac Williams, Thomas Mozley, and the most illustrious of them all, John Henry Newman. In those early days the Tractarians had every expectation of eventual success. Despite official resistance and occasional reversals they had recruited energetically and effectively, especially among the rural clergy and gentry from the south and west of the country. "It was a time," Charlotte Yonge recalled, "when the flower of intellectual life seemed to be blooming for the Church ... fresh conquests were being made on every side."\(^{157}\) She added, "[w]e did but light a beacon fire on the summit of a lonely hill, and we [were] amazed to find the firmament on every side red with the light of some responsive flame."\(^{158}\)

In Yonge's late novel *Chantry House* (1886) she invoked the powerful allure of the Tractarian appeal. The wife of a curate spoke of the energy, excitement, and elation that characterised the original "spirit of Oxford:"

She talked to us of Littlemore, and of the sermons there and at St. Mary's, and Emily and I shared to the full her hero-worship .... She had conversed thoughtfully with some of the leading spirits in religious thought, so that she opened a new world to us. People would hardly believe in our eagerness and enthusiasm over the revelations of church doctrine; how we debated, consulted our books, and corresponded ... how we viewed *The British Critic* and *The Tracts for the Times* as our oracles...\(^{159}\)

The painter George Richmond (1809-1896), whose artistic and Anglo-Catholic credentials and connections were impeccable, produced a series of portraits of several Tractarian churchmen and churchwomen from that time,\(^{160}\) including those in the celebrated community at Hursley. His subjects included William Yonge, Frances Yonge, Julian Yonge, and Charlotte Yonge; Lord Seaton; William Gibbs and Blanche Gibbs, John Keble and Charlotte Keble, Heathcote, Moberly, Coleridge, Lyttelton, and Talbot, as well as Pusey, Thomas Arnold, Newman, and the missionary bishops Selwyn, Patteson, and Mackenzie. These exquisite, delicate portraits, drawn with watercolour, chalk, and charcoal, have a singular consistency. The fragile, idealised countenances of the subjects are often lit with a fierce gaze that seems to signal a secret fanaticism. Richmond portrayed them as enraptured visionaries, representative of and responsive to a separate, transcendent reality, which indeed is how many of them saw themselves. He was an admirer of William Blake (1757-1827) and a student of Henry Fuseli (1741-1825): something of their


\(^{158}\) Quoted in Cruse, *The Victorians and Their Books,* 31.

\(^{159}\) Yonge, *Chantry House,* 307.

\(^{160}\) The portrait of Charlotte Yonge (1844), which Kathleen Tillotson deemed "unfortunate" and "spinelike" ("Review of 'Charlotte Mary Yonge: The Story of an Uneventful Life,'" *Review of English Studies* 20, 80 (October 1944), 330, is in the permanent collection of the National Portrait Gallery in London. It is currently not on display, but may be viewed upon written request to the Keeper of Pictures.
spiritual sensibility, of a great confidence and a certain purpose barely subdued or suppressed, is apparent in this portraiture.\textsuperscript{161}

Despite the apparent triumph of the Ampfield consecration, however, the Tractarian community was in acute distress, distracted and dismayed by the furore created by the recent appearance of Tract 90, in which John Henry Newman argued that the essential tenets of the Church of England and the Church of Rome were not fundamentally in opposition. Among Anglicans the initial shock and chagrin were immediately followed by calls for official condemnation and censure; an outcry so fierce, according to Amy Cruse, that "all England seemed aflame."\textsuperscript{162}

The anguish so long anticipated had come to them at last. Newman, idol and interpreter of the Tractarian cause, abandoned it and much more. After months of study sequestered in his retreat at Littlemore, outside Oxford, he repudiated his faith in and formal allegiance to Anglicanism and on 9 October 1845 announced his affiliation with the Church of Rome and full acceptance of its tenets and truths. The defection of Newman was a devastating loss to the Movement, to the Established Church, and, some said, to England as well.\textsuperscript{163} Gladstone disconsolately deemed it a "disintegrating blow" delivered by a "disgraced departing enchanter."\textsuperscript{164} Of course the personal consequences were equally momentous. Secession meant the certain loss of all social status and professional standing, as a character in Newman's novel \textit{Loss and Gain} (1855) observed grimly to a recent Catholic convert: "[a]n English clergyman is a gentleman; you may have more to bear than you reckon for, when you find yourself with men of rude minds and vulgar manners."\textsuperscript{165}

Gladstone also claimed that Newman had "placed himself quite outside the Church of England in spirit and sympathy."\textsuperscript{166} The historian Walter E. Houghton (1957) considered that "to enter the Roman Church was literally to exile oneself from English life."\textsuperscript{167} Some of Newman's closest associates accompanied him in renouncing Anglicanism, but many of his

\textsuperscript{161} Richmond's admiration for Blake was so great that he named his son William Blake Richmond. See Raymond Lister, \textit{George Richmond: A Critical Biography}. London: Robin Garton, Ltd., 1981.

\textsuperscript{162} Cruse, \textit{The Victorians and Their Books}, 37. Charlotte Yonge contended that this Tract was "much misunderstood, and excited ... much obloquy," adding that "many believed it was intended to teach equivocation—to teach men who believed Romish doctrine to elude the tests and hold office and preferment."

\textsuperscript{163} According to Amy Cruse the Oxford Movement "never ceased to mourn for Newman." \textit{The Victorians and Their Books}, 40. In addition to his intellectual and oratorical prowess, Newman apparently possessed an irresistible charm and immense charisma that secured him an ardent following among Oxford undergraduates. "\textit{Credo in Newmannum}," wrote his contemporary J.A. Froude, was for "hundreds of young men the genuine symbol of faith." Ibid., 26.


\textsuperscript{165} John Henry Newman, \textit{Loss and Gain} (1855), 255. Consider for instance the fate of the Jesuit convert Eustace Leigh in \textit{Westward Ho!} (1855), a historical novel by Charles Kingsley set in the time of the Spanish Armada. "Eustace is a man no longer; he is become a thing; a tool, a Jesuit: which goes only where it is sent, and does good or evil indifferently as it is bid, which, by an act of moral suicide, has lost its soul, in the hope of saving it; without a will, a conscience, a responsibility...."

\textsuperscript{166} William Ewart Gladstone; as quoted in Cruse, \textit{The Victorians and Their Books}, 40.

\textsuperscript{167} Houghton, \textit{The Victorian Frame of Mind}, 84.
former companions and colleagues, including a bereft Keble and a baffled Gladstone, regarded him as a renegade and an apostate, traitor to community, church, and country.\(^{168}\) Newman was well aware of the pain and perplexity he had caused; in *Loss and Gain* Mary Reding responded to the conversion of her brother with consternation, sadness, and confusion "At first it quite frightened and shocked her; it was as if Charles had lost his identity, and had turned into some one else. It was like a great breach of trust."\(^{169}\)

The Oxford Movement, which had originally defined itself through controversy, was now oppressed and overcome by it. The stunning secession of Newman compounded other crises: the scandal of Froude, the suspension of Pusey, the schism of the Jerusalem bishopric (1841), and the shock of the Gorham judgement (1850). The result was a discord so spectacular that some said it was in fact a final, and disgraceful, dissolution.\(^{170}\) The papal announcement of the reinstitution of a Roman Catholic hierarchy in England (1850) shocked and antagonised Anglicans and seemed to signal the imminent collapse of the *via media*. The incidence of "perversions" accelerated, especially among High Churchmen. In April 1851 Henry Edward Manning, later Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, seceded; he was soon followed by several prominent Anglican clergymen, including Henry Wilberforce, the younger brother of Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford (1805-1873). Samuel Wilberforce wrote sorrowfully, "I love dearest H. just as much as ever but I feel that our lives are parted in their purpose, aim, and association. I heartily wish he might settle abroad; but having him here after this dreadful fall seems to me beyond measure miserable: and his broken vows and isolated faith weigh heavily on my soul. May God forgive him."\(^{171}\) In November 1854, despite the anguished appeals of the Bishop, another brother, Robert

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168 Keble kept a marble bust of Newman on his study table at Hursley; after Newman's conversion it was covered with a white muslin veil. Moberly, *Dulce Domum*, 82. Gladstone grieved greatly over the "loss" of his sister Helen, who "went over to Rome" in 1842. For others, however, the secession of Newman was something of a relief. Mark Pattison, the rector of the "anti-Puseyite" Lincoln College, Oxford, asserted "it was a deliverance from the nightmare which had oppressed Oxford for fifteen years." He added, "from that moment dates the regeneration of the University." See *Memoirs of an Oxford Don*, 1885. London: Cassell, 1988. Thomas Leach of Corpus Christi agreed, observing that "to some Newman's secession seemed to bring calm after a long continuance of broken weather." In *A Short Sketch of the Tractarian Upheaval*, 1887, 173.

169 Newman, *Loss and Gain*, 182. Many of the figures and events in the novel are based on actual individuals and incidents. The character of Carlton has been associated with that of John Keble; Charles Reding, "on the road to Rome," repudiates his spiritual counsel, acknowledging "It's impossible not to love him ... but he's not the person quite to get influence over me" (116). Newman emphasises the measured, almost methodical, quality of Reding's spiritual quest, and discounts the possibility of influence or impulsivity in his decision to convert.

170 Froude's memoirs, which feature descriptions of extreme ascetic practices such as self-mortification and flagellation, created a furore when they were published posthumously. Pusey had been accused of heresy by his superiors at Oxford and forbidden to preach. The Gorham judgement and Jerusalem bishopric controversies turned on complex questions of ecclesiastical authority and split Anglican clergy and congregations.

171 Samuel Wilberforce, quoted in Raymond Chapman, *Faith and Revolt*, 130. Samuel Wilberforce (1805-1873), son of William Wilberforce, the great Evangelical abolitionist and philanthropist; and brother-in-law of Henry Manning, Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and hence head of the Roman Catholic Church in England, was sympathetic to much of the Tractarian agenda. He served in succession as rector of
Wilberforce, also converted to Catholicism.\footnote{172}

Within the Anglican community the apprehension and anxiety were overwhelming: “We sat calmly at our breakfasts every morning,’ wrote R.W. Church, “and then someone arrived with news of something disagreeable—someone gone, someone sure to go.”\footnote{173} Mark Pattison (1813-1884) remembered that “when the secessions were announced … the sensation to us was as of a sudden end of things, and without a beginning.”\footnote{174} Years later Charlotte Yonge recalled the agony: “[i]t was a time of “cruel shocks and disappointments, fightings within and fear without, slanders and follies….”\footnote{175} R.W. Church, an ecclesiastical historian and the dean of St Paul’s Cathedral, considered (1894) the series of conversions as crises so catastrophic that they constituted

more than a defeat; it was a rout in which [the Tractarians] were driven headlong from the field; a wreck in which their boasts and hopes of the last few years met the fate which wise men had always anticipated. Oxford repudiated them, their controversial successes, their learned arguments, their appeals to the imagination, all seemed to go down and be swept away like chaff before the breath of straightforward common-sense and honesty. Henceforth there was a badge of suspicion and discredit, and even shame, which made men beware of them, an overthrow under which it seemed wonderful that they could raise their heads or expect a hearing.\footnote{176}

Prospects for survival seemed remote.\footnote{177} The historian J.R. Green asserted in a letter to A.P. Stanley that “High Churchmen fell with a great crash and left nothing behind.”\footnote{178} Ruth Kenyon later wrote (1933) that that in the aftermath of a series of conversions to Catholicism a visitor to Oriel once enquired of a resident what had become of Tractarianism. “Dead,” was the response, “except”—pointing to the darkened windows of Pusey’s lodgings—“that we don’t know what may be going on in there.”\footnote{179}

Brightstone on the Isle of Wight, Bishop of Oxford, Dean of Westminster, and Chaplain of the House of Lords; and was founder of the Tractarian theological college at Cuddesdon, near Oxford. In 1860 Wilberforce publicly debated Thomas Huxley on the merits of Darwin’s recent work \textit{On The Origin of Species}; Huxley is generally considered to have prevailed.

The Reverend R.W. Sibthorpe (1792-1879) was the first notable Tractarian to convert to Roman Catholicism. He frequently wavered between the denominations, was buried as an Anglican, but on his deathbed was said “to be looking both ways.” Sibthorpe once famously compared the Church of an England to a “stiff, cross, unattractive old maid” and the Church of Rome as “a most fascinating adulteress.” Quoted in Reed, \textit{Glorious Battle}, 27.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
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\footnote{174}{Yonge, \textit{Chantry House}, 313.}
\footnote{175}{R.W. Church, \textit{The Oxford Movement: Twelve Years: 1833-1845}. London: Macmillan, 1891, 36.}
\footnote{176}{Yonge, “Seed Time at Oxford,” \textit{The Monthly Packet} (May 1891); 499.}
\footnote{177}{Quoted in David Newsome, \textit{The Victorian World Picture: Perception and Introspection in an Age of Change}. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999, 196.}
\end{thebibliography}
But in truth Oxford was no longer the place to seek redress or reassurance, for it was elsewhere that something remarkable was indeed “going on.” Even more than Pusey, “The Great Tractarian” John Keble had never faltered, refusing to retreat; who “stood firm in the general collapse; and whilst Keble held fast the Oxford Movement still lived.” His admirers and adherents said there was something ineffably English about him, steadfast in his personal and pastoral obligations and ideals and secure in his Hampshire vicarage. He seemed to take strength and certainty from the community at Hursley, and to promise its protection to others, swearing staunchly to the unsteady or unsettled that “[i]f the Church of England everywhere were to fail, it should be found in my parish.” Such an oath had myriad solemn obligations: C.A.E. Moberly (1911) maintained that “it was no restful position to be Mr. Keble’s next-door neighbour for thirty years, and especially such years for the Church of England as from 1836 to 1866, for every phase of church politics was watched, discussed, and prayed over at Hursley. Mr. Keble took up every point of state policy which affected the Church and of religious controversy with keen anxiety.”

The theologian H.P. Liddon (1829-1890) concurred, contending “when all had been said and done, people would wait and see what came from Hursley before they made up their minds as to the path of duty.” Thomas Leach of Corpus Christi agreed, remembering that “no questions of importance ever came without Mr. Keble being consulted, and there were thousands of disciples settled throughout the country who thought that there could be no appeal to any higher earthly judgment when once the oracle of Hursley had spoken.” As a consequence Keble was acknowledged the saviour, or perhaps anointed the saint, of the Oxford Movement; and Hursley regarded as one of “the centres, the powerhouses … of the Church, rather than marginal or at the periphery.”

Nevertheless Keble was acutely aware that the erudite arguments of elderly scholars and churchmen, many of them increasingly worn by illness and infirmity, or wearied by public and private disappointment, were inadequate. “One feels that one’s advanced age has not rendered one fitted to set about such works; but really the irreverence and other mischiefs … seem to leave one no choice,” he lamented. He recognised that more robust and resilient recruits were required to promote the Anglo-Catholic cause, to restore the damaged community and reclaim the lost purity and authority of the Anglican Church. Keble wrote that

180 Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 69.
182 Moberly, Dulce Domum, 7.
183 Blair, John Keble in Context, 4. Liddon, a controversial and celebrated preacher, was a leader of the High Church cause and the author of a massive (four-volume) biography of Edward Pusey (1894).
184 Leach, A Short Sketch of the Tractarian Upheaval, 52.
185 Michael Wheeler, introduction to John Keble in Context, xii. Blair, John Keble in Context, 4. See also Raymond Chapman, Faith and Revolt, 60. The imposing presence of Keble’s massive memorial cross in Otterbourne churchyard is an enduring monument to his mission there. The inscription reads: “In reverent memory of JOHN KEBLE, master and inspirer of CHARLOTTE YONGE. Whom God called home on March 29, 1866” (capitalisation in original). A verse follows: “Voice of the Fearless Saint! Ring like a trumpet where gentle hearts beat high for truth. Tell them their hour is come, and they must take their parts!”
186 Quoted in Yonge, John Keble’s Parishes, 59.
[t]he only Church Reform which can really deserve the name;—
as things are at present to speak of such a thing sounds
almost like talk in a dream—yet if the well-disposed of our
young people were trained up in the tone of the Ancient
Church, were taught to sympathise with her, and to look to her
for sympathy, the spirit of discipline, it would seem, could not
fail to revive, and what are now mere forms would again take
to themselves power.187

The acquisition of power had always been a pursuit, if not a preoccupation, but all previous
strategies and stratagems had failed. Academic disputation had proven ineffectual. Nor were
all the volumes of hymns, prayers, and poems, however beautiful and beatific, adequate
enticements. Instead it was imperative to identify, or perhaps invent, a more potent inducement
and more persuasive authority or agency; one that would present and popularise practices and
ideals to an apathetic, ambivalent, alienated, and on occasion antagonistic, audience.

Again it was Keble who proposed a solution. His precocious catechumen, Charlotte
Yonge, at an early age had been intimately involved in the Tractarian cause, primarily through the
influence of her parents. She had taught her own Sunday school class from the age of seven, and
despite recurring doubts about other aptitudes or abilities she readily affirmed the inarguable:
“in religious knowledge I was forward.”188

When she was fifteen Yonge produced her first serious and sustained literary effort,
Le Chateau de Melville, ou Recreations du Cabinet d’Etude (1839), a series of simple stories set
as French exercises and translations, to raise money for the new school proposed by her mother,
situated near the new church designed by her father. The preface opens with an awkward, and
even apologetic, address to her audience:

The friends who have kindly ordered copies of this little
book are reminded that the price which is put on it must not
be considered as the supposed worth of the little volume, but
must be regarded as a subscription towards raising a fund for
enlarging a Village School.189

It is also, however, a statement entirely characteristic of the Tractarian sensibility: a signature
statement of both deference and determination, sincere in its protestations of humility and stalwart
in its assurances of righteousness and rectitude. “I hope the story is not very foolish,” Yonge
declared sententiously to her cousin Anne Yonge, “but I am in hopes that it has a little better
moralite than the French stories by the French themselves usually have.”190

Watson, “‘Lyra Innocentium’ (1846) and Its Contexts,” in Blair, editor, John Keble in Context, 104.
188 Yonge, autobiographical fragment quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 96.
189 Yonge, Preface to Le Chateau de Melville, or Recreations du Cabinet d’Etude. Winchester: Jacob and
Johnson, 1839. There are only four known copies of this privately published volume; in 2009 Beechcroft
Books, the publishing affiliate of the Charlotte Yonge Fellowship, brought out a new edition.
190 Yonge, letter to Anne Yonge dated 25 September 1838; quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge,
Le Chateau de Melville was a modest success, and was soon followed in rapid succession by a series of sketches and short stories, including "Langley School," "Friarswood Post Office," and "Ben Sylvester's Word," written for the Tractarian Magazine for the Young; and historical tales and texts such as The Chosen People and Kings of England, written for local schoolgirls. Yonge's first novels, Abbeychurch, or Self-Control and Self-Conceit (1844); and Scenes and Characters, or Eighteen Months at Beechcroft (1847), were accepted by the Oxford publishing house J&C Mozley, which had close connections to the Tractarian Movement and specialised in High Church literature. Another work, Henrietta's Wish (1850), was brought out by the firm of Masters; and Kenneth, or The Rear Guard of the Grand Army (1850), by J.H. Parker of Oxford.

All these early efforts were reviewed and revised, by her parents and others, before they were submitted to the publisher. In her autobiographical fragment Yonge acknowledged that "for at least twelve or fifteen years, I never did any literary work without talking it over with Mr. and Mrs. Keble, referring difficulties to them, and generally showing the MS, which used to come back with little touches of pencil, and a list of references to words or phrases, showing the diligence of the revision." Evidently she endured such scrutiny with equanimity, a habit that persisted even when she was an established author. In 1865 she responded to Alexander Macmillan's preliminary amendments with the assurance "[d]o not think I say this from any dislike to criticism. I have been used to it all my life, and really like and am grateful for it...."

A consistently enthusiastic reception eventually encouraged Yonge to consider a more ambitious enterprise, a magazine for the young dedicated to High Church principles and practices. The result was The Monthly Packet of Evening Reading for Younger Members of the English

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137. Ethel Romanes predicted that "[s]ome day the "Langley Tales" will be reprinted as classics.... They will be valuable evidence of what the Church of England did for education and civilisation when she still had the village schools in her hand. Great as was the influence of The Daisy Chain and The Heir of Redclyffe on the girls of their day, I doubt if either did more to stir up the generation who "did parish work" on High Church lines during the latter half of the last century than Langley School." Charlotte Mary Yonge, 37-38.

191 The Magazine for the Young (1842-1875) was edited by Anne Mozley (1809-1891) and published by the firm of J&C Mozley. In 1855 it included The Railroad Children, a short story by Charlotte Yonge. Anne Mozley was the niece of John Henry Newman and edited his Anglican Life and Correspondence (1891).

192 Beginning with The Trial, or More Links of The Daisy Chain (1865), all of Yonge's major novels were first published by Macmillan. Other firms, such as M. Ward, W. Smith, A.D. Innes, and the National Society, brought out her religious and historical works.

194 Additional critics included William Heathcote and his wife, John Coleridge, and Marianne Dyson.

195 Yonge, autobiographical fragment, in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 25. Recommended revisions could be extensive; Yonge recalled that her father read an early draft of The Heir of Redclyffe and "criticised it with all his might." Extract in a letter dated 8 December 1896 to M.E. Christie, the literary critic of The Guardian; quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 338. In an article entitled "Lifelong Friends" she allowed that her father "could criticise, but not compose, and by the time a sentence of the unformed capacity of eighteen was tortured into good English, all the life was gone out of it...." The Monthly Packet, December 1894; reprinted in Battiscombe and Laski, editors, A Chaplet for Charlotte Yonge, 182. Frances Yonge apparently objected to some of the original names chosen for the protagonists in The Heir of Redclyffe, which were subsequently changed.

196 Quoted in Jordan, "I Am Too High Church," in Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship Journal 6 (2003), 16.
Church, which first appeared in 1851 and was aimed at young women of Anglican affiliation.\footnote{One of the names originally proposed was The Maiden’s Manual.} According to Charlotte Yonge, who constituted the entire editorial staff, it was conceived “not as a guide, but as a companion, which may help you to perceive how to bring your religious principles to bear upon your daily life.” In the inaugural issue she maintained that the magazine was meant to “show you the examples, both good and evil, of historical persons, and … tell you of the workings of God’s providence both here and in other lands.” But its mission, she insisted, would be infinitely more important. In a sudden shift to more portentous prose, Yonge solemnly reminded her readers that

\begin{quote}
we live in a time of more than ordinary trial, and our middle path seems to have grown narrower than ever. The walls of the glorious Temple in which we have been builded up [sic] seem to shake, though that is but seeming, since they are based on a Rock, and the foundations are the Apostles and the Prophets, and not one of the smallest of the living stones need fall from its own station, even though larger, more important, and seemingly more precious ones may totter and rend themselves away.\footnote{Yonge, \textit{The Monthly Packet of Evening Reading for Younger Members of the English Church} 1 (1851), 1. The original name of the magazine varied slightly over its many years of publication; the word “Younger” was omitted after July 1880.}
\end{quote}

Certainly this was an oblique reference to the recent conversions that had convulsed the Church, yet it was also a reassurance and a resolve. Yonge concluded with the exhortation that “[s]mall stones as we may be, yet we can, we may, we must keep our places in the fitly framed building, where it may indeed be vouchsafed to some even of us to be “as polished corners of the Temple.”

The magazine created a stable and secure space for readers to strengthen, sustain, inspire, and “improve” one another under the direction of an editor whose opinions were deemed sensible, sound, and above all ‘safe.’

Despite its somber tone and staid appearance—there were no illustrations or photographs featured on the densely-printed pages of each issue—\textit{The Monthly Packet} persevered, and even prospered, for many years, finally suspending publication in 1899, when Yonge was no longer editor.\footnote{It is remarkable how many standard features the magazine lacked, including editorial offices, staff members, fixed day of publication, and any advertising revenue. See Hayter, \textit{Charlotte Yonge}, 21.} Eventually it would evolve from a somewhat clumsy compilation of awkward schoolgirl stories, pedantic essays on peculiar topics (“Comparative Danish and Northumberland Folklore,” “Songs from Other Churches,” “Sketches of the Customs of the Graeco-Roman Church,” “On the Benefits of Cold Water”), and contrived competitions and questions (“Describe the feelings with which a Roman gentleman might contemplate the England of the present day;” “Who was the most interesting child in history?” and the arresting but somewhat alarming “How has human hair figured in history?”) to a publication that could present a serious claim to be one of the more
influential intellectual and ideological exponents, and even institutions, of the Anglo-Catholic adolescent community, encouraging and exhorting social and even political awareness and activism. A determination to deflect or defy accusations of insularity and demonstrate international interests is evident in the subjects of several articles, some of them controversial and on occasion provocative: “Sketches from Hungarian History,” “The Red Cross at Tours,” “The Martyrs of Japan,” “Moorish Antiquities,” “The Siege of Belgrade,” and “Zenana Missions: The Progress of Female Education in Missions of the Church in Foreign Lands.” Requests for obscure or esoteric information also demonstrate the curiosity and extraordinary range of intellectual concerns of her readers: “Kereahldiah would be extremely obliged if anyone … could give her information on the salt-flowers in Polish mines” (March 1873).

Also of compelling interest are the appeals columns that suggest the scope of charitable endeavors undertaken by subscribers. Many are from religious enterprises, especially in urban districts, such as S. Mary’s Mission, Soho; S. Paul’s Mission, Isle of Dogs; and S. Andrew’s Waterside Mission, Gravesend, which sought Anglican Bibles and prayerbooks for sailors and emigrants. Others were from hospitals or schools established by Anglican religious orders, such as the Sisters of the Holy Cross and the Sisters of St. Saviour’s Priory, who required clothing and linen for “destitute infants” in Brighton; The Sea Shell Mission in Brixton; The Guild of the Holy Name Torquay Maid Servants’ Home. The Staff at The Cumberland Street Hospital and The Overseers of Ascot Hospital requested contributions to the “Pusey Bed Fund” and “The Daisy Chain Cot.” Tracts, hymnals, illustrated papers, scrap-books, needlework, “serviceable garments,” and provisions for invalids were also in great demand. The increasingly global concern and imperial commitments of the Anglican Church and community are also in evidence: missionary schools in Africa and the Antipodes requested supplies such as slates, stamps, primers, pinafores, and quinine. One new church in the diocese of New Zealand appealed for used church bells. Others looked for donations of painted windows, embroidered pew cushions, and carved fonts. More dramatically there was an urgent request for funds to “ransom John Sterling from slavery in Madagascar.” This appeal was successful, and Sterling was sent on scholarship to missionary school at St. Paul’s College, Great Taharanana. Ever aware of the importance of narrative, Yonge reported with satisfaction that he eventually returned to “his own tribe, the Bessienarakas in the south of the Islands, where he is now a schoolmaster and catechist.” For readers of The Monthly Packet this could certainly be construed as the happiest of endings. Other appeals signaled more intractable problems. A series of articles on “the destitute of Servia” described the devastation of “famine, typhus, and small-pox” and requested emergency medical supplies. “The Cholera at Portsmouth” and other instances of epidemic disease among the poor of British port or manufacturing cities were also documented.

Especially poignant were personal anecdotes and appeals from correspondents seeking placement or industrial training in England for delicate or “deficient” children, many of them victims of the most appalling circumstances and calamities: “Can anyone tell the writer of a
Church of England home where a boy of seven or one of five, or a girl of eight and a half, would be received, free? The father has just been killed on the Great Western Railway; the mother has six young children unable to earn anything, and another is expected in May” (June 1891). Anyone who claims that the subscribers of the magazine were ignorant, insular, or indifferent cannot have seen these columns.  

The progression of serious subjects addressed in The Monthly Packet paralleled the trajectory of Yonge’s increasingly ambitious interests. Christabel Coleridge, whose involvement included the positions of contributor, columnist, collaborator, and, eventually, editor, contended that the magazine was “from first to last the expression of Charlotte Yonge’s individuality, and the means of extending her influence.” She asserted “[i]n its early years she fought pretty hard for its tone and character,” adding, somewhat cryptically, that “there were not wanting those who thought it daring and dangerous.”

Yonge first published many of her most popular novels in serial form in The Monthly Packet, including much of The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations (July 1853 to December 1855); The Young Stepmother, or A Chronicle of Mistakes (April 1856 to December 1860); and The Pillars of the House, or Under Wood Under Rode (January 1870 to December 1873); and The Three Brides (January 1874 to June 1876). She also encouraged the initial efforts of aspiring authors such as Juliana Horatia Gatty (1841-1885), who had three stories published in 1861 alone; Louisa Molesworth (1839-1921); Rosa Nouchette Carey (1840-1909); Florence Wilford (1836-1897); Amelia Claire Leroy (1851-1934), who wrote as Esme Stuart; Mary Bramston (1841-1912); Frances Mary Peard (1835-1923); and later Pearl Mary-Teresa Richards Craigie (1867-1906), who wrote as John Oliver Hobbes. Julia Cartwright (1851-1924), scholar and historian of Italian Renaissance art and architecture, published some of her first pieces in the magazine, including an article (1873) on the lives of St. Benedict and St. Boniface. She was no doubt not alone in finding the famously exacting author of The Heir of Redclyffe “very alarming.”

The correspondence columns provide ample evidence of Yonge’s magisterial attitude: she chided “S.E.A.” for an inappropriate (and unspecified) query, adding sternly that “[t]his is not the place for such a question.” A prospective reviewer was rebuked for a style that was altogether “too Ruskin-y.” Yonge routinely reminded all her readers that “no announcement of societies can be published unless the Editor has seen and approved the rules” (December 1877). In later years Christabel Coleridge, serving as chief editorial assistant, was authorised to admonish

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200 Yonge was scrupulous in immediately and publicly acknowledging each donation, from a few shillings to “a packet containing small diamonds and stamps, received from Kimberley” [South Africa].
201 Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 165.
202 Ibid.
203 Quoted in Angela Emanuel, editor, A Bright Remembrance: The Diaries of Julia Cartwright. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, Limited, 1989, 133. Cartwright’s journal entry for 26 March 1901 reads “Miss Yonge is dead, dear old lady. It wakes up all my oldest memories and enthusiasms. How I loved her books! Kenneth, The Little Duke, and all, and how proud I was to have a letter from her when I had just begun to write.” She added “She is gone, just after the Queen, with all the great people of the Victorian Age,” 255.
prospective authors for the stale conventions, improbable coincidences, contrived circumstances, or other conspicuous shortcomings that compromised the quality of their submissions. “The majority” [of these manuscripts], she declared, “are extremely melancholy.” She added wryly that

We have sat by the deathbeds of so many innocent children, and have seen marble crosses erected over so many broken-hearted widows and deserted lovers, that we have hardly spirits to continue the magazine. It is, of course, bad art to force events in a story to obtain a happy ending; but, on the other hand, it often requires much less skill to kill everyone, than to work out the problem of the plot satisfactorily.  

The initials of prospective authors appeared on the last page of each issue, followed only by the terse phrase “Declined, with thanks.”

Several of the more determined (or less easily daunted) were also members of The Gosling Society, whose monthly manuscript magazine, The Barnacle (1863-1869) was introduced by Yonge to provide additional opportunities for aspiring authors. Perhaps the most successful was Mary Augusta Arnold (1851-1920), the daughter of Thomas Arnold, who later wrote as Mrs. Humphrey Ward. Her controversial novel Robert Elsmere (1888), which chronicled the spiritual crisis of an Anglican clergyman, attracted national attention when it was noticed by Gladstone in a review published in the Nineteenth Century. Two years later, in a letter to Florence Wilford, Yonge referred obliquely to the notoriety surrounding her former disciple. She recalled several of "her Goslings," remembering "our old brood, and what a remarkable set they have been, for good, and alas! Sometimes for the reverse, but there are a good many that I am proud of."

The works of more established Tractarian writers such as Elizabeth Sewell and Margaret Scott Gatty also appeared in The Monthly Packet on a regular basis, as did the contributions of

204 Christabel Coleridge, as “Chelsea China,” The Monthly Packet, June 1891.
205 The Gosling Society (with Charlotte Yonge, professionally the most established, as “Mother Goose”) eventually merged with “Arachne and Her Spider Subjects,” a popular column in The Monthly Packet that posed a competition among readers for the best response to a series of set questions. Great knowledge was required to address classical, historical, literary, and theological subjects. Mary Bramston’s sister was Anna Bramston, founder of the Winchester High School for Girls, later known as St. Swithun’s (founded 1884); their father was Dean of Winchester. Amelie Leroy later served as secretary of the Charlotte Yonge Scholarship Fund, which was established to enable a graduate of St. Swithun’s to continue her education at either Oxford or Cambridge. See Julia Courtney, “Mother Goose’s Brood: Some Followers of Charlotte Yonge and Their Novels,” in Courtney and Schultze, editors, Characters and Scenes, 189-212.
208 Margaret Scott Gatty (1809-1873) was a naturalist whose two-volume study of British seaweeds was considered authoritative; she was also the author of several popular books for children, including Parables from Nature (five volumes, beginning in 1855), Aunt Judy’s Tales (1858), and Aunt Judy’s Letters (1862). In 1866 she launched Aunt Judy’s Magazine, one of several rivals to The Monthly Packet.
several clergymen, including her cousin, John Coleridge Patteson, Bishop of Melanesia.\textsuperscript{209} Occasionally a submission from a somewhat more unlikely source, such as Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (1832-1898), better known as Lewis Carroll, the author of \textit{Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland} (1865), was listed in the table of contents.\textsuperscript{210} One of Carroll’s pieces, which appeared in April 1860 under the title “A Tangled Tale,” consisted of a sequence of ten “knots,” or conundrums, in which mathematical puzzles were embedded in the narratives.

Another unusual series featured a collection of extracts from the campaign dispatches of General Charles George Gordon (1833-1885), commander of military adventures in China and Constantinople. Readers of \textit{The Monthly Packet} participated in the imperial project by eagerly following the progress of his expedition from Cairo, Egypt, to Khartoum, in the Sudan. After a prolonged siege in the fortified city Gordon was slain and his troops slaughtered by a rebel Arab army of “dervishes” led by Muhammad Ahmed (1844-1885), known as the Mahdi. Charlotte Yonge (and much of Britain) was never to forgive Gladstone and his government for what was considered an unconscionable and even criminal delay in sending out a relief force, which entered the city only two days after Gordon’s death.\textsuperscript{211}

Although \textit{The Monthly Packet} has received little scholarly attention, its effect on its devoted readers, many of whom would have prominent public lives as professional writers and pioneers of educational opportunities for women, has been described by them and by others as incalculable. Despite its modest circulation and reputation, it provided inspiration and opportunities for intellectual expression and exchange previously unimagined by its audience, many of whom otherwise endured somewhat “isolated and monotonous lives.”\textsuperscript{212} In effect the magazine established a community of women, endorsing their ambitions by valuing and validating their experiences. Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish recalled (1908) that “this periodical … supplied a great need, and must have played a great part in awakening and fostering Church feeling and

\textsuperscript{209} Mary Cholmondeley parodied such pretensions in a passage in her novel \textit{Red Pottage} (1899) that clearly refers to \textit{The Monthly Packet} (then labouring in its last days), asking wapsishly, “Is it Utopian to hope that a day will dawn when it will be perceived even by clerical editors that Apostolic Succession does not invariably confer literary talent? What can an intelligent artisan think when he reads what he reads in his parish magazine? A serial story by a Rector unknown to fame, who, if he possesses talent, conceals it in some napkin rather than the parish magazine; a short paper on “Bees” by an Archdeacon; “An Easter Hymn” by a Bishop, too—but what a hymn! “Poultry Keeping” by Alice Brown. We draw breath, but the relief is only momentary; “Side Lights on the Reformation,” by a Canon. “Half-Hours with the Young,” by a Rural Dean....” London: Virago Press, 1986, 255-256.

\textsuperscript{210} Dodgson, the son of a High Church clergyman, was a lecturer in mathematics at Christ Church, Oxford. In 1866 he met and photographed Charlotte Yonge during one of her visits to Oxford, noting in his diary that “[i]t was a pleasure I had long hoped for, and I was very much pleased with her cheerful and easy manners—the sort of person one knows in a few minutes as well as in many years.” Quoted in Janet Howarth, “Charlotte Yonge and the Renaissance in Girls’ Education.” \textit{CMY: Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship Review} 20 (Spring 2005), 5.

\textsuperscript{211} One of the officers who died with Gordon at Khartoum was a distant cousin of Charlotte Yonge.

\textsuperscript{212} Ellen Jordan, Charlotte Mitchell, and Helen Schinske, “‘A Handmaid to the Church:’ How John Keble Shaped the Life and Work of Charlotte Yonge, the ‘Novelist of the Oxford Movement,’” in Blair, editor, \textit{John Keble in Context}, 184. Alethea Hayter maintained that the circulation of \textit{The Monthly Packet} was “never much above 1500;” \textit{Charlotte Yonge}, 21; but as Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish and others have suggested, the magazine was routinely read by all the children in often enormous Tractarian families.
principles among young people. In our large family it was fairly read to pieces." By many accounts, however its influence was intellectual rather than exclusively religious. The anonymous author of an article in *The Church Quarterly Review* invoked the pervasive influence of Charlotte Yonge in "thousands of quiet homes, full of cultured women and carefully educated daughters, upon whom the effect ... was manifest, but not in ways which need attract the notice of future historians." But all that still lay ahead. In Otterbourne there was initial apprehension that literary celebrity and success, or worse, the appearance of satisfaction in such circumstances, was altogether inappropriate, even unseemly, for a young woman pledged to promote Church principles. After prolonged consultation with Keble it was agreed that the proceeds of the novels (after costs, which were minimal) would be entirely directed to support Church causes, both at home and abroad. After all, as Ethel Romanes observed, Charlotte Yonge was educated and "certainly established" by Keble: he had formed her mind and directed her mission, and she acknowledged him as her "Master." Literally and metaphorically Keble anointed, or ordained, Charlotte Yonge as his successor, the champion chosen to revive the faltering movement he and his clerical colleagues had founded only twenty years earlier. In a letter to Marianne Dyson dated 23 February 1853 (and marked "private"), Yonge recalled the solemn, almost sacramental, experience of that encounter. She confided that "when I asked for the blessing, he said, "you shall have it, such as it is," and then he said the words he never used with me before, "prosper Thou her handiwork," which seemed to seal a daily prayer...." This benediction brought with it not only new opportunities and responsibilities but the prospect of an entirely new identity.

In later years Charlotte Yonge recalled, without evidence either of hesitation or hauteur, that "I have always regarded myself as a sort of instrument for popularising Church views." Her commitment to Tractarian causes, always considerable, was complete, an essential and enduring element of her sense of self. According to Christabel Coleridge, "Pro ecclesia et Deo was her favourite motto." C.A.E. Moberly agreed, adding "whether amongst her neighbors,  

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213 Cavendish, "The Secret of Miss Yonge's Influence," in Romanes, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 197. Lucy Cavendish subscribed to *The Monthly Packet* even as an adult; in a diary entry of 22 November 1880 she wrote: "[s]ent off a letter which is to appear in the M. Packet, in answer to an unprovoked attack on High Church Schools by Miss Sewell." The Diaries of Lady Frederick Cavendish, Volume Two, 273.


215 Romanes, 31.

216 Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 192.


or in stories meant to influence a wider circle, the comprehensiveness of the spiritual combat inspired all of Charlotte Yonge's undertakings.\(^{219}\)

But what Yonge regarded as inspiration and instruction others have interpreted as intolerable interference. Several critics, including Sarah Bailey (1934), have maintained that Yonge was so deeply impressionable, "so directly influenced by her devotion to Keble and others of his school as hardly to be capable of independent judgement."\(^{220}\) E.M. Delafield charged (1943) that she was "emotionally fixed in adolescence,"\(^ {221}\) Georgina Battiscombe concurred, contending that Yonge's "life was a prolonged childhood."\(^ {222}\)

Christabel Coleridge, in an authorised account deplored as "as act of pietas" and accurately described as "irritating, dispiriting,"\(^ {223}\) and "superlatively dull,"\(^ {224}\) portrayed Charlotte Yonge as innocent and profoundly imitative, driven only by a desire (some would say compulsion) to placate and please parental and clerical authorities:

She had those greatest joys of high-minded and enthusiastic youth, hero-worship, and the sense of being in the van of one of the greatest movements of the day. Authority, family ties, faculty, and aspiration all glowed in the same full and powerful stream, and for her... the thing was to do home and family duties more perfectly... Th[is] fact was the keynote of her character, and produced that atmosphere of mingled ardour and submission in which she lived all her life, while all other contemporary and contending inspirations were so entirely outside her ken that she did not so much oppose them as remain in ignorance almost of their existence, and certainly of their force.\(^{225}\)


\(^{219}\) Moberly, Dulce Domum, 10-11.
\(^{220}\) Sarah Bailey, "Charlotte Mary Yonge," Cornhill Magazine 150 (July-August 1934), 197.
\(^{221}\) Delafield, Introduction to Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 10.
\(^{222}\) Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 27.
\(^{223}\) Dennis, Charlotte Yonge, Novelist of the Oxford Movement, 4.
\(^{224}\) Delafield, Introduction to Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 14.
\(^{225}\) Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 145.
altruists, as well as with countless readers and admirers, in Britain and beyond, with insularity?

Her novels contain accounts of many of the most dramatic and defining episodes of the contemporary national narrative: the savage contest amongst the clergy and their congregations for control of the doctrine and direction of the Established Church; and the subsequent campaign of activist priests and their partisans for supremacy in the cities and the colonies.

The narratives of Charlotte Yonge also contain multiple examples of and allusions to celebrated or notorious imperialist incidents such as the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava (Ben Sylvester’s Word) and the battles of Alma, Inkerman, and Sebastopol in the Crimea (The Young Stepmother, or A Chronicle of Mistakes); “The Black Hole of Calcutta” (The Daisy Chain, The Clever Woman of the Family), the atrocities at Cawnpore, the siege of Delhi, the looting of Lucknow, the failure of the East India Company, fear, famine, and the Sepoy “Mutiny” and its suppression in India (The Young Stepmother, The Daisy Chain, The Clever Woman of the Family); the assault on Tel-el-Kebir (Strolling Players: A Harmony of Contrasts, with Christabel Coleridge) and the construction of the Suez Canal in Egypt (The Pillars of the House); the Opium Wars (Chantry House) and the Boxer Rebellion in China (The Making of a Missionary, or, Daydreams in Earnest); the Maori Wars in New Zealand (The Daisy Chain); and more sedately and much closer to home, the celebration of the Queen’s Golden Jubilee (The Long Vacation). Crises on the Continent are also imagined: the chaos of Paris during the Revolution of 1848 (Dynevor Terrace), contagion in Italy (The Heir of Redclyffe); pestilence in Prague (Magnum Bonum). Characters venture to dangerous corners of the Empire and beyond: the settlements of Polynesia (The Daisy Chain, The Trial); the wilds of Canada and the outback of Australia (Hopes and Fears, The Pillars of the House); the frontier of America (The Trial, The Pillars of the House); the veldt of South Africa (New Ground: Kaffirland); the counting houses and cantonments of Hong Kong (Chantry House). Nor are more remote and more relentlessly exploited regions of the southern Americas excluded: the sugar and coffee plantations of the West Indies (Heartsease, or The Brother’s Wife); Panama; and the silver and tin mines of Peru (Dynevor Terrace).

Sometimes the most perilous or precarious places are closer to home; Yonge incorporated several instances of maritime, mining, or railway disasters in her narratives (The Heir of Redclyffe; Dynevor Terrace, or The Clue of Life; The Three Brides), and cholera, diphtheria, typhus, typhoid, or scarlet or yellow fever epidemics (The Daisy Chain; The Trial; Hopes and Fears, or Scenes from the Life of a Spinster; The Clever Woman of the Family: The Pillars of the House: The Three Brides; Magnum Bonum, or Mother Carey’s Brood); the adulteration of medication and the criminal contamination of food (The Daisy Chain, The Three Brides), as well as examples of the general distress and deprivation created by the processes of urbanisation and industrialisation (The Trial; Hopes and Fears; The Clever Woman of the Family; The Three Brides). Celebrations of the destruction of three deadly threats to the sovereignty and survival of the state, the detection of the Gunpowder Plot (The Daisy Chain, The Young Stepmother), the
dispersal of the radical protest movement known as Chartism (*Heartsease, or the Brother’s Wife*), and the defeat of the Grande Armée of Bonaparte (*The Three Brides*) also appear. Real or perceived threats to the integrity or the ideals of Anglicanism, including the sectarian strife of the 1840s, the Papal Aggression crisis of the 1850s, and the Ritualist riots of the 1860s, are also evident. These incursions of historical and contemporary incidents and issues, Yonge’s informed contribution to “The Condition of England [and of Empire] Question,” are often dismissed or deprecated by scholars, seemingly in sympathy with the disparaging assertion of Georgina Battiscombe that “her outlook was an unusually limited one; she was ignorant and apparently oblivious to some of the most important features of the great age in which she lived.” It is especially ironic that this allegation accompanied the analysis of a narrative that even the often oblivious Christabel Coleridge considered the most “controversial” of Yonge’s novels, *The Clever Woman of the Family* (1865). Nevertheless, many modern scholars regard this novel, which will be considered more closely in Chapter Four, as an extended interrogation of the cluster of assumptions and anxieties surrounding the condition and circumstances of women in midcentury Britain, commonly referred to as “The Woman Question.” This assessment, however, ignores the narrative’s serious and sustained investigation of the consequences of imperial enterprise, particularly as missionaries and military men returned from their service in India, often deeply damaged by their encounters with the exigencies of empire.

Yonge, an accomplished historian and antiquarian, and an active and assertive churchwoman, was acutely attentive to the realities and repercussions of national and international incidents and events. Ethel Romanes (1908), one of the few scholars to acknowledge and applaud her involvement in contemporary controversies, insisted that she “was always abreast of modern movements,” although she declined to elaborate. Nevertheless, this dissertation will demonstrate that rather than take refuge in reticence and reserve with which she is so often associated, Charlotte Yonge deliberately deployed both her writing and her reputation in a series of fierce cultural and ecclesiastical debates and disputes. She consistently maintained a close scrutiny (that was not always an indictment) of contemporary realities and reforms, once declaring that “[i]t has been the strength and glory of England that she has been built on her old foundations

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226 The discovery and suppression of Gunpowder Plot (1605), a Roman Catholic conspiracy to destroy the Houses of Parliament and depose the Protestant James I, is commemorated on Guy Fawkes Day, 5 November.


229 Romanes, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 51.
instead of sweeping them away..." Contrary to the specious claims commonly found in conventional appraisals of her work, she often reconsidered and occasionally revised her attitudes (although sometimes, it must be conceded, with reservations or reluctance). Scholars have acknowledged, however, that in one instance at least early scruples and uncertainties were entirely abandoned: towards the end of her life Charlotte Yonge regarded the admission of (superior) female students to (select) institutions of higher education with equanimity, and almost with enthusiasm, as something "raising the whole ideal and standard of women" (Modern Broods).

A scholarship established in her name enabled a worthy young woman from a local academy to attend university, either at Oxford or Cambridge. This incontrovertible evidence of a personal and professional progression, so often invalidated or ignored, suggests the possibility of a more general (and generous) reconsideration of her novels. It also provides an irresistible incentive to examine the legacy of this once intensely admired and immensely influential author, and to interrogate the ideological and cultural processes that have worked to expel her from the literary canon, and erase her from the historical record.

231 Yonge, letter to Edward Talbot, quoted in Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 146.
See also Yonge, Modern Broods, or Developments Unlooked For. London: Macmillan, 1900.
1.4. Causes and Costs of Celebrity

Take my name as a pledge.

Charlotte Mary Yonge

Despite persistent pressure to conform to the often exacting expectations of others Charlotte Yonge apparently always had an independent spirit and an indomitable resolve. Even Christabel Coleridge recalled with mild astonishment that she “accepted with deference and gratitude” all the directives of Otterbourne and Hursley, but that in the end she deliberately and decidedly “took none” of them. When asked what she would have done if her father had forbidden her to pursue her literary career Yonge immediately replied, “Oh, I must have written, but I should never have published, at least not for many years.”

As it happened, advice of any sort would have been singularly superfluous. Her next novel, *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853), was a sudden and spectacular success that went into five editions in the year of its publication alone. Described as a sentimental romance; an elaborate Christian allegory; an Anglo-Catholic confession of faith; a painted Pre-Raphaelite fantasy; an extended parable; “the apotheosis of the domestic novel;” and a “final genuflection to a fading world,” *The Heir* proved more popular than any other novel that appeared that year, including those published by established authors Charlotte Bronte (*Villette*), Charles Dickens (*Bleak House*), Elizabeth Gaskell (*Ruth; Cranford*), R.S. Surtees (*Mr. Sponge’s Sporting Tour*), and William Makepeace Thackeray (*The Newcombes*). Enthusiastic readers such as Charles Kingsley (1819-1875), Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892), William Morris (1834-1896), and Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), admired it extravagantly and recommended it effusively. It was reputed to be the volume most requested by young guardsmen stationed in the Crimea (Lord Raglan, field commander of the British forces, reportedly read *Heartsease*, Yonge’s subsequent novel, on his deathbed during the siege of Sebastopol), by missionary priests in Africa and the Antipodes (her cousin John Coleridge Patteson read *The Heir* on the voyage out to Melanesia, and was criticised for his inattention to all other concerns); and by serious young women, it seemed, everywhere. Eagerly awaited editions featuring new illustrations or beguiling bindings appeared almost annually, and sold impressively, into the first decade of the twentieth century.

Many of the early reviews, both in Britain and the United States, were rapturous, and even reverent. The correspondent for *The Times* (1854) contended “never, perhaps, did the beauty of holiness appear more beautiful or more winning than in this pure and excellent creation. People

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233 Quoted in Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 153.
will feel more about it than many will confess; and we are mistaken if it does not help to raise the tone of English fiction."\textsuperscript{237} The same year \textit{Fraser's Magazine} considered that "[w]e feel that we are communing with fellow creatures belonging to a higher order of beings, yet so linked with our own as to compel us to rise into their purer atmosphere."\textsuperscript{238} The reviewer for \textit{The Christian Remembrancer}, a periodical closely affiliated with the Anglo-Catholic community, perceived that \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe} had even greater potential.

It is not that \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe} is a faultless work…. But it is a book of unmistakable genius and real literary power; a book to make men pause and think, to lift them out of themselves and above the world, and make them . . . the wiser and the better for their reading…. [It is] more affecting and far more practically useful than the run of moral treatises or public exhortation.\textsuperscript{239}

As late as 1935 the literary scholar Amy Cruse contended that the appeal of \textit{The Heir} was in the creation of characters with "a real consciousness of unseen realms which were as truly theirs as their actual home on earth."\textsuperscript{240}

The novel was so popular and powerful that almost immediately it transformed its anonymous author from an unproven provincial to an estimable, even exalted, public personage, a process of apotheosis that Charlotte Yonge acknowledged almost as an aside in \textit{The Monthly Packet}. She declared that "[w]ith \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe}, when I was about thirty years old, authorship ceased, in a manner, to be a simple amusement, and became a vocation, though never less of a delight, and I hope I may say, of a conscience."\textsuperscript{241} Despite her apparent diffidence it was evident that she was at last a professional rather than an amateur. Every successive publication, and there would be more than two hundred over the course of her sixty-year career, would be promoted as the work of the author of \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe}.

However, sudden celebrity, extravagant and extensive as it was, seemed to have little obvious effect on the outward contours of her early existence. Yonge's reserve allowed her to resist any intrusion or inquiry into personal or professional routine. Only her charitable impulse remained conspicuous: as in the past all the revenues she received were donated to the Church, and the earliest royalties of \textit{The Heir} went to purchase and provision a schooner, \textit{The Southern Cross}, for the exclusive use of the Melanesian mission.\textsuperscript{242} This clergy and their congregation were

\textsuperscript{237} \textit{The Times}, 5 January 1854, 9.
\textsuperscript{238} "Review of 'Heartsease, or The Brother's Wife,'" \textit{Fraser's Magazine} 50 (1854), 503.
\textsuperscript{239} \textit{The Christian Remembrancer} 267 (1853), 47.
\textsuperscript{240} Cruse, \textit{The Victorians and Their Books}, 64.
\textsuperscript{241} Yonge, \textit{The Monthly Packet}, December 1894; quoted in Courtney, "'Sintram' and 'The Heir of Redclyffe','" \textit{Journal} of Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship (Spring 2004), 1.
\textsuperscript{242} When the original \textit{Southern Cross} was scuttled after many years of service, wood from the hull was salvaged and shaped into a pastoral cross for the bishops of Melanesia.
to continue as the most compelling of all colonial causes and commitments to Charlotte Yonge, for John Coleridge Patteson had been ordained as the first Bishop of Melanesia in the year that the novel had first appeared. In 1859 she also contributed two thousand pounds to the establishment and endowment of a church and missionary school, St. Andrew’s, in Kohimarama, named for the Cocksmoor chapel whose construction and consecration constitute the centerpiece of The Daisy Chain.

With the sensational success of The Heir, Charlotte Yonge had introduced both herself and her cause to an attentive and increasingly avid audience. The novel, as Barbara Dennis and others have observed, was an unparalleled phenomenon, “the foundation of her fame,” but it was also much more. It was similar to Keble’s sermons and Newman’s tracts in that it was intended as both argument and appeal. It was similar to selections in The Christian Year and The Salisbury Hymnal in that it was perceived as poetic, precious, and pure. But it had another attribute that had not been seen before. The Heir of Redclyffe was essentially the first sympathetic and sophisticated illustration of Anglo-Catholic institutions and ideals, one situated in the most exalted and emblematic of English spaces, the rural Anglican parish, and the most sanctified site within it, the drawing room of the devout High Church family, the place of “the trivial round, the common task” of Keble’s poetic phrase. Philosophically and poetically, the novel was a precise and “practically useful” primer of Tractarian thought.

Through an expert deployment of dense domestic detail, particularly in her depiction of setting and circumstance, Charlotte Yonge successfully enlisted her readers to enter that community and endorse its causes and commitments. In all her novels the audience has an immediate immersion in, and intimate involvement with, the Anglo-Catholic crusade. Initially this enterprise was a struggle for acceptance and authority within the Established Church, and the Anglican communion, and against perceived ignorance and irreverence, but eventually it sought something more expansive and elusive: the construction of an alternative national identity, one centred on the Anglo-Catholic experience, its trials and temptations, its triumph and transcendence. The aim was to propel the High Church party--culturally, politically, philosophically, even metaphorically--from periphery to core, a process that would compel a reimagining and a reinvention not only of Anglicanism but of England and “Englishness.”

The Tractarian strategy for conquest was simple: their relentless assault on a daunting array of adversaries--the ignorant, the impious, the impure--no longer would be confined to the rarified (some said anemic) atmosphere of academic and clerical disputation of Oxford. That approach, it was obvious, was flawed and futile. Instead the struggle would be renewed everywhere, especially in the symbolic space that represented the essence of England, the churches and church schools of every parish, no matter how poor, provincial, or otherwise unprepossessing or unpromising.

243 Dennis, Introduction to The Heir of Redclyffe, vii.
Charlotte Yonge's novels, and their author, would be among the most effective participants in the strenuous campaign to allay the suspicions and seize and secure the sentiments, sympathies, imagination, and identity of the nation.

In 1851, when anxieties about the ability of the Anglican Church to survive the secessions to Roman Catholicism were most acute, the Congregationalist John Campbell (1795-1867), pastor and preacher of Whitefield's Tabernacle, Moorfields, London, published a pamphlet entitled *Addresses and Appeals to the Sunday-School Teachers of England*. Campbell, whose audiences were among the largest in England, proclaimed the "immense importance...[that] attaches to the Sabbath School of Great Britain--an importance, in my judgement, incalculably greater than [that accorded] to the Imperial Legislature." He added that Sunday-school teachers are regarded with "dread and detestation by the Vatican.... Priests mock the established clergy, they laugh at the Bishops, and they defy the Legislature, but they survey the British Sunday School with solemn hate, and depressing apprehension."\(^{245}\) Campbell's chief rival as the most powerful and persuasive orator in contemporary Britain, the Radical politician John Bright (1811-1885), concurred, declaring "I don't believe that all the statesmen in existence—I don't believe all the efforts they have ever made—have tended so much to the greatness and true happiness, the security and glory of this country, as have the efforts of Sunday-school teachers."\(^{246}\)

The most conspicuous and celebrated Sunday-school teacher of the age, Charlotte Yonge, would have deprecated such accolades as excessive, but in the end would have considered them essentially accurate.\(^{247}\) Early and intensive instruction in church discipline and doctrine was a crucial component of the Anglo-Catholic program, and over the years Yonge adroitly addressed an enormous and appreciative audience that had an extraordinary range of ages, abilities, interests, and avocations. Her devotional studies were sometimes simple ("Conversations on the Catechism;" a regular column in *The Monthly Packet*) and sometimes sophisticated ("Reasons Why I Am a Catholic and Not a Roman Catholic;" 1901), but all were conceived and astutely calibrated to respond to the intellectual and spiritual requirements of her readers.\(^{248}\)

Her histories, less doctrinaire but still distinctly Anglo-Catholic and didactic, were primarily intended for children instructed at home. Yonge accordingly reconstituted herself as the amiable but authoritative "Aunt Charlotte" (*Aunt Charlotte's Stories of English History for the Little Ones*, 1873; *Aunt Charlotte's Stories of French History*, 1874; *Aunt Charlotte's Stories of Roman History*, 1877; *Aunt Charlotte's Stories of American History*, 1883; and others), thus

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\(^{245}\) John Campbell, *Popery and Puseyism Illustrated: A Series of Essays, With Addresses and Appeals to the Sunday-School Teachers of England*. London: John Snow, 1851, xiii, xvi. Campbell was popularly known (and popular) as the "Champion of Dissent."

\(^{246}\) Quoted in Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, Volume Two, 57. Bright was a Quaker.

\(^{247}\) Christabel Coleridge claimed that Yonge "regarded herself even more in the light of a veteran Sunday School teacher than in that of an author." *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 283.

\(^{248}\) Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 98.
claiming a personal and a privileged position as well as an encyclopedic erudition. Other historical series with which she was involved were aimed at older students, and include *Landmarks of History*, three volumes (1852-1857); * Cameos from English History*, nine volumes (1868-1899); *English History Reading Books*, five volumes (1887-1885); and *Westminster Historical Reading Books*, six volumes (1891-1892). Despite her insistence on the importance of scrupulous research they were seldom favorably reviewed or received, impugning and injuring her reputation even in her lifetime. A correspondent for *The Church Quarterly Review* (1904) allowed that “[w]e are compelled to own that her history books are not conspicuous for their accuracy.” Idiosyncrasies of style, sensibility and (not least) interpretation seemed equally incongruous, especially for modern readers. In *Aunt Charlotte’s Stories of Greek History for the Little Ones* (1876), subsequently renamed the *Young Folks’ History of Greece* (1878), Yonge declared that “the ancient Greeks were not trained in the knowledge of God like the Israelites, but had to guess for themselves. They made strange stories.”

Her historical novels, with one or two exceptions, also were less than successful. Several, such as *The Little Duke, or Richard the Fearless* (1854), *A Reputed Changeling* (1889), and *Grisley Grisell, or the Laidly Lady of Whitburn: A Tale of the Wars of the Roses* (1893), were concerned with early English history, both civil and ecclesiastical, and consequently participated (consciously or not) in the construction and consolidation of the British character and identity. Other tales were set in ancient Egypt (*The Pilgrimage of the Ben Beriah*) or Palestine (*The Prince and the Page: A Story of the Last Crusade*); northern Africa (*A Modern Telemachus*); as well as France (*The Chaplet of Pearls: A Reputed Changeling*), Germany (*The Dove in the Eagle’s Nest*), and Scotland (*Unknown to History: A Story of the Captivity of Mary of Scotland*). Despite Yonge’s assiduous attention to invoking the particulars of period and place, however, critics have contended that the historical personages portrayed in her novels invariably embodied and expressed mid-nineteenth-century Anglican sensibilities. Georgina Battiscombe dryly observed that “Henry V, as she saw him, would have raised no tremor in the drawing room of Hursley Parsonage, and German maidens of the fifteenth century would have passed without remark in Otterbourne Sunday School.”

In *The Chaplet of Pearls, or The White and the Black Ribaumont* (1868), set in sixteenth-century France, the struggle between Catholic and Huguenot resembled contemporary sectarian strife. Ethel Romanes noted “the via media of the English Church is drawn out in vivid and favourable contrast to the violent extremes of religious factions in France

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249 Battiscombe and Laski list nine volumes with “Aunt Charlotte” in their titles between 1873 and 1883, including *Aunt Charlotte’s Evenings at Home with the Poets. A Chaplet for Charlotte Yonge*, 205-206.

250 Further consideration of Yonge’s status (and struggles) as a professional historian is provided by Walton in “Charlotte M. Yonge and the ‘Historical Harem’ of Edward Augustus Freeman,” 225-255.


253 As Alethea Hayter has noted, some of these stories feature a famous historical figure such as Mary, Queen of Scots or Maximilian, the Holy Roman Emperor. *Charlotte Yonge*, 43. For the most part, however, the characters in these novels were wholly invented.

254 Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 131.
during the terrible times of [the Italian and Roman Catholic regent] Catherine de Medici.”

Georgina Battiscombe lamented, however, that Yonge’s determined dislike of both Popery and extreme Protestantism … distorts her historical judgement.” She continued, “[a]ll this Pre-Raphaelite painting of detail is no substitute for a sense of period,” conceding that “such a sense Charlotte sadly lacked.” Of the reviewer who considered The Dove in the Eagle’s Nest (1866) “refreshingly free from High Church proclivities,” Alethea Hayter remarked incredulously (1996)

“she could hardly have read the book she was introducing.”

Yonge herself acknowledged the peculiar perils that accompany the composition of historical novels. In the preface to Stray Pearls (1883) she maintained that

Formerly the Muse of the historical romance was an arbitrary personage who could compress facts, resuscitate the dead, give mighty deeds to imaginary heroes, exchange substitutes for popular martyrs on the scaffold, and make the most stubborn facts subservient … but critics have lashed her out of these erratic ways and now she has become the meet handmaid of Clio.

For her publications aimed at more adult audiences Yonge patiently crafted a more public and professional identity, imagining and presenting herself as an artistic and cultural agent and authority of increasing power and prestige. Her success in securing a prominent place in the contemporary critical and commercial realm was rapid and remarkable. Georgina Battiscombe observed that “[t]wo or three new books by Miss Yonge were to be familiar features of every publishing season for the next forty years, until with the passage of time she was to grow from a popular author into a British institution.”

The anonymous essayist for the Catholic Literature Association, an Anglican organisation, echoed this assessment, adding “the influence of her books on the public opinion of the time was incalculable.”

Her professional accomplishments were also recognised and rewarded by her peers.

Yonge became the first woman vice president of the Society of Authors, an association established by Walter Besant in 1883 to protect and promote the interests of professional writers, particularly in copyright disputes. Several shrewd and sensible exchanges with her publishers J.W. Parker

255 Romanes, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 200.
256 Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 131.
258 Charlotte Yonge, Stray Pearls, 1883; quoted in Alice Fairfax-Lucy, “The Other Miss Yonge,” in Battiscombe and Laski, editors, A Chaplet for Charlotte Yonge, 91.
259 Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 98.
261 Peter Keating, The Haunted Study: A Social History of the English Novel, 1875-1914. London: Fontana, 1991, 28. Other women who were among the early members of the Society of Authors include Eliza Lynn Linton, Mary Arnold Ward, and Eleanor Ormerod, described as “an economic entomologist.” See Jordan et al., “A Handmaid to the Church,” in Blair, editor, John Keble in Context, 175. Women were not offered full membership in the Society under the terms of its original charter.
(1792-1870), Alexander Macmillan (1818-1896), and A.D. Innes (1863-1938); and with her editors Edward Augustus Freeman (1823-1892) and John Richard Green (1837-1883), for whom she wrote historical studies, demonstrate Yonge’s determination to challenge custom and convention and manage the details of her own contractual arrangements. Her increased confidence also is evident in the assured response to a request for practical advice from a contributor to The Monthly Packet. In a letter to the aspiring poet Elizabeth P. Roberts dated 21 January 1854 Yonge counseled

I do not think country publishers have the opportunity of promoting the sale of their books to such an extent as London ones. J.W. Parker of the Strand is the publisher with whom I have had the most satisfactory dealings, and I think he commands a larger sale than either his namesake of Oxford or than Masters.\footnote{Quoted in Jordan et al., “A Handmaid to the Church,” in Blair, editor, \textit{John Keble in Context}, 180.}

Royalties and other revenues, although important, were never the sole or even the primary reason for Yonge’s selection of either publisher or publication, as they were not for the subject of her writing. Although she acknowledged that “[i]t is right to insist on a fair price, and not to close in haste with any offer for less,”\footnote{Yonge, “Authorship,” in Battiscombe and Laski, editors, \textit{A Chaplet for Charlotte Yonge}, 190.} her principles were paramount. When the Reverend W.B. Flower, the editor of the extremely High monthly magazine the \textit{Churchman’s Companion} solicited a contribution, Yonge submitted two serials with comparatively little Anglican content. Various alterations and additions were proposed, but in a letter to Marianne Dyson dated 14 May 1848 an adamant Yonge categorically rejected his demands and declined to revise her preliminary drafts, declaring “I assure you I mean to have my own way, and if The Churchman finds he has caught a Tartar by the tail he must make the best of it.”\footnote{Quoted in Coleridge, \textit{Charlotte Mary Yonge}, 157.} Her association with this publication, which she deemed “controversial,” did not endure.

Yonge subsequently refused to participate in an even more remunerative project. In a series of responses to a proposed editorial position, she resolutely declined to disregard the dictates of her conscience in order to comply with the demands of commerce and celebrity. She was ultimately unable to accept the offer, she advised the publisher Alexander Macmillan, as she was accustomed to “admit nothing that I do not quite go along with.” To compromise or concede would be both a personal and professional betrayal:

I am in doubt whether I could exactly be the ostensible editor in thorough fairness to those who take my name as a pledge for the strict line of distinctly Anglican orthodoxy.... It has been brought to my attention again and again that my name is taken as a guarantee of an Anglican tone that is High and not Ultra High, and not at all Broad, that I do not feel as it would be fair towards that class of reader to give that sort of sanction if I did not with my whole heart approve. If I did

\footnote{262 Quoted in Jordan et al., “A Handmaid to the Church,” in Blair, editor, \textit{John Keble in Context}, 180.}
\footnote{263 Yonge, “Authorship,” in Battiscombe and Laski, editors, \textit{A Chaplet for Charlotte Yonge}, 190.}
\footnote{264 Quoted in Coleridge, \textit{Charlotte Mary Yonge}, 157.}
become in any way responsible, it must be with full authority.265

This insistence on the accountability to her readers did much to secure their affection and admiration. The public also responded with enthusiasm to Yonge’s personal and professional association with several national and international organisations founded to improve circumstances and conditions for young women. Yonge supplied pieces that appeared in the publications of The Girls’ Friendly Society, the Society for Religious Higher Education, and the Mothers’ Union, among many others. Every year from 1887 she wrote for the National Society a story suitable for older elementary school students. She also served as editor of The Monthly Paper of Sunday School Teaching from 1860 to 1875 and of Mothers in Council from 1890 to 1901. Often her involvement was even more substantial. The editor of Friendly Leaves, the magazine of The Girls’ Friendly Society, declared that Charlotte Yonge “was a faithful friend of the G.F.S., a most loyal defender of its works and its objects.” She added, “what she has done for girls and women it is impossible to say.... The example of her characters, and still more of herself, has set many on the upward path.”

That her audience recognized and reciprocated her loyalty was apparent in the results of a survey of schoolgirl readership (1886) in which participants placed Charlotte Yonge third on a list of preferred authors: after Dickens and Scott, even with Kingsley, and just before Shakespeare.266

Undoubtedly her most popular works were her domestic novels, the set of contemporary chronicles that included The Daisy Chain, Heartsease, Dynevor Terrace, The Trial, The Young Stepmother, Hopes and Fears, The Clever Woman of the Family, The Pillars of the House, and The Three Brides. All had appeared within a twenty-year period, and several were connected to one another through the recurrence of characters, often entire extended families. The novels were intended as powerful emotional and intellectual appeals in which Yonge presented her readers with an Anglo-Catholic reality, sometimes pleasurable, often painful, but always sustained by the possibility of perfection and the promise of consolation in an Anglo-Catholic afterlife. All affirmed that the ideals of the Oxford Movement were neither distant nor dim, but immediate, attainable, and irresistible to all but the unrepentant and the unregenerate. Tractarian theology asserted that the devout would be permitted to perceive the presence of God not only after death,


266 The editor of Friendly Leaves was the indefatigable Christabel Coleridge, who had presided over the final decline of The Monthly Packet until its demise in 1899. Friendly Leaves was similar to The Packet in style and substance. See “Miss Charlotte Mary Yonge: In Memoriam.” Friendly Leaves 26, 297 (May 1901), 2.

267 Edward G. Salmon, “What Girls Read,” Nineteenth Century 20 (October 1886), 515-529. Salmon was somewhat sceptical about the results of this survey, questioning in particular the impressive placement of “primarily didactic” women writers such as Charlotte Yonge and Elizabeth Sewell. However, Kate Flint argues that Salmon “failed to consider that the popularity of these authors ... may have rested to a considerable extent on their ability to structure their plots so as to turn the domestic arena into a site of suspense and speculation.” The Woman Reader, 1837-1914. Oxford: Clarendon, 1993, 156.
but also in life; and that the workings of “divine providence” appear in the ephemeral signs that signal eternal truths. Newman had eloquently articulated this principle, preaching that “to those who live by faith, every living thing they see speaks of that future world; the very glories of nature, the sun, moon, and stars, and the richness of the beauty of the earth are as types and figures, witnessing and teaching the invisible world of God.”268 “Material phenomena,” he proclaimed, “are both the types and the instruments of real things unseen.”269 The poems of *The Christian Year* ratified these reassurances, extending and even embedding them in the domestic routine, endowing the most ordinary occurrence with significance and affirming, as Raymond Chapman once observed, “a sense of heavenly reality” in the performance of daily obligations.270

These innovative and imaginative certainties were a persuasive response to one of the great perplexities of the age: the correspondence between this world and the next, and the communion of the living and the dead. They also offered enormous solace to the bewildered and the bereaved. Others found additional compelling assurances: Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898) contended that the ideals implicit in Tractarian theology “taught me to venture all on the unseen,” a curious admission for an artist.271

As catechumen of “The Great Tractarian” John Keble and champion of the High Church cause, Charlotte Yonge also “ventured all,” demonstrating at all times that she “was not afraid of symbols” or signs.272 Indeed she embraced them with enthusiasm, and despite their apparent simplicity all her narratives are abundantly enriched with allusion, analogy, and allegory that allow multiple meanings. Towards the end of her life she had in many ways become a symbol herself, an admired and even exalted example of an almost emblematic English existence: principled, purposeful, disciplined, and devout, ardent but austere. Hursley and Otterbourne, as perfected Tractarian communities, had become elaborate metaphors as well: material manifestations of and memorials to the early survival and enduring strength of the High Church cause. For Charlotte Yonge, the local parish churches dedicated to St. Matthew and to St. Mark were even more precious, for they were imperishable examples of the “edifying,’ building up, of the living stones of the True Church, and the restoring of her waste places,”273 a theme of Tractarian triumph and transcendence that she would often summon and underscore in her narratives.

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270 Chapman, *Faith and Revolt*, 185.
272 Ibid., 74. J.C. Shairp has observed that one of the characteristic qualities of *The Christian Year* was a “pure love of nature, and a spiritual eye to read nature’s symbolism.” Quoted in Charles Smyth, “Personalities of Keble: His Chief Gift to the Church,” *The Church Times*, 25 March 1966.
For some they would eventually become places of pilgrimage.

In early 1862 Charlotte Yonge and Frances Yonge, a widow since the sudden death of William Yonge in 1854, left Otterbourne House to Julian Yonge and settled in the adjacent Elderfield House, which Christabel Coleridge considered a pattern establishment, “perfect in its appointments, and appropriate in its setting … with the three windows of the long, low upstairs drawing room [that] looked across the road to the church and school.”

According to a correspondent for The Church Quarterly Review, this room, which Yonge used as her study, seemed a sanctuary, or perhaps a cloister, with something of “an ecclesiastical effect,” produced by the presence of hundreds of books on theology, dozens of missionary and church magazines, presided over by a large globe and a massive Bible. Evidently there were comparatively few ornaments or other embellishments, and the exceptions were seldom merely decorative, but personally and professionally significant and symbolic. Positioned above Yonge’s writing table was a print of Albrecht Durer’s etching The Knight, Death, and the Devil and copies of the Richmond portraits of her parents and her heroes, Lord Seaton, John Keble, and William Heathcote. Also on display were an engraving of Raphael’s St. Margaret (1518) and a print of John Everett Millais’s A Huguenot on St. Bartholomew’s Day Refusing to Shield Himself from Danger by Wearing the Roman Catholic Badge (1851-1852), both powerful images of the perils of religious principle and the possibility of persecution. All was consistent; a setting and a situation that concealed no secrets or surprises but instead reinforced the core conviction of Yonge’s existence, “how intimately Creed and Character are linked.”

It was in this space, surrounded by these possessions and sustained by the proximity of St. Matthew’s Church and school, that Charlotte Yonge would remain for the rest of her long life, a conscious and conspicuous example of chosen, contented, and consecrated singleness. The extraordinary enthusiasms and energies of her youth never receded, as one observer recounted:

she was perfectly untireable … she would have three manuscripts on her desk at the same time, a novel, perhaps, a historical work, and a book of religious teaching, and she would write a page of each in turn, going from one to the other as she waited for the ink to dry. The process was one which … could only be watched with awe.
Her existence, entirely dedicated to and defined by her vocation, was intensely disciplined. Nevertheless on rare occasions her routine was disrupted by the attentions of a devoted reader or the intrusions of a determined admirer. In a letter to Marianne Dyson dated 24 September 1867 Yonge described with some amusement the invasion of

an utterly unknown little American girl of fourteen or fifteen, [who] bobbed into the room, rushed up to me, shook hands, [and exclaimed] “Miss Yonge, I’ve come to thank you for your books; I’m an American.” It was odd to be thanked by a little bolt upright mite, as if in the name of all the American Republic, for writing for the Church!281

Other interruptions were more melancholy, the result of the inevitable mournful losses. After a prolonged and painful illness Frances Yonge died in 1869; two years later the Reverend William Bigg-Wither, a “High Churchman of the old-fashioned school”282 and trusted spiritual advisor, retired after thirty-five years as curate in charge at Otterbourne. He was succeeded by the Reverend Walter Francis Elgie, an “energetic” clergyman of less sympathetic persuasion but equally stern principles, who was instituted as the first vicar of St. Matthew’s. His wife Catharine shared his conviction that “great changes were absolutely needed at Otterbourne,” and it is therefore scarcely surprising that they considered the presence of their celebrity parishioner Charlotte Yonge “distinctly alarming.” The contemplated changes were indeed comprehensive and signaled greater concerns. There were new church accessories and accoutrements: cushions, collection plates, chalices, surplices, seats, and choral services; and new school appointments and arrangements: trained teachers, modernised texts, and standardised lesson plans. Years later Catharine Elgie conceded to Christabel Coleridge that “the whole village would have been up in arms had it not been for Miss Yonge. She saw that times were changed, that it was impossible to go on for ever in the same groove, and, with a great and noble effort, she determined to support the new clergyman.”283 It was perhaps difficult for Yonge not to consider herself suddenly obsolete; she was still only in her forties when she remarked somewhat ruefully, “it is odd to stand for a generation gone by.”284

Nevertheless, relinquishing previous obligations opened other opportunities, and at this time Yonge realised a long deferred desire and became an exterior, or lay, associate of the community of S. Mary the Virgin, under the direction of William John Butler, the founder and Rector of Wantage. Those who remained outside the convent were not required to profess their vows, but expected to observe all the rules of the order, even at home. Yonge arranged her

281 Letter from Yonge to Marianne Dyson; quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 235.
282 Notes of Catharine Elgie; quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 262. Coleridge spells the name as “Elgee.”
283 Ibid., 262-263.
284 Letter from Yonge to Marianne Dyson dated 19 August 1865; quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 222.
existence accordingly, gave generously to Wantage, and visited frequently. In a letter to Marianne Dyson she wrote of its enormous appeal: “I am enjoying all things. I think the eager life here just suits me, from the wonderful unflagging feeling about it. It is so much the sparking, hurrying stream.”

Another notable distraction from disappointment and distress presented itself in 1869, when Yonge ventured to the Continent for a short excursion that included a visit with Francois Guizot (1787-1874), the former prime minister of France and a great admirer of The Heir of Redclyffe. The following June included a more joyous event; Yonge attended the ceremonial opening of the newest, and most controversial, institution at the University of Oxford, Keble College. The school had been established to honor the existence of the Great Tractarian, and by extension to perpetuate his intellectual, spiritual, and theological legacy. Its mission was to “enable gentlemen wishing to live economically” access to Oxford, and although some perceived it as an idiosyncratic ‘seminary for impecunious High Church ordinands,’” it was from the start an ambitious educational and egalitarian experiment, “where rich and poor would be educated in a brotherhood of churchmen.”

The first warden of Keble, Edward Stuart Talbot, and his wife, Lavinia Lyttelton Talbot, were known for their extensive Anglo-Catholic antecedents and associations, and it was evident that the entire enterprise was in effect an enormous history lesson, an immense testament to the early temerity, tenacity, and eventual triumph of the Tractarian program. It was therefore appropriate that it was also a provocation. Pusey, one of the primary patrons, proudly considered the creation of the College “a broadside of Christianity against the [scientific and secular University] Museum across the road.”

Like the Movement itself Keble was conceived as a deliberate assault on an array of

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285 Letter from Yonge to Marianne Dyson dated 7 June (no year given); quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 259. She later compared Wantage to “a theological college.” Ibid., 315.
286 The Archbishop of Canterbury, Charles Longley (1784-1868) set the foundation stone of the college on 25 April 1868, which was St. Mark’s Day and the anniversary of Keble’s birthday. The official opening of Keble occurred two years later, in June 1870, when the College received its Royal Charter. The chapel, funded entirely by William Gibbs, was opened on St. Mark’s Day 1876. Two of Gibbs’s sons subsequently subsidised the construction of a hall and a library.
287 Nevertheless, the High Church committee appointed to oversee the establishment of Keble stated emphatically that the College was not intended “for persons of inferior social position, less cultivated manners, or of attainments and intellect below ordinary level of University.” Quoted in Keble College: The History. Birmingham: Francis Lomas, Ltd., 1997, 7.
288 Although Talbot was initially regarded as an unusual and even controversial choice, he served the College with devotion and distinction and was universally admired.
289 www.keble.ox.ac.uk/about/architecture. Pusey’s words suggest that the early adversarial spirit of the Oxford Movement had not subsided. Other major donors included H.P. Liddon, who bequeathed his theological papers to the library; Earl Beauchamp, the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Heathcote, John Coleridge, W.E. Gladstone, and Charlotte Yonge. In the subscription list of 1867 her gift is recorded as GB 10; most bishops gave GB 25. Between six and seven thousand individuals subscribed to the establishment of Keble; in all thirty-two thousand of the fifty thousand pounds required to found the College were contributed within two years of Keble’s death, an astonishingly generous tribute from the grateful and grieving Tractarian community. See Charlotte Mary Yonge Newsletter 5 (1997), 5.
academic and clerical conventionalities and complacencies. Apparently no detail, aesthetic or ecclesiastical, was overlooked or omitted. The banded brick exterior of the College, which was immediately branded the "Holy Zebra style," was the work of the most favored architect of the Oxford Movement, William Butterfield (1814-1900). According to the authorised history of the College, its distinctive appearance was applauded by High Churchmen for its "bold assertion of difference from the plain stone tabernacles erected by Evangelicals and Broad Churchmen, and it caused annoyance outside High Church circles for just that reason." The intricate polychromatic patterning was roundly condemned for a perceived reliance on Italianate influences that some said suggested a perverse predilection for other "Romish" practices. The architectural historian Paul Thompson (1971) considered the design and decoration an expression of "Catholicism in a Protestant England, of luxury in the age of Gradgrind, of sensuous pleasures in a time of rigorous suppression. All Saints’ and Keble, to Evangelical Victorian England, were red flags in a moral as much as a visual sense." Other elements of the College were also controversial, none more so than its most celebrated treasure, the original version of one of the most famous and flamboyant Pre-Raphaelite religious paintings, William Holman Hunt’s *The Light of the World* (1853). The Evangelical Thomas Carlyle reviled the glowing image of Christ, inspired by a passage from the Book of Revelation, as "a mere papistical phantasy;" and it had been ridiculed by critics during its appearance in the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1854. Eventually, however, the painting proved so popular with the public that a special antechamber was added to the chapel in order to accommodate the multitude of admirers who wished to inspect it. In its architecture and interior appointments Keble College was a massive and magnificent metaphor for the history of the Tractarian cause itself: at first regarded with suspicion and skepticism as a presumptuous interloper (or perhaps pernicious influence), but eventually accommodated, accepted, and even admired, as both symbol and institution.

Elizabeth Wordsworth (1840-1932), the future principal of Lady Margaret Hall, the first

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290 Butterfield would also design the monument for the martyred missionary bishop, John Coleridge Patteson, in 1873, as well as the enormous brass memorial cross that honored Keble in the chancel of All Saints' Church, Hursley.

291 Keble College: A History, 9. A similar establishment, Selwyn College, named in honor of Robert Augustus Selwyn (1809-1878), the first bishop of New Zealand and "joint heir of The Heir of Redclyffe," was founded at Cambridge University in 1882, also by general subscription. Selwyn’s original pastoral staff, made of Maori hardwood, is on display in the College chapel.

292 Ibid.

college for women at Oxford, also attended the ceremonial opening of Keble. Although she expressed some excitement at the number of illustrious scholars and eminent churchmen who participated in the procession, including Charles Longley, the Archbishop of Canterbury; and Robert Cecil, the Marquess of Salisbury and future prime minister, she exulted in the sudden recognition of another person seated among the dignitaries. Wordsworth, great-niece of the former poet laureate, grand-daughter of the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, daughter of the Bishop of Lincoln, and sister of the future Bishop of Salisbury, recorded with elation in her journal, "[s]aw Miss Yonge, the Miss Yonge." Other spectators had similar reactions. Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish, sister-in-law of Edward Talbot, wrote "I was shown Miss Yonge the great." The Oxford undergraduates vigorously cheered her appearance at the ceremony. Charlotte Yonge had become both cynosure and celebrity of the High Church community, and another symbol of its success. Over the course of her career her own rather reclusive identity, straddling the space between public and private realms, had evolved into something infinitely more expansive and emblematic. Yonge was now seen as a national icon, conscripted, created, and cherished by the public. Edith Sichel shared in this enthusiasm and was even more effusive. In an appreciation published in *The Monthly Review* (1901) she asserted that Charlotte Yonge embodied the essence of "the British gentlewoman." Moreover, she insisted, "if ever a temple were built [for such an ideal], Miss Yonge should figure as its goddess."

If this were so, it was all owing to the effervescent and inextinguishable ardor of her admirers and acolytes, the cadre of young Anglo-Catholic women who were avid consumers of the novels and *The Monthly Packet*. Yonge's narratives enabled an audience previously silent and subdued to establish an increasingly public presence as it came to the attention of the nation. Eventually an emphatically egalitarian community emerged, established on affection for both novels and novelist but also sustained by shared intellectual and spiritual sympathies and sensibilities. Connections among readers were often immediate and intense, despite considerable disparities of class, circumstance, and situation. In a diary entry dated 18 June 1881 Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish,

294 The controversy over opportunities for higher education for women at Oxford was eventually resolved with the establishment of two residence halls in 1879; Lady Margaret Hall, an Anglican venture established on High Church principles with the interests of Christ Church; and Somerville, a nondenominational college supported by the Broad Churchmen of Balliol, Mark Pattison, Benjamin Jowett, Walter Pater, and T.H. Green. Lady Margaret Hall was to emulate "the ways and tone of a Christian family;" Somerville was patterned on the life "of an English family." See Barbara Dennis, "The Clever Women of the Family: Charlotte Yonge and the Higher Education of Women." Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship *Journal* 6 (2005), 1-9. Dennis noted that the Church hall was named for Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry VII and a benefactor of both Oxford and Cambridge; Somerville was named for Mary Somerville, an accomplished scientist and staunch advocate of expanded opportunities for women.


whose husband was the second son and heir of the Duke of Devonshire, one of the great peers of England, wrote that she had that day “[m]ade great acquaintance with the dear little body Ethel Fane, aged 14, Henry Cowper’s orphan niece. We had no end of topics in common, being equal lovers of Miss Yonge, and I did enjoy [her] enthusiasm and great discernment, coupled with a very pretty modesty. She is a loving little Churchwoman....”

However insular at first, it was an audience that would become impressively international and inclusive. Yonge’s enormous readership seemed elastic enough to encompass every class, race, religion, city, country, and colony. Even a cursory examination of her papers reveals the extent of her appeal. Her correspondents included the educators Emily Davies (1830-1921), founder of Girton College for Women; and Dorothea Beale (1831-1906), principal of Cheltenham Ladies’ College and founder of St. Hilda’s Hall, Oxford. Yonge also corresponded regularly with two of the most prominent celebrities in contemporary literary circles: the poet Francis Turner Palgrave (1824-1897), compositor of the popular collection *The Golden Treasury of English Songs and Lyrics* (1861); and Frederick James Furnivall (1825-1910) one of the founders and editors of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Her considerable clerical correspondence included senior bishops and colonial curates. Royalty was also represented: the princesses of Germany, Italy, and Spain wrote to express their admiration for her novels. The letters Yonge seemed to value most, however, were from far less eminent or exalted individuals. Susan Hooper, an invalid unable to afford her own books, quietly confided “[y]ou know not now what a blessing and a comfort you have been.... I shall know you in Paradise and thank you there.” Another exchange concerned the spiritual struggles of an impoverished student in India. In a letter to the nieces of the Reverend William Bigg-Wither dated 28 April 1897 Yonge wrote with delight

I must tell you of something that has given me the greatest pleasure. About two years ago a lady belong to the Mission at Calcutta wrote to me that a Hindu student had been so much impressed with *The Pillars of the House* as to accept Christianity, and that he was going to be baptised. So I sent out one of those illuminated cards that are given at baptisms.... By the time it arrived he had drawn back, though they were so good as not to disappoint me by telling me. But he has now come all right, and he has been baptised.

She concluded, “[h]is friends have sent me this thankworthy letter of his, which I am sure you will like to read. Please return it. It makes the heart glow. I am sending him out a photo of house and garden.”

Charlotte Yonge was always acutely aware of the power of symbols. She acknowledged the

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299 Quoted in Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 353.
300 Letter written by Yonge to the family of William Bigg-Wither dated 28 April 1897; quoted in Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 328.
sacrament of baptism, the ceremonial entry into the Anglican community and communion, with a particularly appropriate gesture: the presentation of a prize that portrayed, even on the edge of the Empire, an emblematic English space. The subject obviously would have great spiritual significance as well, for among the Anglican faithful Charlotte Yonge was considered a saint for her dedication to Church causes; Elderfield House, hallowed by her presence, was seen as a shrine. An inspection of the image of her surroundings would recall the author and reinforce the rigid (precise and yet paradoxical) rules of her engagement with the world: seemingly public yet intensely private; intimate yet inaccessible. Clasped in the hand of the recipient, or secured in the pages of an album, the photograph would be regarded as a precious relic: incontrovertible evidence of an enduring, everlasting, and essentially English reality.

Great changes nevertheless had come to Otterbourne and Elderfield. In September 1873 Gertrude Walter (1849-1897), the youngest sister of Frances Walter Yonge and a confirmed spinster and permanent invalid, presented herself for a stay that ended only with her death twenty-four years later. The closeness of her relationship with Charlotte Yonge was evident but never explained: Christabel Coleridge claimed that Walter cryptically referred to herself as “Char’s wife;” Yonge called Walter, equally affectionately and enigmatically, “my memory.” It was an arrangement, and eventually a responsibility, that did much to encourage, if not enforce, Yonge’s solitude and seclusion. Despite many applications and appeals she would never again leave Hampshire for any appreciable time, and all encounters and engagements would be exclusively and emphatically on her own terms. Countless admirers, among them Christabel Coleridge, Elizabeth Wordsworth, and Queen Emma of Hawaii, came to Otterbourne, as did thousands of letters of appreciation and affection sent by readers in England, the Empire, and beyond.

In July 1899 Christabel Coleridge organised an elaborate afternoon fete to honor Charlotte Yonge and formally announce the establishment of a scholarship fund, amounting to GB 1800, in her name. The program was planned with purpose and presented with precision, scheduled to coincide with a vast diocesan convocation of Sunday School teachers at Winchester. The Bishop of Guildford (George Henry Sumner, the husband of Mary Sumner, founder of the Girls’ Friendly Society) and the Bishop of Winchester (Edward Stuart Talbot, former Warden of Keble College, apparently there was never a definitive diagnosis of Walter’s condition; Christabel Coleridge suggested that she suffered from “a severe form of rheumatism.” Charlotte Mary Yonge, 270.

Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 270, 342.

Queen Emma (1836-1885) was the widow of King Kamehameha IV of Hawaii (1834-1863). Both were devout Anglicans who had been educated by missionaries; Kamehameha had personally translated the Book of Common Prayer and much of the hymnal into Hawaiian. The couple had many personal and political connections to England; Queen Victoria was one of the sponsors to their only child, whom they named Prince Albert Edward. Kamehameha had encouraged the Church of England to establish a permanent presence in Hawaii and built an Anglican cathedral, St. Andrew’s, in Honolulu.
“who made a wonderful speech about having read *The Little Duke* when he was a small boy”) were in attendance at a ceremony in the Cathedral Close that might have been scripted and choreographed by Yonge herself:

Presently the Bishop of Winchester came to conduct her into the great schoolroom gaily decorated with daisy chains and heartsease, and two of her old Goslings, Chelsea China [Christabel Coleridge] and Bog Oak [Mary Elizabeth Anderson Morshhead], walked after her, hand in hand.304

Yonge always recalled the details of the day with great pleasure: “Also they gave me a basket of flowers--daisies, heartsease, and the like, with violet ribbons to represent the violet, as of course there were none to be had, and ropes of daisy chains hung all about. Afterwards the girls made some very pretty tableaux from the stories, *The Little Duke*, *The Caged Lion*, and *The Chaplet of Pearls*, and had a daisy-chain dance in thin white frocks.”305 She was presented with a “beautifully bound book, its exterior finely powdered with daisies,” its interior profusely illustrated with sketches of Hursley and Otterbourne. The pages featured more than five thousand signatures collected from admirers all over the world. The dedication on the frontispiece read:

From all parts of England and Wales, from Scotland and Ireland, contributions have been sent, so that this scholarship has become the embodiment of the love, admiration, and gratitude which the donors feel for you. From scattered homes in Canada and South Africa, from New Zealand and India, from Australia, the Falkland Islands, and Buenos Aires, as well as from the United States of America, has come the echo of the deep sense of the obligation we owe to you and therewith to share with us the pleasure of being able to express it during your lifetime.306

Many were impatient for the appearance of a biography, which Yonge adamantly and repeatedly refused to authorise. In a letter (1890) to A.D. Innes, the last publisher of *The Monthly Packet*, she wrote with some asperity that “*The Newberry Magazine* writes to ask for my biography. I answer that I have always set my face against publishing people’s lives while they are alive, and that I decline decidedly.”307 It was as if she could not countenance any interrogation, or even inspection, of the identity and image she had so carefully constructed and circulated. Only at the end of her life did she agree to appoint her most devoted disciples, Christabel Coleridge, her distant cousin and sometime collaborator, as her biographer, and to allow any access to her correspondence and other private and professional papers.

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304 Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 284.
305 Yonge, letter to Charlotte Fortescue Yonge dated 20 July 1899; quoted in Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 343.
306 Quoted in Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 162.
Photographic images of Charlotte Yonge were also strictly supervised and selectively circulated. Few examples have survived, and none that can be considered casual, candid, or remotely revealing of any intimate element of her character or circumstances. As she aged she appears increasingly and almost aggressively austere, her profile and posture indicating a resolute resistance to any possibility of personal engagement or interaction. Towards the end of her life and immediately after her death two photographs were published, each apparently for a specific purpose and a select audience. The first appeared on the opening page of a bound volume of The Monthly Packet (advertised in the issue of May 1891), intended as a prize for loyal subscribers; the second, edged in black, appeared as the frontispiece of an issue of Friendly Leaves, intended as a memorial to a valued contributor, colleague, and counselor.

Both images, as tribute and trophy, were talismanic symbols of an enduring presence and an evolving series of identities that belonged to and were beloved by the nation: author, editor, activist, “authority,” “aunt,” “child,” spinster, “handmaid,” champion, “instrument,” “saint,” “thorough Englishwoman,” “British Gentlewoman,” “Queen Regnant;” and, above all, “British Institution.” In the end Charlotte Yonge’s refusal to seek publicity or court prestige seemed only to secure and enhance her exalted position.

308 In a letter partially dated “3 November 189--” Yonge complained to Mary Elizabeth Anderson-Morshead that it was evident that her services were no longer required as editor of The Monthly Packet. “They are very civil about it, and want me to be called Consulting Editor, but that is nonsense, for they don’t consult me.” Nevertheless, she insisted with characteristic spirit, “I go on with Cameos and perhaps with stories, certainly with some conchology.” Quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 335. Coleridge included the contents of this letter in her autobiography of Yonge, declaring defensively “she continued to contribute frequently to it, and really controlled its contents to the last much more than was commonly supposed.” 279.

309 Romanes, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 3.
1.5. Cultural Commodity

I do think that a woman produces more effect by what she is than by a thousand talks and arguments.

Charlotte Yonge, ‘Womankind’

Charlotte Yonge died of pleurisy and pneumonia in the first year of the new century, on 24 March 1901 at her home, Elderfield House, in Otterbourne. The details of her death, as divulged by her disciples, appeared to have deeply spiritual, symbolic, and even mythic, resonances. According to Ethel Romanes, Yonge “lay down one spring afternoon, just as the daffodils she loved so well were coming into bloom, and she passed away after her last Communion, on the Eve of the Annunciation, 1901.” Christabel Coleridge observed that her death caused a profound and personal sense of sorrow among the inhabitants of Otterbourne and Hursley: “In her own village, schoolgirls, their mothers, and their grandmothers, all her own scholars are mourning for her.” The arrangements for her funeral were announced “among the tears of the whole village, to whom the loss of her familiar figure from their midst seemed an incredible thing.” For many it was not unlike the death of Victoria, only eight weeks earlier. Most people could not remember a time when she was not among them; not actually or always present, of course, but nevertheless a presiding, seemingly permanent, presence. As had happened with Victoria (whom she came to resemble in her old age), the nation’s affection and admiration had become esteem, and esteem had become veneration. In effect Charlotte Yonge had become a complex and cherished cultural commodity, one that had over time evolved from individual to institution, and from institution to icon, representative of much that was precious and pure, and now that was irrevocably past.

The service, at St. Matthew’s, Otterbourne, was her final performance, in effect an elaborate High Church pageant, the centrepiece of a solemn spiritual salute to (and from) an Anglican symbol, champion, and saint. Christabel Coleridge remembered that

letters and tributes of flowers came from all quarters—from church societies, from unknown readers and admirers, and old scholars—till the church was filled with their fragrance and beauty. She lay surrounded with the flowers of her own village, the daffodils and primroses which she loved, with a beautiful smile of kindness, and the look of the peace which passeth all understanding on her face.

310 She was apparently conscious of her readership and her responsibilities to the end. On February 1901 she sent a response to an invitation to the annual meeting of the Society of Authors, expressing her regrets.
311 Romanes, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 194.
312 Coleridge, “Miss Charlotte Mary Yonge: In Memoriam.” Friendly Leaves 26, 297 (May 1901), 2.
313 Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 286.
314 Yonge’s life spanned that of the Queen: her first work was published in the second year of Victoria’s reign, in 1838, and her last appeared in late 1900, only weeks before the Queen’s death.
315 Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 286.
Even in death Yonge was surrounded and supported by a High Church presence, not only from Otterbourne and Hursley, but from all over England. Her coffin lay in state in the chapel through the night, watched over by acolytes and admirers, and in the early morning the Reverend Henry Albany Bowles, rector of Otterbourne, and the Reverend W.H.P. Arden, chaplain of the King’s Forces, conducted a requiem communion celebration, accompanied by a full choir. The Dean of Winchester then pronounced the benediction.

The correspondent for The Church Quarterly noted with awe that the burial service of “this dear saint of God” had taken place on “the thirty-fifth anniversary of the death of her Master, John Keble.” The contemporary account in the Otterbourne Parish Magazine, equally reverent, described the route of the vast funeral procession as it silently and slowly traversed a path “white with snow … which reminded some of us of her description of that royal funeral in 1649, ‘when the king went white to his grave.’” Her tomb, a modest marble slab surmounted with a recumbent cross, reposes in the shadow of Keble’s memorial marker at the eastern end of the churchyard at Otterbourne. It is shrouded with a thick mantle of ivy, which occasionally obscures the inscription, as if acceding to her wish for privacy.

On the Sunday following her death the Reverend Robert Campbell Moberly, Regius Professor of Pastoral Theology at Oxford and canon of Christ Church, son of Bishop Moberly, returned to Otterbourne to preach the memorial sermon. In the course of his remarks he reminded those assembled that Charlotte Mary Yonge, spinster of Otterbourne parish, “for so many years has become such a part in the training for God of the character of English men and women.” And so, he concluded, “she has surely herself no small part in the history of our country for the last half century, as that history is recorded in the truth of God.” That evening a second address, equally “eloquent and touching,” was delivered by the Reverend Henry Walter Brock, the former rector of St. Matthew’s Church. A third clergyman, the Reverend Vere Awdry, the successor of John Keble as rector of Hursley, also presided. It was at last the final farewell.

316 Bowles was the husband of the younger daughter of Julian Yonge, and thus the nephew of Charlotte Yonge.
317 “Charlotte Mary Yonge,” The Church Quarterly Review 104 (January 1904), 360.
318 The Otterbourne Parish Magazine, 1901. Charles I was executed on 30 January 1649.
319 Keble’s imposing memorial cross, composed of Devonshire granite, is more than nine feet high. An initial proposal that Yonge’s grave be placed in Winchester Cathedral, near the tomb of Jane Austen, was immediately overruled, although an ornamental rood screen dedicated to her memory was erected in the Lady Chapel. Despite her national and even international reputation, it was strongly felt that Charlotte Yonge belonged to Otterbourne, and would have wished to remain there in death, as she had in life. See Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 163.
2. Popular and Critical Reception

2.1. Introduction

Query: Is the novel injured as a work of art by having a definite moral or religious object?

Spider Subject competition, ‘The Monthly Packet’

Even that most authoritative and august of British institutions, *The Times*, acknowledged the extraordinary effect that the novels of Charlotte Yonge had had on the nation, allowing that for many “the news of [her] death comes with a sense of personal loss.”¹ In some respects, however, the dull and discursive account that appeared on 26 March 1901 represented an additional sorrow, for it would establish the dispiriting tone of much subsequent assessment and analysis. The anonymous author admired “the strength and charm of her character” and applauded her “inventive mind,” but also alluded, without extensive elaboration, to “certain obvious defects” in her narratives. Only one work, *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853), was individually acknowledged.² Despite its critical acclaim and popular appeal, however, the novel was condemned as “too controversial, and at times even morbid,” a subtle censure not only of Yonge’s subject and style but also of her Tractarian sympathies and sensibilities. Readers were reminded of the context of its publication; *The Heir*, it was recalled, had appeared “on the eve of great political contests, and perhaps of contests more terrible still.”

*The Times* certainly was not alone in its insistence that Charlotte Yonge’s “firm devotion to the High Church view of Christian doctrine” was an infantile “idée fixe”³ that implied a dangerous and potentially damaging ignorance or infatuation. But in truth it was the protestations and perspectives of the reviewers that were fundamentally flawed. To perceive her narratives as simple romances or sentimental reveries intended exclusively “for the gentle inmates of country rectories” perhaps suggests an equivocation or evasion of its own. *The Times* apparently had no intimation of the radical impulse behind the creation of the novels or of the determination to deploy them in the doctrinal controversies that had convulsed the Church. It failed to recognise that the narratives were conceived as exhortation and example in a time of faltering faith; constructed to cajole, if not compel, the nation to institute High Church doctrine and discipline into its daily ordinances and observances. Thus their primary purpose was profoundly political: to deflect or dispel any residual resistance or resentment and so accelerate a wider acceptance of the Anglo-Catholic cause. By this standard, and others, the novels of Charlotte Yonge were an

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¹ “Miss Charlotte Mary Yonge,” *The Times*, 26 March 1901.
² In 1882 the Dean of St. Paul’s, H.S. Church, sent her an extract from an Italian newspaper in which the correspondent evidently had confused Yonge’s name with that of Sir Stratford de Redclyffe, the former British ambassador to Constantinople, a career diplomat so incompetent, Roy Jenkins has argued, “that he had almost single-handedly caused the Crimean War.” *Gladstone: A Biography*, 306. See also Coleridge, *Charlotte Yonge*, 380.
enormous success.

Instead *The Times* preferred to marvel at the "excessive" number of Yonge's books (an exhaustive list, it exclaimed, "would probably occupy nearly a whole column" of the paper). In doing so it perpetuated the common complaint that the propensity to produce so much prose was personally and professionally somewhat suspect. At the same time it also ignored an opportunity to acknowledge a rarer and altogether more remarkable phenomenon: the intense and enduring intellectual and emotional engagement of author and audience.

Many competitors of the secular press seconded such condescension. In an article that appeared in January 1904 *The Church Quarterly Review* diminished Yonge even further, ignoring all evidence of intellectual and artistic abilities and accomplishments in the elaboration of an adolescent fantasy. According to this correspondent her entire existence was best seen as

An eventless pastoral, lived among the tranquil downs and woods of Hampshire; not a surging drama on a glaring public stage.... She thought out her stories among the daffodils of the Dell Copse and the foxgloves and Solomon's seal of Hursley Woods or on the breezy Downs, or in the delightful Elderfield drawing-room, never invaded by an intruder but full of welcome to her friends.4

Again any serious consideration of the fierce purpose of Yonge's life, formed by the principles and precepts of a radical philosophy and forged by sectarian confrontation and conflict, was scrupulously avoided. Instead an alternative narrative emerged, one far more sanitised, selective, and superficial. Nevertheless, Yonge was explicit about her methods and motivations. Her advice to aspiring authors in a late article that appeared in *The Monthly Packet* (1892) emphasised her determination to resist the "temptation to irreverence" and her decision to "deal with nothing but what is purifying, truthful, and elevating."5 She admonished her readers that

There is at present a taste for sensation, and a certain conventional distaste for a moral, pure, and religious tone. It is a fatal thing to be led away by it. If for every idle word we speak we are to give account, how much more for every word we write.... Even remuneration is only ephemeral. Evil is a dead weight.6

The sentiments behind this severe statement certainly seem sincere, but any assessment of the success of Yonge's efforts to enforce its claims with consistency in her own narratives involves a complex set of considerations. Initially it demands a close scrutiny of the uneasy intersection of individual imagination and ideology, and of the uneven effect of the disruptive and

4 "Charlotte Mary Yonge," *The Church Quarterly Review* 104 (January 1904), 342, 345. Observing that Yonge's autobiography ends abruptly in 1836, Valerie Sanders remarked that "[i]t is as if her adulthood was hardly worth recording." In "All-Sufficient to One Another," in Kay Boardman and Shirley Jones, editors, *Popular Victorian Women Writers*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009, 92.
6 Ibid.
destabilising cultural processes that participate in the construction and consolidation of identity. According to the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* an ideology is “a system of ideas, or a set of beliefs,” but in this context Mary Poovey’s (1989) definition is both accurate and appropriate. She extended Louis Althusser’s concept of “the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence” to emphasise that ideologies are not merely ideas but “are given concrete form in the practices and social institutions that govern people’s social relations and that, in so doing, constitute both the experience of social relations and the nature of subjectivity.” She then added a crucial corollary, arguing that “[t]o describe an ideology as a “set” or “system” of institutions and practices conveys the impression of something that is internally organised, coherent, and complete…. Yet what may look coherent and complete in retrospect [may be] actually fissured by competing emphases and interests.” As a consequence, Poovey concluded, “[t]he middle-class ideology we most often associate with the Victorian period was both contested and always under construction; because it was always in the making, it was always open to revision, dispute, and the emergence of oppositional formulations.”

The image portrayed in *The Times* and the idyll presented in *The Church Quarterly Review* illuminated two contemporary ideological constructs that so insinuated themselves in the critical response to the novels of Charlotte Yonge that they effectively abrogated or annulled all other attempts at interpretation and analysis. Their strength and resilience emanated from a strict conformity to ideals that informed one of the most inflammatory of all mid-century disputes: the debate over the status of women and the nature of “femininity.” The most powerful and pervasive of these ideologies exalted the silence, submission, and subordination of women, and identified the domestic sphere as a sanctuary, the site and source of moral excellence and mortal bliss. In her influential treatise entitled *The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits* (1839), Sarah Stickney Ellis (1812-1862) argued that

[i]t is the domestic character of England—the home comforts, and fireside virtues--for which she is so justly celebrated…. It is the minor morals of domestic life which give the tone to English character, and that over this sphere of duty it is a woman’s peculiar province to preside.

Ellis’s express aim was “to show how intimate is the connexion which exists between the women of England, and the moral character maintained by their country in the scale of nations;” and her

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9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
challenge to women was accordingly both direct and dramatic: "[y]ou have deep responsibilities, you have urgent claims; a nation's moral worth is in your keeping." The book was so successful that she published several sequels: The Daughters of England: Their Position in Society, Character, and Responsibilities (1842); The Mothers of England (1843); and The Wives of England: Their Relative Duties, Domestic Influence and Social Obligations (1843), all of which had the same emphasis, expressed with some urgency, on women's "unique" characteristics, such as "special" capabilities and spiritual qualities. Sarah Lewis, the author of a similar text, Woman's Mission (1839), was even more explicit: "[w]e claim for [women] no less an office than that of instruments (under God) for the regeneration of the world—restorers of God's image in the human soul." All these treatises affirmed women's "relative" status, that is, secondary or subordinate to men; and all, in the opinion of Martha Vicinus (1985) recommended the singular advantages of "religion and restraint."

The eponymous heroine of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poem "Aurora Leigh" (1856) considered both the content of these volumes and the consequences of their claims:

I read a score of books on womanhood
To prove, if women do not think at all
They may teach thinking (to a maiden-aunt
Or else the author)—books that boldly assert
Their right of comprehending husband's talk
When not too deep, and even of answering
With pretty 'may it please you' or 'so it is'—
Their rapid insight and fine aptitude,
Particular worth and general missionariness,
As long as they keep quiet by the fire.

Similar exhortations were expressed by anxious or ambitious practitioners of the emergent professions of social science, who sought to emphasise their expertise and thus enhance their "professional" status and standing. The Statistical Society of London, founded in 1834, was intent on finding or forging a history, or at least a certifiable certainty, that made sense, established objectivity, and perhaps asserted or presumed ownership, of the social order. Its foundational charter categorically stated that

13 Sarah Lewis, Woman's Mission. London: John W. Parker, 1839, 13. Similar tracts include Woman in Her Social and Domestic Character (1831), by Mrs. Sanford; Thoughts on Self-Culture, Addressed to Women (1850), by the sisters Maria Grey (1816-1906) and Emily Shirreff (1814-1897); The Feminine Soul: Its Nature and Attributes (1857) by Elizabeth Strutt; and A Woman's Thoughts about Women (1858) by Dinah Mulock Craik. Charlotte Yonge's contribution to the genre, Womankind, appeared in 1877.
16 The impetus towards professionalisation accelerated in the nineteenth century: the Royal College of Surgeons was established in 1800, the British Medical Association in 1856, the Law Society in 1825, civil engineers in 1818, architects in 1834, pharmacists in 1841, and actuaries in 1848.
The Statistical Society of London has been established for the purpose of procuring, arranging and publishing 'Facts calculated to illustrate the Condition and Prospects of Society.' The Statistical Society will consider it to be the first and most essential rule of its conduct to exclude carefully all opinions from its transactions and publications—to confine its attention rigorously to facts—and, as far as it may be found possible, to facts which can be stated numerically and arranged in tables.\(^{17}\)

Such initiatives signaled the aim of practitioners and partisans of social sciences to design and deploy directives and discourses in support of a central ambition: the acquisition of "evidence" in an almost obsessive campaign to document "the Condition of England Question," a concern that over the next several decades would resonate in the novels of authors as philosophically and ideologically diverse as Benjamin Disraeli, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Wilkie Collins, Charles Kingsley, and Charlotte Yonge.\(^{18}\) Strategies for enhanced surveillance and accurate enumeration were developed by royal, parliamentary, and private committees, commissions, organisations, and associations that produced scores of "blue books" and other statistical studies and reports. Most celebrated among these were the works of Edwin Chadwick (1800-1890), the chief compiler of the Sanitary Report of 1842, with its supplement on interment appearing the subsequent year; James Kay-Shuttleworth (1804-1877), who was concerned with educational reform; William Johnston, author of *England As It Is: Political, Social, and Industrial, in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century*;\(^{19}\) and especially Henry Mayhew (1812-1887), a London journalist. In October 1849 Mayhew, writing as "A Special Correspondent for the Metropolis," published the first installment of a series of articles in *The Monthly Chronicle*, a popular periodical known for its support of radical politics and reformist policies. His original intention was to observe and assess the effects of the cholera epidemic that had recently devastated Bermondsey, in the London suburb of Southwark, but his scope soon expanded to include other sections of the capital city. Mayhew's investigations into the perils and privations of urban life convinced him that possibilities for rehabilitation and redemption were entirely dependent on the institution of marriage and its presiding emblem of "the hearth, which is so sacred a symbol to all civilised races as being the spot where the virtues of each succeeding generation are taught and encouraged."\(^{20}\) His essays, substantially edited and augmented, appeared in an edition of three

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19 William Johnston, *England As It Is*, two volumes. London: John Murray, 1851. According to Johnston, "[t]he most important event of the last quarter century in English history is the establishment of railroads." Quoted in Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, 96. In Otterbourne the express train to London ran on tracks just outside the windows of the original church, greatly distracting the celebrant and the congregation during services.
(later four) volumes entitled *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851);\(^{21}\) the appalling destitution and distress they exposed ignited anger and alarm throughout the nation.

Mid-century was a time of serious and sustained self-scrutiny in Britain, resulting in intermittent but intense spasms of both self-congratulation and self-criticism. Two nearly simultaneous events were especially instrumental in this enterprise, causing both profound satisfaction and pervasive dismay: The Great Census was conducted on 30 March 1851 and followed a month later by the opening of the Great Exhibition on 1 May.\(^{22}\) The public responded to the Exhibition, held at the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, with immediate enthusiasm (see Chapter Three); but reacted to the enumeration with marked indifference, initially at least. Interest ignited, however, when the results of the enumeration were published two years later in those celebrated and controversial volumes that the historian Sheila Ryan Johannson (1980) has acclaimed as the “first great monument to the Victorian passion for statistics.”\(^{23}\) George Graham, the Registrar General, and his two assistant statisticians, the solicitor Horace Mann and the epidemiologist William Farr, presented the findings in a lengthy preamble laced with a multitude of powerful moral, cultural, and ideological assumptions. Graham insisted that certain attitudes and attributes distinguished the (superior) British citizen from his (slavish) Continental counterparts. As he saw it, domestic interests and aspirations of acquisition and ownership were foremost among the defining characteristics of the national identity:

The possession of an entire house is ... strongly desired by every Englishman, for it throws a sharp, well-defined circle round his family and his hearth—the shrine of his sorrows, joys, and meditations. This feeling, as it is natural, is universal, but it is stronger in England than it is on the Continent.\(^{24}\)

satirical magazine *Punch.*

\(^{21}\) Sales of the series were impressive, as was its influence. Charles Kingsley’s *Alton Locke* (1850) was one of several popular novels inspired by Mayhew’s investigations.

\(^{22}\) This was “Mothering Sunday,” and a day of heavy rains and high winds across most of Britain. For more information on the enumeration itself see *The Census of Great Britain, 1851: The Return of the Registrar General: Births, Deaths and Marriages in England and Wales.* London: Longmans, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1854. The volumes for 1851 were first published as part of the *Sessional Papers* for 1852 to 1853. Part I (which consisted of two volumes) included the Introductory Report and Population Tables (1891-1851) for all the major civil and ecclesiastical divisions of Great Britain. Part II included data on “ages, civil condition, occupations, and birth places, as well as the number of the blind, deaf, and dumb, and the inmates of workhouses, hospitals, insane asylums, and prisons.” *Sessional Papers,* 1852-1853, Volume 88; see also Edward Cheshire, *The Results of the Census of Great Britain in 1851.* London: Longmans, 1853. Constance Rover provides an excellent review of the 1851 census in *Women's Suffrage and Party Politics in Britain, 1866-1914.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967, 14; as does Michael Drake in “The Census, 1801-1891,” in E.A. Wrigley, editor, *Nineteenth-Century Society: Essays in the Use of Qualitative Methods for the Study of Social Data.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

\(^{23}\) Sheila Ryan Johannson, “Demographic Contributions to the History of Victorian Women,” in Barbara Kanner, editor, *The Women of England from Anglo-Saxon Times to the Present: Interpretative Bibliographical Essays.* London: Mansell, 1980, 263. The Census Report was an immediate sensation: more than 21,000 copies were sold shortly after it was published.

\(^{24}\) Report of the Registrar-General on the Census of Great Britain, 1851, *Parliamentary Papers,* 1852-1853, Volume 85, xxxviii. The perimeter of the ideal household was described with the professional precision of an estate agent: “the exclusive command of the entrance-hall and stairs, and the possession of free space.
Imaginative works endorsed and at times even exaggerated these assertions. Among the most popular poems at mid-century (after *The Christian Year*) was "The Angel in the House" (1854), a vast verse sequence written by Coventry Patmore (1823-1896). Its interminable stanzas celebrate "the sacred love of home," a domestic idyll dependent upon feminine sacrifice and female subservience in marriage.

Man must be pleased, but him to please
Is woman's pleasure

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At any time, she's still his wife,
Dearly devoted to his arms;
She loves with love that cannot die,
And when, ah woe, she loves alone
Through passionate duty love springs higher,
As grass grows taller round a stone.\(^{25}\)

The cultural critic and art historian John Ruskin (1819-1900) greatly admired "The Angel in the House" and recommended its author as "the only living poet who continuously strengthens and purifies."\(^{26}\) He lavishly invoked similar sentiments in a lecture entitled "Of Queen's Gardens," presented at the Town Hall in Manchester on 14 December 1864. Ruskin ardently addressed the women in his audience, "[q]ueens you must be: queens to your lovers, queens to your husbands and your sons, queens of higher mystery to the world beyond, which bows itself, and will for ever bow, before the myrtle crown and stainless scepter of womanhood."\(^{27}\) The expectations of the nation, he asserted, were that women be "enduringly, incorruptibly good, instinctively, infallibly wise—wise, not for self-development, but for self-renunciation: wise, not that she may set herself above her husband, but that she may never fail [sic] from his side."\(^{28}\) Female intellect and industry were reserved exclusively for the "sweet ordering and arrangement" of the home, "the place of Peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division, [in which] all must be right or nothing is."\(^{29}\)

The essence of English identity, it appeared, rested on the existence of the family, which in turn relied on and reveled in the expectation and exaltation of female purity and passivity. But the stability and survival of such certainties was increasingly precarious. Two additional and most alarming sets of statistics, each utterly unexpected but nevertheless unequivocal, had also emerged in the national census. The first involved the phenomenon of female "redundancy."

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\(^{26}\) Carlyle, Tennyson, and Robert Browning also greatly admired the poem.


\(^{29}\) Ruskin, "Of Queen's Gardens," 107, 109.
results indicated that for every one hundred women in Britain there were only ninety-six men; and of every one hundred women over the age of twenty only fifty-seven were married: thirty were spinsters and thirteen were widows. It was further found that forty-two percent of the six million adult women in Great Britain were single or "surplus" subjects who had no spouse to support them.

The second set of statistics, the result of a "special" inquiry into church affiliation and attendance, revealed an equally untoward result. Devout Anglicans were deeply dismayed by denominational data that indicated that only a quarter of the population, the vast majority of whom were women, worshipped within the Established Church of England; a quarter went elsewhere, mostly to independent or dissenting chapels; and half, it appeared, went nowhere at all on Sunday morning. Horace Mann, the senior assistant statistician, mournfully observed that "a sadly formidable portion of the English people are habitual neglectors of the public ordinances of religion."

Despite the abundant assurances of Ellis, Mayhew, Patmore, and Ruskin (among many others), and the stern admonitions of an array of church and civil authorities, these statistical results demonstrated the fragility, if not the complete futility, of dominant ideologies and established orthodoxies. It was increasingly impossible to reconcile professed certainties with prevailing circumstances and conditions. The publication of the census prompted additional perplexities and polarisations, perhaps unacknowledged but nevertheless profound. The representative rows of numbers, so meticulously amassed and arranged in columns and charts, announced the advent and acceptance of precise new systems of classification, sorting and separating people into classes and categories that articulated and legitimised the inequalities and exclusions of power and privilege.

Increased awareness of continuous demographic change and cultural conflict confirmed the common suspicion that it was indeed an age of transition and tumult. As early as 1831 the philosopher John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) maintained that "mankind have outgrown old institutions and old doctrines, and not yet acquired new ones;" an awkward circumstance, he added, that "had been recognised by the more discerning only a few years ago" but "now forces itself even upon the most inobservant." The Victorian Age was a time of clamorous change,
of radical, even rampant, reform and equally radical and reactionary counterreform, and the Victorians knew it. They analyzed and argued about it earnestly and endlessly. “We are living in an age of transition,” contended the Anglo-Catholic clergyman Henry Scott Holland (1847-1918). In 1833 the novelist and future member of Parliament Edward Bulwer Lytton (1801-1872) allowed that “[e]very age may be called an age of transition—the passing on, as it were, from one state to another never ceases; but in our age the transition is visible.”

James Anthony Froude (1818-1894), Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford and the younger brother of R.H. Froude, was less than reassuring about the implications: “[s]o absolutely has change become the law of our present condition, that it is identified with law and moral health; to cease to change is to lose place in the great race; and to pass way from off the earth with the same convictions which we found when we entered it, is to have missed the best object for which we now seem to exist.”

Such anxieties did not readily resolve themselves. In the last decade of the century the Anglican clergyman Charles Gore (1853-1932) asserted in the preface to Lux Mundi (1891), a collection of controversial theological essays: “[w]e have written with the conviction that the epoch in which we live is one of profound transformation, intellectual and social, abounding in new needs, new points of view, new questions.”

Profound alarm over anonymous foes and potentially anarchic forces unleashed by revolutionary movements, urban growth, national expansion, and imperial engagements were difficult to dispel. The repeal of the restrictive Corn Laws in June 1846 was the formal and final recognition that England had evolved from an agricultural and rural realm to an industrial and urban state. As the historian K. Theodore Hoppen has observed (1998), this legislation “marked a decisive step in the process of reform inaugurated by the franchise concessions of 1832. By its drama and parliamentary excitement it gathered to itself deep feelings of movement, transition, and order. It was, in short, the central rite of passage of mid-Victorian politics.”

The First Reform Act had became law on 7 June 1832; it had expanded the electorate (still exclusively

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34 Victoria (1819-1901), the only child of the Duke and Duchess of Kent, became Queen of Great Britain and Ireland upon the death of her uncle, William IV, in 1837; in 1876 she also became Empress of India.


37 James Anthony Froude, Henry VIII, two volumes. London: Dent, n.d. Volume One, 1. Froude was a bitter adversary of E.A. Freeman, whom he succeeded as Regius Professor of History at Oxford.


male) by fifty percent; transferring representation to urban areas, especially those in the
industrial Midlands. Critics claimed that these reforms encouraged the ambition and exacerbated
the aggression of the newly emergent middle classes. The potential for a seismic shift in power
and prosperity produced a massive sense of disorientation and displacement among those who
regarded themselves at risk. One Member of Parliament observed with trepidation that “the
whole country took fire at once.” He explained that

The working people expected that they were to change places
with their employers. The middle classes believed that by breaking
down the parliamentary influence of the peers, they should get
the governing power of the State into their own hands. And the
ministers, the contrivers of the design, persuaded themselves
that the people, out of sheer gratitude, would make the rule of
the Whigs perpetual. If, to all these interested hopes, we add the
jealousy of the vulgar at all privileges not shared by themselves, --
the resentment of the majority of the nation at the disregard of their
sentiments respecting the Roman Catholic Bill—and the superficial
notion that the direct representation of numbers is the principle of
the elective franchise, -- we shall have a tolerably correct
conception of the motives of a revolution.®

Bulwer Lytton, who had been among the most ardent advocates of electoral reform, also became
alarmed at some of its consequences. In his study entitled England and the English, which
appeared in 1833, he agonised that it was an “age of disquietude and doubt—of the removal of
time-worn landmarks, and the breaking-up of the hereditary elements of society—old opinions,
feelings—all ancestral customs and institutions are crumbling away, and both the spiritual and
temporal worlds are darkened by the shadow of change…. 41

Did this deepening shadow, many wondered, signify the end—the approach of the
Apocalypse—or signal the beginning—the arrival of the New Millennium? Dissolution or
deliverance? Perhaps at last the cataclysmic predictions of the popular Scottish preacher Edward
Irving (1792-1834) and his “school of prophets,” which anticipated the second coming of Christ in
1868, would come to pass. 42 Intellectuals as politically and theologically incompatible as Thomas
Carlyle (1795-1881) and John Henry Newman also were convinced that the current culture was
inherently, perhaps irrevocably, contaminated and corrupt, and must be completely chastened
and corrected in order to be properly cleansed. 43 Even the slightly more sanguine John Stuart Mill
allowed that effective strategies and solutions for improvement were elusive. “None of the ways
in which regeneration is sought: Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Puseyism, Socialism, Chartism,

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40 Quoted in Poovey, Social Body, 60-61.
281, 318-319.
42 The “eccentric and erratic” Irving was a prominent Presbyterian preacher with a vast and fervent
following, but he was eventually accused of heresy and silenced by Church authorities.
the Times, Number One, 1843.

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Benthamism ... will do, although doubtless they all have some elements of good and truth in them," he observed.¹⁴

Less than a decade later even the sanguine were shaken by the reports of the deprivation and distress of the most terrible years of the nineteenth century. The "Hungry Forties" were characterised by a severe economic depression incurred by repeated crop failures and subsequent famines; and cholera, smallpox, and typhus ("the Irish fever") epidemics. The Home Secretary reported that almost 1.5 million people in England and Wales were destitute and completely dependent on public assistance.⁴⁵ In Ireland more than one million died during the ravages of the Great Famine, and on the Continent revolution was rampant in France, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the German and Italian states. For many this triple scourge of disease, democracy, and dissent was seen as an ominous precursor of a comprehensive cultural collapse. As Walter E. Houghton observed, "Victorian society, particularly in the period before 1850, was shot through, from top to bottom, with the dread of some wild outbreak ... that would overthrow the established order."⁴⁶ Civil and political unrest coalesced in the creation of the Chartist Movement, which originated in the labouring classes but aimed to secure political and social rights for all.⁴⁷

On 10 April 1848 ten thousand protesters, led by the Irishman Feargus O'Connor, marched on Kennington Park in central London. The correspondent for The Times anticipated the event in almost apocalyptic terms:

> There is not a being who has an eye to see and a heart to feel but regards the present state of things with other sentiments than those of curiosity and fear.... The destiny of all races [is] centered in England. If she fall, who shall stand? If she perish, who shall live?⁴⁹

Parliament appointed the ancient champion of England, the aged Duke of Wellington, to prepare the city to withstand a violent confrontation and possibly a prolonged siege. Militia were deployed in the capital: additional constables were sworn in and supplied with sabres and truncheons, and sharpshooters were strategically stationed at the Houses of Parliament and at Buckingham Palace, although most members had already fled and the royal family evacuated as a precaution. In the event, such measures were unnecessary. The protest ended peaceably, with the ceremonial presentation of the Chartist six-point petition to governmental emissaries, and the threat of riot

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⁴⁵ Ibid., 46.
⁴⁶ Ibid., 55.
⁴⁸ O'Connor (1794-1855) studied law at Trinity College, Dublin, but abandoned that profession in 1832 when he was elected to the House of Commons as the MP for County Cork. In 1852 he was certified as a lunatic and committed to an asylum in Chiswick, where he died three years later.
⁴⁹ The Times, 3 April 1848. Contemporary reports on the number of protesters varied greatly. The official slogan of the Chartist Movement was "Peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must."
and revolution eventually receded.  

Nevertheless, what Benjamin Disraeli referred to as "The Great Growl of Reform" became increasingly audible and insistent. J.A. Froude (1884) recalled, "It was an era of new ideas, of swift if silent spiritual revolution." He added that

All were agreed to have done with compromise and conventionalities. All round us, the intellectual lightships had broken from their moorings. The present generation which has grown up in an open spiritual ocean and has learnt to swim for itself will never know what it was to find the lights all drifting, the compasses all awry, and nothing left to steer by but the stars.

No institutions or authorities, however eminent or established, were stable or secure. As the sworn enemies of the British state—radicalism and republicanism—swept across the Channel from the Continent, so did the avowed adversaries of the Anglican Church—German "higher" criticism and comparative theology, accompanied by the publications and pronouncements of the practitioners of new scientific disciplines: astronomy, archeology, paleontology, and especially geology. In 1851 Ruskin spoke for many unsettled by these developments when he shrieked "if only the geologists would let me alone, I could do very well, but those dreadful hammers! I hear the clink of them at the end of every cadence of the Bible verses." The novelist Richard Hurrell Mallock (1849-1923) also was distressed by what he saw as the destructive new spirits of secularism and scepticism: "In tropical forests one can almost hear the vegetation growing. One may almost say that with us one can hear faith decaying."

But the menace from within the Established Church was equally damaging, and perhaps even more devastating, to the devout. The literary historian Philip Davis (2002) observed that the loss of religious certitude was increasingly "expressed not only in the language of reform but of

50 This document, known as "The People's Petition," addressed the political and practical issues of extending the ability to vote. For additional information see Newsome, *The Victorian World Picture*, 44-47. Issues of *The Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser*, published between 1837 and 1852, also provide useful information on the Chartist philosophy and platform.


53 For the Victorians "higher" criticism involved historical and interpretive analysis of the Bible; "lower" criticism meant linguistic and textual analysis. Higher criticism was especially popular in German universities.

54 Two of the most controversial studies were *Principles of Geology* (1830-1833), by Charles Lyell; and especially *Vestiges of the Natural History of the Creation*, by Robert Chambers (1844). Some of these texts are mentioned (but not discussed) in *The Clever Woman of the Family* (1865); Rachel Curtis rashly reads them, but the more exemplary Ermine Williams refrains, as she explains, "absolutely as a health precaution." See Chapter Four.


It was as if the old conflicts and compromises of the Reformation itself were being played out to the last in the conditions of nineteenth-century England, for the sake of the very future of the faith. What had been more or less held together amidst the schisms of the Reformation was perhaps finally coming apart. Parties as fundamentally opposed as Roman Catholics, Church of England reformers, and the humanist radicals who called for a new and more secular religion, all used at times the phrase ‘a new Reformation,’ agreeing at least in this: that the period 1830-1880 marked a second great, and perhaps final, crisis for the Western conscience.57

Barbara Dennis also surveyed the effects of such internecine strife, stressing (1980) that the sixty years of Charlotte Yonge’s literary career (approximately 1840 to 1900) “are of tremendous importance to English orthodoxy, for they saw the publication of Das Leben Jesu, Confessions of an Enquiring Spirit, Tract XC, The Origin of Species, Essays and Reviews, Colenso’s Pentateuch, and Lux Mundi . . . all of which undermined the Church from within....”58 Earlier Ruth Kenyon (1933) had argued that Tractarian churchmen were as aggressively engaged in cultural and political controversies as they were in theological and ecclesiastical disputes. Kenyon ably countered persistent allegations of ignorance and indifference, asserting that

It would have been strange if men of the intellectual brilliance of Keble, Pusey, Newman, and Hurrell Froude, living in an Oxford that was seething with the thought of Coleridge and Wordsworth, Whateley [sic] and Arnold, and in an England undergoing throes which gave birth to the Reform Bill of 1832, the Bristol riots of 1841, and the agricultural revolts of the same year, and the industrial horrors disclosed in the campaign for the great Factory Act of 1833, should have noticed none of these things, or noticed them only to dislike the reforming zeal associated with political Liberalism.59

She insisted moreover that Tractarianism “was no calm academic excogitation of a theory of the Church from a city of dreaming spires; it was a reaction to the whole situation, and a reaction which, in the phrase of Newman no less than of Froude, was to be ‘fierce.’”60 Yonge’s novels were in the vanguard of that endeavour; intended as the counterassault of Anglicanism against the efforts of all adversaries, offering both resistance to the aggressors

60 Ibid.
and reassurance to the anxious. Above all her narratives demonstrated the richness and resilience of Christian discipline and devotion, deployed to defy not only recurrences of doubt but restatements of doctrine. The consequences of concession or collapse were too perilous for the Established Church to contemplate. Ethel Romanes observed that the Oxford Movement “had raised the whole scale of feeling about religious matters so high, the questions were felt to be so momentous, the stakes and the issue so precious ... the ‘loss and gain’ so immense.”

Ironically, however, Yonge’s support of ecclesiastical authorities was consistently compromised by her Anglo-Catholic allegiances. Despite its origins at the epicenter of academic and clerical power and prestige, the Movement was intended as a countercultural enterprise, resolutely egalitarian rather than elitist in both precept and practice. Its passion for reform and promise of redemption especially appealed to the destitute and the dispossessed. But it was the Tractarian enthusiasm for education, in England and the Empire, that was the most emphatic expression of their firm commitment to inclusivity. Their fixed intention to identify both church and congregation with women and men of every class, race, constituency, and condition meant that in the both inner cities and in the colonies they were formidable advocates for the poor, the illiterate, the alien, and the alienated. The Broad Church clergyman William J. Conybeare (1815-1857), in an otherwise hostile essay entitled “Church Parties” (1853), observed that “[e]quality within the House of God’ has been from the first their motto and their practice.”

A culture or community that embraced such ideals presumably provided increased opportunities to access or appropriate power, both in the domestic realm and beyond. It has often been observed that women were conspicuous participants in the mid-century resurgence of religious fervour known as the “Devotional Revolution.” Several scholars, however, including the historian Jane Rendall (1985), contended that women were accorded a dramatic and dynamic role in the “regeneration” of a sinful society not as a reward for or recognition of “special” spiritual attributes, but as a consolation or compensation for their secondary status. The issue of whether the Established Church sanctioned female subordination or superiority seemed endlessly arguable, and in turn it exacerbated the already acute anxieties surrounding the rights and responsibilities of women, and more profoundly, the value of the female experience, a cluster of concerns commonly referred to as “The Woman Question.”

Women themselves were neither marginal nor mute in the debate. In an essay entitled “On the Present Condition of Young Women of the Higher Classes” the Anglo-Irish author Frances Power Cobbe (1822-1904) maintained that “few indeed can be unaware that they are

61 Romanes, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 29.
passing through a transition period of no small difficulty, and that there is urgent need for revision of many of the old regulations regarding them. No class has felt more the rise in the atmosphere of modern thoughts.\(^{65}\) In a series of articles with sensational titles such as "Criminals, Idiots, Women, and Minors" (1868) and "Wife Torture in England" (1878) Cobbe considered the social, legal, and political positions of contemporary women, always insisting "[i]t is obvious that all these facts call for a revision of many of our social arrangements."\(^{66}\)

Other protofeminist activists, including Anna Brownell Jameson (1794-1860), Harriet Martineau (1802-1876), Jessie Boucherett (1825-1905), Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon (1827-1891), Bessie Rayner Parkes Belloc (1829-1925), and Emily Davies (1830-1921), as well as additional members of the Langham Place Circle\(^{67}\) also began to agitate for an acceleration of the processes of reform. Their arguments and appeals appeared regularly in the pages of periodicals such as Fraser's Magazine, The Athenaeum, the Contemporary Review, the Fortnightly Review, and especially The English Woman's Journal and its successor, The English Woman's Review. As Martha Vicinus observed in Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920 (1985), this repeated and relentless exposure of the disabilities and disappointments endured by all women made change possible,\(^{68}\) and perhaps inevitable, at least for some.

Barbara Dennis has contended that all Victorian literature, fiction as well as nonfiction, is "a virtual catalogue of responses to a constant succession of shattering developments."\(^{69}\) However provocative or persuasive an essay, tract, or treatise, the popular novel aimed at a general audience was widely perceived to be more effective in illustrating and interrogating contemporary confusions and uncertainties, those "vital offspring of modern wants and tendencies."\(^{70}\) Many novelists constructed their characters accordingly, with an intellect "confused or in chaos" but a spirit sustained by the "profound, however vague, conviction, that there are still great truths, if we could but work them out."\(^{71}\) Several of Charlotte Yonge's heroines were similarly conceived: she especially excelled in the portrayal of restless young women plagued by moral or spiritual doubt, and of impetuous individuals whose pain and perplexity caused them to pray too little or presume too much. In her study of

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\(^{66}\) Cobbe, "What Shall We Do With Our Old Maids?" Fraser's Magazine 66 (1862), 62.

\(^{67}\) The Langham Place Circle, based in London and active from 1857 to 1866, was an association of middle-class women who advocated for an array of political, social, legal, economic, and educational reforms for women. For more information see Mary Lyndon Shanley, Feminism, Marriage and the Law in Mid-Victorian England. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989; and Barbara Caine, Victorian Feminists. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

\(^{68}\) Vicinus, Independent Women, 5.

\(^{69}\) Dennis, Charlotte Yonge, 74.

\(^{70}\) John Chapman, "Hearts in Mortmain, and Cornelia," Prospective Review 6 (1850), 495.

the influence of Tractarian principles on the novels of Charlotte Yonge, the literary historian June Sturrock (1995) acknowledged that the contribution of the Oxford Movement to the cause and condition of women was undeniable but also, she claimed, “unexpected and unintentional.” However, Yonge’s compelling presentations of the intellectual and spiritual struggles of intelligent, sensible, and competent women, who were often the centre of power and authority in her narratives, argue otherwise.

In truth any assessment of Yonge’s novels that dismisses them as either abject apologists for, or excessively acquiescent to, contemporary ideologies of any sort is inaccurate. As complex works of imagination and invention they resist the ease and expediency of consistency and complacency. Most successful novels work to complicate more than to consolidate a culture’s sense of itself, exposing and exploiting the discrepancies between the ideal and the actual. The narratives of Charlotte Yonge are no exception: they resonate with an apprehension and an anxiety caused by an array of issues, including those involving gender, such as contradictory constructions of femininity, redundancy alarms, and intellectual and educational ambitions; religion, such as secularisation, sectarianism, and schism; and national identity, such as industrialisation, urbanisation, and social and racial polarisation. They also respond to a constellation of other contemporary concerns, such as imperialist entanglements, contamination crises, and utopian urges and impulses. Often they hesitate and retreat, reluctant to engage with or endorse the consequences of confrontation, but occasionally they persevere, only to splinter and shatter in the shock of the collision.

In the century since the death of Charlotte Yonge critical response to her novels has often appeared contradictory and occasionally even capricious, riddled with the evidence of rivalries and resentments that not only reflect but also sometimes resume and reinforce the impassioned arguments and antagonisms of the nineteenth century. At times conflicting or contrary interpretations have ignited incendiary disputes of their own. In some instances it has apparently been acceptable to pronounce on the narratives without reading them; or to read them without considering their cultural, intellectual, political, and ideological references and contexts. There can be no other explanation for the astonishing number of misapprehensions and misstatements, several of them expressed with exceptional vehemence and even vitriol, that have endured in the long and vexed history of Charlotte Yonge criticism.

Even her contemporaries were occasionally confounded. Yonge’s admirers included the activist Emily Davies, founder of Girton College, Cambridge, who strenuously but unsuccessfully sought her support for educational initiatives for women; and the novelist and critic Henry James (1843-1916), who ignored immense aesthetic and ideological incompatibilities in declaring *The Heir of Redclyffe* “charming” and its author “almost a

72 Sturrock, *Heaven and Home,* 58.
Admiration and affection for Yonge’s novels were among the few sentiments shared by W.E. Gladstone, Christina Rossetti, Virginia Woolf, C.S. Lewis, and Dorothy Sayers. Other readers were altogether less affirmative. Queen Victoria categorically disapproved of High Church subjects and sensibilities. Another stern critic of considerably less celebrity was Hester Cholmondeley, the sister of the novelist Mary Cholmondeley (1859-1925). As the intellectual invalid daughter of a provincial Anglican clergyman she might have been expected to express some enthusiasm, or at least some empathy, for certain characters or circumstances that recurred in the narratives. Instead she despised them all, declaring “Miss Yonge’s stories ... are very young-lady--like, too good, too dull, and too High Church. They are all so exclusively written for schoolroom girls.” In sum, Cholmondeley stated categorically, “I hate them.”

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73 Quoted in Tillotson, “‘The Heir,’” 51. Henry James, *Notes and Reviews*, 1865, 598.
74 C.S. Lewis declared in *Undeceptions* that “Charlotte Yonge makes it abundantly clear that domesticity is no passport to Heaven on earth but an arduous vocation—a sea full of perilous rocks and icy shores only to be navigated by one who has a celestial chart.” Quoted in G.M. Watkins, “Some Later Readers of Charlotte M. Yonge,” in *CMY: Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship Review* 14 (Spring 2002), 7. Dorothy Sayers, however, described *The Heir of Redclyffe* as “rather a comfort.” Additional admirers included Sheila Kaye-Smith, Ivy Compton-Burnett, Barbara Pym, and Harriet Waugh.
75 Quoted in Cruse, *The Victorians and Their Books*, 60.
2.2. Anglo-Catholic Allegiances and Alliances

‘Too High Church’

Even during her lifetime several influential reviewers had been decidedly less than enthusiastic about Charlotte Yonge’s Anglo-Catholic affiliations and assurances, perceiving them as baleful influences that blighted her ability and baffled or bored her audience. Although Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish contended loyally that “Miss Yonge’s novels awake and commend Church principles far more by what they assume and imply than by what they preach,” other readers emphatically disagreed. The protofeminist Bessie Rayner Parkes Belloc (1829-1925) astringently observed “her reputation has been injured in literary circles by her loyal devotion to her convictions in regard to the Anglican Church,” and on occasion the abuse could be comprehensive. In a review of The Heir of Redclyffe that appeared in Household Words, an aggrieved Wilkie Collins (1824-1889) assailed the “Pusey-stricken” author as inexperienced and incompetent, the narrative as “obscure and absurd,” and the characters as “inert” and “impossible.” Not even “the reading public of England,” immature, impressionable, and ignorant of everything “except the so-called religious world” of “romantic young ladies,” was spared his invective. Collins ended his account with the “afflicting” example of two representative readers who were especially pitiable: the sanctimonious curate who incessantly intoned “[t]here are only Two Books in the world. The first is the Bible, and the second is The Heir of Redclyffe;” and the sentimental young woman who had “read this fatal domestic novel on its first appearance some years ago, and has read nothing else ever since.”

Collins’s exasperation with the Anglo-Catholic element of Yonge’s novels, although more extravagant and entertaining than most assaults, was not unique. The anonymous correspondent for The Prospective Review (1854) spoke for many when he contended “Miss Yonge makes an effort to look at things entirely through the Anglican formula, and, fortunately ... only partially succeeds.” He added, “her genius rather pines on the diet of narrow personal experience to which she confines it.” A critic for The North British Review agreed, alleging “she still wants a wider sympathy with the varieties of human character, and with the manifold interests of life, to enable her to rank with the foremost of our female novelists....” As a result, he deplored “the narrowness

76 Cavendish, “The Secret of Miss Yonge’s Influence,” in Romances, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 198.
78 [Wilkie Collins and Charles Dickens], “Doctor Dulcamera, M.P.,” Household Words, reprinted in Harry Stone, editor, Charles Dickens’ Uncollected Writings from ‘Household Words,’ 1850-1859, two volumes. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968, Volume One, 624. In the same article Collins also declared “[t]he characters have no types in nature, they never did have types in nature, and they never will have types in nature.” Considering the extreme eccentricities and idiosyncrasies of several of the characters in his narratives, and in the novels of Dickens, this seems an odd objection. In a letter to M.E. Christie dated 8 December 1896 Yonge described this article as “the only thoroughly spiteful review that ever befell me ... written, I imagine, by some blindly jealous admirer of Dickens.”
79 Ibid.
80 “The Author of ‘Heartsease’ and Modern Schools of Fiction,” Prospective Review 10 (1854), 460-482.
of religious sympathy and what many of her opponents would regard as the moral and intellectual defects of the high Anglican school of writers.\(^\text{81}\)

In an article for *Blackwood's Magazine* entitled "Modern Novelists—Great and Small" (1855), Margaret Oliphant (1828-1897) criticised what she considered the conspicuously sectarian elements of several recently published novels, calling them "Church novels, rather than religious." Many of them, she maintained, were somewhat marred by a "mild Puseyism," and so, she conceded, "though we cannot admit that these books deserve all the applause they have got, they are still very good books, and worthy of a high place."\(^\text{82}\) In Oliphant's own narratives, however, her perturbation (or petulance) was more pronounced. She named the clerical family in *Phoebe Junior* (1876) "May," the surname of the family in *The Daisy Chain*. When Phoebe observed that the name is memorable "because of a family in a novel that I used to admire very much in my girlish days," another character immediately responded with indignation: "We are not a set of prigs like those people."\(^\text{83}\)

Another contemporary novelist, the Evangelical author Emma Jane Worboise (1825-1887) also condemned the presence of Tractarian principles in Yonge's narratives. Her expressions of displeasure, however, were considerably more effusive. In *The Wife's Trials, or Lillian Gray* (1858), the heroine expressed a searing contempt for the practices, pretensions, appearance, and apparel of a High Church curate:

A Puseyite indeed! Daring to lecture me! A poor, puling, whining lackadaisical Puseyite, that is neither flesh, fish, nor fowl. Such a hybrid of Romanism, and Anglicanism, and schism and heresy, and dissent without the name, to talk about his priestly authority! The mean, pitiful, black-coated fellow!\(^\text{84}\)

In 1874 the prolific Worboise published *Heartsease in the Family*, a novel whose title was intended as a pointed and provocative public riposte to Charlotte Yonge’s popular *Heartsease, or The Brother's Wife*, which had appeared twenty years earlier.\(^\text{85}\)

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\(^{81}\) "Religious Novels," *North British Review* 26 (November 1856), 218, 219.

\(^{82}\) June Sturrock (1995) has observed that "the situation of the Mays in *Phoebe Junior* in fact parodies that of the Mays in *The Daisy Chain*. " Other novels in the "Chronicles of Carlingford" series also allude to characters and circumstances in the narratives of Charlotte Yonge. Valerie Sanders (1999) maintained that Lucilla, the eponymous heroine of *Miss Marjoribanks* (1866), "reads like a satire on Yonge's Ethel May;" "All the way home she revolved the situation in her mind, which was considerably enlightened by novels and popular philosophy ... she constructed an idealised role for herself in which, between bouts of tears, she will sacrifice her own feelings, and make a cheerful home for papa." Yonge once commended Oliphant’s "shrewdness and ironical observation" but considered her novels diminished by a corrosive cynicism. She observed that Oliphant "always puzzles me, partly because she can rise so much higher than what I suppose are "pot-boilers," half of which," she hastened to emphasise, "I have never read." Quoted in Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 342.


\(^{85}\) See Julie Melnyk, "Evangelical Theology and Feminist Polemic: Emma Jane Worboise's 'Overdale,'"
A much more popular woman writer, the sensation novelist Mary Elizabeth Braddon (1837-1915), also published several expressions of her contempt for the narratives of Charlotte Yonge. A character in *Aurora Floyd* (1863) with a predilection for Yonge’s domestic chronicles is pitied and patronised for her piety and passivity. In a later novel, *The Fatal Three* (1888), Braddon’s ridicule became more pointed and personal in the presentation of a somewhat incongruous villainess whose interests and idiosyncrasies were identical to those of Charlotte Yonge: “Happily Miss Fausset loved the sound of church bells, loved all things connected with her own particular church with the ardour which a woman who has few ties of kindred or friendship can afford to give to clerical matters…. She was a single woman of certain age, whose devotion to High Anglican principles manifests itself in endowments of churches and missions and reading of biographies of bishops.”

Others adversaries were somewhat less malicious but scarcely more merciful. Those with significant doctrinal differences of opinion, such as the prominent Broad Church theologian Richard Holt Hutton (1826-1897), were incensed by the obvious denominational allegiances promoted in the novels of popular Anglo-Catholic authors. In a scalding essay entitled “Ethical and Dogmatic Fiction” that appeared in *The National Review* (1861), he chastised Charlotte Yonge for a “feeble reverence for damnatory theories and sacerdotal fictions.” Hutton argued that such abject “religious affections” in the obstinate pursuit of a “blind” acceptance of ecclesiastical authority confounded “the free play of moral idealism,” and compromised what he considered the integrity of the narrative.

Some readers, dimly detecting a stealthier and more surreptitious strategy, suspected that Yonge’s novels were secretly propaganda pieces designed to promote a covert High Church campaign of conversion to Roman Catholicism. Such a response often involved a direct assault on the principles of the Oxford Movement itself, and invariably included a sometimes superficial, although certainly sincere, condemnation of its programs and proponents. In 1858 Charles Maurice Davies (1828-1910) published *Philip Paternoster* (subtitled *A Tractarian Love Story*), a savage satire that featured thinly disguised caricatures of High Church clerics. Two years later the Low Church clergyman Frederick William Robinson (1830-1901) denounced all Tractarian priests as “mountebank” peddlers of a “sponge-cake religion” in his novel *High Church.* The *London Quarterly* (July 1855) contented itself with a broad condemnation of the “dangerous Popish teaching” and “Romish” theology concealed, it contended, in many popular contemporary novels.

Other criticisms emerged. One of their most inveterate enemies, the Evangelical Bishop

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of Manchester E.A. Knox (1847-1934), accused the Tractarians of exclusivity, asserting that the "great weakness of the Anglo-Catholic revival was that it sought to build a national Church on a system that appealed to only one section of the nation." Fifty years later (1983) the historian Nigel Yates agreed, insisting that "the initial impact of the Oxford Movement on the Church of England was entirely theological, and its area of operation almost exclusively academic." More recently the literary scholar John Shelton Reed (1996) described the High Church program as "an academic and mostly clerical effort to shore up the Church of England ... confined to Oxford common rooms and the studies of rural vicarages."

A correspondent for the Roman Catholic Dublin Review observed (1858) such dissension within the Anglican Church with considerable disdain, remonstrating that the novels of Charlotte Yonge had "become a weapon in the hands of the opposing parties, who deafen England with their strife," and regretting the author's "animus against the faith." Although the Dublin Review would as a matter of course repudiate the authority of High Church arguments this statement signaled an implicit appreciation of the powerful presence of the narratives of Charlotte Yonge in the intellectual and ecclesiastical disputes of the day, especially as they were argued in the pages of the periodical press.

These statements also indicated the presence of a curious phenomenon: the persistent predilection (which in time became a convenient precedent) to fuse the identity of the Oxford Movement with those of its leaders. All were condemned as reclusive and remote as all confronted (and invariably evaded, it also was alleged) assembled charges of ignorance, insularity, irreverence, and irrelevance. Their sympathies were deprecated as essentially elitist, dominated by a sensibility that was excessively aloof, ascetic, arrogant, and alien. Even the most hostile accounts, however, acknowledged the illustrious intellectual accomplishments of the original Tractarian triumvirate, Keble, Newman, and Pusey, although their scholarship and sermons were sometimes seen as inaccessible and arcane. As the Movement abandoned the confines and cloisters of the university, however, this improvised, imperfect construct conspicuously fractured and failed. Charlotte Yonge, who did much to make the appeal of the High Church audible and accessible to an enormous audience, was invariably depicted as derivative and almost deficient; her works dismissed as simplistic, schematic, and static. Even the literary historian Amy Cruse, who saluted Yonge as the most successful intercessor for the Oxford Movement, opened her chapter on the Tractarians with the statement that "from John Henry Newman to Miss Charlotte Yonge may

92 "Miss Sewell and Miss Yonge," Dublin Review 90 (1858), 315.
seem a somewhat depressing descent."\textsuperscript{93} Cruse's language echoed the earlier lamentation of the sensation novelist Rhoda Broughton (1840-1920), who described the discouraging decline of her own literary reputation in similar terms: "I began my life as Zola," she remarked disconsolately, "and I finish it as Miss Charlotte Yonge."\textsuperscript{94}

Over the years such personal and professional opprobrium has not only persisted, but prevailed. Yonge's religious sympathies, reticent yet reverent, have exposed her narratives to the impatience and intolerance of modern readers, who prefer to ridicule her principles rather than engage with them. According to Catherine Sandbach-Dahlstrom (1984) "the increasing secularisation of our culture has meant . . . that we do not only reject religious assumptions, we no longer understand them."\textsuperscript{95} All too often they are scorned as well. Alan Horsman (1990) disparaged \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe} for what he described as the "religious doggerel which miraculously accompanies the hero's death," adding that "its aftermath raises a formidable barrier to [the reader's] comprehension."\textsuperscript{96} His disdain enveloped several additional novels and Yonge herself; "the retaining of religious and high romantic sentiment . . . in \textit{Dynevor Terrace}," he remarked, "seemed to have left the author with less than she wanted to say."\textsuperscript{97} In a chapter tellingly entitled "Minor Novelists" in \textit{The Oxford English Literary History, 1840-1880}, the literary historian Philip Davis (2004) abandoned even the pretense of analysis or appreciation, alleging that "nobody really seems to take [religion] or \textit{[The Heir of Redclyffe]} seriously anymore."\textsuperscript{98}

Owen Chadwick, the eminent historian of the Victorian Church (1966) and author of several essential studies of the Oxford Movement, was one of the rare scholars to defend not only Charlotte Yonge's achievement, but her churchmanship, for he recognised that one could not endure an enforced or extensive separation from the other. Chadwick subsequently suggested that "two or three of her books rank among the best Christian novels of any age,"\textsuperscript{99} although he declined to specify the titles of these exemplary texts. Two or three of more than two hundred volumes, however, is indisputably a dispiriting percentage.

Doubtless this dismal record is in part a direct result of the leaden prose and laborious presentation of Yonge's authorised biography, laden with its innumerable ponderous platitudes and pointless anecdotes. Christabel Coleridge had produced a "sketch in luminous greys"\textsuperscript{100}

\textsuperscript{93} Cruse, \textit{The Victorians and Their Books}, 42.
\textsuperscript{95} Sandbach-Dahlstrom, \textit{Be Good Sweet Maid}, 22-23.
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{100} \textit{The Church Quarterly Review} 104 (January 1904), 344.
“that fixed the tone for every succeeding biographer and commentator: bland, concessive, selective,” dull, deferential, oleaginous, obsequious. In it Charlotte Yonge appeared as an adolescent amateur or as an aged and anxious anachronism. Both iterations were evidently intended to illustrate Coleridge’s extraordinary claim that throughout her existence Yonge eagerly and “easily accepted limitations, social, intellectual, and practical, regarding them as safeguards rather than as hindrances.”

Despite such assurances, Coleridge’s anecdotes seem questionable, if not contrived. In her introduction she had openly announced her intention to impose an idealised identity upon her subject: “[t]herefore this, the first piece of literary work of any consequence which I have ever done without the help of her criticism and sympathy, has been, in every possible way, planned out with a view to satisfying her taste and judgment....” Inconvenient or incongruous incidents were slighted or suppressed to create a smooth and seamless example of an exemplary, exalted, emblematic existence. A complacent Coleridge declared

I have tried as far as I can to show her as she was in herself, so that her fine example may be known far and wide, rather than to chronicle the small events of her very quiet life in regular order .... So consistent, so harmonious a life has surely never been described, and has rarely been lived. No inconsistent nor [sic] disappointing record has, or ever can, leap to light where she was concerned.

To this end she apparently destroyed all the personal and professional papers in her possession, thus ensuring that her superficial and sycophantic narrative would remain the standard, indeed the single, source of information about the life of Charlotte Yonge. Contradiction or confirmation of extravagant claims, or even clarification of odd or obscure ones—and there was an abundance of each—would prove difficult, if not impossible. Without apparent irony Coleridge suggested that her account could be both a punishment and a penance: “The book stands as the life of a busy, enthusiastic, happy, devout daughter of the Church; a book to place in the hands of self-conscious, discontented women to shame them into better ways.” Yonge’s cousin Jane Colbourne considered the result “very inadequate,” complaining “all her sense of fun and laughter and excessive sense of humour are all quite lost sight of.” The narrative seemed a dismal affirmation of Yonge’s own impression that “there is a strong Coleridge personality that must show itself in

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102 Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 130.
103 Ibid., viii.
104 Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, v.
105 Some scholars believe that Coleridge returned the papers to Helen Yonge, the niece of Charlotte Yonge; and that they subsequently disappeared. Others contend that the loss is not as comprehensive as first feared. See Alison Millard, “Autumn Meeting,” Review of Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship 18 (Spring 2004), 4.
106 The Church Quarterly Review 104 (January 1904), 345.
107 The Honorable Lady Montgomery Moore (the former Jane Colbourne), letter dated April 1903; Plymouth and West Devon Record Office.
whatever any Coleridge does.” In every sense it seemed the publication of *Charlotte Mary Yonge: Her Life and Letters* was an annihilation, for its lapses and limitations irrevocably damaged, and perhaps destroyed, the literary reputation of its subject.

However awkward, the Coleridge account is not solely responsible for Yonge’s lamentable legacy. Certainly the novels themselves had imperfections that were impossible to ignore, and few contemporary critics could resist a recitation. *The North American Review* (1855) claimed that Yonge’s “style is unstudied, even to carelessness.” The correspondent for the *Church Quarterly Review* also deplored Yonge’s “obvious defects[s] of style and composition,” declaring that “her grammar is faulty; her sentences are slipshod; her situations repeat themselves ... her mannerisms are monotonous.” Comparisons with her contemporaries were often unfortunate: even her ardent admirer Ethel Romanes (1908) claimed that Miss Yonge is intensely simple, direct, and perhaps somewhat wanting in artistic faculty. She is singularly inferior in this respect to Mrs. Gaskell, whose stories are on quite as limited a canvas, but who produces effects as different from any of Miss Yonge’s as are the sketches of a real artist from the photographs of the best camera. That is where Miss Yonge falls short of real greatness. She photographs with extraordinary fidelity, and her people are real people; but she has no idea of construction or of plot, nor does she ever face great questions or problems....

Yonge herself candidly conceded occasional failings. In a letter (1890) to her friend Elizabeth Barnett she noted wryly that

I have had two letters from a Hindoo [sic] Professor, one Guopna (I think), asking elucidations of some bits of slip-slop in *Golden Deeds*, which it seems is a class-book at Bombay and posed the poor professors. To have one’s bad grammar come round that way is a caution!

In time these minor criticisms, readily admitted and easily addressed, were overshadowed by a more serious charge: with the appearance of *Heartsease, or The Brother’s Wife* (1854), *The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations* (1856), and *Dynevor Terrace, or the Clue of Life* (1857), Yonge was repeatedly rebuked for the rapidity of her writing and the proliferation of her prose. The critic J.C. Jeaffreson (1858) exclaimed, “certainly her pen has during the six years ending at the close of

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108 Yonge condemned John Coleridge’s appreciation of William Heathcote for this reason. Ironically, his niece Christabel Coleridge included this criticism in the biography of her cousin. *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 259.


110 *The Church Quarterly Review* 104 (January 1904), 353-354.

111 Romanes, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 177.

112 Quoted in Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 311.
1856 been very prolific.”\textsuperscript{113} In the same year \textit{The Dublin Review} expostulated “Miss Yonge’s works have followed each other with marvelous celerity, and as might therefore be expected, fall off in power and finish.”\textsuperscript{114} Even Yonge’s eager acolyte Ethel Romanes (1908) sighed, “[i]f only she had someone sufficiently near her own age, and of superior mental power, to criticise her and tell her she was writing too much, the gain would have been great.”\textsuperscript{115}

For others the accumulation of domestic detail was even more daunting than the abundance of novels. The correspondent for the \textit{Prospective Review} complained of claustrophobia: “[y]ou have all the small life as well as the eventful; you sit down to nearly every breakfast, you are admitted every day to almost every room.”\textsuperscript{116} In an article entitled “Memoranda About Our Lady Novelists” (1854) that appeared in the \textit{Gentleman’s Magazine}, the anonymous author recommended a carefully calibrated course of correction. He admired the “exquisite perception, and many delicate shades of moral beauty” of the novel \textit{Heartsease}, but deplored its excessive length. Had the narrative been “reduced by one-fourth,” he declared, “[i]t might have left room for all the excellence, and omitted every defect.” Only then could “this be considered a very beautiful novel.”\textsuperscript{117} The literary critic Oliver Elton concurred (1920), adding that Yonge’s writing required “only a little less copiousness, another touch of art, to make it perfect of its sort.”\textsuperscript{118}

These complaints echoed the criticism of William Rathbone Greg (\textit{National Review}), George Henry Lewes (\textit{Fortnightly Review}), and E.S. Dallas (\textit{The Times}), among other established correspondents and columnists, who charged that contemporary women novelists were “sentimentalists” and “scribblers”\textsuperscript{119} who consistently and compulsively “wrote too much and too fast.”\textsuperscript{120} The temper and tone of these accusations recalled and reinforced a recognisable transatlantic tradition of rivalry and resentment. In a letter to his publisher the American author Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) raged that

\begin{quote}
America is now wholly given over to a d****d mob of scribbling women, and I should have no chance of success while the public taste is occupied with their trash--and should be ashamed of myself if I did succeed. What is the mystery of these innumerable editions of \textit{The Lamplighter}, and other
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{113} John Cordy Jeaffreson, \textit{Novels and Novelists from Elizabeth to Victoria}, two volumes. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1858, Volume Two, 407.
\textsuperscript{114} “Miss Sewell and Miss Yonge,” \textit{Dublin Review}, 318.
\textsuperscript{115} Romanes, \textit{Charlotte Mary Yonge}, 136.
\textsuperscript{116} “The Author of ‘Heartsease,’” \textit{Prospective Review} 10 (1854), 461.
\textsuperscript{117} “Memoranda about Our Lady Novelists,” \textit{Gentleman’s Magazine}, November 1854, 443.
\textsuperscript{118} Oliver Elton, \textit{A Survey of English Literature}, two volumes. London: Edward Arnold, 1920; Volume Two, 302-306.
\textsuperscript{120} Nicola Diane Thompson, “‘The Angel in the Circulating Library:’ Gender and the Critical Reception of Charlotte Yonge’s ‘The Heir of Redclyffe,’” in \textit{Reviewing Sex: Gender and the Reception of Victorian Novels}. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996, 94.
books neither better nor worse? Worse they could not be, and better they need not be, when they sell by the hundred thousand.\textsuperscript{121}

Many thought the solution obvious, recommending that women promptly relinquish their literary presumptions and pretensions and cease writing. In an article entitled “The Lady Novelists of Great Britain” (1853) that also appeared in the Gentleman’s Magazine, the anonymous author issued an appeal that was decorous but direct. “We could wish,” he admonished delicately, “that some of our lady writers were not so damagingly rapid and frequent in their gifts.”\textsuperscript{122} Another reviewer, J.S. Ludlow (1853), sought to impose additional restrictions in a campaign to reduce the pool of prospective authors. He argued

if the novel addresses itself to the heart, what is more natural than that it should then reach it more usefully and perfectly, when coming from the heart of a woman ripe with all the dignity of her sex, full of all wifely and motherly experience? No doubt a young lady—and even an old young lady—can write with the fear of God before her eyes, and become a great and good novelist; but somehow, one cannot help suspecting that she would find it much easier to write in the fear of God if she had already to write in the fear of husband and children.\textsuperscript{123}

As for those aspiring authors who were single, Ludlow graciously advised them, “gently and with all reverence,” immediately to “endeavour to find your gifts other employment.” An exasperated essayist for The Saturday Review, however, abandoned circumlocution or the semblance of courtesy and identified Charlotte Yonge as the most conspicuous culprit among a vast cohort of offenders. Compressing his several complaints into a single gratuitous grievance, he exclaimed that “Miss Yonge sometimes writes in a way that somewhat tries the patience of an overworked reviewer,” and exhorted her to spare her exhausted audience and “devote each Lent to a ruthless cutting down of her old stories.”\textsuperscript{124}

Nevertheless her novels had many admirers, several of whom were among the most acclaimed authors of the age. Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892), Poet Laureate of Great Britain from 1850, avidly read The Young Stepmother, or A Chronicle of Mistakes (1861); Charles Kingsley, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, chaplain to the Queen, tutor to the Prince

\textsuperscript{121} Quoted in Fred Lewis Pattee, The Feminine Fifties. NY: D. Appleton-Century, 1940, 583.
\textsuperscript{122} “The Lady Novelists of Great Britain,” Gentleman’s Magazine 1 (July 1853), 20.
\textsuperscript{124} “Women’s Heroines,” Saturday Review 23 (1867), 260. Quoted by Barbara Dunlap in an unpublished essay, “How the Victorians Viewed Miss Yonge: Some Contemporary Reviews of Her Popular Novels,” 1976, 15. Courtesy of Charlotte Mary Yonge Society Archives. This reviewer also admitted without apparent embarrassment that he had failed to finish the novel.
of Wales, rector of Eversley parish in Hampshire, and author of several popular novels, especially admired *Heartsease.* Ruskin, however, preferred *A History of Christian Names,* pronouncing it "the only book by a woman that I ever wish to have written." Yonge was resolutely indifferent to either the celebrity or the cajolery of such readers. She disliked and distrusted Kingsley, questioning both his character and his churchmanship, and refusing "on principle" to recommend or even read any of his writing, with the sole exception of *The Water Babies* (1863), his novel for children. She thought Ruskin’s scholarship as suspect as his theology: much of his analysis in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) she stated with severity, was "very nonsensical." Yonge’s pronouncements often were expressed with an energy and economy that contemplated no contradiction. She considered the Bronte sisters, daughters of an Evangelical clergyman, as well as their novels, "coarse," and condemned the sensational *Barabhas* (1893), the most popular tale of the prolific Marie Corelli (1855-1924) as a "horrible irreverence." Often her discernment (like her doctrine) was in opposition to established, more orthodox, opinion. Thomas Carlyle, perhaps the most eminent historian and political essayist of the age, she called simply "a humbug." Byron and Shelley, whose genius and "glorious powers were wasted and abused."

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127 She considered "the beginnings of chapters only fit to be in German." Quoted in Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge,* 178. In a letter published in *The Times* on 30 May 1851 Ruskin staunchly defended the artistic abilities of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood but strenuously disavowed the presence of what he considered any "Romish and Tractarian" tendencies in their paintings.

128 Yonge’s hostility was perhaps in response to the Brontes’ often satirical and occasionally savage portraits of High Church clergymen. In *Jane Eyre* (1847) Charlotte Bronte’s portrayals of the missionary priest St. John Rivers and of the equally fanatical High Churchwoman Eliza Reed are far from flattering.

129 Yonge, in an undated letter to Mary Elizabeth Anderson Morshead; quoted in Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge,* 333-334. She subsequently admitted that she had not read the novel (and did not intend to), observing ominously "I believe [Corelli] is a woman given to spiritualism, perhaps on her way to better things."

were utterly unprincipled and their poetry profane and pernicious.\textsuperscript{131}

Much of her displeasure, however, was reserved for Mary Anne (later Marian) Evans (1819-1880), who wrote as George Eliot, both for her rampant "spirit of scepticism" and her "irregular" relationship with the philosopher George Henry Lewes (1817-1878). Yonge considered Eliot's ideals "absurd" and her "defiance of all moral and religious principle" deplorable.\textsuperscript{132} She also regretted the combination of rudimentary "religious sentiments" and "frustrated beliefs" that were "cramped by her Atheism."\textsuperscript{133} Without proper precautionary measures in place any proposed biography of Eliot, she predicted, "will do a great deal of mischief."\textsuperscript{134}

Intentionally or inadvertently, Eliot had perhaps incited such animosity. In a scathing essay entitled "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists" that appeared in \textit{The Westminster Review} (1856), she had ridiculed the "feminine fatuity" of a number of (unnamed) women authors whose literary accomplishments she found amateurish and awkward, filled with anachronisms and affectations. Eliot alleged that

\begin{quote}
The least readable of silly women's novels are the modern-antique species ... a ponderous, leaden kind of fatuity.... We find ladies constantly choosing to make their mental mediocrity more conspicuous, by clothing it in a masquerage of ancient names; by putting forth their feeble sentimentality into the mouths of Roman vestals or Egyptian priestesses, and attributing their rhetorical arguments to Jewish high-priests and great philosophers.\textsuperscript{135}
\end{quote}

Eliot considered other artistic practices equally offensive. She argued that "[t]he most pitiable of all silly novels by lady novelists are what we may call the oracular species—novels intended to expound the writer's religious, philosophical, or moral theories," explaining that

\begin{quote}
There seems to be a notion abroad among women, rather akin to the superstition that the speech and actions of idiots are inspired, and that the human being most entirely exhausted of common sense is the fittest vehicle of revelation. To judge from their writings, there are certain ladies who think that an amazing ignorance, both of science and of life, is the best possible qualification for forming an opinion on the knottiest moral and speculative questions. The
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{131} Keble thought them intellectually suspect, emotionally unstable, and probably insane. In \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe} Philip Morville cautions Guy to avoid the poetry of Byron; in \textit{Hopes and Fears} Edna Murrell, an undereducated and errant governess, dies in childbirth, feverishly reciting fragments from the sonnets of Shelley.

\textsuperscript{132} Coleridge, \textit{Charlotte Mary Yonge}, 340; Romanes, \textit{Charlotte Mary Yonge}, 80, 155-156. See also Hayter, \textit{Charlotte Yonge}, 39. Yonge also contended that Eliot "could represent but not create."


\textsuperscript{134} Quoted in Romanes, \textit{Charlotte Mary Yonge}, 179.

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Eliot concluded her article with the astringent assertion that “as a general rule, the ability of a lady novelist to describe actual life and her fellow-man, is in inverse proportion to her confident eloquence about God and the other world, and the means by which she usually chooses to conduct you to true ideas of the invisible is a totally false picture of the visible.” Earlier she had expressed similar sentiments, declaring in a private letter that contemporary “religious novels are a sort of Centaur or Mermaid, and like other monsters that we do not know how to class should be destroyed for the public good as soon as born.”

Such taunts still tormented even after the death of the writer. The Monthly Packet responded to the aspersions of The Westminster Review with admonitions and accusations of its own. In a retrospective essay entitled “George Eliot and Her Critics” (1885) Yonge charged that Eliot’s “practical disregard of moral obligations in her own case, when they involved a sacrifice, incapacitates her, in a very considerable degree, from dogmatising on “duty”—nay, more—reduces all talk of duty to a mockery.” In an earlier article she had criticised Eliot’s masterpiece, Middlemarch (1871-1872) for what she called its essential “hollowness,” the inevitable result, she alleged, of the prolonged and pervasive “poisoning influence” of the atheist (and adulterer) G.H. Lewes. In Eliot’s final novel, Daniel Deronda (1876), both intention and execution were condemned: “[t]he ideal gradually became lowered, the imagination tarnished, the purpose stronger perhaps, but more perverted.”

Despite both personal insults and professional provocations Eliot had greatly admired much of Yonge’s work, particularly The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations (1856) and ‘More Precious than Rubies: ’Biographies of Good Women (1862, 1865), a collection of inspirational tales of heroines “of all times and all lands.” She repeatedly returned to Yonge’s writings, both fiction and nonfiction, once commenting cryptically that in reading her novels “one has a sense ... of the incomplete narrative which cries out for further exploration.” It is unclear whether Eliot’s remark referred to some flaw of conception, some failure of composition, or some frustration of the reader. Perhaps it

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136 Ibid.
137 Ibid.
140 Yonge, The Monthly Packet, May 1885; quoted in Kathleen Tillotson, “Charlotte Yonge as a Critic of Literature,” in Battiscombe and Laski, editors, A Chaplet for Charlotte Yonge, 69. Yonge contended that “a good man could have made [Eliot] do grandly good work—so that the whole seems to me a lesson against delivering up our conscience to any leader.” Such an observation displays a curious lack of awareness regarding the effect of her own close relationship with “her master,” John Keble, among others.
141 Yonge also taunted Eliot in her novels; in The Clever Woman of the Family (1865) Alick Keith procured a copy of Silas Marner at a train station as a present for his uncle, “thinking you might like it.” He then “glanced at Rachel, who had, he suspected, thought his purchase an act of weakness” (442).
was a combination of all three.

These mutual recriminations signaled the presence of another, more subtle rivalry, one ironically based more on similarities than differences. In 1860 the Irish historian W.E.H. Lecky (1838-1903) observed that “it is our lay writers who are molding the characters and forming the opinions of the age; they have superseded the clergy in the direction of the thought of England.” In an influential study (1953) the literary scholar John Holloway identified a number of these writers, most of them men, as “Victorian sages.” According to one, Thomas Carlyle, “the man of letters performs the same function in modern culture as prophets and priests in a former age ... He that can write a true Book, to persuade England, is he not the Bishop and the Archbishop, the Primate of England and of All England? I many a time say, the Writers of Newspapers, Pamphlets, Books, these are the real working effective Church of a modern country.”

Holloway argued that a sage deliberately abjured all distractions in order to develop the discernment and distance needed to maintain his moral authority. His or her writing possessed the earnest and exalted style characteristic of sermons, religious tracts, and social prophesy. Its most salient qualities, however, were also its most subversive: the impulse to retrieve or revive something long discarded or dormant; and the insistence that the audience also participate in the project to perceive the ancient or the abandoned “in a new way.” Contemporary phenomena would be investigated and interpreted in order to expose and endorse transcendent and timeless truths. Persuasion was attempted, and achieved, by indirect, poetic, or rhetorical appeal rather than by rational or logical argumentation.

Holloway declined to identify any noncanonical authors as sages, but ironically his assessment of George Eliot, the sole woman included in his study, may also be read as a reasonably accurate description of Charlotte Yonge. According to Holloway, “she wishes ... to impart a vision of the world that reveals its whole design and value. Her teaching may be partly ethical, but it is ethics presented as a system and grounded under a metaphysical doctrine.” Although their sympathies and sensibilities are entirely different and (according to each author) profoundly incompatible, the narratives of Eliot and Yonge have a similar purpose. They represent ambitious attempts to instruct the reader in strategies (for one essentially secular, for the other emphatically not) to negotiate an enormous labyrinth of contemporary cultural conflicts and ethical entanglements. Eliot’s engagement in such an enterprise has been applauded as strenuously as

144 The “sages” were Thomas Carlyle, Benjamin Disraeli, John Henry Newman, Matthew Arnold, Thomas Hardy, and Marian Evans (George Eliot).
146 Ibid., 3, 17.
148 Holloway, 112.
Yonge's has been ignored. Elisabeth Jay (1997) has observed such inconsistencies of readership response and critical reputation, arguing that "it is customary to see George Eliot as the only Victorian woman elevated to the status of Victorian sage—and that by virtue of her retention of a male pseudonym; but "Aunt Charlotte" in her Monthly Packet probably troubled the consciences and extended the moral sympathies of as many middle-class adolescent female[s] as did Marian Evans." Anthony Trollope (1815-1882), who admired them both, described his own experience of authorship in a more explicit analogy: "I have ever thought of myself as a preacher of sermons."

To be a preacher was regarded as the most exalted of all professions; "it was the preacher's office," proclaimed the clergyman and literary critic H.L. Mansel (1863), to "mold the minds and form the habits and tasks of its generation." This was the age of great preachers, many of national and international renown. The original leaders of the Oxford Movement all were known for their oratorical prowess. Each had a reputation for a signature style: Newman was flamboyant, even florid; Keble poetical, yet reserved; Pusey scholarly and severe. In London the most celebrated High Church preachers were H.P. Liddon of St. Paul's Cathedral and William Dodsworth of Christ Church, Albany Street. Neither was as spectacularly successful, however, as Charles Hadden Spurgeon (1834-1892), a Baptist clergyman known as "The Prince of Preachers," who had a congregation of ten thousand in his cavernous Metropolitan Tabernacle in Southwark. Thousands more purchased the transcript of his Sunday sermon every week; the complete collection was said to have sold more than one million copies worldwide. Another speaker of extraordinary power was William Murphy (1834-1872), a lapsed Catholic who proclaimed (and promoted) himself as "The Lecturer against Rome." Murphy's followers were few but ferocious; his sermons intemperate but effective: in 1867 they incited a savage series of riots in Birmingham against Irish Catholic immigrants.

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150 It was Trollope who first recommended The Daisy Chain to Eliot and Lewes.
153 Spurgeon published his Sunday sermon every week from 1854 until the year of his death. More than 24,000 people attended his service at the reconstituted Crystal Palace in Sydenham on 7 October 1857, the National Day of Humiliation, also called the Public Day of Feast, Humiliation, and Prayer, at the time of the Indian Rebellion, or the "Sepoy Mutiny." This appeal for "the restoration of tranquility in India" raised more than five hundred pounds for the Indian Relief Fund; Florence Nightingale was among the subscribers, contributing GB 25 (see Chapter Four). Punch was less than deferential to Spurgeon, derisively describing him as a "sacred creature at thousands of tea-tables," and "a dealer in brimstone with plenty of treacle." Charles L. Graves, Mr. Punch's History of Modern England, four volumes. NY: Frederick A. Stokes Company, n.d. Volume One: 1841-1857, 106. For more information on Charles Spurgeon see Ernest W. Bacon, Spurgeon: Heir of the Puritans, Grand Rapids, MI: George Allen & Unwin, 1967.
154 Murphy often alleged that "every Popish priest was a murderer, a cannibal, a liar, and pickpocket,"
The sermons of the Presbyterian John Gumming (1807-1881), who preached from the pulpit of a vast church in Covent Garden, were equally inflammatory. Gumming electrified his enormous audiences with tales of the perfidy of Roman Catholicism and the perils of Papal Aggression. The pontiff, he declared, was "the man of sin—the head of apostasy--of that system which was designated in the Scriptures as the ministry of iniquity, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, and the abomination of the earth."\(^{155}\)

Gumming had chosen a subject that had seized the attention of the nation. Papal ambition for the conversion of England, announced with the restoration of a Catholic hierarchy centred in Westminster, the historical, political, and cultural core of both city and the country, was, he contended, "an insult to our Queen, our Church, our religion, and our laws." For many this enterprise constituted a direct assault on the citadel of Protestant England by a resurgent and rapacious rival. The Catholic theologian Ronald Knox (1888-1957) claimed that in the mid-nineteenth century "the Roman Church in England had ceased to be what it was, a remnant, half-pitied, half-despised, to be hated perhaps, but certainly not feared: it had grown into a vigorous movement."\(^{156}\)

Some said that the rapid success of the Roman Catholic revival was engineered by a secret confederacy that had already infiltrated England, insinuating itself in the provincial parish. Gumming identified this adversary, subtle, skillful, and infinitely more insidious than any foreign agent, as "that great pest which was stalking through our country, and was now called ‘Puseyism.’" He thundered, "If we were to have Popery at all, let us have Italian Popery under an Italian flag, and not under the flag of old England!"\(^{157}\) His most popular sermons included elaborate descriptions of the imminent destruction of these "crypto-Catholic" enemies. All would be annihilated at the time of the Apocalypse, which he predicted would arrive sometime between 1848 and 1867. Nor was he reluctant to name names. According to George Eliot, Cumming’s frequent and favourite exercise was "to form conjectures of the process by which the earth is to be burned up, and to picture Dr. Chalmers and Mr. Wilberforce caught up to meet Christ in the air, while Romanists, Puseyites, and other infidels are given over to gnashing of teeth."\(^{158}\)

John William Cunningham (1780-1861) was another clergyman renowned for his extreme abhorrence of Catholic and Anglo-Catholic principles and practices. A prominent member of the separatist and extremist Clapham Sect,\(^{159}\) he was instrumental in the establishment of The British

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159 The Clapham Sect was an organisation of prominent Evangelical philanthropists, parliamentarians,
and Foreign Bible Society and the Church Missionary Society. Cunningham was the Evangelical rector of Harrow for fifty years, but his fame endured for another reason: he was said to be the original for Frances Milton Trollope’s clergyman William Cartwright in her popular novel *The Vicar of Wrexhill* (1837), and for her son Anthony Trollope’s odious Reverend Obadiah Slope in *Barchester Towers* (1857).

The popularity of all these preachers was eventually eclipsed in the enormous excitement that accompanied the arrival of the American evangelists Dwight Lyman Moody (1837-1899) and Ira Sankey (1840-1908), who began their first great revivalist tour of Britain in 1873. Moody spoke and Sankey sang; they claimed that in their first four months in London they were heard by more than two million people. Among the enthusiastic audiences in the agricultural hall that was the only space vast enough to accommodate them was the prime minister, William Gladstone, whose governmental responsibilities and Anglo-Catholic sympathies evidently did not preclude him from attending their evening program three times.¹⁶⁰

The American whose appearance in Britain was most acclaimed, however, had arrived some twenty years earlier. Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896), abolitionist and author of the *Uncle Tom’s Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly* (1852), presented a spectacularly successful series of readings to promote both her cause and her novel. The commercial popularity of the novel was enormous: it is estimated that within a year of its initial publication in England more than a million and a half copies were sold in at least forty different editions.¹⁶¹ The book was a triumph by every measure imaginable. Everyone extolled its achievement: Elizabeth Barrett Browning recommended it repeatedly, regarding it as essential reading and “quite a sign of the times.”¹⁶² Lady Frances Balfour exulted in its political ramifications: “It did its work! A woman’s pen, under Divine inspiration, touched the iron fetters, the rivets fell apart, and ‘the slave wherever he cowers’ went free.”¹⁶³ The abolitionist Earl of Shaftesbury (1801-1885) presented Stowe with a petition entitled “An Affectionate and Christian Address of Many Thousands of Women of Great Britain and Ireland to their Sisters the Women of the United States of America.” It was an appeal directed specifically to American women to end the abuses of slavery, signed by more than five hundred thousand British women.¹⁶⁴

Such enthusiasm ensured that *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was soon adapted for the stage; in

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¹⁶² Elizabeth Barrett Browning; letter to Anna Jameson dated 12 April 1863; *Letters*. Volume Two, 110-111.


London alone there were eleven productions by the end of 1853, including the popular *Uncle Tom in England, A Proof That Black's White*. The reviewer for *The Times* claimed that any theatre "seemed to be scantily furnished unless it was provided with a version of *Uncle Tom*." Occasionally a critic resisted such rhapsodies: *The Spectator* repeatedly denounced what it regarded as rampant instances of "Tom-mania," a contagion originally centred in the capital city, it charged, but rapidly contaminating the entire nation.

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* was greatly admired by the Tractarians, and by Charlotte Yonge, who despised the institution of slavery and wrote in support of the Northern cause during the American Civil War (1861-1865). She reworked many of the themes and techniques of Stowe’s story in the development of her own novel, *The Heir of Redclyffe,* which appeared the following year. Both narratives were addressed to women as well as to men, relied on emotional appeal rather than intellectual argument, and deployed an arsenal of details and discourses in an effort to reveal a timeless, transcendent truth. That truth constituted the central and most sacred myth of Christianity: the power of the powerless to overcome persecution and prevail, and in the process to save the sinful and the corrupt. Redemption was promised to those who believed.

For Yonge the conspicuous achievement and celebrity of Harriet Beecher Stowe were inspirational and instructive. In their investigations of the correspondences between the seen and the unseen, between the temporal and the eternal, between this world and the next, Stowe and Yonge each wrote in defiance of established custom, which reserved such complex considerations for churchmen and scholars. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines theology as "the study of or science which treats of God, His nature and attributes, and His relations with man and the universe," a phrasing and apparently a philosophy that offer no place for female expression or experience. The perils of transgression were eloquently evoked by Ruskin:

There is one dangerous science for women— one which they must indeed beware how they profanely touch—that of theology. Strange, and miserably strange, that while they are modest enough to doubt their powers, and pause at the threshold of sciences where every step is demonstrable and sure, they will plunge headlong, and without one thought of incompetency, into that science in which the greatest men have trembled, and the wisest erred. Strange, that they will complacently and pridefully bind up whatever vice or folly there is in them, whatever arrogance, petulance, or blind incomprehensiveness [sic], into one bitter bundle of consecrated myrrh. Strange in creatures born to be Love visible, that where they can know least, they will condemn first, and think to recommend themselves to their Master,


166 In a later novel, *The Young Stepmother* (1861), a disagreeable character with the improbable name of Algernon Dusautoy is described as "a thorough tyrant at home. His wife will be a perfect slave. I declare I would as soon sell her to Legree" (265), a reference to the brutal slave owner in *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*
by crawling up the steps of His judgement-throne, to divide it with Him. Strangest of all, that they should think they were led by the Spirit Comforter into habits of mind which have become in them the unmixed elements of home discomfort.\textsuperscript{167}

Although the sensational success of Stowe and Yonge exposed the essential emptiness of such effusions and exclusions, both women eventually retreated from an acknowledgement of the implications of their enterprise. When inquisitive admirers asked the author of \textit{Uncle Tom's Cabin} about the source of her inspiration, she replied only that "God wrote it."\textsuperscript{168}

Yonge, too, was reticent about the origins of her own novel, which first appeared anonymously. After her identity was disclosed she insisted that several other individuals, including her parents, John and Charlotte Keble, and Marianne Dyson, were closely involved in its conception and creation. She continued to deprecate her own accomplishment, once declaring "I have taken a sheet of paper and turned my \textit{dramatis personae} loose upon it to see how they will behave."\textsuperscript{169} Georgina Battiscombe perpetuated the claim that Charlotte Yonge was an imitator rather than an inventor, contending that "her characters had a life of their own apart from her; she felt herself to be recorder rather than creator."\textsuperscript{170} The assessment of Margaret Mare and Alicia C. Percival in \textit{Victorian Best-Seller: The World of Charlotte Yonge} (1947) diminished her even more. Their assertion that "[f]ortunately, her characters usually got beyond their creator's conscious control, and impelled by some inner necessity, developed as they would\textsuperscript{171} was an astonishing allegation, implying that the author of an imaginative text was little more than an interloper who interfered in or otherwise impeded the creative process. The modern scholar Alison Shell observed (1997) that such accusations were often aimed at women. "It is still all too common," she contended, "for the woman writer, in particular, to be portrayed as a kind of medium, more intuitive than intelligent."\textsuperscript{172} Even Charlotte Bronte had described her younger sister, the author Emily Bronte, as the inert and innocent victim of artistic inspiration. In the preface to \textit{Wuthering Heights} (1847) she maintained that

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Extract of a letter dated 24 May 1859 from Yonge to Marianne Dyson; quoted in Coleridge, \textit{Charlotte Mary Yonge}, 175-176. In the same letter Yonge disagreed with Richard Hurrell Froude's contention that "an author ... feels the events and people are under his own control." She remarked, "I am sure I don't, and what Guy and Philip may choose to turn out I cannot tell."
\item Battiscombe, \textit{Charlotte Yonge}. This statement summons Yonge's own dismissal of the novels of George Eliot.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
the writer who possesses the creative gift owns something of which he is not always master—something that at times strangely wills and works for itself.... Be the work grim or glorious, dread or divine, you have little choice left but quiescent adoption. As for you—the nominal artist—your share of it has been to work passively under dictates you neither delivered nor could question—that would not be uttered at your prayer, nor suppressed or changed at your caprice.\textsuperscript{173}

Nevertheless not all women writers automatically accepted such assurances, and the apparent diffidence of both Stowe and Yonge was in many respects deceptive. The success of novels such as \textit{Uncle Tom's Cabin} and \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe} ensured that their arguments and their causes were imaginatively accessible to hundreds of thousands of readers. The prayers and petitions of the authors seized the national consciousness, and eventually unsettled the conscience, of many in both Great Britain and the United States. With their exaltation of sacrifice and salvation, the narratives were often seen, and dismissed, as emotional and sentimental, but in their staunch resistance to established systems of power and privilege it is more accurate to perceive each as an audacious "political enterprise, halfway between sermon and social theory, that both codifies and attempts to mold the values of its time."\textsuperscript{174}

In any case the influence of these novels was unprecedented. Despite the public furore over the \textit{Tracts for the Times} (1833), \textit{Essays and Reviews} (1860), \textit{Apologia Pro Vita Sua} (1864), and seemingly countless numbers of speeches and sermons, the tangible effect of such contentious treatises and texts was limited. Not so with the sentimental novel. With their emphasis on domestic experience, women authors provided readers with practical instruction on the integration of theory and theology with the routines and rituals of daily life. All of Yonge's written work participated in this project: her studies on the Prayer Book (1872), the Catechism (1872), and the Psalms (1881), her \textit{Book of Golden Deeds of All Times and All Lands} (1864), and her preface to a popular French devotional manual, \textit{Gold Dust: A Collection of Golden Counsels for the Sanctification of Daily Life} (1880); each of her novels, and every issue of \textit{The Monthly Packet}. All were intended, she repeatedly reminded her readers, "to help you to perceive how to bring your religious principles to bear upon your daily life." In the process all affirmed both the authenticity and the appeal of an alternative order, one in which a woman spoke directly to other women and acted with authority and assurance to reform, redeem, renew.

Although Stowe has been applauded for the audacity of her ambition, Yonge's achievement has invariably been invalidated or ignored. Close readings of several of her novels, however, reveal her political sense and philosophical sophistication. In her study entitled \textit{Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901), Novelist of the Oxford Movement} (1992) Barbara Dennis illustrated that Yonge's Tractarian practices and principles profoundly and pervasively

\textsuperscript{173} Charlotte Bronte, Preface to 'Wuthering Heights,' 1850, 12.
\textsuperscript{174} Tompkins, "Sentimental Power," 84-85. Earlier in her essay Tompkins observed that "a literary reputation can never be anything but a political matter" (4).
informed her narratives. In 1998 Virginia Bemis investigated what she called the “sacramental theology” of Yonge’s novels.\textsuperscript{175} Elisabeth Jay (2006) applied the evidence presented in G.B. Tennyson’s important study of the Anglo-Catholic elements of Victorian devotional poetry to her own analysis of the works of Charlotte Yonge.\textsuperscript{176}

Other scholars recently have emphasised the religious dimension of Yonge’s writing, recognising that the themes and techniques of her novels are essentially incompatible with the scepticism and rationalism that define the emphatically secular sensibility at the core of the realist tradition. In his essay (2003) on The Heir of Redclyffe the literary historian Gavin Budge demonstrated convincingly that Yonge consistently employed strategies of Biblical interpretation and analysis such as typology, allegory, and especially what Tennyson called “the great Tractarian principle of Analogy.”\textsuperscript{177} Budge asserted that the entire novel can therefore be “read in typological terms, as a kind of allegory of the doubting nineteenth century soul’s path to faith.”\textsuperscript{178} Like the “pure and perfect” poetry of The Christian Year, and the powerful and polemical exhortations of the Tracts for the Times, her narratives found inspiration and strength in such imaginative and intellectual allusions and associations. They represented Yonge’s ambition to become something she regarded as infinitely more exalted than any single authority or agency, or any sage or spokesperson: a champion among that exclusive cadre of churchmen and churchwomen “of the second and third generation ... toiling everywhere and fighting the good fight in the strength of those external truths which The Christian Year brought home to the hearts of many, and those half-forgotten Tracts helped to impress;”\textsuperscript{179} heralds and heroes of “The Church Militant.”

In the end Charlotte Yonge achieved her aim. Her novels triumphantly tempered and transformed the Oxford Movement from an inchoate, decentralised, predominantly clerical and academic enterprise into a disciplined and inclusive social and political movement that operated on a national and even international scale as a potential force within the Established Church. Nevertheless it was an accomplishment accompanied by a seemingly intractable problem. Although successful on their own terms, influencing and inspiring generations of readers who perceived the possibilities for activism, the narratives often seem incomprehensible and inaccessible to modern and more secular and sceptical sensibilities. As a result the sarcasm and scorn of Wilkie Collins and Hester Cholmondeley (among others) continues to resonate, and their spite retains its painful and poisonous sting.


\textsuperscript{177} Gavin Budge, “Realism and Typology: Charlotte M. Yonge’s ‘The Heir of Redclyffe,’” Victorian Literature and Culture 31, 1 (2003), 208.

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.

2.3. ‘School-Girl’ Audiences and Associations

‘All so written exclusively for school-girls....’

In a controversial essay entitled “The Lady Novelists” that appeared in *The Westminster Review* (July 1852), George Henry Lewes contended that “of all the departments of literature, Fiction is the one to which, by nature and circumstance, women are best adapted.” He elaborated

Exceptional women will of course be found competent to be the highest success in other departments; but speaking generally, novels are their fate. The domestic experiences which form the bulk of women’s knowledge find an appropriate form in novels; while the very nature of fiction calls for that predominance of Sentiment which we have already attributed to the feminine mind. Love is the staple of fiction.... The joys and sorrows of affection, the incidents of domestic life, the aspirations and fluctuations of emotional life, assume typical forms in the novel.\(^{180}\)

Lewes’s contemporary Coventry Patmore, secure in the critical and commercial success of his own immensely popular poetry, contested this assessment, emphasising that women authors were anomalies and perhaps aberrations. “There certainly have been cases of women possessed of the properly masculine power of writing books,” he conceded, “but these cases are all so truly and obviously exceptional, and must and ought always to remain so, that we may overlook them without the least prejudice to the soundness of our doctrine.”\(^{181}\)

The correspondent for the *Gentleman’s Magazine* solemnly concurred (1853), reminding his readers of certain significant exceptions. Women writers “cannot, indeed fetch up materials from the haunts into which a Dickens or a Bulwer may penetrate,”\(^{182}\) he cautioned. His counterpart at *The Prospective Review*, John Chapman (1821-1894), also spoke of the “necessary incompleteness of a woman’s handling.”\(^{183}\) An anonymous essayist for the *North British Review* (1856) was more precise in his meticulous mapping of the areas he deemed unavailable to or inappropriate for women authors.

Gifted women, with their keen sympathies, quick observation, and dramatic power of representation, may in this way initiate measures of social amelioration, while in general they are unfitted for close, considerate, and systemic reasoning on such questions, for the labour of investigating facts, collecting details, weighing evidence, balancing opposite statements, and the like; processes all necessary as preliminary methods to any practical

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181 Quoted in Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own*, 75.


183 Chapman, “Hearts in Mortmain,” 495.
George Eliot, at the commencement of her career as a novelist, may have been aggrieved or alarmed at such artificial and arbitrary exclusions. In an article entitled “Silly Novels by Lady Novelists” (1856) that also appeared in The Westminster Review she argued that fiction is a department of literature in which women can, after their kind, fully equal men. Novels have a precious quality, lying quite apart from masculine aptitudes and experience. No educational restrictions can shut women out from the materials of fiction, and there is no species of art which is so free from rigid requirements. Like crystalline masses, it may take any form, and yet be beautiful; we have only to pour in the right elements—genuine observation, humour, and passion.

The novels of Charlotte Yonge were a sustained rejoinder, and a robust rebuke, to the restrictions invented and imposed by a relentlessly secular and predominantly male literary establishment. Her nonfiction also steadfastly resisted such patriarchal tyrannies. In the introduction to her biography (1875) of her cousin, John Coleridge Patteson, the martyred missionary Bishop of Melanesia, Yonge remembered the early opposition she had encountered from both literary and clerical establishments: “Many protested that the full and sympathetic masculine grasp of a man’s powerful mind ... is necessarily denied to me.” Patteson’s sisters Frances and Joan nevertheless implored Yonge to persevere, and in the end she answered all aspersions admirably. The Life of John Coleridge Patteson, Missionary Bishop of the Melanesian Islands, was a resounding success; many regarded it as one of the best biographies of the decade. Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish’s diary entry of 8 March 1875 reads “[f]inished this morning a book that has taken a great hold upon me, and that we ought to thank God for: Miss Yonge’s Life of Bishop Patteson. It is a glorious shining proof from beginning to end of what our dear Church can bring forth.” Yonge too was pleased with her accomplishment:

I think I have represented fairly, for I have done my best faithfully to select passages giving his mind even where it does not coincide completely with my own opinions, being quite convinced that not only should a biographer never attempt

184 “Religious Novels,” North British Review 26 (1856), 211. The novels under review were Perversion, or Causes and Consequences of Infidelity by William Conybeare; Loss and Gain, or The Story of a Convert, by John Henry Newman; and The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations, by Charlotte Yonge.

185 Patmore was Eliot’s colleague; Chapman was her editor and publisher; and Lewes, as mentioned earlier, her companion, colleague, and common-law husband.


187 Yonge, preface to The Life of John Coleridge Patteson, Missionary Bishop of the Melanesian Islands. London: Macmillan, 1875. Patteson was bludgeoned to death on the island of Nupaku, in the Santa Cruz Islands, in retaliation for the abduction of five islanders by rogue European traders seeking slave labourers for the sugar and sandalwood plantations of Fiji.

188 Cavendish, Diaries, Volume Two, 169-170.
either to twist or conceal the sentiments of the subject, but that either to apologise for, or as it were to argue with them, is vain in both senses of the word.\(^{189}\)

She was especially proud of an integrity and impartiality that evidently were not always expected of women writers. Nor did Yonge conform to another common assumption about female authors. Sentimentality of any sort was seldom her subject, and romance and its rituals interested her even less. Most of the courtship in her novels was conducted offstage, during awkward and abrupt excursions in the shrubbery (The Heir of Redclyffe) or brisk and bracing constitutionals along the esplanade (The Clever Woman of the Family); on several occasions it was averted or avoided altogether (The Daisy Chain). Many of the marriages that resulted were literally or metaphorically connected with disappointment or diminishment (The Heir of Redclyffe, Heartsease, The Young Stepmother, Hopes and Fears), and often with illness, disease, disability, or death (The Clever Woman of the Family, The Pillars of the House, The Three Brides). Ironically, some readers remembered these details differently, at times even revising the narratives. Molly Hughes, in her memoir entitled A London Family, 1870-1900, recalled that “wedding bells were the usual end to our stories, of which The Heir of Redclyffe was a fair sample.”\(^{190}\) The wedding nearest the end of the novel is at best a melancholy and mournful event, seen more as an act of contrition than of celebration (see Chapter Three below).

Yonge’s resistance to dominant literary practices and protocols, however, was more radical still. She repudiated Eliot’s “right elements,” regarding them as requirements of a realism that was neither relevant nor essential to the interest or integrity of her own narratives. She also adamantly refused to accept the presumption that her gender was either a limitation or a liability, and instead proclaimed her intention to exploit its potential. In her opinion, a woman “can often speak with great effect to her own generation,” and, she added emphatically, “this should be her aim.”\(^{191}\)

Yonge was always acutely aware of her audience. Ethel Romanes (1908) observed that she “wrote mainly for women. Her earlier books undoubtedly had a certain amount of popularity among men; but so far as she had any sense of her own mission, we are sure she thought only of her own sex.”\(^{192}\) For a time such popularity seemed imperishable; although none of her subsequent novels would achieve the sensational success of The Heir of Redclyffe they were always eagerly anticipated and often enthusiastically admired. Georgina Battiscombe (1943) maintained that “two or three new books by Miss Yonge were to be familiar features of every publishing season for [more than] forty years, until with the passage of time she was to grow from a popular authority

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\(^{189}\) Yonge, preface to The Life of John Coleridge Patteson, vi-vii.


\(^{192}\) Romanes, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 176.
into a British institution.” When the results of a schoolgirl readership survey (1886) were announced, Yonge was ranked third (just before Shakespeare, but she may have been more gratified to learn that she had received more than twice as many votes as George Eliot). Her popularity among a certain ‘set’ was enduring; as late as 1898 subscribers of The Girls’ Realm listed Charlotte Yonge among their favorite novelists. Elizabeth Wordsworth, first principal of the first Oxford college for women, Lady Margaret Hall, asserted that “[i]t is hardly too much to say that Charlotte Yonge’s work … seems likely to remain as the high-water mark of English society at its very best.” Apparently many agreed. Countless copies of Yonge’s novels, many of them published in decorative editions by the National Schoolbook Depository, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), or the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), were distributed as confirmation presents or awards for attendance or accomplishment at school, church, and club assemblies. Her works were also translated into many languages, often as part of the missionary enterprise.

Her greatest rival in this regard was Hesba Stretton, the pseudonym of Sara Smith (1852-1911). Stretton was the immensely popular and prolific author of Jessica’s First Prayer (1867), which also sold more than five hundred thousand copies; Little Meg’s Children (1866); and Alone in London (1869); all of which were standards in Dissenting and Evangelical families. Her “most avid” readers included the activist Florence Nightingale, the evangelist Charles Spurgeon; the philanthropist Lord Shaftesbury; Queen Victoria, and perhaps more surprisingly, Tsar Alexander II of Russia. Other slightly less exalted readers seemed somewhat less enthusiastic. “We loved the sentimentality,” explained Lilian Faithfull, once principal of the Cheltenham Ladies’ College, “but we disliked the children.”

By contrast the core appeal of the novels of Charlotte Yonge resided in a careful and compassionate presentation of the intellectual and spiritual concerns of contemporary young women, portrayed as they struggled to perfect themselves. Fraser’s Magazine (1854) declared that “above all, Miss Yonge succeeds in interesting us so much in her protégées, that when at last we bid them farewell, it is ever hereafter to recall them to our affectionate remembrance, as friends whom we have known and loved on earth, and whom we hope to meet in heaven.” Many of her characters were both credible and congenial. The North British Review (1856) admired “the true adherence to nature and the grand dramatic skill displayed in the exhibition
of character,” but applauded the fact that “her persons are like the men and women we may meet any day in ordinary life, with the passions, cares, and pursuits that are common to us all.”

On occasion the encomia could be more extravagant. Mary Sumner (1828-1921), the founder of the Mothers’ Union, an Anglican organisation for young women “with a commitment to marriage and motherhood,” argued that the moral example of Charlotte Yonge had enormous and enduring implications: “she was honoured and respected by everyone, and from a national point of view she has left us an invaluable inheritance. She has bequeathed to the English nation a wealth of good and wholesome literature, which has touched and influenced many of our greatest thinkers.” Sumner subsequently commended Yonge for additional “services of national importance: on account of the part taken by her in guiding the aspirations and forming the characters of the mothers of this generation.”

The Church Quarterly Review (1904) identified what it considered yet another example of her influence across social classes, insisting that “lower-middle class girls owe an untold debt to Miss Yonge, who has taught them the meaning of refinement. Her service to thousands of pupil-teachers and shop-girls, in providing them with pure ideals, is immeasurable.” This emphasis on the importance of national ideals (and the maintenance of class boundaries) and on purity as an essential element of female identity, was increasingly evident in the third quarter of the century. Charlotte Yonge’s involvement and leadership in the Gosling Society and The Monthly Packet are well known, but she was also instrumental in the founding of a much larger and more ambitious organisation, the Girls’ Friendly Society. The GFS was established in May 1874 by Samuel Wilberforce, the Bishop of Winchester, and Mary Elizabeth Butler Townsend (1841-1918), the daughter of an Irish clergyman who had married a prosperous Englishman and settled in Hampshire. Its avowed purpose was to unite women and girls of all classes into a single association with “one clearly defined object, the maintenance of purity.” According to Townsend, “the standard of Purity was to be set up as one that the girlhood of our nation could and should maintain. It was not to be regarded as lost ground to be recovered,” she cautioned.

Letter to Christabel Coleridge; quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 91. Sumner, the wife of the rector of Alresford, in Hampshire (later the Bishop of Guildford), founded The Church of England Union for Mothers, known as the Mothers’ Union, in 1876. Its early organization was based on that of the Girls’ Friendly Society. Apparently no one considered it unusual or untoward that Charlotte Yonge, a childless spinster, served as the editor of its journal, Mothers in Council, for several years.
“Charlotte Mary Yonge,” The Church Quarterly Review 104 (January 1904), 339.
 Ibid.
The concept of purity and its intersection with the construction of gender is a key concern in two of Yonge’s novels from the 1870s, The Pillars of the House (1873) and The Three Brides (1876). See Chapter Five below.
According to Barbara J. Dunlap, Townsend “was born in Ireland to a clerical family that was part of the Anglo-Irish establishment, but the early death of her parents resulted in her being brought up in England ... Her married life was spent mostly in Hampshire.” See “Mary Elizabeth Townsend and the GFS,” The Review of the Charlotte M. Yonge Fellowship 26 (Spring 2008), 2. See also Brian Harrison, “For Church, Queen, and Family: The Girls’ Friendly Society, 1874-1920,” in Past and Present 61 (1), 107-138, 1973.
“but a territory to be faithfully and loyally held.” Military metaphors signaled an emphasis on discipline and duty: “The Girls’ Friendly Society has always been founded on very serious thought and principles, always a fighting fellowship, not a collection of vague groups whose principles and procedure can be altered at will” (italics in original). At the end of its first year, twenty-five affiliates had appeared in fifteen dioceses, with between two and three thousand members. By 1880 its reputation was such that Archibald Campbell Tait, the Archbishop of Canterbury, consented to act as Patron, and Queen Victoria as Patroness. Less than twenty years later there were more than one thousand affiliates in England and abroad, and at least eleven thousand members. Eventually the GFS earnestly and energetically participated in the progress of the imperial project. In her history of the organisation Mary Heath-Stubbs proclaimed (1926) that the Society’s “strong hand of friendship ... stretched out far and wide through the girls and women of the Empire, and beyond Empire itself.” Members organised and opened missions in Canada, China, India, South Africa, Zanzibar, and Uganda; and were also active in less remote “unexplored and difficult regions,” the warrens and workhouses in the south and east of London. In all locations they worked with resident Anglican clergymen to assist the destitute of every denomination. The work of the GFS was detailed in its membership magazine, Friendly Leaves, appearing alongside essays (on subjects such as “Thrift” and “Temperance”), poems (“Daughter of Empire;” “A Missionary Ballad”), scripture competitions, and recipes (for treats for children, such as toffee or cocoanut cake, or for invalids, such as rhubarb wine or marrow jam). Subscribers also sought practical advice (where to obtain “special corsets or expander braces for a member inclined to stoop”) and precise instruction (simple patterns for “knitted ear caps for horses” and “warm woolen wraps for lepers”). Regular features included appeals that reminded readers of imperial realities: money was sought for the Missionary Fund in India at the Hospital at Cawnpore, the Mansion House War Fund for Widows and Orphans, “Our Own Missionary in Japan,” and the South African Burial Fund. Nevertheless, readers also were reminded that regular and routine responsibilities remained paramount. Domestic diligence “helped to make the character of the British nation. If you polished the brass tap well last night, the whole English

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207 Ibid.
208 Barbara Dunlap has observed “by the time of the First World War [the GFS] could count nearly 200,000 [members] in Britain, Canada, Australia, and the United States.... Today the GFS is active in twenty-five countries.” See “Mary Elizabeth Townsend and the GFS,” Newsletter of Charlotte Yonge Fellowship 26 (Spring 2008), 3. The second half of the nineteenth century was an age of charitable and benevolent associations, encouraged and endorsed by the authorities of both church and state. Other newly founded philanthropic organisations included the Ladies’ Association for the Benefit of Gentlemen of Good Family, Reduced in Fortune Below the State of Comfort; The Society for Returning Young Women to their Friends in the Country; The Friendly Female Society for the Relief of Poor, Infirm, Aged Widows, and Single Women, of Good Character, Who Have Seen Better Days; and The Waifs and Strays Society (1881). See Richard D. Altick, Victorian People and Ideas. NY: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1973, 180-181.
209 Heath-Stubbs, Friendship’s Highway, 5.
210 A subscriber suggested the Army and Navy Stores in Victoria Street, London, “price 2s 10d.”
211 In November 1901 Friendly Leaves published an article entitled “A Nurse’s View of the Natal Battlefields” by Gertrude Palmer; in the December issue a reader named Evelyn Luard wrote with indignation that “if you fight for your country you ought to be decently buried, as our men are.” The dead Boers, she shuddered, were “huddled in anyhow, with big stones piled on them.”
nation is a little better for it. If you only half-polished the tap, the whole English nation is a little worse for it." In tone and temperament Friendly Leaves often recalled The Monthly Packet, which is scarcely surprising in that it also was edited by Christabel Coleridge.

Charlotte Yonge contributed several essays and stories to Friendly Leaves, which published her final piece, the last in a series on native plants, in June 1901. She was an energetic advocate for the GFS in Otterbourne, to the extent of opening an affiliate that met at Elderfield House. She served as the "Head of Literature" in the Winchester Diocese for more than twenty years and as an official delegate to the monthly meetings of the Diocesan Council, of which, in 1900, she was made a life member. References to the Society appeared in at least two of her novels, The Two Sides of the Shield (1885) and The Long Vacation (1895). Yonge also corresponded regularly with her former neighbor Frances Emily Moberly Awdry (1844-1921), who was the wife of William Awdry (1842-1910), the Missionary Bishop of Osaka (1896-1898) and South Tokyo (1898-1909), and published a number of appeals in The Monthly Packet in support of the GFS affiliate in Japan. The February 1901 number of the GFS Associates Journal featured a similar plea:

We have all heard that Bishop Awdry, true friend to the GFS, has gone forth to Japan, first of all English Bishops to resign all prospects at home and to devote himself to a heathen land. His wife is well known to us for her able and loyal work on the Central Council and the Diocesan Councils of Chichester and Winchester, for her work in more than one Branch; and, at one time, as Editor of this Journal. Might not the GFS heart expand to foreign Missions in the direction of Osaka, thus helping that England of the East which bids fair to become such a mighty nation?

It was further suggested that readers endeavour to raise GB 120 each year to support an additional instructor for Japanese women in the Osaka diocese. A year later the editor reported that half that sum had been received and the remainder pledged by a daughter of William Heathcote.

The legacy of these efforts, some contended, was extensive and enduring. Extraordinary claims closely connected Charlotte Yonge with the imperial project elsewhere. In 1901 Christabel

213 This featured the arresting title "Sweet but Prickly Leaves;" it is impossible not to consider additional applications.
214 In The Two Sides of the Shield Lilias Mohun encounters a group of GFS members, exclaiming "How pleasant to see rosy, English faces tidily got up" (111).
215 William Awdry was the former headmaster of the Tractarian school Hurstpierpoint; his brother Vere served as curate and later as rector in the Hursley parish of Ampfield; he was also one of the clergymen who spoke at Yonge's memorial service (see Chapters One and Five). Emily Awdry, the daughter of George Moberly and the sister of C.A.E. Moberly, was one of the original members of the Gosling Society. She later wrote biographical sketches of several prominent Tractarians, including William Heathcote and Charles and Anne Mackenzie. Her own biography of William Coleridge Patteson, entitled A Fellow Soldier (1870), was intended for a juvenile audience and included a preface by Charlotte Yonge.
216 Quoted in Heath-Stubbs, Friendship's Highway, 83.
Coleridge insisted "the young ladies in the Liberian Republic in South Africa learn what the best ideal of life for white maidens is by reading and discussing The Daisy Chain and The Heir of Redclyffe." She added for emphasis, "there is no part of the Empire where her name is not known, and she has as many readers in America as here."\(^{217}\)

One of Yonge’s most famous (fictional) American readers was Jo March, the heroine of Little Women (1868), by Louisa May Alcott. At the start of the third chapter Jo has hidden herself in the garret, intent on “eating apples and crying over The Heir of Redclyffe."\(^{218}\) In the fifteen years since its first appearance the novel was apparently a familiar cultural commonplace across the Atlantic as well. In Alcott’s next novel, An Old-Fashioned Girl (1870), the main character resembles several of Yonge’s heroines (again, especially Ethel May in The Daisy Chain), as well as Yonge herself, when she proudly recalled that she and her brother “used to say Horace together, and it was such fun.”\(^{219}\) Even more evocative were many of the details of “May Flowers,” a story that appeared in the collection entitled A Garland for Girls (1887). A group of privileged young women in Boston, yearning to be useful, organise the “Mayflower Club,” a service society similar in structure and sympathies to some of the amateur associations that appeared in Yonge’s narratives.\(^{220}\) In Alcott’s account, however, it is evident that imitation is impractical if not impossible. One dejected member reported disconsolately, “dirty little children don’t come in my way, nor tipsy women to be reformed, nor nice lame girls to sing and pray with, as it all happens in books.”\(^{221}\) In another story, “Pansies,” a sudden change in tone signaled a shift in authorial attitude from gentle irony to conspicuous condescension. One of the main characters, an impressionable young girl named Eva, confessed to her companions that “I love dear Miss Yonge, with her nice, large families, and their pious ways, and pleasant homes full of brothers and sisters,

\(^{217}\) Christabel Coleridge, “Our Frontispiece,” Friendly Leaves 26, 298 (June 1901), 1.
\(^{218}\) Louisa May Alcott, Little Women. 1868. NY: Penguin, 1969. Several scholars have seen similarities between the characters Jo March and Ethel May. There are also close correspondences between the two authors. Both had complicated and intense intellectual relationships with their fathers, who educated them along rather rigid principles at home. Neither married nor had children. Both women incessantly repeated or revised the patterns of their own lives in novels that resist comfortable or conventional closure.
\(^{220}\) The Gosling Society, an essay society for young women founded by Charlotte Yonge, was active from 1839 to 1877. Its membership consisted mostly of the daughters of Anglo-Catholic clergy and educators, who wrote under whimsical names, including Elizabeth Catherine Yonge (“Cricket”), daughter of John Eyre Yonge, master and chaplain at Eton; Emily Synge (“Shamrock”), daughter of Edward Synge, perpetual curate of Trinity Church, Matlock; Lucy Margaret Lonsdale (“Magpie”), daughter of John Gylby Lonsdale, canon of Lichfield Cathedral, and granddaughter of the Bishop of Lichfield; and her close neighbor Frances Emily Moberly (“Humble Bee”), daughter of George Moberly, headmaster of Winchester and later Bishop of Salisbury. Several of the Goslings, including Alice Poole (“Snowbird”), became exterior associates of the Anglican sisterhood at Wantage. For more information see Julia Courtney’s article, available on the website of the Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship; and her essay “Mother Goose’s Brood: Some Followers of Charlotte Yonge and Their Novels,” in Julia Courtney and Clemence Schultze, editors, Characters and Scenes: Studies in Charlotte Yonge. Abingdon: Beechcroft Books, 2007, 189-212.
and good fathers and mothers. I’m never tired of them, and have read *The Daisy Chain* nine times at least. Another character immediately dismissed such enthusiasm, equating it with ignorance and immaturity: “I used to like them, and still think them good for young girls.... Now that I’m eighteen I prefer stronger novels, and books by great men and women, because these are always talked about by cultivated people, and when I go into society next winter I wish to be able to listen intelligently, and know what to admire.” Alcott then abandoned her authorial reserve and addressed the reader directly:

Eva was one of many children in a happy home, with a busy father, a pious mother, and many domestic cares, as well as joys, already falling to the dutiful girl’s lot. Her instincts were sweet and unspoiled, and she only needed to be shown where to find new and better helpers for the real trials of life, when the childish heroines she loved could no longer serve her in the years to come.

Alcott exaggerated the sentiments and circumstances of a stereotypical Yonge heroine in order to satirise Yonge’s style and sensibility. The evident disdain in her narratives documented—perhaps even accelerated—the precipitous plunge of Yonge’s critical reputation, and eventually she was avoided and abandoned by her adult audience.

In England a similar phenomenon had occurred, and Yonge was parodied mercilessly by, among others, the writer E. Nesbit (1858-1924) in her own immensely popular series of novels for children. *The Wouldbegoods* (1901) is a riotous retelling of several episodes and events in *The Daisy Chain*. Lest an ignorant or inattentive reader miss or misunderstand any references, the eldest sister (appropriately named Daisy) supplies a succinct summary of the story:

it’s by Miss Charlotte M. Yonge . . . and it’s about a family of poor motherless children who tried so hard to be good, and they were confirmed, and had a bazaar, and went to church at the Minster, and wore black watered silk and silver ornaments.

Sensing restlessness in her audience, she hastily concludes with an account of the sad circumstances surrounding one of the central characters: “So her baby died, and then she was sorry she had not been a good mother to it....” Her older brother Oswald, the narrator, interrupts this melancholy recital by impatiently insisting, “I have read *The Daisy Chain*. It’s a first-rate

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223 Ibid., 85.
book for girls and little boys." The children next ponder the possibilities presented in *A Book of Golden Deeds of All Times and All Lands* (1864), Yonge's volume of exemplary individuals and inspirational incidents "gathered and narrated" from history and legend. This, too, is summarily dismissed; the Bastables collectively acknowledge that a similar account of their own activities and accomplishments would inevitably contain "only leaden deeds, or brass, or zinc, or aluminium. We shan't ever fill the book with golden ones!" they concede ruefully, but without visible remorse.

A less amiable assault on Yonge's reputation appeared in an anecdote, possibly apocryphal, that recalled the stricken young woman and the insensible curate earlier imagined by Wilkie Collins. The poet and playwright Oscar Wilde claimed to have visited the cell of a condemned man on the eve of his execution. Wilde inquired if the prisoner had access to books and was informed that he was currently immersed in *The Heir of Redclyffe*. Wilde recounted his riposte: "My heart was turned by the eyes of the doomed man, but if he reads *The Heir of Redclyffe* it's perhaps as well to let the law take its course."

Raillery and ridicule had replaced admiration and affection, a process that Yonge had described in her own study of Hannah More (1745-1833), an Evangelical author who had produced a popular series of educational and devotional treatises. Ironically, Yonge's assessment of More's career anticipated with uncanny accuracy the course of her own celebrity:

Over-praise is often compensated for, as it were, by over-censure; and it frequently falls to the lot of those for whom there has been an undue appreciation during their life, to be unduly depreciated after their death. Perhaps this has been the case, in an unusual degree, with the subject of the present memoir; regarded in her own lifetime almost as holding a sort of lay episcopate in the West, and since her death chiefly known to young people as a sort of shadowy educational name. It is just possible that this may be partly owing to indiscriminate praise of her laudatory biographer, which provoked bitter satire in the reviewing world....

But Yonge did not anticipate the cruelty of her own critics. The range and rancor displayed in their repertoire of complaints is remarkable. Oliver Elton (1920) objected that Yonge "martyred" her adolescent heroines with "a really appalling harshness." In *The Novel and the Oxford Movement* (1932) Joseph Ellis Baker argued that Yonge "never touches profound

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226 Ibid., 189, 190.
227 Ibid. The title of another of Nesbit's tales, *The Railway Children*, may also be an allusion to Yonge's short story "The Railroad Children" that appeared in *The Magazine for the Young* in 1855.
experience or the exalted heights of the spirits,” adding, “she did not have the necessary intellect, passion, or nobility.”²³¹ Sarah Bailey (1934) claimed that author and novels were simultaneously “too strict and too sentimental . . . seriously out of sympathy with modern thought.”²³² Yonge’s characters and concerns were so curious and quaint, she observed, “that it is sometimes hard to imagine that she died as recently as 1901.”²³³

Invective soon lapsed into indifference, but the publication of Georgina Battiscombe’s biography Charlotte Mary Yonge: An Uneventful Life (1943) ignited a revival of serious interest in the subject. Initially Battiscombe appeared as devoted a disciple as Christabel Coleridge, but exasperation eventually overcame both admiration and affection. Charlotte Yonge, she declared, “had neither wit nor genius,” and her narratives displayed neither competence nor sense. In the historical novels, she charged, “her accuracy in small matters was only equaled by her incomprehension of large issues.”²³⁴

Far worse was to come: in a sustained and savage assault that appeared (1944) in the British periodical Scrutiny, the literary scholar Q.D. Leavis, apparently alarmed that Yonge’s novels would somehow insinuate themselves, uninvited and unwanted, into the academy, excoriated her for “religious myths” that were the attempts of a “poorly nourished imagination” with a massive “moral cramp” to compensate for a “peculiarly starved life.”²³⁵ “This simple-minded fanatic,” Leavis insisted, “was incapable of perceiving that moral theory may require revision or reinterpretation in the light of experience or in consequence of a change in the sensibility of a society.”²³⁶ She concluded with the recommendation that the guardians of great literature—the champions and custodians of the canon—repudiate the callow “schoolgirlish symbolism” and “ignorant idealisation” of such “undesirable literature” and consign the novels of Charlotte Yonge to the oblivion reserved for the feeble and the failed.

Leavis’s insults were imaginative but certainly not isolated. Robert Liddell declared (1947) that “Charlotte Yonge had an immature mind; an undistinguished style; and the values of a pious schoolgirl.”²³⁷ F. Alan Walbank (1950) regretted the reticence of Yonge’s “shy and unresponsive” character.”²³⁸ The literary historian Raymond Chapman (1970), in contrast, condemned her lamentable “lack of restraint,” complaining that “the dialogue runs on until the

²³³ Ibid.
²³⁴ Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 166, 131.
²³⁶ Ibid.
²³⁸ Walbank, Queens of the Circulating Library, 22.
reader feels almost physically deafened by such a flow of feminine chatter." The Oxford historian E.M. Jamieson deplored her "intolerable sententiousness." David Brownell (1975) denounced her solitude and her selfishness; remonstrating that Yonge's prejudices isolated her so profoundly that she was incapable of interest or involvement in the contemporary crises and convulsions incurred by the processes of "industrialisation, invention, or social change.

At least this last allegation was partially refuted by Robert Lee Woolf in a study entitled *Gains and Losses: Novels of Faith and Doubt in Victorian England* (1977). Despite his sharp criticism of Yonge's "failure to reach maturity" he was well aware of her High Church allegiances and appreciative of her intellectual and ideological ambitions and professional accomplishments. In his consideration of *Abbeychurch, or Self-Control and Self-Conceit*, Wolff marveled at the scope and sophistication of Yonge's concerns, maintaining that "this linking of religious dissent, political radicalism, scientific scepticism, and religious doubt in a novel published as early as 1844 by a twenty-year-old young woman who had never left the English West Country is an extraordinary phenomenon." But his subsequent assessment of her career, with its superficial assurances and spurious assumptions, is a sharp disappointment: "again and again modern critics look in Charlotte Yonge's fiction for traces of repressed hostilities and frustrated spinsterhood, but they never find anything at all convincing." What this appraisal seems to suggest, however, is the reluctance of scholars to relinquish their own prejudices and preconceptions, and to analyse and accept the evidence that appears in the text.

242 Wolff, *Gains and Losses*, 82.
243 Ibid., 121.
244 Ibid., 140.
2.4. Feminist Assumptions and Expectations

‘Miss Yonge’s stories ... I hate them.’

Wolff’s remark seems a subtle scoff at the efforts of feminist scholars, and for a time the novels of Charlotte Yonge have resisted—if not repudiated—what Susan M. Gilbert (1986) has termed the “revisionary imperative” and Annette Kolodny (1986) the “acute and impassioned attentiveness” of their interests and arguments. There were separate yet similar reasons for such disdain. To some the didactic and dogmatic intentions of the author—those impulses of Victorian identity “most distasteful to the modern reader”—had irrevocably tainted the reception of the text and tarnished the reputation of the writer. Others objected that Yonge’s attitudes and actions did not conform to feminist expectations of acceptable or appropriate female experience or endeavour. Particularly offensive was the observation that opened her treatise entitled *Womankind* (1877), her often cited insistence that “I have no hesitation in declaring my belief in the inferiority of women, nor that she brought it upon herself.” It is difficult to accept the intransigence of such a statement, and indeed several scholars have not; arguing that its implications are repeatedly compromised in the subsequent chapters of the book, and contested or contradicted elsewhere in her writing.

Yonge has also been scourged for her regressive sentiments regarding the higher education of women, and suitable schooling was invariably a pervasive and provocative subject in her novels. In 1868 she received an appeal from the educational activist Emily Davies asking her to support the establishment of a woman’s college at Hitchin, near Cambridge. Two years earlier Davies had spoken “approvingly” of Charlotte Yonge in her controversial treatise *The Higher Education of Women* (1866), and was eager to enlist the influence of prominent women, established authors in particular, in endorsing her proposals. In a letter dated 28 February 1867, Davies confided to her colleague Anna Richardson, “[t]here are few names I shd. like better than that of Miss Yonge, but I despair of getting it. I wrote to Miss [Elizabeth] Sewell about the Memorial and she declined…. Miss Rossetti declined…. I certainly shd. not wish to lose either Miss Yonge or Mrs. Gatty, for want of asking.” Richardson had urged

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247 Houghton, 137.
249 See especially Dennis, *Charlotte Yonge, Novelist of the Oxford Movement*.
250 Emily Davies to Anna Richardson; quoted in Ann B. Murphy and Deirdre Raftery, editors, *Emily Davies: Collected Letters*, 1861-1875. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, 254. In an article entitled ‘Clever Women of the Family’ Barbara Dennis asserts that Davies was virtually Yonge’s parody figure of the ‘clever woman,’ *Journal of the Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship*, 2005. Margaret Gatty (1803-1873) was the editor of *Aunt Judy’s Magazine* and the author of *Parables from Nature* (see Chapter
Davies to persevere, for “her name is so well known and so well loved by vast numbers of young ladies and her claim to solid culture so real.” Davies replied that “we considered what we could do about getting more orthodox names & agreed that Miss Yonge especially, was much to be desired,” but, she despaired, “no one knew how to get at her.” In any event her persistence was unavailing. When Yonge finally responded to Davies’s appeal, she resolutely declared that

I have decided objections to bringing large masses of girls together and think that home education under the inspection and encouragement of sensible fathers, or voluntarily continued by the girls themselves, is far more valuable both intellectually and morally than any external education .... I feel with much regret that female education is deficient, but I think the way to meet the evil is by rousing the parents to lead their daughters to read, think, and converse. I am afraid I cannot assist you.

It is impossible to read this refusal without reflecting sorrowfully on the scores of inconsiderate, incompetent, and often insufferable parents who populate her narratives, including The Heir of Redclyffe, The Daisy Chain, Heartsease, Dynevor Terrace, and The Young Stepmother. In others, such as Hopes and Fears, The Clever Woman of the Family, The Pillars of the House, and The Three Brides, fathers, and occasionally mothers, have been evicted or entirely erased. But Yonge’s predilection to think in ideal terms, not of what was, but of what should be, was evident in another letter on a similar subject a few years later. She wrote to Edward Talbot regarding the establishment of Lady Margaret Hall that “I do not think any scheme succeeds
that has not a decided religious object, and in my mind the real difficulty is that this plan seems to
be Lectures plus Church, not like the original conception of a College, education primarily for the
direct service of religion...."  
She also had important advice to impart to the Warden of Keble College as she considered the implications of the first college for women at Oxford:

if it were in any way possible to make it in some way an institution
dedicated to Heavenly Wisdom, training the daughters of the Church
to the more perfect cultivation of their talents whether as educators or
mothers of families, then I think there would be such salt of the earth
in the College as to make it lasting and beloved and to be a real
blessing in raising the whole ideal and standard of women.  

In the end, however, idealism and ideology could not prevail against powerful cultural pressures. In a letter dated 31 July 1899 Yonge acknowledged her disappointment to the Anglo-Catholic author Elizabeth Harcourt Mitchell in a response that in some respects signals her acquiescence to the changed order: "I think the Talbots would have been glad to have such a college, but times are too strong, and Elizabeth Wordsworth and Anne Moberly at St. Hugh's do make their colleges in many respects training for the Church." It is evident that her resistance to advanced educational opportunities for women had eased or eroded.

Earlier that month the Bishop of Winchester, Yonge’s old acquaintance Edward Talbot, had sponsored a reception in the Cathedral close to honor the achievement of Charlotte Yonge, “blessed handmaid” and “instrument of the Church” and beloved “British institution.” With great ceremony Christabel Coleridge and Mary Elizabeth Anderson Morshead solemnly presented the tribute that had been collected from an international community of admirers: a massive signature album and a cheque for eighteen hundred pounds. Yonge accepted one but declined the other, and directed that the money be spent not on a colonial schooner or a church spire but on a college scholarship. A stipend was established to support a student from St. Swithun’s School, formerly known as Winchester High School for Girls, at Oxford or Cambridge. Old prejudices were not entirely abandoned, however; one of the stipulations was that the recipient could not enroll at the emphatically secular London University, an institution that Yonge regarded with distaste and dismay.

The shift in Yonge’s sympathies was also apparent in a late short story, “Come to Her Kingdom” (1889). The heroine, the accomplished Arthurine Arthuret, “had brought home all prizes, all distinctions at the High School, but—here was the only disappointment of her life—a low fever had prevented her trying for a scholarship at Girton." In Modern Broods, or

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255 Quoted in Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 146.
256 Ibid.
257 Quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 330. Yonge often expressed similar sentiments, saying “I have great hopes of Elizabeth Wordsworth’s college.... I have great confidence in her and her power of influencing.” Quoted in Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 91.
258 Yonge, “Come to Her Kingdom,” reprinted in Battiscombe and Laski, editors, A Chaplet for Charlotte
Developments Unlooked For (1890), the same character appears as a speaker at the closing assembly of a girls’ school. She addressed her audience on

the aim of education in raising the status of women, and extending their spheres not only of influence in the occult manner which had hitherto been their way of working through others, but in an open manner, which compelled attention; and she dwelt on certain brilliant achievements of women, and of others which stood before them, and towards which their education, passing out of the old grooves, was preparing them to take their place among men, and temper their harshness and indifference to suffering with the laws of mercy and humanity, speaking with an authority and equality such as should ensure attention, no longer in home and nursery whispering alone but with open face asserting and claiming justice for the weakest.\(^{259}\)

Another character, Elizabeth Merrifield, spoke next, contributing a Christian corollary “not contradictory,” Yonge insisted, to the certainty that women are “the chosen instrument of the Church” and of the Empire, in the service of the imperialist enterprise:

What might be put into their hands, no one could tell; but it was right to be prepared for it, by extending their intellectual ability and knowledge of the past, as well as of the laws of physical nature—all, in short, that modern education aimed at opening young minds to pursue with growing faculties. This was what made her rejoice in the studies here followed with good success, as the prizes testified so pleasantly; and she trusted that the cultivation, which here went on so prosperously, was leading—if she might use old well-accustomed words—to the advancement of God’s glory, the good of His Church, aye! And to the safety, honour, and welfare of our Sovereign and Her dominions.

Perhaps Yonge was initially encouraged, and then reassured, in this regard by her correspondence with Dorothea Beale (1831-1906), whose academic and activist credentials were exceptional. Beale was a graduate of Queen’s College for Women, London; Principal of Cheltenham Ladies’ College; founder of St. Hilda’s College, Oxford; and an eloquent and apparently inexhaustible advocate for enhanced educational opportunities for women. In response to Yonge’s reservations she declared resolutely: “Schools now, with all their faults (and I know there are plenty in mine), are more what they should be than in our grandmothers’ times, so I thank God, and take courage.”\(^{260}\)

So Charlotte Yonge took her advice, and took courage. In Womankind she had exhorted her readers to do the same: “We enjoy progress, as long as we go along with it, but there often

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\(^{259}\) Yonge, Modern Broods, or Developments Unlooked For. London: Macmillan, 1890.

\(^{260}\) Quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 351.
comes a time when the progress gets beyond us. And then! Are we to be drags, or stumbling-blocks or to throw ourselves out if the cause altogether? .... Each generation must think for itself, and each will best love all that was the achievement of its prime." Her advice was both sensible and courageous: to “strik[e] a just balance between old efforts and new culture, life’s experiences and hope’s intuitions.... A welding together of the old and the new is the thing needful....

Nevertheless an increasingly elegiac tone began to emerge in Yonge's writing. This was particularly pronounced in her preface to *The Long Vacation* (1895), a continuation of “the domestic policies of the Mohuns and the Underwoods,” popular characters from earlier novels. Yonge acknowledged to her readers that “that there are two sides to a question ... there are many stages in human life, and that the success or failure of early enthusiasm leaves a good deal more yet to come.” She concluded, “what was once distant has become near at hand ... more than one ideal has been tried, and its merits and demerits have become apparent.”

Apparently these admissions did little to appease her adversaries. Over the years Charlotte Yonge has been condemned twice: first by those who would expel her from “the canon,” who considered her insipid, derivative, and imitative; and secondly by those who would exclude her from the catalogue of reclaimed feminist icons, who regarded her as reactionary, regressive, repellent, and at times ridiculous. Ironically in both instances her fate is identical: she is perceived as a pallid and plaintive phantom, feebly plying the periphery as she petitions the reader for reconsideration and for rescue from obscurity, if not oblivion.

In response to such arbitrary and egregious processes of exclusion the critic Catherine Belsey (1982) has urged a reconsideration of the canon, questioning in particular the “critical discriminations” of literary scholars such as F.R. Leavis (1895-1978) and I.A. Richards (1893-1979), who have argued for the establishment and exaltation of a “great tradition.” Belsey exposed the elitism and intransigence implicit in a “topography that authoritatively distinguished between what was major and minor, mature and infantile, in the field of fiction,” and which “with some minor adjustments ... has produced a high degree of consensus concerning the criteria of greatness in literature and the characteristics of novels which are recognized as worth reading.”

In the past forty years feminist scholars such as Ann Douglas (1977), Nina Baym (1985), and Jane S. Tompkins (1985) also have successfully contested the concept of an inviolable

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262 Ibid.
264 Nicola Thompson also has suggested that Yonge has been “doubly marginalised.” See “The Angel in the Circulating Library,” in *Reviewing Sex*, 87-107.
canon. In separate investigations of the critical invisibility of immensely popular nineteenth-century American authors such as Elizabeth Wetherell (*The Wide, Wide World*, 1850), Harriet Beecher Stowe (*Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 1852), and Maria Cummins (*The Lamplighter*, 1854), among many others, Baym demonstrated that literary prejudices have always existed against women writers, and Tompkins declared that literary texts should not be regarded as “attempts to achieve a timeless, universal ideal of truth and formal coherence,” but rather as “efforts to express and shape the social context that produced them.”

Tompkins also challenged the perceptions and pronouncements of many modern, and as it happens, mostly male scholars, who denigrated and dismissed the achievement of nineteenth-century authors of sentimental and domestic narratives who, as it happens, were mostly female. As she saw it these critics wrongly “equate[d] popularity with debasement, emotionality with ineffectiveness, religiosity with fakery, domesticity with frivolity, and all of these, implicitly, with womanly inferiority.” She concluded that

the very grounds on which sentimental fiction has been dismissed by its detractors, grounds that have come to seem universal standards of aesthetic judgment, were established in a struggle to supplant the tradition of evangelical piety and moral commitment these novelists represent.

In a more recent study of readership response entitled *Reviewing Sex: Gender and the Reception of Victorian Novels* (1996), Nicola Diane Thompson elaborated on these arguments in her observation that in the nineteenth century

masculinity was identified with high culture (and male readers), rather than with popular culture (and female readers); masculinity was also associated with intellectual qualities, with originality, with power, and with truth; whereas ... femininity was associated with stereotypically female qualities such as weakness or feebleness, and lack of significant power, intellect or ideas.

The efforts of feminist scholars to identify and indict these processes of effacement and erasure must be acknowledged as at least partially responsible for the resurgence of interest in the novels of Charlotte Yonge. Several critics had in general terms remarked on Yonge’s

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270 Ibid.


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preoccupation with the moral education of girls and on her enormous popularity among women readers, but their response to the novels was invariably partial or perfunctory: at times “repetitive, superficial … trivial,” and all too often dismissive." As Claudia Nelson (1997) has observed, “[m]ost of the work that exists … is either slight or dull;” even the occasional reviewers who were inclined to admire or recommend the narratives often retreated into obscurities. Miriam Allan de Forde maintained mysteriously (1936) that Yonge “has only just missed greatness.” Almost thirty years later another admirer, Katherine Briggs (1965), was equally equivocal. In an article with the unpromising title “Charlotte Yonge’s Ethics: Some Unfashionable Virtues,” she declared that “one cannot help being disappointed that her wisdom and understanding are less than one would suppose them to be…. However, when her imagination stirs, she knows more than she knows that she knows.” She proceeded to complain of a persistent sense of constriction and claustrophobia that pervaded several of the narratives, complicating characterisation, choking the plot, compromising closure, and confusing the reader.

Briggs did not elaborate on this assessment, which appeared in *A Chaplet for Charlotte Yonge*, a volume of appreciations written by several members of the Charlotte Mary Yonge Society. Another contributor to this collection, the novelist Lettice Cooper (1897-1994), also addressed the status of Yonge’s literary reputation, astutely remarking, “now and then it happens that a writer almost disappears for a time from the general reader behind an image which seems to have been created out of a misunderstanding or exaggeration of part of his [sic] work.”

It seemed that feminist critics were as susceptible as other scholars to the power and persistence of established precedent. In *The Cause* (1928), her early history of the women’s movement, the suffragist Ray Strachey considered Yonge’s novels “delightful” but called their author “a convinced anti-feminist.” Sarah Bailey agreed; in an article that appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* (1934) she proclaimed that “Miss Yonge . . . was no feminist” and

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273 Sandbach-Dahlstrom, Be Good Sweet Maid, 9.
274 Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 72.
277 The Charlotte Mary Yonge Society, founded on 28 November 1961, is still in existence.
proceeded to compare her unfavorably with Christina Rossetti. In an early and influential study of Victorian heroines (1956) these statements were seconded by Patricia Thomson, who assailed Charlotte Yonge and her novels as “anti-feminist to the backbone.”

The next generation of feminist scholars continued this tradition of condescension as they condemned what they considered a covert campaign of dissimulation and deceit. In their 1976 study of schoolgirl fiction Mary Cadogan and Patricia Craig dismissed the narratives as “inadequate” and declared that “in spite of her humility, Charlotte Yonge’s constant desire to point a moral indicates her belief in her own religious superiority.”

Accusations of assumed humility were succeeded by allegations of arrogance and hypocrisy. In A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Bronte to Lessing (1977), Elaine Showalter chided Yonge for a “strategy of studied submission that concealed a surreptitious pursuit of her own self interest.” Such subterfuge was accompanied by the construction and circulation of a “contrived image to conceal her ambition.” The accuracy of Showalter’s depiction of the “good grey Charlotte Yonge” whose heroines “perpetrated the stereotypes of female ignorance and ineptitude” is as dubious as her description of Yonge as “the daughter of a rich clergyman.” Her inventory of Yonge’s idiosyncrasies and iniquities seems somewhat overdone:

By doing good and taking no pay she was safely confined in a female and subordinate role within the family and remained dependent upon her father. She gave the money from The Daisy Chain to missionaries in Melanesia, never wrote during Lent, prayed for humility with John Keble, and became fixated at an adolescent level in her relations to her parents.

Other scholars found these and similar transgressions intolerable. Anthea Zeman (1977) rebuked Yonge for a rebarbative “cult of filial obedience.” In an important study entitled The Impact of Victorian Children’s Fiction J.S. Bratton (1981) reproached her for a series of representations of female docility and deference that were “in the last degree unreasonable, doctrinaire, and repressive.” Juliet Dusinberre (1987), also writing on schoolgirl literature, concurred. More recently Talia Schaffer (2000) complained of the pervasive presence of an “ideological vise” in

283 Cadogan and Craig, You’re A Brick, Angela!, 18.
285 Showalter, A Literature of Their Own, 57.
which Yonge’s constant intention “is to depict dissidence for the purpose of subduing it.”

Its coercions, compulsions, and constraints created additional difficulties, as Schaffer later explained:

Thus, if we read Yonge’s narratives against the grain as a realist author, we misrepresent her central motives; yet if we read her as a pious pedagogue (as she would prefer), we can find nothing to say.

In The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination (1979) Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar had examined the atmosphere of claustrophobia and confinement they identified in Victorian prose and poetry as it was expressed in recurrent images of enclosure, evasion, and escape. They demonstrated that many of these texts displayed a preoccupation with dispossession, disability, and disease that often reflected -- literally or metaphorically -- the female writer’s personal circumstances and professional situation.

These scholars commended rather than condemned what they saw as compensatory strategies and subterfuges, concluding that “[w]omen writers have frequently responded to sociocultural constraints by creating symbolic narratives that express their common feelings of constriction, exclusion, and dispossession.” Although the novels of Charlotte Yonge were not addressed in the study, the implications of these arguments were subsequently interrogated by several scholars in their examinations of her work. In ‘Be Good Sweet Maid: Charlotte Yonge’s Domestic Fiction: A Study in Dogmatic Purpose and Fictional Form (1984) Catherine Sandbach-Dahlstrom suggested the presence of “muted” messages of female resistance and rebellion beneath the surface of the stories. She also devoted an entire chapter to an investigation of the multitude of invalids and maimed and mutilated individuals who appear in many of the domestic novels, especially The Clever Woman of the Family (1865) and The Pillars of the House (1873). Her study was the first in which individual texts received serious and sustained scrutiny, and in the course of her arguments a series of conventional assessments of character and closure were convincingly countered with evidence acquired in close readings. Especially significant was Sandbach-Dahlstrom’s assertion that Yonge’s heroines “are not primarily conjunct to men, but occupy centres of interest in the novel and exert power and influence on all around them.” Also subversive was her subsequent admonition that “[w]e should try to study these works on their own premises—as discourses of the culture and
ideology of the time at which they were written." Nevertheless, Sandbach-Dahlstrom did not consider any contemporary controversies or other contexts in the course of her own investigation of the novels.

The next year (1985) Shirley Foster proposed an alternative appraisal of Yonge's narratives. In *Victorian Women's Fiction: Marriage, Freedom and the Individual* she examined the persistent uncertainty and pervasive unease that appears to complicate authorial intention in several of the domestic chronicles. June Sturrock also concentrated on these texts in her study *'Heaven and Home:' Charlotte M. Yonge's Domestic Fiction and the Victorian Debate over Women* (1995). She contended that *The Daisy Chain, The Clever Woman of the Family,* and *The Three Brides* display an obvious and "obsessional concern about what it is to be feminine," declaring that Yonge's own definition, despite repeated certainties, is "continually revised and restated." Sturrock also observed that Yonge's narratives often resist the ease and expediency of conventional closure. Several of her more exemplary heroines, such as Ethel May in *The Daisy Chain* and Charlecote in *Hopes and Fears,* remain resolutely and contentedly single, and her endings seldom subside into the standard rituals and rites of courtship and matrimony. However, in a subsequent essay (1999) Sturrock argued that Yonge ultimately "aligns herself with the more restricted gender codes of her youth," adding that her female characters frequently "express a feeling of oppression at the demands of feminine propriety, but their author willingly takes on an extreme of novelistic propriety that made her notorious in her own lifetime." As a consequence, she concluded, she must be considered "conservative and antifeminist." Claudia Nelson (1999) noted the central "paradox of Charlotte Yonge," whom she described as an "antifeminist whose works teem with strong-minded and interesting women." Perhaps in response to these discrepancies and discordancies, Laurie Langbauer (1999) deemed the narratives "almost unpleasantly attractive."

Accusations of antifeminism were a frequent and familiar refrain. Alison Shell has argued (1995) that Yonge's assertions of female inferiority have made her a persistent "embarrassment," if not a perpetual pariah, to feminist critics. In an article on *The Clever Woman of the Family* (1996) Kim

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294 Ibid., 100.
295 Sturrock, *'Heaven and Home,'* 15. She also notes that "Tractarian antifeminism was not diametrically opposed to mid-nineteenth-century feminism, even while it rejected apparent attacks on the existing private sphere such as marriage-law reform or women's suffrage."
297 Sturrock, *'Heaven and Home,'* 26.
301 Alison Shell, "Charlotte Yonge, Then and Now," *CMY: Newsletter of Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship* 1 (Summer 1995), 1.
Wheatley assailed Yonge for creating morbid and misogynist narratives that aimed “to inculcate their young female readership with the antifeminist values of High Church Anglicanism.”

Barbara Dennis (1997) observed parenthetically in her preface to a new edition of *The Heir of Redclyffe* that “Charlotte Yonge was no overt feminist.” In an important study entitled *Eve’s Renegades: Victorian Anti-Feminist Women Novelists* (1996) Valerie Sanders included Yonge in a quartet of contemporary novelists known for their unequivocal insistence on the subordinate status of women: Eliza Lynn Linton (1822-1898), Margaret Oliphant (1828-1897), and the slightly younger Mary Arnold Ward (1851-1920). Sanders argued that “[w]hat unites the[se] women ... is a professed commitment to the ideology of the home, undermined by a muted undercurrent of personal ambition and impatience with the limitations of a woman’s life.”

Although she does not pursue the complexities of personal connections, all three authors had a competitive and at times contentious relationship with Charlotte Yonge. Yonge and Ward in particular had a complicated past: Ward, whose early Anglo-Catholic associations were extensive, had once been an enthusiastic member of the Gosling Society, writing under the name “Windermere.” Differences arose when Yonge declined one of Ward’s submissions to *The Monthly Packet*. Apparently deeming it inappropriate for impressionable readers she declared “I am afraid “Aylton” will not do.... The whole turns exclusively on love, and though that is not a subject that I wish to omit from *The Monthly Packet* I would rather have it as an accessory and not a principle.” Yonge explained, “I do not go on the principle of no love at all, and letting nobody marry, but I do not think it will do to have it the whole subject and interest of the story.”

It was a devastating disappointment to an aspiring author, but much later Ward had an opportunity for revenge. In her published memoirs she never explicitly referred to Charlotte Yonge or *The Monthly Packet*, but she recounted in considerable detail an uncomfortable incident in which an anonymous author is ridiculed, and her article rejected, by E.A. Freeman (1823-1892), Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford and the autocratic editor of *Landmarks of History*, a popular series of textbooks intended for use in the schoolroom. The incompetent author is obviously and unmistakably a chastened and chagrined Charlotte Yonge, who had consented to

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303 Dennis, preface to *The Heir of Redclyffe*, xx.

304 Eliza Lynn Linton, daughter of an Anglican clergyman and the grand-daughter of the Bishop of Carlisle, was best known for her series of antifeminist articles entitled “The Girl of the Period,” which appeared in *The Saturday Review* in 1868. Mary Arnold Ward became the first president of the British Anti-Suffrage League, founded in 1908.


306 She was the daughter of the Anglican clergyman Thomas Arnold, who converted to Catholicism and then renounced it; niece of the poet Matthew Arnold, Keble’s godson; and granddaughter of the famous headmaster of Rugby School, also named Thomas Arnold.

307 Quoted in Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 113.

supply the entry on France.\textsuperscript{309} In a letter dated 20 August 1877 Freeman wrote to another contributo expressing the circumstances of the incident. He expostulated that

She never catches any of the points, never brings out the great landmarks, all oh, oh, oh & such sentences. O how long! All political matters are simply confused; she seems to understand nothing.... I shall be thoroughly ashamed to see my name as Editor of such stuff.--especially as she has made no attempt to do what all the others have done, to work on the lines of my General Sketch.--and I should think all the others will be ashamed, of their yokefellow.\textsuperscript{310}

A choleric Freeman proceeded with a substantial catalogue of complaints, calling the completed assignment “wretchedly done” and claiming that “[e]ach sentence of Aunt Charlotte’s has to be broken into 1,000 pieces.... She gives me more trouble than the rest of you put together.”\textsuperscript{311} Such declarations did more than condemn perceived errors and assert his ownership of a set of children’s schoolbooks. Freeman deployed his personal and professional prestige in a vigorous campaign to preserve and police the study of history as an elite and exclusively masculine enterprise. Ironically, his own publishing empire, including his professional reputation and revenues, relied extensively on a cadre of intellectual and highly educated women, the researchers and writers of his “historical harem,” which included several established female authors.

Freeman’s repeated insistence that “[h]istory is past politics, and politics are present history,” indicates a fundamental incompatibility with the philosophy of Charlotte Yonge, and incited a discord that would eventually erupt in rancor and mutual recrimination. Perhaps the real difficulty was that Yonge was too capable a writer and too astute a historian to comply with the rigid requirements of Freeman’s scheme: the series of emphases and exclusions enforced by his “General Sketch.” In any case it was another episode in a recurrent pattern of resistance to authority, however eminent, or, for that matter, exacting, and eventually she was able to dissolve


\textsuperscript{310} Quoted in Leslie Howsam, “Academic Discipline or Literary Genre? The Establishment of Boundaries in Historical Writing,” Victorian Literature and Culture 32, 2 (2004), 540.

\textsuperscript{311} Ibid. In his youth Freeman had known Hannah More and was consequently of assistance when Yonge wrote an appreciation of her. Yonge was an occasional guest at Somerleaze, his Somerset estate. In a letter dated 10 November 1877 Freeman later wrote savagely (and somewhat sadistically) that “all the time she is so good, a perfect saint for taking reproof.... She is a good creature, and takes a kicking better than any living soul—or body.” Quoted in Simon Nowell-Smith, editor, Letters to Macmillan. NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1967, 127. Quoted in CMY: Review of Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship 8 (Summer 1999), 51.
Valerie Sanders has continued to analyze Yonge’s resistances, both conspicuous and covert. In *Eve’s Renegades* she argued that “for novelists … the interplay of ideas is more unstable, exposed by ambiguous characterisation and dialogue, uncertain endings, and an undertow of dissent from the apparent ideological direction of the work as a whole, opening up deeper fissures of self-contradiction.”\(^\text{313}\) She subsequently described Yonge as at least “spasmodically a feminist,” and identified occasional “ambiguities” and “subversive suggestions” as evidence of a “more complex ideological position.”\(^\text{314}\) As Sanders saw it her novels were not seamless expositions of settled certainties but “troubled site[s] of struggle”... fissured and fractured by disparities, distortions, and disillusionments that “generate unease in the modern reader.”\(^\text{315}\) Nor was the chronic discomfort confined to the reader: she contended that “even the dense appearance of the print on the page, in the Macmillan reprints, somehow embodies the crowded, inward-looking lives it depicts.”\(^\text{316}\)

Sanders is regarded as one of the most authoritative modern scholars to have written extensively on Charlotte Yonge. Another is the literary historian Alethea Hayter, whose acclaimed account (1996) recalled and reanimated the enthusiasm that accompanied the publication of Georgina Battiscombe’s study more than fifty years earlier. Hayter provided a concise and comprehensive introduction to both novels and novelist, with chapters on an array of intellectual and cultural contexts, including the influence of Keble and the Tractarian community at Hursley. She was occasionally dismissive of the commentary of earlier critics, and consistently derisive about the aims and arguments of feminist scholars, who had, she alleged, “aligned themselves against Miss Yonge.” Hayter added that “[a] note of real hatred, of determination to find fault with every aspect of Miss Yonge’s work appears … in their attacks.”\(^\text{317}\) In a subsequent article entitled “Miss Yonge and The Feminists” (1998) that appeared in the *Journal* of the Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship she lamented certain readings as partial and lambasted others as pointless.\(^\text{318}\) Claudia Nelson has noted (1997) that Hayter’s analysis “fits comfortably in the tradition of early Yonge appreciators Christabel Coleridge and Ethel Romanes,” considering it obsolete and essentially “outdated.”\(^\text{319}\) All three scholars share a certain possessiveness of their subject that is impossible to ignore.

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\(^\text{312}\) For more details on the acrimonious dispute between Freeman and Yonge see Walton, “The ‘Historical Harem’ of E.A. Freeman,” 226-255.
\(^\text{313}\) Sanders, *Eve’s Renegades*, 15.
\(^\text{316}\) Sanders, “All-Sufficient to One Another,” 90.
\(^\text{317}\) Hayter, *Charlotte Yonge*, 56-57.
Such an attitude reached its apotheosis in *The Chaplet of Pearls* (1997), a novel by Harriet Waugh, who, like Hayter, was a member of both the Charlotte Mary Yonge Society and the Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship. The novel describes the untimely demise of a disagreeable feminist scholar ("nurtured on the works of Andrea Dworkin, Mary Daly, and Roland Barthes") who intends to publish a revisionist (and somewhat scandalous) account of Yonge’s existence. A phalanx of elderly women, members of a literary society dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Yonge’s reputation, lure her into the basement of the London Library during an August bank holiday weekend. As she eagerly inspects the shelves for an elusive source the steel stacks suddenly slam shut, immuring her in perpetuity amidst the massive leatherbound volumes of *Crockford’s Clerical Directory.*

Nevertheless, other champions have recently emerged, undaunted by previous equivocations and exasperations. In an essay subtitled "Fighting to Read Charlotte Yonge" the literary scholar Talia Schaffer (2000) acknowledged the difficulties and distractions presented by "this most unfashionable of novelists." As she saw it the inconsistencies and incongruities that characterise these narratives are not the result of clumsiness or confusion, but of a challenging context, a "complex set of mythical and racial allusions that complicate the reader’s identifications." Contending that the novels "may be compelling in all the wrong ways," Schaffer concluded candidly that

> it is hard to read Charlotte Yonge critically, but it is impossible to read her uncritically. Her novels are curiously addictive yet distinguished by a problematically pious didacticism ... and a mercilessly dogmatic drive.

The only possible response to such a dilemma, she concluded, is to devise an "alternative model for reading Yonge’s fiction." In a subsequent essay (2005) she elaborated on this advice, counseling "every reader of Yonge to be perverse on principle." Her solution may be somewhat eccentric, but the original suggestion is excellent. Engagement with Charlotte Yonge’s novels demands an innovative and expansive strategy that incorporates and perhaps even integrates the abundance of contrary impulses and intentions that complicate the narrative. This approach would encourage and enable an informed appreciation of the elusive and uneasy, but infinitely rich, space that exists between context and text.

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320 Harriet Waugh, *The Chaplet of Pearls.* London: Bloombury Publishing Plc., 1997. In a review that appeared in *The Spectator* Alethea Hayter observed that the Chaplet of Pearls organisation created by Waugh was obviously based on the Charlotte Mary Yonge Society, noting that “the number of members, the themes of papers read to the Society, even the Christian names of some of the members of the fictional group, are identical with those of the real Society.” “In the Library with a Pen,” 6 January 1997, 38.


322 Ibid., 247.

323 Schaffer, “Taming the Tropics,” *Victorian Studies,* 204, 205.

324 Ibid., 205.
3. Novels of the 1850s: Church, Community, England, Empire

‘The Heir of Redclyffe’ and ‘The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations’

3.1. Introduction

It is one great advantage of an age in which unbelief speaks out, that Faith can speak out too; that, if falsehood assails truth, truth can assail falsehood.


She seemed expressly sent below
To teach our erring minds to see.

Coventry Patmore, ‘The Angel in the House’

On 1 May 1851 the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations officially opened at the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, London. Many modern scholars consider this the most momentous episode in the British national narrative between the battle of Waterloo (1815), the conflict that consolidated British power on the Continent, and the Diamond Jubilee (1897), the ceremony that celebrated Victoria’s reign and the success of the Empire. The entry in Victoria’s private journal for that day noted that “a curious assemblage of political and distinguished men” were present: Albert, the Prince Consort; the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell; the Lord Mayor of London; the Duke of Wellington; the Marquesses of Westminster and of Anglesey; and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The lead architect of the Crystal Palace, Joseph Paxton (1803-1865); the head structural engineer, Charles Fox (1810-1874); the chief consultant, Henry Cole (1808-1882); and other members of the Royal Commission were among the multitude of additional dignitaries also seated on the stage. An orchestra and two professional choirs (“two hundred instruments and six hundred voices”) provided appropriate paeans and pageantry. During the final verse of Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus,” which marked the conclusion of the musical portion of the program, many in the audience observed considerable confusion along the periphery of the platform as a mysterious “mandarin,” resplendent in cerulean silk robes, solemnly approached the Queen (regal in pink and white satin) and made his elaborate obeisance. Stewards hastened to secure him a suitable place among the sea of foreign envoys and emissaries, which proved


3 This popular name first appeared in the pages of Punch, which initially satirised and subsequently supported the aspirations of the organisers and enthusiasts of the Great Exhibition. For more information see Richard Altick, ‘Punch,’ The Lively Youth of a British Institution, 1841-1851. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1997.

4 Several heads of state were conspicuously absent. The memory of the revolutions that had recently
impossible; and eventually he was directed to a special seat in a small space that was created between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Duke of Wellington. Although *The Times* initially rejoiced in the exotic presence of “this live importation from the Celestial Empire,” it was later reported that he was neither an official nor an ambassador, but the captain and owner of a Chinese junk anchored in the Thames as a tourist attraction.\(^5\) It was also revealed that he and his crew, residents of Hong Kong, charged spectators a shilling each to attend evening performances of spirited “Chinese swordplay” held aboard their ship. Was this an ill omen? No one knew. The Empire had arrived in London, audaciously accessing one of the most exalted and seemingly secure spaces in the kingdom: if not exactly an example of reverse colonisation, then at least an ominous instance of infiltration. No one dared tell the Queen.

Six million other visitors, the equivalent of twenty percent of the entire population of Great Britain, also appeared at the Crystal Palace over the course of the next five months, each paying a shilling to inspect more than one hundred thousand exhibits.\(^6\) The enormous edifice was both cathedral and carnival. Its immense interior space was divided into two sections: the Western nave displayed recent and representative British products and commodities, such as model “parlour aquariums,” prototypes for agricultural implements, innovations in armaments, and miniature steam engines and blast furnaces. The Eastern nave contained everything else, including the monumental Medieval Court designed by Augustus Welby Pugin (1812-1852), the celebrated (and controversial) architect of the Houses of Parliament.\(^7\) Among the most popular artifacts on display was the early eighth century Tara Brooch, recently discovered near Laytown in County Meath and exhibited by the Dublin jeweler George Waterhouse. For most visitors, however, the centerpiece of the entire Exhibition was the Indian Court, which featured the fabled Koh-i-Noor diamond, plundered from the ruler of the Punjab during the battle of Lahore (1842) in the Sikh Wars and described by one dazzled journalist as “a forfeit of Oriental faithlessness and the prize of Saxon valour.”\(^8\) Almost as compelling were an enormous stuffed elephant, richly caparisoned with a cherry- and canary-coloured satin howdah, and the magnificent ivory throne of the Rajah

\(^1\) The name of the “mandarin” was He Sing, who energetically advertised himself as “The Acting Imperial Representative of China.” Jeffrey Auerbach, *The Great Exhibition of 1851: A Nation on Display.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999, 178. As he approached the Queen He Sing paused to kowtow to the startled Duke of Wellington, who then awkwardly offered to shake hands.

\(^2\) Some paid more: the entry fee was adjusted at various times throughout the duration of the Exhibit.

\(^3\) The Medieval Court itself, although much admired, caused considerable controversy. As a consequence of his 1834 conversion to Roman Catholicism Pugin lost several commissions but was awarded others, some to design Catholic churches. In a letter published in *The Times* the Evangelical Arthur Kinnaird objected to the presence of a huge cross suspended at one end of the Medieval Court, expostulating that “a Popish chapel was being erected inside the exhibition.” Other writers also contended that the inclusion of the cross was “an insult to the religion of this country.” Ibid., 170-171. For more information on Pugin and his commissions (completed and uncompleted) see Rosemary Hill, *God’s Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic Britain.* London: Allen Lane for Penguin, 2007.

\(^4\) Quoted in Auerbach, *The Great Exhibition,* 34. The Koh-i-noor was worn by Victoria on the opening day of the Exhibition and thereafter displayed in a metal “birdcage” lit by gas jets. At night a special mechanism deposited the diamond into an iron safe beneath the display case.
of Travancore. Each of these gigantic glittering trophies was regarded with satisfaction as a spectacular symbol of the apparent success of British imperial ambition in India, the “jewel in the crown” of Empire.9

The Crystal Palace glittered as well, a shimmering edifice of plate glass and cast iron that was itself a conspicuous symbol of national aspiration and achievement. Its massive presence in the centre of the capital, and at the midpoint of the century, constituted a critical moment in the creation and consolidation of the concept of British identity. Ironically, it was Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, the German Prince Consort, who had originally conceived of an international exposition to proclaim the triumph of modern invention and industry and to promote “peace, love, and ready assistance, not only between individuals, but between the nations of the earth.”10 Detractors, however, had their doubts, deriding the project as no more than a desperate and derivative response to the popularity, and pretensions, of the French Industrial Exhibition in Paris that had ended only two years earlier.11

Nevertheless most contemporary Britons acknowledged that the Crystal Palace and its collections provided incontrovertible evidence of the progress and perfectibility of Western civilisation, of the entrepreneurial energy of the national character, and specifically, of the enduring power of Christianity, its essential spiritual support. According to Albert, “the first impression which the view of this vast collection will produce upon the spectator will be that of deep thankfulness to the Almighty for the blessings which He has bestowed upon us.”12 This was a reaction the British and Foreign Bible Society resolved to reinforce: in the entrance hall the Anglican missionary organisation sponsored a dramatic display that exhibited copies of the Bible in one hundred and thirty languages, including Ashanti, Melanesian, Maori, and something described as “American Negro.”13 Select tracts were distributed to the crowds, and a substantial cash prize offered for a short essay that considered the moral advantage to be derived from the

Auerbach noted that “there was a disjuncture between the symbolic meanings generated by the exhibition and the material conditions of commodity capitalism and geopolitical power, as the negative side of imperialism—the oppression, subjugation, and stripping of natural resources—was hidden behind the cornucopia of riches inside the Crystal Palace.” The Great Exhibition, 101. Later there would be other, less triumphalist connections with India. On 7 October 1857 the Crystal Palace at its new location in Sydenham was the site for the main observances of the Public Day of Fast, Humiliation, and Prayer, the national plea for “the restoration of tranquility in India” following the disturbances known in Britain as the Sepoy “Mutiny” (see Chapter Four below).

Prince Albert, from a speech delivered at the Mansion House on 21 March 1850. Quoted in Mundhenk and Fletcher, editors, Victorian Prose, 280.

Although nearly half of the fourteen thousand exhibitors were British, the French won almost every prize, results that caused resentment and recrimination among the British press and public. Many Britons feared that the distractions of the Exhibition would allow foreigners, particularly Continental revolutionaries and Roman Catholics under the direction of the pope and his Jesuit agents, an unprecedented opportunity to unsettle the city and seize control of the country. Special constables were appointed to patrol particularly sensitive sites, such as the Medieval Court, and to report any instances of doctrinal or devotional (mis)deeds to the authorities.

Prince Albert, quoted in Mundhenk and Fletcher, editors, Victorian Prose, 280.

This last was so bizarre that it prompted the Roman Catholic Cardinal Nicholas Wiseman, an accomplished linguist, to denounce all such translations as arrant “nonsense” and “abominations.” See “Bible-Blasphemy,” Dublin Review, 1851.
amity and accord of all nations. Charles Kingsley, an early visitor, claimed to be overcome by a sense of admiration and awe, calling the vast and vaulted interior, filled with curious and compelling sights, “a sacred space.”*14

Several elements of design and decoration were selected and situated to evoke and emphasise similar sentiments. In the center hall spectators encountered a colossal plaster statue of St. Michael the Archangel spearing Satan, which many, mindful of current political and ecclesiastical controversies, apparently regarded as a representation of the Queen slaying the Pope.15 The French sculpture of the Bacchante, however, was considered less satisfactory and even somewhat scandalous: denounced by one shocked critic as “perverted and degraded by low sensuality.”16 When the exhibit was transferred to Sydenham,17 a south London suburb, the subject and placement of certain other statuary was also controversial. The Greek Court in particular created alarm owing to its array of nude male statues. In an aggrieved letter to The Times the Archbishop of Canterbury and several bishops averred that such sights would destroy “that natural modesty which is one of the outworks of virtue ... which Nature herself has placed in the way of Crime.” They strenuously recommended the camouflage or even the complete “removal of the parts which ... ought to be concealed.” Moreover, they declared, the display was in every instance an affront if not an abomination: inappropriate, alien, and atheistic. The clerics concluded angrily “we protest against the adoption of this pagan usage in Christian and Protestant England.”18

Regardless of the profusion of (ir)religious references and renderings, and despite the involvement (some said interference) of the clergy, the general public regarded the massive cathedral of iron and glass, complete with nave and transepts, as a prodigious pavilion designed for the pursuit of pleasure. Railways ran express excursions from dozens of cities, often at reduced rates. Inhabitants of the manufacturing towns of the industrial Midlands imagined a proprietary connection to the Crystal Palace and invested their time and money accordingly: visitors from Birmingham proudly noted that their city had manufactured the materials for the structure and for

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14 Quoted in Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind, 236.
17 The second incarnation of the Crystal Palace was formally opened by Victoria on 10 June 1854 in another ceremony that featured a choir singing “The Hallelujah Chorus.”
18 Letter to The Times dated 8 May 1854; quoted in Liza Picard, Victorian London, 1840-1870: The Tale of a City. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2006, 229. Apparently the petition was successful; many of the offending surfaces were subsequently covered in “plaster foliage.” According to J.R. Piggott, however, there was so much work to be done that fifty statues were still unamended on opening day. See also Palace of the People, above. Punch earnestly recommended “a pair of check pants” to shield the offending portions of the Apollo Belvedere, as well as “a stout Jersey shirt” for Hercules. Quoted in Teukolsky, 90.
the elaborate fountain placed at the center of the exhibition. Many people, including Charlotte Bronte, William Gladstone, and the Duke of Wellington, whose residence, Apsley House, was around the corner, returned repeatedly. Victoria visited at least forty times, purchasing a tiara of beaten gold on one occasion and an enamel brooch from Paris on another.

Others steadfastly resisted the allure of the ornaments and enticements on offer. Ruskin regarded the Crystal Palace with "an astringent and trenchant loathing" as a "colossal receptacle for casts and copies of the art of other nations." He compared it to "a giant conservatory" and a gigantic "cucumber frame" and adamantly refused several invitations to attend. Thomas Carlyle and Karl Marx, who agreed on little else, also despised the rampant consumerism of the Exhibition. Those sympathetic to the Tory party, with its strongly protectionist principles and profound suspicion of all international enterprise as potentially perilous entanglements, strenuously opposed its existence as "a new Tower of Babel." Similar charges were made by Anglo-Catholics (among others), who denounced the Crystal Palace as a meretricious monstrosity, a shameless monument to modernity and materialism. Despite its occasional ecclesiastical trappings, most evident in the Gothic extravagance of the Medieval Court, the entire project was seen by some as a triumphant testament to the secularism, scepticism, and "scientism" of the age.

Such anxieties, once aroused, were difficult to dispel. They were exacerbated rather than allayed by the revelations of the 1851 census. The results confirmed what several of the British displays had suggested and celebrated: that the population of the nation had increased enormously in the interval since the previous enumeration, especially in the capital and the sprawling industrial cities of the Midlands: Manchester, Sheffield, Nottingham, and Birmingham.


20 She also purchased a Sevres service from the French and a carved Gothic sideboard from the Austrians. When the Crystal Palace closed on 15 October (following a final rendition of "The Hallelujah Chorus") workers dismantled and packed up the entire edifice, which consisted of four hundred tons of glass and more than four thousand tons of iron, and transported it to Sydenham, where in August 1852 the building of a permanent structure was begun. This time the emphasis was on history and archeology rather than industry and technology. There were ten gigantic "historical courts," including the Assyrian Palace, guarded by gigantic winged and bearded figures; and the Egyptian Court, glowing with the brilliant colours of Pharaonic temples and presided over by two colossal plaster figures copied from the originals at Abu Simbel. See J.R. Piggott, *Palace of the People*.


23 John Ruskin; postscript to *Modern Painters* (1851); quoted in Isobel Armstrong, "Languages of Glass: The Dreaming Collection," in Buzard, Childers, and Gillooly, *Victorian Prism*, 79. *Punch* rejoiced in the comparison, recommending that all of London should be similarly encased: "We shall be disappointed if the next generation of London children are not brought up, like cucumbers, under glass!" Quoted in Teukolsky, *This Sublime Museum*, 88.

24 Spoken by the Tory MP for Lincoln, Colonel Charles Sibthorp. Jeffrey Auerbach observed that the reactionary Sibthorp had also been against parliamentary reform, railroads, and the repeal of the Corn Laws. He had voted to deny a government allowance to Prince Albert, vehemently objecting to the subsidy on the grounds that he was a foreigner. *Punch* delighted in publishing his opinions. *The Great Exhibition of 1851*, 43.

25 Many cities proclaimed their civic pride: Sheffield, for instance, sponsored a display of steel cutlery;
No longer was England predominantly agricultural: more than half the inhabitants of the nation now lived and laboured in urban areas. Who was to monitor and manage them all, particularly the hundreds of thousands of the destitute who had fled from the famine in Ireland? Fear of the "Other" had a powerful denominational dimension at mid-century. Irish immigration accounted for most of the increase in the Roman Catholic population of Britain, which rose from 30,000 in the beginning of the nineteenth century to 750,000 in 1850. The Irish-born population of England grew from 290,891 in 1841 to 519,959 in 1851, and comprised three-quarters of the Roman Catholics in the country. Their status was complex and contradictory; although they were legally citizens they were not fully enfranchised or accepted, and remained apart, a persistently alien community. Regarded as culturally, denominationally, and racially different, if not inferior, the Irish often were perceived as a threat from both within and without, in confederation with England's ancient Catholic and Continental adversaries: France, Spain, and the Papacy. An article that appeared in the *Times* on 19 October 1850 articulated these anxieties, protesting the practices of a "Church which has maintained so dark a superstition and bred so constant a disaffection amongst a large part of the Irish people." Thomas Carlyle regarded the increased Irish presence in England as a deadly form of contagion, contending that "[t]he Irish national character is degraded, disordered ... immethodic, headlong, violent, murderous. Such a people circulates not order but disorder." Sanitary concerns increasingly dominated the discourse; typhus, a deadly infection of the blood carried by body lice, became known as "the Irish disease." During the first half of the nineteenth century it appeared in recurring epidemics that devastated the populations of London, the port cities, and the communities of the industrial Midlands, where the Irish were known to have settled.

Apprehension surrounded the possible motivations and machinations of these recent Irish immigrants. Anglicans were increasingly alarmed over what they perceived as a much more purposeful and potentially pernicious assault on Britain, instigated by the Roman Catholic Church and intended to challenge the primacy of the Protestant establishment. In July 1848 a new Roman Catholic cathedral, St. George's (also designed by Pugin), was constructed in Southwark, London, the first in England since the time of the Reformation. Two years later, on 29 September 1850, the feast of St. Michael and All Angels, Pope Pius IX (1792-1878), familiarly known as Pio Nono, announced the restoration of the Roman Catholic administrative and diocesan hierarchy in England and ordained Nicholas Wiseman (1802-1865) the first English cardinal since the

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26 Michael Diamond, *Victorian Sensation*, 84. David Newsome observed that "since the annual report innumerable revised estimates and analyses of these figures have been made, with no very significant adjustments." *The Victorian World Picture*, 196.


28 *The Times*, 19 October 1850.

sixteenth century. Wiseman was also named Archbishop of Westminster, one of a dozen new sees in England and Wales. He proudly proclaimed the extent of his power in an “aggressively triumphant” letter published in *The Times* on 19 October 1850, contending that until “the Holy See shall think fit otherwise to provide, we govern, and shall continue to govern, the counties of Middlesex, Hereford, and Essex, as Ordinary thereof, and those of Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Berkshire, and Hampshire, with the islands annexed, as Administrator with Ordinary jurisdiction.” The *Times* proclaimed the “Papal Aggression Crisis,” observing that “we can never forget the part which Papal power has at different times played, or endeavoured to play, in presumptuous hostility to the independence and liberties of this realm.” Moreover, it reminded its readers, as a cardinal of the Church of Rome Wiseman had agreed “to enter the service of a foreign Power, and to accept its spurious dignities.” The *Daily News* abandoned even the pretense of equanimity, excoriating the encyclical as “insulting to the nation, to its history, its noble struggles, and its noble tolerance ... flung in the country’s face.”

Established ecclesiastical authorities were equally enraged. The Evangelical Bishop of London, Charles James Blomfield (1786-1857), denounced what he predicted would be disastrous political consequences, both nationally and internationally. He expostulated angrily that “[t]he assertion now first made of the Pope’s right to erect Episcopal Sees in this country appears to me to be, not only an intentional insult to the Episcopate and clergy of England, but a daring though powerless invasion of the supremacy of the crown.” Several other Anglican bishops petitioned the Queen to “discountenance by all constitutional means the claims and usurpations of the Church of Rome.” Although Victoria declined to act, her Prime Minister Lord John Russell (1792-1878) declared to Edward Maltby, Bishop of Durham, that

> there is an assumption of power in all the documents which have come from Rome—a pretension to supremacy over the realm of England, and a claim to sole and undivided sway, which is inconsistent with the Queen’s

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30 After the Reformation Catholic priests in England had served under the authority of four Vicars-Apostolic, who derived their titles from the points of the compass and answered to the Pope in Rome. Wiseman was born in Seville, the child of a Roman Catholic Irish family who had settled in Spain. Educated at Upshaw College, near Durham, he was sent to Rome and became an authority on Roman antiquities. He was regarded as a formidable scholar and a fierce propagandist. In 1836 he founded the *Dublin Review* to respond to the allegations and abuse of the predominantly Protestant press in Britain. Described as politically, culturally, and spiritually ultramontane, Wiseman was conspicuously fond of elaborate ceremony. *Punch* ridiculed him relentlessly in a series of cartoons (see Appendix), but regarded him warily as a worthy adversary.


32 *The Times*, 19 October 1850.

33 Ibid.

34 *The Daily News*, 21 November 1850.

35 The fact that the Roman Catholic archbishopric was established in Westminster was seen as a symbolic assault on the core and character of the country, and resented and reviled as such by Protestant authorities.

36 Quoted in Wheeler, 5.

37 Ibid., 547.
Russell condemned the actions and ambitions of the Vatican as "insolent and insidious," and vowed that "no foreign prince or potentate will be at liberty to fasten his fetters upon a nation which has so long and so nobly vindicated its rights to freedom of opinion, civil, political, and religious."  

Intemperate rhetoric also accompanied his campaign to identify another adversary, and to implicate a particular faction within the Church of England itself. Russell asserted that clergymen of our own Church ... have been most forward in leading their flocks, 'step by step, to the very verge of the precipice.' The honour paid to saints, the claim of infallibility for the Church, the superstitious use of the sign of the cross, the muttering of the Liturgy, so as to disguise the language in which it was written, the recommendation of auricular confession, and the administration of penance and absolution—all these things are pointed out by clergymen of the Church of England as worthy of adoption, and are now openly reprehended by the Bishop of London in his charge to the clergy of his diocese. What, then, is the danger to be apprehended from a foreign prince of no great power, compared to the danger within the gates from the unworthy sons of the Church of England herself?  

In an article entitled "Decline and Fall of the Papacy" that appeared in *The Sunday Times* Charles Fulke Greville (1794-1865) expressed similar sentiments, assailing the Tractarians as crypto-Catholics with a clandestine allegiance to the Pope. "Puseyites," he argued, remained Protestant only to protect their interests and pursue their indolent and self-indulgent practices:

In saying this I am by no means endeavouring to reconcile you with the audacious aggressions of the Pope, or with that party still more odious and obnoxious, who, entrenched in the very citadel of Protestantism, are basely seeking to betray it into the hands of

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38 Ibid. Other prime ministers would issue similar statements. In April 1868 Disraeli told the House of Commons that the "High Church Ritualists and the Irish followers of the Pope have long been in secret combination, and are now in open confederacy." Reported in *Hansard*, CXCI 924 (3 April 1868). Disraeli had a long history of abusing the Tractarians in his novels as well. In *Sybil* (1845), an aristocrat jeers at "a fine gentleman saint, preaching in cottages, filling the people with discontent, lecturing me about low wages, soliciting plots of ground for new churches, and inveigling Arabella into subscriptions for painted windows" (149). This reads almost like a summary of a Charlotte Yonge novel. Gladstone, who had pronounced High Church sympathies, proclaimed that "no one can become [a Roman Catholic] convert without renouncing his moral and mental freedom, and placing his civil loyalty and duty at the mercy of another, one that has equally repudiated Modern thought and ancient history." Reprinted in *Gleanings of Past Years*, Volume Six, 127-128. Quoted in Jenkins, *Gladstone*, 386.


Rome. The Puseyites are only so many traitors in the camp; those among them who have more honesty than the rest have lifted the mask and gone over to the Vatican, but a majority, more acute and politic, are labouring to reconcile the temporalities of Protestantism with the doctrines of Rome. To them fasting in a hair-cloth shirt has no attractions; they prefer a lazy luxurious life, led at the expense of silly congregations, who, in return for being indulged in spiritual drunkenness readily contribute the good things of mammon to these who administer to their intoxication.⁴¹

Arguably the most incendiary indictment of High Church principles had come in the earliest days of the Oxford Movement, from Thomas Arnold, headmaster of Rugby College. In an article entitled “The Oxford Malignants and Dr. Hampden” (1836) Arnold compared Tractarian clergymen to “the slanderers and persecutors of St. Paul,” and condemned them for “the fanaticism of foolery.”⁴² Later he was reported to have written to a former student that he regarded a Roman Catholic as an enemy in his own uniform, but an Anglo-Catholic as an enemy in disguise, a renegade, a traitor, a spy. As a matter of principle, he pledged he would honor one and immediately hang the other.⁴³

Such accusations exacerbated the suspicion that partisans of the High Church Movement had entered into a covert compact with the Pope to deny the spiritual authority of Anglicanism and deliver England to a foreign power. Countless essays, articles, speeches, and sermons denounced Catholic presumption and debated the possibility of Anglican perfidy. One newspaper, The Bulwark, or Reformation Journal (1851-52), which featured headlines such as “The Blight of Popery,” was established to investigate rumors and reports of “irregular” Roman rites and rituals during Anglican services. The satiric magazine Punch ceased its constant assaults on the Prince Consort and his Crystal Palace and the Cardinal and his Cathedral. Instead the magazine published a series of cartoons with provocative captions such as “The Puseyite Moth and the Roman Candle” and “Daring Attempt to Break into a Church”⁴⁴ (see Appendix).

The popular Presbyterian preacher John Cumming (1807-1881) avidly participated in this increasingly incendiary campaign, condemning the clandestine alliance (as he saw it) between High Church Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism. In a series of sermons at his Covent Garden chapel, he repeatedly rebuked Pius IX for what he regarded as the “boldness and audacity to insult

⁴¹ Charles Cavendish Fulke-Greville, “Decline and Fall of the Papacy,” The Sunday Times, 1850.
⁴² Arnold, formerly a member of Corpus Christi College, was, like the founders of the Oxford Movement, a Fellow of Oriel College. His attacks caused profound distress and enduring enmity. When he died unexpectedly in June 1842 Keble, Newman, and Pusey refused to contribute to an Oxford memorial for him, although they relented enough to subscribe to a fund for the education of his sons, the eldest of whom, Matthew Arnold, was Keble’s godchild.
⁴³ The Times, 19 October 1850.
⁴⁴ Punch, founded ten years earlier by the social reformer Henry Mayhew, seemed to reserve a special scorn for the Oxford Movement, and repeatedly savaged Newman and Pusey in particular. In 1851 nine of the magazine’s first thirteen cartoons targeted the Tractarians.
our Queen, our Church, our religion, and our laws;” and reminded his audience that “they were
called upon not to yield for one moment in submission to such an assumed authority as that.”
He rejoiced, he said, to learn that his erstwhile adversary the Bishop of London had
not only renounced Popery, but that also which was still
worse—that great pest which was stalking through our
country, and was now called “Puseyism.” [Tremendous
applause.] If we were to have Popery at all, let us have Italian
Popery under an Italian flag, and not under the flag of old
England. [Cheers and loud applause].... We are all driven
close like the phalanxes at Waterloo.... Like the gallant
phalanx, made up of the Highland regiment, and the English
and Irish together, we are ready to receive the Papal
Aggression; and by God’s grace we will repel it, or root
out the principles of it from our land.45

On the field of Waterloo, less than forty years before, the British army had prevailed in a struggle
for survival against a host of Continental adversaries, headed by “Roman Catholic and
increasingly atheist France.” At midcentury established authorities perceived a similar crisis and
anticipated the possibility of another confrontation, and assaults on a potential adversary, the
Oxford Movement, accelerated accordingly. Newman’s former friend and colleague, Richard
Whatley (1787-1863), later the Anglican Archbishop of Dublin, denounced “this rapidly
increasing pestilence,” declaring the leaders “veiled prophets” and “children of the mist,” their
theology “Thuggee,” their practices “infidel designs.”46 The Prince Consort recommended that
the Prime Minister refuse preferment to all High Church clergymen as “holders of troublesome
ideas.”47 Victoria expressed similar reservations, professing herself “shocked and grieved” to see
“the higher classes and so many of the young clergy tainted with this learning towards Rome.”48
George Howard, Lord Morpeth, later Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, rose in the House of Commons
to revile the “sect of damnable and detestable heretics lately sprung up at Oxford” and did not
hesitate to mention Newman, once their most celebrated champion, by name.49

Oxford continued to be convulsed. A junior proctor lamented that “it was the day of the
violent on both sides—the courtesies of life were forgotten; men were afraid of being weak in
their censures, their dislike and their opposition; old friendships were broken up; and men
believed the worst of those whom a few years back they had loved to honor.”50 Mark Pattison,

45 “Dr. Cumming on the Romish Aggression,” in Roman Catholic Question (1851), 55. Quoted in Wheeler,
The Old Enemies, 24; and The Pope, the Man of Sin. A Lecture Delivered on Tuesday, May 27, 1851, in
46 Catholic Encyclopedia, “The Oxford Movement,” www.catholic.org/encyclopedia...
47 Chapman, Faith and Revolt, 283.
48 Quoted in James Bentley, Ritualism and Politics in Victorian Britain: The Attempt to Legislate for
49 Ibid.
50 Quoted in Chapman, Faith and Revolt, 54. In 1843 the Tractarian cause was mercilessly mocked
in a pseudonymous pamphlet entitled “A Peep under the Hood, by Bo-Peep, of Oxford.” In his novel Loss
the rector of Lincoln College, observed that “at the time if you were able to describe a man as a Puseyite, he became, ipso facto, unfit for any public appointment.” Pattison had considerable personal experience of the rancorous resentments surrounding Tractarianism. In his memoirs he recalled the wrath of his father, an Evangelical clergyman, who violently objected to the High Church sympathies of his two daughters. “Will you join the Papists in the dining room,” he once snarled at a visitor, “or be content to partake the fare of the poor solitary Protestant here?” One of the daughters, Eleanor Pattison, remembered that

He heard us shut the front door and flew out into so awful a rage after us in the lane, he cursed me, spit in my face, several times, and used most horrid language…. Our books … are threatened with destruction. Our united voices as we read the Psalms … produced an uproar.

Shortly thereafter the senior Pattison was certified as mentally unsound and confined in an asylum for the incurably insane. Certainly some High Churchmen could be almost as emphatic in expressing their opinions. The ardent Anglo-Catholic clergyman Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), antiquarian and author of several novels and histories as well as the popular hymn “Onward Christian Soldiers” (1861), forbade his own daughters to read any historical texts (including his own) or to mention the Reformation in his presence.

In a curious way, however, the High Church movement relished and even reveled in its precariously peripheral position and cult status. It had always perceived and promoted itself as a conspicuous outsider: staunchly resistant to conformity, complacency, and the “erastian” emphasis of the state. As John Shelton Reed (1996) has argued, “[i]t’s practices were a series of affronts to Victorian culture—and deliberately so.” Contrary to the accusations of its enemies, Tractarianism detested Roman Catholicism as much as it despised dissent, but it also recognised an impressive array of adversaries within the Anglican communion, defying what it considered

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and Gain (1848) Newman wrote of similar persecution. A notice was inserted into the University newspaper with the headline “Defections from the Church.” The author wrote “[w]e understand that another victim has lately been added to the list of those whom the venom of Tractarian principles has precipitated into the bosom of the Sorceress of Rome … [As a result of this] infatuated act … he is now the subject and slave of an Italian bishop.” Loss and Gain, 246.
51 Pattison, Memoirs, 120.
52 Ibid., 5.
53 Ibid., 6. Her sister Dora eventually joined the Anglican sisterhood of the Holy Rood. Published accounts of the pathetic and “genuinely unpleasant” life of “Sister Dora” were for a time awarded as prizes in some Evangelical Sunday schools.
54 Reed, 14. The prolific Baring-Gould was also the author of The Lives of the Saints (in sixteen volumes) and The Book of Werewolves (1865). In addition to his clerical duties as rector of East Mersea, Colchester he was an instructor and choirmaster at the Tractarian school Hurstpierpoint.
55 “Erastianism,” the subordination of ecclesiastical to secular authority, was abhorred as an extreme “irreverence” by the Tractarians.
56 Reed, Introduction to Glorious Battle, xx.
the enthusiasm of Evangelicals as well as the liberalism of Latitudinarians. The resulting rivalry within the Established Church, said Robert Cecil, the Marquess of Salisbury, "threatened to create an unhappy civil war" that would, if unresolved, eventually shatter the state.

Evidence of an additional peril had emerged in distressing data announced in a "special" enumeration on religious affiliation in the 1851 Census. Adherents of all denominations were aghast to learn that apathy was more of a threat than apostasy. The number of those who attended either a Roman Catholic or a dissenting establishment on 30 March 1851 suggested disappointment, but the number of those who avoided any church or chapel at all signaled certain disaster. Only a quarter of those questioned had indicated an affiliation with the Established Church of England. Half of the British population, it could be claimed, was apparently heathen.

Despite these deeply dismaying results, even the most despondent churchman was compelled to admit that their publication was in itself an impressive achievement. That the cadre of social scientists and statisticians had procured and processed such immense amounts of information so rapidly and accurately and published it in a single set of volumes had an unanticipated and altogether extraordinary effect. Inclusion in the count encouraged the inhabitants of the United Kingdom to consider themselves active participants in an important national project: the creation and consolidation of a sense of citizenry, and therefore a shared stake in the survival and success of the state. In midcentury Britain both the Great Census and the Great Exhibition inexorably brought together classes and constituencies that had seldom encountered, and almost never engaged, one another.

It is outside the scope of this dissertation to examine the distinctions among these three factions, or parties, of the Anglican Church. Briefly, the adherents of the Oxford Movement at various times were also known as Tractarians, High Churchmen, Puseyites, Anglo-Catholics, and Ritualists. These terms were by no means interchangeable, although their adversaries were not always scrupulous in acknowledging the finer distinctions. They were regarded as rigorously intellectual and austere churchmen who placed great emphasis on the sacramental and (later) the ceremonial elements of Anglicanism. High Churchmen were represented in imaginative literature in the character of St. John Rivers, the missionary priest in Jane Eyre (1847). Evangelicals, the dominant Church party from the 1790s to the 1830s, originally came out of Cambridge and were known for their early and enthusiastic support of the missionary enterprise. They emphasised a personal connection between God and the individual, with no clergyman or saint as intercessor or intermediary, and saw the path to salvation through the scriptures rather than the Book of Common Prayer. Prominent Evangelicals were the statesman and abolitionist William Wilberforce and Lord Shaftsbury; in literature they were represented by the Reverend Robert Brocklehurst, the cruel clergyman who oversees Lowood School in Jane Eyre, and by the oleaginous Reverend Obadiah Slope in Barchester Towers (1857). The third group, the Broad Churchmen, or Latitudinarians, were scholars and social reformers who emerged from Oxford after the conversion of Newman and the diaspora of the High Church party to Hursley and other provincial parishes. Their views were expressed in a controversial collection entitled Essays and Reviews (1860). Newman condemned their beliefs as "close to atheism." Their leaders were Mark Pattison and F.D. Maurice.

Gertrude Himmelfarb has noted, however, that on the day of the census more than two million children attended Sunday schools—over half of all the children aged five to fifteen and three-quarters of the working class children of that age group. She argued that "the Sunday schools were perhaps a more significant institution than even the churches in the social, moral, and religious life of the Victorians—and more particularly, in developing the ethos of respectability that became so prominent a part of working class life." The De-Moralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values. NY: Knopf, 1995, 24.

John Tallis, author of one of the many popular guides to the Great Exhibition, claimed "all social
Anglican Church, displaying the division and dissension they were deployed to deny or disguise. Institutions and authorities anguished over the realities that were revealed, and it suddenly seemed obvious that the most immediate opportunities for missionary enterprise were not in the remote corners of the Empire, despite the assurances of stability and superiority presented (and relentlessly peddled) at the Crystal Palace, but at the core of the country, inside ignorant and infidel England itself.

For some these evil tendencies had long been evident. In a sermon entitled “The Sacramental System” (1850) Robert Wilberforce, the Anglo-Catholic Archdeacon of East Riding, Yorkshire, described the calamitous decline of devotional practices throughout the country: “[s]ilent churches, deserted altars, infrequent Eucharists, are but too plain a witness to the national unbelief,” he despaired. Such ignorance and irreverence had been anathema to the original members of the Oxford Movement, but after Newman’s conversion to Roman Catholicism he held Anglicanism itself accountable. In the pages of his spiritual autobiography (1864) Newman denounced what he perceived as the decadence and decay of the debased and deserted Church of England. It was, he declared,

a ritual dashed upon the ground, and broken piecemeal; vestments shucked off; lights quenched; jewels stolen; the pomp and circumstances of worship annihilated; a dreariness which could be felt, and which seemed the token of an incipient Socianism, forcing itself upon the eye, the ear, the nostrils of the worshipper; a smell of dust and damp, not of incense; a sound of ministers preaching Catholic prayers, and parish clerks droning out Catholic canticles; the royal arms for the crucifix; huge ugly boxes of wood, sacred to the preachers, frowning on the congregation in the place of the mysterious altar; and long cathedral aisles unused, railed off; like the tombs (as they were) of what had been and what was not.

The Established Church, Newman proclaimed, was an elaborate and clumsy charade perpetrated on the credulous British citizenry by the chicanery of a corrupt clergy; its rubrics and rituals reduced to the paltry mummeries of “a paper religion.”

distinctions were for the moment merged in the general feeling of pride and admiration at the wondrous result of science and labour exhibited in the Palace of Glass. Never before in England had there been so free and general a mixture of classes as under that roof.” Tallis’s History and Description of the Crystal Palace, and the Exhibition of the World’s Industry in 1851, three volumes. London: John Tallis & Co., 1852. Volume One, 102.


“Anglicanism,” in Characteristics from the Writings of John Henry Newman. 1874. Kessinger Press, 2007, 288. Newman was eager to refute the unfounded rumor that he was about to repudiate his recent allegiance to Roman Catholicism.

John Henry Newman, Apologia Pro Vita Sua; quoted in Mundhenk and Fletcher, editors, Victorian Prose. 82. At the time of his conversion Newman concluded that the Anglican position resembled the tenets of early Church heresies. His denunciation of Evangelicalism was equally devastating: “It had,” he asserted,
Such sensational accusations reverberated throughout the Church and the country and required an immediate and robust response. Newman’s former colleague Keble, who regarded the doctrine and denunciations of Rome with equal contempt, sought to “convince people of certain truths and to accustom their minds and imaginations to conceive of these truths as practical and to dwell with delight upon the time when they were really practiced.” As rector of Hursley he rapidly instituted a series of conspicuous innovations, which included the sacramental (the daily administration of the Eucharist), the ceremonial (the introduction of chasubles, chanting, incense, and candles), and the symbolic (the abolition of private pews and pew-rents), that encouraged (or enforced) the engagement and emphasised the equality of the entire congregation. Fellowship was further promoted in his parish with the establishment and celebration of the “Holyday” fetes and festivals that were featured in *The Christian Year*. Sermons and other public appeals were shortened and simplified, their arguments expressed in terms that were less academic and more accessible. The ecclesiastical historian R.W. Church commented on the profound significance of such changes, contending that “the *Tracts [for the Times]* were not the most powerful instruments in drawing sympathy to the Movement.... While men were reading and talking about the *Tracts*, they were hearing the sermons, and in the sermons they heard the living meaning, and reason, and bearing of the *Tracts*, their ethical affinities, their moral standard.”

An early advertisement for a collection of Keble’s sermons insisted that it was the intention of the author to “show that the subjects treated of in the *Tracts* were not set forth as mere parts of ideal systems... but are rather urged as truths of immediate importance, bearing more or less directly on our every day behaviour.”

High Church devotional practices were therefore to be constant, consistent, and comprehensive, not confined to occasional ostentatious public observances (a pointed rebuke to Newman’s practices and pronouncements) but instead an integral element of personal character and conduct. Disdainful comparisons with the practices of other denominations were deliberate and direct: in the preface to his novel *The Nemesis of Faith* (1849) J.A. Froude argued that “[o]ld faith preserved only in false show of reverence either from cowardice, or miserable

“no intellectual basis; no internal idea; no principle of unity, no theology... it does but occupy the space between contending powers, Catholic Truth and Rationalism.” The philosophy of the Broad Church was also dismissed: “Liberalism,” Newman declared, was “too cold a principle to prevail with the multitude.”

Ibid., 84, 85.

63 Quoted in Battiscombe, *John Keble*, 160. Keble was reputed to especially despise “Rome, dissent, and Methodism.” His list of dislikes was long: dissenting denominations also included Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, and Congregationalists. Other Anglo-Catholics concurred; James Anthony Froude recalled that “[d]issent in any of its forms was a crime in our house.”

64 The Tractarian F.E. Paget (1806-1882) devoted an entire novel to the pew and pew-rent controversy entitled *Milford Malvoisin: or, Pews and Pewholders* (1842).

65 Edward Monro (1815-1866), Tractarian author of the influential manual *Parochial Work* (1850), was instrumental in implementing this change, although his enthusiasm for extemporaneous sermons was not shared by the majority of High Church preachers. See Skinner, *Tractarians and the 'Condition of England,'* 165.


social convenience.”68 Although authority remained with the clergy, all Anglo-Catholics were continually exhorted to protect and promote the truth of the reforms first promulgated by the founders of the Oxford Movement, and practiced in the parishes of their priests.

In the course of her sixty-year career Keble’s catechumen Charlotte Yonge was among the most stalwart (and successful) of those who participated in the project to popularise the practical applications of Anglo-Catholic doctrine. Inspiration was strengthened by indignation. In her appreciation (1865) of the Evangelical Hannah More Yonge denounced what she regarded as the “frightful neglect and inefficiency of the clergy at the end of the last century,” and deplored the resultant “vice, misery, and ignorance ... almost verging on savagery.” Perhaps in an oblique allusion to her own motivation, she asserted that such abuses were “an absolute subject for a mission.”69 Yonge elaborated on the subject a few years later in her account of the life of her cousin John Coleridge Patteson (1874), martyred in Melanesia.

The Church had for a long period been at a peculiarly low ebb in the country, and there is not a neighbourhood which has not traditions of incredibly ignorant, careless, and underbred—if not dissipated—clergy; and though there were grand exceptions, they were only respected as men; faith in the whole system, as a system, was destroyed.70

The Anglican Church, Yonge maintained mournfully, “was virtually asleep; her members were lapsing into heathenism, and to instruct and awaken them was the first great object.”71 These and similar indictments also appeared as constant refrains in her novels. Emmeline and Katherine Berners, the impressionable young heroines of The Castle Builders, or The Deferred Confirmation (1854), lamented the “disuse of the prayerbook” (77) and protested the intransigence of the local clergyman “in turning out that poor boy from his choir because he did not turn to the East one day” (71). More than twenty years later, in The Pillars of the House (1876), Yonge portrayed the spiritual impoverishment and physical squalor of a rural parish plagued with an apathetic absentee rector who allowed his exhausted curates to perform all priestly duties.72 In the late novel Chantry House (1886) she was even more emphatic, excoriating the “days of dilapidation,” devoid of all “decency, order, and reverence” (74). Yonge proceeded to a devastating description of a derelict church, its neglected interior and exterior “mauled in every possible way ... with green stains on the walls, windows bricked up ... no font was visible....” The occasional service was presided over by a disaffected parson in a “rusty black gown” and a “very dirty surplice.” Irregularities and irreverences were abundant. A callow “curate in riding-boots came out of the vestry” (78), passing

68 Quoted in Davis, The Victorians. The Oxford English Literary History. Volume Eight, 98.
70 Yonge, Life of Patteson, 73.
71 Ibid., 310.
72 Additional examples of spiritual atrophy and ecclesiastical abuse appear in The Heir of Redclyffe, The Daisy Chain, Hopes and Fears, and The Clever Woman of the Family.
a “black-curtained, black-cushioned, black-lined pew” in which young parishioners were perceived “eating apples, performing antics,” and alternately ignoring and defacing their “dilapidated prayer books” (76). The sacred music, too, was a tedious travesty: “improper selection had led to unworthy performance;” in the hymns were indistinguishable amidst a deafening cacophony of ill-played “bassoon, clarinet, and fiddle.”

This painful image was a powerful metaphor for the parlous state of the Established Church. Such sacrilege and slovenliness of spirit symbolised the sloth that afflicted both church and community. Yonge observed that the local village was “in a frightful state of neglect…” that reflected and reinforced the decay and “general decadence of the parish…” (102). Nevertheless like Newman (in this at least) she did speak, audibly and insistently, and generations listened intently and responded, in England and elsewhere. Yonge’s strategy was invariably the same: to present a hero(ine) who would embody Tractarian ideals and endorse the traditions of the early Church that had been ignored, insulted, or otherwise neglected. Her novels would provide readers with both an emblem and an example of their sanctity and their strength. The most enduring of her efforts appeared anonymously in 1853 and was entitled The Heir of Redclyffe.74

73 Thomas Leach, A Short Sketch of the Tractarian Upheaval. London: Bemrose & Sons, 1887, 11.
74 The first edition of The Heir of Redclyffe, Yonge’s seventh novel, was brought out by J.M. Parker. The original run consisted of seven hundred and fifty copies, all of which zzsold almost immediately.
3.2. ‘The Heir of Redclyffe’ (1853)
Church and Community

When *The Heir of Redclyffe* first appeared, remarked the literary historian Amy Cruse (1935), “it had a reception such as has been given to no other book in our language.” Scores of scholars have readily concurred, but consensus regarding the precise reasons for its spectacular success remains elusive. Even its essence is in dispute: *The Heir* has been described as a devotional manual, meditation, manifesto, religious romance, confession, Christian allegory, Anglican primer, Anglo-Catholic apologia, painted Pre-Raphaelite fantasy. Still more extravagant claims also have emerged: some saw it as “the embodiment of the spirit of the Oxford Movement in its purest and sweetest form,” or as the “apotheosis of the domestic novel,” a vision of earthly perfection; others perceived an achievement infinitely enriched by “scrupulous innocence” and “immaculate beauty and purity,” an elaborate exemplar of an uninterrupted reverie, a sublime elegy, an exalted “dream world that is essentially English in character.” More recently the literary historian Philip Davis described *The Heir of Redclyffe* in sacramental and almost eschatological terms as “the great Victorian novel of the Fall … a formidable and final genuflection to a fading world.”

The original publisher, John W. Parker of Oxford, had declined to classify or categorise *The Heir*, proclaiming it “neither a novel nor a girl’s story-book” and promising potential readers that it was instead “something quite new.” Despite its apparent simplicity, the narrative questioned and contested cultural expectations, and exclusions, in a way that was accessible to all. In the novel’s first important national notice the correspondent for *The Times* (1854) alluded obliquely to contemporary controversies of church and state, observing that it was “published on the eve of great political contests, and perhaps of contests still more terrible.”

Other reviewers elaborated, often revealing (intentionally or inadvertently) their own allegiances. In an essay entitled “Miss Sewell and Miss Yonge,” the anonymous writer remonstrated (1858) that “such novels as *The Heir of Redclyffe* have become a weapon in the hands of opposing parties, who rend and deafen England with their strife.” *The London Quarterly* denounced the dangerous “diversion of our sympathy to imaginary woes, when the

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75 Cruse, *The Victorians and Their Books*, 50.
76 Quoted in Romanes, *Charlotte Yonge*, 6. Christabel Coleridge also considered the novel “untouched by the world. Perhaps it is this unworldliness which gives the Heir and one or two more of Miss Yonge’s books their especial charm.” *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 145.
79 Davis, *The Victorians*, 124, 125.
80 Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 167. Parker always contended that he had accepted the novel for publication over the strenuous objections of the senior partners in the firm.
81 *The Times*, 1854.
82 “Miss Sewell and Miss Yonge,” *Dublin Review*, 315.
stern ills of life darken around us on every side” and predicted that the novel would produce a “spurious” religious sentiment among impressionable or excitable readers. The reviewer proceeded to condemn the novel’s clandestine “Popish” sympathies: “[t]he words are from the formularies of the Church of England, but the tendency of the teaching is that of the Church of Rome.” Ironically, the Roman Catholic Dublin Review also suspected subterfuge, discerning covert “enmity … and malice against the Catholic religion…. [The author] uses the weapon of insinuation rather than direct attack…. Alas! She injures her own mind far more than she injures the Church of Christ.”

Yonge was undaunted by such disparagement. Indeed, she continually courted controversy, for confrontation provided opportunities to publicise and promote High Church principles. In the premier issue of The Monthly Packet (1851) she had advised her audience

Above all it is the especial desire and prayers of those who address you through the pages of this Magazine that what you may find there may tend to make you more steadfast and dutiful daughters of our own beloved Catholic Church of England, and may go alongside in all respects with the teaching, both doctrinal and practical, of the Prayer Book. For we live in a time of more than ordinary trial and our middle path seems to have grown narrower than ever.

The anonymous essayist for The Gentleman’s Magazine (1853), however, protested that the most persistent and painful “narrowness” was in Yonge’s own perceptions, and pronounced a particular dislike for the religious devotion of the characters of The Heir of Redclyffe, which he deemed deeply “displeasing.” Wilkie Collins described the hero, Guy Morville, a young baronet of uncertain temper but impeccable Tractarian sensibilities as “simply impossible,” but The Times (1854) demurred, declaring, “never, perhaps, did the beauty of holiness appear more beautiful or more winning.” William Morris admired all elements of the novel, and avidly recommended it to his classmates at Oxford as an example and an ideal, an exceptional “pattern for actual life.”

Morris, it seemed, had a sense of the ambition that animated the narrative and thus an instinctive appreciation of its appeal. The Heir of Redclyffe should be read both as spiritual exhortation and political enterprise, as an act of persuasion aimed at encouraging awareness of an alternative and more exalted reality. Its content, characters, and closure relentlessly promote the possibilities of

83 London Quarterly (July 1858), 495.
84 Ibid., 500.
85 “Miss Sewell and Miss Yonge,” Dublin Review, 320.
87 “Memoranda about our Lady Novelists,” Gentleman’s Magazine (July 1853), 442.
88 Collins ridiculed the “lifeless personification of the Pusey-stricken writer’s fancies on religion and morals, literature and art.” Yonge was pleased that another reviewer had recognised that she had based the character of Guy Morville, at least partially, on Richard Hurrell Froude.
89 Quoted in Cruse, The Victorians and Their Books, 52. Raymond Chapman ascribes the popularity of the novel to Yonge’s “ability to represent holiness in a domestic setting.”
this reality, accessible only through the doctrine and discipline endorsed by High Church principles. The novel also reiterates the promise of redemption, the reward of religious devotion, as it was defined in Tractarian thought. In *The Christian Year* Keble had spoken of these comforts and consolations:

Thus, souls by nature pitched too high,
By suffering brought too low,
Meet in the Church’s middle sky,
Halfway ‘twixt joy and woe.  

Perhaps the most celebrated stanza of *The Christian Year*, however, is found in the lines of “Morning.” The poem was intended as a prayer that should be recited every day, and it recommended a specific strategy to sustain its readers.

The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we need to ask;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

The apparent simplicity of the language conceals the profound paradox at the core of Tractarian theology. Repudiation of the compromises that complicate the human condition was essential to an acceptance of the certainties essential to salvation. *The Christian Year and The Heir of Redclyffe* should not, therefore, be read solely as documents of renunciation, or even of resistance, as some have suggested, but rather as articles of affirmation, of “the firmness of assent,” to the practices and principles of the Oxford Movement as they interpreted and presented Christian truth. ‘To deny ourselves’ meant to accept the will of God.

For readers of *The Heir of Redclyffe* engagement with the text therefore requires an especially acute sensibility and an appreciation, or at least an informed awareness, of an array of sophisticated literary techniques. Foremost among these is an attentiveness to the practice of typology, a form of scriptural interpretation in which events and individuals in the Old Testament are seen as both historically real and as divinely ordained prefigurations of events in the New Testament, and most centrally, of the life of Christ. In his study *Hell and the Victorians* (1974) Geoffrey Rowell (former chaplain of Keble College and since 2001 Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe) argued that typological readings allow the real and the symbolic to succeed simultaneously within the narrative, to support a structure reliant on recurrent linkages of the

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92 Dennis, Introduction to *The Heir of Redclyffe*, xxiv.
93 The phrase was first used by Newman to characterise the strength of Keble’s spirituality: “I considered that Mr. Keble met this difficulty by ascribing the firmness of assent which we give to religious doctrine, not to the probabilities which introduced it, but to the living power of faith and love which accepted it.” *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, 1865.
past and the present, the seen and the unseen, the temporal and the eternal. The power and
persistence of these analogies, in which every element of the secular is also an exponent of or an
allusion to some aspect of the spiritual, was from the start acknowledged as an essential tenet of
Tractarian thought. To those who remained sceptical Keble insisted as both poet and priest that

if our words seem often full of a deeper meaning than we intended, if the same words produce on us quite a different
effect at different times, it is natural that we should be constantly able to find new meanings in divine language,
and that it should speak a different language to those whose hearts are prepared to receive it.

In his Lectures on Poetry, 1832-1841 (originally delivered in Latin), Keble asserted, “Poetry lends
Religion her wealth of symbols and similes. Religion restores these again to Poetry clothed with
so splendid a radiance that they appear to be no longer merely symbols, but to partake (I might
almost say) of the nature of sacraments.” Stephen Arata has observed (1999) that this enthusiasm
for complex symbolism was a key intellectual and aesthetic strategy for the founders and
followers of the Oxford Movement (and others) that has applications beyond the theological.
He maintained that “[w]hen Victorian thinkers wanted to work through difficult intellectual
problems ... they often turned to parables.... There was a resurgence of interest in parabolic forms
of narrative: folktales, fairy tales, myths, romances, ballads, sagas, allegories.” The parable, he
added, “synthesises a complex set of social, historical, and ideological issues into a narrative that
invites, indeed requires, multiple exegesis.” Typology was an important example of the constant
struggle within the confines and constraints of Christian orthodoxy to make scripture more
relevant and richer, more responsive to multiple metaphoric interpretations.

The Heir of Redclyffe, like The Christian Year, was intended to elaborate on the values
and virtues expressed in Tractarian theology, to illustrate by example rather than exhortation that
readers should regard even the most onerous obligation or tiresome responsibility or routine as an
opportunity for reverence. The narrative is provocatively placed not at the remote Redclyffe, the
desolate domain of the Morvilles, but at the center of the country, in the most emblematic space
in the national imagination, the provincial parish. The opening passage details an atmosphere of
Anglican prosperity and privilege:

95 See especially Isaac Williams, “On Reserve.” In the Apologia Newman referred to this “intellectual
truth” as “the Sacramental system ... the doctrine that material phenomena are both the types and the
instruments of real things unseen.” Quoted in Munhenk and Fletcher, editors, Victorian Prose, 75.
96 Quoted in Wheeler, Heaven, Hell, and the Victorians, 152.
97 Quoted in Elisabeth Jay, Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship Journal, “Charlotte Yonge’s ‘Gleanings’
from the Rev. John Keble” (1997), 35. See also John Keble, Lectures on Poetry, 1832-1841, two volumes,
99 Ibid.
Hollywell is much more than a house; it is presented as an iconic English interior, an inviolable sanctuary that is both refuge and retreat. Its enclosed space, static and secure, summons the powerful cultural aspirations and expectations expressed in the introductory remarks of the 1851 census. George Graham, the Registrar General, insisted that "the possession of an entire house is strongly desired by every Englishman, for what happens in the home throws a sharp well-defined circle round his family and his hearth—the shrine of his sorrows, joys, and meditations." Hollywell attains that representative status, created and sustained by a pattern of select inclusionary and exclusionary processes that participate in the construction of ideological imperatives. Its identity arises from an intimacy that is defined by its difference from its opposite, the outside world of darkness and desolation. It is a closed world of "known limits," a secure space of 'absolute familiarity;' outside of which is the "unimaginable and uncomfortable" 'Other.' Although Hollywell appears to resemble rural Hampshire, its precise location is never disclosed or described in any detail; in this too it is allegorical and almost archetypal, an apotheosis of the domestic, its qualities consistent with those characteristics that constitute the most cherished core of the English cultural identity.

Yonge immediately introduces several of the main characters: Charles Edmonstone, the invalid heir of Hollywell, and his sisters, Laura, Amabel, and Charlotte, all members of a provincial Anglican family of pronounced High Church sympathies. Incapacitated by chronic illness, Charles is confined to his chair, and his sisters seem similarly circumscribed, content with "reading and music, roses, botany, and walks on the terrace" (176). Eventually the equanimity of the entire establishment is disrupted by the appearance of two young men, each

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100 Yonge, The Heir of Redclyffe. 1853. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. All subsequent references are to this edition and are noted parenthetically within the text.

101 The Registrar General, Introductory Remarks to The Census of Great Britain, 1851.

102 Rosemary Marangoly George, The Politics of Home: Postcolonial Relocations and Twentieth-Century Fiction. Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002, 3. Doreen Massey has observed that "such understandings of the identity of places require them to be enclosures, to have boundaries, and—therefore or most importantly—to establish their identity through negative counterposition with the Other beyond the boundaries." Space, Place, and Gender. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994, 169.


104 According to Sarah Bailey, "[i]t is indeed certain that anyone who wishes to know what daily life was like in hundreds of manor-houses and parsonages scattered up and down the country in the middle of the last century, especially those that came under the influence of the Oxford Movement, cannot do better than to take a course in Miss Yonge." Cornhill Magazine 150 (July 1934), 196.

105 Their father is a member of the English "squirearchy;' he is a landowner and rural magistrate with titled connections in Ireland.

106 Charles's disability is variously described as "a contracture of the limb," "a disease of the hip-joint," and "a formation on the joint" and remains of mysterious origin; on occasion he is prescribed opiates for the pain.
an orphan but cousins to the Edmonstones and each other. Guy Morville, a rich baronet who has recently inherited the estate of Redclyffe, and Philip Morville, an impoverished regimental officer, sole remnants of a once illustrious house, seem destined to perpetuate the ancient enmity that has estranged their families “since the time of William of Orange.” Guy’s resolve to defy this ancestral curse is repeatedly repulsed by the malevolence of Philip, who persists in a campaign of persecution. Guy and Amabel marry after a series of misunderstandings; they meet Philip on their wedding trip to the Continent, where he becomes dangerously ill in Italy and is saved by Guy’s devoted ministrations. Guy succumbs to the fever, content in the certainty that his suffering and sacrifice will amend, and atone for, the sins of the past. The final chapters of the novel center on the survivors: physically diminished and morally chastened, Philip inherits Redclyffe, but will forever repent his “hateful sophistries” (436) and misplaced malice. Amabel returns to her parents and “the smooth green enclosure of Hollywell” (112), where Guy’s child, Mary Verena, is born.

For a novel positioned so deliberately in the domestic, the text incorporates an astonishing array of analogies and alternative narratives: history, myth, legend, fable, folklore, fairy tale, romance, parable. The Heir also contains a surprising number of references to altered states of consciousness: reveries, dreams, trances, hallucinations, spells, “stupors,” visions, even the extremes of delirium and delusion. The literary historian Barbara Dennis has noted that The Heir of Redclyffe never abandons the realm of the realistic, but in effect Yonge continually contrives to manipulate rather than maintain its conventions. Every element is part of a complex, highly schematised pattern; several of the main characters (Philip and Guy, Laura and Amy, Amy and Guy, Charles and Guy, Charles and Philip) correspond closely to one another for purposes of comparison, contrast, and, if warranted, criticism and censure. Often these characters are also shadowed by lesser figures, some of them scarcely realised: Philip and his sister, the rebarbative Margaret Morville Henley (Philip himself recognises, and recoils from, their similarities); Philip and James Thorndale, an impetuous and impressionable subaltern (59); Margaret and Elizabeth Wellwood, founder of a school and a “sisterhood” at Stylehurst; Amy and Alice Lamsden, an exemplary young widow; and Laura and Ewleen de Courcy, her captivating but capricious “Irish cousin.”

Prominent events are similarly structured, emphasising or echoing one another, and sometimes even reemerging as secondary or seemingly trivial incidents. In the opening chapter the death of Guy is prefigured in the destruction of Amabel’s most prized camellia: a “perfect”

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107 This historical reference would remind her readers of the great religious conflict at the time of the English Civil War. In her English Church History, Adapted for Use in Day and Sunday Schools (1883), Yonge entitled the relevant chapter “The Persecution of the Church,” and ominously observed that William of Orange was “bred up in the Calvinism that prevailed in Holland.” London: Harrison and Sons, n.d., 183. The most wicked Morville ancestor, however, was “Hugo de Morville, who murdered Thomas a Becket” (7). As Archbishop of Canterbury Becket quarreled continuously with Henry II over ecclesiastical privileges and in 1170 was murdered, perhaps on the orders of the king, near the high altar. He is venerated as a martyr and saint by both the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches. It seems reasonable to assume that Yonge may be summoning more recent struggles between Church and state with this reference.

108 Dennis, Introduction to The Heir of Redclyffe, viii.
and "pure" blossom carelessly broken by Philip's clumsy interference (4). Much later the birth of Mary Verena coincides with that of the son of a local clergyman; an infant named for Guy, who was, as Charles commented caustically, a child "no-body wants" (514). More significantly, the courtship of Amy and Guy is repeated twice: mirrored in the secret passion of Philip and Laura, whose own clandestine arrangements are subsequently caricatured in the scandalous elopement of Eveleen and George Fielding, her brother's impecunious tutor.

No wedding, however blessed, is entirely blissful; *The Heir of Redclyffe* repudiates the possibility of matrimony as either resolution or reward. Even the marriage of Amy and Guy, following a service "in Whitsun week" (287), is seen as a trial that separates them from Hollywell: "The last day had come, and a long, strange one it was—not exactly joyful to Amy, and very sad to some" (301). The ceremony is accompanied by a series of portents painted in radiant Pre-Raphaelite colours: "It was a showery day, with gleams of vivid sunshine, and one of these suddenly broke forth, casting a stream of colour from a martyr's figure in the south window, so as to shed a golden glory on the wave of brown hair over Guy's forehead, then passing on and tinting the bride's white veil with a deep glowing shade of crimson and purple" (383). A few hours later, as they leave Hollywell together, Amy "gave a sweet, sunny smile through her tears;" and Yonge evokes the Tractarian emphasis on nature as a sign and symbol, a guarantee of the grace of God:

At that moment they came beyond the thick embroidering shrubs, while full before them was the dark receding cloud, on which the sun-beams were planting a wide-spanned rainbow. The semi-circle was perfect, and full before them, like an arch of triumph under which they were to pass.... "Guy," said the bride, "I was thinking, that if there is a doom on us, I am not afraid, if it will only bring a rainbow." "The rainbow will come after, if not with it," said Guy (389-390).

Guy and Amy intend to travel only until Redclyffe is made ready to receive them; ominously, the house is unsafe and requires substantial repairs long deferred by the Morvilles ("The roof? That's serious!" exclaims Guy). A desire to see the English cathedral cities is dismissed by the Edmonstones as too insular, and the couple agrees to the proposal of an excursion to the Continent. The narrative had previously ranged (somewhat reluctantly) to the environs of Oxford, Stylehurst, and London, and all are presented as distinct (but distant) sites of intellectual, spiritual, and moral peril. Oxford is perceived as "a place of temptation" (89); Stylehurst is notorious for its racing set; and London seen as "not quite correct," but few particulars are provided. In contrast Yonge portrays the abject miseries of Coombe Prior, a "distant offset" of Redclyffe and "a noted place for thieves and vagabonds," in considerable detail:

109 The character of Amy is continuously associated with symbols of purity: flowers, doves, the spring moon, and the colour white.
110 A character in *The Castle-Builders* complained that wedding-days are "generally such long, dismal days" (26); in Yonge's novels this is almost invariably so.
The cottages, of the rough stone of the country, were little better than hovels; slates were torn off, windows broken. Wild-looking, uncombed women, in garments of universal dirt color, stood at the doors; ragged children ran and shrieked after the coach; the church had a hole in the roof, and stood tottering in spite of rude repairs, the churchyard was trodden down by cattle, and the whole place only resembled the pictures of Irish dilapidation (275).

The disreputable priest in charge is described only as "a fox-hunting parson" ... "scarcely involved with his congregation," who lives "half-a-dozen miles off, and gallops over for the service" (273).

In Yonge's narratives the condition of the church and the conduct of its clergyman symbolise the spiritual state of the community; and such dereliction and disorder are not to be countenanced by an exemplary High Churchman such as Guy Morville. He energetically enlists the assistance of an available Tractarian priest to restore the church and recruit instructors and students for the new Sunday school, promising to replace the incumbent with a more estimable individual. Hollywell again is the ideal: a similar village on its periphery is well managed and maintained, as Guy declares, "I have seen what a village school ought to be at East-hill, and I should like to see Redclyffe like it" (283).

The Continent, however, proves far more pernicious. In Switzerland Amy nearly plunges into a ravine; and in Italy Guy sickens and dies of malarial fever. With the return of Amabel to the safety of England and the sanctuary of Hollywell, the narrative eventually achieves symmetry. Its circularity reaches a closure that, as one scholar suggests, constitutes "in the deepest sense, a happy ending."¹¹² The death of Guy redeems the unregenerate, but Philip and Laura, although chastened, cannot remain at Hollywell. A melancholy ceremony unites them in a marriage that commences (and will continue) as both a punishment and a penance:

It was not such a wedding as the last. There was more personal beauty, but no such air of freshness, youth and peace. He was, indeed, a very fine-looking man, his countenance more noble than it had ever been, though pale and not only betraying the present suffering of the throbbing, burning brow, but with the appearance of a care-worn, harassed man.... She was hardly bridal-looking in dress, and so it was with her face, still beautiful and brilliant in complexion, but with the weight of care permanent on it, and all the shades of feeling concealed by a fixed command of countenance, unable, however, to hide the oppression of dejection and anxiety (590-591).¹¹³

¹¹² Sandbach-Dahlstrom, _Be Good Sweet Maid_, 14.
¹¹³ Nevertheless this is not as dismal as a ceremony described in a subsequent novel, _Hopes and Fears_: "It was a dreary wedding, in spite of London grandeur. In all her success, Juliana could not help looking pinched and ill at ease, her wreath and veil hardening instead of softening her features. Phoebe pitied Sir Bevil, and saw little chance of happiness for either" (259).
After their departure Hollywell resumes its previous perfections. Instructed and inspired by the example of Guy, Charles conquers his eccentricities and infirmities and subsides into contented domesticity: "the brother and sister were a great help and happiness to each other; Amabel found herself restored to Charles, as Guy liked to think of her, and Charles felt as if the old childish fancies were fulfilled, in which he and Amy were always to keep house together" (557).

Amy and Guy, like Hollywell, had disciplined themselves in the pursuit of perfection, and in the process the identities of all three seem to mingle and merge. Originally Amy, shy and submissive, had wanted resilience and resolve, more "bones and sinews" (13) in her character, and Guy, impulsive and impetuous, had wanted restraint, more rigour and reserve, in his; each eventually accomplished that aim. After his death she assumes some of his attributes; there is in her "a likeness to that peculiar and beautiful expression of her husband's, so as, in spite of the great difference of feature and colouring, to give her a resemblance to him" (482). Thereafter the narrative revolves exclusively around Amy, whom Barbara Dennis and others consider "the displaced center of the novel," and Yonge takes care to portray her power in both practical and poetic terms. She capably cares for Guy during his illnesses and calmly directs a hesitant clergyman to hear his confession and administer absolution. She is alone with Guy as he dies; afterwards her attendant recalled with awe that she "should never forget how my lady looked. It was not grief; it was if she had been a little way with her husband, and was just called back" (468). The clergyman at Hollywell also regarded Amy's authority with admiration and reverence, reassuring her brother that "in this greatest of all trials she would rise instead of being crushed, with all that was good and beautiful in her purified and refined" (489). And to the astonishment of all, including and perhaps especially her parents, she is appointed executrix of the substantial Redclyffe estate and guardian of her child.

Her greatest challenge, however, is to complete the rescue and rehabilitation of Philip, in a state of complete collapse brought on by remorse and a recurrence of brain fever. His veneration of Amy enables him to recognise and repudiate both the base elements of his character, his avarice and envy; and of his past, the cynical importunities of his sister and the craven idolatry of Laura. Upon his recovery he reconciles with the Edmonstones and resolves not to immure himself at Redclyffe. Eventually he stands for a seat in Parliament, is elected, and in a supreme irony appoints Charles as his private secretary. Charles "amused himself with triumphing in his importance," imagining "when he should sit in state on his sofa at Hollywell, surrounded with blue-books, getting up the statistics for some magnificent speech of the honourable member for Moorworth" (574). He proclaims his own ambitions to his sister, vowing "[w]hen the member from Moorworth governs the country, I mean to govern him" (593). At the end of the novel a new

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114 As sinners Philip and Laura have been expelled from Eden; Hollywell returns to its prelapsarian state.
115 Philip and Laura are also described in similar terms. Mrs. Edmonstone observes that "they were much alike in the remarkable symmetry both of figure and feature, the colour of the deep blue eye, and fairness of complexion," 106-107.
116 Dennis, Introduction to The Heir of Redclyffe, xxi.
regime, that of Hollywell, rules Philip, the incarnation of all the institutions of patriarchal power: the university, the army, and the government. The dominant has deferred to the domestic, the usurper dispatched, and power passes to the private, and female, realm. Philip is the ostensible heir of Redclyffe, the owner of “as fine a property as any in the kingdom” (516), but in reality he takes possession only of prolonged, and possibly perpetual, wretchedness. Yonge is inexorable in her indictment:

It was a harassed, anxious life, with little of repose or relief, and Laura spent her time between watching him and tending his health, and in the cares and representation befitting her station, with little space for domestic pleasure and home comfort, knowing her children more intimately through her sister’s observation than through her own (594).

Philip and Laura are isolated and alienated even from each other. In the end Amy is metaphorically and morally the heir of Redclyffe, superior to her sister, successor in sanctity to Guy, saviour of Philip, centre of Hollywell, regarded as the supreme arbiter with the authority and ability to rule not only a community, but the country, and perhaps beyond. She presides over all, affirming the presentiments of her father in the opening pages of the novel: “I’ve a pretty deal on my hands,” he proceeded, looking more important than troubled. “All that great Redclyffe estate is no sinecure, to say nothing of the youth himself. If all the world will come to me, I can’t help it!” (8).

117 When Philip considers resigning his commission in the army he contemplates applying for the post of “chief of the constabulary force in the county where Redclyffe was situated” (433), another position involving patriarchal surveillance and supervision.
Although Amabel and Hollywell prevail at the end of *The Heir of Redclyffe*, Philip initiates much of the action and instigates most of the tension in the novel. His incessant “interference” connects (and often compromises) all the other characters, even the most minor or marginal such as Markham, the aged steward of Redclyffe, and Marianne, the young daughter of Guy’s uncle. Philip opens the novel and closes it, and Yonge invests an inordinate amount of energy and imagination in detailing her abuse of him. In the course of the narrative he is variously described in terms appropriate for the villain of a fairy tale or fable, as a “destroyer,” “monster,” “ogre,” and “three-tailed bashaw.” Barbara Dennis (1996), however, sees him as the representative of another more particular evil, the exponent of utilitarianism, a contemporary philosophy of logic and rationality much despised by the Tractarians.\(^{118}\) His ambitious, aggressive, and argumentative spirit places great emphasis on secular pursuits, and at his insistence Laura studies the *Encyclopedia* (112), *Joyce’s Scientific Dialogues* (122), and monographs on mathematics, rather than more suitable works of scripture or devotion. Other recommendations appear even more ominous; she immerses herself in “a German book with a great deal of dictionary” (143), a dangerous diversion that perhaps signals exposure to a dubious treatise of Continental or comparative theology.\(^{119}\) Philip’s private understanding with Laura, pursued without the permission of her parents, is in a sense as pernicious as his persecution of Guy, and is portrayed as a profane parody of his cousin’s engagement to Amy. He “reigned over her whole being” (143), and Yonge documents the extent of his domination and its effect on its object:

Laura was eighteen; she had no experience, not even in novels; she did not know what she had done; and above all, she had so learnt to surrender her opinions to Philip, and to believe him always right, that she would never have dreamt of questioning where he might choose to lead her. Even the caution of secrecy did not alarm her.... Philip had long been all in all to her.... She did not awaken her mind to consider that anything could be wrong that Philip desired (122).

Unlike her sister Amabel, Laura is “dejected” and despondent, incessantly described as “weary,”

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\(^{118}\) Dennis, Introduction to *The Heir of Redclyffe*, xvii. Utilitarianism, or Philosophic Rationalism, was developed and popularised by Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). Bentham argued that the rightness of an action was judged in terms of the happiness that resulted from it. Constructed on a system that promoted reason and logic rather than emotion, it celebrated efficiency and economy, and it was seen as endorsing the culture of secularism and materialism that so troubled the Tractarians. See also Budge, *Charlotte M. Yonge*, 150.

\(^{119}\) Keble called such volumes “Germanism.” Amy prefers Butler’s *Analogy* (144), a “safe” text acceptable to Tractarian theology that would not unsettle her faith. Characters in *The Heir of Redclyffe* read constantly; titles of texts are meant to signify moral and spiritual strengths and susceptibilities. Guy prepares assiduously for his Oxford examinations but also delights in works of imaginative literature such as *Le Morte d’Arthur* and *I Promisi Sposi* (1827), a historical novel by Alessandre Manzoni. More importantly, Mrs. Edmonstone gives him a copy of *The Christian Year* for his eighteenth birthday, an early example of product placement.
"worn," "harassed," "anxious," or "oppressed." The observation that "there was something either added or taken away, which made it appear that the serenity and carelessness of early youth had fled from her, and the air of the cares of life had come over her" (172) suggests a more disturbing possibility: appropriating the language of violation, defilement, and perhaps rape. Yonge returns obsessively to describe the dangerous destructiveness of Philip’s dominion over Laura, repeating words that would have a particular resonance for attentive contemporary readers.

He seldom or never was alone with her; but his influence was as strong as ever, and look, word, and gesture which she alone could understand, told her what she was to him, and revealed his thoughts. To him she was devoted, all her doings were with a view to please him, and deserve his affection; he was her world, and sole object…. Still she did not realise the evil of concealment; it was so deep a sensation of her innermost heart, that she never could imagine revealing it to any living creature, and she had so besides surrendered her judgment to her idol, that no thought could ever cross her that he had enjoined what was wrong. Her heart and soul were his alone (173-174).

Towards the end of the novel Yonge added acerbically, “although her idolatry was complete, it did not give full satisfaction or repose” (554). Laura’s abject adulation of Philip is seen as a physical, psychological, and moral agony, an excessive appetite, and even an addiction, a constant “craving for his presence,” with, Yonge added, “a dread of showing it” (143). Its noxious nature subtly but surely also invokes an incendiary contemporary issue: the Papal Aggression crisis and its attendant clergy and congregation conversion anxieties. Anglicans were said to especially resent and resist any attempts to impose on the integrity and independence of the individual conscience, and considered that Roman Catholics had relinquished their own in slavish submission to the envoys of the Vatican.120 It was assumed that Pius IX would deploy a secret army of priests (invariably believed to be Jesuits, the most militant missionaries of the Catholic orders, and the one most devoted to the pope) to infiltrate Protestant England. In her novel Father Clement (1852), which appeared at a time when apprehension was most acute, Grace Kennedy contended that

England was too valuable ground to be deserted, and too cultivated to be any longer trusted to the priests of the common order; and the only way, at that period, open to the Church of Rome, was to insinuate her doctrine into the knowledge, and attention, and good will of those amongst whom she could find the means to place her clergy. It was at that time well known that the end principally proposed by the Order of Jesuits was to gain converts to the Church of Rome, with which view they had dispersed themselves

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120 Gladstone argued that “no one can become her convert without renouncing his moral and mental freedom, and placing his civil loyalty and duty at the mercy of another; and when she has equally repudiated modern thought and ancient history.” “The Church of England and Ritualism,” *Contemporary Review*, October 1874.
in every county and nation; and with unceasing industry and address, pursued the end of their institution. No difficulty was considered too great for them to overcome—no crime, in the service of their cause, of which they were not considered capable.\textsuperscript{121}

Other novelists expressed similar concerns. In \textit{Beatrice, or Unknown Relatives} (1852) by Catherine Sinclair, one of the characters warned that "[t]he danger you have all to apprehend is not from the open honest warfare of soldiers on a battlefield. No! It is the clandestine, the marvelous but imperceptible expansion of the Jesuits around us which ought to be feared, and their masquerading maneuvers" that incessantly seek to "enthral the free and intellectual population of Great Britain under the same iron yoke of ignorance, idolatry, and real infidelity as Italy, Portugal, Spain, and other countries, drenched in guilt and superstition."\textsuperscript{122} In another novel, \textit{The Brand of Dominic: Or Inquisition} (1852), by William H. Rule, it was alleged that a vast multitude of the "members of the Order were placed in English families. We must understand that the spies and familiars of the Inquisition are listening at our doors, and intruding themselves on our hearths."\textsuperscript{123}

The alarm over the possible presence of such agents was pervasive. \textit{The Times} advised constant vigilance, cautioning that even the most devout Protestants "may easily become a prey to teachers, so subtle, so skillful, so insinuating as Romish emissaries are known to be."\textsuperscript{124} Some claimed "at the heart of the Aggression is a plan to prevail chiefly through female influence;"\textsuperscript{125} a campaign, they contended, that would first victimise the most vulnerable: innocent and impressionable young Englishwomen of all classes and circumstances.\textsuperscript{126} A series of cartoons that appeared in \textit{Punch} incited and intensified cultural alarm regarding their safety, and by implication, the security of the nation (see Appendix). This connection also had been emphasised in a multitude of advice manuals that appeared even earlier. Among the most popular was a series of volumes by Sarah Stickney Ellis entitled \textit{The Women of England: Their Social Duties, and Domestic Habits} (1839). Ellis declared "how intimate is the connexion which exists between the women of England, and the moral character maintained by this country in the scale of nations," adding emphatically that "it is the domestic character of England—the home comforts, and the

\begin{thebibliography}{125}
\bibitem{121} Grace Kennedy, \textit{Father Clement: A Roman Catholic Story}. NY: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1852, 81.
\bibitem{122} Catherine Sinclair, \textit{Beatrice, or Unknown Relatives}. 1852, two volumes. Volume Two, 14, 38.
\bibitem{123} William H. Rule, \textit{The Brand of Dominic: Or Inquisition; at Rome 'Supreme and Universal.'} London: John Mason, 1852. Quoted in Ceraldi, ""Popish Legends and Bible Truths,"" 269.
\bibitem{124} \textit{The Times}, 25 November 1850.
\bibitem{125} Sinclair, \textit{Beatrice}, 41.
\end{thebibliography}
fireside virtues, for which she is so justly celebrated.” Ellis’s assumptions and assurances echoed those that appeared in an unsigned article entitled “Women in Domestic Life” (1836) that appeared in the *Magazine of Domestic Economy*.

Home is the true place of happiness; that which alone can make compensation for all the troubles, and toils, and struggles, with which men of all classes must meet in public life, and business, and occupation of any description. We also endeavoured to show that England is in a peculiar and especial manner *the land of home*—that no men exert themselves either so strenuously or so successfully to promote the comforts of their homes … and therefore no men have such strong claims as Englishmen for a fair and adequate return for these their hearty, incessant, and generally speaking successful labour in promoting the welfare of their homes.128

The extent of these responsibilities and the enormity of their ramifications were later enumerated in *Domestic Economy: A Class-Book for Girls* (1876). The anonymous author asserted that

Domestic economy is the science which teaches the right management of the family home. The rightful home manager is a woman….This science, which belongs specially to the education of girls, is of more importance than all the other arts and sciences put together. From well-managed homes go forth happy, healthy, wise, and good men and women, to fill every position in the world.129

The writer concluded, “If a country were made up of such homes, it would be a nation happy, noble, and good, wise and prosperous. The influence and power of girls are, therefore, enormous. They have more to do with success or failure, happiness or misery, learning or ignorance, than kings, statesmen, philosophers, philanthropists, and clergymen.”130 The struggle for supremacy would center on control of the conduct and conscience of young women in the symbolic inner citadel of the country, the provincial parish. The clergy of the Established Church were strongly advised to supervise and defend their congregations accordingly. In a volume of verse entitled *Altars, Hearths, and Graves* (1854) the Anglican churchman and ecclesiastical scholar John Moultrie (1799-1874) calculated the catastrophic cultural and spiritual costs that accompanied conversion to Rome:

God give her wavering clergy back that honest heart and true
Which once was theirs ere Popish fraud its spell around them threw;

130 Ibid.
Nor let them barter wife and child, bright hearth and happy home
For the hectic bliss of the strumpet kiss of the Jezebel of Rome. ¹³¹

This ideologically charged atmosphere of invective, insinuation, advice, admonition, allegation, and alarm provided the context for the appearance of *The Heir of Redclyffe*. Philip Morville is no Jesuit, of course, but the equivocations and evasions with which he ensnares Laura Edmonstone are portrayed as Jesuitical devices and deceptions, examples of the doctrine of expediency emphatically linked with Roman Catholicism in the popular Protestant imagination and especially loathed by the Tractarians. He relies on additional strategies commonly regarded as “Jesuitical” practices: prevarication, argumentation, subterfuge, sophistry, and surveillance, all of which enable him to impose his authority at Hollywell: “[s]ecrecy was the only way of preserving his intercourse with her ... and exerting his influence over the family” (120). Philip deftly manipulates Mr. Edmonstone, who “little guessed that his nephew felt his power over him, and knew that he could wield him at will” (233). His uncle is so entirely deceived by the plausibility of the “false proofs” (209) and “monstrous stories” (334) that impugn the character of his cousin Guy that he declared with exasperation that Philip would “persuade me black was white” (334) when at last the truth is discovered.¹³² Charles and Guy observe Philip’s “readiness” to adapt both his conversation and his conduct (72, 85, 360) to appeal to his audience, a form of dissimulation (if not deceit) that confounds them both. Charles compares Philip, not entirely jocularly, with “Don Philip II, the Duke of Alva, alguazils, corregidors, and executioners” (227); Alva was the military commander appointed by Philip II of Spain to suppress the revolt of the Netherlands in the sixteenth century. Both were fanatical Roman Catholics infamous for their reliance on the Inquisition and relentless persecution of Protestants. Philip Morville is associated with similar cruelties and compulsions:

[He] had been used to feel men’s wills and characters bend and give way beneath his superior force of mind. Some might, like Charles, chafe and rage, but his calmness always gave him the ascendancy almost without exertion, and few people had ever come into contact with him without a certain submission of will or spirit (255).

More calamitously, Philip establishes himself as Laura’s sole confidant and confessor, and his intrusive advice and improper counsel alienate her from all previous and appropriate affections and allegiances. All her senses and scruples are seduced by and surrendered to him (447), “with little space,” Yonge observed, “for domestic pleasure and home comfort” (594). Laura’s

¹³² This is an unmistakable reference to the famous Thirteenth Rule of the Jesuit order, set forth in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola, which reads: “to be right in everything, we ought always to hold that the white which I see, is black, if the Hierarchical Church so decides it.” It was much criticised by Anglicans during the years of the Papal Aggression crisis.
innocence and identity are irrevocably compromised; as Charles concludes with sorrow, “we always knew Laura to be his slave and automaton” (447); she is entirely “his own work” (146); “he was her idol” (142). Yonge had explained earlier that

Philip was mystifying himself, because he was departing from right. His right judgment in all things was becoming obscured, so he talked metaphysical jargon instead of plain practical truth, and thought he was teaching Laura to strengthen her powers of mind, instead of giving way to dreams, when he was only leading her to stifle meditation and thus securing her complete submission to himself (126).

At the end of the novel Philip's debilitation and distress signify both the degree of his responsibility and the depth of his repentance. He abjectly acknowledges to Laura, “[u]nhappiness enough I have caused, indeed. But I meant that you have to forgive the advantage I took of your reliance on me to lead you into error, when you were too young to know what it amounted to.... I taught you to take my dictum for law, and abused your trust, and perverted all the best and most precious qualities.... We must look to enduring the consequences all our lives....” (584). The use of the word “error” signals a doctrinal dimension that would again summon and underscore current sectarian controversies.

During the period that Charlotte Yonge conceived and wrote *The Heir of Redclyffe* anxiety over the “Popish perversion” of “the corrupt and corrupting confessional” was at its most acute. In a popular pamphlet entitled *Auricular Confession: Not the Rule of the Church of England* (1852) Joseph Harris argued that “[t]he first result, on the part of a penitent, is a deadness of heart to all but the Confessor’s or Director’s influence. Then succeeds a sneering morbid religionism, coincident with a too consistent disregard and scorn of household duties and domestic obligations.” It was alleged that confession completely unsettled the stability of the domestic sphere by allowing access to the most intimate thoughts of its most impressionable inhabitants. W.M. Colles (1852) contended “the confessional affords a ready way of knowing the secrets of the family and their feelings.” As a result, *The Times* declared, “habitual confession to priests is a practice which English husbands and parents in general will never endure to have inculcated


upon their families.” At the Wolverhampton Church Congress (1867) one of the featured speakers maintained that the confessional meant “the establishment of another master in every household, by every hearth, in the place of the husband and father.” The transcript of the proceedings shows repeated shouts of “No, No” and “Shame” as frenzied members of the audience furiously stamped their feet and shook their fists. T.T. Carter claimed that the practice of confession amounted to surreptitious surveillance and “is contrary to the genius of the Church of England, which has always very specially loved to cherish the sacredness of the home.” Punch played its part, publishing a series of cartoons on the subject, including “Expectations from Rome,” which portrayed a wolf in clerical costume listening intently to the confession of a penitent goose (see Appendix).

Nevertheless, the practice was valued by High Church partisans and validated by Pusey, whose translation of a two-volume manual for confessors, The Priest in Absolution: A Manual for such as are Called unto the Higher Ministries in the English Church (1877), caused a national sensation. Its publication was denounced on the floor of the House of Commons, and the Home Secretary petitioned to prosecute its distributors as dealers in obscene material. One Evangelical clergyman, the Reverend Hugh McNeile of Liverpool, Canon of Manchester, proposed that any Anglican priest who heard confessions be subject to capital punishment. “Death alone,” he proclaimed, “would prevent the evil.” Punch again avidly participated in the abuse, publishing a cartoon that portrayed John Bull preparing to thrash Jack Priest, who holds a copy of The Priest in Absolution and has come to hear Britannia’s confession (see Appendix). Pusey’s punishment was more enduring: Bishop Wilberforce inhibited him from preaching for nearly two years, explaining, “I so firmly believe that of all the curses of Popery this [regular confession] is the crowning curse, that I cannot allow voluntarily within my charge the continuance of any ministry which is infected by it.” This hardly resolved the controversy: in 1887 the clergyman Thomas Leach proclaimed “the broad fact remains that the enormous majority of Anglican penitents during the past fifty years have been foolish girls, who may probably, in the aggregate, have got as much harm from it as good.”

136 Quoted in Reed, Glorious Battle, 198.
137 Ibid., 200.
138 Ibid.
139 In Eliza Lynn Linton’s novel Under Which Lord? (1879) an Evangelical clergyman takes auricular confession and the credulity of women as the subjects of his sermon. He predicts the pernicious consequences: “I say of you, beware lest these, the weaker vessels, be the means in the end—as Adam was driven out of Paradise—of driving you out of the happy, the very happy Eden of an English Christian home.” That he considers the practice not only heretical, but heathenish, impious, and improper, is made clear when he calls those who seek confession no better than “a spiritual harem.”
140 Quoted in Wheeler, The Old Enemies, 99. McNeile was obliged to offer a written retraction.
141 Quoted in Reed, Glorious Battle, 114.
142 Leach, A Short Sketch of the Tractarian Upheaval, 178. Christabel Coleridge recalled that “at rare but regular intervals, [Yonge] always continued the practice of Sacramental Confession, begun under the guidance of Mr. Keble,” although she cautioned that “she never regarded it as of universal obligation, or would ever have urged it upon young people except under very special circumstances.” Charlotte Yonge, 233.
The confidential arrangements of Philip and Laura are portrayed as a contemptible travesty of the conventions of courtship. Within the narrative Yonge presents examples of authentic and appropriate auricular confession, as well as all other Christian sacraments, as essential expressions of reverence and grace.\(^{143}\) As Guy lies dying of fever in Recoara, he and Amy anxiously await the arrival of an English (Anglican) clergyman. A young priest, “only just in orders,” performs the office, but is so tentative that “he almost needed to be directed by her.” Afterwards he observed to Amy, “[h]ow it puts one to shame to hear such repentance with such a confession” (464).

As an ardent Tractarian Guy’s entire existence was defined by a scrupulous observance of the sacraments: at Redclyffe he had expressed his gratitude to the landlady of the inn where he was born,\(^{144}\) who had immediately called for a clergyman to baptise him when others believed he could not survive: “Was it you that did so? Then I have to thank you for more than all the world besides” (291).

The administration of this sacrament, too, had controversial implications that had recently reverberated through the nation and rent the unity of the Church. Henry Phillpotts (1778-1869), Bishop of Exeter, at that time the sole English diocesan bishop with Tractarian sympathies, had declined (1847) to institute George Cornelius Gorham, an Evangelical clergyman, to the parish of Brampford Speke because of “unsound” opinions on baptismal regeneration.\(^{145}\) This somewhat arcane theological dispute prompted an unseemly series of public appeals and counterappeals, combined with a torrent of personal and professional aspersions, all of which were energetically reported in the press. To the incredulity and incandescent rage of the Tractarian clergy, a secular commission appointed by the Crown found for Gorham and forced Phillpotts to institute him. When Gorham was finally installed (1850) at the insistence of the Evangelical Archbishop of Canterbury, the fragile Anglican community splintered into several factions, and three or four hundred churchmen, some of them among the most prominent in the nation, seceded to Rome. In a letter to Marianne Dyson (Coleridge dated it “Midsummer Day, about 1850”), Yonge mournfully compared the loss “to seeing tower after tower in a fortress taken by some enemy, and every time the blow seems closer to home. I do think such things as these make one know the comfort of people being dead and safe, so that one can give them one’s whole heart without fear of having to wrench it away again....” She added dolefully:

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\(^{143}\) The seven sacraments are baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, holy orders, and matrimony. All are mentioned, invariably only by implication, in the narrative.

\(^{144}\) The description of Guy’s birth at an inn (“the respectable old George”) is undoubtedly meant to emphasise his similarities with Christ. As a sacrificial hero he saves (literally or metaphorically) several characters who require rescue or redemption, including Philip, Charles, his uncle, his niece, the inhabitants of Coombe Prior, and several sailors whose ship is wrecked on the rocks in Redclyffe Bay (“all saved,” exclaims an eyewitness, “all owing to him”).

\(^{145}\) Phillpotts was the only such bishop in England from 1831 to 1869. He examined Gorham for a total of fifty-two hours, between December 1847 and March 1848. Owen Chadwick observed that “in spite of his soundness of faith and grand trenchant force of character,” he was “better as a warrior than as a shepherd, and the controversial and political sides of his character, though invaluable to the Church, did not recommend him to the affections of the people his diocese, who could not understand the points of the debate, and wanted the direct evidence of spirituality which they could appreciate.” \textit{The Victorian Church}, Volume Two, 212.
I am thankful to say that no personal friend of my own, no one indeed whom I know well, has gone.... There was a cousin indeed, but I had not seen him since he was a child. After hearing of such a thing as this, it does seem indeed a warning to any woman not to put herself in the way of being shaken by personal influence....

According to Christabel Coleridge “the chief shadow over this period [in Yonge’s life] was the secession to Rome of various leaders of the Church movement, and of several friends and cousins of her own.” One of her Coleridge cousins joined the Roman Catholic communion in 1852, and later became a Jesuit; another cousin, John Francis Yonge (1814-1879), resigned his curacy when his own spiritual certainties were unsettled. The eldest son of William Heathcote, William Perceval Heathcote (1826-1903), heir of Hursley, became a Roman Catholic at the time of his marriage in 1850; a second son also converted.

Allusions to all seven sacraments anchor the narrative, acting as symbols and signifiers in an elaborate and readily recognisable reference system. The space separating character and reader dissolves in the shared experience of the eternal and transcendent present of the Tractarian ideal, which includes all individuals in a single exalted community. The inscription on Guy’s gravestone, “I believe in the Communion of Saints,” a line from the Apostles’ Creed, affirms the covenant among all Christians. The grave itself, in a secluded green corner of a rural churchyard, shaded by a “spreading chestnut tree,” recalls Hollywell and represents England: “the blessing of peace came in the precious English burial-service, as they laid him to rest in the earth ... rendered a home by the words of his Mother church—the mother who had guided each of the steps in his orphaned life” (475-476). Yonge intended to portray the ideal pattern of the Anglo-Catholic community: intimate, inclusive, affirmative, and expansive, but also and most assuredly, and emphatically, English.

In order to counter repeated charges that their principles and practices were irregular, if not alien, the Tractarians were eager to emphasise the strength and sincerity of their English sensibilities. Christabel Coleridge maintained that Yonge “had no turn for the kind of sentiment which leads some people to idealise the Church of Rome. She did not like foreign books of devotion, and had a profound dislike for sentimental expressions of religious feeling, which she thought irreverent.” In 1858 the High Church community at Wantage (which Yonge joined as an associate or exterior sister in 1869) devised its own devotional manual, entitled The Day Hours

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146 Yonge, extract of a letter to Marianne Dyson; quoted in Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 160.
147 Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 168.
148 The marker itself is in the form of a cross, at that time another controversial innovation of the Tractarians and vehemently condemned by Evangelicals, who viewed it as dangerously “Popish.” In explaining her choice of marker and inscription Amy confides to Philip, “I should like, too, for these Italians to see the stranger has the same creed as themselves” (391). She later treasures a small cross, amounting to a relic, made from the salvaged splinters of the ship that sank in Redclyffe Bay.
149 Ibid., 169.
of the Church of England Used at Wantage. The rector, W.J. Butler, described its ordinances as
evidence of the “simple, honest loyalty to the Church to which it belongs, that is the Church of
England, the Church of our native land.” He added that

We believe that in her Prayer Book her teaching and her will are
to be found. We are not desirous to follow our own forces, or to
set forth doctrines and rituals which belong to the Church of Rome.
We are satisfied with giving dignity and beauty to that which we
have of our own. 150

Nevertheless the Tractarians also had a somewhat idiosyncratic approach to ordering their
existence, evident in their archaic expression, with terms of time and place invoking an
alternative reality. 151 The Church calendar of feasts, fasts, and festivals, and days dedicated
to apostles, archangels, saints, and martyrs, replaced all other dates; there was even a sustained
attempt to rename the days of the week. Thursday was called “Ascension Day,” Friday was
“Passion Day.” 152 Perhaps the preference originated with The Christian Year and The Tracts
for the Times, but eventually the usage dominated all Tractarian publications and
correspondence. Charlotte Yonge habitually used such terms both personally and
professionally: a letter to her cousin John Coleridge Patteson in Norfolk Island is dated “Holy
Week;” a note to her publisher Macmillan is marked only “Epiphany.” 153 Events in The Heir
of Redclyffe are constructed around these dates, from seasons such as Whitsuntide, Michelmas,
and Lent, to Ember Week, Passion Week, and the more cumbersome Sexagesima Sunday and
Quinquagisema Sunday; informed and attentive readers would recognise certain days as
occasions for either celebration or sorrow, rejoicing or repenting. The two most significant
seasons in the liturgical calendar, Easter and Christmas, are periods of great consequence in the
narrative, indicating times of especial trial or transcendence. It is telling that in one of the few
instances in which a standard date is supplied it accompanies the ominous and intrusive
appearance of Philip’s signature on a hotel register in Switzerland. The most conspicuous date
in the novel, however, is that inscribed on Guy’s gravestone; the day of his death is rendered
(in Latin) as “The Eve St. Michael and All Angels.” St. Michael, appropriately enough, is the
angel appointed to bear the souls of the dead to heaven. 154

Many contemporaries, and especially Evangelicals, objected to the association of saints’

150 W.J. Butler (1890); quoted in Reed, Glorious Battle, 53.
151 In the 1840s and 1850s the concept of a standardised time was under intense scrutiny in Britain,
owing to the emergence and expansion of railway systems, the publication of printed schedules
(Bradshaw’s), and the imposition of Greenwich mean time.
152 Desmond Morse-Boycott, The Secret Story of the Oxford Movement. London: Skeffington and Son,
1933, 149. See also Reed, 89-82.
153 Ellen Jordan, “‘I Am Too High Church and Too Narrow:’ Charlotte Yonge, Macmillan, and the
154 In the Book of Revelation Michael leads the armies of God against the forces of Satan. He is seen as
the great guardian of the Christian Church, but is also the gentle patron saint of the sick and the suffering.
days with temporal or trivial concerns, seeing it as an affectation, or worse, an irreverence. As early as 1843 the novelist Francis Paget ridiculed the “disciples of the Tractarian school” who sent directives to their greengrocers and stationers dated "The Morrow of the Translation of the Bones of St. Symphorosa."\textsuperscript{155} The irascible Philip Nicholas Shuttleworth, Bishop of Chichester, considered the practice an affront, and occasionally expressed his irritation by sending correspondence to his High Church colleagues dated “The Palace, Washing Day.”\textsuperscript{156}

Other Tractarian tastes and tendencies were the subject of additional ridicule. In \textit{Barchester Towers} (1857) Anthony Trollope portrayed the consternation of two Anglo-Catholic churchmen as they called upon a newly-appointed Evangelical bishop at the episcopal palace. As they entered the study

they at once felt that they were strangers there. The furniture was for the most part the same, yet the place had been metamorphosed. A new sofa had been introduced, a horrid chintz affair, most unprelatical and almost irreligious; such a sofa as never yet stood in the study of any decent High Church clergyman of the Church of England. The old curtains had also given way....\textsuperscript{157}

The personal appearance of Tractarian clergymen also immediately signaled their sympathies to the initiated: many took especial care to ensure that this should be so. W.J. Conybeare (1853) observed, “their peculiarities have been made familiar to all, by the pen and pencil of innumerable satirists.”\textsuperscript{158} Tractarian priests were invariably clean-shaven and austere, even ascetic, and wore “jampot” collars (now called dog-collars) and straight, sober black coats tightly buttoned up to the cravat. Members of Anglican sisterhoods also were recognised by their distinctive clerical costume; those in the Devonport community wore severe black dresses with starched cotton collars and simple wooden crosses.\textsuperscript{159} Not everyone admired such attire, which some saw as an indulgence or even an impertinence. In his \textit{Letter to Young Girls and Young Ladies} (1876), Ruskin waspishly advised “don’t wear white crosses, nor black dresses, nor caps


\textsuperscript{156} G.B. Tennyson, \textit{Victorian Devotional Poetry}, 256, note 15.

\textsuperscript{157} Anthony Trollope, \textit{Barchester Towers}, 1857. New York: Signet, 1963, 42. The power struggles between High and Low Church partisans, presented in mock epic terms as the “angers of Agamemnon and Achilles” (132), provide one of the comic underpinnings of the novel. Another clergyman, Mr. Arabin, “champion of the Church militant . . . took up the cudgels on the side of the Tractarians, and at Oxford . . . sat for a while at the feet of the great Newman,” 183, 184. Issues of class also inflected and intensified these disputes.

\textsuperscript{158} W.J. Conybeare, “Church Parties,” \textit{Edinburgh Review} 98 (October 1853), 315.

\textsuperscript{159} One Evangelical clergyman complained about the practice of using crosses and crucifixes as ornaments, contending “[c]rosses have been introduced into Protestant churches and cemeteries, on the covers of Prayer Books, and elsewhere, by the Puseyites.” Quoted in Reed, \textit{Glorious Battle}, 82. Guy Morville, Margaret May, and Alan Ernescliffe, the wife of Mr. Clare, among many other exemplary characters in Yonge’s novels, had grave markers in the shape of a cross, as did Yonge herself; in \textit{The Pillars of The House} Stella Underwood weaves white flowers onto the framework of a wire cross, which she places on her brother’s grave.
with lappets. Nobody has any right to go about in an offensively celestial uniform, as if it were more their business or privilege, than it is everybody’s, to be God’s servants.”

Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, and subsequently of Winchester, complained of the style adopted by the students at Cuddesdon, the High Church theological college he had recently founded: “I consider it a heavy affliction that they should wear neckcloths of peculiar construction, coats of peculiar cut, whiskers of peculiar dimensions—that they should walk with a peculiar step, carry their heads at a peculiar angle to the body, and read in a peculiar tone.”

He lamented “the want of vigour, virility, and … vitality” of the religious life of young men. The appearance of H.P. Liddon, the vice-principal of Cuddesdon, apparently was even more objectionable: he was ominously said to resemble “an Italian ecclesiastic, glittering-eyed, with ‘a white band for a collar and a black cassock with a broad belt.’”

Some suspected that a more subversive possibility was surreptitiously signaled in such an appearance, and denounced it accordingly. A visitor to St. Matthias’s Church, in Stoke Newington, London, charged that “the style of dress and the closely-shaven face, favored so greatly by the English imitators of Rome, do give to most men a rather juvenile, if not womanly, appearance…”

*Punch* expressed an opinion in an essay entitled “Parsons in Petticoats” (1865): “Clergymen of extreme High proclivities are very fond of dressing like ladies. They are much addicted to wearing vestments diversified with smart gay colours, and variously trimmed and embroidered.”

J.W. Burgon (1814-1888), who had been a fellow at Oriel with Newman, Keble, and Pusey, also insisted that these sartorial preferences were unseemly, unmanly, and possibly unnatural. He protested that “there is wondrous little of the gospel of Jesus Christ in this miserable resuscitation of effete Medievalism. It is of the Earth: earthy, unspiritual, an unwholesome, a mawkish, a wholly unEnglish thing.”

Despite such insults the Tractarians sought every opportunity to accentuate their separate identity by emphasising their many idiosyncrasies. In an extended satire of Tractarian practices and perspectives entitled *The Life of A Prig, by One* (1885), the narrator carefully catalogued the ecclesiastical and academic credentials of his High Church family:

My father was a fellow of his college; my grandfather wrote

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163 Quoted in Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 99.


165 “Parsons in Petticoats,” *Punch*, 10 June 1865, 239.

166 J.W. Burgon; quoted in Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 225.
a commentary of thirteen volumes on the Ephesians; my uncle on my mother’s side was the writer of the popular children’s series, called *Gilded Pills*, and my maternal grandfather was a famous preacher. My one married aunt wedded a dean, and five of my unmarried aunts never miss the two daily services at Boredom Cathedral. I was brought up in an atmosphere of mortar-boards, masters’ gowns, spectacles, and Greek lexicons, and my earliest recollections are of that delicious odour of black broad-cloth, which is so familiar to those who have mixed with the clergy.  

He included a representative extract from his childhood diary in order to recount in detail the routine duties and diversions of his day.

> When buttoning my braces, asked myself the question, “What do I live for?” Much moved at family prayer with feelings of thanksgiving. Heads—that I am of a clergyman’s family; that I am a member of the Church of England; that I live within reach of a cathedral town; that I am going to Oxford; that I have never been exposed to the temptations of school; that I have the inestimable blessing of a mother who can read Greek.... A profitable morning. Herodotus. Trigonometry. For mortification at dinner, put sugar into beer, and mustard into pudding, but secretly, lest being observed, pride might supervene. Afternoon—walked with father to Hayhurst, where he had a funeral. Algebra, Hecuba, Greek verses until tea. Feeling of oppression after tea.... Earnest conversations with Uncle George about the future of the Chinese missions. Felt much fervour at family prayers. In my own room, self-examination.

Even the most devoted disciple of Charlotte Yonge must laugh ruefully at this recitation; these situations and sentiments might have been scripted for a character in any of her domestic chronicles. More importantly, however, they signal that even the most intransigent enemies of Tractarianism acknowledged the singular intensity of an entire community eager to present itself as a more exalted example to a sceptical or suspicious world. This was an enterprise that attracted an array of reactions, including amusement, admiration, animosity, and on occasion, abuse. The Evangelical dean of Carlisle certainly spoke for many when he offered this fervent prayer during Lenten services:

> Oh Lord, we pray Thee, lift the veil of hypocrisy from these faces! We pray Thee, strip them of their meretricious sanctity, of that assumed form and garb of superior holiness, which is but the cover and concealment of the paganism and popery of the

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167 Thomas de Longueville, *The Life of a Prig, by One*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co., 1885, 9-10. As Robert Lee Wolff has suggested, these details are “doubtless intended to suggest Hurrell Froude’s *Remains*,” but they also recall several of the characters and situations in the novels of Charlotte Yonge, especially *The Heir of Redclyffe* and *The Daisy Chain*.

168 Ibid., 11-12.
heart which lies within.\textsuperscript{169}

Works of the imagination such as the novel are extended meditations on the deeds, desires and destiny of a community; providing insight into how its inhabitants establish and enforce practices of inclusion and exclusion in the creation and preservation of an identity. In \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe} Yonge succeeded in making those inhabitants, and that identity, not only convincing but compelling. To do this she invented a closed world that ended as it opened, with a young Anglo-Catholic heroine in an English provincial parish. The timeless Tractarian cycle celebrated in \textit{The Christian Year} provides the structure, which is relentlessly reinforced with references and allusions to a multitude of other Tractarian texts: novels, poems, hymns, sermons, treatises, and translations.

In the end, the achievement of \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe} is that it orders the unruly elements of reality so effectively that it creates its own authority and authenticity. The narrative entertains for a time, but ultimately intends to test and transform its audience in a profound and perhaps permanent way. It is propaganda that aims to persuade its readers to admire and accept the truth and power of Anglo-Catholicism, and it was a spectacular success.

Despite its many accomplishments, however, the novel remains vulnerable. In creating a static and separate world, in emphasising the security and safety of Anglo-Catholicism, the closed space of \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe}, its parlors, pews, and secluded spaces, may seem confined and almost claustrophobic. Some of the early enthusiasms and endorsements of the Oxford Movement, such as the emphasis on sacraments and ceremony, are evident, but remain primarily abstract concerns. Practical enterprise, such as the creation of conventual orders and the establishment of city and colonial churches and schools, is as yet peripheral to the narrative, scarcely perceptible, still only possibilities. In her next novel Yonge would confront more directly the pressures, predicaments, and perils of modernity: secularism, rationalism, utilitarianism, positivism, pragmatism, and imperialism. The struggle would be profound and success provisional, even problematic.

With the publication of \textit{The Heir of Redclyffe}, the “foundation of her fame,” Charlotte Yonge had established herself as the most formidable champion of High Church principles in mid-century Britain. Admirers claimed that through some alchemy the narrative became allegorical, even archetypal, and that it altered the established (some said revived the exhausted) ideals of Anglicanism. Perhaps this is the sentiment that best explains the expressions of extravagant praise and exasperated protest that the novel almost invariably aroused. Nevertheless, serious and perhaps insurmountable reservations regarding the essence of Anglo-Catholicism remained: “as a doctrine, was it not wanting in simplicity, hard to master, indeterminate in its provisions, and

\textsuperscript{169} Quoted in Reed, \textit{Glorious Battle}, 233.
without a substantive existence in any age or country? Were its practices too alien, its precepts and proposals too arcane, its partisans too adversarial? Was it limited to the privileged? Or could it expand to engage and embrace all constituencies? Would the Established Church, and the nation, accede to its appeal and accept its truths?

The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations, was Yonge’s response.

A disclaimer was placed in the preface to The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations: A Family Chronicle (1856): Charlotte Yonge declared that “no one can be more sensible than is the Author that the present is an overgrown book of a nondescript class, neither the “tale” for the young, nor the novel for their elders, but a mixture of both.” She confessed that the narrative was “begun as a series of conversational sketches [that] outran both the original intention and the limits of the periodical [The Monthly Packet] in which it was commenced.” Valentine Sanders (2004) has contended that Yonge was conscious of constructing something altogether new: “in categorising her work, she makes it sound like the body of an adolescent—neither one thing nor another, but 'overgrown,' and a ‘mixture.’”

Its episodic, elastic narrative structure closely corresponds to the representation of the heroine, Ethel (Etheldred) May. Ethel, “thin, lank, angular, and sallow,” is fifteen years old when the narrative opens, and it is her voice that is heard first, “trembling with restrained eagerness” as she awkwardly apologises to an aggrieved governess for her impulsivity (3). Ethel, who has none of the composure or contentment of Amabel Edmonstone, is repeatedly admonished by a series of authorities in a relentless refrain of criticism and correction.

As she struggles to be a “flawlessly Tractarian heroine” she resolves to be submissive, but can be neither silent nor still. As a result “she earned a reproof which caused her to draw into herself a rigid, melancholy attitude, a sort of penance of decorum, but a rapid motion of the eyelids, a tendency to crack the joints of the fingers, and an unquietness at the ends of her shoes, betraying the restlessness of the

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171 The Daisy Chain first appeared in The Monthly Packet from July 1853; it was discontinued in December 1855.
172 Valerie Sanders, “‘All-Sufficient to One Another’? Charlotte Yonge and the Family Chronicles,” in Kay Boardman and Shirley Jones, editors, Popular Victorian Women Writers. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004, 93. The Heir of Redclyffe also was considered "something altogether new.
173 According to Amy Cruse, “from the first, the awkward, intelligent, idealistic girl was so popular that a family friend spoke for many of the public when he made Yonge promise that she would never allow Ethel to marry.” The Victarians and Their Books. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1935, 54. Quoted in Shirley Foster and July Simons, What Katy Read: Feminist Re-Readings of ‘Classic’ Stories for Girls. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995, 84. The character of Ethel May was conceived twelve years before her more celebrated American counterpart, Jo March, appeared in Louisa May Alcott’s novel Little Women (1868). Ethel and Jo are described in similar terms and occupy similar roles in their respective families; both are passionate readers constrained by the demands of domesticity who aspire to be professional writers, hovering hesitantly on the boundary between the conventional and the unconventional.
174 Sandbach-Dahlstrom has asserted that Ethel is “described in idealising terms from the very start,” but her imperfections are continually emphasised, and it is more accurate to see her as admirable and appealing instead. ‘Be Good Sweet Maid,’ 78. At the end of the novel, however, even Dr. May concedes that Ethel “is master here.”
175 Dennis, Charlotte Yonge (1823-1901), Novelist of the Oxford Movement, 150. According to Talia Schaffer Ethel May “is generally considered to be as close to a self-portrait as Yonge ever wrote.” Taming the Tropics, 207.
176 Yonge’s portrayal of Ethel’s painful predicament evokes the famous exhortation of Sarah Stickney Ellis that “the highest duty” of a woman “is so often to suffer, and be still.” Ellis, The Daughters of England, 3.
digits therein contained.” Ethel is banished to her room to repair the “deplorable” rents in her “horrid frock,” which she does in a singular style:

Poking and peering about with her short-sighted eyes, she lighted on a work-basket in rare disorder, pulled off her frock, threw on a shawl, and sat down cross-legged on her bed, stitching vigorously, while she spouted with great emphasis an ode of Horace (8).

This passage introduces both the tensions at the core of her character and the themes at the centre of the narrative: the pleasures, proscriptions, and problems that accompany and often inhibit intellectual endeavour and academic aspiration and accomplishment. The boundary between the education of boys and girls was commonly defined by the opportunity to study classical languages and literature. Charles Reding, the protagonist in Newman’s novel *Loss and Gain: The Story of a Convert* (1848), curbs the curiosity of his sister with gentle condescension: “You would know what I mean, dear Mary, if you had read Herodotus.” The heroine of *Middlemarch* (1871), Dorothea Brooke, senses the same limitations in her own schooling, which in her shamed estimation consisted of a “girlish instruction comparable to the nibblings and judgements of a discursive mouse;” “…a labyrinth of petty course, a walled-in maze of small paths that led no whither.” She perceived that the “provinces of masculine knowledge … were a staging-ground from which truth could be seen more clearly.”

The activist Emily Davies energetically condemned the inequities (and iniquities) of such exclusionary educational practices and protocols. In a letter to Anna Richardson she contended

I don’t think anybody has a right to say that Greek and Latin are good for middle-class boys, whose education is expected to end at eighteen, and not for girls, who may probably have leisure to go on studying for some years longer. Also you might say that some girls, ‘tho as yet not many, do learn and love Greek and Latin, and their favourite pursuits ought to have fair play.

A few years later the Schools Inquiry Commission, known as the Taunton Commission (1867-1868), published an exhaustive account on the state of endowed schools that exposed the inconsistent and incoherent instruction that served as the standard in the education of young women. According to the authors

177 Yonge, *The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations: A Family Chronicle*. 1856. Sandwich, MA: Beautiful Feet Books, 2004, 3. All other references are to this edition and will be noted parenthetically within the text.
181 Emphasis in original. Emily Davies, quoted in Murphy and Raftery, editors, *Emily Davies*, 141.
182 The Taunton Commission had not intended to examine the education of young women but was
it cannot be denied that the picture brought before us of the state of middle-class female education is, on the whole unfavourable ... want of thoroughness and foundation; want of system; slovenliness and showy superficiality; inattention to rudiments; undue time given to accomplishments, and these not taught intelligently or in any scientific manner; want of organisation ... a very small amount of professional skill, an inferior set of school books, a vast of dry, uninteresting work. Rules put into the memory with no explanation of their principles, rather than to solid worth, a tendency to fill rather than to strengthen the mind.... An educated mother is of even more importance to the family than an educated father.183

Despite such criticism, however, the Commission declined to recommend the addition of classical languages to the revised standard curriculum for young women. In a letter regarding the establishment of Hitchin College (1870), an exasperated Emily Davies expressed her displeasure to George Lyttelton, one of the chief commissioners: “I am sorry you object to Greek. Judging by the number of ladies who study it for mere pleasure, it wd. seem specially congenial to the female mind.”184 In January 1871 Davies also cautioned Frances Mary Buss (1827-1894), former head of the North London Collegiate School and first principal of the Camden School for Girls, about her proposed curriculum, observing “I noticed in one of the circulars that Latin was only an extra, even in the highest-school. I think the omission lowers the character of the school rather seriously.”185

Charlotte Yonge’s ideal curriculum for girls echoes her own experience and is forbiddingly enterprising and exacting. The program would include literature (both British and continental), modern and classical languages, mathematics, history, geography, astronomy, botany, music, art, composition and declamation, and much Bible study and theology.186 In The Daisy Chain, however, Ethel May has few such opportunities; her intellectual ambition is continually compromised and condemned; her ardour for classical studies ridiculed and repressed, and her impressive attainments regarded as eccentric and even “something contraband” (79).187 Although

persuaded to do so by Emily Davies.

183 Findings of the (Taunton) Schools Inquiry Commission, quoted in Patricia Hollis, 140-141. The report of the Taunton Commission appeared in twenty volumes between 1867 and 1868.

184 Emily Davies, quoted in Raftery and Murphy, editors, Emily Davies, 333.

185 Ibid., 354. Frances Mary Buss was a pioneer of women’s education and instrumental in the opening of the independent North London Collegiate School for Girls in 1850.


187 June Sturrock has noted that Ethel is educated as both a girl and a boy; that is, she studies French, history, and geography with a series of governesses but also borrows her brother’s Greek and Latin texts and attempts his school assignments. Heaven and Home, 35. Mary Ross, the daughter of a clergyman in The Heir of Redclyffe, has similar interests and inclinations: “She had no girlhood, she was a boy till fourteen, and then a woman, and she was scarcely altered since the epoch of that transition, the same in likings, tastes and duties.... [H]er delights were still a lesson in Greek from papa, a school-children’s feast, a game at play, a new book” (33). Nevertheless, Yonge added, “the quantity she did at home and in the parish would be too amazing to be recorded. Spirited and decided, without superfluous fears and
she revels in her achievements she is painfully aware of their perceived impropriety, and anxiety about the appropriateness of her enthusiasm compels her to conceal her poems and papers: “Ethel would not for the world, that anyone should guess at her classical studies—she scarcely liked to believe that even her father knew of them, and to mention them before Mr. Ernescliffe would have been dreadful” (8).

She cannot entirely suppress her resentment of these restrictions, however, and her resistance repeatedly reveals itself: her distracted father querulously demands, “Have you no medium?” (52); and her dull older brother declares disdainfully, “You are always in extremes, Ethel” (73). Following the death of her mother and during the prolonged illness of her older sister Margaret, the demands of deference and domesticity increase exponentially, and Ethel creates a series of schedules to structure her day. Emblematic of her existence is a distressing incident in which her governess berates her for “declaiming,” “neglecting her work, and interfering,” and insists that she abandon her studies and devote herself to domestic duties. “In a state between self-reproach and a sense of injustice,” an exhausted and exasperated Ethel capitulates. She “made a fretful contortion, and obeyed;” “and so it went on,” Yonge added for emphasis, “all the morning” (57). Episodes of prohibition and privation multiply, and Ethel’s entire existence continues to darken precipitously. She cannot see: her father and brother in effect forbid her to wear spectacles (16); she cannot read: her classical studies are forsaken; and she cannot rest: even her “leisure was gone” (343). As if to conform to this diminished sense of self, “Ethel tried to make herself small;” an effort, Yonge observes dryly, “at which she was not very successful” (149). Eventually a crisis occurs: as a result of her inattention (she is reading) her youngest brother nearly falls into a fire; and an abject Ethel is fiercely assailed by her father, who angrily blames her books and accuses her of being “good for nothing” (136).

These incidents participate in the recurrent pattern of the novel, which is preoccupied with the processes of constructing and then contesting intellectual and academic restrictions and restraints; with imposing and then interrogating literal and metaphorical boundaries and borders; and ultimately, with inspecting the unstable, often contentious spaces that separate, and sometimes connect, real and imagined communities and cultures. Yonge continually attempts to impose order on both a restless character and an unruly narrative by emphasising and enforcing the disciplines of enclosure and exclusion. Although The Daisy Chain is often considered the best and most beloved of Yonge’s domestic novels, Jean Shell is surely correct when she deems it “excellent... but uncomfortable.”

fineries... with a manner that, though perfectly feminine, had in it an air of strength and determination” (34). Yonge invests so much detail in a lengthy description of what is after all a secondary character that it is impossible not to interpret this as another idealised self-portrait.

Nevertheless he teaches her how to read a chart and pilot the course of a ship.

Jean Shell, Charlotte Mary Yonge Review. 2000. Georgina Battiscombe, however, has claimed that “[t]he true addict has read The Daisy Chain not once but a hundred times; every word is dear and familiar, a text as sacrosanct as Holy Writ.” Charlotte Mary Yonge, 96. It may be that now there is more popular and scholarly interest in The Pillars of the House, a later novel that features an even larger Anglo-Catholic
Ethel is one of eleven children whose "aspirations" and experiences form "the daisy chain" of the title, an archetypal Anglo-Catholic family in an archetypal country town. Market Stoneborough is known primarily for its two most prominent institutions, the great minster and the grammar school, and unlike the isolated Edmonstones of The Heir of Redclyffe the Mays are intimately involved in their community as students, instructors, physicians, priests, parishioners. Barbara Dennis (1992), June Sturrock (1995), and others have observed that The Daisy Chain is profoundly concerned with education in all its incarnations, including elementary schools, national schools, boarding schools, home schools, finishing schools, dame schools, ragged schools, missionary schools, parish schools, preventive or reformatory schools, service, industrial, and professional schools, and universities. In contemporary Britain the most important of these institutions were established by two rival religious foundations: the Anglican National Society, founded in 1811 to provide education for the poor; and the Nonconformist British and Foreign School Society, founded three years later to promote a general education. In the 1840s the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, established a Committee of Education with a system of school inspectors supervised by James Phillips Kay, later Kay-Shuttleworth (1804-1877). This organisation was independent of the Established Church, and its authority and agenda were often regarded with resentment by the Anglican clergy.

As early as 1847 the Anglican clergyman W.J. Butler had astutely predicted "that the battle for the Church would be fought in the schools" and The Daisy Chain demonstrates the depth and persistence of the High Church commitment to that cause. According to Christabel Coleridge the Church concentrated on "children of the working classes, whose development and welfare was the new great enthusiasm of the day," but this emphasis was not exclusive. One of the most energetic educators, Nathaniel Woodward (1811-1891), activist curate of several parishes in the East End of London, insisted to the Bishop of Manchester: "we must get possession of the Middle Classes ... and how can we so well do this as through Public Schools?" He later added that

The greatest possible good that a nation can enjoy is unity among the several classes of society, and certain it is that nothing can promote this so effectively as the classes being brought up together learning from their childhood the same

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191 Even an unfortunate pair of jackdaw nestlings captured by Tom May "were destined to a wicker cage, and education" (394).


193 Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 164.

Reform also was reviving the most elite educational institutions. In 1854, at the time of the writing of *The Daisy Chain*, governmental authorities had approved proposals to end the Anglican domination of the universities and provide opportunities for dissenters to matriculate. The emphasis on secularisation also accelerated, and additional concerns emerged. When the Broad Churchman Benjamin Jowett (1817-1893) became Master of Balliol in 1870 he asserted that he was “anxious to turn … the college from a mixture of Anglican seminary and gentleman’s finishing school into a serious forcing house for those who governed Britain and the Empire.” The High Church Party was both aggrieved and alarmed. On the floor of the House of Commons Robert Cecil, later the Marquess of Salisbury and Prime Minister, expressed his fear that Oxford would then become “a nucleus and focus of infidel teaching and exposure.”

Other formidable competitors also emerged to challenge the supremacy of the Established Church: the Anglican clergy were incensed by the increasingly aggressive campaign of the Roman Catholic Church to expand its own system of primary education in England and to establish missionary schools abroad.

*The Daisy Chain* insinuated itself into these rivalries. From the most elementary to the most elite, in city, country, and colony, every educational institution or initiative in the novel requires radical reconstruction and reform. Charity schools were ruined by the indolence and ignorance of the instructors; endowed day schools such as Stoneborough had degenerated academically, and socially, and morally; and as Yonge saw it even Balliol, the most prestigious college, with all of Oxford, had become a place of “competition and controversy,” its certainties and civilities damaged and “distorted by some enchanter” and its standards debased by those who would “desert and deny” (365-366, 392).

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195 Quoted in Dennis, *Charlotte Yonge*, 71.
196 Jenkins, *Gladstone*, 164.
198 The education of British schoolchildren was a particular concern of Henry Edward Manning (1808-1892), Cardinal of Westminster, who had converted to Roman Catholicism in 1852 (see above). In 1855 Keble and Gladstone organised a counteroffensive with the unwieldy name of the Association for Making Known upon the Continent the Principles of the Anglican Church, later known as the Anglo-Continental Society.
199 Anglicans often referred to Newman as an “enchanter” when many of his admirers and associates accompanied him into the Roman Catholic Church.
200 Ethel Romanes observed that in the Oxford scenes “some hints are given of the stress and strain which so many of the best of Oxford felt in these years after the disappearance of Newman.” *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 73. In *The Heir of Redclyffe* Guy forbids his groom to accompany him to Oxford, citing the possibility of temptation there; and the tutor George Fielder, educated at Oxford, establishes a private understanding with Evelyn de Courcy in preparation for their elopement; in *The Daisy Chain* Norman May is bewildered by argumentation on sacred subjects; and in *Hopes and Fears* the academic career of Owen Sandbrook becomes a dangerous course of dissipation and doubt. In a late novel, *The Long Vacation* (1895), Yonge lamented that “now the University seems just an ordeal of faith to go through” (133). It should also be noted that Tom Harewood, a minor character in *The Heir of Redclyffe*, is heard to be “getting into fresh scrapes at Cambridge” (164).
In *The Daisy Chain* Yonge interrogates the inadequacies of both secular and spiritual instruction, and especially those that cluster at the instable intersection of the two: a contentious space that the Tractarians regarded with equal amounts of enthusiasm and apprehension. The ecclesiastical historian S.L. Ollard observed (1983) that “the first men of the Oxford Movement were scholars and teachers: it was natural therefore that education should be quickened and enriched by their work,” and *The Daisy Chain* details the demands of that daunting legacy.

The “aspirations” of all the children involve an arduous process of moral instruction and improvement, and it is entirely appropriate that the centre of the May household is neither the drawing room nor the dressing room, the secure, almost sacred cynosures and sanctuaries of the Edmonstone establishment, but the schoolroom:

It was such a room as is often to be found in old country town house, the two large windows looking out on a broad old-fashioned street.... The fireplace was ornamented with blue and white Dutch tiles bearing marvelous representations of Scripture history... the seats in faded carpet-work, a piano; a globe; a large table in the middle of the room, with three desks on it; a small one, and a light cane chair by each window; and loaded with bookcases (3).

There is a familiar, fairy-tale quality to this description, and its representative fixtures and furnishings reassure the reader with a sense of comfort and connection. The May schoolroom seems an enduring, eternal, emblematic space: prosperous, practical, Protestant, and above all entirely and irreproachably English.

Although one scholar has contended that the narrative “hardly leaves” schoolroom or Stoneborough, this is not entirely accurate. The conspicuous presence of the globe, which will become something of a talisman as the novel proceeds, signals that *The Daisy Chain* will abandon the somewhat insular setting and sensibility that was the symbolic core of *The Heir of Redclyffe*. This alternative emphasis is announced by the appearance of Alan Ernescliffe, a young lieutenant in the Royal Navy, whose exploits as an Englishman in the expansion of Empire are eagerly enumerated by his younger brother. “He got his promotion last week. My father was in the battle of Trafalgar, and Alan has been three years in the West Indies and then he was in the Mediterranean, and now on the coast of Africa” (9). Lest Alan appear motivated by mere mercenary considerations, Yonge added that

he had distinguished himself in encounters with slave ships, and in command of a prize that he had had to conduct to Sierra Leone, he had shown great coolness and seamanship, in several perilous conjunctures, such as a sudden storm, and an encounter with another slaver, when his Portuguese prisoners became

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mutinous, and nothing but his steadiness and intrepidity had saved the lives of himself and his English companions (10).

Alan’s competence, courage, and composure are characteristic elements of an idealised English identity that Yonge evidently admires and endorses: “he was, in fact, a hero” (10). Nevertheless, exhaustion and exposure during his arduous service in the South Seas eventually cause “a curious exotic specimen of fever” (10), and upon his arrival in Stoneborough he becomes seriously ill and consults the most senior medical practitioner, Dr. May.

As Alan recovers and anticipates his “orders to the Pacific” he is accepted and eventually assimilated into the May establishment, no longer seen as an alien “stranger” but as “one of themselves” (11). Intimate with and inspirational to the younger boys, especially Harry, who is keen to become a sailor, he is asked to stand as a sponsor to their youngest sister, the infant Gertrude Margaret May, whom everyone calls Daisy. Alan eventually proposes to the eldest daughter, the invalid Margaret, and they intend to marry when he returns and she recovers from severe injuries sustained in a carriage accident, but he sickens and dies of fever in the Loyalty Islands; and after “seven years’ captivity on her couch” (546) she too dies, debilitated by disappointment and disease. Even in death the two provide a powerful and persistent link, both literally and symbolically, between Stoneborough and the South Seas, and by the end of the novel this close connection of core and colony will become one of the most compelling elements of the narrative. At Margaret’s funeral service the correspondence is made explicit: a seaman who “had been with Mr. May on the island” during Alan’s last illness arrives in Stoneborough to serve as one of the pallbearers “who, early on Christmas Eve, carried her to the Minster:”

Last time she had been there, Alan Ernescliffe had supported her. Now, what was mortal of him lay beneath the palm tree, beneath the glowing summer sky, while the first snowflakes hung like pearls on her pall. But, as they laid her by her mother’s side, who could doubt that they were together? (547)

The intimate connection is founded on and furthered by the church; Alan bequeaths twenty thousand pounds to the establishment and endowment of a chapel, not in the South Seas but in Cocksmoor, an adjacent village, meant, as Ethel understands, as “his token to Margaret” (472). The consecration of the country church dedicated to St. Andrew, sponsor and special protector of sailors, symbolises another sacrament, the marriage ceremony that will never take place, and the “pearl hoop” of Margaret’s engagement ring seals the eternal covenant as it is set into the stem

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203 There are four other Margarets: the mother, the oldest sister, Flora’s second child, and Margaret (Meta) Rivers, a local heiress who marries Norman May and becomes a missionary in New Zealand. 204 The three doctors, including the provincial practitioner Dr. May; the medical missionary Dr. Aubrey Spencer; and Sir Matthew Fleet, an eminent London specialist, disagree on a diagnosis: shock, paralysis, and general debility all are symptoms of her condition. None suggests a possible cure, apart from complete bed rest.
of the chalice. The narrative portrays Alan and Margaret as martyrs whose sacrificial deaths provide Cocksmoor not only with its own church and clergyman, but its own pair of patron saints, recalled in the design of the painted glass of the windows. Yonge added that "[t]here was more true union in this than in clinging to the mere tangible emblem, for broken and weak is all affection that is not knit together above in the One Infinite Love" (513), appropriating the language and intonations of a psalm or sermon.

Cocksmoor itself is inhabited by poor Irish immigrants who labour in the slate quarries outside Stoneborough. Its "colony of roughly built huts of mud, turf, or large blocks of slate" is surrounded by "a broad open moor, stony and full of damp boggy hollows, forlorn and desolate...." (22). Yonge continually constructs the original Cocksmoor as a wilderness and a wasteland, "a dark heathenish place" populated by a "hard, rude, and unpromising race" of "rude, wild-looking men" (90). The community is literally and metaphorically separated from the "rich green meadows" and prosperous population of Stoneborough; access is restricted to a single arduous route bordered by several boundaries and barriers: "there was a plantation to be crossed, with a gate that would not open..." (22). Even the incomprehensible dialect of the people seems an insurmountable impediment until Ethel reassures her perplexed brother: "Never mind.... You will soon learn their language" (301). Avoided, exploited, or ignored by everyone except the Mays, Cocksmoor is an uncivilised space with neither school nor church to subdue its savagery, and its reclamation can also be read as an allegory of redemption.

Talia Schaffer (2005) has observed that the British population contemplated the presence and proximity of such "wild" places with considerable consternation, anxiously and incessantly comparing them with the newly "discovered" "dark continents" of Africa and Asia. The inhabitants aroused additional alarm: poor and primarily Irish and Roman Catholic, they were perceived as infidel aliens presumably eager to initiate and accelerate processes of reverse colonisation in an invasion that would imperil not only the integrity of the Empire but the identity of Protestant England itself. In her representation of Cocksmoor and its residents Yonge evokes similar sentiments, recalling the racialist attitudes and imperialist arguments of the statistician

205 The painted windows are the gifts of several of the characters, recalling the generosity of the High Church community in the decoration of All Saints, Hursley (see Chapter One). Patteson also sent Charlotte Yonge an extensive inventory of the gifts made to the Melanesian mission. Margaret's gentle gesture recalls a rancorous ecclesiastical controversy. In 1848 Pusey's daughter, Lucy, died of consumption at the age of fifteen. Had she lived she had intended to enter an Anglican convent, and during her last illness expressed the wish that her personal jewelry, which included more than two hundred precious stones, including diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and pearls, might be reset into a collection of church plate, including a chalice. The presiding bishop, the Evangelical Charles Thomas Longley (later Archbishop of Canterbury), adamantly refused the presentation, insisting that the jeweled inscription, "Have Mercy, Lord, on Lucy Marie," implied a belief in purgatory that was contrary to the tenets of the Established Church.

206 Much of the novel interrogates the idea of enclosure. Norman May is stripped of his leadership position at Stoneborough School when the students riot to protest the enclosure of a public space. This episode reflects another contemporary concern: between 1864 and 1867 a new body of case law emerged on the subject of private ownership and public space.

James Kay-Shuttleworth in his celebrated study of the labouring immigrant population entitled *The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Classes Employed in the Cotton Manufacture in Manchester* (1832). According to Kay-Shuttleworth

This immigration has been, in one important respect, a serious evil. The Irish have taught the labouring classes of this country a pernicious lesson.... Debased alike by ignorance and pauperism, they have discovered, with the savage, what is the minimum of the means of life, upon which existence may be prolonged. The paucity of the amount of means and comforts necessary for the mere support of life, is not known by a more civilized population, and this secret has been taught the labourers of this country by the Irish.... [This] contagious example of ignorance and a barbarous disregard of forethought and economy, exhibited by the Irish, spread.

He concluded with an apocalyptic prediction: “[t]he colonisation of savage tribes has ever been attended with effects on civilisations as fatal as those which have marked the progress of the sand flood over the fertile plains of Egypt.”

Coombe Prior and East Hill, similarly “savage” and insalubrious “Irish” spaces in *The Heir of Redclyffe*, are portrayed as securely segregated communities populated by the anonymous ‘Other’.

The moral and cultural contagion that so alarmed Kay-Shuttleworth was controlled and contained. However, despite difficulties of distance and terrain the separation of the two spheres in *The Daisy Chain* is seldom managed or monitored so successfully. Frontiers dissolve and disappear, and literal and metaphoric boundaries between civilisation and chaos, religion and irreligion, prosperity and poverty, are constantly contested and occasionally breached. Ethel invariably returns to Stoneborough bearing evidence of the squalor she encounters at Cocks Moor, the heavy clumps of black mud that obstinately cling to and discolour her skirts and chafe the sensibilities of her governess. However, she is determined to improve the condition of the inhabitants of that “forsaken colony” (22) through education and the eradication of “the many flagrant evils amongst them” (435). The men and women are sullen and slovenly, and the

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209 As Talia Schaffer observed, “a poor and uncivilised district needing to be reclaimed and civilised is almost a necessary appendage of every family of her novels.” “Taming the Tropics,” *Victorian Studies*, 211.

210 Schaffer noted that Yonge has transformed the English poor into a colonial as well as a sanitary problem. See “Taming the Tropics,” above. According to Amy de Gruchy, “Cocks Moor school and village exist not for themselves but as the principal spheres in which Ethel’s moral and spiritual development can take place.” In “Could Ethel May Teach?” Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship *Journal* 7 (2005), 28.

211 Yonge’s images recall Mayhew’s study that divided all societies into “nomadic and civilised tribes” or “races,” comparing the poor of London to the “Bushman and Sonquas among the Hottentots, the Fingoes among the Kaffirs and the Bedouins among the Arabs, alike in their savage lusts and immorality.” Quoted in James Epstein, “Taking Class Notes on Empire,” in Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, editors, *At Home*.
appearance of the schoolchildren, “little savages” whose “rough heads, torn garments, staring vacant eyes, and mouths gaping in shy rudeness” (106, 138) scarcely prepossessing, but Ethel becomes particularly interested in Una M’Carthy, a pious and picturesque child who regularly attends the Anglican classes established by the Mays, although, as one scholar has observed with some amusement, she is “repeatedly, even obsessively, described as Irish.”

The M’Carthy family eventually abandons Cocksmoor in search of easier employment, and Ethel later learns of Una’s death in an epidemic of “the Irish fever,” or typhus. In her last hours she had incessantly recited the prayers and psalms she had learned at Cocksmoor, a report from a clergyman that is some consolation to the grieving Ethel.

The other schoolchildren, the “hives of heathens” who remain at Cocksmoor, are also at risk. The atmosphere of the rented room in which religious classes are conducted is “poisonous” and pestilential, repeatedly referred to as “a black hole,” an allusion to a notorious incident in 1756 in which more than one hundred British prisoners reportedly died of suffocation in a Calcutta prison. Both Norman and Mary are overcome by the airlessness and oppressive heat of the Cocksmoor cottage, but they recover rapidly; Dr. Spencer, a medical practitioner recently arrived in Stoneborough from a career with the East India Company, is more concerned, however, with the “wretched beings you are leaving shut up there” (387). Trained at Cambridge, Paris, and Edinburgh with Dr. May, he is the most conspicuous representative of Empire after the death of Alan Emescliffe and the disappearance of Harry May. His impressive imperialist resume includes postings to several British possessions and protectorates: he had “received an appointment in India” (77), and proceeded to the Himalayas, Australia, “the Asiatic Islands,” Egypt, and Palestine. He returned to the subcontinent, however, as a medical missionary, and “Dr. Spencer had, in fact, never rested till he had established a mission in his former remote station; and his brown godson, once a Brahmin, now an exemplary Clergyman, traced his conversion to the friendship, and example, of the English doctor” (406). Spencer relied on this colonial experience to design Cocksmoor Church, and the connection between missions at home and overseas is reinforced, and indeed repeated in tangible terms.


212 Ibid., 208. However, the Cocksmoor clergyman notes that the words of Una’s first prayer sound suspiciously similar to “an Ave Maria” (139). Later “her Irish wit and love of learning” enable her to memorise the Catechism and win a prize Prayer Book (175).

213 The “Irish fever” arrived in England in 1847, said to be brought by those fleeing the Great Famine. More than a thousand people died in London in the last three months of 1848; the epidemic recurred in 1856 and 1864.

214 Evidence of the existence of “the Black Hole of Calcutta,” as it came to be known, has never been independently confirmed, but the incident was so widely accepted in England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that it became a conspicuous controlling image in the construction of the British encounter with India and its inhabitants. For more information see Andrew Ward, Our Bones Are Scattered: The Cawnpore Massacres and the Indian Mutiny of 1857. London: Henry Holt & Co., 1996; and Christopher Herbert, War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007. Yonge's idea of India and of the imperial experience will be further examined in Chapter Four.
Similar associations had been made earlier. Owen Chadwick has argued that “the idea of mission not only to the heathen overseas but to the heathen at home was established in Christian minds.” However, the commitment to this initiative had languished, and in 1851 the Anglican Church had sought to reignite interest by sponsoring a conference in Birmingham on the subject of missionary schools. “The soul of the little ragged urchin in the street,” as the report of the conference put it,

is as precious in the sight of God as that of a Hindoo or a Hottentot, and a saving conversion in the one case causes as great joy in heaven as in the other. Do not let us, then, leave the heathen abroad uncared for, but let us, likewise endeavour to reclaim the heathen perishing at home, and who are living in darkness as profound, and in habits as debased, as in the darkest places of the heathen world.

*The Daisy Chain* is a primer that provides pertinent information and practical and philosophical advice on how to accomplish these ambitions. School and church, established by the Mays, “do something towards civilising” (115) the “wild” and “wayward” peoples and places in both England and the Empire, and Charlotte Yonge (selectively) records the phases and the results of this enterprise. After a series of reversals she contended that “all went well; there was a school instead of a hubbub, clean faces instead of dirty, shining hair instead of wild elf-locks, orderly children instead of savages” (263). The success at Cocksmoor was comprehensive, as the wilderness that was both alien and alienating transformed itself into an English idyll:

It was not a desolate sight as in old times, for the fair edifice, rising on the slope, gave an air of protection to the cottages, which seemed now to have a center of unity, instead of lying forlorn and scattered. Nor were they as wretched in themselves, for the impulse of civilisation had caused windows to be mended and railings to be tidied, and Richard promoted, to the utmost, cottage gardening, so that, though there was an air of poverty, there was no longer an appearance of reckless destitution and hopeless neglect (533-534).

Richard May, the oldest son, is the curate in charge of Cocksmoor, and as they become adults many of the May children participate in similar projects or pursuits. Margaret and Ethel note with sorrow that “there were too many Cocksmoors in the world” (251), and Charlotte Yonge “scatters” several “wild places” throughout *The Daisy Chain* in order to engage the reader.

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217 Gardens remain an emblematic English space. In *The Heir of Redclyffe* Guy proposes marriage to Amy amid the shrubbery at Hollywell; after his death she finds solace amid the roses there.
intellectually and imaginatively with emerging issues of racial or ethnic difference. The compulsion to classify or categorise “exotic” or “alien” peoples encountered in the imperialist project was an effort to subdue the instabilities already present in the precarious construction and maintenance of the national identity. The narrative introduces a series of strategies and subterfuges to confront and contain the menace of “the Other:” Irish, Indian, Maori, Melanesian. Perhaps as a result of Yonge’s affection and admiration for (and extensive correspondence with) her cousin John Coleridge Patteson, the colonial bishop who began his missionary work in Melanesia and was martyred there in 1871, the sprawling narrative eventually settles itself in the Pacific Islands, New Zealand, Samoa, and particularly the Loyalty and Navigator Isles, as if also in sympathy with Norman’s confession that he “cannot help being drawn to those Southern seas” (440). After his ordination he will become a missionary priest among the Maoris, then an archdeacon, and eventually is enthroned as a colonial bishop.218

Another brother, Harry, perhaps more representative of a stereotypical Englishman than the intellectual and introspective Norman, provides a more sentimental linkage between England and Empire, one that eventually establishes itself as almost a separate narrative within the novel. Harry joins the Royal Navy and is posted to a ship in the South Seas. The May family congregates in the schoolroom to consult the globe as they contemplate his assignment to the Pacific station.

Harry begged to be told which constellations he should still see in the southern hemisphere. Dr. May was the first to rectify the globe for the southern latitudes, and fingers were affectionately laid on Orion’s studded belt, as though he were a friend who would accompany the sailor-boy. Voices grew loud and eager in enumerating the stars common to both; and so came bedtime, and the globe stood on the table in danger of being forgotten. Ethel diligently lifted it up (220).

The globe becomes a precious reminder of a personal correspondence and connection, but also a promise of something more: a material artefact symbolic of the extensive yet profoundly English essence of Empire. Ethel’s patient act of elevation appears ritualistic and above all reverential.

218 See the sequel to The Daisy Chain, The Trial (1864), and The Long Vacation (1901). Norman and Meta’s son (named for Dr. May) returns to England under the charge of Ethel to be educated at Stoneborough. Scholars have observed that missionary enterprise is central to the formation of middle-class identity in Britain. “By the end of the nineteenth century British churches were sponsoring a field force of ten thousand missionary operatives, financed to the tune of two million pounds a year, about what the British government was then spending on civil-service salaries.” Andrew Porter, Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004, 372. Mare and Percival contend that Yonge’s cousin John Coleridge Patteson “seems to have served to some extent as a model for Norman, and Charlotte tells us that his earlier voyages in his mission ship had been so suggestive of incidents fabricated in The Daisy Chain that the proceeds were felt to be the due of the mission;” Victorian Best-Seller, 148. Yonge’s descriptions of the places and peoples of the South Seas in The Daisy Chain are based on the accounts of Patteson and Selwyn; she also published extracts of Patteson’s letters in The Monthly Packet.
3.3.1. ‘The Daisy Chain’
England and Empire

Where truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors...
Which he may read that binds the sheaf,
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
And with those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, ‘In Memoriam’

The remainder of the novel seems resolutely and almost relentlessly “rectified” for the southern latitudes. After Harry’s ship is reported missing off the coast of New Zealand and its crew lost and presumed dead, Ethel gazes at the globe and reflects on these precious recollections of her beloved brother: “now and then her eye was caught by the rocket-like tract of a shooting star. Orion was rising slowly far in the east, and bringing to her mind the sailor-boy under the southern sky; if, indeed, he were not where sun and stars no more are the light” (400). And finally, when Harry returns to Stoneborough, he recalls the most desperate hours of illness and exhaustion: “Orion shone clear and bright, and brought back the night when they had chosen the starry hunter as his friend. ‘It seemed,’ he said, ‘as if you all were looking at me, and smiling to me in the stars. And there was the Southern Cross upright, which was like the Minster to me, and I recollected it was Sunday morning at home, and I knew you would be thinking about me’” (454). The memory of English mornings, and Sunday routines and rituals, saves and sustains him. Again, the narrative insists on creating another linkage of localities, between England and Empire, and an emphasis on the interdependencies of imperialist and missionary enterprise; and as it proceeds constantly blurs the boundaries between a series of imagined spaces and a set of ideological processes. Yonge’s reference to the Southern Cross, the name of the ship purchased for the Melanesian Mission with the proceeds of The Heir of Redclyffe, recognises and rewards the discernment and devotion of her readers.

However, it is yet another brother, Tom, whose pronouncements on race are so exaggerated and extreme that they unsettle the narrative and startle the reader with their anger and aggression. Tom, continually brutalised and bullied by his classmates at Stoneborough School (ironically, another example of a chaotic and uncivilised space), speaks of barbaric practices such as cannibalism with a vehemence that has a viciousness of its own.\(^\text{219}\) His vile abuse of the “blackamoors” and “black villains” (464-465) of “the Antipodes” eventually erupts in the

\(^\text{219}\) According to Talia Schaffer “the missionaries’ careful presentation of the Islanders as acceptable Christians-to-be constantly gets undermined by the hostile racial jokes made by minor characters and the narrative voice itself,” Taming the Tropics,\(^\text{209}\). Tom, however, is not an estimable character; his vulgar views on race are portrayed as those of a louche and loutish schoolboy; and Yonge certainly satirises or scorns, rather than shares or sanctions them. He is eventually removed from Stoneborough School and enrolled at Eton, where he is “civilised” and reforms. In the sequel to The Daisy Chain, The Trial (1868), Tom becomes an accomplished and admired physician, taking over the medical practice of his father, and a devoted husband to a dependent invalid wife.
exasperated exclamation that “they are all niggers together” (506, 523). Tom’s perceptions of racial difference draw on contemporary anxieties that circulated even (and perhaps especially) among the more educated elites in England. They illustrate the common compulsion to order and indeed own “the Other” encountered in the course of the imperial project by creating convenient (if contingent and contested) categories and classifications, thus assigning its representatives a separate and subordinate status and space within the national imagination.

Despite his arrogance Tom is abashed when Norman pointedly asks: “What is your place?” (275), in order to ascertain his academic standing at Stoneborough School, and he stammers out an unsatisfactory admission in response. The question of “place” is incessantly posed in the novel, metaphorically controlling the unruly energies of the narrative, as Yonge attempts to construct a response of her own to the implications of this inquiry. Within the novel she confronts an array of cultural, ideological, and aesthetic issues and their attendant anxieties: what is the place of Britain, and of the Established Church, as the Empire inexorably expands in “infidel” lands? How do core and colony maintain their different and distinctive identities as distances contract and definitions collapse? How should the emerging recognition of racial categories and classifications and the resulting emphasis on racial differences be addressed and accommodated in works of the imagination such as the novel? What is the responsibility of the novelist in resolving (or complicating) these concerns?

Yonge certainly had an enormous and enduring interest in the possibilities of “place.” She saw foreign missions as a “splendid romance, a crusade in which subjects were won to Christian dogma as well as souls to Christ;” an opportunity for valour without violence; according to Christabel Coleridge her “greatest enthusiasm was for the spread of the Christian church in heathen lands;” and the importance of “abroad” is apparent in almost all her narratives. She was encouraged in this enterprise from an early age: in her recollections of John Keble Yonge recalled “a printed address to the parishioners of Hursley as early as 1838, in which their vicar invited them to form an association for subscription to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and from that time forward he was almost yearly bringing someone among them who could speak to them from actual experience.” A copy of that appeal, she once confessed, was among her most cherished private papers. Other prominent High Churchmen also promoted missionary enterprise: in the same year Pusey preached two sermons in support of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. W.J. Butler, the vicar of Wantage from 1846, established an annual meeting of the SPG in his parish and encouraged the community of S. Mary the Virgin,

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220 The only other character who expresses himself with a similar vehemence is Jem Jemmings, an ignorant and uneducated sailor who reviles the cannibalism he believes is practiced by the “black savage niggers” of the Loyalty Isles, 452.
221 “Charlotte Mary Yonge,” in The Church Quarterly Review (January 1904), 358.
222 Coleridge, Charlotte Yonge, 143.
223 Yonge, Musings on The Christian Year, xxx, xi.
the religious order he founded, to open affiliate organisations abroad.

At a time when scrutiny of the condition of England (the Great Census) and of Empire (the Great Exhibition) generated considerable national discourse (and discomfort), Charlotte Yonge presented her own interrogation of English identity in *The Daisy Chain*. The Mays are associated with almost all the constituent components of Britain: England, Ireland, and Scotland, and their ancestors participated in several of the key conflicts that contributed to its creation: Flodden, Homildon Hill, Blenheim, Trafalgar. The construction of identity is an enterprise in which the text itself insistently participates, employing strategies both obvious and oblique: chapter headnotes are no longer almost exclusively Tractarian poems and prayers, as in *The Heir of Redclyffe*, but almost entirely British passages. Extracts from *The Christian Year* and *Lyra Innocentium* are included, to be sure, but selections from the works of Chaucer, Milton, Shakespeare, Burns, Scott, Barrett Browning, Tennyson, and Wordsworth dominate.

The central dilemma in *The Daisy Chain* arises from these contradictory impulses: an insistence on an English, or British, essence and an equal emphasis on a more inclusive identity, a Tractarian vision of assimilation into a single exalted community. When Alan and Harry are lost at sea Ethel comforts her sister by saying “It is all one communion, you know,” (322), recalling the simple inscription on the grave marker of Guy Morville in *The Heir of Redclyffe* (“I believe in the communion of saints”); and Dr. May adds “those stars tell us they are in the same Hand” (411), but at times the novel seems to struggle to accept its own assurances. The reality it represents is far more recalcitrant: full of the dirt, dust, squalor, and sin of wild places. Yonge’s strategy of providing correspondences to contain this chaos is illustrated in two compelling images in which the exotic Other participates in the practices and performances of the Anglican community. The shipwrecked sailors of the *Alcestis* come ashore on the Loyalty Isles after days of suffering on the open sea:

> Black figures, with woolly mop-heads, and sometimes decorated with whitewash of lime, crowded round to assist in the transport of the sick man through the surf; and David [a local chieftain] himself, in a white European garb, met his guests with dignified manners that would have suited a prince

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224 London is another “wild place” visited in the narrative; Flora, the materialistic and “cold utilitarian member” (496) of the May family, immerses herself in her husband’s parliamentary career at a time when “great interests were in agitation” (435). As a result of her inattention her infant daughter is dosed to death with Godfrey’s Cordial, a popular “medicinal” elixir that contained dangerous amounts of opium. In *The Three Brides* (1876) another infant sickened with the syrup survives. In his novel *Sybil, or The Two Nations* (1845), Disraeli strongly condemns Godfrey’s Cordial and similar concoctions, revealing racist assumptions in his contention that “infanticide is practiced as extensively and as legally in England as it is on the banks of the Ganges; a circumstance which apparently has not yet engaged the attention of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts” (164). For more information on the uses of opium, laudanum, and morphine in “strengthening” or soothing syrups for children and infants at mid-century see Virginia Berridge and Griffith Edwards, *Opium and the People: Opiate Use in Nineteenth-Century England*. NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1981; and Elia Vallowe CHEPATS, *The Opium of the Children: Domestic Opium and Infant Drugging in Early Victorian England*. Storrs: University of Connecticut Press, 1985. See also *Punch*, “The Poor Child’s Nurse” in Graves, *Punch’s History of Modern England*, Volume One, 153 (see Appendix).
of any land, and conducted them to a beautiful house consisting of a central room with many others opening from it, floored with white coral lime, and lined with soft shining mats of Samoan manufacture. This ... had been erected by them in hopes of an English missionary taking up his abode among them (451-452).

Although structured around the opposition of black and white, these passages emphasise the imagined and idealised connections between colonial community and Cocksmoor, Englishman and Melanesian, and missionary and Ethel May. As Harry earnestly explains, "You must not think of him like a savage, for he is my friend, and a far more perfect gentleman than I ever saw anyone.... The notion of his heart—like Cocksmoor to Ethel—is to get a real English mission, and have all his people Christians" (453). He recounts a memorable experience in New Zealand, at "the Maori pah [village] near his uncle's farm, where the Sunday services were conducted by an old gentleman tattooed elegantly in the face, but dressed like an English clergyman" (460).

These imperialist fantasies illustrate Yonge's strenuous efforts to erase the boundaries that separate racial identities and realities in the establishment of a more inclusive imagined space.\(^{225}\)

The ambition of the Tractarians in the 1850s was to accelerate the processes of acceptance and assimilation in order to attain their ideal of a universal Christian and Anglo-Catholic community. Charlotte Yonge, catechumen of John Keble, child and champion of the Oxford Movement, and increasingly a national celebrity,\(^{226}\) proposed a radical solution: the Church must abandon its clerical origins and abstruse argumentation and instead, as a curate of an inner city church in a later novel insists, "come to the people."\(^{227}\) With the publication of *The Heir of Redclyffe* and *The Daisy Chain* she achieved spectacular success in her crusade to popularise High Church principles, cajoling (and conscripting) her audience into an active participation in that cause. All proceeds of the sales of the novels were dedicated to the establishment and endowment of a series of missions at home and abroad.\(^{228}\) Perhaps the most distant was St. Andrew's Church and College in Kohimarama, named for the church in Cocksmoor, connecting the recovery and rehabilitation of mutually these alien peoples and places and constructing a multitude of literal

\(^{225}\) Mare and Percival contend that "[i]t is no exaggeration to say that *The Daisy Chain* became one of the most important pieces of propaganda in directing the thoughts of the younger generation of Tractarians to the mission field," although they provide few examples in support of this claim. *Victorian Bestseller*, 147.

\(^{226}\) According to Amy Cruse, "[w]hen she came to London and attended evening parties people crowded to see her, and many of her admirers made pilgrimages to Hursley in the hope of catching a glimpse of the creator of Guy Morville and Ethel May." She added that Yonge was repeatedly cheered at Oxford in 1865, "where the enthusiasm for her among the undergraduates was wonderful." *The Victorians and Their Books*, 58.

\(^{227}\) Robert Fulmort, in *Hopes and Fears, or Scenes from the Life of a Spinster* (1860). See Chapter Four.

\(^{228}\) A window in Liverpool Cathedral depicts missionaries disembarking from *The Southern Cross* in the Solomon Islands. In 1857 additional revenues from the sales of *The Heir of Redclyffe* paid for a chapel (designed by Butterfield) and school room in Pitt, an industrial community near Otterbourne, an enterprise that recalls Ethel May's mission in *The Daisy Chain*. For additional information see Frewen Moor, *A Guide to the Village of Hursley, the Home of Keble, Author of 'The Christian Year.'*
and metaphorical reciprocities. The Melanesian Mission has become known as the Melanesian Martyrs Memorial Church of St. Andrew, in honor of John Coleridge Patteson, his deacon, Joseph Atkin, and others. The members of the Melanesian Brotherhood (organised in 1925) recently acquired a much cherished (and coveted) relic: the writing-table of Charlotte Yonge. Yonge had greatly prized the massive table, made of “kauri-kauri wood given to me by Bishop John Richardson Selwyn.” The wood, native to New Zealand, was the same used in the construction of the original Southern Cross, and indeed of all its successors. Yonge bequeathed the table to the Reverend Henry Albany Bowles, rector of St. Matthew’s Otterbourne and the husband of her niece Louisa Alethea Yonge. In 2008 it emerged from obscurity and was offered for sale at auction; after a spirited competition (which included a representative of the Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship), the table was secured by the Melanesian Brotherhood and “repatriated” to Norfolk Island. The new owners intend to display it as the centrepiece of “the Patteson Room” at St. Barnabas’s Mission, a space intended to honor in perpetuity the memory of the Mission’s earliest and most generous benefactors and its first and most famous bishop.

The remarkable odyssey of Yonge’s writing-table, as it circumnavigated the globe, symbolises the presence of the Church at the centre of the imperialist cause. In the 1860s Charlotte Yonge and the High Church clergy, increasingly confident of their powers, called for a similar crusade to reclaim and “rechristianise” England: a campaign to convert the “unchurched” or convince the unsettled. In her next novels she would expose the “dark places” not at the periphery of Empire but at the core, in the capital and the industrial cities, with their enormous populations of the poor and the profane. In Hopes and Fears (1860) and The Clever Woman of the Family (1865) Charlotte Yonge abandoned the ordered and enclosed spaces of the Edmonstones and the Mays to convey her readers to sites much more contested and chaotic. Her strategy in this enterprise was simple: she exhorted her readers to emulate the resolution of Ethel May “always to be doing” (76), recognising, as she always had, “that my course and aim are straight on” (564).

229 The College trained Melanesians for the Church of England. Additional funds were raised at Eton, from the Coleridge family, and from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Yonge also donated GB 800 from the proceeds of The Daisy Chain to establish a dedicated “mission room” at Hursley.
230 Atkin was fatally wounded during an attempt to recover the body of the Bishop. In the days before he died he “consoled himself” for the death of Patteson by reading The Chaplet of Pearls.
231 J.R. Selwyn (1844-1898), the second Bishop of Melanesia, was the youngest son of George Augustus Selwyn, the first bishop of New Zealand. His health failed during his time in the South Seas and he returned to England, serving as the second master of Selwyn College and as honorary chaplain to the Queen.
232 The ninth Southern Cross, built in 1962 and recently refitted, was still in service in 2006.
233 For information on the history of the table see “More about the Writing Desk,” Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship Review, 26 (Spring 2008), 5; and “News from the South Pacific,” Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship Review 27 (Autumn 2008), 5.
4. Novels of the 1860s: City and Community; England and Empire

‘Hopes and Fears, or Scenes from the Life of a Spinster’

‘The Clever Woman of the Family’

4.1. Introduction

‘The great mass of the metropolitan community are as ignorant of the destitution and distress which prevail in the large districts of London ... as if the wretched creatures were living in the very center of Africa.’

James Grant

‘The Church must come to the People.’

The High Churchman Henry Scott Holland (1847-1918), poet, preacher, and Regius Professor of Divinity at Christ Church, Oxford, declared decisively, “there are few moments more dramatic in our Religious History than the recovery of the slums by the Oxford Movement of what it had lost at the University. It had ceased to be Academic. It had become popular. It offered itself to every kind of novel opportunity and risk. It plunged itself into the dark places of our awful cities. It spent itself, with sacrificial ardour, in the service of the poor.”

Although the High Church had identified and aligned itself with the interests and allegiances of the provincial parish after the loss of Newman, the results of the 1851 census had announced the advent of an emerging challenge. The demographic data indicated that for the first time in the history of the nation the majority of the population lived in urban rather than rural areas and worked in industry rather than in agriculture.

The troubled spiritual state of the capital city and the manufacturing centers of the Midlands, where the majority of those who responded had acknowledged no affiliation with the Anglican Church, and many others had admitted that they attended no church at all, was emblematic of the erosion of the authority of the Established Church. Tractarian priests, commonly denied preferment to more prosperous and privileged parishes, as well as almost all bishoprics, recognised the extent of their disabilities in the countryside and came to regard clerical appointments in the inner city as opportunities for the conversion of multitudes of the unchurched. As early as 1835 Edward Bouverie Pusey had asserted that “London, as the heart of our social

1 Henry Scott Holland, A Bundle of Memories. London, 1915, 95-96. Quoted in Dennis, Charlotte Yonge, 103-104.

2 The Census of 1851: The Report of the Registrar General. Mary Poovey observed that “the three censuses published since 1801 showed a remarkable growth in the population of England and Wales, but the increase in the five largest towns was positively astronomical.” Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation, 1830-1864. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995, 73. The Select Committee on the Health of Towns reported an increase of forty-seven percent from 1841 to 1847, remarking that “the actual increase in the number of inhabitants of five of our most important provincial towns has very nearly doubled that rate; being ... almost 98 percent.” London: House of Commons, 1840. Reprints of Economic Classics. NY: Augustus M. Kelly, 1968, iii.
system, must be, and is, day by day more manifestly, circulating health or disease ... in every corner of our land, adding with apprehension that “the condition of our large towns must indeed be a painful and an oppressive subject of thought to every Christian mind.” As the processes of urbanisation and industrialisation accelerated, Pusey was more explicit in his exhortations to his clerical colleagues:

We need missions among the poor of our towns, organised bodies of clergy living among them, licensed preachers in the streets and lanes of our cities; brotherhoods or guilds which would replace socialism; or sisterhoods of mercy.... We need clergy to penetrate our mines, to migrate with our emigrants, to shift with our shifting population, to grapple with our manufacturing system.

Pusey’s appeal was amplified in a series of pamphlets published by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG). In one treatise entitled “Heathen London,” the anonymous author observed that “there are whole streets of houses in London where men, women, and children are crowded together, who are more savage and brutalised than the lowest savages. While this is so, are not Home Missions more urgent than missions to non-Christians?” The Bishop of London, Archibald Campbell Tait (1811-1882), sponsored a national fund to establish and subsidise new mission districts, and over the next twenty years more than eighty were created in poorer sections of the city. Initial resources rapidly proved inadequate, and clergymen in London and elsewhere often made public appeals to the general Anglican community. In April 1871 an appeal from Reginald N. Shutte (1829-1892), priest in charge of the Mission of the Good Shepherd, in Portsmouth, appeared in the columns of The Monthly Packet. Portsmouth was a place, he contended, “that is, or ought to be, of interest to every Englishman. In some sense the town belongs to the whole nation.” Additional revenues were required to support an array of causes: the military garrison and its arsenal, the convict establishment, the workhouse, the hospital, the derelict “landing-place for sailors from every country under heaven,” and the dilapidated quay where “Indian troop ships discharge their invalids.” Shutte also catalogued the more conventional charities available at Good Shepherd: a soup kitchen, clothing and coal clubs, and the standard church services (“open and free to all comers”) and Sunday school classes, all calculated to appeal to the interests of the composite and transient population of an urban area such as Portsmouth. The prominent placement of Shutte’s petition in the pages of The Monthly Packet indicates that Yonge was eager to promote the Tractarian commitment to social activism,

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7 Ibid.
especially in the cities.

As with earlier doctrinal and devotional interests and innovations of the Oxford Movement, the impetus for activism in the recovery of these “dark and wild places” of the infidel inner cities incited enormous controversy as it emerged and escalated. The Established Church would now participate more deliberately in the scrutiny of contemporary crises, directly confronting problems of urbanisation and modernisation such as industrial abuse, infant mortality, prostitution, drunkenness, squalor, and assorted attendant social and cultural ailments and issues that it construed as moral afflictions and ills. And it intended to proceed with the same energy and enthusiasm with which it had earlier intervened in intellectual and clerical disputes that had involved the iniquities (as its adherents saw it) of scientific empiricism, historical investigation, comparative theology, continental criticism, and “German” transcendentalism. Ironically, however, as the High Church prepared its campaign to eradicate the atheism and immorality of the inner city, its gravest challenge came not from apprehensive or aggrieved secular authorities, but from adversaries within its own communion.

In the early 1860s a movement arose that coalesced around the theological principles and liturgical practices advocated by Pusey rather than those associated with Keble. Keble’s frail health had begun to fail; in the early 1860s he suffered a series of “small” paralytic strokes that greatly diminished his energies and eventually led to his death in March 1866. As the only surviving member of the original founders of the Oxford Movement Pusey assumed authority over the High Church community. For Pusey the future of the Church lay not in the provincial parish but in the inner city, and his followers introduced and implemented interventions and innovations accordingly. The Ritualists, as they came to be called, represented themselves as successors of the original spirit of the Oxford Movement, but the reality was somewhat more complicated. Their emphasis on “the externals” of early Catholicism, on the importance of ornament, ceremonial, and costume, greatly exceeded the enterprise of rescuing sixteenth-century rubrics in the Prayer-Book from obscurity or oblivion. Dormant anxieties over Papal Aggression and the possible reconversion of England to Roman Catholicism were reignited. Some contended that the entire Anglo-Catholic revival was imperiled by the convictions of a small but contentious minority that courted controversy and celebrity, inviting persecution and eventually prosecution from outraged Protestants. The prolonged and very public struggle for supremacy within the Established Church perplexed and appalled the country. An essayist in John Bull proclaimed that “the most pressing Question of the Day” concerned “Ritualism under various aspects.” The Edinburgh Review remarked the “sudden growth” of the revival,” regarding it as a phenomenon that had “taken

8 An additional reason must be acknowledged: High Church adherents were routinely denied preferment to more important parishes; their opportunities confined to remote or obscure sees that served the collieries, the industrial cities, and especially the colonies. During Gladstone's ministries the Tractarians were able to procure more desirable positions.

9 Steele, Lord Salisbury, 87.

10 Quoted in Reed, Glorious Battle, 60.
the nation and Church by surprise.”

Perhaps this was so, but the more attentive professed that in truth they were not at all astonished. The London Quarterly Review retorted that the nation was suddenly seeing “the abundant fruit” of the Romanising plot “laid in Oxford thirty years ago.”

The difference between the original Oxford Movement and its successor was becoming more pronounced. As Robert Wolffe has observed, and the novels of Charlotte Yonge have documented, the first generation of Tractarians “wanted to restore the church buildings of England to their original appearance, to sweep away the pews, the plaster, the various modern concealments of the medieval details, and to substitute choirs and proper church music for the fiddlers that so often squeaked away in the balcony.” The Ritualists were far more assertive, insisting upon and instituting radical reform, or more precisely, an immediate return to what they perceived as the “pure” practices and protocols of the “Catholic” past. Rather than restoration of style or replacement of seating, the emphasis was on the construction of an entirely new edifice, designed according to the exacting specifications of increasingly extravagant Ritualist sensibilities. Pusey’s endowment of St. Saviour’s, Leeds, consecrated in 1845, had established a pattern for these “slum churches, as they were commonly called.” In the next thirty years perhaps a dozen Ritualist churches and their associated missions ministered to the inhabitants of East and South London; others were active in the poorer neighborhoods of Oxford, Birmingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Leeds, and Leicester.

The premier and in some ways prototypical London slum church, St. Barnabas, Pimlico, was consecrated in 1843. W.J.E. Bennett (1804-1886), the rector of St. Paul’s, Knightsbridge, raised the money to build St. Barnabas in a poor and isolated corner of the West End. The parishioners of St. Paul’s were prosperous and philanthropic; Blanche and William Gibbs were among the congregation, and Charlotte Yonge often worshipped with them when in London. Bennett was a celebrated preacher, but he was more renowned for his prominent place on The Times’s private list of “Puseyites of London,” a controversial register that ranked Anglican clergymen according to their perceived preference for the doctrine of Rome; Bennett, it was claimed, was “as near Romanism as Possible.” The customs and ceremonial of his new church were accordingly placed in evidence to be criticised and condemned.

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12 Ibid., 43.
13 Wolffe, Gains and Losses, 113. Disputes over church decoration were a common theme in Yonge’s novels, including The Six Cushions (1866), The Pillars of the House (1873), Chantry House (1886).
14 Pusey, who was enormously rich, did more than preach in support of Anglo-Catholic causes. In addition to his support for the foundation of St. Saviour’s, Leeds, he sent considerable sums of his own money to the Metropolis Churches Fund as well as to the chapter houses of several Anglican sisterhoods. He also served as a voluntary curate in the East End during the devastating cholera epidemic of 1866.
15 The Times, 23 March 1864.
16 St. Barnabas, regarded as the leading “Puseyite” church, was lampooned in the Punch cartoon captioned “The Convent of the Belgravians.” 10 October 1850 (see Appendix).
In 1866 Lord Shaftesbury (1801-1885), the Evangelical politician and philanthropist, offered his own testimony regarding Ritualism. In a private journal entry he recorded his revulsion at the exotic appearance of the altar and the elaborate performance of the priests at an Anglo-Catholic service. As Shaftesbury recalled the church featured

A High Altar reached by several steps, a cross over it—no end of pictures. The chancel was very large, and separated from the body of the Church by an iron grill. Abundance of servitors in Romish apparel. Service intoned and sung, except the lessons, by priests in white surplices and green stripes... three priests in green silk robes, the middle priest having on his back a cross embroidered, as long as his body.... Such a scene of theatrical gymnastics, of singing, screaming, genuflections, and a series of strange movements of the priests, their backs almost always to the people, as I never saw before even in a Romish Temple. Clouds upon clouds of incense, the censer frequently refreshed by the High Priest, who... swung it about on a silver chain... the communicants went up [to the altar] to the tune of soft music, as though it had been a melodrama, and one was astonished, at the close, that there was no fall of the curtain.17

Every element of the performance—cross, color, surplice, chanting, censor, communion, and choreography—was an affront to his Evangelical sensibilities. Ritualist clergymen wore richly colored vestments appropriate to a feast day or festival, intoned the liturgy, bowed before the altar, and turned to the east at key moments during the service. Assailed as "Romish" extravagances, "ecclesiastical theatricals," and "Popish novelties," these practices routinely prompted litigation, some of it costly and protracted. In 1865 the Evangelical Church Association raised fifty thousand pounds at a single session to suppress Ritualism by subsidising legal action against its practitioners, and so acquired the name "Persecution Company, Inc."18 In response Ritualist sympathisers organised the Church of England Protection Society, later known as the English Church Union, which was especially active in the defense of Anglo-Catholic clergy against legal action under the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874. Clergymen convicted of "contumacy," a repeated refusal to obey authority, were suspended from their positions, stripped of their privileges, and sent to prison.

No amount of sectarian anger and abuse, and no spectre of legal proceedings and punishments, however, could erase the evidence of the extraordinary dedication and devotion with which many Anglo-Catholic clergymen ministered to their communities. In time several of them achieved almost mythic status for their compassionate commitment to the poor. The work of Charles Fuge Lowder (1820-1860) began in 1851 when he was called to serve as assistant curate to James

17 Emphasis in original. Quoted in Picard, Victorian London, 1840-1870, 286-287. The church in question was St. Alban's, Holborn, the centre of the Ritualist controversy, under the leadership of Alexander Mackonochie.

18 Wolff, Gains and Losses, 169.
Skinner at St. Barnabas, Pimlico. His Ritualist pedigree was impressive: in 1856 he was appointed curate at St. George’s in the East, the most renowned of all Ritualist churches, and in 1866 was installed as first rector of St. Peter’s, London Docks. The day after the church was consecrated cholera was discovered in the parish, and the energy and courage of Lowder during the course of the epidemic became legendary. He also organise an impressive array of charitable services, including a loan society, a sick and death benefit association, a soup kitchen, and a coal club; and in 1855 founded the Society of the Holy Cross, an international organisation devoted to serving the needs of the poor in the inner cities. To those who questioned the expense and the appropriateness of these arrangements Lowder retorted, “in the presence of such utter destitution … the Church must assume a missionary character to stem the prevailing tide of sin and indifference.” He regarded the innovative spirit of Ritualism as a necessary response to the crises caused by the incidence of crime and cholera in the cities, as “a new adaptation of Catholic practice to the altered circumstances of the nineteenth century and the peculiar wants of the English character.”

Charlotte Yonge applauded Lowder’s ambition and activism, attending services at St. George’s in the East and programs at its mission house in Calvert Street. The church served a notoriously impoverished parish; its four major streets contained at least 733 derelict structures, including, it was alleged, forty public houses and gin or beer shops and 154 brothels or “houses of ill fame.” Even more scandalous, however, were the series of sensational events, avidly reported in the press, which were to become a public sport and spectacle every Sunday for more than a year. Those opposed to Ritualist practices orchestrated a relentless campaign of harassment, recounted by the rector in an open letter to the Home Secretary. He noted with indignation, “Prayer-Books were thrown, windows were smashed, carpets were torn up and burnt in the stove, drugged dogs were turned loose, and someone had made use of a pew (No. 16 in the south aisle) as a water closet.” For more than a month fifty uniformed policemen were engaged to monitor the services and maintain order in the church, a move that did little to promote reverence among the congregation. The presence of more than a thousand paid protesters from Whitechapel also added to the anarchy. All expectations of decorum, or even of decency, were disappointed. In the

21 Ibid.
22 Dennis, Charlotte Yonge, 114.
23 Mumm, Stolen Daughters, 127.
24 Quoted in Shelton, 58.
end the shaken and exhausted priest was encouraged by his superiors to consider the restorative possibilities of retreat, strategically referred to as a sabbatical. He departed early to avoid the notice of the neighbors as well as the noise of the small brass band his enemies had engaged to escort him to the train, and declined to return. The exasperated Evangelical Bishop of London thought it best to close the church until sentiments subsided.

Other Ritualist churches endured similar if less celebrated disturbances. Riots erupted over the presence of a priest wearing a surplice while preaching at St. Sidwell’s, Exeter; two hundred protesters stormed the church and the celebrant needed a police escort to escape by a side door. The rector of St. Peter’s, Plymouth, similarly attired, regularly required protection to proceed from the chancel to the pulpit. Members of another congregation rushed the altar if the celebrant attempted to read from a Prayer Book decorated with a gilt cross and crimson edging. Priests were stoned or pelted with refuse for permitting what was considered an excessive reliance on candles and incense, and in one Birmingham church the clergy had to barricade themselves in the choir during a particularly violent protest over the choice of hymns. The younger son of William Heathcote was physically threatened for engaging in similar practices in his parish in the north of England.

As the riots raged through the 1860s a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate their causes, particularly in the volatile East End. By this time the antagonism caused by preferred Anglo-Catholic practices had created a phalanx of formidable adversaries, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, Archibald Campbell Tait, who proceeded to introduce a private bill in Parliament to curb what he considered the conspicuous extravagances and excessive enthusiasms of Ritualism (see above). The Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874, known as “the bill to put down Ritualism,” was supported by both the Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, who publicly referred to its practices as “a mass in masquerade,” and the Queen, who privately wrote that “the defiance shown by the Clergy of the High Church and Ritualistic party is so great that something must be done to check it and prevent its continuation.” The Times also applauded the measure as a means of “protecting the sober majority of the Church from a medieval delirium.” Punch ventured a verse:

The Church should thank you, Tait—in time it will,
For your sagacious Public Worship Bill.

The debate in Parliament, however, was considerably less amicable. One MP angrily alleged that

25 Benjamin Disraeli, quoted in Jenkins, Gladstone, 383. Disraeli had an “ostentatious and often expressed contempt for those he referred to as “the Rits and Rats”—the Ritualists and the Rationalists.” Reed, Glorious Battle, 225.
27 The Times, 1 May 1894.
“the sappers and miners have made their way up to the daylight, and are openly at work, breaching the defenses of our Protestantism, and tampering with the defenders.” An astonished spectator declared that during Disraeli’s speech in support of the bill the scene on the floor of the House of Commons was “frenzied” and that “if it had been proposed to cut off the hands of all the offending clergymen, they would have carried it.” The legislation, with its somewhat less punitive provisions, passed with an overwhelming majority.

Enforcement of the Act, however, proved only occasional, although several Anglican priests were interrogated, some prosecuted, and five imprisoned for their Ritualist “insolence” and “irregularities.” Alexander Mackonochie (1825-1887), among the most prominent of these clergymen, had earlier been an assistant at St. George’s in the East, but during his tenure as perpetual curate of St. Alban’s the Martyr, Holborn (the church visited by Lord Shaftesbury), his name became synonymous with the Catholic revival and the church replaced St. Saviour’s, St. Barnabas, and St. George’s in the public imagination as the epicenter of the Ritualist controversy. Mackonochie had previously been prosecuted (1867) by a judicial committee of the Church, which convicted him of “crimes” such as “elevating the Eucharistic elements and using incense.” He remained resolute, however, and in a robust address to the Society of the Holy Cross (1874) he rallied his allies and reviled his adversaries. Mackonochie invoked the original spirit of the Oxford Movement in impassioned rhetoric that recalled the *Tracts for the Times*, declaring that

> It is impossible to deny that the forces arrayed against the Catholic truth are very formidable. Never since the oldest of us can remember has the Hierarchy, the Church, the Parliament, and the general Press shown such bitter animosity to it as at present. Nothing is too absurd or too manifestly false, either in fact or principle, to be believed, if said of those who seek to uphold the Catholic Faith; no means are too base for its suppression; no differences, on other points, are great enough to prevent Papist, Puritan, and Infidel from allying for its destruction. . . .

He concluded, “[h]ow are we to meet the united craft and violence of the attack, and the desertion (however sincere in purpose) of those who have fallen away? May I venture to suggest that there is only one watchword which will save us? It is that which the Cross suggests—NO SURRENDER AND NO DESERTION.” It can scarcely come as a surprise that over the next several years Mackonochie was repeatedly censured and on occasion suspended for a series of

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30 Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 237. Disraeli also parodied Anglo-Catholic practices in several of his novels.
31 Ibid.
ecclesiastical and liturgical irregularities and infractions. During enforced separations from his parish he often went to Wantage, in Oxfordshire, to stay at the home of his brother. Wantage was also the base of the convent of S. Mary the Virgin, the Anglican sisterhood of which Charlotte Yonge was an exterior member, or lay associate, and eventually served as a spiritual advisor to the order.

Ironically, the controversy over the Public Worship Regulation Act actually served to generate interest in and galvanize the Ritualist Movement. The decade of the 1860s saw the proliferation of Anglo-Catholic churches in the inner cities, whose clergy sought to address the spiritual needs of those previously ignored by all denominations. Despite organized resistance and occasional reversals “slum priests” became emblematic of the aggressive activism of Anglo-Catholicism, whose adherents were increasingly seen not as reclusive scholars, effete, ineffectual, reserved, and remote, but as champions of a “fighting faith;” “Heroes of the Church Militant,” who were tireless and tenacious in their commitment to the poor. The popular image of the High Church clergyman was no longer that of the poet John Keble or the preacher Edward Pusey (and certainly not the apostate John Henry Newman), but that of Lowder, Mackonochie, and their colleague Alexander Penrose Forbes, Bishop of Brechin by Aberdeen (1817-1875), “beloved and blessed” by the people of Dundee. During the cholera epidemics that swept through Scotland in the 1860s Forbes was said to be “found at all hours of the day and night, Prayer-Book in one hand and a bottle of the cholera mixture in the other.” He was a devoted disciple of Keble and often visited Hursley; according to Charlotte Yonge, who met him often, he regarded the rectory as “a place of holy counsel and peaceful rest.”

The Oxford Movement had originated in argumentation and obstinacy, obtaining its early impetus and organising itself in opposition to established authority. In its new incarnation it abandoned insularity and introspection for more intimate and immediate involvement with the inhabitants of the inner cities. As it reconstituted itself the High Church effectively supplanted all other denominations, especially the Evangelicals, seizing their initiative and appropriating their identity as the party of the poor and the marginalised of the metropolis and the manufacturing towns.

34 His admirers referred to Mackonochie as “The Martyr of St. Alban’s” for his fortitude and forbearance in the face of persistent persecution.
35 Battiscombe, John Keble, 319. Forbes was an accomplished scholar of Sanskrit at Brasenose and had originally intended to join the Indian Civil Service. Ill health prevented this choice of a career; he became an early acolyte of Pusey and entered the ministry instead, serving at St. Saviour’s, Leeds, before his enthronement as Bishop of Brechin (1848-1875). See Rowan Strong, Alexander Forbes of Brechin: The First Tractarian Bishop. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
36 Yonge, John Keble’s Parishes, 79. Perhaps Keble taught him the habit of resistance to authority. When Forbes was prosecuted for heresy in 1857 Keble wrote an eloquent testimonial in his defense and appeared at his trial in Edinburgh; he was exonerated with only an admonition from his superiors.
37 Anthony S. Wohl has observed that “with its stern attitudes towards Sabbath observance and its strict attitudes towards morality, accompanied as these often were by a patronising and unsympathetic attitude towards the poor and their plight, Evangelicalism has been criticised both by contemporaries like Dickens, who accused the Evangelicals of ‘taking custody of the people’ and placing them in ‘religious custody,’ and by later historians.” Endangered Lives, 145. The Evangelicals organised an energetic (and enduring)
Anglo-Catholicism seemed to supply the strategies and solutions that ameliorated the physical suffering and appealed to the fledgling spirituality of the "heathen" populations subsisting in the wilderness of urban and industrial England, those who had been alienated by, or perhaps had never been attracted to, the promises of organised religion.

Such success was startling both to the advocates and the adversaries of a movement that had endured (and often encouraged) so much censure and controversy. Strengthened and spurred by the energies of the Ritualists, the power and prestige of the High Church was in the ascendant, its ambition, apparatus, and agenda increasingly those of a national, and international, enterprise. Its sacramental and ceremonial emphases, once scorned as overly exotic or eccentric affectations, were admired, accepted, and eventually adopted. According to S.A. Skinner (2004) "[o]ne contemporary clerical estimate was that while morning and evening prayer were said in three parishes in the whole of England in 1840, the number exceeded a thousand in 1864, with thirty-six in London alone." Success continued into the next decade. The weekly *Church Times*, which spoke for Anglo-Catholicism, doubled its circulation, from ten thousand subscribers in 1865 to twice that number in 1880. David Hilliard has estimated that by 1901 "at least three out of every ten parochial clergy in the Church of England could be regarded as sympathetic to High Church teaching and practices."

Still, in many provincial Anglican parishes the apparent triumph of the Anglo-Catholic revival was regarded with some ambivalence, if not alarm. The Oxford Movement had maintained its original principles but had become a predominantly urban phenomenon. Its Ritualist successors, directed by Pusey, placed an emphasis on the ceremonial that greatly perturbed an earlier generation that preferred "reticence and austerity in their ordinances and observances and regarded ostentatious liturgical practices as a set of empty signifiers." Perhaps, indeed, their time had passed. As Owen Chadwick observed, in the decade of the 1860s ambitious "Tractarian disciples henceforth looked not only to the cloisters of Christ Church and the rural peace of Hursley vicarage, but to the slum parishes of East London" for their inspiration and instruction.

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39 Other Tractarian publications founded in this period include the *The Church Review* (1861), the *Union Review* (1863), and the *Church Monitor* (1866).
42 Chadwick, *The Victorian Church,* Volume One, 501.
4.2. ‘Hopes and Fears, or Scenes from the Life of a Spinster’ (1860)
Church, City, and Community

The second stage of a mission is the really difficult one.

John Coleridge Patteson

R.W. Church, one of the earliest and most influential historians of the Oxford Movement, argued (1892) that “it was not a popular appeal; it addressed itself not to the many but to the few; it sought to inspire and to teach the teachers. There was no thought as yet of acting upon the middle classes, or on the ignorance and wretchedness of the great towns.” In a recent study (2004) S.A. Skinner has observed that “this pronouncement on both the purely theological character and the limited class horizons of first-generation Tractarianism went largely unchallenged in an ensuing generation of studies.”

Certainly Georgina Battiscombe’s studies appear to confirm Church’s assertion; she echoed a common misapprehension concerning the extent of the Keble’s concern, and indeed, compassion, for the condition and circumstances of the poor:

The pity was that, in spite of his sympathy with the working class and his understanding of the hardships they had to endure, [he] never sought to identify himself, and through him, his friends and followers, with the efforts made to improve social conditions as a whole. His blindness in this respect must be accounted one of Keble’s greatest limitations.

But in truth Keble had always been insistent that it was the responsibility of the Anglican Church to propagate “the truths and duties of Christianity ‘among the dense masses’”… to enlighten “every creature in the vast wildernesses of London and our own manufacturing districts.”

As many in the High Church community saw it the achievements of Anglo-Catholicism in the inner city, although impressive, had only affirmed their early conviction that the establishment of religious communities were the most effective means of recolonising and reclaiming the inner cities, of curing the spiritual corruption and cleansing the contamination of their “clamouring” and unchurched inhabitants. High Churchmen construed the “condition of England” not only as a social or political problem, but as a spiritual and moral one that could not be denied or dismissed. The attendant crises of the processes of modernisation, the impurities and pollutions that accompanied the Industrial Revolution, became a subject of compelling concern. In two of her most popular novels of the 1860s, Hopes and Fears, or Scenes from the Life of a Spinster (1860)

45 Battiscombe, John Keble, 134.
and *The Clever Woman of the Family* (1865), Charlotte Yonge ventured from the placid provincial prosperity portrayed in her earlier narratives to confront the depravation and distress of urban and industrial Britain.

Georgiana Battiscombe maintained that *Hopes and Fears* was “the most interesting of Charlotte’s works” and “the most important novel of her maturity,”\(^47\) declaring that “shifting from persons to problems,”\(^48\) but she declined to elaborate, perhaps because its publication history is particularly complex and controversial. Amy de Gruchy (1999) observed that “no earlier work ... had so difficult a passage, or waited so long to appear in print.”\(^49\) Correspondence between Yonge and Marianne Dyson indicates that as early as 1853 she had completed a considerable portion of the narrative, which she apparently decided to abandon in order to concentrate on at least three other novels, *Heartsease, or The Brother’s Wife* (1854), *The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations* (1856), and *Dynevor Terrace, or The Clue of Life* (1857).\(^50\) However, in June 1859 the opening chapters of *Hopes and Fears* were serialised in the initial issues of a small monthly magazine, *The Constitutional Press*.\(^51\) The magazine struggled almost immediately and survived only a short time, ceasing publication in July 1860, when less than half of the novel had appeared. The next month Yonge arranged for the complete text to be published “as soon as possible,”\(^52\) in a reduced run of three thousand copies. Reviews of *Hopes and Fears* began to appear that November, and most were disappointing.\(^53\) The *Athenaeum* was openly discouraging and *The Press* outright dismissive, charging that the novel had no proper hero or heroine or, for that matter, “any powerful scenes, striking incidents, or picturesque descriptions.”\(^54\) *The Saturday Review* agreed, deploring the substitution of a “domestic ledger” in the place of a plot.\(^55\) Nevertheless, the correspondent admired much of the novel, asserting in an extensive essay that Yonge “does not attempt to disguise from herself that the world has not gone as she wished” and that

\[\text{she herself has changed with the current of the times.}
\]
\[\text{We can hardly help describing the change by saying that}
\]
\[\text{she has grown wiser, though this sounds like a patronizing}
\]
\[\text{insult. But still the impression of increased breadth of mind}
\]
\[\text{and largeness of view which her book leaves is too strong}
\]
\[\text{to pass unnoticed. She writes in a different way, thinks less}\]

\(^{47}\) Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 122-123.

\(^{48}\) Ibid., 119.


\(^{50}\) Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 185.

\(^{51}\) de Gruchy provides a comprehensive history of the controversial origins of *The Constitutional Press*. She suggests that its truculent tone and polemical posturing approached an irreverence that would have been deeply distressing to Yonge. See “‘Hopes and Fears,’” *Charlotte Mary Yonge Journal*, 1-16.

\(^{52}\) Quoted in de Gruchy, “‘Hopes and Fears,’” note 7, 16.

\(^{53}\) Cecilia Bass has noted (2008) that *Hopes and Fears* was reviewed in only five major newspaper or journals; far fewer than *The Heir of Redclyffe* or *The Daisy Chain*. “Charlotte Yonge and the Critics,” in Courtney and Schultzze, editors, *Characters and Scenes: Studies in Charlotte M. Yonge*, 55-85.

\(^{54}\) “‘Hopes and Fears,’” *The Athenaeum* 1723 (November 1860), 590-591; “‘Hopes and Fears,’” *The Press* 24 (17 November 1860), 594.

\(^{55}\) “‘Hopes and Fears,’” *Saturday Review*, 10 November 1860, 593.
of little things, and more of great things.\textsuperscript{56}

The reviewer concluded, “her sincerity and warmth of feeling have been rewarded by new powers of seeing and judging ... she really has grown more able to sympathise with and therefore to influence the new generation, while she has retained her power to write what thousands of young people will like to read.”\textsuperscript{57}

Others remained skeptical. \textit{The Edinburgh Review} (1905) expostulated that “the novel is almost without form at every point, and in every dialogue redundant.... These are Miss Yonge’s besetting sins, and this book has a double dose of them.”\textsuperscript{58} In a more recent assessment of Yonge’s novels in \textit{The Oxford History of English Literature} (1990), Alan Horstman argued that “this ambitious book suffered from the principal feature of her work: it was all foreground. Her very prodigality in providing immediate ‘scenes’ left her with a correspondingly smaller power of attention to organising principles and interpretive ideas.”\textsuperscript{59} Alethea Hayter (1996) agreed, contending that “the opening chapters” in particular are “not well managed.”\textsuperscript{60} Yonge had accepted similar criticism from some of her contemporaries, conceding that plot construction “is still my great deficiency.”\textsuperscript{61}

Perhaps this loss of authorial control can be ascribed to the inordinately long interval between conception and publication; possibly Yonge was diverted or otherwise distracted by the enormous demands of producing several other novels as well as a series of articles and essays for \textit{The Monthly Packet}. Nevertheless she persevered, and the topics and themes recorded in \textit{Hopes and Fears} resonate with the anxieties of the time, particularly those that convulsed the Established Church as it attempted to accommodate the ceremonial and spiritual innovations promoted in the Catholic Revival. As a result, Barbara Dennis has observed, the novel “in many respects is almost a transcript of this area of church history.”\textsuperscript{62}

The narrative especially documents the High Church missionary impulse in its initiative to “recolonise” the cities. In subject, setting, and sensibility \textit{Hopes and Fears} is the most urban of all the domestic chronicles of Charlotte Yonge, although it continually struggles to stabilise and settle itself and seldom concentrates on a single, or even single set, of situations or concerns. It opens

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 594. de Gruchy has suggested that Yonge’s greater tolerance of dissent and concern for the urban poor in \textit{Hopes and Fears} may be attributed to the influence of two regular contributors to \textit{The Monthly Packet}: Emily Taylor, a former Unitarian and follower of F.D. Maurice, the Christian Socialist; and Anne Carter Smith, the daughter of an Anglican clergyman in the inner city near Stepney. See “‘The Monthly Packet,’” paper presented at Inaugural Conference of Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship, 18 November 1995, 5.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{58} “The Novels of Miss Yonge,” \textit{Edinburgh Review}, 414 (October 1905), 376.
\textsuperscript{59} Horstman, “Late Minor Novelists,” in Buxton and Davis, editors, \textit{The Oxford History of English Literature}, Volume Thirteen, 250.
\textsuperscript{60} Hayter, \textit{Charlotte Yonge}, 31.
\textsuperscript{61} Yonge; quoted in “‘A Handmaid to the Church:’ How John Keble Shaped the Life and Work of Charlotte Yonge, the Novelist of the Oxford Movement,” in Blair, editor, \textit{John Keble in Context}, 188.
somewhat tentatively in the commercial center of London, “among the numerous steeples counted from the waters of the Thames,” but retreats almost immediately, proceeding to alternate awkwardly and erratically between episodes in city and country. The central character, the eponymous spinster Honora Charlecote, is also elusive: recessive and often absent from the text, both literally and metaphorically. She is described only as “nothing remarkable … an average woman of the higher type … there is little to describe in her” (3, 4), as if Yonge were eager to abandon the conventions or obligations of exposition and proceed to other concerns.

Nevertheless, the early pages of the novel are almost exclusively hers, and are suffused with a sense of profound disappointment and disillusionment. Honora considers herself pledged to a young Anglican priest, Owen Sandbrook, sent by his superior to Canada to convert the heathen of wilderness and wasteland, and her “imagination, heart, and soul were with his mission … as she watched for histories of noble braves, gallant hunters, and meek-eyed squaws” (14). Apparently he has neither the aptitude nor the ability to succeed in such an arduous enterprise, and Yonge observes ironically that from his occasional correspondence Honora “slowly, slowly gathered that the picturesque deer-skins had become dirty blankets, and that the diseased, filthy, sophisticated savages were among the worst of the pitiable specimens of the effect of contact with the most evil side of civilisation” (14). Once again, encounters with Empire and exposure to and participation in imperial processes prove perilous and morally problematic. Owen precipitously abandons his unprepossessing charges (“such a hopeless set”) for an easier and more agreeable congregation: “[r]eports spoke of Mr. Sandbrook as the most popular preacher who had appeared in Toronto for years, attracting numbers to this pulpit, and sending them away enraptured by the power of language … preaching everywhere and for everything” (15, 17). The inconstant and improvident young clergyman also abandons Honora, courting and marrying the “dashing, fashionable” daughter of a colonial general (15). They had a daughter, Lucilla, and a son, Owen, whom Honora agrees to maintain as wards after the early death of both parents.

She rears the children in the country, at her estate called Hiltonbury Holt; and in the city, at her establishment on Woolstone-Lane, in St. Wulstan’s Parish, which is part of Whittingtonia, a desolate district in the East End of London. Each imagined space is emblematic of the rural and urban spheres of England. The Holt is presented as a “pattern parish” (343) and “a sort of Sunday world” (102), an English idyll in which the idealised squire, Honora’s cousin Humfrey Charlecote, sponsors “strawberry or syllabub feasts half the summer” and Christmas celebrations “extending

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63 Yonge, Hopes and Fears. London: Macmillan, 1860; 126, 259. All further references are to this edition and will noted parenthetically within the text.
64 de Gruchy has observed that the character of Honora appears in only a small proportion of the novel; she seems to disappear from the second volume almost entirely. See “‘Hopes and Fears,’” Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship Journal (1999).
65 Lucy Sandbrook dies in childbirth and Owen Sandbrook of consumption, although the description of his death is another instance of Yonge’s inexact or obscure medical explanations and is extremely perfunctory: “a hurried notion of preparation came from Captain Charteris. A slight imprudence had renewed all the mischief, and his patient was lying speechless under a violent attack of inflammation. Another letter, and all was over.” Both senior Sandbrooks vanish before the end of Chapter Two.
wide on either side of the twelve days” (12). His serene and “sunshiny presence”... presides over
the entire population; he is “godfather, guardian, friend, and advisor of all.” Charlecote’s sudden
death occurs early in the narrative, but does not disrupt the narrative (or the morning service):

There he lay on the altar-step, with hands crossed on his breast,
and perfect blessed repose on his manly countenance, sweetened
and enabled in its stillness, and in every lineament bearing the
impress of that Spirit of One who made it a meet table (57).

Like Guy Morville and Alan Ernescliffe, death elevates Humfrey Charlecote to a status that
approaches sainthood. Within the narrative “all good things dwell on the Holt side of the
boundary;” and beyond its borders lies the extensive domain of Beauchamp. Continental names
often have an ominous significance in Yonge’s novels, and this example is no exception: the
ornate and ostentatious property is owned and inhabited, according to the local clergymen, by “our
bete noir, the enemy himself, the lord of gin-shops” (46). Its painted plaster surfaces, barely dry,
signal the nouveaux riches pretensions, and the spurious superiority, of the proprietor.

The immense Fulmort fortune is founded on the manufacture and sale of spirits, primarily
gin and brandy, in an enormous syndicate of city distilleries. The conspicuous success of such an
enterprise signals Yonge’s interpretation of a controversial shift in the status of certain
entrepreneurs at midcentury, the rapid rise to prosperity and prominence of representatives of the
powerful new commercial classes: avaricious, openly predatory, and poised to exploit the chaos
and corruption that afflict the poorer areas of the inner city. The controversial origins of the
Fulmort wealth compromise their standing in the country, unsettling the social order and
emphasising the precariousness of their position among the established elites: “Mr. Fulmort was
a great distiller, who had married a county heiress, and endeavored to take his place among the
country squires, whom he far exceeded in display; and his wife, a meek, sickly person, lived a life
of slavery to the supposed exigencies of fashion” (73). Yonge is relentless in expressing her
contempt for such mercenary and materialistic ambitions, adding with asperity, “Mrs. Fulmort
was always paying court to their own station ... every change of position was felt, though not
acknowledged. Even the mother, lady as she was by birth, had only belonged to the second-rate

66 The detailed description of yet another establishment with a faux French name, Castle Blanche, the
estate of Lucy and Owen Sandbrook’s Charteris connections, is even more pointed: “the mansion, as the
name implied, had been built in the height of pseudo-Gothic, with a formidable keep-looking tower at each
corner, but the fortification below consisting of glass; with sham cloister and a great embattled gateway with
a sham portcullis.... There was a grievous dearth of books and of reasonable conversation” (79, 85). Charles
Charteris, in possession of this ponderous and pretentious edifice, had married “a Miss Mendoza.”
recommended only for “her immense fortune, something in the stockbroker line” (125). She is described
as passive, profligate and perhaps a pagan; Owen compares her to “a fair sultana ... a Mahometan.” He
explained, “I don’t mean that she was not bred a Christian, but the Oriental mind never distinctly embraces
tenets to the contrary. She had not reflection enough for faith. All that enters into the Eastern female mind
is a little observance” (138). Gendered anxieties about the exotic Other emerge in this description, and the
space between categories of race and class dissolves.

65 For more information on the production and consumption of spirits in the nineteenth century see Brian
class of gentry, and while elevated by her wealth, was lowered by connection, and not having
either mind or strength to stand on her own ground, trod with an ill-assured foot on that to which
she aspired” (144).

Yonge also censoriously observed that Mrs. Fulmort “would have been a happier woman
had she married a plain country gentleman, like those of her own stock, instead of giving a
country position to a man of lower origin and enormous monied wealth” (196). The Fulmorts
are often ostracised by their acquaintance, especially the “quiet, clerical families” who constitute
“the real elite” (66), but their dubious position has additional and potentially dangerous personal
consequences for the enfeebled Mrs. Fulmort:

To live up to the claims of that wealth had been her business ever
since, and health and enjoyment had been so completely sacrificed
to it, that for many years past the greater part of her time had been
spent in resting and making herself up for her appearance in the
evening…. Faded and tallowy in complexion, [she was] almost
ghastly in her blue brocade and heavy gold ornaments (116).

These passages signal the profusion of anxieties and antagonisms clustered at the intersection
of the economic and social orders, exposing the fragility of class constructs and the fluidity
of its categories. Despite its episodic structure *Hopes and Fears* presents a sustained
interrogation of the confrontation between class and commerce in both city and country
at a time when cultural certainties and social hierarchies seem to have collapsed.

Both Fulmorts die, disappointed in and damaged by their aspirations, and the next
generation must decide on the future direction of the family firm. The oldest son, Mervyn,
is portrayed as a dissipated reprobate, debilitated by excess and evil habits. He inherits the
distilleries and intends to expand their presence and increase his profit in the East End, but his
brother, an Anglo-Catholic clergyman, has decidedly different ambitions. Expensively educated
at Winchester and Oxford, Robert Fulmort is not the privileged incumbent of a comfortable
country cure, but the ascetic assistant curate of St. Wulfstan’s, Whittingtonia, an inner city parish
notorious for its

festering masses of corruption … where honest men dared not
penetrate without a policeman; and report spoke of rooms
shared by six families at once .... Drinking was the universal
vice, and dragged many a seemingly steady character into every
stage of degradation. Men and women alike fell under the
temptation, and soon hastened down the descent of corruption
and vice (126).

His character is closely patterned on the austere and activist missionary priests who were

68 Yonge portrays his sister Augusta as an alcoholic, probably conceived as an appropriate punishment
for the Fulmort family ownership of distilleries. Another sister, Julia, is depicted as a glutton.
conspicuously at the centre of Ritualist controversy, advocating and agitating for moral, social, and ecclesiastical reform. Yonge constantly alludes to evidence of Robert’s Anglo-Catholic allegiances: the strict observance of feast and fast days (253), the “severely clerical” costume (255), the choice of celibacy, the preference for chanting the most sacred portions of the service. However, it is not his sartorial or ceremonial preferences that define his ministry, but his spirited and selfless dedication to the poor of St. Wulfstan’s. His presence animates and accelerates the entire narrative, reviving the faltering spirit and fractured structure that compromise the coherence of the early chapters. Intentionally or inadvertently the novel reflects the resurgence of energy that characterises the Anglo-Catholic revival.

Robert solemnly “declines to live by murdering bodies and souls” (552), and denounces the distilleries of “Fulmort and Son” as “the ministry of hell” (142), declaring that the evidence of its responsibility for the woes of the inner city is incontrovertible:

I find that not above a fifth part of our manufacture goes to respectable houses, where it is applied properly. The profitable traffic, which it is the object to extend, is the supply of the gin palaces of the city. The leases of most of those you see about here belong to the firm, it supplied them, and gains enormously on their receipts. It is to extend the dealings in this way that my legacy is demanded (142).

He descends into paroxysms of lamentation and self-loathing, echoing the impassioned rhetoric of an Old Testament prophet:

All of us have eaten and drunk, been taught more than we could learn, lived in a fine house, and been made into ladies and gentlemen, all by battenng on the vice and misery of this wretched population. Those unhappy men and women are lured into the gaudy palaces at the corners of the streets to purchase a moment’s oblivion of their conscience, by stinting their children of bread, that we may wear fine clothes, and call ourselves country people (143).

Robert’s agony signals his sense of the close connectedness of rich and poor, high and low, city and country, and his anguished awareness that all boundaries separating these contingent categories and spaces have been breached. Overcome with guilt and grief, he pledges to counter the pernicious effects of the spirits produced and peddled by the family firm, a campaign he conducts as a personal act of penance to “atone for a fraction of the evil that our house is every day perpetrating here” (256). He expends his energy and inheritance not on the expansion of the distillery “dealings” but in the establishment of a missionary compound “remote from civilisation”

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69 The choice of celibacy for Anglo-Catholic clergy was controversial. According to John Shelton Reed, some considered celibacy “a crime against nature.” In Glorious Battle, 220. Despite such charges most of the “slum” Ritualist clergymen remained single. For more information see Hilliard, “UnEnglish and Unmanly,” Victorian Studies, 181-210.
(246), purchasing a derelict property for the “purpose of building a church and schools for Whittingtonia at his own expense” (246). His sister Phoebe describes the distinctive appearance of the complex, known as St. Matthew’s, with its “white brick wall with a red cross built into it over the gate…. A court with buildings all round, church, schools, and the curates’ rooms” (340). Its ambitious array of services for the poor includes “day-schools, a home for orphans, a crèche for infants, a reading room for adults” (356). Robert regards the enterprise as “his sermon in brick and stone” (342); his irate brother, however, accuses him of “popish tricks” (349), as he had been unsuccessful in his own endeavours to purchase the property to expand the distilleries.

From this base, deliberately and defiantly established in the worst of Whittingtonia, Robert conducts his crusade against the exploitation and abuse of the poor. His actions precisely parallel contemporary Anglo-Catholic initiatives in the inner city, evoking the efforts of Bennett, Lowder, Mackonochie, among others, who also attempted to recolonise the wastelands of the East End and rescue and rehabilitate “that dreadful population” by “discovering their sick, reclaiming their children, [and] causing the true Light to shine in that frightful gross darkness that covered the people” (141). Before the arrival of St. Matthew’s mission the Established Church had had no presence in the district, deserted by distant and disaffected clergy. More aggressive non-conformist chapels had asserted themselves instead: “Little Whittington Street,” Yonge observed dryly, “being given to dissent, was little frequented by the clergy, who had too much immorality to contend with, to have leisure to speak against schism” (260). The Roman Catholic Church, however, remains a subject for scorn (or perhaps anxiety), and save for a few asides from the supercilious Sandbrooks seems strangely absent from the narrative. Owen apologises to Honora for his churlish conduct, conceding “[i]n effect, I treated you as the Romish Church began by doing to the populace” (557). He also asks his sister “[i]s it our fault or our misfortune that our ailments can’t be cured by a paring of St. Bridget’s thumb-nail, or by any nostrum, sacred or profane, that really cures their votaries?” (298-299). These gratuitous insults perhaps signal the intensity of the rivalries and resentments between Ritualists and Roman Catholics in the inner city.

70 St. Matthew’s mission, like St. Saviour’s, Leeds, is staffed and served by a community of celibate Anglican priests. Yonge’s use of this name summons the church at Otterboure and establishes another close linkage of city and country and text and context.
71 The structure of St. Matthew’s closely resembled that of St. Alban’s the Martyr, in Holborn, the church of Alexander Mackonochie.
72 The narrative seems preoccupied with the experience of organised religion in the inner city. In addition to Ritualists and High Churchmen, Yonge mentions Evangelicals, Latitudinarians, and members of dissenting churches such as Methodists. Among the more interesting characters are a Unitarian governess (who later converts to Anglicanism) and a “formerly fast” young woman (named Horatia, but known as “Rashe”), who renounces her previous life of privilege and joins the Plymouth Brethren, an austerely Calvinistic sect founded in Dublin in 1827. The founders of The Plymouth Brethren (also mentioned in The Clever Woman of the Family) were Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853), a dentist who studied theology at Trinity College, Dublin; and John Nelson Darby (1800-1882), a curate from County Wicklow. Darby organised and presided over a series of meetings, known as the Powerscourt Conferences, held at Powerscourt House outside Dublin, on the subject of prophecy. The Plymouth Brethren were (and remain) active in Eastleigh, Hampshire, not far from Otterbourne.
As an ardent Tractarian Robert is determined to provide the “respectable poor” with the “proper” basis for a moral education, the rudiments of Christian instruction as interpreted by the Established Church. Without such intellectual and spiritual strictures, and appropriate surveillance and supervision, a “heathen” existence in the slums of the inner city is inseparable from a state of chaos, savagery, and squalor, and deeply susceptible to sin. He recalled that the people of the parish
did send their children to the old endowed charity schools, but as these children grew up, wave after wave lapsed into a smooth, respectable heathen life of Sunday pleasuring. The more religious became dissenters, because the earnest inner life did not approve itself to them in Church teaching as presented to them; the worse sort, by far the most numerous, fell lower and lower, and hovered scarcely above the depths of sin and misery. Drinking was the universal vice, and dragged many a seemingly steady character into every stage of degradation. Men and women alike fell under the temptation, and soon hastened down the descent of corruption and crime.... (141).

This “descent” recalls the deprivation and degradation described in *The Daisy Chain*: the poorer population of the city, and those of the country and the colonies, are in “frightful disorder ... filled with vice and misery,” and “in need of an absolute mission” (256). The remedy, however, has changed: Robert Fulmort speaks for the resurgent Oxford Movement when he insists that “the Church must come to the people” (256). The standard gestures of district visitors, with their offerings of “soup and subscriptions” (372), will no longer suffice; the clergy must have a visible and vigorous presence, an enduring existence among the poor they serve. Robert emphasises that the inhabitants of the inner city “must see religion in the world, not out of it.” Mere abstractions and assurances cannot cure the mystifications and miseries of the unsettled; only immediate intervention and constant example can.

The differences between the novels of the 1850s and *Hopes and Fears* are palpable and profound, perhaps signaling the more sophisticated sensibilities of the writer. Unlike Coombe Prior and Cocksmoor, the wasteland of Whittingtonia is not an isolated or inaccessible wild space, separate and securely contained, but instead is anchored and integrated within the narrative, a place of constant and sometimes brutal confrontation between classes and creeds. Management of such a chaotic, almost anarchical, space requires aggressive surveillance and supervision, and Robert Fulmort seems to revel in both: “He was strong and healthy, ravenous of work, impervious to disgusts, and rejected holidays as burdensome and hateful” (259). His clerical colleagues regard such self-denial and self-mortification with some ambivalence:

To see how contentedly, nay pleasurably, Fulmort endured perpetual broiling, passing from frying school to grilling
pavement, and seething human hive, was constant edification to his colleague, who, fresh from the calm university, felt such a life to be a slow martyrdom, and wished his liking for the deacon were in better proportion to his esteem (260).

Robert's sister Phoebe, seen as the most sensible character in the narrative, also expresses her concern for the aggressively ascetic practices of her increasingly “ill and cadaverous” older brother: “It was, in fact, one of his remaining unwholesome symptoms that he rather enjoyed persecution, and took no pains to avoid giving offense. If he meant to be uncompromising, he sometimes was simply provoking” (258). Her reaction echoes the criticism of the early Tractarians and their extremist Anglo-Catholic successors.

Yet the distress of the inner cities is undeniable, and Yonge’s staunch defense of the character and conduct of this “slum” clergyman signals a significant shift in contemporary opinion. Anglo-Catholic priests such as Robert Fulmort were increasingly recognised and respected as able, purposeful, and above all, professional. They were rigorously trained to comprehend and assume command of all the practical and philosophical elements of an enormously complex cultural, political, and ideological enterprise. As John Shelton Reed (1996) observed, the clergy were no longer regarded with contempt as rank amateurs; or worse, as a species of minor civil servant.

Percy Alden had another explanation for the evolution. The impressive success of Anglo-Catholicism in the city, he contended, was directly owing to the courageous initiative of individual clergymen who “put the man before the priest. They call nothing common or unclean, and are willing to share all that they possess with the people whom they serve.” In other words the priests participated fully in the experience of the people.

Nevertheless clergymen of the same communion often had vastly different interpretations of the essence and extent of their pastoral obligations. Whereas Mr. Henderson, the aged incumbent of Hiltonbury Holt “had the indolent conservative orthodoxy of the old school, regarding activity as a perilous innovation” (343) and restricting his ministry to Sunday services and an occasional catechism class, Robert Fulmort never retreats from even the most rebarbative of his clerical responsibilities. He refuses to abandon his commitment to St. Matthew's mission to accept the more comfortable cure of the Holt, despite persistent opposition in the city to his Anglo-Catholic practices and principles. Honora "knew more than she told

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73 Roger Lloyd maintained that “in the right sense of the word, they were professionals: they knew their job through and through.” The Church of England, 1900-1965. London: SCM Press, 1966.
74 Reed, Glorious Battle, 98. Anglo-Catholic theological colleges that were established for the advanced education of young recruits included Cuddesdon, Chichester, Wells, Leeds, and Ely. According to David Hilliard, these institutions consciously aimed at the formation of purposeful and disciplined priests rather than scholars, poets, or preachers, emphasising “the presentation of the ministerial ideal and the development of the devotional life.” “UnEnglish and Unmanly,” Victorian Studies, note 79.
of the persecution that Robert was undergoing from a vestry notoriously under the influence of the Fulmort firm, whose interest it was to promote the vice that he came to withstand. [T]here had been moments when Robert had been exposed to absolute personal danger, by mobs stimulated in the gin-shops; their violence against his attacks on their vicious practices being veiled by a furious party outcry against his religious opinions (342).

Robert’s combative Tractarian temperament is continually emphasized, inevitably recalling earlier champions and contests: “He meanwhile set his face like a rock, and strong, resolute, and brave, went his own way, so unmoved as apparently almost to prefer his own antagonistic attitude, and bidding fair to weary out his enemies by his coolness, or to disarm them by the charities of which St. Matthew’s was the centre” (342). He relishes controversy and revels in resistance, conceding that “I loved opposition, and there was an evil triumph in the annoyance I gave.” Nor does he deign to disguise the ferocity of his wrath at the iniquities he encounters; he once left the lodgings of a dying woman with “his hand clenched, his brow lowered, and his mouth set so savagely, that the passing policeman looked in wonder from the dangerous face to the clerical dress” (263).

However, the disturbances and disorders that accompanied the reforms and innovations of the Ritualist revival were eventually resolved not by the passionate argumentation of its advocates, or even the passive resignation of its adversaries, but by the ravages wrought by the return of the cholera epidemic.76 Erin O’Connor has observed (2000) that the visitation of the deadly disease, which reportedly originated in the Gangetic delta and India and emerged in the seaports and industrial cities of England, was “linked in the popular imagination to such pervasive social problems as immigration, poverty, poor sanitation, and revolution; cholera was synonymous with the modern condition; it was everywhere and everything at once.”77 The literary historian Pamela Gilbert agreed (2004), arguing that cholera,

which struck quickly in epidemic form and killed many in the course of a few months before subsiding, foregrounded civic tensions, as dramatic public events do. Again, as with all public events, the cholera epidemics were understood within narratives which were combined and reconciled with existing narratives about class, race, urban life, nation, and place.78

These “narratives” were constructed around contemporary theories of contagion and suggestions for containment and cure. Medical opinion was deeply divided on the causes of cholera; the publication of more than seven hundred works on cholera between 1845 and 1856 suggests

that its transmission and treatment were subject to interpretation. The contagionist theory of disease predominated for a time, but its acceptance was compromised by the inconvenient but incontrovertible fact that cholera seemed to choose its victims selectively. In the middle of the nineteenth century an alternative theory of disease was in the ascendant, promoted by Thomas Southwood Smith (1788-1861), physician to the Fever Hospital in London and author of an investigative report on cholera (1850). Regarded as "the intellectual founder of the sanitary movement," Smith proposed the popular theory of "vital processes" that connected organisms to their physical environment. His ideas contributed to the development of the miasmic theory of disease, which argued that scourges such as cholera arose spontaneously from the squalor of the slums, originating in and emanating from accumulated dirt, decomposition, and decay. Edwin Chadwick was another influential advocate of this theory; his sensational Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain (1842) asserted "all smell is, if it be intense, immediate acute disease." He insisted that "the removal of noxious physical circumstances, and the promotion of civic, household, and personal cleanliness, are necessary to the improvement of the moral condition of the population; for that sound morality and refinement in manners and health are not long found co-existent with filthy habits amongst any class of the community." Chadwick's arguments indicated that the miasmic theory was explicitly moralised to explain the catastrophic number of fatalities that occurred in the inner city: it was suggested that faulty drains and fetid tenements produced a foul atmosphere that forecast social disorder and disintegration, an elastic category that eventually expanded to include any instances of activity regarded as deviant: whether irregular, irresponsible, or irreverent. Clergymen of all denominations endorsed the idea of cholera as a visitation of God's wrath. In 1832 the Established Church had declared that the disease was a punishment for "national sins," and "the special scourge of drunkards and blasphemers." Pamela Gilbert has contended that during the next three decades Anglican authorities worked assiduously to convince the general population of their moral responsibility to the classes most likely to die of cholera, so that under Church auspices

81 Wohl describes Chadwick's report as "remarkable, one is tempted to say epic.... Chadwick skilfully wove the most lurid details and evocative descriptions, damning statistics and damaging examples into a masterpiece of protest literature." Endangered Lives, 147.
82 Quoted in W.F. Bynum, Science and the Practice of Medicine in the Nineteenth Century. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, 72. Chadwick's Report included a statistical analysis of disease, mortality, and life expectancy for all regions of the British Isles, but its eyewitness accounts of the ravages of epidemic disease in the inner cities were considered especially compelling. In a separate study William Farr, an epidemiologist who had been an assistant registrar of the Great Census of 1851 under George Graham, also demonstrated a decisive link between the London water supply and patterns of contagion in his Report on the Cholera Epidemic of 1866 in England (1868). However, these arguments were not generally accepted until the isolation of the cholera bacillus by the German bacteriologist Robert Koch in India in 1884.
83 Chadwick, Labouring Population, 1842.
84 Poovey, Social Body, 41.
85 Gilbert, Mapping the Victorian Social Body, 94.

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immediate and appropriate intervention might commence.\textsuperscript{86}

These pronouncements were widely accepted until the experiments (1849) of two early epidemiologists, the London physicians William Budd (1811-1880) and John Snow (1813-1858).\textsuperscript{87} Budd, who had previously researched the causes of typhus and typhoid, concluded that cholera was "a living organism of distinct species, which was taken by the act of swallowing it, which multiplied in the intestine by self-propagation."\textsuperscript{88} Snow elaborated on these theories in a study entitled \textit{On the Mode of Communication of Cholera} (1849), in which he argued that cholera was a waterborne disease that spread through oral transmission. In 1854 he proved his theories when he conclusively connected clusters of cholera deaths with suspect water supplied by the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company. When Snow persuaded municipal authorities to dismantle the pump handle in Broad Street in Soho the deaths there came to a sudden halt.\textsuperscript{89}

Anxieties over adequate ventilation and sanitation had come to dominate the public discourse. Anthony S. Wohl (1983) has noted that between 1853 and 1862 fully one-quarter of all the papers read at the Statistical Society of London were on public health and vital statistics.\textsuperscript{90} \textit{Hopes and Fears} appeared six years after the Soho water scandal and only two years after the crisis known as "The Great Stink of London."\textsuperscript{91} In the sweltering summer of 1858 the stench emanating from the putrefying waters of the Thames was so powerful and poisonous that the vast linen curtains in the House of Commons were routinely soaked in chloride of lime in a vain attempt to spare the sensibilities of the members.\textsuperscript{92} Parliamentary debate on the purification of the Thames was accompanied by an extended editorial in which \textit{The Times} expressed its exasperation and impatience in trenchant terms:

\textit{The Times}, 9 July 1855 (See Appendix).
the recent expedient of correcting Thames water with lots of lime. The stench of June was only the last ounce of our burden. That hot fortnight did for the sanitary administration of the Metropolis what the Bengal mutinies did for the administration of India.93

At the same time a publication of the medical profession, the Journal of Public Health and Sanitary Review, featured an article entitled “Is the Thames Pernicious?” The account reported “stories flying of men struck down with the stench, and of all kinds of fatal diseases, upspringing on the river’s banks.”94 Punch expressed its revulsion more emphatically in an editorial entitled “The Terrors of the Thames,” asserting “it is alarming to contemplate how many inhabitants of London are annually drinking themselves to death by imbibing the water of the Thames.... There are many more who find a watery grave than those who come to their end by drowning. We have heard that water will always find its level but if the Thames water found its proper level it would be banished from all decent society.”95 The correspondent continued

Let anyone who delights in Rambles by Rivers, take a stroll along the banks of the Thames between Limehouse and Battersea. He would, after going a yard or two, find himself up to his knees in slush—the sort of Black Death which we are daily drinking—and though every step would add mud there would be nothing to admire. Let him watch the juvenile bathers on the banks, and he will fancy himself just arrived on a foreign shore, whose natives are negroes up to their knees, while from the legs upwards they belong to a white population.96

A cartoon with the caption “The Silent Highwayman” that appeared in the magazine on 10 July 1858 depicted Death as a skeletal riverman plying the waters of a river choked with raw sewage and rotting animal carcasses (see Appendix).

In desperation Parliament authorised the payment of three million pounds to Joseph Bazalgette (1819-1891), chief engineer of the Metropolitan Board of Works, to design and implement a massive sewer system for London, and between 1856 and 1859 he supervised the construction of eighty-two miles of intercepting sewers, four hundred and fifty miles of main sewers, and thirteen thousand miles of local sewers to channel the city’s waste downstream to Barking and Crossness, where it would be discharged (untreated) into the Thames during times of favourable tides. The scheme also called for the creation of a massive municipal improvement, the Embankment.97

93 The Times, 21 July 1858, 9, column 2. Racial, cultural, and ideological anxieties and antagonisms aroused by the Sepoy “Mutiny” will be discussed below in connection to The Clever Woman of the Family (1865).
96 Ibid. Punch elaborated on these racialist associations and apprehensions in a series of cartoons, including “The London Bathing Scene” (18 June 1859); and “Father Thames Introducing His Offspring to the Fair City of London” (3 July 1859) (see Appendix).
97 In 1874 with the completion of three embankments along the Thames Bazalgette had added fifty-two
in order to improve the flow of water and the appearance of the riverscape. Despite adverse conditions—construction continued during the wettest summer and the coldest winter recorded in the nineteenth century—the system was officially opened by the Prince of Wales in 1865.

The conspicuous contamination of the Thames, the main artery that connects the commercial centre and cultural core of the metropolis, was perceived as a moral as much as a sanitary crisis. Its polluted waters provided immediate and indisputable evidence of the inability of the city to monitor and maintain itself adequately and acceptably, to protect itself from infiltration and invasion, and to contain and cleanse its own corruption. Charlotte Yonge repeatedly returned to these contemporary controversies over sanitary reform; references to the difficulties of assuring the proper provision and placement of drains and drainage systems, and the damages (disease and death) that result, appear in many of her novels. In *Hopes and Fears* the atmosphere of Whittingtonia is portrayed as particularly pestilential: “It was high summer; and in spite of cholera-averting thunderstorms, the close streets and the odour of the Thames was becoming insufferable” (259). As a result illness and infirmity are rampant among the inhabitants, and Yonge is especially intent on demonstrating the deadly risk to “the destitute children that swarm” (255) amongst the “wretched rookeries” and warrens of the East End. They are instantly recognisable by their “pale faces and small limbs” (480); their “pinched and squalid looks” immediately identifying them as “the denizens of the over-crowded lanes and alleys” (481).

The effects of such an environment on the constitution and character of Owen Sandbrook’s son, born and reared in Whittingtonia, are deeply dismaying to the delicate sensibilities of his extravagantly handsome, expensively educated father: “he had the whitened drawn-up appearance of a child who had spent most of his life in a London cellar, with a pinched little visage and preternatural-looking black eyes, a squeaky little fretful voice, and all the language he had yet acquired decidedly cockney” (435). The social and cultural disparities between the child’s city and country connections and experiences seem irreconcilable, and he appears to be consigned to a miserable and marginal existence. Despite Honora’s promise to cultivate and “civilise him” she concedes that his “pronunciation and habits are an absolute distress, and he is not happy anywhere but in the housekeeper’s room” (525). In this case it is uncertain if it is the environment or heredity that has prevailed.

Yonge’s perceptions of the deprivations and dangers of the urban environment were

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Yonge eventually relented somewhat; in the last pages of the novel we are told that the child will become a Christ’s Hospital scholar, “his h’s and his manner alike doing credit to the paternal training” (568).
confirmed in the publication of the report of The Commission on the Employment of Children (1864). According to the authors an alarming proportion of the children of London were seen to be “stunted in growth, their aspect pale, delicate, sickly ... the diseases most prevalent being of the nutritive organs, curvature and distortion of the spine, deformity of the limbs and especially of the lungs, ending in atrophy, consumption, and death.” A generation earlier Edwin Chadwick had recorded similar results and expressed similar concerns, contending that “the younger population, bred up under noxious physical agencies, is inferior and physical organisation and general health to a population preserved from the presence of such agencies.” He emphasised the catastrophic cultural consequences of these circumstances, maintaining that “the population so exposed is less susceptible of moral influences, and the effects of education are more transient than with a healthy population.” Chadwick concluded with the suggestion that the survival of the human race was at risk:

That these adverse circumstances tend to produce an adult population short-lived, improvident, reckless, and intemperate, and with habitual avidity for sensual gratifications.... These habits lead to the abandonment of all the conveniences and decencies of life, and especially lead to the overcrowding of their homes, which is destructive to the morality as well as the health of large classes of both sexes.

These examples of physical decay and moral decadence signal acute anxieties about the possibility, and perhaps the inevitability, of the exhaustion and extinction of the human race. The acceleration in the processes of modernisation, urbanisation, and industrialisation complicated and challenged contemporary constructions of the concepts of perfectibility and progress. As its title suggests *Hopes and Fears* is an anxious narrative that interrogates the intersection of these incendiary issues. In the process Yonge exposes the equivocal nature of inheritance, illustrating the perils and precariousness of both possession and dispossession. In a sprawling narrative populated by the Other, or those (by choice, circumstance, or coercion) outside the norms of the dominant community—spinsters, celibates, outcasts, and orphans—as well as, more ominously, interlopers and intruders, trespassers and transgressors, rogues and reprobrates, connections among characters are contingent and often uncertain. Affinities and affections dissolve and disappear; alliances and allegiances falter and fail. The fragility of families is routinely suggested. Marriages are portrayed as adversarial, or as awkward or autumnal resolutions; spouses are estranged, parents are alienated or absent, siblings are separated, and children and other dependents are often literally or metaphorically discarded or disowned. Legacies, endowments, allowances, annuities, and other legal and financial assurances are rescinded; contracts and commissions are revoked; pledges and

promises are retracted or renounced. Exile or expulsion, inadvertent or enforced, is a common occurrence. The estate of Hiltonbury Holt is withheld from the apparent heir and awarded to a more worthy “colonial claimant” (506), a distant American cousin who courts Phoebe Fulmort and conveniently consents to change his name to Charlecote. At times the novel itself seems dangerously intent on ignoring or erasing early emphases, almost as if it were devouring or otherwise destroying itself.

Nevertheless, Yonge was able to restrain these powerful processes of disintegration and impose closure on a restless and recalcitrant narrative “with neither hero nor heroine.” *Hopes and Fears* concludes with a transcendent Tractarian vision of an inclusive new order. Robert authorises and arranges a special summer excursion for the children in the care of St. Matthew’s mission. In a spectacular invasion (and reverse colonisation) these “untouchables” of the inner city “come to the Church” in the country, invited to take possession of the Fulmort family estate, if only for a single afternoon. Yonge presents each of the “rescued” constituencies as they serially appear in a triumphal procession: the parish schoolchildren, “with pale faces and small limbs” (480); the orphans and the outcasts, “stunted indeed they are, several with the expressionless, almost featureless, visages of hereditary misery, others with fearfully refined loveliness” (481). She added that “these are the waifs and strays, of home and parents absolutely unknown, whom Robert Fulmort has gathered from the streets—his most hopeful conquest from the realm of darkness” (481). They are followed by the members of “St. Wulstan’s Young Women’s Association,” who earn their own livelihood in service or by their handiwork, but meet on Sunday afternoon to read, sing, and go to church, have their books lent out for the week, or questions set for those who like them. It is Miss Fennimore [a governess] who is the nucleus of the band; she sits with them in church, she keeps the books, writes the questions, and leads the singing; and she is walking between her two chief friends, answering their eager and intelligent questions about trees and flowers, and directing their observation (481).

Each detail recalls the emphases and ideals of Tractarian thought, especially as interpreted, experienced, and endorsed by Charlotte Yonge. Indeed, Katherine Fennimore herself, once reviled by Robert Fulmort as “a nasty latitudinarian piece of machinery” (101) has evidently redeemed herself by repudiating the “sceptical habit” (364) and “temper of rationalism” (427) of her Unitarian past. She abjures the “argumentative books” and the “fallacies to which her life had been dedicated” (363, 417), acknowledges her errors, and is received into the Church of England.¹⁰² She is represented with the intellectual interests and philanthropic pursuits of Yonge herself, her actions and activities clearly an allusion to Yonge’s roles and responsibilities as

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¹⁰² Yonge wrote censoriously of the elasticity of Miss Fennimore’s faith: she practiced “what she thought reasonable—Christianity, modified by the world’s progress—was her tenet, and she had no scruple in participating in any act of worship” (363).
editor of *The Monthly Packet* and advisor to *The Barnacle*.

At the end of the procession the "gentlemanly choristers, tidy sons of artisans and warehousemen, ragged half-tamed little street vagabonds, all file past, under curate, schoolmaster, or pupil teacher, till the whole multitude is safely deposited in a large mead running into the heart of the Forest." Two thousand of these representatives of Whittingtonia, their parish pennants and banners aloft, assemble at the "little Forest Church, a small, low-walled, high-roofed building, enclosed by stately beeches, making a sort of outer cathedral around the little elevation where it stood in its railed-in churchyard ... each division takes up a position on the ground strewn with dry beech leaves ... and the short out-door service is begun."
The portrayal of this massive congregation of city and country children, members of the increasingly vocal and visible Anglo-Catholic "Church Militant," directed and deployed by Robert Fulmort, is the most compelling image in the novel.

One lesson alone is read ... "one Lord, One Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all,"... troops on troops of young and old, rich and poor, strangers and homebom, all held together in that great unity, typified by the overshadowing sky, and evidenced by the burst of the Creed from every voice and every heart (482).

This passage documents the triumph of Tractarianism at its most transcendent. The original scholarly and academic spirit of the Oxford Movement has reconstituted itself as a formidable "fighting faith," no longer exclusively clerical and contemplative, but confident, combative, and armed with the ability to appeal to and assert itself among the poor and dispossessed in all "the dark places" of England and Empire. The Anglo-Catholic missionary enterprise has assumed the aggression and acquired the educational and administrative apparatus that will allow it to accomplish its most ambitious aims. The novel rejoices in the rescue of the cities, the rehabilitation of the populations, even the regeneration of the race. To preserve the purity of the new order, however, Yonge ensures that all disagreeable or discordant elements are eliminated or expelled. Lucilla Sandbrook, physically shattered and "subdued" (520) by her experiences as a "fast young lady" and a failed governess, is dispatched to the seacoast of Spain, where her superannuated husband will serve as chaplain to a "small colony" of English convalescents. Her cousin, Horatia Charteris, a formerly "fast young woman," abandons a life of frivolity and flirtation and becomes a member of the Plymouth Brethren, an ascetic Protestant sect. A chastened and crippled Owen Sandbrook will atone for a series of sins, which include the seduction of a schoolmistress and a sceptical and secular spirit, in a squalid set of rooms in the inner city. The errant schoolmistress, Edna Murrell, dies in childbirth. Even Melvyn Fulmort, the dissolute "distiller and distributor," modestly reforms (and perhaps mildly repents), agreeing to relinquish his monopoly and reduce the sale of spirits to the residents of Whittingtonia. Defeated and disappointed in his attempts to expand his commercial empire in London, he announces to his
brother, “I am getting into the foreign and exportation line. It is infinitely less bother” (468).103

Nevertheless, it is apparent that Charlotte Yonge was not entirely comfortable or content with the Anglo-Catholic emphasis on the inner city and the ascendancy of the Ritualist regime. In Hopes and Fears she resists any explicit endorsement of conspicuous ceremonial and retreats to a closure that is more sentimental and subdued than confrontational or controversial: “[h]ow the little girls hug their flowers! If any nosegays reach London alive, they will be cherished to their last hour, and may be the leaves will live in prayer-books for many a year.” Their country experience will continue to “live in their memories for many a day, and as time goes on, will … become one of the precious days that make gems on the thread of life” (483). This preference for private devotion rather than public display appears almost elegiac, evidence of the continuing strength of her early allegiance to the austere practices of Keble and the original Tractarians rather than the more ostentatious performances of Pusey and their Ritualist successors.

Charlotte Yonge continued to interrogate contemporary crises of urbanisation and industrialisation, and their effect on the construction (both consolidation and contradiction) of ideology and identity, in her second novel of the 1860s, entitled The Clever Woman of the Family (1865). Anxieties aroused and exacerbated by powerful and persistent challenges to the imperialist enterprise would also complicate that narrative.

103 His assurances however, fail to appease the American Humfrey Charlecote, who declines his partnership offer, preserving his separation from such a morally dubious enterprise. Ironically, at the end of The Pillars of the House Robert Fulmort becomes Bishop of Albertstown, Australia (Volume Two, 524); the new rector of St. Matthew’s, Whittingtonia, is Clement Underwood, another celibate Ritualist priest, and a member of the family at the center of The Pillars of the House (see Chapter Five).
4.3. ‘The Clever Woman of the Family’ (1865)
Community and Country

‘The cleverest of Miss Yonge’s books....’

_The Clever Woman of the Family_ (1865), which first appeared in the _Churchman’s Family Magazine_ from January 1864 to April 1865, is commonly regarded as Charlotte Yonge’s most pointed and provocative rejoinder to contemporary controversies that centred on the roles and responsibilities of women. The extraordinary range of rancorous resentments that accompanied those anxieties is evident not only within the text itself but in its critical and popular reception.\(^{104}\) The literary historian Kathleen Tillotson (1978) argued that _The Clever Woman of the Family_ is more “consistently and deliberately topical in its references than any other novel of Miss Yonge’s.”\(^{105}\) Catherine Sandbach-Dahlstrom (1984) concurred, considering it “a conscious contribution to the debate on the woman question.”\(^{106}\) Consistency, however, is somewhat less conspicuous within the narrative. Even the most ardent of her acolytes have been disconcerted by its apparent contradictions and contortions. Christabel Coleridge (1903), invariably so effusive in her estimations of the novels of Charlotte Yonge, conceded with consternation that

_The Clever Woman of the Family_, published in 1865, should have been noted here. Some people think it the cleverest of Miss Yonge’s books, but there is a controversial element in it which, I think, distracts from its charm.\(^{107}\)

Coleridge consigned this statement to the relative obscurity of a rare footnote, as if she were somehow compelled to separate any acknowledgment of the novel from the rest of her account, and perhaps even from her subject. In any event her guarded response is echoed by an uneasy Ethel Romanes (1908), who remarked only that “this is, in our judgement, almost Miss Yonge’s cleverest book; not the most charming by any means, but distinctly able and amusing.”\(^{108}\) She declined to elaborate on a declaration that seems both defensive and dismissive. Another of Yonge’s most devoted readers, Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish, disconsolately recorded in her diary that she had “finished _The Clever Woman_;” and had found it “a sad failure, and mostly very dull.”\(^{109}\)

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\(^{104}\) Yonge, _The Clever Woman of the Family_. 1865. Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, Ltd., 2001. All subsequent references are to this edition and will be noted parenthetically within the text.


\(^{106}\) Sandbach-Dahlstrom, _Be Good Sweet Maid_, 136.

\(^{107}\) Coleridge, _Charlotte Mary Yonge_, 230.

\(^{108}\) Romanes, _Charlotte Mary Yonge_, 99.

\(^{109}\) Cavendish, _Diaries_, Volume One, 260.
Dismay that edged (and occasionally erupted) into exasperation and distinct dislike was also evident in responses by perhaps less partisan reviewers. The anonymous essayist for *The Nation* (1865) charged “although able the book is a disagreeable low tragedy,” and considered it, somewhat cryptically, “unpleasant ... but also timely and most impressive.” The writer proceeded to present a more serious complaint, accusing Yonge of excessive severity, if not absolute sadism, and protesting that “[h]aving brought before us one or more fine creatures, she beats them; she binds them; ... she sticks pins into them; she impales them; she makes them declare it is ‘so comfortable’ to be impaled; she calls upon us to congratulate them; then, in triumph, she bears them out of our sight.” The *Church Quarterly Review* (1865) was more reserved, but also regretted “the relentless way in which she crushes, under tons of avenging disaster, any of her capable heroines who venture onto modern lines.”

More recent scholarship, however, has preferred to see evidence of clumsiness and incompetence rather than cruelty. Edith Sichel (1901) disparaged what she perceived as the “mismanagement of the machinery of the plot,” and Annis Gillie (1965) denounced the “sacrifice of probability to morality.” J.S. Bratton (1981) deplored “the discrepancy of intention and effect.” There is certainly some accuracy in these complaints; situations and circumstances can seem contrived, often displaying an alarming dependence on coincidence or chance. Alan Horsman’s casual dismissal (1990) of the novel as “another runaway family chronicle,” however, is altogether less convincing. *The Clever Woman of the Family* is a circumscribed, often claustrophobic narrative of false starts, frustrated or flawed initiatives, and failed closure. It is defined by instances of restriction and repression, encumbrance and enclosure, surveillance and subordination, denial and disappointment. The heroine, Rachel Curtis, is physically and spiritually disciplined and diminished: punished for praying too little and presuming too much. June Sturrock condemns the novel as “in many ways directly and wholeheartedly antifeminist.” Valerie Sanders, in a comparative study entitled *Eve’s Renegades: Victorian Anti-Feminist Women Novelists* (1996), and Kim Wheatley, in an essay “Death and Domestication in Charlotte M.

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111 Ibid.
112 *The Church Quarterly Review*, 347. The writer cites Rachel Curtis, Laura Edmonstone (*The Heir of Redclyffe*), Flora May (*The Daisy Chain*), and Janet Brownlow (*Magnum Bonum*) as examples; and adds that “Lady Temple (*The Clever Woman of the Family*), Amy Edmonstone, Mary Ponsonby (*Dynevor Terrace*), and Violet Martindale (*Heartsease*) are all glorified for their womanliness, not tainted with the intellectual pride or modern desires which make their victims lust after strange meats.”
117 Sturrock, ‘*Heaven and Home*,’ 62.
Ambivalence and antipathy have persisted to the present day. Some critics continue to condemn the attitudes and assumptions of *The Clever Woman of the Family* as rigid and reactionary, characterised by "superciliousness and spleen," and compromised by Yonge's "terror of intellectual pride and of its iconoclast spirit." Others consider its arguments more convoluted and complex, "subversive and completely revolutionary, fostering discontent with the very model ... it purports to admire." These discrepancies and discordancies can perhaps be ascribed to (if not explained by) the contradictions and incongruities that result from Yonge's attempts to accommodate within her aesthetic the repeated incursions and of a troubled and tumultuous reality beyond the confines of the narrative. *The Clever Woman of the Family*, more conspicuously topical and transgressive in its themes than any of Yonge's other novels, is profoundly destabilised by shifting narrative impulses, inconsistent characterisations, and uncertain or unsettled sympathies; and it strenuously resists any perfunctory reading or resolution of its tensions.

By any measure imaginable the novel is audacious: at various times it preaches sacrifice and submission through an insistent evocation of the central Christian myth of salvation, presenting itself almost as a devotional tract; it celebrates courtship and marriage, presenting itself as a romance; it incorporates some of the gothic conventions of sensationalism, presenting itself as a mystery and a melodrama; it appropriates the language of domesticity and decorum, presenting itself as a conduct manual. It can also be seen as a comedy of manners, a satire on contemporary customs and concerns, an expose of social injustice, a "set of psychological portraits or a moral fable," a protest, a parody, a parable, a quest, a cautionary tale. The institutionalised victimisation of the most vulnerable among the population, the poor, as well as women, many of them widows, spinsters, and celibates, and children, many of them invalids and orphans, is a central concern. Elements of empire, and in particular of the crisis of the imperial engagement in India, emerge abruptly, unexpectedly, and with a somewhat disconcerting proximity and pertinacity. The themes of the novel are elusive, its tone equivocal, and its title especially


120 Ann B. Murphy, "The Borders of Ethical, Erotic, and Artistic Possibilities in 'Little Women.'" *Signs: The Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 15, 31 (1990), 562-585. The linguistic, structural, and thematic parallels of the two texts are striking, as are similarities in the initial descriptions of the two heroines.

121 Wheatley, "Death and Domestication," 909.

122 *The Nation* considered the novel "a timely and most impressive warning against the particular proof of the weakness of mind which . . . has come to be called strong-mindedness," 55.
enigmatic: is the obvious authorial irony affectionate or astringent, and even more fundamentally, to whom does it refer?

In the opening pages the heroine Rachel Curtis, heiress of "The Homestead," near the provincial community of "Avonmouth," and "belonging to the country by birth and tradition" (41), announces at her birthday breakfast, "this is the day I had fixed for hauling down the flag of youth" (1). Much to the dismay of her more conventional sister she insists that "I have done with white muslin ... it is an affectation of girlish simplicity" (2) as she reluctantly accepts her mother’s gift of a garland of white roses. Rachel is twenty-five years old, certainly no longer a child, and this passage establishes one of the central tensions that will be examined in the novel: the clash between the constraints enforced by contemporary ideologies of young womanhood, with their emphases on deference and dependence, and the restless and often impatient imperatives of the individual and the adult. A detailed description of her countenance and costume, offered with an attention unusual and perhaps unique in Yonge’s novels, signals the extravagant energy of her spirit:

Rachel for the first time turned to the glass and met with a set of features of an irregular, characteristic cast, brow low and broad, nose retousse, with large, singularly sensitive nostrils quivering like those of a high-bred horse at any emotion, full pouting lips, round cheeks glowing with the freshest red, eyes widely opened, dark deep grey and decidedly prominent, though curtained with thick black lashes. The glossy chestnut hair partook of the redundance and vigour of the whole being, and the roses hung on it gracefully though not in congruity with the thick winter dress of blue and black tartan, still looped up over the dark petticoat and hose, and stout high-heeled boots, that, like the grey cloak and felt hat, bore witness to the early walk (2).

Rachel is the incarnation of a new type of heroine, active, engaged, enterprising, and eccentric rather than decorative or demure; a young woman who despises custom and convention, especially “this ridiculous fiction of a prolonged childhood,” and will adamantly decline to be “a ridiculous, useless, being” (4). She is intelligent, opinionated, energetic, and like Ethel May, impatient and imperfect: decidedly neither beautiful nor beatific. However, despite the appearance of ominous words such as “irregular,” “redundance,” and “[in]congruity” her enormous vigour and vitality are admirable.

Again like Ethel, Rachel is most vocal and vehement in her desire for the purpose implicit in “a mission,” for she “felt the influence of an age eminently practical and sifting, but with

123 The conspicuous placement of this word, used to introduce the reader to Rachel, surely signals the “surplus” woman controversy that was so explosive in mid-century England.
small powers of acting” and the urgings of a “soul burning at the report of the great cry going
up to heaven from a world of sin and woe” (6). Despite her privilege she is acutely aware
of the profound miseries and abuses that attend the “progress” of contemporary industrial
society:

The times were out of joint ... the dark places of the earth
looked darker than ever, and those who lived at ease seemed
to be employed either in sport upon the outside of the dungeon
where the captives groaned, or in obstructing the way of those
who would fain have plunged in to the rescue (222).

The novel restricts itself to the examination and indictment of the practices of one industrial
enterprise: the “crying evils” (50) of the lacemaking system. The enforced labour of workers in
this home “handicraft” industry, all of whom were young women or children, amounted almost
to slavery. Conditions were notorious: confined in poorly lit and ventilated spaces, condemned to
close work on the delicate white finery required for weddings or the dense black drapery required
for mourning, many workers sacrificed to “this Moloch of lace” (100) suffered from severe
eyestrain and became permanently blind. Sensational cases were regularly reported in the press,
including that of Mary Ann Wakely, a twenty-year-old seamstress who had been forced to work
for twenty-six hours without a single break. Her death from the effects of exhaustion and ill-usage
led to the establishment of the Association for the Aid and Benefit of Dressmakers and Milliners,
an organisation that pressed the government for increased pay and enhanced protections for the
exploited workers in these professions. Charlotte Yonge had demonstrated sympathy and
support for these reform initiatives, publishing several accounts of similar instances of abuse
in The Monthly Packet, including “Life Among the Factories” (August 1859) and “The
Needlewoman’s Institution” (March 1861), but The Clever Woman of the Family is her most
sustained scrutiny and indictment of the plight of workers in an underpaid and unregulated
industry. In 1867, two years after the publication of the novel, Parliament approved the passage
of the Factory and Workshops Regulation Act, which mandated that no child younger than the age
of eight was to be employed in a handicraft such as lace-making.

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125 Many scholars, including June Sturrock, have noted the similarities between Rachel Curtis and Emma
Woodhouse, Jane Austen’s heroine; see ‘Heaven and Home,’ 61. There are other literary parallels as well.
George Eliot’s most endearing heroine, Dorothea Brooke, in Middlemarch (1873) is reminiscent of Rachel,
Yonge’s most exasperating. Both are idealistic, intellectual, impetuous, and (like Ethel May) extremely
short-sighted, which Ethel wryly describes as an advantage rather than an affliction, insisting “[t]hat’s one
advantage of being blind. No one can stare me out of countenance” (301). In contrast Rachel is tormented
by constant supervision and surveillance. Although the scope and style of the The Clever Woman of the
Family and Middlemarch are very different, their closure is not dissimilar. Yonge read Eliot’s novel and
remarked only that it “it leaves one with a sense of hollowness.”

126 There were several similar perils in this age of accelerating consumerism: exposure to lead in embossed
paper-lace making caused an array of respiratory ailments. Many of the shop girls who made artificial
flowers for the milliners, dress-makers, and florists in London were slowly poisoned by the arsenic used
to dye the green of the leaves. The fashion of “frosting” flowers with pulverized glass also had its dangers;
invisible particles were ingested by the workers and the lining of their lungs often damaged as a result.

127 The Act also imposed other restrictions on the conditions of employment for children, and widened
Rachel is restricted by the demands of decorum rather than domesticity; unlike Ethel, she has no pressing “home duties.” “Something to do was her cry” (43) and she desairs at the emptiness of her isolated and idle existence: “not a paper do I take up, but I see something about wretchedness and crime, and here I sit with health, strength, and knowledge, and able to do nothing” (4). Even the local clergyman declines to investigate or intervene reports of abuse, a response Rachel regards with disappointment and regret, reminding her cousin ruefully, “Do you remember our axiom? Build your church, and the rest will take care of itself” (39).

Rachel considers herself “tethered to the merest mockery of usefulness by conventionalities,” those strictures that stifle and suppress the actions and ambitions of young women: “I am told that it is my duty, and that I may be satisfied” (4), she sighed. Acquiescence is agonising for her, but nevertheless, Yonge asserted implacably, “Rachel generally did concede. She could not act; but she could talk uncontradicted; and she hated herself for the enforced submission to a state of things that she despised” (6). It is evident that for her submission is inevitable, and as the novel accelerates so does Yonge’s indictment of Rachel’s aspirations. Unlike Ethel, her efforts and enthusiasms are not portrayed as exemplary: confidence becomes arrogance as ambition leads to presumption; certainty becomes credulity as ideals degenerate into delusions. Rachel’s resistance to any restraint, first described somewhat leniently as a “puzzled chafing ... that breaks out in odd effervescences” (168), inexorably becomes the target of sharp, and at times almost savage, authorial irony and anger.

This is first evident in an extended caricature and implicit criticism of the origins and enterprise of the Langham Place Circle (1857-1866), a protofeminist organisation founded in London to pursue the possibility of political, economic, and social equality for women. Originally established by Bessie Rayner Parkes (1829-1925) and Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon (1827-1891), the organisation eventually included the poet Adeline Procter (1825-1864); Maria Susan Rye (1829-1903); Emily Faithfull (1835-1895); Jessie Boucherett (1825-1905), the founder of the Society for the Promotion of Employment for Women (SPEW); Emily Sheriff and her sister Maria Grey (1816-1906); and Emily Davies. Their intention was to provide clerical and industrial training that would lead to opportunities for paid employment for women, although they also were instrumental in the founding of the Ladies’ Sanitary Association, part of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Sciences (NAPSS), which campaigned to demonstrate “the proper conditions of domesticity,” particularly among the poorer populations of London and the

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the definition of a workshop in order to provide for closer and more consistent supervision of smaller enterprises. Routine inspections and consistent enforcement, however, remained concerns.

128 These “conventionalities,” catalogued in an earlier novel, The Young Stepmother, or A Chronicle of Mistakes (1861), consist of “a class at school ... the penny-subscription and lending library ... a sharp constitutional walk ... parochial cares, visits, singing classes, lessons to Sunday-school teachers” (85).

manufacturing cities of the Midlands. The organisation was staunchly nonsectarian, although many associates identified themselves as members of the Established Church.\textsuperscript{130}

Rachel resolves to "become the founder of some establishment that might relieve women from the oppressive task-work thrown upon them in all the branches of their labour" (3), "raising the whole tone of female employment" (224). She realises her ambition in the creation of a local institution that will instruct former lacemakers in the arts of wood engraving and printing (4) in order to prepare them for a more permanent and better paid profession.\textsuperscript{131} She intends to name her establishment the Female Union for Lacemakers' Employment, whose ill- advised acronym FULE echoes that of SPEW; and rashly resolves the difficulty by replacing the L for Lacemakers with an E for "Englishwomen," failing to realise that the resulting FUEL ("phooey") is equally unfortunate. And just as SPEW was connected to The Englishwoman's Journal, founded in 1858 by Rayner Parkes and Procter, Rachel plans to produce a provincial periodical, The Journal for Female Industry. This "illustrated monthly magazine" will be designed "to contain essays, correspondence, reviews, and history tales," all of which will promote her own "decided theories of 'diffused' education" (43, 164, 311).\textsuperscript{132} Rachel is elated at the opportunity, however selfish or contrived, to place before the public her articles on "Curatocult, on Helplessness, on Female Folly, and Female Rights" (229). In time she intends to present accounts of her inspections of various charitable institutions and asylums on the Continent: "The only places I should really care to see," she confides to an amused acquaintance, "are the Grand Reformatory for the Destitute in Holland, and the Hospital for Cretins in Switzerland" (164).

These pedantic preoccupations earn Rachel her reputation as "a clever woman," a phrase that signals Yonge's intention to participate in contemporary controversies that raged around such cultural constructions and contestations. For girls the gulf between intellectual abilities and

\textsuperscript{130} Rachel's asylum for apprentices, doubtless meant as a satirical allusion to Jessie Boucherett's Society for Promoting the Employment of Women (SPEW), may have been seen as a deliberate provocation. If so, it provides context for the question proposed by Elizabeth Garrett at the inaugural meeting of the Kensington Society on 23 May 1865. In what may have been intended as a pointed rejoinder, riposte, or rebuke Elizabeth Garrett posed the query "What is the true basis, & what are the limits, of parental authority?" to the audience, most of whom were associated with the Langham Place Circle and its affiliated organisations.

\textsuperscript{131} For more information on the Society for the Promotion of Employment for Women see Sheila R. Herstein, \textit{A Mid-Victorian Feminist: Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon}. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985; especially 135-148. Rachel also expresses an interest in female emigration (56), a proposed "solution" to the "redundancy" problem that was announced with the publication of the results of the census of 1851. Between 1849 and 1862 several organisations, including the National Benevolent Emigration Society and The Female Middle-Class Emigration Society, founded by Maria Rye, were founded to address this issue. See Rita S. Kranidis, \textit{The Victorian Spinster and Colonial Emigration: Contested Subjects}. NY: St. Martin's Press, 1999.

\textsuperscript{132} Colin Keith exclaims in exasperation that "down comes this girl to battle every suggestion with principles picked up from every catch-penny periodical, things she does not half understand, and enunciates as if no one had even heard of them before" (167). Catherine Sandbach-Dahls trom has demonstrated that Rachel's ideas are parodies of actual articles that appeared in the contemporary periodical press; \textit{Be Good Sweet Maid}, 187.
educational opportunities was acknowledged to be enormous. In 1864 the Taunton Commission had initiated its investigations into endowed schools, declaring that the entire system was lamentable but that the provision for young women was particularly limited. In an address (1865) to the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science the head of Cheltenham Ladies’ College, the celebrated educator Dorothea Beale (1831-1906), seconded these sentiments, demanding with indignation, “How is it that the daughters of the higher middle classes are more ignorant and constrained than the children of the national schools?”

Many appeared to recognise the importance of increased access to improved educational institutions for women, and some, it seemed, were compelled to present their opinions and recommendations on the subject. Articles and essays routinely appeared and were answered in the periodical press. Investigation into ideals prompted an interrogation of ideologies, which often were reinforced rather than revised. Anne Mozley explained in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* (1868) that

> when we would define a clever woman, we mean something as distinct from a sensible, a well-informed, even an intelligent woman, as from the conventional charming woman.... The ideal woman confines herself to her circle, her family, her home, and herself as the centre of all. Within this restricted range the mind’s touch is endued with an exquisite sensibility because it is restricted.

Charlotte Yonge added her own interpretation in a treatise entitled *Womankind* (1877; serialised 1874-1875), ironically insisting that the clever woman “is supposed to have an aptitude for all kinds of severe studies, and to insist on pursuing them on equal terms with men.... Her chief dread is of prejudice, and of ancient conclusions, and she therefore thinks it weak not to read all kinds of books, especially the sceptical and sensational.... She speaks on platforms, gives lectures, and endeavours to persuade us of [our] wrongs.”

Her rhetoric recalls *The Clever Woman of the Family* in every particular. Yonge gently ridicules Rachel’s initial attempt at journalism, a “sententious,” unreadable treatise on “curatocult,” that “sickly mixture of flirtation and hero worship” destined for a periodical entitled *The English Woman’s Hobbyhorse* and intended as the “beginning of a series exposing the fallacies of woman’s life as at present conducted” (50-51). She is even somewhat indulgent of...
Rachel’s subsequent venture into creative writing: a “slender thread of a story” on “the distresses of Woman,” encrusted with “disquisitions on economy and charity,” which plans to place the heroines in “various industrial asylums where their lot should be far more beatific than marriage, which was reserved for the naughty one to live in unhappy ever after” (253). But Rachel herself, it seems, is destined to be a “naughty one,” and the novel darkens precipitously as her impassioned resistance to domesticity and impetuous plunge into philanthropy descend into disaster and death. Her asylum for apprentices is exposed as a complete charade, managed by a scoundrel who is a practiced and “plausible” swindler (123) and monitored by a matron, “Mrs. Rawlins,” neither widow “nor his wife.” At their separate trials they are accused of a series of crimes that include fraud, forgery, theft, and most catastrophically, assault and abuse of the children. Rachel’s credulity and complicity are evident during her abject testimony for the prosecution:

Here she was, the Clever Woman of the family, shown in open court to have been so egregious a dupe that the deceiver could not even be punished, but must go scot-free, leaving all her wrongs unredressed! To her excited, morbid apprehension, magnified by past self-sufficiency, it was as though all eyes were looking in triumph at that object of general scorn and aversion, a woman who had stepped out of her place (387).

Some of the most sacred icons of the dominant ideologies, marriage, maternity, philanthropy, and industry, will be imperiled; Rachel’s character and certainties, as well as her considerable income and inheritance, are compromised; and she is responsible not only for the sorrow and shame of her family but for the suffering and death of an innocent child. In her guilt and grief Rachel succumbs to the triple scourges of despair, diphtheria, and doubt:

The feverish misery that succeeded Lovedy’s death had been utterly crushing, the one load of self-accusation had prostrated her, but with a restlessness of agony that kept her writhing as it were in her wretchedness; and then came the gradual increase of physical suffering.... She could not die. The world here, the

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137 Examples of unhappy or otherwise unfortunate marriages abound in Yonge’s novels; Margaret Henley and Laura Edmonstone in The Heir of Redclyffe; Flora May in The Daisy Chain; Bessie Keith in The Clever Woman of the Family; Alda Underwood in The Pillars of the House, are described with varying degrees of disapprobation. In contrast, widows and spinsters, such as Honora Charlecote and Katherine Fennimore in Hopes and Fears and Fanny Temple in The Clever Woman of the Family, are often depicted as exemplary and conspicuously content.

138 “Rd. R.H.C.L. Mauleverer,” whose calling cards were “written, not engraved” (210) was “understood” by the local stationer to be “a clerical gentleman who had opinions.” He was also known as a philosopher, a painter, and by his own account a “popular, philanthropical lecturer” (367). Mauleverer’s professional affiliations and personal acquaintance are highly irregular: he provides Rachel with dubious testimonials “from a German university” and “American professors and philanthropists” (230), and at his trial the witnesses called on his behalf are “a dissenting minister and a widow who is the owner of the family shop” (390). Rachel acknowledges that Mauleverer is “not exactly a finished gentleman,” but continues to accept his assurances. The butler at The Homestead, however, has no illusions, or perhaps sounder instincts; he “put him into the dining-room ... not regarding him as drawing-room company” (228).
world to come, were all too dark, too confused, to enable her to bear such a doom.... She longed, as for something far away, for the reality of those simple teachings—once realities, now all by rote! Saved by faith! What was faith? Could all depend on a last sensation? She tried to think of progress and purification beyond the grave, but this was the most speculative, most insecure fabric of all. There was no habit of trust to it—no inward conviction, no outward testimony (371-372).

Rachel is rescued from her anguished uncertainties by the love of a superior and selfless man, Alexander ('Alick') Keith, whose sensitive and sensible ministrations gradually enable her to recover from the shame and scandal that surround her. Alick is an authentic hero, awarded the Victoria Cross for his valour at the siege of Delhi, but “almost shattered to pieces” by the experience as well.139 His sympathy and solicitude enable Rachel to repair her own “shattered nerves” (436) and relieve the “thorns in her mind” (280), and the remainder of the novel is devoted to a recitation of the physical and psychological symptoms of her suffering. She is continually fretted by the recurrence of fever, fatigue, and “delusive miseries;” constantly followed by “a morbid sense of eyes” (294). At first the standard remedy of rest (and repentance) is recommended as a restorative, but Yonge observed that “although calm and time were promised to Rachel ... the more she had of both the more they hurt her” (274). As in all Yonge’s narratives, complete recovery from a severe illness is equivocal: although Rachel “had her childhood’s heart again” (316) “it seemed even her personal identity was gone” (267). Her illness engulfs her entire identity, until at last, enveloped by “lassitude and depression” (268) her “indisposition had become almost precious to her” (287).

In the course of their sombre and subdued wedding trip (the ceremony itself is scarcely mentioned) Rachel and Alick travel to Wales, but eventually seek sanctuary with his uncle, the rector of the remote country parish of Bishopsworthy:

Rachel, alighting, saw that the land proceeded to a river crossed by a wooden bridge, with an expanse of meadows beyond. To her left was a stable-yard, and below it a white gate and white railings enclosing a graveyard, with a very beautiful church.... There was a lovely cool tranquility of aspect as the shadows lay sleeping on the grass ... a white setter dog bounded forward ... and a still snowier cat ... a gentleman came forward to meet them, fearlessly treading the pathway between the graves (289).

Mr. Clare is blind, and thus Rachel is spared the agonised pain of her pathological sensitivity to

139 Instances of illness and injury dominate the novel. Ermine Williams, an idealised invalid, has lost the use of her legs (“a contracture of the lower limbs”) in a chemical explosion; and many of the male characters are also disabled: Alick has lost several fingers as the result of a burst shell in India and suffers from recurring bouts of fever and delirium; Colin Keith, his distant kinsman, “carries a ball in his chest” from his service in South Africa that endangers his life in cold or inclement weather; the ailing Lord Keith dies following an operation;” even Edward Williams, who appears only at the end of the narrative, is apparently an addict, “a wreck of a man, stunned and crushed, and never thoroughly alive again” (494). Elaine Showalter calls these illnesses “symbolic immersions of the hero in the feminine experience.” A Literature of Their Own, 152. See also Sandbach-Dahlstrom’s analysis of Yonge’s portrayals of communities of invalids in Be Good Sweet Maid, Chapter Five.
the oppressive scrutiny and surveillance that had so preyed upon her spirits. He is portrayed as the ideal Tractarian clergyman; one who “belonged to that generation which gave its choicest in intellectual, as well as in religious gifts to the ministry, when a fresh tide of enthusiasm was impelling men forward to build up, instead of breaking down, before disappointment and suspicion had thinned the ranks, and hurled back many a recruit, or doctrinal carpings had taught men to dread a search into their own tenets” (454). He is able to dispel Rachel’s spasms of spiritual doubt, agreeing to read and analyse examples of those “sceptical” and “superficial” arguments that are so perplexing and perilous in their ability to “paint contradictions as truth” (417, 486). Rachel asks with some curiosity, “Do you object to my having read, and thought, and tried?” and is reassured by Mr. Clare’s considered response: “Certainly not. Those who have the capability should, if they feel disturbed, work out the argument. Nothing is gained while it is felt that both sides have not been heard” (486). Yonge does not pursue any particulars; the only “argumentative” or “advanced” text actually named in The Clever Woman of the Family is Richard Owen’s Paleontology (1860), which examined (and disputed) Darwin’s theories of evolution and natural selection.

Rachel attempted to console herself, remembering that “Alick says thought will come back with strength,” but added disconsolately, “I don’t think I wish it!”

These spectral intimations of somnolence and death are in conspicuous contrast to the images presented in the first few pages of the novel: lilies rather than roses, twilight instead of

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140 The description of churchyard and rectory recall the setting of the parsonage at Hursley. The creation of the saintly Mr. Clare is Charlotte Yonge’s tribute to, or as Elisabeth Jay suggests, typological reading of, her mentor and “master” John Keble. “The bright sunny playful sweetness of his manner” and “dark handsome eyes” of Mr. Clare are based on qualities for which the rector of Hursley was renowned; and his vision was so poor that his wife forbade him to ride. The tone of this passage is markedly elegiac: Keble had recently been incapacitated by a series of strokes and would die in his Bournemouth lodgings the following year. See Elizabeth Jay, “Charlotte Yonge’s ‘Gleanings’ from the Rev. John Keble,” Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship Journal 1 (1997), 37.

141 This reading is attempted only at the express wish of his superiors: according to Mr. Clare, “the bishop has desired me to preach the next visitation sermon, and he wishes it to be on some of these subjects” (486). At Avonmouth all Rachel’s acquaintance “regarded them as poisonous; and even Ermine Williams, without being shaken in her steadfast trust, was so haunted and distressed in her lonely and unvaried life by the echo of these shocks to the faith of others, that absolutely as a medical precaution she abstained from dwelling on them” (174).

142 Robert Owen (1804-1892), a Scottish physician and comparative anatomist, served on a series of governmental committees and commissions and as an advisor to the Great Exhibition of 1851. His proposal of animal “archetypes” actually found favour with the Established Church as not necessarily contrary to or incompatible with revealed scriptural truths.
morning; torpor instead of vigour, passivity instead of purpose; an ending, not an opening.

At the close of *The Clever Woman of the Family* a chastened and contrite Rachel will virtually vanish from the narrative, humbled by her humiliations and submerged in the deepening shadows of marriage and motherhood. What remains for the reader, however, is a persistent sense of disappointment and even displeasure; a resistance to the conventional closure, which seems peremptory and almost punitive; and a reluctance to accept her diminishment and disappearance as well as Yonge’s dubious and dispiriting disclaimer that “perhaps a sense of failure was always good for Rachel” (477).

Rachel, however, is not the only heroine in *The Clever Woman of the Family* whose precipitous marriage has momentous consequences. Bessie Keith, Alick’s “wicked” (218) and wayward younger sister who has “cast about the world too long” (292), represents a controversial construction of young womanhood that was the cause of considerable consternation in mid-century England.

She is Yonge’s own somewhat idiosyncratic interpretation of the “madcap” modern heroine, mercenary and almost manic, dedicated to folly and flirtation and defined by a devotion to finery and frivolity. Despite an ostentatious enthusiasm for the church choir and a series of animated discussions of “hymnals and chants” (203) with the callow curate it is evident that she is neither sincere nor devout; as Alick ominously observes, “the truth is not in her” (297). Bessie’s marriage is based on ambition and avarice rather than affection, and despite her brother’s constant admonitions she is remiss in her attentions and obligations to her husband, an elderly and increasingly infirm Scottish peer.

Instead she turns her energies to the pursuit of the newly popular game of croquet, condemned by *Punch* as “a summer afternoon fever” and “an engine for flirtation” (214) (see Appendix). As a confessed “votary of the hoop and mallet,” Bessie blithely proclaims her “mission” to convert the quiet clerical community at Avonmouth to this contemporary “cult” (116), drolly declaring herself “the serpent in this anti-croquet paradise” (219). Her diversions disrupt the entire county, distracting an impressionable clergyman to such a degree that he neglects even the most rudimentary and routine pastoral responsibilities. “Under the infection of croquet fever” (258) “he had, indeed, gone safely through the services, but at school he had entirely been at a loss as to what Sunday it was” (257), and in an attempt to recover his composure he exchanges parishes with a London colleague. Rachel, despite her many

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144 Their courtship is also conducted entirely offstage, their engagement a consequence of a brief “walk on the esplanade” (290-291).

145 The exact origins of croquet are unknown, but its French name and Irish associations (reportedly it was brought to England from Ireland in 1853), suggest that it had nothing of consequence to recommend to Charlotte Yonge. Many sceptics regarded it not as a sport but as a screen for unsupervised encounters in the shrubbery as players pretended to search for errant balls.
other faults, resists Bessie’s blandishments and remains the only “recusant” (221).

Bessie’s punishment for these sins, stemming from “the climax of conceit, croquet, and mere womanhood” (116), is in equal parts appropriate and absurd: unaccompanied by the ailing Lord Keith, she recklessly attends an afternoon garden party and is accosted by a former suitor recently returned from Rio de Janeiro, “a trumpery idle fellow always loitering at Littleworthy” (297). In her efforts to escape his importunities she suddenly stumbles over a stray croquet trap, “twists herself,” and expires in a harrowing scene of premature childbirth.

Rachel is rewarded with the care of her child, the presumptive heir to the Keith peerage and properties, but such responsibilities seem to oppress more than console her. As she endeavours to restore order to the profusion of ornaments and other personal possessions in Bessie’s “sumptuous” apartments, she is appalled to discover evidence of an additional disgrace: a secret packet of papers that itemise Bessie’s substantial debts, incurred both before and during her marriage. For Yonge this is another opportunity to expose and excoriate the “modern” habits of “a young lady of fashion” (510): extravagant selfishness and expensive self-indulgence rather than austere discipline and self-sacrifice.

Despite this detailed documentation of her disapproval Yonge’s portrayal of Bessie is beset by powerful discrepancies; and her apparent intention to enforce a painful moral lesson and exact a stern punishment seems exaggerated and inappropriate, almost defiantly inconsistent with her previous portrayal of a young woman whose “eager sympathy” and “sunny, gay good nature could not be withstood” (121). It is difficult to reconcile Yonge’s persistent allegations of “double-mindedness” (306, 472), duplicity, and mercenary “manoeuvering” (295) with her asseverations that “Bessie Keith took all hearts by storm with her ... humor and ease. Nothing came amiss to her... all was done with a grace and a zest that was peculiarly her own” (202-203).146

With her ease and exuberance, Bessie Keith is a diverting new type of heroine, less louche and leaden than the awkward and aggressive Rachel Curtis. And in the end even the censorious Charlotte Yonge seems to relent somewhat, with the almost reluctant admission that Bessie’s extensive catalogue of failings “were those of her day and her training” (332). As an indictment of the flaws of a culture rather than the faults of an individual, this appears to be an offer of absolution, or at least of dispensation. Yonge seems somewhat confounded by the appeal of her own character, concluding that Bessie’s “life was gone from the earth in its incompleteness, without an unraveling of its complicated texture” (475). In truth, however, the portrayal of amiable and accommodating Bessie Keith seems less a criticism of the “madcap” behaviour of modern young women than a cautionary tale of the literal and metaphorical predicaments and perils of marriage and maternity.

146 Sandbach-Dahlstrom argues that Yonge intended Bessie to be seen as diabolical and destructive, an “incarnation of the Devil ... with her legacy of debt and dishonor.” Be Good Sweet Maid, 177.
4.3.1. ‘The Clever Woman of the Family’

England and Empire

The sentiment of Empire is innate in every Briton.

William Ewart Gladstone

They have a proverb in the East: First the missionary, then the consul, then the general.

Robert Cecil, Lord Salisbury

Bessie Keith is a young Scotswoman who marries “the chief of her clan,” the elderly Lord Keith of Gowanbrae, but the mercenary match is merely a convenience and a charade. As a consequence of her “managing” and “manoeuvering” (205) the marriage degenerates into a miserable debacle that destroys them both. Unlike Rachel, who “belonged to the country by birth and tradition” (41), Bessie has no fixed place and few enduring allegiances or affections; she is essentially a child of Empire rather than of England. The Keiths are neither missionaries nor merchants but military men, sent abroad to maintain the presence and power of the British imperialist project. Bessie had returned “from the Cape at about ten years old, when the regiment went to India” (181), but her interests and loyalties remained with her brother and father, both career officers. She is deeply sentimental about her childhood experiences, recalling with happiness her “wandering home with the dear old Highlanders” (472). “The regiment was his hereditary home” (413), she declares of her brother Alick, adding proudly “he was born a soldier, like all the rest of us.... The – is our home” (198). Later Alick describes the extensive martial pedigree of the Keiths as well as its inevitable melancholy consequences: “My great-grandfather came from Gowanbrae,” ... but our branch of the family has lived and died in the –th Highlanders for so many generations that we don’t know what a home is out of it. Our birthplaces—yes, and our graves, are in all parts of the world” (164).

Bessie’s solitary grave, however, is not abroad, or in the grim ancestral crypt at Gowanbrae, “the ruined abbey where all the Keiths go” (473), which she has perhaps forfeited in her folly, but in a secluded corner of the Anglican churchyard at Bishopsworthy, in the idyllic and emblematically English parish of her uncle Mr. Clare. Many mourners attend her funeral service, but in the midst of his great grief and shock at her sudden death Alick is most gratified at the presence of his regimental commander, Colonel Hammond, who

147 “Highlander” regiments were deployed as the primary assault forces in the campaign to suppress the Sepoy “Mutiny; “Edward M. Spiers has observed that events in India established the “iconic significance of the Scottish soldier.” The Scottish Soldier and Empire, 1854-1902. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006, 7. Scholars have often noted the irony that one subjugated people were so instrumental in the campaign to subdue another in this key episode of British imperialism, a recognition that Yonge seems to have sedulously avoided in The Clever Woman of the Family.
Yonge suggests that brother and sister were essentially formed, but also deeply damaged, by their encounters and engagements with the imperialist enterprise. Episodes of sensational conquest create for each a sudden and conspicuous celebrity in placid, provincial Avonmouth. Alick, awarded the Victoria Cross\(^{148}\) for his courageous actions in the Indian campaign, is extravagantly admired by the entire community. Bessie is excessively admired as well, especially as she appears at a regimental dance. Even Rachel remarks on the elegance of her exotic finery:

“I must say young ladyhood looks to the greatest advantage there,” Rachel could not help exclaiming, as at the moment Elizabeth Keith smiled at them, as she floated past, her airy white draperies looped with scarlet ribbons; her dark hair turned back and fastened by a snood of the same, an eagle’s feather clasped in it by a large emerald, a memory of her father’s last siege—that of Lucknow (286).

She quite enchants the aged Lord Keith, who proposes marriage shortly thereafter. Alick, too, prospered in India; he is wealthy from his share of the considerable prize money distributed to officers of “the -th Regiment at Cawnpore and Delhi.”\(^{149}\) The other legacies of his service on the subcontinent, however, are as equivocal as his sister’s stolen emerald: the appearance and awkwardness of his maimed hand, with its missing and mutilated fingers, and the affliction of “his old India fever” (474). Yonge emphasises the persistent pain that prolongs Alick’s convalescence, describing his suffering as “the fresh undetected splinters of bone worked themselves out” of his wounds and his convulsive “shuddering and shivering” from a wild delirium that “could not be repressed” and was “apt to recur on any shock” (474). According to Bessie a return to England was prescribed as the restorative: the regimental doctor declared

\(^{148}\) The Victoria Cross, Britain’s most prestigious military decoration, was a very recent invention, introduced on 29 January 1856 by Victoria to recognise conspicuous acts of valour. The Queen insisted that the award should be attainable by all, regardless of birth or rank. The first investiture was held in Hyde Park on 26 June 1856; the same day, it is said, that reports of the outbreak of the Mutiny first reached London. The largest number awarded for actions on a single day was twenty-four on 16 November 1857, at the relief of Lucknow.

\(^{149}\) Bessie’s plundered emerald is not the only example of the possibilities of imperialist conquest. Her father, a regimental commander, is described as “a prudent man, who, having been a widower during his Indian service, had been able to live inexpensively, besides having a large amount of prize money” (232). In his Reminiscences of the Great Mutiny 1857-1859 William Forbes-Mitchell, a sergeant who had served with the 93rd Sutherland, a Highlander regiment, observed “the plunder accumulated by the prize-agents was estimated at over GB 600,000 (according to the Times of 31 May 1858) and within a week it had reached a million and a quarter sterling. Each private soldier present who served throughout the relief and capture of Lucknow got prize-money in the value of Rs 128” (228). There are many similar accounts; all providing evidence that looting by the British during the Mutiny and its aftermath was institutionalised, endorsed, and even applauded by the British government.
that "the long sea voyage was the only chance, and that in India he could not get vigour
enough to begin to recover" (198). However, she also confided to Rachel that in England
another set of trials and torments had emerged. "He is the conquering hero, and everybody
came and complimented him, and catechised him whether he believed in the Indian
mutilations, when, poor fellow, he had seen horrors enough never to bear to think of them,
except when the fever brought them all over again" (199).

Several other characters in the novel also have remembrances of India and their experience
of Empire, most of them tokens or trifles more decorative than debilitating. An impressive number
of imperial trophies, some trivial and some extravagant, are amassed and exhibited in the
narrative. Rachel's cousin, the beautiful young widow of a superannuated general who had died
abroad after "various commands in the colonies" (40), considers the possibilities for an
appropriate wedding present for Bessie: "I would give her my best Indian table, only I always
meant that for Ermine. I think she must have the emu's egg set in Australian gold" (262), she
declared. The most prized possessions of her children are not dissimilar: "a stuffed duckbill"
(48) and a collection of birds' eggs. "I've got an egg of all the Australian birds the Major could
get me," the oldest proclaims, "and I mean to have all the English ones" (77). Even small
children, it seems, have an insatiable desire for the acquisition of imperial plunder.

The Major himself, Colin Keith, a distant kinsman of Alick and Bessie (and for a time
the heir to the Gowanbrae estate) has been on overseas service with his own regiment for twelve
years, dispatched to a series of posts in the most strategically and politically important (and
 perilous) possessions and protectorates of the British Empire at mid-century: India, Australia,
and South Africa (184). As a "Scotsman, soldier, and High Churchman" (242) he obviously has
"many perfections," but a robust constitution is not among them. Like Alick he sustained
devastating and potentially deadly injuries as a consequence of his imperial service, suffering
from the effects of a Boer bullet permanently lodged in his chest during a skirmish at Cape
Town. Unable to tolerate an extreme or ennervating climate, Colin eventually resigns his

150 Fanny also presents Rachel with "silky," "embroidered" material for her trousseau that is made into
"the prettiest thing you have worn." Mr. Clare approves: "Indian, surely... it is too intricate and graceful
for the West" (461).

151 Many everyday commodities were supplied by imperialist encounters: coffee, cigars, sugar, tea, tin,
textiles, rubber, mahogany, and medicinal opiates; even the "Chinese" pagoda-patterned silk dressing gown
worn by Charles Edmonstone in The Heir of Redclyffe. See especially Joanna de Groot, "Metropolitan
Desires and Colonial Connections: Reflections on Consumption and Empire," in Catherine Hall and Sonya
O. Rose, editors, At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World. Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press, 2006, 166-190.

152 Lord Gowanbrae, who had ardent hopes of marrying their mother, is eager to dispatch these seven
inconvenient children, confiding in Colin that "most of them are lads, and what with school, sea, and India,
they will be easily disposed of" (252).

153 With his "Scotch face" (61) Colin Keith is compared with "Robert the Bruce" (131), the thirteenth-
century warrior king and national hero of Scotland. Yonge later observed that many of "the inhabitants
of Avonmouth found the world more flat in his absence," (191), an interesting acknowledgment of the
effect of his presence on an insular community "esteemed by some for its remoteness from railways" (41).

154 Colin Keith is not as fortunate as Harry May (The Daisy Chain), who is saved from the impact of a
bullet by the pages of his Prayer Book, which he always kept in the chest pocket of his naval jacket.
commission and returns to England in order to marry Ermine Williams, an invalid to whom he has long been devoted. His arrival in Avonmouth is heralded by the appearance of several enormous crates filled with the relics of his campaigns and conquests, choice rarities that he was avid to collect and keen to display. After arranging the rooms of his first permanent establishment in England to recall "the old Parsonage" of their early courtship, Ermine assures him that "your beautiful Indian curiosities have found their corners" (539). At "Gowanbrae Cottage" the everyday and the exotic are intertwined, and despite the pair of family portraits and the pervasive scent of "English geranium" it is possible that these artefacts of Empire (never described as "plunder") may eventually exchange their passive and provisionally peripheral position for a more central and assertive placement in that most emblematic space of England, the drawing-room. Colin's elderly housekeeper, however, persistently portrayed as intensely Scottish, may suppress this "great exhibition" (309) of imperial relics from India, intent on preserving her domain from the intrusions of "yon far away land o' wild beasts and savages" (371).

The scholar Stephen Arata has argued (1996), however, that the evidence and effects of Empire could not be controlled, contained, or kept in "the corners," and this seemingly banal instance of interior decoration suggests the presence of the problematic phenomenon that he has called "reverse colonisation." Colonisation, of course, involves the circulation of individuals as well as of culture and commodities. In Victorian literature (as in life) it was a convention (and a convenience) for those who defied or disrupted the established order to be dismissed or despatched from England, and often evicted from the narrative as well. According to Arata, "this evacuation often serves of course to highlight domestic ills. Emigration, enforced or voluntary, is represented as the only option for casualties—political, social, economic, of Victorian England." He identified multiple examples from the novels of Charlotte Bronte (the missionary St. John Rivers in *Jane Eyre*) and especially Charles Dickens (the Micawbers and Peggottys in *David Copperfield*; Pip in *Great Expectations*). Charlotte Yonge also repeatedly relies on this strategy to remove a superfluous or unsatisfactory character, such as Lucilla Sandbrook in *Hopes and Eears*, Lucy Kendal in *The Young Stepmother*, Edward Williams in *The Clever Woman of the Family*, Bernard and Edgar Underwood in *The Pillars of the House*, and (metaphorically)

155 In *The Daisy Chain* Dr. Spencer returns from his medical and missionary career in India and the Antipodes with several crates that contain his own collection of exotic curios. These trophies, however, remain separate and unspecified in his somewhat eccentric establishment at "the far edge of garden," and are neither exhibited nor seen elsewhere. See Chapter Three above.

156 Stephen Arata, *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siecle: Identity and Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Arata analysed the acute cultural and ideological anxieties that erupt into fevered imperial fantasies such as *She* by H. Rider Haggard (1887), and *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker.

157 Ibid., 107.

158 Lucy is pitied by her English friends and family: "so they married her, poor child, very much as if they had been attending her to the block" (316). "Her husband hates England, and all his habits are foreign.... He has a bad lot about him ... Polish counts, disreputable artists and poets.... Edmund was terribly disgusted" (426).
Philip Morville in *The Heir of Redclyffe*, none of whom are permitted to return. Nevertheless, the frontier, the separation of civilization and savagery, is an increasingly compromised and uncertain space, challenged and contested from without and within.

As imperial entanglement intensified at midcentury, anxieties arose over the separation of core and colony as alarm over the presence of the Other, aroused and aggravated by the Papal Aggression crisis, accelerated. The imagined sense of impervious boundaries, and of Britain as an impregnable “island nation,” the “bulwark of Protestantism,” begin to dissolve. Arata asserted that “the fear is that which has been represented as the “civilised” world is on the point of being overrun by “primitive forces”.... A terrifying reversal has occurred: the coloniser finds himself in the position of the colonised, the exploiter becomes the exploited, the victimiser victimised.” He added, “such reversals are in turn linked to perceived problems—racial, moral, spiritual—within Britain itself, which make the nation vulnerable to attack from more vigorous, “primitive” peoples.”

For the British a series of catastrophic events seemed to signal the impending failure, or at least the increasing fragility, of imperial domination at midcentury. Probably the most dramatic incident was the Sepoy “Mutiny” (1857), regarded as “a great crisis in our national history” and remembered as “our greatest and most fearful disaster.” Also known as the Great Rebellion, the Great Revolution, the Indian Mutiny, the Revolt of 1857, the Great Indian Uprising, and the First War of Indian Independence, the Mutiny was covered extensively, and indeed exhaustively, in the contemporary press, and consequently came to occupy and obsess both the imagination and the conscience of the British public. According to the most credible accounts isolated disturbances

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159 In *The Clever Woman of the Family*, several minor characters are removed in similar fashion. According to Alick Keith, his sister's eager early admirer had “gone out to Rio in hopes of earning the means to justify his addresses” (297). A reluctant Lord Keith had been “obliged to give his consent” to the imprudent marriage of one of his daughters, but “he had by no means forgiven the husband, and they are living on very small means on a Government appointment in Trinidad” (246). A more estimable individual, “an old intimate of Grace [Rachel’s sister] had married an Indian civil servant” (325) and gone abroad. James Buzard has also observed that remote colonies “stood at the margins to receive troublesome characters or resolve troublesome plots.” “Then on the Shore of the Wide World: The Victorian Nation and Its Others,” in Herbert F. Tucker, editor, *A Companion to Victorian Literature and Culture* (Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture). London: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999, 453.


163 Christopher Herbert notes that the debate over the use of the term “mutiny” was not initiated by modern scholars, “but sharply and searchingly conducted in Britain almost from the moment of events themselves. To misapprehend this point is to misread the historical conjunction of 1857 in a crucial way.” *War of No Pity*, 8. In the British popular press the violence was commonly portrayed as a spontaneous mutiny rather than nationalist rebellion. It is beyond the scope of this study to consider more closely the complexities of the history of the Sepoy Mutiny. For various perspectives see Christopher Herbert, *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008; Gautam Chakravarty, *The Indian Mutiny and the British Imagination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; Denis Judd, *The Lion and the Tiger: The Rise and Fall of the British Raj, 1600-1947*. Oxford:
initially arose in the northern province of Bengal with the introduction of the new Enfield rifle to the Sepoy regiments of the British East India Company,¹⁶⁴ which were composed of both Hindu and Muslim soldiers from the subcontinent. The rifles required the use of paper cartridges whose casings were greased with animal fat, a substance regarded as ritually unclean. Resistance to the use of the rifles led to a revolt that erupted in the garrison at Meerut in May 1857 and rapidly spread to Delhi and then to twenty-two other military stations in Bengal, Oudh, and the North West Frontier provinces. British and Indian accounts of the Mutiny are complicated and contradictory; in a comprehensive study entitled The Last Mughal, The Fall of a Dynasty: Delhi 1857 (2007) William Dalrymple considered that these incidents and events were “Indian history’s most enigmatic episode.”¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless, when reports of the rebellion reached London the incredulity and indignation of the nation were enormous. The British press published allegations of appalling atrocities at Lucknow, Allahabad, and especially Cawnpore, where British women were said to have been sexually assaulted and then slaughtered by mutinous marauders during a doomed defense of the city.¹⁶⁶ British children, many of them infants, were also said to be among the casualties. In September 1857 Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine published an unsigned article based on a series of apparently eyewitness accounts of the first days of the Mutiny. Details emphasised the essential “English” (Christian, civilised, orderly) character and customs of the victims and the senseless savagery of the subhuman Sepoys:

The 10th May, which happened to be Sunday, passed in apparent tranquility. The Queen's troops marched to church, had their dinner, and were quietly sauntering in their lines. The officers and ladies (poor souls!) were preparing to go to the evening service, the chaplain was driving thither in his buggy—all was as it had been in every station in India for scores of years past—when the mine exploded. The men of the 3d Light Cavalry, having probably spent the day in drugging themselves with bhang for their intended revenge, suddenly rushed from their huts to the lines, [and] commenced an indiscriminate attack on the European residents. Colonel Finnis, their commander, was shot down ... other officers were eagerly fired at and sabred. Their houses were set on fire, and barbarities practised which have been read with horror throughout the Empire, and to which we remember no parallel in the bloodiest scenes of storm or piracy upon


¹⁶⁴ A sepoy was an Indian soldier who served in the armies of the East India Company and, following the Rebellion of 1857, in the infantry of the British Indian Army. Rebel Sepoys of the “Mutiny” were considered freedom fighters by Indian nationalists.


¹⁶⁶ Although there were atrocities committed against British civilians, certainly at Cawnpore for instance, many of the reports of rape and mutilation reported in the British press have never been substantiated. Several historians have observed that reports home did not mention British atrocities at Benares and Allahabad in June 1857, for which the actions at Cawnpore might have been a reprisal.
Our countrymen and countrywomen were thus abandoned as a prey to atrocities more than fiendish.\textsuperscript{167}

The demands of the British press and public for retaliation were deafening. The correspondent for \textit{Blackwood}'s did his part, insisting that immediate "retribution be inflicted on these rebels." He declared that

\begin{quote}
We are sick of the maudlin interference of humanitarians in the administration of criminal justice; and it is a great act of justice which England has now to perform in the sight of India and the world.... Treason, murder, highway robbery, and rape, are offences not lightly dealt with by any code of civil law: they are not to be more leniently regarded by military tribunals, when committed, with every unimaginable atrocity, soldiers against the Government which they served, and upon the officers they were sworn to obey. \textit{Death} is the certain penalty of every native who has imbrued his hands in British blood, or outraged British chastity.\textsuperscript{168}
\end{quote}

It was seen as essential to avenge the honor of the violated and the dead, but equally imperative to restore and reassert Britain's reputation as the preeminent imperial power.\textsuperscript{169} In the concluding paragraphs of its account \textit{Blackwood}'s correspondent blended the laws of God and the British government, contending that "the well-merited doom of treason and murder will be the best way of writing up in the sight of all the nations who attend the portals of British justice,—"If thou do evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."\textsuperscript{170}

An article that appeared in the \textit{Illustrated London News} on 8 August 1857 made similar accusations but anchored its account in sensational reports of atrocities against British "memsahibs:"\textsuperscript{171} "What do those who cry out for mercy to such wretches say of the murder of helpless babes and unoffending women? And of the almost incredible indignities committed upon English ladies—cruelties so horrible that the mere mention of them is almost an offense in itself?"\textsuperscript{172} Nevertheless the author immediately proceeds to catalogue those crimes in almost pornographic detail:

\begin{enumerate}
\item Emphasis in original. "The Bengal Mutiny," in \textit{Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine} 82 (September 1857), 372-392. \textit{Bhang} is a concoction derived from the cannabis plant; it is either liquefied and consumed as a beverage or smoked.
\item \textit{Ibid.}; emphasis in original.
\item The popular press dubbed the British relief column, commanded by Henry Havelock, "the army of avengers" and "the army of retribution." Patrick Brantlinger has investigated the ideological work performed by the rhetorical polarisation between civilisation and savagery in accounts of the Mutiny. He observed that "in the basic fantasy ... the imperialist dominators have become victims and the dominated, villains. Imagining the Mutiny in this way totally displaced guilt and projected repressed, sadistic impulses onto demonized Indian characters." \textit{British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914.} Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988, 199.
\item "The Bengal Mutiny," \textit{Blackwood}'s, 390.
\item Several scholars have contended that for the British the apparent inability of their army to protect the lives and the virtue of these "memsahibs" meant that the national "manhood" had been insulted. See Jane Robinson, \textit{Angels of Albion: Women of the Indian Mutiny}. London: Penguin UK, 1997.
\end{enumerate}
One European lady... very young and beautiful, was taken off to
the harem of the mock king of Delhi.... One wretch had seized a
lady from Delhi, stripped her, violated, and then murdered her in
the most cruel manner, first cutting off her breasts. Another lady
who had hidden herself under a bridge was treated in the same
manner, then hewed into palpitating morsels, and her mangled
remains thrown out on the road.¹⁷³

These reports were followed by a series of images that portrayed stern British officers solemnly
presiding over the execution of scores of Sepoy rebels. The appalling images of Indian soldiers
being hanged or blown to pieces from the mouths of cannon provided opportunities for British
readers to edit or erase hateful or humiliating memories, and as Clare Simmons has suggested,
also enabled them to participate in the reassertion of imperial power.¹⁷⁴

The popular poet Martin Tupper (1810-1889), often referred to as “the English poet of the
Rebellion,” also worked tirelessly to consolidate and construct what he considered the appropriate
response. He demanded immediate revenge, including the arrest and imprisonment of every Sepoy
soldier. Tupper also recommended that Delhi be razed and its ancient structures replaced with
“groves of gibbets” from which to hang the guilty:

And England, now avenge their wrongs by vengeance deep and dire,
Cut out their canker with the sword, and burn it out with fire;
Destroy those traitor regions, hang every pariah hound,
And hunt them down to death, in all hills and cities ‘round.¹⁷⁵

Another immensely popular poem that appeared at this time was written by Christina Rossetti
(1830-1894), an ardent Anglo-Catholic whose work generally consisted of delicate devotional
verses. “In the Round Tower at Jhansi, June 8, 1857,” instead imagined the agonising final
moments of a British officer and his “pale young wife” “as the swarming howling wretches below
gained and gained and gained.”¹⁷⁶ Less surprisingly, certainly, Punch also responded to the tenor
of the times, although the satirical magazine curbed its customary cynicism and published a
cartoon illustrating the British lion attacking a Bengal tiger that had savaged a white woman
and her child¹⁷⁷ (See Appendix).

¹⁷³ Ibid.
¹⁷⁴ Simmons, Appendix to The Clever Woman of the Family, 582.
¹⁷⁵ Quoted in Sashi Bhusan Chaudhuri, English Historical Writing on the Indian Mutiny, 1857-1859,
Calcutta: World Press, 1965, 259. Derek Hudson provides more information in Martin Tupper: His Rise
¹⁷⁶ Christina Rossetti, “In the Round Tower at Jhansi, June 8, 1857,” Goblin Market and Other Poems,
1862; reprinted in Chris Brooks and Peter Faulkner, editors, The White Man’s Burdens: An Anthology of
¹⁷⁷ The two-page cartoon, with the caption “The British Lion’s Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger,” appeared
in the issue of 22 August 1857. The artist, John Tenniel (1820-1914), later achieved celebrity as the
illustrator of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland (1865), written by Lewis Carroll.
Much of this cultural agitation and anguish seems remarkably removed from Yonge’s novel, securely set in remote Avonmouth, but repeated references eventually succeed in disrupting the narrative and reminding the reader that the Sepoy Mutiny had aroused a cluster of profound anxieties that remained unresolved. In *The Clever Woman of the Family* Yonge repeatedly connects Indian atrocities with industrial abuse, insistently comparing accounts of sensational horrors abroad with incidents less salacious but equally savage at home. A woman lacemaker at Avonmouth kept imprisoned “seven little pupils in a sort of cupboard under the staircase.” Yonge described the appalling conditions:

> For ten hours a day did the children work in a space just wide enough for them to sit, with the two least under the slope of the stairs … opened the door of the black-hole under the stair, Rachel read aloud something religious, something improving, and a bit of a story, following it up by mental arithmetic and a lesson on objects (100-101).

“The Black Hole of Calcutta,” until displaced by events at Cawnpore, was the presiding cautionary tale in the British imagination of the imperialist encounter with India. During the night of 20 June 1756 more than one hundred English soldiers and civilians, prisoners of the Nawab of Bengal, were said to have been asphyxiated by the heat and airless conditions in a cramped dungeon in Fort William. In Britain reports of this incident were obsessively repeated and often extravagantly embellished; seldom acknowledged was the fact that they relied on a single authority, an account by Joseph Zephaniah Holwell (1711-1798), a military surgeon and civil servant said to be among the survivors. Holwell’s recollections, entitled *A Genuine Narrative of the Deplorable Death of the English Gentlemen and others who were suffocated in the Black Hole* (1758), became a runaway bestseller and the basis for representing all Indians as brutal and barbaric. Yonge had summoned these powerful cultural animosities in an early episode in *The Daisy Chain*, in which Mary and Norman May are overcome by the oppressive heat and fetid air in an Irish slate worker’s cottage in Cocksmoor (see Chapter Three above). However, in *The Clever Woman of the Family* anxieties about the imperialist project mobilised by the Mutiny complicate these references. The savage Other is no longer securely kept captive in a remote quarrying village, its inhabitants tempered and tamed by the “charity and catechism” of the privileged classes, but has escaped its confines and is circulating everywhere amongst the English, angry, unruly, and eager to exploit moments of crisis and credulity and penetrate the increasingly porous boundaries of Empire.

Yonge’s description of the trials of Mauleverer and Maria Hatherton suggests the anxieties and animosities that are aroused by this perceived menace. As the woman who called

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178 Holwell’s account has never been fully substantiated. In 1915 the British scholar J.H. Little denounced his claims as “a gigantic hoax” in an article entitled “The Black Hole—The Question of Holwell’s Veracity.” *Bengal Past and Present*. London: 1915, 76

179 There are nearly a dozen references to the “black hole” that is a derelict cottage at Cocksmoor.
herself Mrs. Rawlings is removed from the courthouse following her conviction, there was a loud, frightful roar and yell, a sound of concentrated fury that, once heard, could never be forgotten. It was from the crowd outside, many of them from Avonmouth, and all frantic with indignation at the cruelty that had been perpetrated upon the helpless children. Their groans and execrations were pursuing the prison van, from which Maria Hatherton was at that time making her exit, and so fearful was the outcry that penetrated the court, that Fanny trembled with recollections of Indian horrors.... (388)

The literal and imagined separation between core and colony has suddenly contracted and collapsed, allowing England to be challenged, contaminated, and possibly conquered by adversaries it had previously subjugated or suppressed. Perhaps this was unavoidable; in the aftermath of the Mutiny the authority of the East India Company was abolished, and the Crown assumed direct control of the subcontinent.¹⁸⁰ No longer would there be a convenient (if incompetent) intermediary to negotiate the rivalries and reciprocities of the imperialist enterprise.

Confrontation and complications between coloniser and colonised were inevitable in the new order. This reality is reflected in the exaggerated reaction of the Temple children as they considered the guilty verdict at the trial of Maria Hatherton: the boys sensed “some confusion between mutineers and Englishwomen, hoping the woman would be blown from the mouth of a cannon, for hadn’t she gone and worn a cap like mamma’s?”(342).¹⁸¹ Minutes earlier, when they heard the evidence and saw the abused children, they hastened to inform Rachel that “[o]h, Aunt Rachel, your FIJ thing is as bad as the Sepoys. But we have saved the two little girls that they were whipping to death, and we have got them in the carriage” (340).

Catherine Hall (2002) has argued persuasively “that colony and metropole are terms which can be understood only in relation to each other, and that the identity of the coloniser is a constitutive part of Englishness.”¹⁸² And perhaps, as Yonge suggests here, with scarcely concealed consternation, the identity of the colonised may soon become a part of the essence of Englishness as well.

¹⁸⁰ The Government of India Act of 1858 (officially entitled “An Act for the Better Government of India”), was passed on 2 August 1858. It consisted of a series of measures designed to dissolve the power of the British East India Company and transfer control to the Crown. Victoria became Empress of India on 1 May 1876.
¹⁸¹ The boys object to the fact that Maria Hatherton, who has a child but has never been married, has assumed the appearance of a respectable widow.
¹⁸² Hall, Civilising Subjects, 12.
4.3.2. ‘The Clever Woman of the Family’
Empire and England

The destiny of the Christian faith is nothing short of universal dominion: to regulate the fate of churches and nations.

Henry Wilberforce

The gallant phalanx, made up of the Highland regiment, and the English and Irish together.

John Cumming

In the same year that she read The Clever Woman of the Family Lucy Lyttelton opened one of the many histories of the Indian “Mutiny” and soon recorded her own stunned and stricken reaction to its revelations. In an entry dated 15 November 1865 she noted that she had finished Mr. Trevely'an's book, Cawnpore, which is fearfully graphic and said to be entirely accurate. I can remember, even in the midst of our own great grief in the autumn of 1857, the frightful heart-rending news from India, and especially the massacre of women and children: the outcries for vengeance, and the Day of Humiliation. It has left a horror and shudder at India in my heart which I can never get rid of.

“The Day of Humiliation,” Wednesday, 7 October 1857, was officially promoted by the government as “Being the Day appointed by Proclamation for a Solemn Fast, Humiliation, and Prayer before Almighty God: in order to obtain Pardon of our Sins, and for imploiring His Blessing and Assistance on our Arms for the Restoration of Tranquillity in India.” It had been called by Lord Palmerston, the Prime Minister, as a time of solemn public observances to mark the outbreak of the Mutiny; Victoria had proclaimed that “[w]e, taking into our most serious consideration the grievous mutiny ... in India, command ... a Day of Fast, Humiliation, and Prayer ... so both we and our people may humble ourselves before the Almighty God in order to obtain pardon for our sins.” The most celebrated preacher in the country, Charles Hadden

183 The British experience in and with India was also the subject of several novels and short stories. Philip Meadows Taylor published Confessions of a Thug (1839); Tipoo Sultan: A Tale of the Mysore War (1840); and Seeta (1872) on the Sepoy insurrection. Others include First Love and Last Love: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny (1868), by James Grant; The Moonstone (1868) by Wilkie Collins; “The Sign of the Four” (1889), by Arthur Conan Doyle; and On the Face of the Waters (1896), by Flora Annie Steel. Perhaps the most popular stories set in India, The Jungle Books (1894, 1895) and Kim (1901), were written by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936). Christopher Herbert estimates that the Mutiny inspired “innumerable poems and fifty or sixty novels.” War of No Pity, 8.
184 Lucy Lyttelton Cavendish, Diaries, Volume One, 281. “Our own great grief” was a reference to the death of her mother.
185 Victoria, 4. See also Bentley’s Miscellany 42 (November 1857), 458-466. In 1847 there had been a Public Day of Fast to acknowledge the ravages of the famine in Ireland. There was also a National Day of Thanksgiving for the abatement of the cholera epidemic in 1849, and a day of Humiliation and Prayer in 1854 to ask for divine intercession in the Crimean War. All were attempts to express and emphasise national
Spurgeon (1834-1892), solemnly ascended the platform at the Crystal Palace (then situated in Sydenham) and opened his sermon by sternly announcing to the massive audience that “there are such things as national judgments, national chastisements for national sins.” Spurgeon then recited a series of historical examples that would remind the assembly of several threats that had previously imperiled the sovereignty, and the survival, of the British nation:

And, my brethren, not Israel itself could boast a nobler history than we, measuring it by God’s bounties. We have not yet forgotten an armada scattered before the breath of heaven, scattered upon the angry deep as a trophy of what God can do to protect his favored Isle. We have not yet forgotten a fifth of November, wherein God discovered divers plots that were formed against our religion and our commonwealth. We remember how God swept before our armies the man who thought to make the world his dominion. God wrought for us; he wrought with us; and he will continue to do so. He hath not left his people, and he will not leave us, but he will be with us even to the end.

Thus Spurgeon assured those in attendance that the God who had sustained the British people, whom he compared with God’s chosen, against those who sought to destroy or enslave them, the Roman Catholics (the Spanish Armada and Gunpowder Plot) and the atheists (Bonaparte), surely would not abandon them now. However, he also assured them that the recent events in India were a judgement upon the nation, not for the oppressions and exclusions of imperialism (which he explicitly endorsed) but for the iniquities at home (which he elaborated on in some detail). Spurgeon reviled the treachery of “the Sepoys” (“our voluntary subjects”) but repeated “that one part of the reason for this dreadful visitation, is the sin of the people of England themselves.”

British clergymen of every denomination professed similar sentiments on the implications of the Mutiny. Bentley’s Miscellany applauded their example, asserting that “nothing could be more gratifying than the tone assumed by nearly all the ministers of our religion on that solemn day set apart for the humiliation of the nation before an offended Creator.” The magazine also expressed its approval of the discourse “of Mr. Disraeli,” who had argued in an address to the House of Commons that

unity in times of public crisis or catastrophe.

186 Quoted in Don Randall, “The Making of the India ‘Mutiny,’” Victorian Literature and Culture 31 (2003), 3-17. Twenty-four thousand people were said to be in attendance that day. Tens of thousands also purchased a copy of Spurgeon’s sermon, which was accompanied by a precise accounting of the results of his appeal: the sum “collected towards the Indian Relief Fund amounted to nearly GB 500, of which GB 25 was given by Miss Florence Nightingale. The Crystal Palace Company contributed GB 200 in addition—making a total of nearly GB 700.” C.H. Spurgeon, “Fast-Day Service,” in The Collected Sermons of C.H. Spurgeon, five volumes, London: Baker Publishing, 1883. Volume Three, n.p.

187 Ibid.

188 “The Day of Humiliation,” Bentley’s Miscellany 42 (November 1857), 458-466.
we are bound to protest against meeting atrocities by atrocities. I have heard things said and seen things written of late which would make me almost suppose that the religious opinions of the people of England had undergone some great change, and that we were preparing to revive the worship of Moloch. I cannot believe that it is our duty to indulge in such a spirit. I think that what has happened in India is a great providential lesson, by which we may profit; and if we meet it like brave and inquiring men, we may assert our dominion and establish for the future in India a government which may prove at once lasting and honourable to the country.\(^{189}\)

_Bentley’s_ proceeded to express its profound dismay at “the isolated instances” of “Tupperisms” that displayed the “Moloch cry for vengeance,” an ignoble impulse that placed the citizens of “the most civilised nation in the world” on a “parallel with the miscreant traitors whose wanton horrors have caused us such deep sorrow and regret.”\(^{190}\) Nevertheless, many Britons regarded events in India with unappeasable anger. Revulsion and rage constructed a single representative Sepoy, a base brute who had broken his word and betrayed his oath of allegiance to his imperialist overlord. Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859), historian and politician who had long been involved in construing the singular connection between England and India, acknowledged that “the cruelties of the traitorous Sepoy natives have inflamed the Nation to a degree unprecedented within my memory…. There is one terrible cry of revenge….The almost universal feeling is that not a single Sepoy within the walls of Delhi should be spared, and I own that is a feeling with which I cannot help sympathising.”\(^{191}\)

Despite these and similar declarations Macaulay’s nephew George O. Trevelyan (1838-1928), the author of _Cawnpore_ (1865), probably the most widely read of all studies on the Mutiny, saw causes and circumstances rather differently. He noted that in the years immediately preceding the Mutiny many British subalterns began to refer to their Sepoy recruits as “niggers.” Trevelyan argued that the use of “that hateful word … which is now constantly on the tongue of all Anglo-Indians,”\(^ {192}\) signaled a dangerous shift in a deeply unstable British ideology. As attitudes surrounding the new concept of race, with its incendiary corollaries of racial identity and racial difference, collided, the new social, political, and economic policies imposed by the East India Company, including the annexation and assimilation of several princely states in the 1850s under the Amritsar Agreement, the course of Empire was increasingly seen as adversarial, and the

\(^{189}\) Ibid.

\(^{190}\) Ibid.

\(^{191}\) Quoted in Newsome, _The Victorian World Picture_, 108. The first two volumes of Macaulay’s _History of England from the Accession of James II_ appeared at the end of 1848 and were an immediate popular and commercial success; three thousand copies were sold in the first ten days alone. Macaulay’s magisterial work was instrumental in establishing Britain’s sense of its cultural superiority. See Hall, “‘At Home with History:’ Macaulay and the History of England,” in Hall and Rose, editors, _At Home with the Empire_.

\(^{192}\) George O. Trevelyan, _Cawnpore_. London: Macmillan, 1865, 31. Scores of memoirs about the events of the Sepoy “Mutiny” also appeared at this time.
contact between peoples as dangerous, and as events would prove, deadly. The imperial "mission" that had been presented and promoted as moral was now perceived as mercenary, savage rather than "civilising."

Patrick Brantlinger (1988) has claimed that no other event in the nineteenth century created so much hatred and hysteria, or had a greater hold on the British imagination, contending that most "Victorian writing about the Sepoy Mutiny expresses in concentrated form the racist ideology that Edward Said calls 'Orientalism.'" In his highly influential (and controversial) study of the often contentious relationship between East and West Said argued (1979) that Western knowledge about the "the Orient" has been "a systematic discourse by which Europe was able to manage—even produce—the Orient politically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively."

According to Said, European assumptions created and perpetuated a distorted reality in which the debased and decadent "Oriental" was forced to exist. He also contended that all discourse, especially cultural discourse, is inherently ideological. These ideologies are potent and pervasive but also contingent and contested, involving the construction and maintenance of the imperial identity through a relentless emphasis on the absolute difference between East and West, coloniser and colonised, core and colony, white and black, often expressed in terms of the ostensibly rigid (but actually elastic and endlessly expansive) category of "race."

Other scholars also have suggested that as a result of the Sepoy insurrection previous concepts of race were revisited, profoundly revised, and redeployed. Categories were constructed, contradicted, circulated, and suppressed. Christopher Herbert (2008) has argued that events in India represented "a crucial episode in the history of racial ideology and feeling, of nineteenth-century religion, of imperialism, and of the formation of modern British national identity."

He added

[i]t is precisely the fusion of these different elements into a single pathological complex that gives the Mutiny its distinctiveness as a cultural phenomenon and its extraordinary capacity to galvanise the Victorian imagination long afterward.

Perceptions of India and its inhabitants as the "Other" were complicated. The English had for some time considered themselves inherently superior to the Irish and the French, but these

193 Trevelyan denounced the "falsity" of several accounts of atrocities as "prurient and ghastly fictions," which, he declared, "it is our misfortune that we once believed, and our shame if we ever stoop to repeat."

194 Cawnpore, 194, 233. Quoted in Herbert, War of No Pity, 15.

195 Brantlinger, Rule of Darkness, 199.


197 Herbert, War of No Pity, 18.

197 Ibid.
convictions were motivated largely by intermittent spasms of anti-Catholicism and similar prejudices that were based on cultural traditions rather than a sense of "racial" superiority. Sally Mitchell (1996) has contended that "from the 1860s onward, however, anthropological and biological studies began to divide humanity into various categories depending on skin color, hair form, facial characteristics, and so forth." She argued that "there was a growing sense that "race" was biologically determined: that there were fundamental physical differences based on genetic inheritance, and that the 'Anglo-Saxon race' had evolved furthest from the primitive, animal roots of mankind." Race became a central political and cultural preoccupation for the European imperialist powers; it "naturalised difference" and "reinscribed the always unstable distinction between coloniser and colonised. In its many guises, both covert and conspicuous, race also repeatedly intersected with domestic discourses of class, ethnic, and gender difference." There was a more pronounced insistence on representation, a process that was central to the construction of identities, the creation of the self and the "Other." Catherine Hall (2000) observed that

at its core was ambivalence, rooted in the twin dynamics of identification and disavowal, desire and repudiation, both key to the marking of difference. Journalists, ethnographers, missionaries and others attempted to fix "the peculiarity of the Hindoo," for example, to know it, to name it and classify it, to write the character of "the race" as particular and recognisable, they were marking the continuous attempt to construct binaries, make hierarchies of difference. This was part of the effort to construct consent around particular readings of racial difference.... But these binaries were just as continuously being dissolved, the "essential" characteristics of different peoples slipping away as times changed ... the imagined map of the people and races of the empire was reworked.

These constructions and compulsions emerge in a curious exchange between Rachel and Colin Keith regarding the appointment of a matron to manage the children who would be the first inmates of the proposed industrial asylum. Colin is dismayed by the sinister appearance of the woman, recommended by Mauleverer, remarking that "[s]he is a handsome woman, and reminds me strongly of a face I saw in India.... Your matron's likeness was a very handsome sepoy havildar whom we took at Lucknow: a capital soldier before the mutiny and then an ineffable ruffian" (319). Rachel, however, refuses to be drawn into inferences. "The mutiny was an infectious frenzy; so that you establish nothing against that cast of countenance," she retorted (319). Later, however, it is discovered that the woman had regularly abused her wards, in league

200 Hall, *Civilising Subjects,* 276.
with Mauleverer; causing the death of the child in whom Rachel had a special interest.\textsuperscript{201}

This reductive but highly charged racialised reading of physiognomy,\textsuperscript{202} in which an ostensibly respectable English widow (clad in crepe, with requisite cap and streamers) is seen as a savage, scarcely human brute (as the word “Sepoy” would have been construed at that time) is profoundly unsettling, and in fact spectacularly shocking when her cruel practices are finally exposed.\textsuperscript{203}

Alick Keith, whose opinions are invariably the most astute in the novel, reminds Rachel (and the reader) of his kinsman’s startling comparison, agreeing that “[s]he had not her Sepoy face for nothing” (352).

Yonge herself, however, is not content with a simple insistence on this singular resemblance. Rather than retreat from the alarming possibility of reverse or countercolonisation, as the perfidious Sepoy suddenly “appears” in provincial Anglican England, betraying her superiors and brutalising an innocent child, she suggests a similarity more insidious still. As a young woman the matron “Mrs. Rawlings,” then known as Maria Hatherton, was employed as a nursery maid by Edward Williams and his wife. Ermine reminds Colin of that early history: “She was one of the Hathertons. You must remember the name, and the pretty picturesque hovel on the heath” (310). The conversation continued as the two recall

“The squatters that were such a grievance ... always suspected of poaching, and never caught. Most of the girls turned out ill, but this one, the youngest, was remarkably intelligent and attractive.... You called her a gipsy and said we had no right to her! It was those big black eyes that had that fiendish malice in them” (310).

Maria also “turns out ill” and was “sent away in disgrace at a moment’s warning.”\textsuperscript{204} Under the malign influence of Mauleverer, the father of her child, she commits forgery, fraud, and much worse, and as the narrative proceeds and her “savagery” is exposed she is inexorably stripped of all her identifying markers of “civilization” and even humanity: race, class, and gender. Alison Williams pities the weariness and wretchedness of “the well-remembered features, once so bright with intelligence and innocence, and now sunk and haggard with the worst sorrows of womanhood” (391), but Yonge remains implacable. Colin Keith confides to Ermine “I found her

\textsuperscript{201} Lovedy Kelland recalls Una M’Carthy, Ethel’s precocious protégée in \textit{The Daisy Chain} (although without the incessant Irish emphasis). Both children suffer and die in order to “redeem” another; Rachel, however, is portrayed as at least partially responsible for Lovedy’s death from diphtheria and is punished accordingly.

\textsuperscript{202} There are several instances of similar “readings:” Colin Keith has a “Scotch face” and his voluble housekeeper Tibbie, with her impenetrable Scottish accent and aversion to English habits, a “home face.” Lord Keith is described as “a long-backed Scotchman” and “intensely Scottish,” with, ominously, “the gallant polish of manner that the old Scottish nobility have inherited from the French of the old regime” (179).

\textsuperscript{203} Susan Meyer has asserted that such linkages are “stronger than mere similitude,” arguing that this is a relationship that “approaches identity.” \textit{Imperialism at Home: Race and Victorian Woman’s Fiction}. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996, 3.

\textsuperscript{204} That is, she was dismissed without references when it was discovered that she was pregnant.
the picture of desolation, in the midst of the dreary kitchen, with the child gasping on her lap; all pretence of widowhood gone ... and her great eyes looked wild, like the glare of a wild beast's in a den"(362). Maria is sentenced to a term of imprisonment, "with hard labour," but Yonge also punishes her with the death of her child, the fate she frequently reserves for her most wicked female characters.205

Rachel is also held accountable, and she too succumbs to her guilt and surrenders her identity, at least for a time. She is shattered by her dealings with Mauleverer and Maria, by turns despondent and delirious in her sorrow and shame. Scandalous rumors about her conduct are rampant in Avonmouth, some more absurd than others.

Rachel was made aware that he and his wife had come, fraught with tidings that she was fostering a Jesuit in disguise, and that Mrs. Rawlins was a lady abbess of a new order, Rachel herself in danger of being entrapped, and the whole family likely to be entangled in the mysterious meshes, which, as Mrs. Curtis more than once repeated, would be "such a dreadful thing for poor Fanny and the boys" (321).

Obsolete anxieties, when recalled, are often ridiculous, but eventually Yonge abandons such raillery and instead scourges Rachel mercilessly: "Sometimes ... she would live over again in the poor children, the hunger and the blows, or she would become Mrs. Rawlins, and hear herself sentenced for the savage cruelty, or she would actually stand in court under sentence for manslaughter"(407).

Representatives of the alien Other (the Irish and the Indian in particular) had often appeared in earlier novels, such as The Heir of Redclyffe and especially The Daisy Chain (see Chapter Three), but similar references in The Clever Woman of the Family exist in a central and more contingent ideological space, exposing deeper cultural susceptibilities and anxieties. As constructed by Yonge images of the Sepoy and the gypsy work to destabilise and dissolve established barriers and other boundaries, presenting metaphors of invasion that constitute a profound menace to the individual, the community, the country, and by extension, the Empire. The Clever Woman of the Family, often perceived as exclusively (if not exhaustively) domestic in its concerns, instead presents an ambitious, but ambivalent, imaginative and intellectual engagement with the processes of inclusivity (and exclusivity) that complicate the cluster of ideologies that constitute the sense of self: certainties on class, race, gender, and the nation.

There is, of course, no such thing as a Sepoy "race," and although gypsies have been legally recognised in Britain as a separate and distinct ethnic group the term itself remains controversial and contested. It is impossible to know with any degree of certainty what Yonge

205 The most conspicuous example is that of Flora May (Rivers) in The Daisy Chain, whose infant daughter dies after repeated doses of Godfrey's Cordial, a patent medicine used to treat colic (or fretfulness) that contained a significant amount of opium (see Chapter Three above).
may have intended as she deployed it here: might she have been aware, for instance, of scholarship (and less substantiated suspicions) that contended that “the gypsies” who had settled in Britain had originated in India? Or of the medical studies that suggested that the Ganges River delta was the source of the cholera epidemics that had repeatedly devastated England and the continent? In any case, the idea of race, then as now, refers not to real, transhistorical essences, but to the classifications and categories occasionally valorised (and often invalidated) by the texts. The Clever Woman of the Family is an anxious and often awkward narrative, concerned with addressing as well as avoiding the ambiguities of identity, not only of the individual, but of the nation and its imperialist enterprise.

As the novel closes only the most exemplary characters remain. Some, such as Rachel, have been rigorously corrected and relentlessly chastened by their experiences. Others, less estimable, have been expelled, including Mauleverer and Maria Hatherton, who are imprisoned; the importunate Lord Gowanbrae and imprudent Bessie Keith, who are dead; and Edward Williams, Ermine and Alison’s impetuous brother. Edward had left England suspected of the fraud eventually traced to Maddox (alias Mauleverer), and had settled in a series of “uncivilised” spaces on the Continent: in a Bohemian city with “an unpronounceable name” and a Russian mining camp settlement in “the Oural Mountains.” He is a chemist, an inventor, and evidently an opium addict, with “a strange, lost, dreamy look ... haggard and mournful ... a wreck of a man” (494). Colin Keith concedes that Edward “is an Ouralian bear ... estranged from English ways ... with “all connection broken, he is bent on returning to Ekaterinburg.... His foreign manner and appearance testified to his entire unfitness for English life” (527). Edward once had been a conventional, indeed an altogether unexceptional, Englishman. Emphasis on his subsequent difference, and on his conspicuous dissipation, however, may signal Yonge’s uneasy sense of the impermanence of the effects of “civilisation” on character; a concern that may have been mobilised and magnified by accounts of the Mutiny.

Edward had reluctantly returned to England to testify at the second trial of Mauleverer, who was accused of an earlier fraud. The evidence rests on the engraving of the crest of Edward’s sealing-ring, originally incised with a “Saxon head,” a present from Ermine that was inadvertently

206 See Deborah Nord Epstein Nord, Gypsies and the British Imagination, 1807-1930. NY: Columbia University Press, 2008. Several other scholars have also observed that gypsies were both romanticised and reviled in Britain during the nineteenth century, and were the objects of intense antiquarian and anthropological research.

207 Pamela Gilbert has observed that “epidemic disease, and especially cholera, was, by its nature, defined as an invader, and of course cholera, coming from Bengal, was particularly subject to British scrutiny in India itself.” By 1866 the disease is referred to almost exclusively as the “Asiatic” or “Indian” cholera. Mapping the Victorian Social Body, 141, 143.


209 Mauleverer will remain in prison; his sentence of sixteen years of hard labour is appropriately ironic given the abuses he inflicted on the young lace workers. Maria Hatherton will be incarcerated for a year; after that, the “sisterhood will find a safe shelter for her” (502).
replaced, to her great displeasure and dismay, with a “Saracen head.” Mauleverer (then Maddox) had stolen the Saracen seal and used it to forge financial documents. Yonge connects the (English) “Saxon head” to honesty and integrity and the (Muslim, or “Mahometan”) “Saracen head” to duplicity and deceit. Within the context of the narrative, this contrast must be read as another example of her insistence on closely inspecting (but perhaps not always accepting) the implications and instabilities of racialist attitudes and assumptions.

Edward’s irregular habits and irresponsible practices preclude him from caring for his only child, Rose, who will remain in Avonmouth with Ermine and Colin. Her character is somewhat underrealised, and her appearance occasionally idealised, but her essential Englishness is always emphasised and must be protected (Colin calls her his “English Rose,” and he describes her complexion as “something of the York and Lancaster rose”). Despite these conventionalities a slight detail emerges that exemplifies the persistence of Yonge’s preoccupations. In a narrative immersed in issues of identity, and engaged in an interrogation of “Englishness,” Rose is eager to purchase the next installment of *Ivanhoe* (1819), a historical novel that turns on the struggle for supremacy between Saxon and Norman in twelfth-century England, a critical time in the consolidation of the nation. The enormously popular narrative recreated the past for generations of English schoolchildren, constructing their sense of their country’s early history. The irony, of which Yonge was well aware, is of course that it was written not by an Englishman, but by Walter Scott.

*The Clever Woman of the Family* ends as both a pastoral idyll and imperial fantasy. Alick and Rachel combine his Indian prize money and her inheritance to establish a charitable institution for convalescents at Avonmouth. The community consists of English, Scottish, Irish, and Welsh invalids; and it appears that in this instance the constituent races of Britain are reconciled in a moral and martial regime:

The male convalescents were under the discipline of Sergeant O’Brien, and the whole was to be superintended by Colonel and Mrs. Keith. Most of [the young girls] were from Avonmouth, but two pale Londoners came from Mr. Touchett’s district, and a little motherless lassie from the Highlanders was brought down with the nursery establishment (540).

Structure, strict supervision, and surveillance seem essential elements of this enterprise (as they are of empire). The asylum is a highly artificial and authoritarian establishment, the incarnation of an idealised and idiosyncratic vision. It is carefully constructed, as utopias are, on specific

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210 The Normans were invaders from France; in Scott’s novel they are invariably portrayed as ravishers and rogues. Rachel notes that the name Mauleverer is “Norman,” 403-404. As an accomplished historian presumably Yonge would have known of Thomas Mauleverer (1599-1655), commander of a Parliamentary regiment during the English Civil War that was notorious for defiling and destroying churches. He signed the death warrant of Charles I and was condemned as a regicide during the Restoration.

211 The representative of Wales is Ermine Williams Keith, if only metaphorically. Colin admires the sound of “Ermine, an old Welsh name, the softest I ever heard” (137).
allegiances and affinities, the shared assumptions and interpretations of the social order that become enduring ideologies. Despite its assurances and appeal, however, Yonge’s community of imperial remnants is very much under siege, and perhaps even in retreat, obliged to protect itself from the incursions of the increasingly aggressive Other. 212 The Clever Woman of the Family attempts to accommodate cultural anxieties aroused by Indian Mutiny, but its recurring images of Sepoys and gypsies signal an insecurity about its ability to succeed. The maimed and mutilated British who remain at the end of the novel, a damaged collection of colonial artifacts themselves, represent not the apotheosis of the imperialist impulse and investment but an awareness, and perhaps an acknowledgement, of its consequences and costs. England may seem secure, its boundaries stable, its adversaries (both resident and remote) subdued, but apprehensions about imminent invasion, infiltration, or insubordination remain. The subjugated have insinuated themselves into the core; they cannot be separated or sequestered; and they may have their revenge in compromising, contaminating, or conquering their former overlords. As Anne McClintock (1995) has observed:

Imperialism is not something that happened elsewhere—a disagreeable fact of history external to Western identity. Rather, imperialism and the invention of race were fundamental aspects of Western, industrial modernity. The invention of race in the urban metropoles … became central not only to the self-definition of the middle class but also to the policing of the “dangerous masses.” 213

Charlotte Yonge had several close connections to India: in September 1858 Julian Yonge had married Emma Frances Walter (1839-1913), whose father, Edward Walter (1804-1862), was a lieutenant colonel with the 3rd Bombay Light Calvary, in the employ of the East India Company. His service ended abruptly with the outbreak of the Mutiny, and he was present at the wedding, with his wife and another daughter, Gertrude, who would later become Yonge’s companion and permanent houseguest. Her own maid married an Irish officer and went out to India; she and her former mistress remained correspondents for years. The community of S. Mary the Virgin at Wantage, where Yonge was an exterior associate, established an affiliate organisation in India. Members also published a half-penny monthly magazine, The Star in the East, which reported on the activities of the mission there, which eventually included the establishment of a hospital, library, laundry, school, and cholera clinic.

The Monthly Packet also published several articles on India. An appeal for assistance for the Delhi Female Medical Mission appeared in June 1867; articles included a series on “Zenana Missions: The Progress of Female Education in Missions of the Church in Foreign Lands.”

212 Sandbach-Dahlstrom identifies two utopian communities: “the seemingly male paradise of Bishopsworth,” the idyllic parish of Mr. Clare; and the idealised and androgynous invalid “institution,” with its gendered ambiguities and ambivalences, established at Avonmouth. However, her study does not address the cultural contexts of the narrative or acknowledge Yonge’s references to India and the Mutiny.

213 McClintock, Imperial Leather, 5.
In 1880 an essay entitled “The Effect of India on Englishwomen” is more melancholy, suffused with a sense of resignation and retreat. India, it seems, has sapped the strength and subdued the spirit of those involved in the imperialist project and sorely in need of a special restorative: “Englishwomen are apt in India to deteriorate more or less in character…. We can hardly perhaps tell how much of a help it might be to wanderers and exiles in that weary land if, week by week, it were possible to be transported to one, even the plainest and smallest, of our English churches, and under the influence of its calm and soothing atmosphere, join in our Church’s service.”

Yonge had incorporated references to India and to Anglo-Indians in several earlier novels, including The Castle Builders, or The Deferred Confirmation (1854), The Daisy Chain, or Aspirations (1856), and The Young Stepmother, or A Chronicle of Mistakes (1861), but these allusions invariably were presented in romanticised or idealised terms and remained peripheral to the central concerns of the narrative. In The Clever Woman of the Family, however, events in India and their reception in England became key to an informed understanding of the themes, and a crucial analogy for much of the action in Avonmouth and elsewhere. In the essay on the effect of India on Englishwomen, as in The Clever Woman of the Family, both of which appeared after the events of the Mutiny, character and identity are defined through exposure to and experience of its opposite, often in circumstances of extreme or exaggerated peril. The novel is a more sustained response to contemporary apprehensions and anxieties; an eager, if uneasy, participant in imperialist processes of accommodation and assimilation, portraying the cultural and ideological struggles at the core of colonial encounters. In previous novels these preoccupations were evident in the presentation of Irish and Melanesian peoples, creating close correspondences between two alien and subordinate populations. The “primitive” poor of the inner city were also perceived as inhabitants of wayward and wild spaces, desolate wastelands that required reverence and restraint in order to be successfully disciplined and domesticated. The Clever Woman of the Family considers the consequences of cultural confrontations and racial resentments that are less easily controlled or quelled, invoking in the images of the Sepoy the ominous presence of a mutinous and malevolent India as it contests the separation and subjugation imposed by the British imperialist enterprise. The narrative suggests that in the end the ambitions of Empire have compromised the imperfect certainties and precarious stabilities of England, exposing its people and its institutions to disruption and devastation by the Other. These are incendiary cultural concerns with immense ideological implications. It appears after all that Charlotte Yonge is in...

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214 “The Effect of India on Englishwomen,” The Monthly Packet (1880), 64.
215 Edward Kendal, the husband of Albinia Kendal, “the young stepmother” of the title, is a retired East India Company administrator who had been the resident “at a small remote native court.” As in The Clever Woman of the Family the narrative never ventures to the subcontinent, but his daughter mourns the loss of the land where she was born, “pouring over old grammars, phrase-books, and translations of Hindoostanee” (112), avid to learn “anything about India” (107). Her brother, however, “had a strong distaste to and dread of India,” fearing especially “the toil, the climate, the fevers, the choleras, the coups de soleil” (195, 196). No intermediate space between these extremes appears accessible to either child.
sympathy with “the clever woman” Rachel Curtis, who states categorically and candidly, “I don’t like small answers to great questions.” And again, like her heroine, Yonge’s questions confirm that she was “a woman of perseverance and purpose” (65).
5. Conclusion
5.1. Introduction
Novels of the 1870s
‘The Pillars of the House, or Under Wode, Under Rode’
‘The Three Brides’

Where does the rhetoric of acquiescence end and the rhetoric of resistance begin? George Eliot

In 1833 the first of The Tracts for the Times appeared, “breathing courage, defiance, and the furious despair of a forlorn hope. In 1880 the men who have replaced the old leaders are within the citadel, victorious, preparing their own terms of peace. It were a curious question why, in what is fancied to be a critical and skeptical age, so extraordinary a revolution has been achieved.” An answer to this “curious question” has been proposed in these pages, and it has been the aim of this dissertation to examine the “extraordinary revolution” that convulsed the second half of the nineteenth century from an entirely different perspective, as it was reflected and interpreted in the domestic novels of Charlotte Yonge, one of the most popular and prolific authors of the age. In tracing the trajectory of her involvement in contemporary conversations and confrontations it must be acknowledged at once that the “revolution” was never singular, but multiple, as England revised its cultural and ideological certainties in an attempt to accommodate the increasingly insistent demands of complicated and contradictory realities.

The early Tractarians, most of them scholars and schoolmasters, had searched tirelessly for strategies to subdue their many rivals and adversaries, but few had heeded their appeal. In his novel Clement Walton, or the English Citizen (1840), William Gresley observed, “[w]hat we want is the home-application of religious truth to the various circumstances of life, and the infusion of good sterling principle into our every-day literature. The press has done its worst against the Church; let us storm the batteries, and turn them into the enemy.” Their leader, “The Great Tractarian” John Keble, who had abandoned Oxford for the provincial parish of Hursley in Hampshire, recognised an exceptional ardour and ability in his precocious catechumen, Charlotte Yonge, and commissioned her to champion the High Church cause. She solemnly accepted the responsibility, regarding her role as “a sort of instrument for popularising Church views” and it can be claimed, as another “Hero of the Church Militant.”

The domestic chronicles of Charlotte Mary Yonge were essential to the survival and success

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2 William Gresley, Clement Walton, or The English Citizen (1840); quoted in Skinner, Tractarians and ‘The Condition of England,’ 65.
of this audacious enterprise; energetic participants in midcentury ecclesiastical, cultural, and ideological controversies. Towards the end of her life she contemplated the Tractarian triumph, celebrating the privileges of ecclesiastical preferment but more especially savouring the private pleasures and rewards of "the trivial round, the common task" cherished by Keble in *The Christian Year* so many years earlier. In an elegiac essay entitled "Seed Time at Oxford" (1891) that appeared in *The Monthly Packet* Yonge considered the remarkable change in the sacramental and ceremonial customs of the Church since Keble and his clerical colleagues first challenged an array of adversaries in calling for radical reform and religious revival:

Yet here, *Deo gratias*, the leaven has worked through the whole, so that what the men of 1830 scarcely durst dream of has become accomplished. Daily Prayers, Weekly and Early Celebrations, almost general recognition of Baptismal Regeneration, revival of Convocation, Catholic teaching all and much more, have been carried out by movements scarcely traceable after that earliest impulse and warfare.

The essay included no apparent allusion to her intimate involvement in and immense influence on that ambitious crusade to reclaim England, a campaign in which the idealism and innovation of the Anglo-Catholic resurgence became accepted orthodoxies in the Anglican Church, or awareness of the implications of that endeavor. In all of her narratives Yonge interrogated issues deeply embedded in and contested in the public consciousness, in the process constructing and affirming alternate interpretations and applications of the ideologies of the age. On occasion she resisted or repudiated the implications of her own arguments, but her courage and commitment cannot be disputed or denied. Her awareness of national, and international, events and incidents, both civil and ecclesiastical, also is conspicuous. Talia Schaffer is surely correct in refuting enduring accusations of an exaggerated insularity and insisting that the novels of Charlotte Yonge "show evidence of accurate research into contemporary issues." Another scholar, June Sturrock, concurs, although her terse acknowledgement that "her work is generally highly responsive to current social and literary concerns" might be less grudging and, for that matter, more generous.

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4 Schaffer, *Taming the Tropics*, 204.
5.2. ‘The Heir of Redclyffe’

‘The Daisy Chain’

With the publication of *The Heir of Redclyffe* the High Church appeal came to the attention of the nation, its powerful effect reliant on inspiration and example rather than dry doctrinal disputation (*The Tracts for the Times*) or demure devotional verse (*The Christian Year*) to articulate and advance the Tractarian agenda. In a sense it was a sustained response to John Henry Newman’s scathing (if not sneering) criticism of the authenticity and efficacy of the *via media* of Anglicanism: “however positive a religious system,” he declared dismissively, “it was not yet objective and real, and had, in fact, scarcely any existence except on paper.”

A contemporary literary critic, demonstrably less distracted by such doctrinal distinctions, once contended that in *The Heir of Redclyffe* Charlotte Yonge “makes goodness seem real,” but a crucial corollary of this accomplishment surely deserves more recognition: in her narratives an existence exalted and enriched by High Church precepts and principles was both real and realisable, even (and perhaps especially) in “thousands of quiet homes, full of cultured women and carefully educated daughters,” and in “hundreds of manor-houses and parsonages scattered up and down the country.” This immense but isolated audience of readers with shared interests and ideals found her many affirmations and assurances authentic and deeply appealing. To the inhabitants of a nation that was convulsed at midcentury by a series of ecclesiastical controversies and cultural crises her novels presented, at least on the surface, a calm certitude that was compelling and often irresistible.

Yonge’s concerns in *The Heir of Redclyffe* remain almost exclusively in the countryside, seen as the symbolic core of England and exempt or immune from the corruption of the capital or the chaos of the industrial cities; she is intent on establishing the position of the provincial parish as the premier emblematic space of the presiding English identity. The most estimable of her characters are imagined as resolutely English as well, emphasising that Anglo-Catholics were not, as some of their adversaries alleged, crypto-Catholics, the disguised and dissembling allies or agents of Continental or Roman Catholic powers. Actual conversions to Rome, and the Papal Aggression crisis (1850), however, had devastating the original Oxford Movement, depriving it of several of its most celebrated churchmen; and conspicuously called into question the claim that Anglicanism was a key constituent of the British identity.

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7 “Charlotte Yonge.” *The Church Quarterly Review* 1004 (1904), 337.
9 Although the Edmonstones represent the privileged class of the English gentry, Mr. Edmonstone (who is invariably portrayed as less exemplary than his wife) is described as “half Irish” (103), a designation that may, in Yonge’s estimation, account for the impetuosity of his character and the uncertainty of his temperament.
The opening of the Great Exhibition in London (1851) and the publication of the Census of Great Britain (1851) also aroused profound anxieties by exposing inaccuracies or inconsistencies in certain powerful and pervasive ideologies regarding the British identity; signaling the possibility, and perhaps even the presence, of competing and possibly contradictory realities and ideals. The Tractarians rallied their ranks in order to exploit these opportunities, organising countermeasures to contest the prevailing construction of British Protestantism, perceived as relentlessly insular and robustly Evangelical; and orchestrating campaigns to replace it with a compelling alternative that closely conformed to their idiosyncratic standards and sensibilities.

The domestic chronicles of Charlotte Yonge were spectacularly successful in this endeavour. Scholars have suggested that she conceived *The Heir of Redclyffe* as a declaration of resistance, but it may be more accurate to read the novel as a document of reassurance, seeking to emphasise the profound reverence and essential “Englishness” of the High Church enterprise. Rosemary Marangoly George has suggested (1999) that the word “domestic” often has a double meaning that fuses the “familial household with ... the nation, by imagining both in opposition to everything outside the geographic and conceptual borders of home.”¹⁰ In *The Heir of Redclyffe* distinctions between real and imagined dissolve; home, Hollywell, Hursley, and England become a single and inseparable space. “Built on a pattern of inclusions and exclusions,” the setting is a static yet often unstable site with an idealised identity that must be protected and preserved. David Morley and Kevin Robins proposed (1995) similar observations: “[h]ome is about sustaining cultural boundaries and boundedness. To belong in this way is to protect exclusive, and therefore excluding, identities against those who are seen as aliens and foreigners. The 'Other' is always and continuously a threat to the security and integrity of those who share a common theme.”¹¹ *The Heir of Redclyffe* aims to achieve such “boundedness” by policing its literal and metaphorical perimeter and expelling or otherwise eliminating all interlopers from its provincial precincts. At the end of the novel Hollywell remains intact, a purified and intensely “female” space, a sanctuary purged of patriarchal influence and profane interests, with Amabel Edmonstone (Morville) the presiding authority and her infant daughter the heir apparent. The literary scholar Barbara Dennis (1996) has called Amy “the displaced center” of the narrative, contending “women were always a central concern to Charlotte Yonge, and the themes of her domestic realism are regularly expressed in terms of the women characters.... In *The Heir* she is looking ahead to the novels which were to come, in which the ‘Woman Question’ was more consciously approached.”¹² Other pressing issues and their immediate and distant implications were also addressed (and occasionally avoided) more pointedly and purposefully.

¹² Dennis, Preface to *The Heir of Redclyffe*, xix.
In *The Daisy Chain* (1856) the central character of Ethel May dominates the narrative; she is less idealised than Amy but equally admirable. Stoneborough, the setting for the novel, is also imperfect: as a central market town, reachable by railway, rather than an isolated estate, it is a space much more chaotic, contested, and compromised than Hollywell, potentially imperiled by its close proximity to the uncivilised and unruly presence of its “Irish colony,” the industrial community of Cocksmoor. The inhabitants of Cocksmoor, however, are persistently connected to the population of another problematic place: Melanesia, in the South Seas, where several of the characters venture, some never to return. Allusions to the missionary and mercantile enterprise of Empire accelerate and eventually appropriate the narrative, paralleling their increasingly conspicuous place in the British imagination (and conscience) as imperialist entanglements become more complicated and contentious. Amy returns to Hollywell and remains immured in “the shade” and shadows of its provincial and pastoral “perfections;” but despite her determination to remain in the schoolroom at Stoneborough Ethel is eagerly engaged in the establishment of church and school at Cocksmoor, consistent with her solemn oath “ever to be doing.” At the end of the novel her charitable endeavours among the “savages” of Cocksmoor are echoed in and extended by the enterprise of another young woman, Margaret (Meta) Rivers, who abandons her privileged existence to become the wife of Norman May, a missionary priest in the South Seas. This call to activism, both in Britain and abroad, is perhaps the Tractarian tenet that resonated most powerfully with contemporary young women, denied access to significant secular educational or employment opportunities. Peter Nockles has noted that “the Tractarian leaders were superb propagandists among the young and impressionable,” and the novels of Charlotte Yonge provide compelling evidence of the accuracy of his assertion and the strength of that appeal.

Yonge introduced the theme of missionary enterprise in *The Daisy Chain* and would return to it repeatedly, if perhaps less persuasively, in several other novels. In a passage from *New Ground* (1863), a narrative set in South Africa, two sisters thoughtfully discussed the origins of their early aspirations:

“"It is the work, I know, Agnes, it is the work that you long for. I have not forgotten how you and I used to lie awake together in the summer evenings and scheme how we would go out and help to teach the natives. And how we talked of our first church that was to be built of bamboos with plantain leaves near it." "Yes," said Agnes, "and how we loved to read the Mission reports that told how useful women could be in teaching the little children, and showing the women how to be civilised. And oh! the heartache of looking at one of the great maps of the world, where the spread of different religions is marked, and seeing the great dark cloudy region all heathen! Then the thrill of remembering that the actual work is doing in our day, and by persons like ourselves; and to imagine that in time we might be one of those persons!”

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The realisation that “we might be one of those persons” of purpose and indeed consequence represents a profoundly radical concept at the core of Tractarian thought; Emmeline and Katherine Berners, the young heroines of an earlier novel, The Castle Builders (1854), had lamented the limitations of their lives in London as well as in the country. There was little for them to do except “district visiting,” and the distribution of “tracts, missionary boxes, and cards for shilling and penny subscriptions.” Yonge’s domestic novels were among the first works of the imagination to demonstrate that despite extensive cultural and ideological exclusions there were extraordinary opportunities available to “ordinary” women. These narratives repeatedly assured their readers that they could experience an engaged and even exalted existence, rather than endure the imitation, or even worse, the mere mockery, of one.

In a commemorative volume entitled The Victorian Half-Century: A Jubilee Book (1887) Charlotte Yonge recalled the energy and enthusiasm that accompanied those early exertions. She maintained that “the Victorian era will be remembered as a period of great progress in all respects …. Religion has awakened…. The Church has worked wonders in her missions, both at home and abroad. From a state of lethargy and unpopularity she has awakened to great vigour and energy.” Characters and circumstances in The Daisy Chain create a powerful linkage of distant locations and divergent missions, and the endeavour to civilise the poor of Cocksmoor is shown to be as crucial, and as challenging, as the enterprise to convert the pagans of Melanesia. Indeed, within the narrative the two populations often are seen as interchangeable, and occasionally as identical. The deaths of Margaret May and Alan Ernsciffe, in Stoneborough and in the South Seas, consecrate the church in Cocksmoor in order to reclaim that wild space and rescue and redeem its wayward people. As missionaries posted to the Antipodes, Norman May and Meta Rivers also represent the central role of the Church in constructing a close connection between the populations of core and colony, a single community that is both unified and universal, “the communion of saints.”

In The Heir of Redclyffe and The Daisy Chain, the novels of the 1850s, the Tractarians continued to draw strength and assurance from their base in the country, but by the end of the decade they were increasingly ambitious and aggressive, intent on expanding their influence and authority beyond the confines and concerns of the provincial parish.

Although the Established Church deplored the exaltation of materialism and secularism it discerned in the excesses of the Great Exhibition, the spectacular success of that endeavour could not be denied. Ecclesiastical authorities were increasingly aware of other opportunities on offer in the course of commercial and imperialist enterprise; of the possibility of extending their own dominion over the “unchurched” and “uncivilised” peoples of other countries and on other continents. The publication of the results of the Great Census of 1851, however, was an enormous rebuke to such ambitions, revealing realities that presented an immense and more immediate challenge. The identity of “the island nation,” “the bulwark of the Reformation and of Protestantism,” had shifted: Britain was no longer predominantly agricultural, but industrial; urban rather than rural. A “special enumeration” on church affiliation and attendance provided incontrovertible evidence that a large proportion of the population of both city and country regularly resisted the appeal of any church or chapel and preferred secular but otherwise unspecified pursuits on Sunday mornings.

With little to lose in terms of privilege or preferment, the Tractarians were eager to exploit these emerging opportunities. Increasingly secure and supreme in the provincial parish, they sought to extend their influence and establish themselves amid the chaos and confusion of the inner city, with its promiscuous intermingling of classes, creeds, commerce, and crime. In *Hopes and Fears, or Scenes from the Life of a Spinster*, Charlotte Yonge documents the progress of this campaign, depicting the strategies, setbacks, and successes of activist clergymen in their crusade to “come to the people;” to “conquer” and convert the inhabitants of the emblematic space of “Whittingtonia,” a wilderness of destitution and dissent in London. In abandoning an early emphasis on the country and chronicling the commitment of the High Church to ameliorating the plight of the poor of the inner cities, the narrative ably repudiates the persistent allegation of the Evangelicals (among other adversaries) that its philosophy and its priests spoke only to the educated and the elite.

In the course of this novel, Yonge’s first in the decade of the 1860s, the boundaries of city and country, so precisely established in the opening passages, gradually but conspicuously erode. Populations and places are in close proximity, no longer protected by distance or preserved by

16 In 1868 the preacher and reformer Hugh Stowell Brown (1823-1886) published a popular pamphlet entitled “The Bulwark of Protestantism.” In it he observed that “in parliamentary debates, in public speeches, in lectures, in sermons, in newspaper articles, it has been asserted, as if it were an indisputable axiom, a first principle, a self-evident truth, that a State Church is the Bulwark of Protestantism; that, were this barrier swept away, nothing would be left to protect us from the inroads and invasions of Popery, which would soon overrun the country and demolish all our Protestant institutions.” Quoted in Wheeler, *The Old Enemies*, 147. Some thirty years earlier Richard Parkinson, fellow of Christ’s College, Cambridge, had produced a pamphlet entitled “The Church of England: A Bulwark between Superstition and Schism” (1835).
powerful distractions or deterrents. Such close contact meant that determined assaults on dominant ideologies and identities could no longer be easily resisted or restrained: established classes and categories (however partial or precarious) inevitably were compromised and occasionally crumbled and collapsed. The imagined integrity of England and of the English identity was challenged by an array of powerful rivals, internal and external, literal and metaphorical, that would no longer accept sequestration, segregation, or subordination. The periphery was no longer perceived as passive and inert, but regarded with alarm as active, assertive, and even adversarial. Another set of perils also presented themselves: contamination and contagion, once perceived as confined to the Continent or to remote communities or colonies, became increasingly urgent concerns even for those who had long considered themselves safe or secure. The unendurable stench of the Great Stink of London and the inescapable reach of the cholera (said to be from India), typhus (said to be ‘the Irish disease’), smallpox, and other epidemics demonstrated, with deadly certainty, that even the core of the country, the capital city itself, was deeply susceptible to infiltration or invasion. Moral and sanitary issues had long been regarded as inextricably intertwined; and by the end of the decade it was increasingly evident that they could no longer be isolated or ignored with impunity.

The Clever Woman of the Family appears to be a narrative in profound disarray, if not dissolution. Far more anxious and agitated than any of its predecessors, it is literally and metaphorically unable to resolve the arguments it presents or accept the assurances it promotes. Perhaps its profound perplexities are a result of the precarious imaginative space it inhabits, at the unstable and uneasy intersection of domestic discourses and imperialist ideologies. As the novel ambitiously attempts to insinuate itself into contemporary controversies by exposing instances of abuse in child labour practices and interrogating cultural and ideological exclusions of “the woman question” it is continually disrupted by the presence of the Other, the Sepoy and the gypsy, distracted and dismayed by its imagined malign presence and menacing proximity.

Amy Kaplan has observed (2002) that the terms “domestic” and “foreign” are not “neutral legal and spatial descriptions, but heavily weighted metaphors imbued with racialised and gendered assumptions of home and family, outsider and insider, subjects and citizens.”17 Although it appears to exist in and emphatically exalt the domestic sphere, ending as it began, at ‘The Homestead,’ in placid and provincial Avonmouth, The Clever Woman of the Family is nevertheless a narrative saturated with provocative imperial references.18 Most of the central characters participate in the enterprise of Empire, and the novel continuously suggests how

18 However, “The Homestead” is portrayed as a precarious and perhaps doomed space, described as “an estate of farm and moorland ... the house was perched on a beautiful promontory, running out into the sea, and enclosing one side of a bay, where a small fishing-village had recently expanded into a great watering-place, esteemed by some for its remoteness from railways, and for the calm and simplicity that were yearly diminishing by increasing popularity” (41).
ideological, intellectual, commercial, and cultural exchanges profoundly affected the British sense of the world and their place in it. The circulation of missionaries, military men, merchants, and administrators expose the perpetually shifting and unstable boundaries between coloniser and colonised, and between superior and subordinate, in the British imagination, complicating certainties and contesting categories. Yonge incessantly portrays how the “foreign” both forms and fractures the British identity, and how the frontier between civilisation and savagery found itself both everywhere and nowhere.¹⁹

Firdous Azim has argued (1993) that the novel as a genre has its origin in the era of English colonial ambition and expansion, which “makes it an intrinsically imperial genre … based on the construction of self … and the forceful eradication and obliteration of the Other.”²⁰ As he saw it the identity of a nation is conceived and constructed through processes of exclusion as well as inclusion, through the manufacture and mobilisation of prejudices against a particular population. After the Sepoy “Mutiny” India replaced Ireland (and Roman Catholicism) as the source of anxiety over an alien “race” within the British Empire. For many that event, and the mythology that surrounded it, suggested that the British sense of self (and of superiority) was exceedingly fragile, dependent on contingent alliances and alignments that were determined by continuously shifting imperial interests and investments. Yonge’s provocative comparison of an Indian soldier with a gypsy woman in an English provincial town suggests a preoccupation with emerging discourses on racial and gender identities and differences. It also signals an alarm that adversaries of the state were in secret confederation. Perhaps, however, the sudden appearance and savage actions of these subjugated peoples were necessary to chasten and correct a corrupt or compromised identity or enterprise: a just punishment for shared sins, such as the evils implicit in the British imperialist impulse. Stephen Arata has contended (1990) that

if fantasies of reverse colonisation are products of geopolitical fears of a troubled imperial society, they are also responses to a cultural guilt…. Reverse colonization narratives thus contain the potential for powerful critiques of imperial ideology….²¹

He concluded that “the strong suspicion [was] that the devastation may, after all, be deserved, that it may be a form of punishment”²² for the nation’s improper or impure practices. “What have we done?” anguished churchmen asked audiences on the national days of humiliation. The Clever Woman of the Family may also have raised this question, but it resolutely declined to render a

¹⁹ Linda Colley contended that the British national identity was fixed during the Napoleonic Wars and especially at Waterloo. Other scholars, more concerned with domestic occurrences and events, consider 1832, a year of electoral reform and the arrival of the cholera, as especially formative. See Introduction to Britons: Forging the Nation.


²² Ibid.
single response. Instead the novel withholds closure and seems to collapse upon itself, returning to Avonmouth to take refuge in the enforced confinement of its characters in a closed community of the ill and the infirm, the incurables and the eternally convalescent. The ending also subsides into a contrived and rather unconvincing celebration of marriage and maternity, conspicuously inconsistent with Yonge’s previous narrative practices and predilections. In its awkward retreat and artificial resolution the novel denies, and in many respects deeply disappoints, the expectations of the reader, who may have anticipated something less common and conventional for its “clever” but chastened heroine.
5.4. Suggestions for Further Study

Novels of the 1870s

5.4.1. ‘The Pillars of the House, or Under Wode, Under Rode’

Purity and Perfection

Both the origins of the Sepoy Mutiny and the reprisals exacted by British authorities centred on the concept and consequences of defilement.\(^{23}\) Perhaps this is one of the reasons that the rhetoric of purity and perfectibility became increasingly prominent in the national discourse in subsequent decades. Domestic concerns regarding the perils of contamination were also aroused in a series of scandals over additives to bread, beef, and milk, the staples of the British diet, and in 1860 Parliament passed an Act for Preventing the Adulteration of Articles of Food and Drink. Critics maintained, however, that without precise policies for enforcement its provisions were ineffective; local authorities could observe or ignore them, as they pleased. The City of London did adopt the Act, but in 1869 one disappointed supporter observed disconsolately that "nothing at all has come of it"\(^{24}\) (see Appendix).

Charlotte Yonge’s most popular novel of the 1870s, *The Pillars of the House or Under Wode, Under Rode* (1873), an enormous narrative of nearly one thousand pages, is dominated by images and metaphors of purity and impurity, cleanliness and filth, sin and sanctity, possession and dispossession; as well as instances of distress, disease, debilitation, and death.\(^{25}\) The Underwood family (also enormous) consists of thirteen children who are left almost destitute upon the death of their consumptive father, an Anglican clergyman.\(^{26}\) The novel opens on a retrospective note, with the advertisement for Edward Underwood’s position as assistant curate at St. Oswald’s Church in Bexley, an industrial town in proximity to Dearport, described as ‘a decayed seaside town with much poverty and dissent, and a divided and neglected parish.’\(^{27}\) St. Oswald’s offers “Daily Prayers; Choral Service on Sundays and on Holy Days; Holy Communion;” crucial details that signal the High Church sympathies of the resident clergy. The parish also has a past; or, as Yonge put it, “Bexley had a fame. A great ritual war had there been fought by the rector … and when he had become a colonial bishop, his successor was reported to

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23 According to most accounts the Mutiny began when certain Sepoy regiments learned that the cartridges of their newly issued rifles had been greased with animal fat. Some of those found guilty were forced by military authorities to lick the blood from the floor of the rooms where British men and women had died, resulting in a loss of caste that many dreaded more than death. See Chapter Four above.


25 The novel appeared in *The Monthly Packet*, from January 1870 to December 1873; it begins in July 1854 and covers some twenty years.

26 The critic for the *Saturday Review* was so incensed at the immense size of the Underwood family that he congratulated himself on his resistance to a strong ‘temptation to turn Herod and begin by a massacre of the babes.’ *Saturday Review*, 27 September 1873, 415-416.

have carried on the work; and the beauty of the restored church, and the exquisite services were so generally talked of, that Mr. Underwood felt himself fortunate in obtaining the appointment."

Nevertheless he is soon disabused of his illusions, deeply dismayed by "the general languor and indifference" that characterises both congregation and community:

There was also a great deal of opposition in the parish, some old sullen seceders who went to a neighbouring proprietary chapel, Many more of erratic tastes haunted the places of worship of the numerous sects, who swarmed in the town, and many more were living in a state of town heathenism.... It was not long before the perception of the cause began to grow upon Mr. Underwood. The machinery was perfect, but the spring was failing; the salt was there, but where was the savour? (4)

However, as his health declines and the Underwoods struggle for economic and social survival these concerns are soon overshadowed by a series of material and metaphorical losses. One of the most devastating is their enforced departure (more an expulsion or exile) from their "very idyllic, very British" ancestral home, Vale Leston, another idealised and emblematic space often referred to as "a paradise." The eldest brother selflessly sacrifices himself for the others, suffering deeply through years of misery and mortification. Employment in a printer's shop damages his prospects and excludes him from the privileged classes, destroying his status (or caste) as inexorably as his constitution. His final illness, brought about by consumption and exhaustion, is painful and prolonged; unlike the delicately drawn Pre-Raphaelite presentation of the death of Guy Morville in The Heir of Redclyffe twenty years earlier, which in the end was more transcendant than tragic.

The Pillars of the House never achieved the spectacular success of its illustrious predecessor, but Christabel Coleridge claimed that Charlotte Yonge always considered it "her fullest form of self expression," and certainly Yonge herself referred to the novel as her own favorite. Ethel Romanes was more extravagant, declaring "in this novel she shows what the Church of England has done and does for England." She added for emphasis (but without elaboration) that "[t]his was a real bit of work towards establishing the kingdom of God." Georginia Battiscombe concurred, describing the novel as "a near-masterpiece."

The narrative reprises several characters that appeared in earlier novels (the Mays, the Mohuns, the Merrifields, and the Fulmorts, among others, from The Daisy Chain and Hopes

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29 Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 136. She added that in the presentation of Vale Leston "Charlotte paints her utopia." The prelapsarian estate is seemingly resistant to the processes of modernisation and urbanisation, in stark contrast to the adjacent industrial town of Bexley.
30 Coleridge, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 232.
31 In a letter to M.E. Christie dated 8 December 1896 Yonge confided "I found myself preferring The Pillars of the House to The Daisy Chain." Quoted in Cecilia Barr, "Charlotte Yonge and the Critics," in Courtney and Schultzke, editors, Characters and Scenes, 82.
32 Romanes, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 131.
33 Ibid., 132.
34 Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge, 134.
and Fears) and again refers to many of the early and evolving ecclesiastical interests of the High Church movement: emphasis on the Book of Common Prayer, structured and serious Sunday schools, sisterhoods, activist priests, slum parishes, missionary enterprise. By the 1870s these innovations were no longer seen as questionable or controversial, signaling that the High Church campaign, once so disparaged and distrusted, had succeeded in its aim to establish its presence and appeal outside the provincial parish. Challenges however, increasingly came from within its communion. The proponents of Ritualism were in the ascendant, and as they prevailed their insistence on the importance of the ceremonial became more pronounced. It was evident that their practices were philosophically and practically incompatible with the reticence and reserve so cherished by John Keble. In many respects The Pillars of the House represents an elegy for a lost time and a lapsed tradition, riddled with episodes and examples of disappointment and disillusionment; as June Sturrock observes, “the novel celebrates the domestic, but it celebrates domestic reality rather than a domestic idyll.”35 Julia Courtney concurs, noting that “the novel ends with the family dispersed and absent.”36 Three of the brothers die; those who survive suffer from prolonged illness or persistent anxiety.

5.4.2. ‘The Three Brides’
Contamination and Contagion

In *The Three Brides* (1876) even fewer characters are afforded health or happiness. Critics denounced other “denials,” “dispersions,” and “absences;” “this is a narrative so sprawling and so unstructured,” remonstrated the disappointed reviewer for *The Times*, “that it can scarcely be called a novel at all.” Others were even more dismissive. Ethel Romanes simply declared *The Three Brides* so disagreeable and dispiriting that “we do not think many people would care for it.” Alethea Hayter, however, has staunchly defended *The Three Brides* as “sophisticated” and “the most grown-up” of all Yonge’s novels in its tone, themes, and narrative techniques. Nevertheless, June Sturrock’s adjectives “ambitious” and “uncomfortable” seem altogether more accurate and appropriate. “Even more than *The Clever Woman of the Family*,” she observed, the novel “involves frustration, failure, difficulty, and confinement.” All the characters “move from constraint to constraint;” several are permanent invalids, suffering from what would come to be known as neurasthenia, defined as “a nervous disability, a type of accidie, or physical and mental torpor, causing the victim to lose all appetite for life, in the conviction that he [sic] has nothing more to give.” The head of the family is permanently paralysed, and her oldest son suffers from recurrent episodes of uncontrollable bleeding, symbolising perhaps his impotence, enervation, emptiness, and exhaustion. Imminent and immense perils are everywhere and inescapable, even in the ordinary and everyday: faulty drains and fetid ponds create “vapours” that cause disease and death. At the end of the novel a typhoid epidemic devastates the industrial community of Willansborough as well as more privileged communities; no one, prosperous or poor, is insulated or immune from this “filth disease.” Mary Poovey has identified (1988) the classic Victorian inventory of common but deadly domestic dangers: “dirt, drink, diet, damp, draughts, and drains;” Charlotte Yonge presented them all in previous novels, but in *The Three Brides* they dominate, disrupt, and destabilise the narrative. No “sanitary commission,” civic association, or charitable institution, diligently distributing tea and tracts to the afflicted, can devise an effective

38 Romanes, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 135.
41 Ibid., 89.
42 Ibid., 90.
43 The term was first used in 1869 by the American physician George Miller Beard, who considered it a disease peculiar to the middle classes. Quoted in Newsome, *The Victorian World Picture*, 88. Beard considered neurasthenia a consequence of modernisation and urbanisation. Many of those diagnosed with this affliction were intellectual women of the comfortable classes, who were often advised to submit themselves to the rest cure, a restrictive regimen that commonly involved isolation, immobilisation, confinement, coercion, and control. For more information on the history of this condition and the consequences of such a “cure” see Ann Stiles, *Popular Fiction and Brain Science in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
response, and ignorant and uninformed interference has catastrophic consequences. As a result the narrative is literally and symbolically in retreat, its characters in search of a sanctuary or secure space that will protect them from the depredations of the imagined “Other,” a mysterious but malevolent force that surreptitiously emerged from obscurity, stealthily evaded or escaped all efforts at containment or control, and suddenly enveloped the community in a poisonous and pestilential “miasma.” Barbara Dunlap has observed (2003) that “Charlotte Yonge does not explore all the implications of this charged material,” but her sentiments may be signaled in the statement of the most sympathetic and sensible character, the Irish bride Rosamond Charnock, sickened and subdued by the continuous contagion, who solemnly pledges to her clergyman husband, “I’ll never go anywhere again.”

In terms of future study it would be interesting and instructive to consider both The Pillars of the House and The Three Brides in the context of the purity movement that became a powerful and public part of Anglicanism in the 1870s and 1880s. In 1875 Yonge was involved in the formation of the Girls’ Friendly Society, an organisation established by the Church of England that proclaimed the pursuit, preservation, and promotion of the “purity” of young working class women as its primary purpose. The official slogan of the GFS was indeed “Purpose and Prayer,” but Mary Heath-Stubbs, the author of Friendship’s Highway (1926), an early history of the GFS, described the organisation as “a fellowship of young girls whose bond of unity is purity and..."
Charlotte Yonge emphatically approved of the society, and enthusiastically endorsed its aims; articles on the GFS appeared with regularity in *The Monthly Packet*. She also published essays on similar themes, such as “The Purity of the Mind” by J. Ellice Hopkins (1846-1904), an Anglo-Catholic author and activist who founded the Church of England Purity Society and the White Cross Army; these organisations amalgamated in 1891 to form the White Cross League, a powerful social purity movement that launched a vigorous public campaign to promote chastity, especially among the urban and industrial poor. Hopkins once wrote that of all the denominations in England only the High Church party did not shirk the issue of urban poverty and its consequences; and she was widely regarded and respected as an intrepid and innovative advocate for reform.

These two novels of the 1870s also could be considered in another contemporary context, the recurrent crises and catastrophes that prevented the possibility of a “pure” and physically sound social body in the second half, and particularly in the final quarter, of the nineteenth century. This approach would include an analysis of the effects of cholera, the pestilential “filth disease” particularly associated with immigrants and the impoverished inhabitants of the overcrowded inner cities. The physician and surgeon Robert Nelson (1793-1873) contended that of all the remarkable occurrences, the one which distinguishes this century more than all others of which history makes mention, in relation to man, is the stupendous plague called Cholera. Stupendous from its widespread malignancy over every continent; stupendous from the millions of victims it has swallowed; stupendous from the rapidity of its spread; stupendous from the few brief moments of life it allows those it attacks: apparently capricious in its selections, it has desolated some places, spared others; terrified nations, arrested the march of armies, and baffled the efforts of man to arrest its empire.

52 J. Ellice Hopkins, *A Plea for the Wider Action of the Church of England in the Prevention of the Degradation of Women*. London: Hatchards, 1879, 12. Hopkins, like Charlotte Yonge a confirmed spinster of High Church persuasion, was an indefatigable campaigner for the cause of social purity. She was involved in the establishment of other charitable institutions and organisations; in 1878 she founded the Ladies’ Association for the Care of Friendless Girls, dedicated to the prevention of prostitution in London and elsewhere.
According to Anthony S. Wohl (1983) cholera first appeared in England in the shipping city of Sunderland in the autumn of 1831, and over the next few months spread to Scotland, Manchester, the midlands, and London. That outbreak killed almost half of its victims, more than 32,000 individuals. Cholera returned in 1848, the year of Chartism in England and revolution on the Continent, killing 62,000; in 1853 and 1854, killing 20,000; and again in 1866, killing 14,000. At first the government remained comparatively passive, counseling the possibilities of prudence, penitence, and prayer in calling for national fast-days in 1832, 1849, and 1866. However, a supplementary report issued (1866) by the Registrar General caused a national sensation when it revealed the course and extent of the contagion. Appeals for intervention could no longer be avoided or ignored. An international conference in Constantinople (and a subsequent session in Vienna in 1874) added to the alarm when the publication of its proceedings included documentation of the approach of the disease from India through the Mediterranean and into the port cities of Britain, perhaps, some suspected, in retaliation for an assortment of insults and injuries. It was evident that the imperial enterprise had exposed Britain to contamination; all aliens were increasingly regarded with suspicion as potential reservoirs of the disease and subjected to intense scrutiny and surveillance.

The Irish were the largest such population in England, and early studies of the labouring classes had referred to Irish immigration as “the other cholera,” responsible for all of Britain's social and economic ills. Perceived connections of the disease to both Ireland and India were emphasised in an essay that appeared in the Quarterly Review (1867), in which the author reported that “experts” had identified both the cause (the East, specifically the Gangetic delta) and the carriers (the Irish, specifically enlisted soldiers and the residents of congested and claustrophobic urban and industrial areas). In any case, it was alleged, cholera was an alien aggressor, an


Wohl, Endangered Lives, 118. June Sturrock has noted that other deadly epidemics also occurred: smallpox in London in 1870 and 1871 and typhoid fever in the Staffordshire colliery district. Heaven and Home, 55. In English millenarian circles it was commonly believed that such calamities presaged the imminent end of the world, which was often predicted to occur between 1866 and 1873. See Michael Wheeler, The Old Enemies, 259.

The Church of England had devised a special “cholera liturgy.” The clergy were directed to pray, “we approach Thee under a deep sense of our sinfulness, and in awe of Thy Judgements which are abroad in the Pestilence that has now reached our shores. We desire to humble ourselves . . . confessing our iniquities which have justly provoked thy wrath against us.” Pamela K. Gilbert has noted that this language was slightly modified in 1866 to address an epidemic of rinderpest, a deadly disease of cattle that had recently appeared. Cholera and the Nation, 44, 193.


“The Cholera Conference,” the Quarterly Review, 122 (1867), 29-55. The authors documented the approach of the disease from India through the Mediterranean and its arrival (“attack”) in the port cities of
intruder emphatically not native to Britain, certainly not “English” in origin. Once established
in the country it was believed that the disease could lie dormant in the subsoil, impossible to
detect or dislodge; a deadly contagion that could emerge at any time.\textsuperscript{59}

For the British this was perhaps the most dreaded form of infiltration, the most toxic
infection, and beyond that the most terrible irony, imaginable; the boundaries of their island
fortress, previously perceived as impregnable, had finally failed them. The enemy was now
within, watching and waiting for a victim or a vulnerability. If such an assault were successful,
it was entirely possible that England might succumb to the Other, and the essence of its
“Englishness” surrender—be altered, absorbed, amalgamated, assimilated, annihilated—forced
to cede its identity and forever cease to be “English.” Thus the consequences of this disease were
seen not only in terms of physical diminishment or debilitation, but as a moral and cultural
degradation. Much work remains to be done on this preoccupation with purity that in times of
crisis or calamity seemed to suddenly and spontaneously ignite into powerful spasms of paranoia
and panic.\textsuperscript{60}

\footnotesize{
England. David Arnold has estimated that one third of British troop casualties (many of them Irish) in India
after the Mutiny were from cholera. In “Cholera and Colonialism in British India,” \textit{Past and Present} 113
(1986), 127. Earlier Karl Marx had linked these two entities of Empire, stating that “Hindustan is not the
Italy, but the Ireland of the East … a world of voluptuousness and a world of woes.” “The British Rule in
\textsuperscript{59} See Pamela K. Gilbert, \textit{Disease, Desire, and the Body in Victorian Women’s Popular Novels}. Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press, 1997; and \textit{Cholera and the Nation: Doctoring the Social Body in Victorian
\textsuperscript{60} A series of contamination scares occurred in Britain during the late 1870s, including one that involved
panic over the perils of exposure to “unclean” circulated texts in lending libraries.
}
In a collection of connected stories entitled *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1858) George Eliot observed that the “influence that promotes higher experience is not calculable by algebra, not deductible by logic, but mysterious…. Ideas are often poor ghosts … they pass athwart us in thin vapour, and cannot make themselves felt. But sometimes they are made flesh; they… speak to us in appealing tones; they are clothed in a living human soul, with all its conflicts, its faith…. Then their presence is a power … and we are drawn after them in gentle compulsion.”\(^61\) Such is the essence of Charlotte Yonge's appeal, which despite the censure and calumnies of an astonishing array of adversaries has endured for more than a century.

This study considered four of her celebrated novels within the context of midcentury controversies, anchoring itself amid the chaos and confusion of that tumultuous era with the proposition that the purpose and value of scholarly scrutiny is to disturb received ideas and disrupt ideological certainties, categories, and complacencies. Inspiration for interdisciplinary inquiry was found in the works of post-colonial, transatlantic, and transoceanic scholars, especially Antoinette Burton, Stephen Arata, Catherine Hall, and their predecessor Edward Said, who encouraged the reader to identify and interrogate recurrent subtle, at times subterranean, codes and correspondences embedded in the text. He insisted (1993) that serious scholars “deal with as much of the evidence as possible, fully and actually, to read what is there or not there, above all, to see complementarity and interdependence instead of isolated, venerated, or formalised experience that excludes and forbids the hybridising intrusions of human history.”\(^62\) This study seeks to honor that engagement and that enterprise, also affirming that one of the central challenges, if not critical responsibilities, of interdisciplinary endeavor is to “restore conflict, ambiguity, and tragedy to the centre of historical process, to explore the varied and unequal terms upon which genders, classes, and races participate in the forging of a common destiny.”\(^63\) Close reading that relies on contextual evidence has therefore been a key component of my own presentation.

Feminist scholarship has also profoundly influenced and informed this analysis. In a pioneering essay (1975) Elaine Showalter exhorted the reader always to examine fugitive images and fragmented arguments in a text, and to expose rather than ignore the inconsistencies and instabilities that inevitably emerge. Such strategies, she maintained, enable us “to see meaning


in what has previously been empty space."\textsuperscript{64} The novels of Charlotte Yonge, it must be acknowledged, present a complicated challenge for a feminist scholar. However, the cultural scholar John Shelton Reed articulated a relevant and important distinction in his assertion that "it would be a mistake to link the Anglo-Catholic movement too closely with Victorian feminism. It embodies some of the values, but in such a limited and tentative way, and incorporates so many of the patriarchal assumptions of the time, that it might be better to regard it as an alternative to feminism."\textsuperscript{65} In short, Charlotte Yonge may never conform to or comply with conventional triumphal narratives of feminism, but she is absolutely crucial to an understanding of historical feminisms and the effects (intended or inadvertent) of her example and inspiration have yet to be recognised. Perhaps Yonge herself put it best when she proclaimed in her study \textit{Womankind} (1877) that "the achievements of one ... form the foundation for the next."\textsuperscript{66}

This dissertation also sought to interrogate the ways in which Yonge, one of the most celebrated authors of the age, was read, represented, and remembered. It asked for a return to Yonge and to her writings, and to the contexts and receptions of her work, in order to develop a deeper and more detailed understanding of the rivalries and reciprocities between her ideas and those of her contemporaries. Her novels sought to insinuate themselves in incendiary ecclesiastical, ideological, and cultural conversations and crises over Papal Aggression, Catholic "perversions," the Crystal Palace, the Great Census, "surplus" women, school commissions, Indian insurrection, Irish immigration, ceremonial innovation, sanitary reform, "slum" parishes, cholera and other contaminations, purity alarms, and anticipation of the imminent appearance of the apocalypse, all integral to the processes of modernisation, urbanisation, industrialisation, and imperialism that constructed (and contested the certainties of) the British identity at midcentury. Yonge studies continue to evolve in concert with broader disciplinary and interdisciplinary concerns, especially responsive to the complexities that surround and destabilise categories of class, race, disability, and gender.

The popularity of her narratives also enabled her to propel the High Church from its precarious position on the periphery to the core, from an idiosyncratic academic anomaly to an accepted, admired, and indeed essential element of Anglicanism, and by extension of Britain itself. At times enthusiasm for her cause, and for her part in promoting it, may have waned, but it has never vanished, and now appears resurgent and robust. Charlotte Yonge, spinster of Otterbourne in the parish of Hursley, outside Winchester, has endured it all with steadfast equanimity, creating and resolutely retaining a remarkably resilient reputation as "catechumen," "handmaid," "instrument," "hero and saint of the Church Militant," "thorough Englishwoman," and indeed, beloved "British institution."

\textsuperscript{64} Elaine Showalter, "Review Essay:" \textit{Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society} 1, 2 (Winter 1975), 435.
\textsuperscript{65} Emphasis in original. Reed, \textit{Glorious Battle}, 209.
\textsuperscript{66} Yonge, \textit{Womankind}, 1877.
An informed appreciation of her achievement must include an acknowledgment of her audacity and an acceptance of the admonition of Raymond Chapman (1970) that she “needs to be taken on her own terms if she is to be understood.” Those terms were most eloquently expressed by one who once knew her well, the Reverend Canon Robert Campbell Moberly (1845-1903), Regius Professor of Pastoral Theology at Christ Church Oxford, Honorary Chaplain to the Queen and then to Edward VII, the churchman who preached the memorial sermon for Charlotte Yonge at St. Matthew’s, Otterbourne, on 31 March 1901. Once her close neighbor in Hursley parish, a member of the sprawling High Church clan often compared to the May family of *The Daisy Chain,* and later an esteemed Anglican priest, theologian, and teacher, he was greatly admired for his ardent spirit and astute scholarship. Moberly was especially remembered, after his own death, for “an exceptional clearness of perception of the principles that lay behind practical questions.” That singular quality he surely held in common with Charlotte Yonge, and it was much in evidence as he recalled her presence in the parish, praising in particular her reverent but reserved “religious teaching in Otterbourne School.” Moberly paused briefly and continued:

But it is of something much wider than her work in Otterbourne that we are thinking to-day. After all, quiet as her life was, if you look at its outer conditions, it is wonderful really how much that life contained, and how rich its content was…. For she from the first was endowed with … the gift of a lively imagination…. What is the meaning of it, and what is its function? … It may be so misused as to be a mere substitute for truth, mystifying and misleading the minds which yield themselves to it, and find that they have been mocked by an empty illusion. But the real work of a lively imagination is not so much to create unrealities, or substitute the untrue for the true. Rather it is to make the truth living and real…. It is to make remote truths near and present; and dull precepts fascinatingly interesting; and slumbering principles all alert with living power. It is to bring us into near and living contact with all the realities of all the world, however remote from us outwardly, in place, or time, or kind…. So every realised principle, or complexity of principles, to her imagination became a story. The story was the illustration of the principle. But the principle, as illustrated in the story, had a power which as an abstract principle it would never have had, to bite upon the imagination, to sink into the hearts … of a great variety of readers.

Moberly ended with a stern admonition that resonates and reverberates more than a century later:

And if it be true that English men and women read her work, or care for it, less now than a generation ago—well, I will not accuse my generation, but let them look to it carefully; let them, before they turn lightly from her, inquire first, and be sure that they can find done as well in other ways that priceless work which she, in her way, did for their elders so loyally and so

67 Chapman, *Faith and Revolt,* 83.
well. In this work she has surely been herself no small part of the history of our country for the last half century....

This dissertation relies on an interdisciplinary methodology that seeks to identify correspondences between text and context in order to erase preconceptions and prejudices and establish a new basis for inquiry into the ecclesiastical, ideological, and cultural controversies that inspired and informed the narratives of Charlotte Yonge. During this investigation it has been my express intention to “look to it carefully,” to “inquire first,” and above all to honor the “complexity” and “power” of her imagination and her history: to recognise and celebrate the immense ambition and accomplishment of Charlotte Mary Yonge, and in so doing reclaim novelist and novels from obscurity and opprobrium, and from what the Oxford historian E.P. Thompson once called in another context (1963) “the enormous condescension of posterity.”

70 Ibid., 217-218.
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Grave of Charlotte Mary Yonge, Otterbourne Churchyard
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“A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing.” 30 June 1877
“Convent of the Belgravians.” 19 July-December 1850
“Croquet.” 1863
“Expectations from Rome.” 19 July-December 1850
“Faraday Giving His Card to Father Thames.” 21 July 1855
“Fashions for 1850, or A Page for the Puseyites I and II.” 19 July-December 1850
“Father Thames Introducing His Offspring to the City of London.” 3 July 1858
“Justice.” 12 September 1857
“The British Lion’s Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger.” 22 August 1857
“The Guy Fawkes of 1850.” July-December 1850
“The Poor Child’s Nurse: Opium.” July-December 1849
“The Puseyite Moth and the Roman Candle.” July-December 1850
“The Silent Highwayman.” 10 July 1858
“The Thin End of the Wedge.” 19 July-December 1850
“The Use of Adulteration.” 4 August 1855
“Which is Popery, and Which is Puseyism?” 20 January-June 1851
Appendix

Cartoons from ‘Punch’

I. Religion

The Oxford Movement

“The Puseyite Moth and the Roman Candle.” July-December 1850
“Fashions for 1850, or A Page for the Puseyites I and II.” 19 July-December 1850
“Convent of the Belgravians.” 19 July-December 1850
“Expectations from Rome.” 19 July-December 1850
“Which is Popery, and Which is Puseyism?” 20 January-June 1851
“A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing.” 30 June 1877

Papal Aggression

“The Guy Fawkes of 1850.” July-December 1850
“The Thin End of the Wedge.” 19 July-December 1850

II. Leisure

“Croquet.” 1863

III. Empire

Sepoy ‘Mutiny’

“The British Lion’s Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger.” 22 August 1857
“Justice.” 12 September 1857

IV. Contamination, Contagion, and Cholera

“The Poor Child’s Nurse: Opium.” July-December 1849
“A Court for King Cholera.” 25 September 1852
“Faraday Giving His Card to Father Thames.” 21 July 1855
“Father Thames Introducing His Offspring to the City of London.” 3 July 1858
“The Silent Highwayman.” 10 July 1858
“The Use of Adulteration.” 4 August 1855
THE PUSEYITE MOTH AND ROMAN CANDLE.

"Fly away, Billy Moth."

"The Puseyite Moth and the Roman Candle." 19 July-December 1850
THE GUY FAWKES OF 1850
PREPARING TO BLOW UP ALL ENGLAND!

"The Guy Fawkes of 1850." 19 July-December 1850
THE THIN END OF THE WEDGE.
DARING ATTEMPT TO BREAK INTO A CHURCH.
"Croquet." 17 August 1861

A NICE GAME FOR TWO OR MORE.

"...fixing her eyes on him, and placing her pretty little foot on the ball, she said, 'Now, then, I am going to croquet you!' and croquet'd he was conquistado." (From King to Bubbling.)
“The British Lion’s Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger.” 22 August 1857
“Justice.” 12 September 1857
“The Poor Child’s Nurse: Opium.” July-December 1849
"A Court for King Cholera." 25 September 1852
“Faraday Giving His Card to Father Thames.” 21 July 1855
"Father Thames Introducing His Offspring to the Fair City of London." 3 July 1858
"The Silent Highwayman." 10 July 1858
"The Use of Adulteration." 4 August 1855
"The Silent Highwayman." 10 July 1858
"The Use of Adulteration." 4 August 1855