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"The Moral or Educational Tale of the Early
Nineteenth Century"

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CHAPTER I.

THE PLAINS OF LAMENTATION AND THE UPLANDS OF FANCY.

The period from the writing of 'Early Lessons (1780) until the death of Mrs. Sherwood (1851) is the 'golden age' in Britain of the educational and moral tale, especially for children, but of that period the most popular writers, with the exception of Mrs. Sherwood (1775 - 1851), wrote their best work prior to the nineteenth century. This was largely due to the fact that authors like Mrs. Barbauld (1743 - 1825), Thomas Day (1748 - 1789), Mrs. Trimmer (1714 - 1810) and Maria Edgeworth (1769 - 1849) were genuinely interested in the morals and education of children, and not only were they clever and intelligent people, but they did not write because stories of that type were sound financial investments. A study of the periodicals of the period such as the 'Edinburgh Review', and the 'Monthly Review' reveals the interesting fact that among the hundreds of writers who attempted the moral tale, there are no names of any literary repute. Morality and religion seemed to attract the second and third rate brains, probably because the writing of a moral tale exacted no great demand upon the intellect, as the issues involved were clear cut and obvious. Not only did the better known writers find life much more interesting and complex, much more than the simple division into good and bad, but they were unwilling to be swept along by the tide of popular

demands. The new reading public, middle class in outlook and upbringing, serious, moral, and interested in questions of conduct, eagerly read novels of conduct, religious and moral. The supply kept pace with the demand and the writers reaped a golden harvest. Before morality, however, had attracted the 'Minerva Press', conscientious and gifted writers had pointed the various routes the moral and educational tale was to take, moved by no other motive than dislike of the literary fare which was served up to the reading public, especially the young.

Mrs. Barbauld felt the need for elementary books of instruction suitable for young children, and being herself a practical teacher, hastened to make good the deficiency. The result was a small volume entitled 'Early Lessons' (1780) which, while primarily for the use of her class of boys in the boarding school at Palgrave, in Suffolk, conducted by her husband and herself, quickly won favour as an essential addition to nursery libraries. The author endeavoured to arouse interest by writing in a language the young reader would understand, and by treating of situations which were well within a child's experiences. Moral lessons and facts were inculcated through simple illustrations such as the analogy between stroking a cat's fur the wrong way and the properties of amber, when rubbed; the tale of the stupid drake who insisted on teaching chicks to swim, with fatal consequences to them; the tale of the three little boys and the cakes, how Harry ate all his cake and was ill, Peter who kept his cake to himself but only took a little each day with

a resultant benefit to mice and mould, and Billy who shared his with his school fellows and later with a blind fiddler. The tale of the cakes, however, gives a counsel of perfection; it was the adult's point of view. Charles Lamb would have known that while the reader gives lip service to Billy, his sympathy and interest lie with Harry. In spite of the fact that Mrs. Barbauld has the common fault of the period, that of writing as an adult to children, and regarding the child as an adult in miniature, she struck a new note in literature for the young with such writing as, 'It is December and Christmas is coming and Betty is very busy. What is she doing? She is paring apples, and chopping meat, and beating spice. What for I wonder? It is to make mince pies.'⁽¹⁾

Mrs. Barbauld was not alone in questioning the suitability of the children's books of her youth and generation. William Carey (1761 - 1834) disliked the so-called religious books of his youth and read the 'Pilgrim's Progress' as adventure. He read it to no spiritual profit', wrote his biographer, and added 'there were few a boy then could',⁽²⁾ a criticism which, with Mrs. Barbauld's protests, reveals the two major trends in children's books of the 18th and 19th centuries - the secular call to duties and obligations to each other as members of a community, and the religious call to duty to God; the one the path trod by Maria Edgeworth (1767 - 1849) and the other by Mrs. Trimmer (1741 - 1810), 'Mrs.' Hannah More (1745 - 1833),

(1) Lessons for Children - Mrs. Barbauld - a new ed. - Routledge, page 39.

(2) 'William Carey' - S. Pearce Carey, 1923 - page 23.

and Mrs. Sherwood (1775 - 1851). Between the extremes of Maria Edgeworth and Mrs. Sherwood, there are many diversions: the lure of the chapbook, the thrill of travel, the magic of Arabian tales, the wandering in the world of 'ferlies' with Mother Bunch or La Mère de l'Oye. Carey's dislike had, however, no practical results emanating from himself, but the likeable eccentric, Thomas Day, (1748 - 1789) translated his annoyance at what passed current for children's books or what might be termed the 'juvenile library', into the writing of the first really popular children's story with an avowed purpose deeper than the interest of narrative. His classic, 'Sandford and Merton' (1783 - 89) was one of the results of Day's friendship with Richard Lovell Edgeworth, whom Professor Saintsbury rather unkindly called 'one of the capital examples of the unpractical pragmatists and clever-silly crotcheteers who produced and were produced by the Revolutionary period'.⁽¹⁾ It was the expansion of a short tale which had been written years before for insertion in a volume begun (1778) by Richard Edgeworth and his wife, Honora, to be called 'Harry and Lucy', the history of two children through every stage of childhood, and by virtue of interesting stories to inculcate morality and the elements of science and literature, in such a manner as not to weary the attention of children. The project died with Mrs. Edgeworth's illness and death,⁽²⁾ but its aim lived on in 'Sandford and Merton' which,

(1) 'The English Novel' - George Saintsbury, 1924 - page 181.

(2) v. 'Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth' - Vol. II. 1820. pp. 334 - 5.

according to the Preface, was to be a book, not merely a collection of tales, with each tale to be an integral part of a continual narrative, the conduct of two children, Tommy Merton and Harry Sandford being the unifying force. The author obviously expected criticism, because he concludes his Preface, 'I cannot stoop either to deprecate censure, or to invite applause; but I would advise those alone to criticize, who have some experience in the education of a child.'⁽¹⁾ As the importance of 'Sandford and Merton' will be dealt with later, it may be advisable to turn back the pages of time and examine what justification there was in complaints about books which were deemed 'suitable' for children.

Until the era of the French Revolution when the philosophers of the time expounded the 'Rights of Man', a doctrine so attractive that the 'duties' of man were in danger of being forgotten, books written for the young stressed conduct and obligations. They were essentially for the guidance of the children of aristocratic families, a fact amply proved in Professor Gesiena Andreae's interesting compilation of books written expressly for the edification and amusement of youth. 'The Babies Book', or 'a lytel Reporte of how young people shall behave' (1475) was a book on manners, civility, and courtesy, in which the boys are exhorted to salute their Lord, look straight at whoever speaks to them, listen well, not to chatter, answer sensibly, not to scratch, keep quiet when

(2) Preface to 'Sandford and Merton' - Day - Vol. I. 7th edition (1795) - page X.

their Lord drinks, tell no low stories, keep clear of fire and water, take care of book, cap, and gloves - commands but little different from a code of manners in any well conducted modern school, and decidedly reminiscent of the injunctions of any Victorian father. Among others listed by Professor Andreae, are: 'A Youth's Behaviour' (which received a tenth impression in 1672), 'Booke of Good Nourture for children and youth to learne their duty by', (reprinted as late as 1817), 'A lytle Booke of Good Maners for chyldren', (1554). Nor were young ladies neglected. 'A Manual of Behaviour for Girls', (16th Century) recommended as suitable reading, 'God's Revenge against Murther' and also 'Arcadia'. Caxton translated and printed (from the French), 'The Booke of the Enseynments and Teachynge that the Knight of the Toure made to his Daughters. And speaketh of many faire ensamples'. In this, the duties of young women are illustrated by historical or biblical examples, and the purpose is set out in Caxton's preface, 'This book is a special doctryne and technyng by which all young gentylwymen specially may lerne to behave themself virtuously'.^(I)

The Puritan regime, recognizing the Bible as the sole guide for man, woman, and child, witnessed the publication of children's books which must have sent many a child to toss sleepless nights on a 'hag ridden' pillow. All are based on the conception of a chastening diety in whom there is strict justice but no humanity. Mortification of the flesh is the only way to the somewhat hysterical joys of the life beyond.

(I) The Dawn of Juvenile Literature in England - Gesiena Andreae - Amsterdam, 1925 pp. 24-5.

Two gems from the collection are a Thomas White's 'A little Book for little Children', (printed 1702) which consists of a spelling book, an alphabet in rhyme, and a third section with the innocent-seeming title 'Instructions and Directions for little Children'. This section contains short tales from Ancient and Modern sources 'divers whereof are of those who are lately deceased'. Among its warnings are exhortations not to sleep in church under the dire penalty of everlasting fire, nor to take thought of raiment because the devil stands by and holds a mirror, and to consider how fortunate the child is who has been at his prayers while other children have been playing. ⁽¹⁾ The other is James Janeway's (1634 - 74) 'A Token for Children', which claims to be 'An exact account of the conversion, holy and exemplary lives, and joyful deaths of several young children'. Mine Host cried in anguish, not unmixed with irritation, 'Sire monk namoore of this, so God yow blesse!' when Chaucer's jovial monk told his lugubrious stories. How would he have reacted to Janeway's thirteen examples of children, 'all dying under their twelfth year crying to the Lord as well as they could, which might easily be perceived by their eyes and countenances' ⁽²⁾ Pity gentle souls nurtured on such books, and the grim horrors of Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs'.

(1) The Dawn of Juvenile Literature - Andbeae - page 34.

(2) Ibid. - page 35.

The puritan legacy was long in exhausting itself. Mrs. Hughes, discussing the reading material of a London middle class family of the eighteen seventies, mentions a work called 'The Safe Compass', which took a gloomy view of the penalties attendant on the minor weaknesses, such as, 'the disobedient were gored by bulls, those who laughed at the infirm fell down wells and were crippled for life'.⁽¹⁾ 'The Peep of Day' contained this pious sentiment:

'Satan is glad - when I am bad,
And hopes that I - with him shall lie
In fire and chains - and dreadful pains'.⁽²⁾

'The Peep of Day' was read every Sunday to Lord Frederick Hamilton (in the "sixties") much to his enjoyment in spite of the terrifying pictures. He recalls that his mother came into the nursery one Sunday evening and found her son listening in rapt attention to what his nurse was reading him: the conversation was as follows:

"Nana is reading to me out of a good book".
"And do you like it, dear?"
"Very much indeed".
"What is Nana reading to you about? Is it about Heaven?"
"No, it's about 'ell."⁽³⁾

It is difficult to make any accurate judgment on the effect of such devotional books as the 'Safe Compass' and 'The Peep of Day', on young minds, but to the normal child they coloured his imagination and peopled the darkness, without, however acting as a deterrent to healthy mischief. Tales about the

(1) A London Family (1870 - 1900) - M.V. Hughes - O.U.P.
1946 - page 52.

(2) Ibid. page 52.

(3) The Days before Yesterday - Lord Frederick Hamilton -
H. & S. 27th edition 1943 - page 16.

pains and penalties of Hell converted the furnace that heated Lord Frederick's home into the authentic lake of fire, and made the journey to the housekeeper's room, which could only be reached through a maze of basement passages, one so (I) 'perilous that it would only be undertaken under escort', but they did not seem to have scratched more than the mind's surface. Lamb it may be remembered justified such books on the ground that they at least localised the child's imagination and afforded material which was less awful and terrifying than that which appeared unbidden from the depth of some nameless fear. (2) Mrs. Hughes also refers to a collection of tales for the young, one of which concerns a rich mamma who, as a reward for her daughter's good behaviour, suggested a walk down the street to visit the shops, the little girl to buy one article from each shop. A perambulator, expensive lollipops, writing desk, tarts, slippers, fancy-coloured note-paper, a pineapple, were successively purchased and dispatched to the child's home. Eventually she wished to return home, eager to view and sample the wares.

"Have you quite finished my child?" asked mamma.

"Oh, yes, thank you, dear mamma, pray let us return home".

"I fear, my child, that there is one shop that you have omitted".

So saying, she led Rosa to the undertaker's and had her measured for a coffin. 'In this kind way, my dear young

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(1) The Days Before Yesterday - Lord Frederick Hamilton -
1943 - page 16.

(2) Essays of Elia - Witches and other Night Fears - Lamb.

readers,' writes the author, 'little Rosa was early led to realize that death was the necessary end to all her pleasures'.⁽¹⁾

One is reminded here of Mrs. Sherwood (1775 - 1851) who, as a young girl, endeavoured to adopt this principle laid down by herself, 'Always when lying down in your bed, try to think it is your coffin.'⁽²⁾ The Victorian and pre-Victorian child may have supped on horrors, but when some future historian of the twentieth century, contemplating its restlessness and neurosis, contrasts it with the stability and virility of the Victorian Age, will he not say with truth 'There were giants then'?

The normally healthy child may read as a duty, an avowedly moral tale, in whatever guise, but he (or she) will irresistibly be drawn to the fanciful as Lamb (1775 - 1834) was, and Frances Ann Kemble (1809 - 1893) and Mrs. Martha Sherwood, no matter how much the latter ladies, when adult, denied and rejected their early loves. Dr. Johnson, himself a teacher, said to Mrs. Thrale, 'Babies do not want to hear about babies. They like to be told of giants and castles, and of somewhat which can stretch and stimulate their little minds'.⁽³⁾ The same spirit, no doubt prompted the appearance in the last years of the 1770's, of a number of children's books, in which some of the favourites of children are press-ganged to serve the interests of Dame Instruction. Tom

(1) A London Family - M.V. Hughes - 1946 - page 110.

(2) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - 1854 - page 216.

(3) Quoted by F.V. Barry in 'A Century of Children's Books - 1922 - page 53.

Thumb became a pedagogue, and 'Tom Thumb's Exhibition' (1780) claimed to be an 'account of many valuable and surprising curiosities which he had collected in the course of his travels, for the instruction and amusement of the British youths;' ⁽¹⁾ the giant became a harmless Nestor as in the 'History of the Enchanted Castle', or 'The Prettiest Book for Children', published by Francis Newbery (1777), ⁽²⁾ which is described in the title page as 'The Enchanted Castle, situated in one of the Fortunate Isles and governed by the Giant Instruction - Written for the Entertainment of little Masters and Misses, by Don Stephano Bunyano, Under-Secretary to the Aforesaid Giant'. Isaac Bickerstaff perceived his eight year old godson as 'a very great historian in Aesop's Fables', but, 'he frankly declared to me his mind' said Bickerstaff, 'that he did not delight in this learning because he did not believe they were true, for what reason, I found he had very much turned his studies for about twelve months past into 'The Lives and Adventures of Don Bellianis of Greece, Guy of Warwick, The Seven Champions He would tell you the mismanagements of John Hickerthrift, find fault with the passionate temper in Bevis of Southampton and loved St. George for being champion of England'. ⁽³⁾ This is a far cry from 'The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven'.

Across the years Steele's godson reaches in spirit Charles

(1) A Century of Children's Books - F.V. Barry - Methuen - 1922
page 54.

(2) Reprinted for Harris early in the Nineteenth Century.

(3) Tatler No. 95 - Steele.

Lamb (1775 - 1834). Both were devotees of the Chapbooks, 'those little stitched tracts written for the common people and formerly circulated in England, Scotland, and the American Colonies by itinerant dealers or chapmen, consisting chiefly of vulgarized versions of popular stories, such as Tom Thumb, Jack the Giant Killer, Mother Shipton, Reynard the Fox - travels, biographies, and religious treatises.' (I) These names are music to the child's ear, but as chapbooks constituted the sensational press of the day and although never failing to show that evil will never go unpunished, were frowned on by the shapers of morals and moral teachers, as being coarse, brutalising, vulgar, and melodramatic. Many of the titles are not unlike those to be found today in the cheaper magazines for girls - The Morpeth New Penny Histories published by J. Mackay, Bridge Street, Morpeth (undated) contained 'The Village Carpenter', a tale of temptation through poverty caused by the malignant jealousy of the squire, but with virtue having its ultimate triumph; 'The False Guardian', a tale of greed and true love; 'Annie Hope' or 'The Broken Heart'; 'The Baffled Plotters'; 'The Curse of Blood'. The Otley Chapbooks, published by William Walker (1809), but obviously in many cases retelling older material, has 'The Life and Character of Nell Gwin', 'History of Valentine and Orson'; 'Amelia Neville', or 'The Dis-

(I) Article on Chapbooks - Encyclopoedia Britannica
(eleventh edition)

appointment of Envy'; 'The Jealous Husband, and the Virtuous Wife'; 'St. Ronan's Well' or 'The Fatal Effects of a Clandestine Marriage'. Orr and Sons, Glasgow (1839) published 'Tournament at Eglinton Castle', 'History of Whittington and his Cat', 'Puss in Boots', 'Jack and the Beanstalk', 'History of the Black Douglas', 'Beauty and the Beast'. The chapbook from 1700 - 1840 was, as F.J. Harvey Darton wrote in 1932, the popular literature of four centuries in a reduced and degenerate form; most of it 'in a form rudely adapted for use by children and poorly educated country folk'.⁽¹⁾

Coarse the chapbooks may have been, mean in format, ill cut and poorly illustrated, rambling and often ungrammatical, but they brought morality and information to the non literary public in a cheap form, and enjoyment to the young, both in prose and verse medium. Music Hall, Melodrama, and the sentimental ballad carried on the themes of the chapbooks into the world of entertainment, as in the tale of the young daughter who refused to be coaxed to take a little toddy.

O father do not tempt me so
 I fear I'll love it by and by.
 And then my love will grow and grow,
 Till I shall drink your bottle dry.
 Father, I love you from my heart,
 But O, I fear to taste your brandy!
 The sugared dram shall be your part
 And I will have my sugar candy. (2)

(1) Children's Books in English - F.J.Darton - C.U.P. 1932
 page - 82.

(2) From the 'Theatrical Speaker' - pub. by F.Orr & Sons,
 Glasgow - 1840. 'A selection of the newest and most
 popular recitations of the present day'.

More ambitious reading among the 'better sort' were English versions of 'Contes de ma Mère L'Oye', by Charles Perrault (1628 - 1703), of whom Andrew Lang wrote, 'no nation owes him so much as we of England, who, south of the Scottish, and east of the Welsh Marches, have scarce any popular tales of our own save "Jack the Giant Killer", and who have given the full fairy citizenship to Perrault's "Petit Poucet" and "La Barbe Bleue"'.^(I) 'Perrault's fairy tales appeared in the 'Mercure' (1696), and by the end of the eighteenth century, many editions had appeared in France and England. Of their number are the eternal favourites of the nursery - 'La Belle au bois Dormant', 'Petit Chaperon rouge', 'Le chat botte', 'Cendrillon', 'Riquet a la houppe'. His popularity with the eighteenth century intelligent reading public was not only because of his gifts as a story teller, but the moral which concluded each tale, the moral twist being prepared for in the general title of his 'Contes de ma Mère d'Oye' - 'Histoires ou contes du temps passé avec des moralités'. Red Riding Hood was eaten, and the reader, much as he may wish for the 'happy ending', must applaud the punishment which of necessity accompanies disobedience - 'ce mechant loup se jette sur le petit Chaperon rouge et la mangea'.

La Barbe bleue has as its moralité:

(I) Perrault's Popular Tales - ed. Andrew Lang - Oxford 1888
- Introduction - page XVI.

La curiosité malgré tous ses attraits
 Couste souvent bien des regrets;
 On en voit tous les jours mille exemples paroistre,
 C'est, m'en déplaie au sexe, un plaisir bien leger,
 Dès qu'on le prend il cesse d'estre (1)
 Et toujours il couste trop cher.

There is a wealth of natural humour in the conclusion of 'Le Chat botté' - 'Le chat devint grand Seigneur & ne courut plus après les souris, que pour se divertir', and 'Riquet à la Houppe', with the departure from the 'prince charming' theme and consequently of less interest to a child, has, as a lesson, a conception too subtle for a child to grasp, that of the love of a woman overcoming a natural repugnance to the ugliness of a man, or as Perrault ends his *moralité*,

Tout est beau dans ce que l'on aime,
 Tout ce qu'on aime a de l'esprit. (2)

Another French writer whose fairy tales had a vogue both in France and England was the Comtesse d'Aulnoy (1650 - 1705). Her 'Contes Nouvelles ou Les Fées à la Mode' appeared in three volumes in 1698. Among the best known were 'L'Oiseau bleu', 'Finette Cendron', and 'La Chatte blanche'.

What child would read with evident and unsolicited enjoyment, 'A Father's Advice to his Son', 'Merit Exalted', 'The Spoiled child', when, in cheap format, he could procure 'The Adventures of Philip Quarll', 'The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins',⁽³⁾ - one of the 'classics' which Lamb and his schoolmates read on the frequent occasions that the Rev.

(1) La Barbe Bleue - ed. Lang - Perrault's Popular Tales
 - page 29.

(2) Riquet à la Houppe - *ibid.* - page 58.

(3) By Robert Paltock (1751) - 4 editions before 1800 and 16 since - was edited by A.H. Bullen (1884) - Reprinted in Everyman 1915.

(I)

James Field absented himself from the class-room - or the Mother Bunch's tales with such exciting titles as, 'The Yellow Dwarf', 'Miranda and the Royal Ram', 'Elinedorus and Alzayda'? 'The Yellow Dwarf' overflows with charms, spells, enchanted castles, though it would be difficult to imagine the modern child indulging in a willing suspension of belief, to read it. A synopsis of the story will serve to reveal its ludicrous and crude improbabilities, and at the same time afford a plausible pretext for the opposition shown to fairy tales in general by such writers as Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Trimmer and Mrs. Sherwood. There is certainly a broad gulf between its frank impossibility and the reasonableness of the moral tales which Maria Edgeworth made popular:

A queen had a daughter, All Fair, who would not marry. As this was a great grief to the mother, the queen sought the advice of the Desert Fairy. This fairy was guarded by two lions and to pass them, the queen baked a cake which she intended to give them (a romantic version of a sop for Cerberus). Unfortunately, she lost it and would have fallen a prey to the lions had not she been saved by a yellow dwarf on the promise that he would marry All Fair. The daughter, seeing her mother fretting and uneasy, determined to consult the Desert Fairy, but a like fate befell her cake and she was saved by the yellow dwarf after having agreed to give him her hand in marriage. As was to be expected the daughter regretted her promise and determined to marry the gallant King of the Golden Mines. At the wedding ceremony, there could be seen coming towards the pair, a box on which sat an ugly old woman who reminded the mother and daughter of their promises. When the bridegroom threatened her, the top of the box flew off and there appeared the yellow dwarf mounted on a large Spanish cat. He challenged the King of the Golden Mines to combat, which, however, the latter broke off when he saw the Desert Fairy (the old hag) strike the princess with a lance. The dwarf reaching All Fair before him, took her from her mother's arms

leapt with her upon the top of the palace and disappeared. The bridegroom himself was kidnapped by the Desert Fairy, who bore him to her cavern where all her arts proved in vain against his vision of All Fair in a castle of polished steel, 'leaning her head on one hand, and wiping away her tears with the other'. One day while meditating by the sea shore, the king spied a mermaid who offered to help him release All Fair. Sitting him upon her tail, she swam away and eventually drew near the palace where the princess was captive. He was given a sword and admonished never to let it out of his hands. With it he killed, two sphinxes, six dragons, four and twenty nymphs sent to tempt him. Drawing near the princess, he cast himself at her feet but unfortunately dropped his sword in the process. The yellow dwarf, conveniently hiding behind a shrub, seized the weapon. By magic spells he conjured up two giants who laid the king in irons from which the dwarf offered to free him if he renounced all claim to All Fair, but, when the king refused, the dwarf stabbed him to the heart. All Fair thereupon died and the mermaid changed them into two palm trees 'which preserving a constant mutual affection for each other, caress and unite their branches together'. (I)

It is interesting to note that among the fairy tales which were given to Martha Butt (later Mrs. Sherwood) in her childhood by her brother, were 'The Yellow Dwarf' and 'Miranda and the Royal Ram'. When young, Mrs. Sherwood had enjoyed such fantasies as 'The Six Princesses of Babylon' by Lucy Peacock, Aesop's Fables, 'Riquet with the Tuft', 'Arabian Nights', (2) yet in 1817 when she edited 'The Little Female Academy' (Sarah Fielding - published 1749) she used the pruning knife mercilessly, and ruthlessly cut out the fairy tales since 'fanciful productions of this sort can never be rendered generally useful' and in their stead put 'such appropriate relations as seemed more likely to conduce to juvenile edification'. (3)

(1) Edition used - Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales - pub. J. Lumsden & Son, Glasgow. (undated).

(2) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - 1854 - page 45.

(3) Ibid. - page 35.

While on the 'Devonshire' (which took her husband and her to India) she read the 'Arabian Nights', but declared, 'perhaps I ought not to commend them to the study of young people.

They certainly are not correct, and yet strange to say, till the circumstance was pointed out to me, when I was more than 50 years of age, I was so little aware of it that I had never withheld the books from my children'.⁽¹⁾ 'Miranda and the Royal Ram' must have been strong meat for Miss Butts' palate. It has little of the charm and beauty associated with fairy tales, but does possess a deeper implication and pathos than most tales of the genus, and consequently was not without moral value:

A king, afraid that a dream of his youngest daughter boded the loss of his crown, ordered his captains to kill her and bring back her heart and tongue (an old device). The princess's Moorish attendant, her pet ape, and dog, offered themselves as sacrifices, but the king was not deceived by the ape's tongue nor with that of the Moor. Miranda swooned with grief at the fate of her faithful friends, and when she recovered, found herself alone with the corpses, which she buried. Half dead from grief and weariness, she heard the bleating of sheep and saw a plain in which was a large ram pure white in colour - a prince in animal shape because he had scorned a fairy's love. She stayed with the ram until a rumour reached her that her eldest sister was to marry and when she asked permission to attend the wedding the ram readily gave his consent provided she promised to return. She came back before the ceremony was completed because of the suspicious looks cast upon her by her father. When the second daughter was to be wedded, permission was again granted by the ram to attend, but on this occasion the princess found all avenues of escape closed. Father and daughter were reconciled when the king perceived the innocence of the dream, but Miranda's happiness made her forget her promise to the ram. The ram sought her, but, on being refused admittance to the palace, died, a tragedy which the princess did not long survive.⁽²⁾

(1) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - 1854 - page 241.

(2) Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales - pub. J. Lumsden & Son - Glasgow.

It is difficult to conceive what pleasure Martha Butt would derive from such a tale, except the luxury of tears over the ram's death. Probably the demise of the princess was viewed with equanimity as a just punishment for unfaithfulness.

The moralists from 1780 - 1840 either under-rated the usefulness of the fairy tale or exaggerated its adverse effect on the child mind. They forgot the divinity which lay in the day dream; the vague yearnings to escape from uninteresting realities and the adult deities with their irksome demands of 'why and wherefor' and questionings of impulses, as the Mamma in Madame d'Épinay's 'Les Conversations d'Emilie'.^(I) They rejected the reverie because its highway led to nowhere, and the fairy tale because they saw in it false morality and ethics. Yet the detractors failed to realise that the child sees the joke as well as most men. G.K.Chesterton once wrote, 'When Hiawatha was told by his nurse that a warrior threw his grandmother up to the moon, he laughed like any English child told by his nurse that a cow jumped over the moon If any student tells me that the infant Hiawatha only laughed out of respect for the tribal custom of sacrificing the aged to

(I) Emilie: Mamma! Mamma! Let me come and kiss you.

Mamma: Most willingly; but you will tell me upon what account

- quoted by F.V. Barry - A Century of Children's Books, etc.

- page - 100.

'Les Conversations d'Emilie' was awarded in 1783, the French Academy Prize for a work of the greatest benefit to humanity.

economical housekeeping, I say, he did not. If any scholar tells me that the cow jumped over the moon only because a heifer was sacrificed to Diana, I answer that it did not'.⁽¹⁾ They underestimated child intelligence and failed to grasp the simple truth that 'throwing your grandmother into the sky is not good behaviour, but it is perfectly good taste'.⁽²⁾ They ignored the subconscious which makes the child dream dreams and see visions, because they believed that all experience came from the senses, that impulses were derived from the physical world; they recognised the truth of, but neglected the danger in, the paradox that the 'child is father of the man'. - The appeal to reason, the attitude of 'does it work?', 'is it useful?' in some cases may set in motion antipathetical forces such as appeared in the 18th Century Club, 'The Monks of Medmenham' with its strange emotionally exciting rites. Such clubs 'provided an outlet for some of the violent and revolutionary impulses that had begun to ferment beneath the smooth surface of a so-called "Age of Reason". They represented a revolt against Christian ethics, the desire of the individual to explore dark labyrinths in his own nature from which conventional morality and the dictates of common sense alike debarred him'.⁽³⁾

Though it is probably true psychology to regard children

- (1) The Everlasting Man - G.K. Chesterton - Hodder & Stoughton
- page 112.
(2) Ibid. - page 112.
(3) Four Portraits - Peter Quennell - Reprint Society edition
1947 - page 202.

as possessing little imagination and seeing nothing magical in the supernatural world of fairyland, Wordsworth (1770 - 1850) revealed an insight into the child's world when, looking down through the years and realising how false materialism was, he wrote:

Oh! give us once again the wishing-cap
Of Fortunatus, and the invisible coat
Of Jack the Giant-Killer, Robin Hood,
And Sabra in the forest with St. George!
The child, whose love is here, at least doth reap
One precious gain, that he forgets himself. (I)

And if morality is wanted, there it is, in the chapbooks and the 'little yellow, canvas-covered book, A slender abstract of the Arabian tales', which Wordsworth and his companions treasured (2) - the triumph of good over evil, sweetness of temper overcoming malice and envy, the reward of courage, beauty without pride and affectation, mischief without malice. 'The History of Beauty and the Beast' teaches a lesson as clearly as does Mrs. Sarah Trimmer's 'History of the Robins' and Mrs. Hannah More's 'Shepherd of Salisbury Plain' - the triumph and reward of virtue. The chapbook edition of this nursery favourite speaks in accents which would have won the full approval of a Ziegenhirt or a Pilkington. 'Beauty', said the fairy, 'come and receive the reward of your judicious choice: You have preferred virtue before either wit or beauty, and deserve to find a person in whom all these qualifications

(I) 'Prelude' - Wordsworth's Poems - ed. T. Hutchison - O.U.P.
page - 670 - ll. 341 - 346.

(2) Ibid.
page - 673 - ll. 461 - 462.

are united'.⁽¹⁾ The evil sisters are condemned to become statues until they owned their faults which, according to the fairy will be for eternity, because 'pride, anger, gluttony, and idleness are sometimes conquered, but the conversion of a malicious and envious mind is a kind of miracle',⁽²⁾ a conclusion which Mrs. Markham much more prosaically had reached in 1832, when Letitia, alone of the three sisters, was unable to become amiable because she had been cursed with a malicious temperament.⁽³⁾

Maria Edgeworth maintains the attack on the fairy tale and the adventure book. Among types of books which she lists as unsuitable for children in the formative years, are adventure stories - unless for children destined for the army, or seafaring life - because 'the taste for adventure is absolutely incompatible with the sober perseverance necessary to success in any other liberal profession'.⁽⁴⁾ She regarded (as Locke did) 'Hobgoblin' or fairy tales as serving no useful purpose, having no foundation in fact and experience, and being outwith the confines of reason and the credible. One wonders what she would have done at Haworth Parsonage in 1825 with 'Tabby' who, shrewd and practical Yorkshire woman though she was, had not only known the valley at Haworth in the far off days 'when the fairies frequented the margin of the "beck" on moonlight

- (1) History of Beauty and the Beast - pub. Thomas Richardson - Derby (undated) - page 46.
 (2) Ibid. - page 47.
 (3) The New Children's Friend - Mrs. Markham - Vol. I - 1832 - page 94.
 (4) Practical Education - R.L. & Maria Edgeworth - 1798 ed. - -Vol. I - p. 336.

nights⁽¹⁾, but had known folk who had seen them. The vivacious and charming Fanny Kemble (1809 - 1893) was much perturbed as to the efficacy of 'Mother Goose's Nursery Rhymes' which she administered to her daughter in doses of a quarter of an hour daily. She questioned the wisdom of choosing a work of imagination and was relieved when Miss Butler (Fanny Kemble married a Southern Planter, Pierce Butler), acted like a 'rational creature', abhorring the whole thing most cordially'. To the mother, much more important were the 'wondrous revelations' which flowed into the child's mind through those 'five gates of knowledge, her senses'.⁽²⁾ In spite of Mrs. Butler's fear, it would be pleasant to think that when she was five, (1814), little Miss Kemble read fairy tales and that they were among the children's books given to her by her brother John, on the occasion of her going to Bath to that 'fashionable establishment for the education of young ladies', managed by Mrs. Twiss (her aunt). 'There were', she wrote, 'at least a round dozen, and having finished reading them, it occurred to me that to make a bonfire of them would be an additional pleasure to be derived from them, and so I added to the intellectual recreation they afforded me, the more sensational excitement of what I called a "blaze"'.⁽³⁾

'A rational child' in any age is a rarity and it was little

- (1) Life of Charlotte Bronte - Mrs. Gaskell - Everyman edition - page 49.
 (2) Record of a Girlhood - Frances Ann Kemble - 1878 - vol. I - page 234.
 (3) Ibid. - page 20.

wonder that voices were raised against the fetish of 'the useful' both in reading material and education. William Godwin (1756 - 1836) was emphatic in his dislike of over rational children. 'I hold', he said, 'that a man is not an atom less a man, if he lives and dies without the knowledge they are so desirous of accumulating in the heads of children. These things may be learned at any age, while the imagination, the faculty for which I declare, if cultivated at all, must be begun in youth. Without imagination there can be no genuine ardour in any pursuit . . . and without imagination there can be no genuine morality, no profound feeling of other men's sorrow, no ardent and persevering anxiety for their interests'.

What Crabb Robinson, writing in 1829, called 'trash' was, Lamb noticed, fast disappearing from the bookshelves of the 'Newbery' publications, and characteristically the latter fired a valedictory salvo over the departure. He wrote to Coleridge on October 23, 1802, 'Mrs. Barbauld's (1743 - 1825) stuff has banished all the old classics of the nursery, and the shopman at Newbery's hardly deign'd to reach them off an old exploded corner of a shelf when Mary ask'd for them. Mrs. B's and Mrs. Trimmer's (1714 - 1810) nonsense lay in piles about. Knowledge insignificant and vapid as Mrs. B's books convey, it seems, must come to the child in the shape of knowledge, and his empty noddle must be turned with conceit

(1) William Godwin - C. Kegan Paul - vol. I. - page 119.

(2) Lamb's Life and Letters - E.V. Lucas - 1905 - vol. II. page 326.

of his own powers when he has learnt that Horse is an animal, and Billy is better than a Horse and such like, instead of that beautiful Interest in wild tales which made the child a man, while all the time he suspected himself to be no bigger than a child. Science has succeeded to Poetry no less in the little walks of children than with men . . . ' (I) Godwin had a similar complaint to make when he was critical of a 'silly Bookseller' who suggested that a 'delightful book for children' might be written and called 'A Tour through Papa's House', the object of which would be to explain the furniture, how carpets were made, the history and manufacture of iron . . . (2) These criticisms, however, pale before the attack on 'Useful Knowledge' which appeared in 1840 in one of the magazines prominent in the literary world. The writer declared that knowledge of locomotive engines, the gradients of railroads, 'the pressure and generation of sham political economy' was more to be coveted than the cultivation of the heart or conduct and that the age regarded him as 'worthy of a doctor's degree who can with the greatest speed run a railway through lovely landscapes, wide-spread panoramas, hoary ruins, and venerable mementoes of departed ages . . . can construct a stationhouse from the ruins of an ancient abbey, sleepers from Shakespeare's mulberry tree or the royal oak, and collect fuel for the furnaces from the charcoal foundations of the Temple of Ephesus'. The article grows in vitriolic vigour

(1) Lamb's Life and Letters - E.V. Lucas - 1905 - Vol. I
- page 232.

(2) William Godwin - C. Kegan Paul - Vol. I - page 119.

when the 'genius of the useful-knowledge mongers' is depicted as contemplating the millennium when 'all the chimney-sweeps could jabber philosophy, the dustman chemistry, the milkmaids hydrostatics, and the coalheavers, mineralogy', and when 'Ancient MSS. of the Bible would be subjected to a process of cleansing, and made available for useful knowledge diplomas'. The architects of utilitarianism are condemned as the favourites of useful knowledge and London University attacked. (I)

This tirade carries the earnestness of Godwin and the whimsical seriousness of Lamb to absurdity and illustrates the chaotic thinking when emotion supersedes reason.

There was little of chaotic thinking when the writers for children, after 1780, expressed their views on fairy tales. Their criticism sprang from their personalities and their conviction of what constituted the correct and most valuable models, models which had proved their worth in the domestic circle, at least in the case of the major luminaries - Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Barbauld, and Mrs. Sherwood. 'She was such a woman as we read of in romances, and had she lived in some dark age of the past, might have been charged with sorcery, for even in advanced life, she often bore away the palm of admiration from the young and beautiful, and many even were fascinated who wholly condemned her conduct'. (2) In such terms

(1) Fraser's Magazine, No. CXXII, Feb. 1840 - Vol. XXI - page 161.
Article on Characteristics of the 19th Century - section on 'Useful Knowledge'.

(2) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - 1854 - page II.

did Mrs. Sherwood speak of Anna Siward (1747 - 1809), the Swan of Lichfield', whom E.V. Lucas called 'the last and greatest of the unhumorous women', ⁽¹⁾ and in the sentiment expressed lies a hint of the reason for the distaste the 18th and 19th century moral writers had for the odd and bizarre. It was not so much the fact that sorcerers, giants, and fairies did not exist, but that they belonged to a world alien to the writers. They were no mystics, dreamers at the shore of old romance, but respectable conventional people of the middle classes who derived their power from, in the case of the 'Edgeworth' group, themselves, and, in the case of the 'Trimmer - Sherwood' group from a consciousness of some divine mission. To the one class, there were no influences at work in the child mind, but such as came from physical surroundings and people; to the other, the 'father of lies' was very real and the doctrine of original sin always cast its ominous shadow. The one taught for life, the other for immortality. Both groups refused to acknowledge that through the land of fancy, a child could come to win to a nobler conception of itself, its obligations, and duties. Why attempt, they asked, to make vice and wrong-doing palatable, or to set in a by-gone age little social and ethical faults which were in the contemporary age? With few exceptions - Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Barbauld, Mrs. Trimmer, (in the History of the Robins) and Mrs. Sherwood (when not unduly oppressed with the thought of the ubiquity

(1) A Swan and her Friends - E.V. Lucas - 1907 - page 4.

of sin) - they could not return to the days of childhood, and see the child's point of view. They wrote as adults, moulding children to their image. They would have endorsed Lamb's advice to his friend Manning (when the latter was hankering after the idea of an Eastern Adventure - 1803), without recognising its pathetic undercurrent. 'I am afraid 'tis the reading of Chaucer has misled you; his foolish stories about Cambuscan, and the ring, and the horse of brass. Believe me, there are no such things, 'tis all the poet's invention; but if there were such darling things as old Chaucer sings, I would be up behind you on the horse of brass, and frisk off for Prester John's country. But these are all tales; a horse of brass never flew, and a king's daughter never talked with birds! ' (1)

Both groups failed to realise that if bogies and Hobgoblins are removed from children, the latter will replace them with creations of their own. G.K. Chesterton voiced this view in his essay, 'The Red Angel',⁽²⁾ no new discovery as Lamb had aired it almost a century before.⁽³⁾ Chesterton saw in fairy tales a weapon with which children could arm themselves to defeat evils - the old allegorists recognised the significance of the slain dragon. Fairy tales show the child that evils can be overcome. 'They do not give a child his first idea of bogey. What fairy tales give the child is his first clear idea of the possible defeat of bogey. The baby has known the dragon intimately ever

(1) Lamb's Letters - Vol. I. - Talfourd - 1837 - page 333.

(2) Red Angel (from Tremendous Trifles) - G.K. Chesterton.

(3) v. Witches and Other Night Fears - Essays of Elia.

since he had an imagination. What the fairy tale provides for him is a St. George to kill the dragon'.⁽¹⁾ Mrs. Trimmer would put into his hand no sword of the spirit, but have at his shoulder a vague (for the child) beneficent deity whom he might, or might not, identify with his own father; with the best of intentions she would remove St. George. 'At the four corners of a child's bed', wrote Chesterton, 'stand Perseus and Roland, Sigurd and St. George. If you withdraw the guard of heroes, you are not making him rational; you are only leaving him to fight the devils alone'.⁽²⁾ Youth glories in heroes and mighty men. That is why it claimed the Pilgrim's Progress as its own. The moral lesson followed later.

When the moralists forsake the beaten track and turn off into the realms of fancy, they go clear eyed and unafraid, and unafraid the children follow them, because who could fear a giantess wearing glasses,⁽³⁾ a malice with a machine which could eject darts rather than spells (a milk and water Apollyon),⁽⁴⁾ or feel awe of a fairy called Benigna,⁽⁵⁾ or one named Flibbertina? Here is no dragon whose breath breeds death and plague, no shadowy elfin grotto, no mysterious lady with 'wild wild eyes'. Who could have a wholesome respect

- (1) Tremendous Trifles - G.K. Chesterton - pub. Methuen - page 102
 (2) Ibid. - page 104.
 (3) v. The Six Princesses of Babylon, in their travels to the Temple of Virtue - Lucy Peacock - 1785.
 (4) Ibid.
 (5) 'The Beautiful Countess' from the New Children's Friend - Mrs. Markham - 1832.

for an 'Avarice' whose rags could not hide what must have been the product of a superior education? The 'fiend' in Spenser would have torn asunder an 'Avarice' who said, 'It appears to me, young Damsel, that you are insensible to the honour Fortune throws in your way, by rending you agreeable to me. It is true I have paid some tribute to Time, and may not, perhaps, appear agreeable to the delicacy of a maiden's eye, but the treasures it is in my power to bestow will more than compensate for my personal imperfections, were they more numerous'.⁽¹⁾ Who would really listen to a good fairy who says, 'you must not always judge from appearances, a plain and poor garment often conceals more valuable qualities than the richest embroidery'⁽²⁾ - the accents of a Trimmer, a Wakefield, a Taylor, a Ziegenhirt, and a Fenn - or the pulse rate quicken at Mrs. Pinchard's conception of a fairy, a being a foot high with its dimensions proportionately small. 'On its head was placed a turban of the finest blue, the texture of which seemed like the leaf of a flower: it was ornamented with a circlet of precious stones, which, though small, was of incredible brightness. It's garment was a sort of robe descending in folds to the ground, of the most exquisite whiteness and shining like the slight threads which in the autumn are seen floating over the grass at sunset'⁽³⁾ - an Amelia Alderson in miniature, as Opie, the painter, saw her for the first time. Mrs. Pinchard, with

(1) The Six Princesses of Babylon - Lucy Peacock.

(2) Ibid.

(3) The Blind Child - Mrs. Pinchard - I79I - page I29.

a true zeal for explaining away the unexplainable, apologises for the presence of her fairy, 'You (Elfrida) have heard, and, with propriety, despised a thousand idle tales of the fairies, which have no existence but in imagination - you have rightly judged it inconsistent with the wisdom of the Supreme Being to suffer a set of inferior agents to torment mankind with impunity. But learn, fair Elfrida, that although they exist not for purposes so vain, yet do exist. Under the control of superior power, they are permitted by their invisible agency to direct the smaller concerns of man's life. Once in an age, their personal appearance is allowed to some favoured mortal, who like you, possesses a heart simple and unsexed by the allurements of vice.'⁽¹⁾ A similar insensibility to the 'stuff' that fairies 'are made on' is shown by Miss Sprightly, in the following dialogue with Mrs. Teachwell;

Mrs. Teachwell: You know that stories of fairies are all fabulous?

Miss Sprightly: Oh! Yes, Madam.

Mrs. Teachwell: Do you wish for such a Fairy Guardian?

Miss Sprightly: Very much, Madam.

Mrs. Teachwell: Why, my dear? (2)

Miss Sprightly: Because she would teach me to be good.

The imagination falters when it contemplates a pedagogic or moral fairy.

It is, however, easy to criticise the pseudo-fairy moral tale which was very popular in its day, and cavil at the pantomime conception of fairyland. Better to be charitable like Lamb when he discussed the superstitions of earlier days and say 'There is no law to judge of the lawless or canon by which a dream may be criticised'.

(1) The Blind Child - Mrs. Pinchard -1791 - page 131.

(2) From 'The Fairy Spectator' - Miss Teachwell (Lady Fenn) -1789.
(Quoted by F.V.Barry - A Century of Children's Books - p. 121.)

CHAPTER 2.

BRIEF INTERLUDE WITH 'NEWBERY.'

Although chronologically, many of the 'Newbery' publications belong to the period after 1780 and consequently illustrate the new taste in children's books, the early issues show a genuine desire both in material and format to attract children. A knowledge of what books were being published at the 'Bible and Sun' in Saint Paul's Churchyard gives a comprehensive picture of the situation in the 'Juvenile library'. It was to John Newbery, (1713 - 1767) and Griffith and Giles Jones that the public of the eighteenth century was indebted for popular little books written for the amusement and instruction of children, such as 'Goody Two Shoes' (1765), 'Giles Gingerbread' and 'Tommy Trip' (1766). Newbery was the first publisher who introduced the regular system of a juvenile library and gave children's books in a more permanent form than the popular chap-books of the period. (1) He advertised patent medicines and combined business with pleasure by advertising his goods both literary and medical. In 'Goody Two Shoes' little Margery's father was 'seized with a violent fever in a place where Dr. James's Fever Powder was not to be had, and where he died miserably', (2) and young Theophilus in the 'Blossoms of Morality' (1789) said to his father, 'my dear papa, I cannot help pitying those poor little

(1) v. A Bookseller of the Last Century - Charles Welsh - 1885

- page 45.

(2) Ibid.

- page 109.

boys whose parents are not in a condition to purchase them such a nice gilded library as that which you have supplied me from my good friends at the corner of Saint Paul's Churchyard'.^(I)

Charles Welsh lists in his 'Appendix' to 'A Bookseller of the Last Century' (1885), some of the Newbery publications from 1740 - 1800. They fall naturally into three groups - for amusement, for moral instruction, for amusement through instruction. In the list are the personified abstractions of the emotions, feelings, and senses so dear to the eighteenth century, as 'The Adventures of Master Headstrong and Miss Patient in their journey towards the Land of Happiness, containing an account of the various difficulties Master H. Experienced in listening to Passion, leaving Miss Patient, and not consenting that Reason whom they met on the road should always direct his course'. (1789); a number of anecdotes concerning families, as 'The Blind Child' or 'Anecdotes of the Wyndham Family (1791 - reached a fifth edition in 1798) by a Lady (Mrs. Pinchard of Taunton), who dedicated her work to writers for children, such as Mrs. Barbauld and Madame de Genlis (1746 - 1830), and the 'Memoirs of the Danby Family' (c.1800); debunking books as 'False Alarms' (1789), or the 'Mischievous Doctrine of Ghosts and Apparitions, exploded from the Minds of every Miss and Master'; tales setting forth the duties of children and reminiscent of earlier corrective pieces, as 'Filial Duty' (1798), 'recommended and

(I) A Bookseller of the Last Century - Charles Welsh - 1885
- page 110.

enforced by a variety of instructive and entertaining stories of children who had been remarkable for affection to their parents, also an account of some striking instances of children who have behaved in an undutiful and unnatural manner to their parents. The whole founded on historical fact', (a type of story condemned by Maria Edgeworth), 'The Force of Example', or the 'History of Henry and Caroline', 'for the instruction and amusement of young Persons'. (1797), and 'Fruitless Repentance' or 'The History of Miss Kitty' (1769), which is designated as 'a mild novel' and had as its theme the triumph of virtue, the would be seducer foiled by purity and innocence. In the collection are a number of translations from the French authors, François Fénelon, Archbishop of Cambrai, (1651-1715), and Armand Berquin (1747-1791). 'The Adventures of Telemachus', abridged from the French of Fénelon was published about 1789, and 'The Looking Glass for the Mind' (1787), 'The Children's Friend' (1788-96-98), 'The New Children's Friend' (1798), 'The Blossom of Morality' (1789), were all based on the works of Berquin, whose L'Ami des Enfants (1784) was awarded a prize by L'Academie Francaise. The Newbery publications issued, in 1777, Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales, ^(I) published for the Amusement of all those little Masters and Misses, who by Duty to their

(I) Reprinted by J. Harris in two parts in 1817. The second part contains the grandiloquent titles 'The History of Elemidorous and Alzayda', 'The History of Zalmayda and Alenzor', 'The History of Prince Zalmandor and the Princess Amandina', 'The Story of Finetta' and - to spoil the impressive array - 'The Story of Little George'.

Parents, Obedience to their Superiors, and Affability to their Inferiors aim at becoming Great Lords and Ladies' - three duties which are key stones in the social structure as envisaged by Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Trimmer, and Mrs. Pinchard, and in fact by all the edifying writers of the period.

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CHAPTER 3.
TWO MAJOR LUMINARIES.

Writers are singularly reticent or vague about what they read as children. Some, as Lamb, give tantalising hints, others speak of books destroyed in youth, as Fanny Kemble did, but neglect to name authors and titles, and others, like Mrs. Trimmer, mention their juvenile reading with a certain amount of shame. But in some cases there are records and suggestions as to what should constitute suitable literature for the young, although there is no attempt to grade books into age groups. With a magnanimous gesture William Godwin proposes a selection of books suitable for the education of 'female children from the age of two to twelve' (1802) and the author of 'Going too Far' (1825) called her work a 'tale for all ages'; there were no nice distinctions.

Dr. Erasmus Darwin (1731 - 1802) writing in 1797 recommends
(I)
the following as eminently suitable for young ladies:

Sandford and Merton	-	Thomas Day
Children's Friend	-	A. Berquin
Adelard and Theodore	-	Comtesse de Genlis
Tales of the Castle	-	Comtesse de Genlis
Moral Tales	-	Dr. Percival
Moral Tales	-	Miss Mitchell
Stories from Life	-	Mary Wollstonecraft
Emily Montagu	-	Miss Brooks
Harry and Lucy	-	Begun by Richard Edgeworth and his second wife. Completed by his daughter Maria, and published as part of her 'Early Lessons'.
Les Romans de L'Abbé Prevost.		

(I) v. A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education in Boarding Schools - E. Darwin - 1797.

Parent's Assistant	-	Maria Edgeworth
Evenings at Home	-	Dr. Aikin.
Davenport Family	-	Letitia Lively
Fables	-	Gay.

Just such a list as Lamb might have condemned to the limbo of forgotten things, as he did Paley's 'Moral Philosophy',⁽¹⁾ and such a list as one would expect from Dr. Darwin who extolled in the female sex 'mild and retiring virtues', rather than the 'bold and dazzling ones'.⁽²⁾ Darwin does not say which of the 'Romans' of L'Abbé Prevost he favoured. Was it the 'Memoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité qui s'est retire du monde' (vols. I-IV - published in Paris - 1728), especially 'Manon Lescaut,' which appeared in the seventh volume of the 'Memoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité', or 'Le Philosophe Anglois' ou 'Histoire de Monsieur Cleveland, fils naturel de Cromwell, écrite par lui mesme et traduite de l'Anglois' (Paris - 1731-39)? 'Manon Lescaut' and 'Le Philosophe Anglois' belong to the novel of sensibility and as such would appeal to Darwin's generation. Cleveland, brought up a child of nature with an instinct for the good and noble which maintains him even when duped and cheated, and Manon, faithless to her lover, le Chevalier des Grioux, only because she could not renounce luxury for (as it were) love in a hut, were two creations from whom much could be learnt. 'Cleveland' had as an additional attraction, the daring possibility of incest.

From a different social class and with different interests

(1) Detached thoughts on Books and Reading - Essays of Elia - Collins edition - page 225.

(2) A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education - Darwin - page 10.

William Carey (1761 - 1834), Oriental scholar, and pioneer of modern missionary enterprise, read 'Robinson Crusoe', 'The Pilgrim's Progress' and books on Science and Travel, and a contemporary of Carey, the philosopher William Godwin (1756 - 1836), that repository of infallible truth, writing to a William Cole in 1802, suggested books which would suit 'female children from the age of two to twelve.' Among them were:

Four Books (not specified))- Mrs. Barbauld
 The Infant's Friend - Miss Lovechild (pseudonym)
 Contes de Ma Mère or Tales of Mother Goose.
 Beauty and the Beast
 Fortunatus
 Valentine and Orson
 The Seven Champions of Christendom
 Dialogues of the Dead - Fénelon
 Les Contes de Madame Darmon
 Robinson Crusoe (if weeded of its methodism)
 Arabian Nights (I)

This is an illuminating collection, because, while approving of the works of the lady whom Lamb placed among the detested blue-stockings of the period, with the qualification that 'Letitia was only just tinted; she was not what the she-dogs now call an intellectual woman'⁽²⁾, Godwin does not advocate the tale with an obviously moral purpose to the exclusion of the chapbook and the fairy tale - 'Beauty and the Beast', 'Fortunatus' 'Valentine and Orson', and 'The Seven Champions' are all to be found in chapbook form - though if the 'Arabian Nights' was the edition printed by Newbery with the addition to each story of 'suitable moral reflections' by the Rev. Mr. Cooper, his

(1) William Godwin - C. Kegan Paul - Vol. I. - page 118.

(2) Charles Lamb - E.V. Lucas - Vol. II. - page 33.

allegiance to the fanciful may be suspect. 'Dialogues of the Dead' is a curious recommendation, and shows the heavy hand which Godwin could not always disguise, and his deplorable lack of humour. Steele, it will be remembered mentions in the 'Tatler', the 'Seven Champions', and Godwin's friend, Thomas Holcroft (1745 - 1809) was, as a boy, introduced by his father's apprentice to the 'History of Parsimus and Parismenes', and 'The
(I)
Seven Champions of Christendom'.

The last named story, which in the edition of 1794, printed in Glasgow by J. and W. Robertson, has on the title page:

THE SEVEN CHAMPIONS OF CHRISTENDOM

Showing

Their valiant Exploits both by Sea and Land: their combating with Giants, Monsters, Lions and Dragons: Their Tilts and Tournaments in honour of their Mistresses: Their overcoming Magicians and Necromancers, and putting an end to their direful Enchantments: Their Knight-hood, Chivalry and Magnificent prowess against the enemies of Christ, and in honour of Christendom, in Europe, Asia and Africa.

deals with the separate adventures of St. George, St. James, St. Andrew, St. David, St. Dennis, St. Antony and St. Patrick with little pause for breath and with a necessary demand to suspend all parley with reality. If David slew his tens of thousands, equally so did St. George. 'Coming to Persia, near the Sultan's palace, observing their monstrous idolatry, he could no longer hold, but threw down their images of Mahomet and Apollo, and slew those who offered to withstand thim

(I) Holcroft's Memoirs - Hazlitt - Vol. I. pp. 39 - 40.

insomuch that the rumour thereof being noised at the court, great forces were sent against him; whom he opposed in single self and sent many of them to the stygian river'⁽¹⁾. Time and distance do not exist; true virgins, satyrs, English knights, princesses, giants, lions 'with hungry entrails', mix in glorious profusion and confusion, until the grand climax when the Seven Champions, leading christian knights, fought and won a terrible battle against the Moors in Barbary, after which 'Almidor, the black king of Morocco was boiled to death in a brazen caldron of lead and brimstone',⁽²⁾ - a potent brew to set before young misses of ten to twelve years of age, and some excuse for the attempt to raise the tone and moral value of children's books.

'Valentine and Orson' requires discretion thrown to the winds and to the modern ear is hardly a tale which would cure deafness. It does, however, extoll family affection, courage, renunciation of evil, and ideals above the materialistic. As in the 'Seven Champions', incident crowds upon incident; humans, sub-humans, and ferlies jostle and clamour for recognition. With a total disregard for historical truth, Pepin of France appears with Alexander of Greece, and the old devices, an enchanted head of brass, a wooden horse take their bow.

(1) The Seven Champions of Christendom - published J & W. Robertson - 1794.

(2) Ibid.

A jingle quoted by John Ashton suggests the proper attitude to adopt towards tales of the 'Valentine and Orson' type -

Reader: Ye'll find this little Book contains
 Enough to answer thy Expencc and Pains
 And if with Caution you will read it thro' (1)
 'Twill both Instruct thee and Delight thee too.

Poles apart in beliefs and manner of living from William Godwin, and intimately associated in her girlhood with the literary coterie at Lichfield, Mrs. Sherwood, (1775 - 1851) who had a happy childhood at Stanford Rectory, read as a young girl, (2)

Rasselas	- Johnson
The Little Female Academy	- Sarah Fielding
Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales	
The Six Princesses of Babylon	- Lucy Peacock (3)
Arabian Night's Entertainment	
Aesop's Fables	
Riquet with the Tuft	
Don Belianis of Greece	(4)

There is little in this reading list to suggest the subsequent author of 'The History of the Fairchild Family' (1818 - 1847). Of a later generation, the Scottish philanthropist and reformer,

- (1) Chapbooks of the 18th Century - John Ashton - 1882 - page 84.
 (2) List to be found in the early chapters of - Mrs. Sherwood - by Sophia Kelly (1854).
 (3) Sophia Kelly's Life of her mother gives as the title 'The Seven Princesses'.
 (4) This was among the books in the 'Black Library' so called because of the black binding. Her father had bought them at a sale. Few attended the sale, 'Such was the illiterate turn of the age of my youth in the county (Worcestershire) that none cared to bid for the old books' wrote Mrs. Sherwood - v. Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - page 56.

John Hope (1807 - 1893), not many months before he died, was considering in what sort of type he would issue a pamphlet, and remarked on the excellent production of the books of his childhood. Of these he instanced:

The New Robinson Crusoe	-	Translated from the French
Tom Brown and his Sisters	-	Dorothy Kilner (1755-1836)
Stories for Children	-	Maria Edgeworth (1810)
Sandford and Merton	-	Thomas Day.
Children's Friend	-	Translated from the French
Rosamund	-	Maria Edgeworth (1821)
Wonders of Animated Nature	-	Lady Fenn. (I)

In this list, reminiscent of the recommendations of Dr. Erasmus Darwin, is an indication of a change of taste. Where is the horse of brass, the magic ring, Zalmayda and Alenzor, Prince Zalmandor and the Princess Amandina, the stout Belianus of Greece, the monster-manOrson, and the Seven Champions? They have been banished from the schoolroom and nursery, to gather dust in some neglected attic, and in their stead reign practical morality, sane ethics, and the useful discoveries of the rational child. The speaking and flying horse have shrunk into the mundane dimensions of the 'wonders of animated nature'. Such books as that written by Lady Fenn, were not a new departure, but there is no well defined period when the type became popular. 'Evenings at Home' (6 vols. 1782-6), by Dr. Aikin and Mrs. Barbauld contains nature study and moral lessons based on animals - 'The Mouse', 'The Wasp', 'The Discontented Squirrel', 'The Goose', 'The Horse' - these nature talks being usually in

(I) John Hope - Rev. David Jamie, B.D. - 1900 - pp. 6-7.

(1)
 the form of dialogues between, Tutor, George and Harry, or
 father and son, (2) but the sustained tale with animals as the
 main characters was made fashionable by the publication (1786)
 of the 'History of the Robins' by Mrs. Trimmer (1741-1810), a
 moral tale with a difference, in that the vicissitudes of a
 family of robins have an obvious counterpart in human life.
 'The Fabulous Histories', or the 'History of the Robins' had
 the additional interest of being an attempt - unfortunately not
 followed by her contemporaries, but brought to a fine art in
 the present century - to see the bird's point of view and to
 view humans through a bird's eyes. Robin, Dicky, Flapsy,
 Pecksy, are creations which would delight any child, and their
 portrayal was a distinct step in advance of humans masquerading
 in animal skins, or animals and birds pretending to be humans. (3)

Doctor, Philosopher, Missionary, Evangelist, and Temperance
 Reformer, all contribute to make clearer the picture of what
 was read and what was expected to be read in a middle class

(1) v. The Grass Tribe, The Pine, The Fir Tree - 'Evenings at Home.'

(2) v. The Martins - 'Evenings at Home'.

(3) 'The Fabulous Histories' were followed by a number of animal
 stories - 'The Life and Perambulations of a Mouse', 'The
 Rational Brutes' or 'Talking Animals' (1799), by Dorothy
 Kilner (1755-1836); 'The Adventures of the Guildford Jack-
 daw' (c.1794), by John Russell; 'The Vicissitudes of a Cat'
 (1802), 'The Sorrows of Caesar', or 'Adventures of a Found-
 ling Dog' (1813), by Mrs. Mary Pilkington (1766-1839);
 'Keeper's Travels in search of his Master' (1798 - many
 editions until 1897), by E.A. Kendall (1776-1842), 'Adven-
 tures of a Bullfinch' (1809), 'Adventures of Poor Puss (1809),
 'Perambulations of a Bee and a Butterfly' (1812) by Elizabeth
 Sandham, etc.

home. Although no one author is common to all five, yet, taking Dr. Darwin and John Hope as the extremes in relation to time, it will be noticed that Thomas Day and Maria Edgeworth appear in both lists, and while acquaintanceship may have prejudiced Dr. Erasmus Darwin in favour of Thomas Day and Maria Edgeworth, no such accusation could be levelled at John Hope. Both writers survived through their own merits.

In 'Sandford and Merton', fable, the animal kingdom, the teaching of Christ, South America, tales of shipwrecked mariners, Venice, the gout, the Spartans and the Persians, Greenland, the American Indians, Asia, are culled 'with curious toil', to afford illustrations of the dignity of labour, the meekness of the really great, the vices attendant on wealth, the virtues of moderation. Throughout Day's juvenile classic, the rich, with the exception of Mr. Merton are invariably insolent, purse proud, ignorant, helpless, or merely silly; the poor are invariably contented, cheerful, ingenuous and courteous. Gathering the threads into his kindly but firm hands is Mr. Barlow, the all seeing, and all wise who teaches Master Tommy Merton to work or want, to keep his eyes open, appreciate the beauties of the heavenly bodies, to develop his body by using hands, legs and muscles as nature had intended him, to accept his birth and prospects of wealth as a privilege not a right, to think independently, to realize the source of true breeding, to recognize a gentleman, to value useful knowledge. Mr. Barlow may be, in modern eyes, an old bore who spent an inordinately large proportion of the day, talking, and seemed to have no

visible means of support, but he was a household god at one time and in subsequent writers, assumed many forms, pastor, aunt, mother, or uncle.

Day's attack on the idle rich does not spring from envy or bitterness. When he speaks against the insolence of office, or conduct of the moneyed class, it is not with the pique of Robert Burns who wrote (1789) to Mrs. Dunlop, 'When I must skulk into a corner, lest the rattling equipage of some gaping blockhead should mangle me in the mire, I am tempted to exclaim - "what merits has he had, or what demerits have I had, in some state of pre-existence, that he is ushered into this state of being with the sceptre of rule and the key of riches in his puny fist, and I am kicked into the world, the sport of folly or the victim of pride"^(I), but with the indignation of one of the rich, who realised wherein real gentility lay. He did not advocate the levelling process of a John Ball, and was only academically interested in the sentiment of the latter's couplet, 'When Adam delved and Eve span, Who was then the gentleman?' He was not preaching revolution, but pointing a way by which all classes could live in mutual respect. He was not an economist striving to reach a solution of the problem of the unequal distribution of wealth, but an expounder of the obvious truths, that wealth brings responsibilities, and that character is a

(I) Works of Robert Burns - ed. C. Annandale - 1887 - Vol. IV - General Correspondence - page 129.

greater distinguisher than money. Much of the popularity of 'Sandford and Merton' with adults was because of the fact that he gave no disturbing message or awkward command like 'sell all you have and give to the poor', but expressed what all decent thinking people knew to be correct. Mr. Barlow did not make them feel uncomfortable, though he might make them think. They knew, or rather, sensed that although the dice was very much loaded in favour of the poor in 'Sandford and Merton', it was Day's purpose to make black more black to intensify his white, to extoll the nomad of the desert and the redskin of the American Woods at the expense of the leisured and civilised European, and by so doing to bring a little more natural behaviour into civilised society, to show the benefit of exercising the natural virtues, and to cultivate the strength of character to resist the flesh pots. The cult of the 'noble savage' and the doctrine that 'Jack is as good as his master', have an attraction for the idealistic philosopher and the sentimentalist, but when the revolutionary armies of France were hammering at the gates of the established monarchies, and calling upon all peoples to overthrow the legitimate governments, it was little wonder that the 19th century moralists and politicians admitted that honesty, fair dealing, and the christian virtues were not the prerogative of the poor, and that moral and political danger could lurk among the shades of the forest of Arden.

'Sandford and Merton', despite the fact that a too slavish adherence to the determination expressed in the Preface, to throw into the language 'a greater degree of elegance and

ornament than is usually met with in such compositions,' (I)
 enables a Highland crofter, 'born in that part of our Island
 which is called the North of Scotland', (2) and a negro to con-
 verse with the dignity and precision of a Barlow or a Merton,
 did yeoman service to books for children. At last children
 were allowed to draw aside a curtain and see strange places
 and people, to wander freely where before they had done so
 surreptitiously, in some chapbook purloined from an unwary
 servant, through the backwoods of America, the grasslands of
 Africa, the ice-fields of Greenland, to follow Leonidas un-
 fettered by irregular verbs and the worries of construeing,
 to visit places which were lines and colours on the globes
 which had pride of place in thenursery or schoolroom, and to
 participate in many a 'bloody' fight without which no school
 story is complete. It sufficed them, until a Marryat (1792-1848)
 appeared to give Mr. Barlow sea-legs and clothe him in uniform,
 to give life, vitality, colour to battles, and an enjoyment
 undiluted by the feeling that a moral lesson ought somewhere
 to be found. Day led the child along the road of learning, but
 not across the plains of lamentation.

Throughout the three volumes there are plenty of tears, tears
 of joy, sorrow, anger, shame, but little laughter. Such laugh-
 ter as may be heard has its origin in the baser aspects of human
 nature - malice, ill-nature, and pride. It is difficult to

(I) 'Sandford and Merton' - 7th edition - 1795 - Preface -
 page VIII.

(2) Ibid. - Vol. II - page 90.

trace even the flicker of a smile in Day's face on the occasions when Tommy Merton discovers that impetuosity may cause physical discomfort and that a mud and water bath is an excellent deterrent to over-confidence. Little Jack, in Day's tale of that title which appeared in a 'selection of the most interesting and improving histories from different authors',⁽¹⁾ called 'The Children's Miscellany' (1788) has a like reluctance to smile, but he had little time to indulge in pleasantries, being frequently and actively engaged in defending his honour, that of the old soldier who befriended him in childhood and youth, and that of the nanny-goat who suckled him as a boy. Both Harry Sandford and Little Jack are no mean performers with the fists, and in defence of the right, neither is a 'carpet knight so trim'. Only once did Harry refuse to retaliate when struck, and that was by Tommy Merton. Any doubts a young reader might have had about the ethics of the situation and the stout-heartedness of Harry, apparent to the adult mind, are dispelled by Harry's words, 'But though I have suffered Master Merton to strike me, there's not another in the company shall do it; or if he chooses to try, he shall soon find whether or not I am a coward'.⁽²⁾ None of the 'little Masters' that have their hour upon the stage erected by the moralists of the 19th century, have such a useful pair of fists as Harry Sandford, that prodigy of natural goodness whose instinctive

(1) Advertisement to 'The Children's Miscellany' - 1788 - page V.

(2) 'Sandford and Merton' - 7th edition - 1795 - Vol. II. -
page 252.

good manners failed him only once, when he openly yawned and noisily fell asleep during Matilda's pianoforte solos. Not even Maria Edgeworth's Forester could have done it so blatantly. (I)

Such perfection as is found in the Sandfords and Mr. Barlow, and such high seriousness would inevitably produce the antidote of laughter and parody, though it was not until 1872 that the cap and bells displaced the mortar-board and gown, when 'Punch's' editor (1880-1906), Sir Frances G. Burnand (1836-1917) wrote a 'New History of Sandford and Merton', which is delightful, if at times 'third form', fooling. The cadences of Thomas Day are captured in the following extract, 'The little boys were now indeed enjoying themselves. In the early morning they went out skating (an amusement which Mr. Barlow had strictly forbidden them to indulge in) and towards the latter end of the month nothing gave them greater pleasure than to hire guns and go out shooting, which Mr. Barlow had desired them on no account to think of doing. As they now commenced to understand that no pleasure brings with it such contentment and true happiness as that which has been prohibited by competent authority, so they had already begun to experience those joys which invariably accompany such pursuits as had not received the approbation of their beloved tutor.'⁽²⁾ Harry, the virtuous, becomes the villain of the piece. Urged on by enthusiasm to enact the

(I) v. 'Moral Tales' (Forester) - 1802 - Maria Edgeworth.

(2) New History of Sandford and Merton - F.C. Burnand - 1872 - pp. 58-59.

scenes of history, the boys plan to blow up Mr. Barlow's house by storing gunpowder in the cellars, but with as little success as the immortal 'Guy Fawkes'. 'On being questioned, Harry, who was of a noble disposition, at once replied that as there was nothing to conceal, he would immediately tell the whole truth, which indeed he said, it gave him great pain to say, would show that Master Tommy was solely to blame in this affair. Master Merton had been studying the science of engineering, and thus conversations had been turned upon blasting experiments, which, Harry admitted, had for both of them considerable attraction. That Master Tommy had insisted upon trying its effect on their beloved tutor, "a proposition", added Harry "against which my whole soul revolted"⁽¹⁾. A less happy effort is "'Pray stop," said Mr. Barlow, "I wish to ask Tommy a question. Why is it dark at night?" Tommy considered for a minute and then answered - "Because, sir, the moon shines". Mr. Barlow threw the milk-jug at him, and Harry forthwith proceeded with his narrative.'⁽²⁾ but Sir Francis regains the spirit of parody with, "Oh, sir," said Harry, "I should be the happiest creature in the world if you would only flog Master Tommy instead of me. Will you be so kind as to do this, and you shall see how I will behave?"⁽³⁾

(1) New History of Sandford and Merton - F.C. Burnand - 1872

- page 62.

(2) Ibid.

- page 75.

(3) Ibid.

- page

The burlesque is heightened not only by the grotesque illustrations, but by the anecdotes which make mockery of the moral lessons. Their titles speak for themselves - 'The Crocodile and the Presumptuous Dentist', 'Arsaces and the Unnecessary Infant', 'The Uncles and the Ants', 'The Hermit and the Dessert', 'Dan Ditto and the Dutchman', or 'The Dey and the Knight.'

Having a greater influence on the educational and moral tale and surviving into the twentieth century was Maria Edgeworth, (1769-1849) ⁽¹⁾ who owed much in her views to her father and his friend, Thomas Day. Although the moral purpose was ever present in her books and consequently eliminated the element of surprise, she did not unduly mar a plain tale in the telling it. Her forte in works with a moral purpose was the short tale; her sustained stories drag. Professor Andreae thought that the children in her tales are often tedious prigs, ⁽²⁾ but what child is not? They may be prigs, but are not tedious. Nearer the mark was Miss Barry when she realised that it was the strong point of Miss Edgeworth's contrasts that her bad children were never attractive and her good ones hardly ever impossible. ⁽³⁾ There is nothing unnaturally unreal about the perfection of Jem Presten, Franklin, Susan, Helen Temple, Brian O'Neill, and Henry Campbell, nor are the mentors Madame de Rosier, Mrs. Villars, and Mrs. Temple so

(1) An edition of Lazy Lawrence appeared in 1949, and the same tale was broadcast in the 'children's Hour' the next year. 'Harry and Lucy' was printed in 1887

(2) Dawn of Juvenile Literature in England - Andreae - page 49.

(3) A Century of Children's Books - Barry - 1922 - page 179.



awful in their goodness and infallibility as Mrs. Wyndham,
 Miss Mills, ⁽²⁾ and Mrs. Worthy. ⁽³⁾ Proof of the popularity of
 Maria Edgeworth's tales, especially the collection known as
 'The Parent's Assistant' (1796), and eloquent testimony of how
 they were read and handled is that the 'Parent's Assistant' is
 not known at all in its first edition. ⁽⁴⁾

The series of short didactic tales written under the rather
 forbidding title 'Parent's Assistant', are the expression in
 narrative form of Maria Edgeworth's ideas, as later expressed
 in 'Practical Education' (1798) in which father and daughter
 collaborated. Throughout, is the absence of the appeal to
 imaginative sentiment, no specific reference to enjoyment
 through books, and emphasis laid on character building through
 early training and association with goodness. Preceptors and
 teachers are noted for wisdom and patience, not learning. The
 tales offer two clear alternatives - pleasure derived from doing
 the 'correct thing' and obeying the rules, or misery which is
 the inevitable outcome of laziness, false pride, snobbery and
 evil doing, the moral consequences of vice. Independence of
 thought, initiative, contentment in the social niche into which
 a person is born are cardinal virtues. Governesses and servants
 are invariably harmful in their influence - Madame de Rosier was
 an exception -. Hypocrisy has little chance of holding up its

(1) v. The Blind Child - Mrs. Finchard - 1791.

(2) v. Visit for a Week - Lucy Peacock - 1791.

(3) v. Seabrook Village - Sophia Ziegenhirt - 1811.

(4) English Books (1475-1800) - Sawyer and Darton - 1927 -
 volume I. page 116.

head under the steady eye of truth, and sham and falsehood wilt before reason. The panacea for all evils is early training which, allied with proper associations, ought to banish the faults of hasty judgments, bias, and the over regard for the infallibility of authority.

There is no conceived plan in the arrangement of the tales, but they could fall into three well defined groups - those dealing with the industrious poor, or 'near' poor, ⁽¹⁾ those dealing with schools and colleges, ⁽²⁾ and those concerning 'quality' or near 'quality'. ⁽³⁾ 'The False Key' might be regarded as an experiment which succeeds, illustrating that if a child is taken in hand early enough, the taint of an evil parentage will be removed. From each group can be derived a well defined and clear cut social order. In the lives of the poor appear, not fairy godmothers who with magic turn base metals into gold and rags into regal robes - Maria Edgeworth did not subscribe to the view established since the days of Dick Whittington that goodness leads to wealth - but ladies and gentlemen of substance who bear a strong resemblance to the Edgeworths of Edgeworth town, Thomas Day, and the Josiah and Thomas Wedgwoods of the age, men and women who, just and considerate, knew the world well enough not

- (1) Lazy Lawrence, Simple Susan, The Little Merchants, The Basket Woman, The White Pigeon, The Orphans, Forgive and Forget.
- (2) Tarlton, The Bracelets, Barring Out, Eton Montem, in 'play' form.
- (3) The Birthday Present, The Mimic, Mademoiselle Panache, Waste not, Want not, and the play 'Old Poz'.

to mistake brass for pure metal, nor to accept a situation as true until it had been proved so. Their conception of charity and relief is similar to that expressed by Thomas Wedgwood in a letter(15th April, 1804) to William Godwin. 'I have no opinion of the good, upon the whole, resulting from great facility in the opulent, in yielding to requests of the needy. I have no doubt that it is best that everyone should anticipate with certainty the pinch and pressure of distress from indulging in indolence, or even from misfortune. It is this certainty which quickens the little wit that man is ordinarily endowed with, and calls out all his energies; and were it removed by the idea that the rich held funds for the distressed, I am convinced that not only half the industry of the country would be destroyed, but also that misfortune would be doubled in quantity. I confess to you then, that I have always a doubt of the value of any donation or loan. At the same time, I have the strongest desire to give relief to suffering, and an excessive repugnance to that hardness of heart, that vicious inclination to heard - to the depraved state of mind which enables me to view sufferings with calmness, if not with indifference, whilst I should never miss the sum that would instantly relieve them.'^(I) This refusal to relieve distress by a senseless munificence and the acknowledgment that relief entails some obligation on the part of the recipient are themes common to all the moral tale writers between 1780 and 1840. They are the basis of Mrs. Worthy's charitable

(I) Godwin and his Friends - Kegan Paul - Vol. II. - page 125.

(I)
schemes. In the 'Parent's Assistant', the 'good fairies' have many names - Jem's Mistress ('Lazy Lawrence'), Mr. Spencer ('The False Key'), Dr. Trueman ('Tarlton'), Sir Arthur and Miss Somers ('Simple Susan').

Virtues which Maria Edgeworth expected of the poor were, an obliging temper, industry, good humour, patience and fortitude in adversity, honesty, initiative, self-sacrifice, practical in mind, a genuine, not sychophant, gratitude, a belief in the dignity of labour, and contentment. Many of these virtues are to be found in the school group. Young Hardy is a more cultured and sophisticated 'Jem'. He is the school boy sublimated, with all his virtues but none of his failings, and consequently little of his warmth, a boy Prince Arthur, rescuing his friend from peril in the latter's pursuit of the enchantress 'Popularity', and the applause of his fellows. Good nature and good temper stand high with the school population. In 'Barring Out', perfection is raised on the four pillars of good sense, genius, ability, and amiability. The children of 'quality' must be kindhearted, generous, but the generosity must be enlightened and not born of pride and affectation. (2) They must have a true sense of values, appreciate modesty and the frank avowal of ignorance, (3) be sincere, and tactful, (4) and stamped with

(1) 'Seabrook Village' - Sophia Ziegenhirt - 1811.

(2) 'The Birthday Present'

(3) 'Mademoiselle Panache' - part I.

(4) 'Mademoiselle Panache' - part I.

the hallmark of good breeding.

The snares and pits devised to entrap unwary youth are numberless. For the poor there are poverty, which may cause discontent and embitterment, bad influences from companions, temptations to acquire money dishonestly. ⁽¹⁾ For the rich there are pernicious influences from relatives, ⁽²⁾ from servants, ⁽³⁾ from governesses, ⁽⁴⁾ from acquaintances, ⁽⁵⁾ from lax parental control, ⁽⁶⁾ and the guide which will afford safe conduct through the bogs and pitfalls to the fuller life beyond, is a sound training at home in the early formative years. It is all a question of correct habits formed in early youth and the correct mould into which to pour the child's mind. Early habits and expressions were vital when it was believed with Locke (1632-1674) that the mental condition at birth is 'as white paper or wax, to be moulded and fashioned as one pleases'. ⁽⁷⁾

As it is by contrasts and comparisons that standards are fixed and deductions made, the moral in the 'parent's Assistant' is derived from contrasts, virtues and foibles developing as the contrasts develop - Jem and Lazy Lawrence, Hardy and Loveit, Franklin and Felix, Benjamin and Hal, Francisco the Good and

(1) Lazy Lawrence, The False Key, The Orphans.

(2) The Birthday Present.

(3) The Birthday Present, Simple Susan, Waste not, Want not.

(4) Mademoiselle Panache.

(5) The Mimic, Mademoiselle Panache.

(6) The Bracelets, Mademoiselle Panache.

(7) John Locke's Educational Writings - ed. J.W. Adamson -

1912 - page 179.

Piedro the Cunning, Helen Temple and Lady Augusta, Mary and Goody Grope. The issues are clear. There are no 'obstinate questionings' to evoke the shadows. The conflict is between judicious upbringing and neglect, between the individual and his environment, with the inevitable reward for virtue, and punishment for vice, and that being so, there is nothing of the unexpected as one encounters in Charles Lamb's first published effort for children, 'The King and Queen of Hearts' (1805), where knavery is unmasked but at some pain for the virtuous unmasker -

Lo! Pambo prostrate on the floor
 Vows he will be thief no more.
 O King your heart no longer harden
 You've got the tarts; give him his pardon
 The best time to forgive a sinner
 Is always after a good dinner.

Their Majesties so well have fed,
 The tarts have got up in their head
 "Or maybe 'twas the wine!" hush, gipsy!
 Great Kings and Queens indeed get tipsy!
 Now Pambo is the time for you,
 Beat little Tell-Tale black and blue. (I)

The reader is not faced with problems comparable to those in 'Peter Grimes' and 'Michael'. What dark ancestry made Peter a sadist and potential murderer, and Luke a waster and a failure? - both the sons of respectable and God-fearing parents. With such, Maria Edgeworth had no dealings. Her problems of right and wrong fall into neat compartments, with each fault carefully labelled, the bane and antidote for all to see. The origin of weaknesses lay in her characters themselves through

(I) 'The King and Queen of Hearts' - illustrated by William Mulready - Lamb - Reissued in Facsimile - Methuen & Co. 1902 - Introduction by E.V. Lucas.

faulty education, and not in their 'stars'. Hence it is that her villains are never likeable or great figures; they are mean and despicable like Mackenzie,⁽¹⁾ and contemptible like Dashwood.⁽²⁾ It was not, however, her purpose to shine the torch upon the darker sides of human nature, nor reveal the various delicate shades of virtue and vice, and in this she showed sound common sense, because the judgments of youth are definite and children do not live in a world of shadows. She presented straightforward problems, and depicted characters who were not youthful prototypes of Hamlet, Lucifer, Manfred and Cain. She was an exorcist of folly, not a psycho-analyst; too sure of herself, too sane, to understand a Quilp or a Rochester.

The reader of 'Practical Education' (1798) will readily recall passages which are illustrated in the tales comprising the 'Parent's Assistant' and the 'Moral Tales' (1802). The friends and enemies of child welfare walk boldly through its pages. There are the servants with the false values who mistake for happiness the luxuries and follies of fashionable life, who 'measure the respect they pay to strangers by their external appearances . . . value their own masters and mistresses by the same standard, and in their attachment there is a necessary mixture of that sympathy which is sacred to prosperity'.⁽³⁾ This being so, 'Children's rooms should not be passage rooms for servants',⁽⁴⁾ because too easy access of children to servants

(1) v. Forester (Moral Tales)

(2) v. Mademoiselle Panache - part 2.

(3) Practical Education - Maria Edgeworth & Richard L. Edgeworth
(1798) - Vol. I - page 121.

(4) Ibid. - Vol. I - page 131.

might be harmful to the former's moral life as 'the education and custom and situation of servants, are at present such that it is morally impossible to depend upon the veracity in their intercourse with children'⁽¹⁾. Maria Edgeworth laid stress on moral education but a contemporary, Mrs. Taylor of Ongar - to distinguish her from Mrs. Taylor of Norwich - regarded good temper, veracity, honesty, sobriety, cleanliness and industry as essential qualities in a servant yet insisted upon a sound religious training.⁽²⁾ Both ladies felt very strongly about truthfulness but neither expressed it so firmly as did Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) who wrote 'All peace is broken up when once it appears that there is a liar in the house'.⁽³⁾ There are relations and friends who make the task of education difficult. Of them 'Practical Education' paints a gloomy picture. 'It will be found impossible to educate a child at home unless all interference from visitors and acquaintance is precluded,'⁽⁴⁾ and makes the recommendation that where the parents have not personality strong enough to exclude the well meaning acquaintance, the children ought to be sent to a private school. The value of home training was not just peculiar to Maria Edgeworth who advocated it from a utility, not a financial point of view, but was recognised by all the education and moral tale writers and others who did not write tales. Writing in 1795, Thomas

(1) Practical Education - Maria Edgeworth & Richard L. Edgeworth (1798) - Vol. I. - page 196.

(2) 'The Present of a Mistress to a young Servant' - Mrs. Taylor - 2nd Edition - 1816.

(3) 'Household Education' - Harriet Martineau - 1861 - page 155.

(4) 'Practical Education', etc. (1798) - Vol. I. - page 149.

Gisborne put the case for education at home, using arguments which are obvious to all - the child was kept under the parent's eye, conduct could be supervised, less temptation at home, evil habits could easily be discerned, a greater freedom from envy and pride etc. - but he also, as Maria Edgeworth did, warned against studies interrupted by the arrival of friends and the intrusion of company, encouragement of pride by the flattery and obsequiousness of servants and dependents, and, when he considered the advantages of a 'public school' mentioned as possible factors detrimental to home education, the absence as a character builder of contact with one's fellows, and the want of a gradual introduction to the temptations of the world. (I)

Seventeen years later, Hannah More (1745-1833) wrote to her friend Zachary Macaulay when he was wondering if it would be advisable to send his son Thomas Macaulay to a public school, (Westminster) to the effect that it would be a good plan provided the Macaulays removed to Westminster, that 'Westminster' would tie down his roving mind and pen his desultory pursuits to a point and at the same time there would be the safety of the parental hearth during the intervals of study. In her letter, Hannah More was insistent on pointing out the dangers which would appear, away from the wholesome atmosphere of the home. 'Nor would I', she wrote, 'for all the advantages which the intellect may obtain, throw his pure and uncorrupted mind into such a scene of danger. Your having him to sleep at home

(I) An Enquiry into the Duties of Men - Thomas Gisborne -
Vol. II - 1795 - pp. 431-33.

as well as to inspect in the evening will with the blessing of God, protect him from all mischief of this sort'.⁽¹⁾ The mischief envisaged by Hannah More was that which would jeopardise young Macaulay's spiritual welfare, whereas Maria Edgeworth was concerned about the qualities and training which would fit a child for its position in the world. Parents have consequently a sacred duty towards their families, and must be on constant guard that they do or say nothing which would adversely harm the children's moral character. 'We should not even in jest' she wrote, 'talk nonsense to children or suffer them even to hear inaccurate language,'⁽²⁾ and in this she was characteristic of those who had the interests of children at heart, because loose habits whether in morals, thought, or speech, grow with the years. Hannah More saw the danger in glossing over immorality by 'corrupting words'. 'The substitution of the word "gallantry" for that crime which stabs domestic happiness and conjugal virtue, is one of the most dangerous of all the modern abuses of language. Atrocious deeds should never be called by gentle names',⁽³⁾ and in the sphere of the simple domestic relations, Alicia Mant called for precision even in the friendly letter. Mrs. Orme was writing a note to the dictation of little

(1) Hannah More's Correspondence with Zachary Macaulay - ed. A. Roberts - 1860 - pp. 45-46.

(2) Practical Education, etc. - Vol. I - page 140.

(3) Letters of Hannah More to Zachary Macaulay - ed. A. Roberts - 1860 - page 66.

Lucy Hanway.

Lucy: 'Dear Miss Milne, pray come and see us before you go to L....., for I want to hear you read the "Children in the Wood" once more

Mrs. O: Is that all?

Lucy: I thought it would look more when it was written.

Mrs. O: I do not advise the expression, 'I want to hear you read,' a more gentle term would be better; do you not wish it?

Lucy: Yes I do; but how can it be altered?

Mrs. O: I will efface the word. Do you wish to hear this ballad only once more?

Lucy: Oh yes, many times.

Mrs. O: Then you should have said, 'I wish to hear you read it again'. Adoxa will think, from your manner of expressing yourself, that you do not desire to hear it more than once. (I)

- a lesson in courtesy, affection, and gratitude expressed in a judicious choice of words, and where better to start training in precision than in the home?

The really serious writers of moral tales set a high standard for parental conduct. Both Maria Edgeworth and her father laid it down as a first principle that 'we should preserve children from the knowledge of any vice, or any folly, of which the idea has never yet entered their minds and which they are not necessarily disposed to learn by early example' (2) - an ideal which would appal any conscientious parent, though its efficacy was shown in the case of Martha Butt (Mrs. Sherwood) who owed much to the influence of her mother. Mrs. Butt had a horror of any kind of coarseness in word and action and her daughter who could never remember hearing one incorrect word proceeding from

(I) 'Utility' or 'Sketches of Domestic Education' - A.C. Mant - IBI5 - page 65.

(2) Practical Education - page 322.

her lips, looking back on her early training wrote, 'Greatly blessed, then was the dread of coarse and indelicate language which I brought with me to school; though in all probability, it would certainly have gone off had I allowed my mind to have become gradually familiar with it; but through that Divine influence by which I was led without hesitation to tell of the first offence of the kind to which I was witness, this danger was removed at once, and no one ever afterwards dared to use bad language before me'.^(I) A modern school girl imbued with a respect for the ethical code involved in schoolgirl honour, would condemn Martha Butt's complaining to a higher authority about the use of bad language by a school fellow, and call it priggishness, but she would be outside the mark. She would not realise that the motive lay in the fact that swearing was an offence against good manners and polite breeding, and that Martha Butt had been taught and trained to abhor anything coarse or vulgar. There was nothing self-righteous or narrow minded about it, but part of the courage with which she faced what she deemed to be right. Between the pupil of the Old Abbey School at Reading, and the woman who sailed in the 'Devonshire' to India, was a period of spiritual development which resulted in Mrs. Sherwood's conviction that doing the right thing and living a useful life was not entirely a matter of

(I) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - 1854 - page 96.

early training and influences, but was the outcome of 'Divine' guidance, ^(I) and that of oneself one can do nothing, a view which takes her out of the Maria Edgeworth orbit.

Miss Edgeworth and her contemporaries regarded the home and parental influence of paramount importance. The early training of the child was the responsibility of the parent (especially the mother) and constitutes a duty which had to be performed with tact and care. The present century, witnessing the gradual disintegration of family life, and parental authority and responsibility being placed upon the shoulders of the state, might with profit learn a lesson from their insistence on individual attention, although in all fairness to the modern period, Maria Edgeworth was writing - as Locke and Montaigne had in an earlier age - for one particular class, that to which she belonged. Her aim for education in its earlier stages was to set up before the child the ideal of moral perfection, to build up a world from which evil was excluded because never encountered, to set the feet upon the road which led to the development of individuality and independence. Such a road was no easy one, and demanded the highest qualities of character from those who were to be the child's early companions. Children are not interested in principles but are in people, a fact that Richard Lovell Edgeworth had in mind when he thought it of essential consequence that young people, on their entrance into

(I) 'The Christian knows that education can do nothing without a higher influence' - Mrs. Sandford in 'Woman in her Social and Domestic Character' - 6th edition - 1839 - page 172.

the world, should see the best models, because they from
'sympathy' imitate or catch involuntarily the habits and tone
of the company they keep. ⁽¹⁾

In such a world as Maria Edgeworth visualised in her stories, honour, self-respect, 'golden opinions' were prized and loss of reputation was followed by 'total depravity'. In it, young people as they grew up and perceived the consequences of their own actions became extremely solicitous to preserve the good opinion of those whom they loved and esteemed. ⁽²⁾ In such a world, feelings of pain and pleasure were connected with evil and good, and the acquiring of moral virtues were to be more valued than academic successes. 'Greek and Latin', wrote Maria Edgeworth, 'and all the elegance of classical literature, are matters but of secondary consequence compared with those habits of truth which are essential to the characters and happiness of their (preceptors') pupils'. ⁽³⁾ Books might be dangerous to the judicial development of character, true sensibility and good taste, consequently books which created a romantic taste were condemned because in them, the gulf between reality and fiction was so very wide that 'those who copy from anything but nature are continually disposed to make mistakes in their conduct ludicrous to the impartial spectator', ⁽⁴⁾ and in addition,

(1) Memoirs of R.L. Edgeworth - 1820 - Vol. II - page 142.

(2) v. John Locke's Educational Writings - ed. J.W. Adamson -
1912 - page 39.

(3) Practical Education - Vol. I. - page 220.

(4) Ibid. - page 333.

the creators of this world believed that a genuine sympathy for distress was ruined because in such books distress being always made 'elegant', the imagination 'which has been accustomed to the delicacy in fictitious narratives revolts from the disgusting circumstances which attend real poverty, disease and misery'.⁽¹⁾

There was always, according to Maria Edgeworth, the ever present danger that young ladies mersed in novel reading might lose a true sense of values and ape some 'Jemima or Almeria' who had no existence or confuse 'William and Thomas' with 'My Beverly'.⁽²⁾ In such a world, a bridle must be placed upon the emotions and a rein to the passions, as these interfere with clear thinking and reason, and faithful to their parent, none of Maria Edgeworth's child creations yield to the excessive display of emotion; nerves and feelings are under perfect control as good breeding and pedigree stock do not tolerate the open and excessive display of emotion. One cannot imagine any of her heroes or heroines acting as did Theodore in Priscilla Wakefield's 'Juvenile Travellers'. At the fortress of Toux where Napoleon imprisoned Toussaint L'Ouverture, Theodore saw the cell where the negro patriot had ended his days - a cell dripping with moisture and the floor shining like a pond. So disgusted and distressed was he at this refinement of cruelty to a man 'inured to the heat of a tropical sun', that he threw himself on the earth when he hastened from the fortress, and

(1) Practical Education - Vol. I. - page 334.

(2) v. Practical Education - page 297.

(I)

gave way to tears of deep distress.

In footnotes to 'Practical Education' are to be found the authorities who influenced the opinions of the Edgeworths, father and daughter - Diderot, Condillac, Dr. Darwin (author of 'Loves of the Plants' and 'Zoononia'), Bacon, Locke, Rousseau, Lord Kames, Dr. Priestley, Adam Smith. - These guides would not have been regarded as wholly satisfactory to the 'Religious' group of writers of the early nineteenth century, ⁽²⁾ none of them having the requisite religious background. All were practical, logical, with ideals tempered by reason; all sure of touch; all sceptical about the powers of 'divination'; all emphasising the dependence of man's ideas on his five senses and all empirical. It was to John Locke (1637-1704) and his 'Thoughts concerning Education' (1693) that father and daughter were indebted for many of their views on education, yet what all three say and write about education and child experience are conclusions which could independently have been reached by intelligent men and women whose conception of training was individual not mass, and who were not concerned with visions of education for all. They were not writing education manuals. When Locke recommended bodily health in the words 'Imagine the

(1) Juvenile Travellers - Priscilla Wakefield (1751-1832) - 19th edition - 1850 - page 134.

(2) Catherine Sinclair (1800-1864) makes one of her characters name Bacon as one of the great men whose happiness and eminence were derived from the profession of a deep and holy veneration for Christianity - v. 'Modern Society' or 'The March of Intellect' - 1837 - page 427.

minds of children as easily turned, this or that way, as water itself; and though this be the principal part, and our main care should be about the inside, yet the clay cottage is not to be neglected', ⁽¹⁾ and jocularly suggested that 'if my young master be kept always in the shade, and never exposed to the sun and wind for fear of his complexion, it may be a good way to make him a beau, but not a man of business', ⁽²⁾ he was not uttering an oracular truth. Montaigne (1533-1592) wrote in 1580, 'It is not enough to fortify his soul; you must also make his muscles strong . . . A boy must be broken in by the hardship of severe exercises to endure the pain of colic, of cauteries, of falls, of discolations . . .' ⁽³⁾ And so it stretches back to 'Mens sana in corpore sano'.

The forces which storm the citadel of child training are the same in Locke as in Maria Edgeworth and similar to those that the wise modern parent has to overcome. Modern education-
alists would agree with Locke that 'those children who have been most chastened, seldom make the best men', ⁽⁴⁾ nor is a discipline of moral consequences instead of physical punishment a point of view peculiar to Locke. It is equally true that his dictum 'esteem and disgrace, are of all others the most powerful incentives to the mind, when once it is brought to relish them.

- (1) John Locke's Educational Writings - ed. Adamson - 1912 - page 26.
 (2) Ibid. - page 26.
 (3) Montaigne, Education of Children - selected L.E. Reutor - New York - 1899 - page 36.
 (4) Locke's Educational Writings - ed. Adamson - 1912 - page 34.

If you can once get into children, a love of credit, and an apprehension of shame and disgrace, you have put into them the true principle, which will constantly work, and incline them to the right', ⁽¹⁾ is in its essence a verity today, and his belief or 'fancy' that learning must be made a play and re-creation ⁽²⁾ is an established practice of educational procedure, although at present (1950) a substantial body of professional opinion questions the value of the 'play way' in education as a builder of sterling character and independence. The indulgent parent as a stumbling block to the mental and moral progress of the child was a problem to both Locke and Maria Edgeworth, but the present generation would not disagree with Locke's conclusion on the topic, that 'parents by humouring and cockering them (their children) when little, corrupt the principles of nature in these children, and wonder afterwards to taste the bitter waters, where they themselves have poisoned the fountain', ⁽³⁾ nor would it question his observation that children 'discouraged by their parents for any faults, have found usually a refuge and relief in the caresses of those foolish flatterers (servants) who thereby undo whatever the parents endeavour to establish'. ⁽⁴⁾

The importance of John Locke and Maria Edgeworth is not that

(1) John Locke's Educational Writings - ed. Adamson - 1912 - page 40.

(2) Ibid. - page 115.

(3) Ibid. - page 29.

(4) Ibid. - page 41.

they embody healthy and sound ideas which find an echo in all intelligently thinking minds, but that they realised the importance of the child as a unit of the domestic circle and as a member of the social structure beyond the home. In their day and generation there were too many mothers like Mrs. Harcourt who had not 'time to cultivate her understanding or to attend to the education of her family', and who had satisfied her conscience by procuring, for her daughters, a fashionable governess and expensive masters',^(I) or mentors like the Rev. Matthew Field whose pedagogic duties lay lightly on his shoulders, and the Rev. James Boyer who initiated the 'blue coats' into the niceties of the classical languages the stern way, believing there was no easy road to learning. Philosopher and Squire's daughter brought patience, pains, tact and good temper to bear upon the education of children.

As a writer of didactic tales, Maria Edgeworth has no equal among her contemporaries, and while, like Hannah More, she had an aloofness from her characters - a trait more characteristic of the eighteenth century than the nineteenth - she breathed her personality and humanity on the dry bones of morality. There is at times a twinkle in her eyes, rarely seen in her contemporaries, with the possible exception of Jane Taylor (1783-1824), and later Catherine Sinclair (1800-1864). A lover of children - and she knew them intimately, her father having had 18, all of whom survived infancy - her good characters are likeable, and her mentors

(I) Moral Tales - Maria Edgeworth - 2nd edition - 1806 -
Volume III - page 2.

are never severe because they are her chosen puppets, and consequently the pleasure derived from reading her stories was not an inverted one, that is, the reader is not more interested in what the 'bad' characters do than in the recital of the deeds of the 'good', as was Mrs. Hughes who, looking back on the 1870's and her Sunday reading, remembered Mrs. Sherwoods 'Henry Milner' which purported to be an account of the upbringing of a Christian gentleman, and wrote, 'I believe he never did anything wrong, but his school-fellows did, and all their gay activities shone like misdeeds in a pious world'.⁽¹⁾ It was a triumph for Maria Edgeworth that she made goodness attractive.

Unlike many moral writers, Maria Edgeworth had the saving grace of humour and on occasion there are on her lips the bubbles of suppressed laughter as when she pictures Miss Fanshaw sitting erect and silent in company, 'so as to do her dancing master strict justice',⁽²⁾ and Forester at the ball, when 'in vain the Berwick Jockey, the Highland Laddie, and the Flowers of Edinburgh were played', because 'he fenced himself behind a pillar, proof against music, mirth and sympathy: he looked upon the dancers with a cynical eye. At length he found an amusement, that gratified his present splenetic humour; he applied both his hands to his ears, effectually to stop out the sound of the music, that he might enjoy the ridiculous spectacle of a number of people capering about, without any apparent motive . . . His elbows

(1) A London Family (1870-1900) - M.V. Hughes - 1946 - page 72.

(2) The Good French Governess - Moral Tales - M. Edgeworth - 1806 edition - Vol. III - page 99.

stuck out from his ears, and his head was much sunk beneath his shoulders'.⁽¹⁾ Humour and laughter there are in her tales, both the humour of character as in Forester, Lord George, Lady Di - the last very much like the type detested by Addison (I672-I719), thinking nothing of leaping over a six-barred gate and who 'if a man tells her a waggish story' gives him 'a push with her hand in jest and calls him an impudent dog',⁽²⁾ - and happy laughter such as Mrs. Grace overheard when she 'listened . . . to the frequent bursts of laughter, and to the happy little voices of the festive company'.⁽³⁾ It is typical of Maria Edgeworth that her laughter could be turned off immediately as water by a tap.

"Sir," said Forester, who bore the laugh that was raised against him with an air of a martyr, "I can bear even your ridicule in the cause of truth." The laugh continued at the solemnity with which he pronounced these words. "I think", pursued Forester, "that those who do not repeat truth in trifles, will never respect it in matters of consequence". Archibald Mackenzie laughed more loudly and with affection, at this speech; and Henry and Dr. Campbell's laughter instantly ceased'.⁽⁴⁾ She knew there is a time and place for laughter as she knew a mistaken or misplaced sense of humour might have drastic consequences. Did not Lady Augusta's smile lead to the fatal step of her elopement?⁽⁵⁾

Humour, sympathy, and a benevolent detachment are to be found

- (1) 'Forester' - Moral Tales - M. Edgeworth - 1806 ed. - Vol. III - page 49.
- (2) Spectator No. 57 - quoted by Rev. Canon Streatfield in 'The Mind of the Spectator' - 1923 - page 128.
- (3) The Good French Governess, etc. - page 59.
- (4) 'Forester' - Moral Tales - Vol. III - page 43.
- (5) Mademoiselle Panache - Moral Tales - Vol. I - page 233.

in Maria Edgeworth's tales. In them, the medieval moralities take the stage garbed in the trappings of the novel of manners and while they act to her producing, and in character have their brief hour upon the stage, they do so with a naturalness absent in her contemporaries. They are not conscripts but volunteers led by an able commander, and although she has, especially in the early tales an irritating habit of forgetting the story-teller in the moralist, scattering maxims about like punctuation marks - 'One good turn deserves another', 'Honesty is the best policy', 'Nothing truly great can be accomplished without toil and time', 'One can afford to be generous when one is industrious', 'Idleness was the root of all evil', 'Idleness breeds mischief', 'A kindness repeated may in time be regarded as a right', 'People who have no inclination to work, easily find excuses to avoid it' etc. (all from 'Lazy Lawrence') - she carries her reader on the crest of a tale. There is seldom a dull moment, and despite the fact that it is inevitable for the 'good' to prosper and the 'bad' to fall, the reader has the ever present excitement of coming events, the pleasurable marvelling at the ingenuity with which she weaves a plot round a piece of string, the quixotic eccentricities of a young man who refuses to acknowledge the forms and dependencies of civilised society, the unmasking of a soured and slighted Jew, or the awful natural consequences of an unfortunate choice. She was at her best in the drawing room and the cottage, but less sure in the Neapolitan underworld and the Boarding Schools. There she could go only in the imagination.

One of Maria Edgeworth's most pleasing traits, and one she shares with Mrs. Barbauld and Mrs. Sherwood, is the ease of her

dialogue, the fruit of many conversations and much letter writing. Like others of the sisterhood of writers - Mrs. Barbauld, Mrs. Opie (1769-1853), Mrs. Trimmer, Mrs. Sherwood - she was an inveterate letter writer. It was seldom that the authoress of the 'Tales of Fashionable Life' made such a glaring discrepancy as she did in 'Lazy Lawrence'. Dame Presten is the speaker in the following extracts but surely she undergoes a strange metamorphosis in the second one!

"So what signifies talking child?" said the widow, leaning her head upon her arm, "Lightfoot must go".

"Jem", said the old woman, "what, art hungry?"

"That I am, brave and hungry".

"Aye! no wonder, you've been brave hard at work".

E.A. Kendall had more excuse for such a lapse in his 'English Boy at the Cape' (1835) when he made the Boer, Mynheer Van Horff say 'Mine son, it is time for de to be rising and to be eating dine breakfast, and making ready for dine jorney, and here is dine little monkey, what has been waiting dis hour for de to speak to him. Come along mine son; art thou ready for to go?'⁽¹⁾ and some ten pages later remark, 'But we shall be sorry to part with you, mine child . . . and when you are settled, you must often come and see us; and get some good sheep's head, and sheep's tail fat; for they know nothing about such things at Graham's Town', a speech which bursts into 'de shall see dine moder again, and soon, and comfort the poor Vrouw for de loss of dine dear fader'.⁽²⁾

Maria Edgeworth's contemporaries and predecessors have a heavy touch. Listen to Mrs. Dormer addressing her daughter,

(1) 'English Boy at the Cape' . . . E.A. Kendall - 1835 - Vol. II - page 12.

(2) Ibid. - Vol. II - page 32.

Fanny. 'Proud and unfeeling girl, who could prefer vain and trifling ornaments to the delight of relieving the sick and miserable! Retire from my presence; take with you your trinket and nosegay, and receive from them all the comforts which they are able to bestow,'⁽¹⁾ or Miss Molesworth bidding goodbye to Mrs. Worthy, 'Never can I forget, dearest Madam, and you my beloved pupils, the kindness and attention I have experienced in so many instances; nothing but the ecstatic joy of again embracing my adored parents and my sisters supports me under this separation; and the idea, perhaps, of never re-visiting such inestimable friends, nearly breaks my heart',⁽²⁾ or Theodore (age 14) writing to his sister, Laura (age 12) . . . 'I feel the loss of your lively observations, thus separated from my dear Laura; but be assured, that neither distance nor climate can ever lessen the love of her affectionate brother',⁽³⁾ or Emily Wyndham (age 14), dedicating herself to the care of Charlotte Neville: 'Hear me, oh my dear Mamma! suffer me for I dare do nothing without your advice, suffer me to promise to be a mother to my Charlotte. Do not think me presumptuous, I am young, it is true, but my heart . . . has been chastened and improved, more than it could have been by the experience of years. I promise, my heart promises, the most unlimited

(1) 'The Nosegay' - Children's Miscellany - 1788.

(2) 'Seabrook Village' - Sophia Ziegenhirt - 1811 - page 218.

(3) 'The Juvenile Travellers' - Priscilla Wakefield - 19th ed. 1850 - page 27.

There was, however, in the period a letter writing etiquette which differed from that of the spoken word.

attention, the tenderest love', ⁽¹⁾ and her answer when the mother wondered if her enthusiasm would stand the test of difficulties, 'Ah, Mamma, I shall be her mother! And who knows better than you the extent of those duties that sacred name imposes? If I am happy, Charlotte shall share my felicity; if I am in distress, will she refuse to divide my cares? Ah, no! I am sure of it: for will she not be my daughter?' ⁽²⁾

This was no doubt the sensibility so much admired in the 18th and early 19th centuries, but Maria Edgeworth had too fine a taste for, and sense of, the fitting, to overdo emotional writing. With her, emotions are under control and do not evoke such a ludicrous (to the 20th century) scene as - 'Mrs Neville, affected beyond expression, caught the charming girl in her arms, and her mother, eagerly snatching her from them prest her to her bosom' ⁽³⁾ - an emotional battledore and shuttlecock - .

When due allowance has been made for the mannerisms and medium of expression of the period, Maria Edgeworth is reasonably free from emotionalism and verbosity in her style, and true to her rationalism she is also free from easy expedients of reaching climaxes and forcing denouements. In her 'Parent's Assistant', 'Moral Tales', and 'Early Lessons', no rich uncles, long lost husbands, or fathers, forgiving aunts, appear to bring happiness, especially of a pecuniary nature. ⁽⁴⁾ Her

(1) 'The Blind Child' - Mrs. Pinchard - 1791 - page 52.

(2) Ibid. - page 53.

(3) Ibid. - pp. 52-53.

(4) Her play 'Eton Montem' comes nearest to happiness, being acquired through a fortuitous happening.

characters work their own salvation, and the only deus ex machina, is a natural order of events. Yet she recognised the element of chance, especially in small things and thereby disproved Macduff's belief that 'fates with traitors do contrive'. Lazy Lawrence and his accomplice are betrayed by a silver penny, the cook by a little dog, and Corkscrew by a piece of wax. It is certain that she approved of Mrs. Barbauld's opinion of Jane Taylor's tale 'Display' (3rd ed. - 1815), conveyed by letter to her (1816). Mrs. Barbauld wrote, 'I trembled, as I drew near the close, lest Elizabeth should have a fine fortune left her by somebody, and was much pleased with the author's good sense in handing her to her post behind the counter'.⁽¹⁾ Miss Edgeworth⁽²⁾ did not believe in short cuts to prosperity.

It might be well at this point, to glance at a series of tales which founded no school and which in spirit was alien to the writers of moral tales between 1780 and 1840. These writers wrote in the 'Romantic period' and, as a critic of the novel said of Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth, 'did not reveal the slightest consciousness of that awakening of the soul and imagination which was the essence of romanticism'.⁽³⁾ They were untouched by it. Maria Edgeworth's children are never helpless;

(1) v. Memoir of Mrs. Barbauld - A.L. le Breton - 1874 - page 177.

(2) In a letter to his friend Dr. Darwin, Richard Edgeworth wrote (1790) 'Maria says, that, even with the help of geni, man can do nothing without some labour; for Aladdin's lamp required to be rubbed quite bright, before the genius obeyed'.
Memoirs of R.L. Edgeworth - 1820 - Vol. II - page 132.

(3) The History of the English Novel - E. Baker - 1935 - Vol. 6.
- page 14.

the shadows which are cast upon them are physical, not mental. In 1809, the Skinner Press published 'Mrs. Leicester's School', by Charles and Mary Lamb, and during the lifetime of the authors, ten editions were 'put out' by the impecunious Godwins. ⁽¹⁾ 'Mrs. Leicester's School' has neither novelty in its plan nor is it directly concerned with education - a number of young ladies, to break the ice on their first arrival at Amwell School, tell the story of their lives, or at least that part or episode in them which had been indelibly imprinted on their minds. There are ten stories of which Lamb contributed three: 'Witch Aunt', 'The First Going to Church', and the 'Sea Voyage' ⁽²⁾ - but, as might be expected from the Lambs, the tales reveal an insight into the darker side of the child's mind. Sighs and tears there are in plenty, but no spontaneous laughter. Most of the heroines are orphans or have a parent lost; most are lonely children drawing companionship not from human love, but from old tomes in dusty libraries; most are unhappy, misunderstood or misinterpreted.

The atmosphere in which the heroines were reared was unhealthy and detrimental to a child's spiritual and mental health. There was Elizabeth Villiers taught to spell the letters on her mother's grave, until a breath of colder air blew from the sea, and a new vision and new ideals were given her; there was little Margaret Green whose fancies were fed

(1) 'Mrs. Leicester's School' - Harvell Press edition - intro. R. Church - 1948 - page XIII.

(2) 'A Century of Children's Books' - F.V. Barry, etc. - page 156.

by figures on a tapestry and the illustrations in 'Mahometanism Explained', until her fears grew into a fever as she contemplated the fate of those she loved dropping into the bottomless gulf which was spanned by a bridge no wider than a silken thread; there was Emily Barton brought up by an unsympathetic uncle and aunt. 'My aunt', she said, 'took Sophia's part because she was so young, and she never suffered me to oppose Mary or Elizabeth because they were older than me'.⁽¹⁾ - a lonely and wretched child, until a stranger (her own father) introduced her to the childhood she was fast losing, to dolls, baby houses, completely furnished, and books;⁽²⁾ there was Maria Howe, weak, subject to fears and depression, who, completely out of tune with pleasure loving parents, spent hours in the book closet with a 'Book of Martyrs', Salmon's 'Modern History' with the pictures of Chinese gods and the great hooded serpent, Stackhouse's 'History of the Bible' and 'Glanvil on Witches', until, her imagination twisted and distorted by Glanvil's stories and Stackhouse's picture of the witch conjuring up the spirit of Samuel, she came to regard a much loved aunt as a witch, 'a creature hateful to God and man, reading backwards the good prayers, who would perhaps destroy her'.⁽³⁾

(1) 'Mrs. Leicester's School' - Harvell Press ed. - 1948 - page 82.

(2) 'The story of Emily Barton' reminds one of the advertising in 'Goody Two Shoes' - 'As we were returning home down Cheapside papa said "Emily shall take home some little books. Shall we order the coachman to the corner of St. Paul's Churchyard, or shall we go to the Juvenile Library in Skinner Street"' - Tactfully, Emily went to the Juvenile Library

(3) 'Mrs. Leicester's School', etc. - page 103.

Charles and Mary Lamb, although they had often walked hand in hand with misery, were optimists, and this optimism shines through the dark pages of the histories of the young scholars. Fears are removed, hopes and ambitions are realised, and through sufferings joys are attained. Elinor Forester, who hated her new mother because she was so beautiful, alive and vital was won over by tact and sympathy, and child and step-mother, sharing a common memory of a dead woman, met on an equal footing in the dead mother's room, now a schoolroom and repository of the child's playthings. 'I now began,' said Elinor, 'to learn very fast, for when I said my lessons well, I was always rewarded with some pretty story of my mother's childhood, and these stories generally contained some little hints that were instructive to me, and which I greatly stood in want of, for between improper indulgence and neglect, I had many faulty ways'.⁽¹⁾ Maria Howe, who regarded her aunt, 'an old lady who pored ten hours a day upon her prayer-book, or her favourite Thomas a Kempis,⁽²⁾ as a witch, was restored to a more reasonable mental balance through cheerier surroundings, and found that her new happiness brought her parents closer to her. Maria, through fear, learnt wisdom. 'I impute', she confessed, 'almost all that I had to complain of in their (her parents) neglect to my having been a little unsociable uncompanionable mortal',⁽³⁾ - a novel situation, because no other

(1) 'Mrs. Leicester's School', etc. - page 68.
 (2) Ibid. - page 96.
 (3) Ibid. - page 105.

(I)

writer of moral tales suggested that there might be faults on both sides. The story of Charlotte Wilmot comes closest to the spirit and form of moral tales, and has the stock theme of the purse proud and spoiled daughter who through the failure of her father's business, is compelled to rely upon the generosity and sympathy of the despised daughter of her father's clerk.

So much is written between 1780 and 1840 about the training of children and the influence of adults upon them that it would seem to appear that these writers did not regard the child as influencing the adult. That became a device of the later religious and reforming press. The Lambs' tale of Arabella Hardy relates how a young girl's helplessness and youth brought out the finer qualities in a rough sea captain and his rougher crew, and illustrates the truth that the rude quarters of an East-Indiaman could house Christian gentlemen, such as the first mate Charles Atkinson who, to calm Arabella during a storm, said the 'sea was God's bed and the ship our cradle, and we were as safe in that great motion as when we felt that lesser one in our little wooden sleeping-places',⁽²⁾ and of whom she spoke, after his death, when she discovered that his ill-health was because of a wound received years before, defending his captain against a boarding party, 'this was that Atkinson who, from his pale and feminine appearance, was called

(1) At least in those studied.

(2) 'Mrs. Leicester's School', etc. - page 127.

Betsy; this was he whose womanly care of me got him the name of a woman; who, with more than female attention, condescended to play the handmaid to a little unaccompanied orphan that fortune had cast upon the care of a rough sea-captain and his rougher crew'.^(I)

Through 'Mrs. Leicester's School' walk human beings, not 'monsters of curiosity' and epitomes of perfection, sympathetically guided by a brother and sister who, although they were never parents, loved children and believed in the natural goodness of children. There for the first time, the focus of attention is on the young people and the adults melt into the shadows. There the children lead an individual life both physically and mentally, and are not moulded into a common pattern, or trained to react in a given way to a given stimulus.

(I) 'Mrs. Leicester's School', etc. - page 131.

CHAPTER 4.

CURRENTS OF THOUGHT (I).

The Philosophical Scene.

All human action is 'motivated', but to what end? As action concerns the individual, it must, in its motive, inhere in the essence of the ego, and that seems to suggest that the ostensible end of all human action is the preservation and assertion of the ego. If self-interest is the highest and only motive, all ethics must be 'egoistic', so that as Nicolai Hartmann pointed out in his 'Ethik' (1926), the proper meaning of all moral claims must culminate in the maxim: 'Be a shrewd far-sighted egoist; discover your real advantage; avoid what is only your apparent gain'.⁽¹⁾ This, as the same writer asserts, reduces Justice and Humanity as not primarily directed to others, but to well thought out egoism,⁽²⁾ which is absurd to all but the confirmed cynic. Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) made a valiant attempt to interpret the 'whys' and 'wherefores' of human action. According to Bentham, Nature has placed mankind under the rule of two masters, Pleasure and Pain, and he sought to measure the good and evil of an action solely by the quantity of pleasure or pain, physical or intellectual resulting from it. 'Regarding the nations of the earth as aggregates

(1) 'Ethik' - Nicolai Hartmann - Authorised English Version - 1932 - Vol. I.)- page 119.

(2) Ibid. - page 120.

of beings fashioned in a mould of his own creation, and bent on the pursuit of their own selfish interests, unmoved either by purely generous impulses or by the violence of passion, he was led to believe that the whole duty of man might be enforced by the operations of Sanctions - certain pains and pleasures so Annexed to actions as to form chains, as it were, bending a man to the observance of some particular rule of life or conduct'.⁽¹⁾ Bentham recognised at least four sanctions or sources from which pleasures or pains flow - Physical (pleasures or pains naturally arising in the course of human conduct), Political, (pleasures and pains dependent on the Law of the land), moral, and Religious, (pleasures and pains originating through some 'Superior Being). Of these the physical is the basis.

To Bentham's creed was given the name 'Utilitarianism'. The true Utilitarian was a 'man who held on to fact and to nothing but the barest most naked and unadorned fact'.⁽²⁾ He had a noble faith in man and denied the theory of Hobbes (1588-1679) that man was a bundle of egoistic instincts. 'Hobbes', said Dr. Albee, 'viewed man as essentially anti-social beings who in their "natural" state desired only the gratification of their passions and the subjugation of their fellows'⁽³⁾ - a point of view which had, no doubt, its origin in contemporary

(1) 'Jeremy Bentham' - C.M. Atkinson - 1905 - page 219.

(2) 'The English Utilitarians' - Sir Leslie Stephen - 1900 - Vol. II. - page 363.

(3) 'History of English Utilitarianism' - Albee - 1902 - page 177.

history with its record of political anarchy and religious domination. Generally speaking, the eighteenth century was convinced that self-interest was the dominating principle of human conduct. This was not denied by the Utilitarians, who thought in terms of the individual, but they regarded self-interest as not wholly anti-altruistic. Man, while pursuing a line of action which would ensure his own happiness would, by the very nature of his being follow a policy which would be for the benefit and happiness of the majority. That happiness, physical and intellectual could only be realised by the 'free exercise on the part of every individual of enlightened self-interest. Complete freedom of contract was the very core of the utilitarian creed. Any denial of it by the State could only delay and perhaps defeat the beneficent purposes of Providence'.^(I) The freedom of the individual to work out his own salvation could be translated into political language as 'Laissez-faire', a policy which, followed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, led to the hideous conditions in factory, workshop, and mine, which were only remedied by Parliamentary legislation - a reversal of Laissez-faire, because, when the State passes measures to control wages, working hours and conditions, there is bound to be a curtailment of personal liberty, in which case the ideals of the Utilitarians are embodied in the 'body politic' which acts on the principle that a lessening of the powers of a few

(I) 'English Saga' - Arthur Bryant - Reprint Society edition - 1942 - page 55.

will increase the happiness of the many. The State, as in the present century, has assumed the beneficent virtues of the individual. The Individualists believed that men left to themselves could look after themselves. 'They assumed that every man could be trusted to judge all things rightly for himself and follow the law of his own will. By registering and counting individual expressions of will and giving legislative effect to those of the majority, universal human well-being could be ultimately attained'.⁽¹⁾ Practical legislation was indeed the real end and aim of Bentham's labours.⁽²⁾

'The greatest happiness of the greatest number', is the ultimate aim of modern parliaments, the individual will becoming a majority, and Parliament, exercising a benevolent State Control, working through, what is euphemistically called, the 'Will of the People'. This is the antithesis of the rule advocated by William Godwin, (1756-1836) in 'Political Justice' (1793). Godwin was an extremist in his devotion to Individualism which, carried to its logical conclusion, meant the absolute disruption of social and political bonds. 'All control', wrote Godwin, 'of man by man is more or less intolerable, and the day will come when each man, doing what seems right in his own eyes, will also be doing what is in fact best for the community, because all will be guided by the principles of

(1) 'English Saga' - Arthur Bryant - Reprint Society edition - 1942 - page 169.

(2) 'Jeremy Bentham' - C.M. Atkinson - 1905 - page 217.

pure reason'.⁽¹⁾ In 1812, when his views had somewhat mellowed, he wrote to the poet, Shelley, 'Discussion and conversation on the best interests of society are excellent as long as they are unfettered, and each man talks to his neighbour in the freedom of congenial intercourse as he happens to meet with him in the customary haunts of man, or in the quiet and beneficent intercourse of each other's fireside. But they become unwholesome and poisonous when men shape themselves into societies, and become distorted with the artifices of organization'.⁽²⁾ In the light of history it is difficult to countenance the view that man's instincts are always good. The radical philosophy of Godwin and his followers remains an attractive theory, but breaks itself against the facts.

There have been few laughing philosophers and, as Sir Leslie Stephen said, there is usually a natural sympathy between any serious view of life and a distrust of the aesthetic tendencies.⁽³⁾ The Utilitarians were serious folk upon whose shoulders the mantle of thought did not fall lightly as it did upon the Rev. Sidney Smith (1771-1845). They were interested in facts and deductions from facts; they had little interest in the pageantry and romance of history because, since the 'dead and the unborn cannot record votes, the Utilitarians were little concerned with the national past or future: the most logical of them could see no reason why there should be

(1) 'Godwin' - Kegan Paul - Vol. I. - page 104.

(2) Ibid. - Vol. II. - page 205.

(3) The English Utilitarians - Sir Leslie Stephen - 1900 - Vol. II - page 363.

(1)
 a nation at all'. Keats might shrink from the touch of 'cold philosophy' or science, and Campbell put imagination before 'Optics', in his appreciation of the rainbow, but to the Utilitarians, it was 'difficult to distinguish between fiction and lying; and if some concession might be made to human weakness, poets and novelists might supply the relaxation and serve to fill up the interests of life, but must be sternly excluded if they tried to intrude into serious studies. Somehow, love of the beautiful only interfered with the scientific investigation of hard facts'.⁽²⁾ Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), whose name is most intimately connected with utilitarianism, was not encouraged in youth to read light literature, and he masticated such solid fare as Rapin's 'History of England', Burnet's 'Theory of the Earth', and Cave's 'Lives of the Apostles'. His French master, M. La Combe introduced him to fairy tales and Fénelon's 'Télémaque'. He also read at an early age Voltaire's 'Candide' and wept over Richardson's 'Clarissa'. To offset this, his fancy was fed by the servants with tales of ghosts and legends. 'It was a permanent source of amusement', wrote Bentham, 'to ply me with horrible phantoms in all imaginable shapes . . . At Barking, in the almost solitude of which so large a portion of my life was passed, every spot that could be made by any means to answer the purpose, was the abode of some spectre or group of spectres'.⁽³⁾

(1) English Saga - Bryant - Reprint Society ed. - 1942 - page 169.

(2) The English Utilitarians - Stephen - 1900 - Vol. II - pp. 363-4.

(3) Bentham's 'Theory of Fictions' - C.K. Ogden - 1932 - Intro. page XI.

Bentham's appreciation of poetry may be gathered from his own words. 'Prose is when all the lines except the last go on to the margin. Poetry is when some of them fall short of it'.⁽¹⁾

The seriousness associated with the Utilitarians was not isolated, but a characteristic of the nineteenth century. The scepticism and avowed self-interest which were the less commendable traits of the eighteenth century gave place in the nineteenth century to the influence exerted by a powerful middle class into which had infiltrated a strong evangelicism. The upper classes which had remained largely uninfluenced by the religious and humanitarian movements of the previous century, were now led to take stock of their spiritual welfare. The excesses of the French Revolutionaries and the aggressive wars first of the Republic, then of the Empire under Napoleon, had made them realise the dangers to their own property and privileges from atheistical and Jacobin doctrines. Consequently, they realised that they could no longer remain inactive and indifferent to the undercurrents in the lives of the common orders, and to the first faint tremblings at the foundations of their own edifices. 'A change in manners took place, from licence or gaiety to hypocrisy or to virtue. Family prayers spread from the merchant's household to the dining-rooms of the country house'.⁽²⁾ Evangelicans, Utilitarians, Agnostics, poles apart perhaps in ideology had a common bond in 'serious-

(1) Quoted by Sir Leslie Stephen - The English Utilitarians - Vol. I. - page 231.

(2) English Social History - G.M. Trevelyan - Reprint Society edition - 1948 - page 497.

ness', and the religious element which formed the substantial majority of the manufacturing middle class, many of whom had their roots in a rural England of the past, presented the strange spectacle of an attempt to reconcile christian ethics with self-interest. 'In their double anxiety to obey a given ethical code', wrote Professor Trevelyan, 'and to "get on" in profitable business, the typical men of the new age overlooked some of the other possibilities of life. An individualist commercialism and an equally individualist type of religion combined to produce a breed of self-reliant and reliable men, good citizens in many respects - but "Philistines" in the phrase popularized by their most famous critic in a later generation (Matthew Arnold). Neither machine industry nor evangelical religion had any use for art or beauty, which were despised as effeminate by the makers of the great factory towns of the North'.⁽¹⁾ In a later generation, the type had coarsened into a Hornblower who despised the landed gentry as 'fossils', and was under no delusion as to their opinion of him. 'Ye don't like me', he said to one of them, 'An' ye don't like that. I make things, and I sell them, and ye don't like that. I buy land, and ye don't like that. It threatens the view from your windies'.⁽²⁾ To such types, to utilitarianism in general, and to the three-fold invasion which was laying waste the fields

(1) English Social History - G.M. Trevelyan - Reprint Society edition - 1942 - pp. 497 - 8.

(2) 'The Skin Game' - John Galsworthy - pub. Duckworth - page 20.

of beauty - the money-getting spirit, religious Puritanism, the imperfect psychology of Bentham - Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855) made the obvious retort. She wrote to Mrs. Gaskell, (20th September, 1851) 'There is such a thing as self-sacrificing love and disinterested devotion . . . I believe J.S. Mill (1806-1873) would make a hard dismal world of it . . . there is a large margin in human nature over which the logicians have no dominion, glad am I it is so'.⁽¹⁾ And Charles Lamb (1775-1834) as he so very often did, seeing the humorous side of the serious philosophies of his day, fired a gentle shaft at the doctrine of 'happiness'. 'I remember', he writes in a "Dissertation upon Roast Pig", 'an hypothesis, argued upon by the young students, when I was at St. Omer's, and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavour of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (per flagellationem extremam) superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision',⁽²⁾ and then playfully supporting the theory that

(1) Life of Charlotte Brontë - Mrs. Gaskell - Everyman edition - page 344.

(2) Cf. 'Men may be allowed to kill or inflict pain on animals with a determinate object, if that object be beneficial to mankind and there is a reasonable prospect of its accomplishment, but no man should be suffered to torment them'. - quoted by C.M. Atkinson - Jeremy Bentham - 1905 - page 146.

all action has a root in self-interest, writes, in the same essay, about his feeling when he had given his aunt's cake to a beggar. 'I walked on a little buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt to go and give her good gift away to a stranger . . . then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I . . . would eat her nice cake . . . and the odour of that spicy cake came back upon my recollections, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it . . . and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last - and I blamed my impertinent spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness'.

It is doubtful if the writers of moral tales of the early and mid nineteenth centuries had any knowledge of the philosophy of living, or any interest in what might be termed the 'Science of Religion'. They were neither philosophic nor speculative and the religious writers among them drew their Christian ethics exclusively from the Bible. Moralists, because of their calling, are never mystics. To none of them could be applied Mr. Lytton Strachey's words on Cardinal Newman, at Oxford. 'He was a child of the Romantic Revival, a creature of emotion and of memory, a dreamer whose secret spirit dwelt apart in delectable mountains, an artist whose subtle senses caught like a shower in the sunshine, the

impalpable rainbow of the immaterial world'.⁽¹⁾ Their conception of the Deity and the universe was that of orthodox christianity and they would have abhorred the views of a Holbach (1723-1789) who in his 'Système de la Nature' (1770) denied the existence of a deity, saw the universe as matter in spontaneous movement, and declared that man's chief end was the pursuit of happiness, and who believed that vice should be preferred to virtue if virtue did not bring happiness; or of a Lamettrie (1709-1751) who, in L'Homme Machine, (English translation - London 1750-) defended Atheism on the ground that the world had been constantly in a state of turmoil through wars brought about by Theologians, and that as death brought the game of life to an end, it behoved mankind to take his pleasures while he could. While disliking the man, they would have applauded some of Godwin's notions about religion, but not his denial of retribution after death.

In his essay on Dante and that poet's relation to the theology and ethics of the Middle Ages, Edward Caird wrote, 'The writers who are most revolutionary in their ultimate effect are not those who violently break away from the institutions of the past and set up a new principle against them, but rather those who so thoroughly enter into the spirit of these institutions that they make them, so to speak, transparent'.⁽²⁾

Godwin (1756-1836) did not revolt against christianity, he was

(1) Five Victorians - Lytton Strachey - Reprint Society edition - 1942 - page 355.

(2) Essays on Literature - Edward Caird - 1909 - page 4.

in arms against what man had made of christianity. He recognised the false morality underlying the threat of hell.

'Accursed and detestable is that religion by which the fancy is hag-rid', he wrote, 'and conscience is excited to torment us with phantoms of guilt, which endows the priest with his pernicious empire over the mind, which undermines boldness of opinion and intrepidity in feeling, which aggravates a thousand-fold the inevitable calamity, death, and haunts us with the fiends and retributory punishments of a future world'.⁽¹⁾ That

was in 1787. Later he wrote to Miss Harriet Lee, 'The virtue of every good man is built upon the stable basis of what he sees and daily experiences, and not upon the precarious foundations of the retribution which he rather endeavours to credit

than certainly believe'.⁽²⁾ To his aunt, Mrs. Sothern, who was much concerned about her relative's becoming author and consequently wasting, in fiction, the talents which would have been for the good of mankind, he wrote the following: 'I know of nothing worth the living for but usefulness and the service of my fellow-creatures. The only object I pursue is to increase, as far as lies in my power, the quantity of their knowledge and goodness and happiness',⁽³⁾ a sentiment echoed years later by a niece of John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, Fanny Kemble (1809-1893). 'In this world doctrinal points do not

(1) 'William Godwin' - C. Kegan Paul - Vol. I - page 28.
 (2) Ibid. - Vol. I. - page 29.
 (3) Ibid. - Vol. I. - page 29.

seem to avail much', what is important is 'the daily and hourly discharge of our duties, the purity, humanity, and activity of our lives . . . all that we can add to our own worth and each others' happiness is of evident, palpable, present avail'.⁽¹⁾ - both the expression of practical christianity. Noble as many of Godwin's ideas were, he had the unfortunate knack of saying stupid things at the most inopportune moments. Miss E.R. Clough tells how, when Godwin's wife, Mary Godwin Wollstonecraft was dying, an anodyne had been given her which had so eased her suffering that she exclaimed, 'Oh Godwin, I am in heaven', but that Godwin declined to be trapped into the admission that heaven existed and replied, 'You mean, my dear, that your physical sensations are somewhat easier'.⁽²⁾

Godwin was no scoffer at the views of others. He rejected Paine's 'Age of Reason' (1793-1807) as being unsuitable for his step-son, Charles Clairmont, because it was 'written in the vein of banter and impudence, and though I do not wish the young man to be the slave of the religion of his country, there are few things I hate more than a young man, with his little bit of knowledge, setting up to turn up his nose and elevate his eyebrows and make his sorry joke at everything the wisest and best men England ever produced have treated with

(1) Records of Later Life - Fanny Kemble - 1882 - Vol. I. - page 40.

(2) Mary Wollstonecraft and the Rights of Women - E.R. Clough - 1898 - page 59.

veneration'. ⁽¹⁾ He had little in common with the conception of religion and God that was preached from so many pulpits. His was the religion which 'sees God in clouds and hears Him in the wind, which endows every object of sense with a living soul, which finds in the system of nature whatever is holy, mysterious, and venerable, and inspires the bosom with sentiments of awe and veneration'. ⁽²⁾ God as the ruler of the universe was to Godwin 'the most irrational and ridiculous anthropomorphism', ⁽³⁾ and he identified God within himself in the 'reverent and soothing contemplation of all that is beautiful, grand or mysterious in the system of the universe'. ⁽⁴⁾

Mrs. Trimmer, Mrs. Hannah More, Miss Jane Taylor, Mrs. Taylor of Norwich and Mrs. Taylor of Ongar, Mrs. Sophia Ziegenhirt, and Mrs. Sherwood would not have wholly subscribed to Godwin's ideas. Unmystical and practical, this group had no affinity with such a nebulous creed as Pantheism with its denial of a personal deity, its conception of the world as an organic whole, and mind and matter as the manifestations of what could be called, 'one supreme reality', nor with Deism which acknowledged the existence of God, but rejected His active participation in the life of the world; emphasised the transcendence of God, but did not hold that He was immanent - this was the main view in the later eighteenth century when

- (1) Godwin - Kegan Paul - Vol. II. - page 185.
 (2) Ibid. - Vol. I. - page 28.
 (3) Ibid. - Vol. I. - page 357.
 (4) Ibid. - Vol. I. - page 358.

'theology was as transparently coherent as a proposition of Euclid, and as devoid of all appeal to the deeper instincts of man', and 'when God was a remote artificer who, after constructing the world, refrained from any further concern with it than that of giving evidence of His existence by occasional interference with its order'.⁽¹⁾ Much more in keeping with their beliefs and temperaments were the characteristics of Calvinism. With modifications, the following points could easily describe the opinions and outlook of the religious group of writers. Calvinism⁽²⁾ mistrusted arts or letters and was suspicious of music because of its association with dancing; the christian was to practise a severe self discipline within the world; he was to rejoice in his salvation, but to eschew almost every other form of rejoicing as that gave proof of ungodly disposition - dancing, gambling, play acting, undue adornment of person.⁽³⁾ It taught that God is absolute and man utterly worthless, and that 'God does not give his saving grace to all but to the elect';⁽⁴⁾ it commanded the christian not to question God's power towards him.

It does not require much search among the reputable moral writers between 1790-1840 to discover that the majority voiced through their characters, the warnings of Calvinism; spoke as

(1) The Age of Wordsworth - C.H.Herford - 1925 - pp. 28-9.

(2) 'Calvinism' is used throughout in the general sense of the term and it was interpreted by later adherents of Calvin, and is not to be identified with the doctrines of Calvin himself.

(3) v. Calvin - R.N. Carew Hunt - Centenary Press - 1933 - page 134.

(4) Ibid.

those having authority and showed humility only before their God. This, however, does not mean that they had imbibed calvinistic doctrines, but that their upbringing^{or}, as in the cases of Mrs. Sherwood and Hannah More, their later contacts caused them naturally to adopt seriously the christian life. John Hope (1807-1894) the Scottish philanthropist and reformer was not a calvinist because he declared that 'Gaming is bad, and playing for a small stake differs only in degree'⁽¹⁾, nor is Hannah More when she desires to maintain the sanctity of the Sabbath and writes, 'But were the Angel Gabriel the poet, the Archangel Michael the composer, and the song of the Lamb the subject, it would not abrogate that statute of the Most High, which has said "Thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath day, and thy Servant and thy cattle, shall do no manner of work."⁽²⁾' nor are the many hard headed industrialists among the Dissenters, because they practised what Calvin advocated for the christian, 'Eschew all forms of worldly amusement but to concentrate upon his business'⁽³⁾. Christian practice, irrespective of denominations, has a common ground in honest dealing, Sunday observance, church worship, and detestation of gaming. Hannah More and Mrs. Sherwood did not despise or suspect the art of letters, but used their gift to propagate their views. Both made the religious tract, literature. Sophia Ziegenhirt did not condemn

(1) 'John Hope' - David Jamie, B.D. - 1900 - page 35.

(2) Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great to General Society - Hannah More - 6th edition - 1788 - page 42.

(3) Calvin - Hunt - 1933. - PAGE 134.

music, and Jane Taylor did not see in religion, a gospel of gloom. They represented the best type of English Middle Class and were, as Mrs. Edward Trotter described the evangelical Clapham Sect, 'singularly pure of life, wise and benevolent in practice: their children were trained in self-restraint, moderation, and a sense of responsibility. Their large households were models of correctness and good government, of order, and of cheerful kindly piety'.⁽¹⁾ Mrs. Trotter believed that the great Revival Movement represented by the Wesleys, Berridge, Toplady, Romaine, and Fletcher of Madelay, which had rescued England in the eighteenth century from the dangers of Atheism, found its highest expression in the philanthropy and labours of the Clapham sect, but regarded individualism as 'the besetting weakness of Evangelicalism'.⁽²⁾

The comprehensive view and long term planning are twentieth century concepts. The eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries calculated in terms of the individual and individual effort. Society was made up of individuals who formed groups, unlike that of the Middle Ages in which the 'unit was the group and not the individual, a society which did not trouble itself with notions of equality or individual liberty, and which acknowledged without question a hierarchy of authority and privilege'.⁽³⁾ The French Revolution had brought very much

(1) Undertones of the Nineteenth Century - Mrs. Edward Trotter - 1905 - page 27.

(2) Ibid. - page 27.

(3) Calvin - Carew Hunt - 1933 - page 126.

to the forefront the question of equality and individual liberty, but the attempt to oust religion failed in France.

Voltaire (1694-1778) had stated that 'religion was a useful fiction, a kind of moral police to keep the common people in order',⁽¹⁾ and no doubt the French authorities had found it so.

The loosening or freeing the individual from the shackles placed upon him by an all powerful state,⁽²⁾ brings its own problems. The individual must now weave the pattern of his own destiny and determine for himself the road along which he will travel. In France, from the ashes of Bourbon France, sprang the new Empire of Napoleon, and the duty of the individual was clear. In England there was no new found freedom, but the Church and the privileged orders had been jolted out of their complacency. Strange ideas were in the air, strange heresies - Dr. Whately (1787-1863) with his keen practical view of Christianity, Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) who shocked the charitably inclined by maintaining 'that the improvement in the condition of the great mass of the labouring classes should be considered as the main interest of society', but that 'to improve their condition, it is essential to impress them with the conviction that they can do much more for them-

- (1) 'From Myth to Reason' - Woodbridge Riley - 1926 - page 216.
 (2) The British genius does not take kindly to control and planning. Cf. 'The English do not approach life intellectually; they do not demand that it shall conform to some rigid mental plan; they are not convinced that the universe can be penetrated by thought; they look askance at those grand first principles that seem to some alien people the very foundations of the world; they are willing to go to work, either in politics or art, without a theory to sustain them . . .'
 - English Humour - J.B. Priestley - The English Heritage Series - 1933 - page 18.

selves than others can do for them, and that the only source of permanent improvement is the improvement of their moral and religious habits'.⁽¹⁾ The insistence of Malthus on the spirit of independence and self-help had been long a major theme of the moral tale writer. As a class, they had no patience with the idler and vagabond, and held for the most part the view that poverty was the result and brand of bad character rather than misfortune. To them the road to self-respect was no easy one. Not that they were uncharitable. One of Mrs. Barbauld's 'Lessons for Children' (1788) was on charity. 'I wonder what poor little boys do that have no fire to go to, and no shoes and stockings to keep them warm; and no good papas and mammas to take care of them and give them victuals. Poor little boys! Do not cry, Charles, for here is a halfpenny, and when you see one of these little boys you shall give it him; he will go and buy a roll with it, for he is hungry, and he will say, Thank you, Charles, you are good to me'.⁽²⁾

That poverty is the result of vice, was a legacy from the harsh teaching of Puritanism, a teaching which in the eighteenth century made workhouses degrading and brutal institutions. Between 1836 and 1842, the Poor Law Commissioners laid down rigorous rules for the conduct of workhouses. Silence was demanded at all meals, visitors were not allowed except in the presence of Master, Matron, or Porter. Playing at cards was forbidden.⁽³⁾ 'In the minds of the Commissioners the work-

(1) The English Utilitarians - Sir Leslie Stephen - 1900 - Vol. II - page 178.

(2) 'Lessons for Children' - Mrs. Barbauld - New Edition - Routledge - pp. 56-7.

(3) v. 'The Bleak Age' - J.L. & Barbara Hammond - 1932 - Pelican Books edition - 1947 - page 107.

house was meant to be a deterrent institution for all sorts and conditions of the poor . . ."with regard to the aged and infirm", they wrote in 1840, "there is a strong disposition on the part of a portion of the public so to modify the arrangements of these establishments as to place them on the footing of Almshouses. The consequences which flow from this change have only to be pointed out to show its inexpediency and its danger. If the conditions of the inmates of a workhouse were to be so regulated as to invite the aged and infirm of the labouring classes to take refuge in it, it would immediately be useless as a test between indigence and indolence or fraud."^(I)

Moralists are not social reformers. They do not expose abuses but attempt to show in their tales how evils and faults of character may be avoided. They are essentially individualists. Central institutions, legislation, workhouse systems do not interest them as plot material, but home training, morality, and religion did. Modern psychology has tended to shift man's personal responsibility for wrong doing to sex abnormalities or endocrine gland disturbances. Having no detailed and accurate knowledge of glands, and if they had, probably discrediting much of their influence, the moralists saw in wrong doing the result of personal folly. To some, that folly had its origin in a deficient home training, or faulty education; to others, lack of a sound religious upbringing.

(I) v. 'The Bleak Age' - J.L. & Barbara Hammond - 1932 - Pelican Books edition (1947) - page 109.- 110.

Illustrative of their habit of putting moral questions into watertight compartments, is an elaborate and colourful 'Diagram of Morality' published by B.W. Gardiner & Son, Princes Street, Cavendish Square. (1) Its object was to show the connection between individual and universal happiness, by illustrating diagrammatically that the greatest happiness of every individual of the human race was dependent on a 'pure moral atmosphere', or, in other words, 'an impartial extension of the benevolent principles and feelings of man to all the living works of God'. (2) The diagram consists of a series of concentric circles, each circle being divided into four segments representing a division of society or degree of morality with its corresponding virtues and vices. On the right hand compartment, beginning at the centre 'Self' and leading to 'Uncertain' or 'Partial Prosperity' are placed various qualities which are esteemed virtuous, but as they are productive of 'Positive Vices' unless based upon 'Unbounded Benevolence', they are in effect only 'Imaginary Virtues', giving rise to 'Delusive Expectations' which end in 'Vexation' and 'Disappointment' to 'Self'. On the left of the diagram, commencing at the centre 'Self' and leading to 'Discord' and 'Misery' are placed the 'Positive Vices', which result from these 'Imaginary Virtues', and in the lower compartment, beginning at the centre 'Self' and leading to 'Universal Happiness',

(1) No date is given, but the publishers also advertise and recommend 'The Science of Happiness' (1861) by the same author - a lady. 1861 is outwith the 1840 limit but the diagram could quite easily have been drawn earlier as far as its conclusions went.

(2) v. Explanatory notes to 'Diagram'.

are the 'Real Virtues' which naturally spring from 'Unbounded Benevolence'.

There is nothing startling or unusual in what this diagram reveals. For instance it takes no great depth of intellect to arrive at the conclusion that in connection with the 'Family Circle', 'Ardent Affection' could lead to 'Domestic Concord', but also to 'Unjust Partiality', or that a disposition to please Society might lead to attention to the feelings of others, or self-conceit or vanity, or that in Religion, 'Pious Zeal' might lead not only to obedience to the Laws of God and toleration of man, but to bigotry and intolerance, or that in Education, physical and mental development might blossom into physical and moral improvement, but without benevolence, wither into perversion of intellect and moral depravity; nor does it need great acumen to realise that a love of sports and amusements could foster the promotion of social enjoyment and enhance innocent pleasure, but it could also lead to 'Malignity' and 'Wanton Cruelty', or that 'Philosophy' might be attended by profound study and research, leading to the furtherance of 'Truth' and 'Humanity', but perverted, would lead to 'Sophistry' and 'Error'. But while the 'Diagram' would not satisfy Mrs. Sherwood, as being too much dependent on the actions of self alone, it is in keeping with the factual and non-speculative attitude of the class that in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, wrote moral tales, and does work from the individual outwards and not as in the present period, from society or the group to the individual. The importance of individuality was stressed by a William Maccall in a lecture delivered at Exeter on 29th March, 1844, before the Literary

Society. 'In society', he said, 'as actually organized, each is false to all and all are false to each, but the source of this universal falsehood is that every one is false to himself, is false to his Individuality'.⁽¹⁾ Maccall's lecture was a plea to recognise the individual as such. On the educational side, he warned against cramming, and said, 'If we adopt the principle of educating children not by suppression but by expression, not merely will it be found that no one family can be educated like any other family, but that no two children in the same family can be educated precisely in the same manner'.⁽²⁾ This is true when dealing with mental processes, but there are no degrees of right and wrong, and to the moralist there is but one pattern. The 'Diagram of Morality' supplied the pattern, although it erred in assuming that morals can be reduced to a formula and an equation.

In the present century, the term 'Middle Class Morality' implies a reproach and censure. In the minds of many, it is associated with narrow-mindedness, severity and priggishness, and anti-compromise. It stands for the past, not the future. Today, indeed, the epithet 'Victorian' is used derogatively, and implies an obstinate refusal to move with the times. Professor C.H. Herford attributed the decline of Evangelicalism in the nineteenth century to the fact that it was detached from the 'living currents of thought'.⁽³⁾ Moving with the living currents

(1) Lecture printed by John Chapman - London - 1844 - price 6d.

(2) Ibid. - page 36. (-page 9.)

(3) 'The Age of Wordsworth' - C.H. Herford - 1925 - page 29.

of thought makes one wonder into what hidden depths of water the thinker will be plunged. Holbach's or Lamettrie's ideas made men little better than the mechanical figures which delighted the guests at the Palace of Versailles, and their currents of thought led to atheism. Rousseau's views, if carried out in their entirety led to absurdity. And what of the currents today? Man can only say with Lytton Strachey, when he described the influence of Newman on the pious youths of Oxford, 'The new strange notion of taking Christianity literally was delightful to earnest minds; but it was also alarming. Really to mean every word you said when you repeated the Athanasian creed! How wonderful! And what enticing and mysterious vistas burst upon the view! But then, those vistas, where were they leading to? Supposing - oh heavens! - supposing after all they were to lead to - !' ⁽¹⁾ Beneath the banter there is a corrective in Strachey's aposiopesis.

The writers of moral tales did not venture beyond their depths. They might actively, like Mrs. Trimmer, Mrs. Hannah More, and Mrs. Sherwood, propagate their doctrines of right and wrong, but in their tales, they dealt with what all knew, and evolved a system of practical morality and religion. In defence of good conduct and upright living, they were as uncompromising as the Reverend Andrew Thomson was in the matter of the Princess Charlotte's funeral. ⁽²⁾ Compromise is a

(1) 'Five Victorians' - Lytton Strachey - Reprint Society ed. - 1925 - page 29.

(2) v. 'Memorials of his Times' - Lord Cockburn - ed. V. Forbes Gray - 1946 - page 194.

dangerous makeshift to adopt when dealing with morals. Mrs. Sherwood and Mrs. Trimmer would hear nothing in its defence. Mrs. Hannah More was emphatic about the perniciousness of the phrase, 'There is no harm in it',⁽¹⁾ and condemned the glossing over of vice through the misuse of names. 'The substitution of the word "gallantry" for that crime which stabs domestic happiness and conjugal virtue, is one of the most dangerous of all modern abuses of language. Atrocious deeds should never be called by gentle names',⁽²⁾ and writing (1840?) to his sister, on hearing that a young nephew of his had expressed a desire to attend Doncaster races, John Hope remarked, 'Now in no games would I give children a pool. Give them amusing games (cards if you will, for I do not at present see evil in cards), but let them get into the custom of liking the game for the game and victory, and not as the means of getting a six-pence or cakes, etc. In short there must be no stimulant, for we know that as we progress in years, we require stronger doses, and may end in becoming confirmed gamblers'.⁽³⁾

A problem which ought to occupy the attention of the moralist is that of sin and the problem of evil. In a small but stimulating volume, Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones has clearly, but succinctly, stated the modern views on the origin of sin. It is to some a necessary antagonism, a kind of resistance which

(1) 'Thoughts on the Manners of the Great' etc. - 6th edition - 1788 - page 63.

(2) Ibid. - pp. 65 -6.

(3) 'John Hope' - David Jamie, B.D. - 1900 - page 35.

is provided by life in order that the positive faculties may be exercised and developed. To some it is the 'opposition of the lower propensities to a gradually developing moral consciousness', the fight put up by our lingering animal instincts against the demands made by our dawning and ever increasing moral consciousness; to others it is the 'failure of the higher qualities to exert themselves as they should', and yet again to others, primarily a matter of housing and education'. 'Slum clearance schemes and educational systems are the one and only necessary cure'.^(I) There is among modern thinkers a refusal to regard sin as an active force and to minimize man's responsibility; stress is laid rather on conditions, opportunities, economics, home life; sin as a mental state or a disease. On the other hand, orthodox Christianity, drawing its material from a study of the Bible, regards sin as a force, an entity with an existence apart from man, and one which has entered human nature from without. This thesis was stated clearly by the Rev. H.C.G. Moule, 'Man, originally holy, was invaded by a personal Intelligence, hating God. Man, in the female, suspects a lack of love in God, and, in the male, prefers the creature's will to His. God's will, in its one known prohibition, is violated. Thereupon, by a law quite mysterious in some aspects, but almost self-evident in others, the personal creature not only loses the bliss of intercourse with God, but suffers moral revolution in his

(I) v. 'The Plight of Man and the Power of God' - Lloyd-Jones - 1942 - pp. 44 -6.

being. There is no change in the nature, or constitution, of man, which retains all its noble parts and faculties. Man is still "living soul", spirit, soul, and body; still has conscience and will. But the "habit" (habitus) of the personality, the state of the "subject" of all these parts and faculties is distorted. Man no longer lives and obeys God as the law of his life. Moral discord is there. Knowledge and choice no longer delightfully converge upon right, upon the Will of God. Man "knows good and evil". The very idea of discord with God apparently had as yet been absent from his happy being; now it is awfully present. He is now "like God", in knowing that such a thing is, but with what a difference! God knows it as the infinite Observer and Judge; man as the guilty subject of its experience'.

To Calvin, sin was a 'hereditary taint, for the existence of which no explanation can be found save in that appalling aboriginal catastrophe to which the Scriptures testify in the story of the Fall and of the sin of Adam'.⁽²⁾ Belief in this, solves the paradox 'Man knows and approves the good, yet he continually performs the evil which he hates', but does not satisfy the philosopher in his quest for the 'good' and a comprehensive definition. 'The Prophecy of the serpent is the great deception', wrote Nicolai Hartmann, a Professor of Philosophy at Berlin University, 'Sin has not opened Man's eyes; he has not become as God; to this day he does not yet

(1) Outlines of Christian Doctrine - H.C.G. Moule - 1889 - pp. 169-70.

(2) Calvin - R.N. Carew Hunt - 1933 - page 120.

know what good and evil are'.⁽¹⁾ The Utilitarian Bentham attempted to explain sin and vice as false moral arithmetic, a miscalculation of chances, a mistake in 'estimating the value of pleasures and pains',⁽²⁾ and Utilitarianism in general believed that moral faculties were not original but acquired powers of mind. The ability to distinguish right from wrong was not intuitive, but the outcome of experiences of the consequences of actions 'for the recognition of which no other faculties are needed than the intellect and the bodily senses'.⁽³⁾

Abstruse theories of sin and human behaviour are not essential to make successful writers of moral tales. What is required is a clear conception of the purpose in writing them. And that the moralists had, from the authors of books on manners in the fifteenth century, to those of religious tracts and novels in the nineteenth.

(1) 'Ethik' - English Translation - 1932 - pp. 84 -5.

(2) v. A History of English Utilitarianism - Albee - 1902 - page 188.

(3) v. 'Logic and Utility' - G.R. - pub. 1866 by E. Truelove, 240 Strand - pp. 114 -6.

cf. 'The root of evil is in ignorance, and the secret of salvation is knowledge. A more enlightened education is all that is needed to make man progressively better, and more enlightened government to make society progressively better'. - Dr. Baillie on the Rationalism of the 17th & 18th centuries - The Belief in Progress - John Baillie - O.U.P. - 1950 - page 176.

CHAPTER 5.

CURRENTS OF THOUGHT (II).

The Educational Scene.

Children were for centuries regarded as having no separate individuality, no self-determinate 'ego'. They were adults in miniature and consequently any educational schemes were drawn up with the preconceived notion of what children ought to be. There was little elasticity in the subjects taught and little attempt to provide scope for the child's natural activities; the curriculum was not fashioned to suit the child. John Locke (1632-1704), understood the importance of the child himself as a determining factor in the educational process, but he was, as Professor Barnard points out, by no means typical of his age. (1) Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), whose 'Emile' (1762) was an attempt to force open the prison house which early educationalists had built round the growing boy, 'protested against a system partly ascetic and partly conventional, in which the natural tendencies of youth were neglected, or crushed under arbitrary routine'. (2) The often quoted opening sentence of 'Emile', 'tout est bien, sortant des mains de l'Auteur des choses: tout dégénère entre les mains de l'homme', is one of the pillars supporting Rousseau's educational structure, the other is his belief in the doctrine of original goodness. The one line of thought leads naturally to a

(1) Short History of English Education - 1760 - 1944 -
H.C. Barnard - 1947 - page 39.

(2) Essays on Literature - Edward Caird → 1909 - page 120.

mistrust of cities, towns and institutions, as containing the disease germs of a man-made civilisation, the other to the conclusion that given the proper surroundings and training, the child would develop naturally into a good and useful member of the community.

Until the age of 12 years, maintained Rousseau, education was to be through sense experiences and not through the written word, and to avoid contamination, Émile was isolated from Society and placed under the charge of a 'tutor'. From 12 to 15 he started his intellectual studies - Robinson Crusoe, geography, natural science and a little history. At 15 he was apprenticed to a trade 'less for the sake of knowing the trade than for overcoming the prejudices which despise it',⁽¹⁾ and about that period his education was on moral and religious lines, as that was the period when the passions and emotions awakened. To this period belong history, literature, and art. At 18, Émile was introduced to the abstract conception of God.

The importance of 'Émile' lies in the fact that at last someone regarded education as progressive, as a gradual development suited to the child's mental and physical growth. Thomas Day (1748-89), followed Rousseau as did the Edgeworths, father and daughter, in agreeing that education should be shaped according to the needs of the child and should be based on 'doing'; that 'self-activity' should be encouraged, and

(1) Payne - Rousseau's Emile - page 178 - Quoted by H.C. Barnard, etc. - page 43.

that there ought to be a positive training with 'utility' rather than a passive learning as the standard. ⁽¹⁾

Pestalozzi (1746-1827), emphasised a religious education but insisted that 'ethical teaching should not be based on precepts or codes or catechisms', and that the child must 'learn of the goodness of God or the rightness of truth and kindness from his actual experience'. ⁽²⁾

According to Pestalozzi's method, the 'mind of the pupil', wrote Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton (1758-1816- 'cannot be passive in receiving instruction. It is compelled to work its way to knowledge . . . Instead of repeating words on subjects so important as to demand the most serious consideration, but too far removed from the ideas which occupy the minds of children, to admit a possibility of their being easily understood, his pupils are made to proceed by a regular process from one idea to another until the same proposition, which was in the former instance repeated by rote, seems to them the evident deduction of reason'. ⁽³⁾

With this rational, graded approach to the problems of the education of young children, as shown by a theorist like Rousseau, and practising teachers like Pestalozzi, Philipp Von Fellenberg (1771-1844), and Samuel Wilderspin (1792-1866), there was a movement which had its origin in the doctrines of life and living which came from

- (1) v. Practical Education (Richard Edgeworth and Maria Edgeworth), Sandford and Merton (Day), Little Jack (Day).
 (2) Short History of English Education - Barnard - 1947 - page 45.
 (3) Hints addressed to the Patrons and Directors of Schools' - 1815 - Mrs. E. Hamilton - pp. 66 -7.

the pens of the writers of the French Encyclopoedia (published 1751-65), who described a society freed from clerical control and influence, and in which that elusive quality 'universal benevolence' would rule. In such a society as envisaged by the Encyclopoedists where the appeal was to the reason and experiences based on reason, there would be general agreement that education should be taken out of the hand of the 'Church' and become the responsibility of the State, as was advocated by La Chalotais in his 'Essai d'Éducation Nationale' (1763). 'I claim', he wrote, 'the right to demand for the nation an education that will depend upon the State alone because it belongs essentially to it; because every nation has an inalienable and imprescriptible right to instruct its members; and finally because the children of the State should be educated by the members of the State'.⁽¹⁾

The winds from France, impregnated with the doctrines of Revolutionary France, fanned the glowing embers of English radicalism and assisted in that noble conception of education for all. 'A nation under a well-regulated government should permit none to remain uninstructed',⁽²⁾ said Paine (1737-1808), which was poetically expressed by Wordsworth (1770-1850), in 1814, even after the youthful flame of early loyalties and en-

(1) La Chalotais - Éducation Nationale - translated by F. de la Fontainerie in 'French Liberalism and Education in the Eighteenth Century - page 53. - Quoted by Barnard - Short History, etc. - page 50.

(2) 'Rights of Man' - Paine - 1791 -2 - part II - page 132.

thusiasms had died down within him.

'O for the coming of that glorious time
 When prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
 And best protection, this imperial Realm
 While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
 An obligation, on her part, to teach
 Them who are born to serve her and obey;
 Bending herself by statute to secure
 For all the children whom her soil maintains
 The rudiments of letters and inform
 The mind with moral and religious truth' (I)

The visions and dreams of poets are seldom, if ever, realised in their lifetime. In the enthusiasms of the French Revolution were sown the seeds of an Anti-Reform movement. The excesses of the Paris mob alarmed the upper and middle classes of Britain to such an extent, that any proposal of reform, in government and education, especially any attempt to educate the masses, was regarded with suspicion.

The early nineteenth century saw the continuance of the eighteenth century viewpoint that the educational programme for the poor should consist in training them to be honest and industrious, to keep in humility their divinely appointed places on the lower rungs of the social ladder, and to be thankful for any notice which those on the higher rungs took of them. With this, however, went a fuller and nobler desire to educate the poor in keeping with the state into which they had been born, a project which, however much desired by the 'Paines' of the eighteenth century, had its economic and practical problems - mass education at a cheap rate. Two names now appear to evolve a prac-

(I) 'The Excursion' - Book IX. ll. 293-302 - Wordsworth's Poetical Works - ed. Hutchinson - 1913 - page 888.

tical solution to the problem of how and at what cost, - Dr. Andrew Bell (1753-1832) and Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838), one a clergyman of the Church of England, and the other a Quaker. Both established the 'Monitorial System', a kind of educational feudal system where one master mind passed on 'his learning' to a chosen few who, in turn, handed it down to others.

Bell was of the aggressive type, and though his 'large fiery (I) friendly nature had an infection in it which few could resist', his nature made him blind to the virtues of other systems and the meritorious work done in other establishments. 'Do not talk to me of your colleges and your universities. They are asylums for the maimed, the halt and the blind; more, they are receptacles for the dead, who cannot hear the new word of life which I have spoken, and who must sleep on', (2) words as forceful and bitter as Mary Wollstonecraft's (1759-97) all embracing attack, 'There is not, perhaps, in the kingdom a more dogmatical or luxurious set of men than the pedantic tyrants who reside in colleges and preside at public schools'. (3) One is reminded of Herr Teufelsdröckh's opinion of his masters, 'My Teachers were hide-bound Pedants, without knowledge of man's nature, or of boy's'. (4) Bell had a vision of an educational 'faire felde ful of folke', but his eye looked with favour only on the 'beautiful system' favourite child of his

- (1) 'Life of Dr. Andrew Bell' - Professor Meiklejohn - page 39.
 (2) Ibid. - page 88.
 (3) 'Rights of Women - 1891 edition - Mary Godwin - page 242.
 (4) 'Sartor Resartus - Carlyle (1831) - Centenary edition -
 - page 84.

own genius, and passed unseeing over the work of Pestalozzi whose explanations of his own system, said Professor Meiklejohn, 'were like the passing gossip on the staircase of a world-hardened dowager.'⁽¹⁾ Joseph Lancaster became in Bell's eyes a kind of 'spiritual and diabolic Guy Fawkes',⁽²⁾ an upstart strutting in borrowed feathers, 'illiterate and ignorant', said Bell, 'with a brazen front, consummate assurance and the most artful and plausible address'.⁽³⁾

It is a sad reflection on the blindness of the age, that the hope that every child would be able to read the Bible, was lost in the ecclesiastical and political wrangle, invective and abuse that surrounded the Bell-Lancaster controversy,⁽⁴⁾ and that the Tories were driven to sponsor education as a bulwark against their fear of a growing and spreading radicalism.

A fairly satisfactory method had now been found for education of the many by the few,⁽⁵⁾ but the success of Lancasterian Schools, which were unsectarian, could not long go unchallenged, especially when there were pernicious influences from across the English Channel, whisperings in the air against the authority of the Established Church, with special reference to its right to superintend and direct education, and a growing,

(1) 'Life of Dr. Andrew Bell' - Professor Meiklejohn - page 73.

(2) Ibid. -page 44.

(3) Ibid. - page 45.

(4) v. Monthly Review - May-August - Vol. 68. - pp. 86 - 94.

(5) For a kindly criticism of the Lancasterian System, vide Hints Addressed to the Patrons and Directors of Schools - Mrs. Hamilton - 1815 - pp. 31 - 60 et seq.

strange, new breed of children who, because of the 'Industrial Revolution', and the hardships caused by the French Wars, were fast being removed from the influence of the domestic hearth. Yet, one practical result of the quarrel was a turning of the national conscience towards the problem of education for the poorer classes, and in 1811 was formed the 'National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church throughout England and Wales', which took over the 'charity schools' sponsored by the 'Society for the Promoting of Christian Knowledge'. In the 'National Society' schools, Bell's monitorial system was followed; instruction was given in the Liturgy and Catechism, and church attendance was a compulsory feature. In 1808, was established the 'Royal Lancasterian Association', renamed in 1814, 'The British and Foreign School Society' - Lancaster's methods had spread to the Colonies and the Continent -. Although the schools under the aegis of that society did not have sectarian religious teaching, the pupils attended divine worship on the Sunday. The aim of the 'B. and F.S.S.', was to constitute itself 'a society for the purpose of affording education, procuring employment, and as far as possible to furnish clothing to the children of the poorer classes.'^(I)

Bell claimed for his system that it 'gave the master the hundred eyes of Argus, the hundred hands of Briareus, and the wings of Mercury, that it was, in fact, the steam engine of

the moral world and the lever of Archimedes transferred from matter to mind', ⁽¹⁾ while Lancaster proclaimed that he had 'invented under the blessing of Divine Providence, a new and mechanical system of Education', ⁽²⁾ yet learning in these monitorial schools was factual and passive, and granted that the pupils acquired some knowledge by dint of repeating it long enough, there was a stifling of individuality and what is now called 'personality'. In their favour it must be acknowledged that however imperfect the schools were, the 'monitorial' system played an important part in recommending education to public patronage. The imagination is haunted by the prospect of a clear cut easy practical system carried out with a maximum reduction of labour and expense and bringing speedy and calculable returns'. ⁽³⁾ There is a very modern atmosphere about the question of expense, that ominous cloud that darkens the educational sky. It is interesting to note that the attractiveness of cheapness was one of the arguments put forward by Samuel Whitbread in 1807, when he was introducing a 'Parochial Schools' Bill' into the House of Commons. ⁽⁴⁾

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the 'primary education' of the 'lower orders' was catered for by the Dame Schools which had not changed much in the nineteenth century

(1) 'The Bleak Age' - J.L. & B. Hammond - Pelican Books ed. - Dodds - 1947 - page 150

(2) Ibid. - pp. 149-50.

(3) Educational and Social Movements - 1700-1850 - Dobbs - 1919 - page 149

(4) For arguments pro and contra, see Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, (Hansard) Vol. IX (1807) July 13, page 798, July 22, page 859, Aug. 4, pp. 1051-1053.

from the picture given by the poet Shenstone (I7I4-65) in 'The Schoolmistress' (second version I742). These 'Dame Schools' were intended for fairly young children. For older children there were Day Schools, Charity Schools associated with parishes and catering mainly for day pupils. The Charity Schools had been instituted in I698 by the Society for the Promoting of Christian Knowledge, and the curriculum included, the Catechism, Bible Reading, Writing, Spinning, Sewing, Knitting, Gardening. The catechising was done by the clergy and the masters had to be members of the Established Church. In addition to these schools, and serving a useful purpose in bringing together the army of young people who worked in factory and mine for six days in the week, were the Sunday Schools. Such a type of school is mentioned in Sophia Kelly's Life of Mrs. Sherwood (I854). In I796, the widow and family of the Rev. George Butt of Lichfield, settled in Bridgenorth. There Mary Martha Butt (later Mrs. Sherwood) and her sister undertook the charge of a Sunday school and made a success of it. 'We made', said Martha Butt, 'Bonnets and tippets for our girls; we walked with them to church; we looked them up in the week-days; we were vastly busy; we were first amused and next deeply interested'.^(I) It was to the older girls in the school that Martha read 'Susan Grey' chapter by chapter, a moral tale that turned upon the special circumstances of the times when many towns were filled with soldiers.

(I) 'Life of Mrs. Sherwood' - Sophia Kelly - I854 - page I64.

For the 'superior orders' there were the endowed public and grammar schools which in some cases were unsatisfactory, being scholastically too narrow, sub-standard in boarding and housing conditions, and of a low moral tone. ⁽¹⁾ For the sons of gentlemen were Private Schools such as that which Dobbin and Rawden Crawley attended; Dotheboys Hall was an extreme example. The curriculum in them was built along 'useful lines' - arithmetic, drawing, history, geography, modern languages. ⁽²⁾

For girls there were fashionable establishments such as Fanny Kemble (1809-1893) attended for a short time. This one was at Camden Place, Bath, and was conducted by Mrs. Twiss, her husband and three daughters. 'Balls, routs, plays, assemblies, the Pump Room and all the fashionable dissipations of the place were habitually resorted to by these very stylish school-mistresses. It was understood as part of the system of the establishment, that such of the pupils as were of an age to be introduced into society, could enjoy the advantage of the chaperonage of these ladies'. ⁽³⁾

- (1) For a reference to 'barrings-out' at Winchester, v. Barnard's Short History of English Education - 1947 - pp. 20 - 21.
- (2) Mrs. Sherwood's story 'Little Martin' was based on her husband's account of what he had suffered at Ashford Grammar School. - Mrs. Sherwood and Her Times - Darton - page 224.
- (3) Record of a Girlhood - Francis A. Kemble - 1878 - Vol. I. pp. 22 - 23.
Fanny was a sore trial to Madame Faudier and her daughter Flore at the school in the Rue tant perd tant pie (Boulogne) where music, dancing, and Italian were taught. On one occasion, Madame, when told that one of her demoiselles was walking on the roof exclaimed "Ah ce ne peut être que cette diable de Kemble".

Not so avowedly catering for society as the Camden Place establishment, were private schools of the type in which Amelia Sedley was educated, namely Miss Pinkerton's Academy for young Ladies, on Chiswick Mall. It will be remembered that when Miss Sedley was leaving, the headmistress wrote as follows to the parents, 'After her six years' residence at the Mall, I have the honour of presenting Miss Amelia Sedley to her parents as a young lady not unworthy to occupy a fitting position in their polished and refined circle . . . In music, in dancing, in orthography, in every variety of embroidery and needlework, she will be found to have realised her friends' fondest wishes'. Amelia was not very bright at Geography, and was the possessor of an obviously not too elegant carriage, because Miss Pinkerton advocated 'the undeviating use of the "back-board"⁽¹⁾, for four hours daily during the next three years, as necessary to the acquirement of that dignified deportement and carriage so requisite for every young lady of fashion'.⁽²⁾ A little further down the social scale were private schools, such as that run by Mrs. Sherwood at Worcester, in which the young ladies, for 80 guineas a year when they

(1) 'A hideous engine of torture of the backboard species, made of steel covered with red morocco which consisted of a flat piece placed on my back and strapped down to my waist with a belt, and secured at the top by two epaulettes strapped over my shoulders. From the middle of this there rose a steel rod or spine, with a steel collar which encircled my throat and fastened behind'. - Records of a Girlhood - F. Kemble - Vol. I. - pp. 138 -9)

(2) 'Vanity Fair' - Thackeray - Everyman Edition - page 6.

went home for holidays, and 100 guineas when they remained the whole year, were taught English, French, Astronomy, Geography, History, Grammar, Writing, Ciphering, and the learned languages if required. Further down the scale were schools such as the school at Cowan's Bridge, attended by the Brontës, so graphically described in 'Jane Eyre' (1848), as Lowood School. This was no charity school, although Fanny Burns in a moment of pique called it such. The £15 which each pupil paid annually was not enough to maintain the school, and the deficiency was made good by 'different benevolent-minded ladies and gentlemen in the neighbourhood and in London'.⁽¹⁾

Grammar School, Private School, Ladies Seminary,⁽²⁾ Sunday School and Charity School, have one thing in common; all owed their being to individual effort on the part of one person or group, whether through whim, benevolence, enlightened self-interest, or financial necessity, and although much of the instruction was based too much on memory work and the use of such text books as Mangnall's Questions (1800), they supplied according to their light, the foundation on which the future fabric was to be laid, strong enough to ensure the safety of the social superstructure. That their horizon was limited, and they could see little beyond the conception of a 'providentially' ordained social order and the 'useful', is no valid criticism of the work done in the schools.

(1) 'Jane Eyre' - C. Brontë - Everyman Edition - page 44.

(2) For an interesting account of the Ladies Seminary, v. Chapter III - The English Miss Today and Yesterday - M.C. Percival - Harrap - 1939 - pp. 78-97.

As the best of the education and moral tale writers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were intimately connected with children either through the domestic circle, or as teachers, supervisors of Sunday Schools, or as persons interested in education, it would be surprising if there were no reference to the various types of school, either indirectly or as an integral part of their tales. All seem to be in agreement that the fashionable seminaries for young ladies gave their pupils a wrong sense of values and the wrong interpretation of their duties. - Mrs. Trimmer deplored the attitude of many parents to what constituted the important aspect of life, and who wished their children to shine in 'exterior accomplishments'. Their horizon was bounded by the trifles of the worldly state. 'To gratify them the Song and the Dance must be learnt to perfection, that their children may shine in the fashionable world' (I) The education of the heiress, Miss Polworth, was typical of what they found wrong. In Miss Polworth's school, every accomplishment was taught except moral and religious duties, these being considered only necessary to plebeian pupils. She and her companions were taught, by a sergeant, to walk properly, (2) to

(I) An Address to Heads of Schools and Families - Mrs. Trimmer -
- page 6

(2) Fanny Kemble, as a young girl, was placed under the tuition of a sergeant of the Royal Foot Guards. 'Thanks to his instruction I remained endowed with a straight back, well placed shoulders, an erect head, upright carriage, and resolute step'. - Record of a Girlhood - Vol. I. - page 139.

ascend and descend their carriage gracefully, (1) to use the pocket handkerchief with delicacy, 'to faint gracefully upon any sudden disaster or at the theatre when a despairing lover stabbed himself, to learn the harp and pianoforte, draw, dance, perform a reel with a skipping rope, or a hornpipe with the tambourine in perfect time, and to calculate merit by the weight of the purse'. (2) Miss Graspall attended a Boarding School for Girls, and there she was taught to gabble bad French, dance reels, thrum the pianoforte, spoil muslin, dress smartly and look down with contempt upon all those who had not been favoured with the same polite accomplishments. (3) Sarah Marlowe, the antithesis of Miss Graspall, describes what seems to be the general conception of the ideal aim of educational establishments for 'young ladies', - places 'where the girls were taught to be good Christians, good housewives, good wives, and good mothers'. (4) That was the middle class view. The governess-companion, Miss Emily Molesworth, had been at an 'excellent Boarding School', but whatever harmful influences might have been at work through the teaching in that school, were in her case removed, because 'her mind had been formed under the eye of an exemplary mother'. (5)

- (1) 'Girls' seminaries'. . . were all anxiety to be in the fashion. One of the most distinguished had a carriage suspended from the hall of attitude, to practise young ladies in mounting and descending the steps with grace'. (Private Education - E. Appleton - 1813 - page 234.)
- (2) 'The Orphan of Tintern Abbey' - Sophia Ziegenhirt - 1816 - Vol. I. - pp. 90 - 1.
- (3) 'Seabrook Village' - Sophia Ziegenhirt - 1811 - page 60.
- (4) Ibid. - page 80.
- (5) 'Seabrook Village' etc.

Sophia Ziegenhirt is by no means alone in her opinion that 'schooling' must be preceded by home training, or that the home influence must be working in conjunction with that of the school. It is an ever recurring theme. The basis of home training is love. Harriet Martineau (1802-76) made that point when she wrote, 'The fundamental difference between school and home is clear enough. At school everything is done by rule; by a law which was made without a view to any particular child, and which governs all alike; whereas at home, the government is not one of law . . . but of love, or at least of the mind of the parent, varying with circumstances and with the ages and disposition of the children',⁽¹⁾ and writing (in 1812) to her friend Zachary Macaulay, Hannah More (1745-1833) advised him not to send his son, Thomas (later the historian) to a public school at Westminster, unless the parents removed to Westminster, not so much to keep an eye on his youthful activities⁽²⁾ but to maintain the home atmosphere.

The education of the poor is not passed unnoticed by the writers of tales, because as a class they approved of the idea of popular education, not only as a humane, but as a religious, duty. In addition, they saw in a little education a safeguard against vice, the irreligion and subversive tendencies among the poor, especially if that education was along religious lines and the instruction taught the scholars to live industrious lives in the Heaven appointed station to which they had been

- (1) 'Household Education' -Harriet Martineau - 1861 - page 173.
 (2) Hannah More's Correspondence with Zachary Macaylay - ed. Arthur Roberts - 1860. - page 45.

called.

As the future of a country lies in its youth, and as 'ignorance is the parent of vice', there were in the moral and educational tales, the three main types of school which catered for the 'lower orders', all under the local patronage of the lord or lady of the Manor. These were, the Dame School, the Day School, and the Sunday School. Mrs. Worthy established, at Seabrook, a 'dame school' where fifteen children of both sexes and ages ranging from six years to ten were taught by Sarah Joyce - by no means a purist in her native tongue, but sensible and a devoted reader of the Bible - reading, spelling, the catechism and (for the girls) knitting stockings. The hours of instruction were: three in the morning for the girls and for the boys two, from one to three o'clock, Mrs. Worthy compensating the parents for the loss of these two hours. Sarah's little school was a happy place, not like that kept by a 'dame' who said, 'If I can keep a bit of quietness, it is as much as I can do, and as much as I am paid for'.^(I) Frank, the curate's son in 'The Canary Bird' (1817) attended the 'National' School for boys until he was eight years old and learnt his letters from the sand tray. The authoress pictures Frank, who by right of birth ought to have received his preliminary education at the 'dear little school by Mamma's work table,' taking his chance with twenty other little boys,

(I) The Bleak Age - J.L. & Barbara Hammond - Pelican Books - 1947 - page I40.

'the humble sons of the plough', to stay at the bottom, or
 rise to the top, according to his ability or attention. ⁽¹⁾ This
 insistence on individual effort is characteristic of the age,
 especially of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
 As Mrs. E.M. Field had noticed, the children of the tales are
 always represented as perfectly free agents, choosing the evil
 or the good and being rewarded or punished in consequence. ⁽²⁾
 At eight years, Frank was removed to a classical school - and
 here is that typical aristocratic view point - when he visited
 his earlier school, the boys spoke to him easily and cheerfully,
 but still with that respect due to his birth and his now super-
 ior education, 'a distinction which must be kept up' said the
 writer, 'if mankind do not wish to see a chaotic confusion in
 society', ⁽³⁾ and added with the obvious reflection, 'There must
 be great birds and little birds in the air; there must be men
 of high and men of low degree in society'. ⁽⁴⁾ The man of 'high
 degree' in 'The Canary Bird', Sir Charles Montford, was a
 liberal benefactor to the National School, but he was no very
 great help to it in any other way. However, he did not seem to
 interfere much with its management, which was better 'than to
 do so without understanding anything about it'. ⁽⁵⁾

Most of the well brought up young ladies in the tales of the

(1) The Canary Bird - Alicia Mant - 1817 - page 139.

(2) The Child and his Book - Mrs. E.M. Field - 1891 - page 248.

(3) The Canary Bird - Alicia Mant - 1817 - page 141.

(4) Ibid. - page 142.

(5) Ibid. - page 137.

period, besides periodically visiting the poor, and organising 'work-parties' on their behalf, taught in, or superintended, Sunday Schools. Such a school was that which appears in 'Display' (3rd. edition, 1815), where at first the young ladies of fashion were the teachers, attracted by the novelty and fashionable fad of being religious, but they wearied of well doing, especially when the scarlet and gold uniforms appeared in the town, and their places were taken by two or three ladies of a lower class - Betsy Pryke who had a haberdasher's shop, and Susannah Davy, daughter of an alehouse keeper, a profane violent man. The duties of the Sunday Schools as envisaged by Mrs. Trimmer, Sophia Ziegenhirt, Jane Taylor and others of that 'ilk', were the christian ones of, clothe, feed, alleviate suffering and read the Bible with understanding. Their aim was to teach, not a watered down christianity, or a polygot faith, but to train youth to conduct their lives in the principles of Christ's teaching, as interpreted and expounded in the New Testament, to have before their eyes, not the picture of a general God who was behind thought and action, the wind and the calm, but in the foreground of all things. Religion, Mrs. Hamilton considered as essential to the happiness of mankind. She accepted the Bible as truth and 'those passages of doubtful import which have chiefly engaged the attention of theologians, and on which the divisions of sects have been founded, appear (to me) not to constitute the essential doctrines of Christianity. These, we are expressly told in scripture, are so plain "that he that runneth may read them".

I consider that which is above my apprehension, I cannot be commanded to understand; but depending on Divine authority, I believe that what I understand not now, shall, when this fleshly veil is removed, be made clear to me hereafter'.⁽¹⁾

That, more or less, sums up the simple and direct faith of the authors and characters of the period. They believed with Dr. Murray, 'The Bible was written not for giants in logic, but for babes in Christ, and the earth was created not merely as a curious problem for philosophers to investigate, but as a platform on which Christians are to rehearse the virtues which shall be perfected for them in a better and holier world'.⁽²⁾

The education of the poor in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was considered as a religious duty and was the result of individual effort and charity. This was not, however, done without protest on the part of employers of labour. One farmer's wife in the neighbourhood of Cowslip Green objected to the attempt to educate the poor as an interference, as it were, with the purpose of the Almighty, holding that the labourers were predestined to be 'poor, ignorant, and wicked', but Hannah More and her sister seem to have made some headway against prejudice in the Cowslip Green district by arguing that schools would teach children not to rob orchards.⁽³⁾

(1) Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education - E. Hamilton - 2nd. edition - 1801 - Vol. I. pp. 107 - 8.

(2) 'Modern Society' - Catherine Sinclair - 1837 - page 273.

(3) Hannah More - Dictionary of National Biography - Vol. XIII. - page 864.

The objection to the attempt to educate the labouring classes is well illustrated in the remarks of Mr. Davies Giddy, M.P. for Bodmyn, during the debate on the Parochial Schools Bill (1807), 'However specious in theory the project might be of giving education to the labouring classes of the poor, it would teach them to despise their lot in life, instead of making them good servants in agriculture and other laborious employments'. Mr. Giddy, in the same debate, declared that they (the labouring classes), would use their new found power of reading and understanding to read seditious pamphlets, vicious books and publications against christianity. He foretold the compulsory legislature of 'strong arm' tactics to counteract a growing insolence towards superiors. Speaking (I) against the Bill, Mr. Pole Carew, the member for Fowey, drew attention to the cost on the landed interest of the country to educate another class, and while admitting that there might be an advantage in the way of morality in teaching the poor to read, could see 'neither utility nor morality in teaching them writing and arithmetic', to which Samuel Whitbread replied to the effect that writing and arithmetic, so far as they tended to increase and improve human understanding, tended also to improve morality. (2)

(1) Hansard - Vol. IX. - July 13th, 1807 - page 798.

(2) Hansard - Vol. IX. - July 22nd, 1807 - page 859.

The 'Preamble to the Bill' states '...whereas, the instruction of youth tends most materially to the promoting of morality and virtue ...whereas we had a most convincing proof of long experience in that part of the United Kingdom called Scotland' (August 4th, 1807 - page 1051).

The writers of the tales do not let pass unchallenged the question of educating the poor. Mr. Giddy's fears were later echoed by Percy Seyton. 'School', cried Percy, 'there is another of your righteous absurdities: what use is there in teaching the poor to read? It is only enabling them to study Paine and Carlisle',⁽¹⁾ and Dr. Barton who might be regarded a kind of Devil's Advocate asked Mrs. Worthy, 'Pray, may I ask you what good end you propose in sending all the poor children to school?'⁽²⁾ The answer in each case is what one would expect. Ellen Seyton said that the aim was not exclusively to teach the poor to read, but to 'supersede the taste for bad production by implanting a desire for good',⁽³⁾ and Mrs. Worthy unhesitatingly replied, 'the amendment of their morals'.⁽⁴⁾ Mrs. Trimmer would have agreed and both would have found chapter and verse for Richard Lovell Edgeworth's defence of educating the poor and the beneficial effect of that education. In a letter to Dr. William Stuart, Lord Primate of Ireland, he wrote, 'of three thousand boys who have been educated at the Sunday Schools in Gloucester, only one has been convicted of a crime: that of four thousand educated at Lancaster's school not one has been brought into a court of Justice',⁽⁵⁾ though, neither Mrs. Trimmer, Sophia Ziegenhirt, nor Mrs. Worthy with

(1) 'Going too Far' - 1825 - page 10.

(2) 'Seabrook Village', etc. - page 188.

(3) 'Going too Far' - page 10.

(4) 'Seabrook Village' - page 188.

(5) Memoirs of R.L. Edgeworth - 1820 - Vol. II. - page 461.

their Church of England leanings and principles would have welcomed the eulogy on the school conducted on lines suggested by Joseph Lancaster.

Education at home has pride of place in the tales of the period, and that follows two lines; training by a parent (usually the mother), or instruction imparted by a governess, with variations of aunt and interested adult. Governesses follow a conventional pattern; those whose influence was entirely bad, the direct descendants of Maria Edgeworth's Mademoiselle Panache, such as Catherine Sinclair's Miss Marabout, and those who, because of their own home training are able to instruct their pupils in the ways, not only of learning, but of virtue. Such are Miss Polson, Miss Weston, and Miss Molesworth whose education has been built up from a religious rather than a rational basis; who are seen not so much in a pedagogic capacity, as is Madame Rosier, but as moral signposts indicating the paths to virtuous living, and who represent the qualities Lady Olivia Neville desired most in governesses. Speaking about the accomplishments of Miss Marabout, she said, 'But I should have felt more sanguine if you could speak of her qualifications for forming the heart and understanding. It has been well observed that the care of a governess is like that of a bird for its young; for she knows that whenever her pupils are grown up she must abandon them, and her sole anxiety may be directed to the outward accomplishments on which her own credit depends'.⁽¹⁾

(1) Modern Accomplishments - C. Sinclair - 1836 - page 105.

The good governesses have the full confidence of pupils and mistress and live on equal terms with the household as honoured companions and not dependents. Not for them the mental agony and misery apparent in Charlotte Brontë's letter to Emily, (June, 8, 1839), 'I see more clearly than I have ever done before, that a private governess has no existence, is not considered as a living rational being, except as connected with the wearisome duties she has to fulfil', ⁽¹⁾ and the bitterness which is not quite hidden under the veneer of banter, in her letter to a friend Ellen Nussey (June, 15, 1839), ⁽²⁾ a bitterness that reminds one of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (1759-97) when, in a letter to the brother of her friend, Fanny Blood, she complained of the inferior standing a governess had, and that in spite of a superior education. Looking into the future, she feared the prospects of being a governess, surrounded by intellectual unequals and debarred the pleasures of perfect friendships, living on 'terms of civility and common benevolence without any interchange of little acts of kindness and tenderness'. ⁽³⁾ Charlotte Brontë (1816-55) lacked the serenity and apparent health of the governesses of fiction. Her experiences and temperament had given her a very ignoble opinion of the species, and she saw as their main asset and requisite for the

- (1) Life of Charlotte Brontë - Mrs. Gaskell - Everyman ed. - page 115.
 (2) v. The Brontës and their Circle - Clement Shorter (1896) - Wayfarer's Library ed. (1914) - page 67.
 (3) William Godwin - Kegan Paul - Vol. I. - page 184.

position 'the power of taking things easily as they came, and of making oneself comfortable and at home wherever we may chance to be' and added, 'qualities in which all our family are singularly deficient.'⁽¹⁾ One cannot picture Miss Molesworth, Miss Weston, and Miss Polson ever ruffled and ill at ease no matter in what company or situation they found themselves. But they moved in congenial surroundings, respected and loved, sure of touch and conscious of their own probity, because they were of the same mould as their creators, entitled by virtue of their ability to a seat at the table and a place in society.

Elizabeth Appleton, herself a governess,⁽²⁾ enumerates the qualities which constitute the 'finished governess', and explains the relationship between the parents and the preceptress. Her description would fit any of the three fictitious ladies already mentioned. She is careful to note that by 'finished' she does not mean an elegant dancer, fine pianoforte player, charming painter, or learned French grammarian, which she declares are useful accomplishments as 'resources against fashionable ennui', and necessary because of the 'present rage for them'⁽³⁾ (1813) - 'Her age is from five and twenty to forty . . . her countenance is open, mild and prepossessing; not from the influence of beauty, but from the general character of conscious

(1) The Brontës and their Circle, etc. - page 69.

(2) Governess to the children of the Countess of Leven - v. Dedication of a Practical Plan for the Studies of Young Ladies - E. Appleton - 1813.

(3) Miss Appleton suggests that between governess and pupil there should be at least a disparity of ten years - page 5 of above.

rectitude. Her dress is more handsome than fine; more neat than showy; her clothes are made genteely, but within extremes. Her whole air bespeaks the gentlewoman. Her language is correct, pure, and free from the slightest affectation, and her sentiments are naturally, cheerfully, and candidly delivered. To a strong and reflective mind are added a refined taste, correct judgment, good memory, watchful eye, and quick intellectual perfection. She is pious, patient, and affectionate, and is without prejudice . . . She has a mind well stored with the knowledge of nature; of history from the best authorities; of general geography, the manners and customs of nations; and of the grand outlines of astronomy; she is acquainted with the biography of her own and of other countries, and has a taste for literature. Music, French, drawing, may be taught by professors, but these also she has studied, although she values the acquisition of them only as they may be advantageous to her pupil upon quitting London masters for the season'.⁽¹⁾

Such a paragon is not lightly bought, and Miss Appleton makes a plea for allowing no consideration of finance to step between the parent and the best training for his child. Governesses, of a sort, could be procured cheaply, but she asks the parent, 'can you endure the frightful idea that your sweet child's failings will grow into vice? Can you run every risk, for a little saving of money?',⁽²⁾ and reminds him that he can

(1) Private Education - E. Appleton - 1813 - pp. 9 - 10.

(2) Ibid. - page 10.

afford to give entertainments and maintain a handsome establishment, he could surely give a 'deserving woman one hundred and fifty or two hundred guineas per annum, for dedicating her youth, abilities, strength, and mind to the service' of his children. ⁽¹⁾ She adds, moreover, that 'however the profession of governess be pleasing to an amiable-minded woman, yet she must have other motives in following it, than those of pleasure'. ⁽²⁾

A reader of the moral and educational tales written between 1790 and 1840 must be struck by the resemblance between Elizabeth Appleton's account of the 'finished governesses' and the parents and aunts who educated children at home - Mrs. Mills, Mrs. Worthy, Mrs. Delton, Mrs. Benson, Mrs. Wyndham, Mrs. Orme, Mrs. Conway, etc., not to mention interested people who influenced the lives of children, Mrs. Franklin, Lady Olivia Neville, Ellen Heathfield, Ellen Seyton, and Adoxa Milne. All are well informed, sympathetic, well bred, conscientious and painstaking, of apparently independent means, and rural. They tend to look back, and represent a stable element in a society which was beginning to lose the old loyalties and question the recognised conventions. None of them belong to the new industrialist class, often Dissenters and sprung from the yeoman or from the 'working class', a class which was making the new wealth of England, but were excluded from the central and local

(1) Private Education - E. Appleton - 1813 - page II.

(2) Ibid. - page II.

government and jealous of the class which kept them out, ⁽¹⁾ nor had they much interest in town life unless to point out the pitfalls there which trap the unwary. Their pleasures are domestic - paying social calls, walking, visiting the sick and being ladies bountiful. They recognise the divinely appointed order and although believing in the principle 'love thy neighbour', did not have the emancipating and classless vision of Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809) 'who was not a gentleman at all, never pretended to the title, and would probably have been rather affronted if any one had applied it to him'. ⁽²⁾ They would not have quarrelled with the thesis of Holcroft that if 'loving thy neighbour' were universally adopted as the motive behind human acts, prejudice would be eliminated and back-stair influence would be at a premium as none would have an axe to grind; gratitude to a benefactor, and a philanthropy based on self-interest and self-gratification would be eliminated by a mutual spirit of give and take; the false gods - false honour, false shame, vanity and emulation - would be destroyed, and that in a world governed by the principle, neither the healthy motives of honesty and honour, nor the unhealthy motives, - ease, desire for wealth, dread of punishment - would be required to excite to industry. ⁽³⁾ But they would not have countenanced his theory that no one would require

(1) English Social History - G.M. Trevelyan - Reprint Society edition - page 472.

(2) The English Novel - G. Saintsbury - Channels of English Literature - page 167.

(3) v. Holcroft's Memoirs - ed. Hazlitt - Vol. II.-pp. 129-33.

an incentive to work, because 'all would cheerfully' labour for the general good, a labour all the more genially borne, because the fruits of industry would be equally divided among the members of the community.

They were practical and little moved by the new scientific and mechanical world which was growing around them, in which painter and poet were weaving strange dreams, and in which the landscape painters were becoming conscious of 'blue skies with flying clouds, of thunder and drenching rain of sunlight and moonlight and the elements, not as symbols but as dramatic realities'⁽¹⁾. It was the picturesque and conventional that they admired in art, scenes such as, 'the silver crescent of a cloudless moon shown in solemn brightness over the distant hills, and lighted up the gaunt bare skeletons of many ancient trees, throwing their shadows upon the grass beneath, while the blue sky was studied with countless stars which were reflected in the dark gloomy bosom of the silent waters'⁽²⁾.

They admired the exotic and grotesque neither in art, nor life and in this respect remind one of Maria Edgeworth's opinion of some of Henry Fuseli's paintings (1741-1825). In a letter to Mrs. Ruston (April, 1813) she wrote, 'Turning from these drawings (a portfolio full of Michael Angelo's sketches, drawings and studies) to a room full of Fuseli's horribly distorted figures, I could not help feeling astonishment, not only at

(1) Aspects of British Art - ed. W.J.Turner - 1947 - page 162.

(2) Modern Society - Catherine Sinclair - 1837 - page 244.

the bad taste but at the infinite conceit and presumption of Fuseli's . . . pictures sprawling their fantastic lengths, like misshapen dreams.'⁽¹⁾ There spoke the Voice of law and order, of compactness and the credible. Milton's Satan which was accepted as 'the symbol of the new scientific forces in society,⁽²⁾ because he embodied intelligence, ingenuity and science in the cosmic struggle', and at the same time was a symbol of 'man's self-destruction and inevitable doom',⁽³⁾ did not interest them so much as did the devil. They saw no cosmic struggle, studied no sublime canvases like John Martin's (1789-1854) 'Fate of Babylon', or 'Belshazzar's Feast', but a society which would be disrupted if not based on Christian morality, as illustrated by the Bible. They themselves had the secret of contentment and happiness which they wished to pass on to others, especially as there were forces at work which were luring people away from their duties and obligations. The author of 'Going too Far' (1825) apologises for obtruding her judgment in matters of serious importance on the grounds that it be unpardonable for one 'who has tasted that the Lord is gracious' to remain idle while the 'servants of the Lord on one side are burnishing their weapons against the enemies of

(1) Maria Edgeworth - Chosen Letters - F.V. Barry - 1931 - page 174.

(2) Not surprising, considering the changing industrial world, and the revival of the eighteenth century taste for the sublime which was brought about by the upheaval and unrest of the post French war years, and the unexpected disillusionment of hopes placed in science and political reform.

(3) v. Art and the Industrial Revolution - F. Klingender - 1947 - page 103.

the Faith, who are ranging themselves under the Prince of Darkness on the other'. By temperament they stood for the very qualities against which the philosophy of the 'Romantic Movement' was a reaction. The pre-Romantic period was one 'when men were very conscious of the danger of chaos, of the anarchic tendencies of all strong passions', when 'intellect was valued as the most effective weapon against subversive fanatics', and when 'polished manners were praised as a barrier against barbarism, when Newton's orderly cosmos, in which the planets unchangingly revolve about the sun in law-abiding orbits, became an imaginative symbol of good government, when restraint in the expression of passion was the chief aim of education, and the surest mark of a gentleman'.⁽¹⁾ Substitute 'natural' for 'polished manners', and the chief aim of education being 'the formation of a christian character', rather than 'restraint in the expression of passion', and one would have a vivid picture of the aims of the mammas and guardians as interpreted by the moral and educational tale.

When Hannah More (1745-1833) wrote, 'a woman sees the world, as it were, from a little elevation in her own garden, whence she takes an exact survey of home scenes, but takes not in that wider range of distant prospects which he who stands on a loftier eminence commands'⁽²⁾ she sums up the strength (and weak-

(1) History of Western Philosophy - Bertrand Russell → 1946 - pp. 702 - 703.

(2) 'Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education' - Hannah More - 1799 - Vol. II. - page 25.

ness) of ladies like Mrs. Worthy and Mrs. Wyndham and Mrs. Orme. To them the home was the world in miniature, with its laughter (albeit subdued) and tears, its comedy and tragedy, its meanness and high endeavour. It was from the domestic circle that they obtained their philosophy of life, a philosophy based on practical observations and experience, and not on the gleanings from other minds. Hence it is that books do not play a very important part in the training but good conversation does, a conversation stimulated and kept alive by the parents. Idle chatter was not encouraged, but the art of listening was. 'I have never heard any persons converse as my father and mother were accustomed to converse', said Mrs. Sherwood, 'My mother never suffered her children to interrupt conversation. We were compelled to listen, whether willing or not. My father not only conversed in a superior way himself, but he gave the tone to all his visitors and to all his pupils. I can hardly say how young I was when I got ideas of other countries and other times, and other modes of life, such as, by the modern style of education could never possibly be obtained; and this through the simple means of listening to my father's conversation'.⁽¹⁾ The little masters and mistresses certainly learnt to observe, listen, and talk intelligently, although an abnormal amount of time seems to have been occupied in observation and discussion.

(1) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - 1854 - page 38.

Such a society as that depicted in the tales, with its unit the family circle, is aristocratic in outlook. It tends to think and act along lines of duty. It does not deal with abstract theories, neither in religion, politics, nor living, but believes in decisive action, consistent with the dictates of duty, unlike the philosophical radicals of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries who were dreamers of a golden age which would eventually come upon the world without revolution and without violence, as the hectic in the world's blood would be cooled in time because of the innate goodness of men, and moral and political improvement would be 'gradual, calm, and rational'.^(I) - Human nature is, however, so constituted that it is seldom patient, and the reformer is often so contemptuous of the philosopher that he must hasten the sought for millenium, with the result that change comes upon a community before it can adjust itself to it. - They have a quiet confidence in every act they commit and every word they utter. None of them suffer from diffidence or inferiority complexes, but conduct their lives as if they had a mission to perform, as indeed they had - the training of future wives and mothers, and leaders of men. The good parents, guardians, preceptors, and governesses were active in well doing, drawing moral lessons from the happenings of every day life and seldom

(I) Holcroft's Memoirs - ed. Hazlitt (1816) - Vol. II. - page 122.

allowing a situation or incident to pass without linking it with a subject for morality. 'The death of a playfellow, or acquaintance, will afford an opportunity for dropping a few observations on the uncertainty of life; the sight even of a beautiful and tender corpse where there is no danger of infection, is a very useful and impressive lesson'.⁽¹⁾ This reminds one of Hannah More's experience at the bedside of one of her pupils at Cheddar of some thirty years before, an experience which she wished Zachary Macaulay to explain to his children. 'I never attended a more edifying dying bed. (1818) With ulcerated lungs and inflammation of the liver, she discovered something more than resignation. It was a sort of humble, grateful triumph. She was obliged to pray against impatience for death, so ardent was her desire to be with her Saviour. Oh, how I envied her! I write this for your children'.⁽²⁾ The writers of the early nineteenth century were like those of the seventeenth; they did not hide from children the fact of death and dying.

As the majority of the writers, thinking through their characters, had as the primary object of their work the inculcation of correct principles, not rules, and the expression of such sentiments as would be likely to produce 'some beneficial effects on the youthful candidate for Heaven',⁽³⁾ the family

- (1) Private Education - E. Appleton - 1813 - pp. 211-12.
- (2) Letter of H. More to Zachary Macaulay - ed. Roberts - 1860 - page 110.
- (3) Advertisement to Ellen or The Young Godmother - 3rd. edition - 1815 - A. Mant.

circle was a natural starting and rallying point. Very few of the tales wander far from the home and its immediate neighbourhood,⁽¹⁾ and even on a desert island where one would think that the conventions and recognised standards of conduct might be in jeopardy, the old ethical tape measure is employed and life conducted with a view towards the existence beyond. A father who with his daughter and her nurse had survived a shipwreck, being washed ashore on an uninhabited island, prayed that he might be enabled to bring his daughter up in the beauty of holiness and that either amidst a world of varied pleasure, or in their solitary island 'she might ever look forward to that heavenly home purchased for her by a Saviour's Love'.⁽²⁾ The same father warned his daughter, Leila, not to let her imagination run away with her, when, having named a nest of turtle doves, Bob, Harry, Billy, Fanny, Lucy, and Kitty, (much more prosaic than Mrs. Trimmer's names for the nest of robins) she had pretended that the parent bird had spoken to them and that they had nodded and said 'yes'.⁽³⁾

The family being the unit, unquestioning obedience to parental authority is demanded. This demand is not unreasonable because parents are usually depicted as acting in the best interests of their children. The view point of 'father or mother

(1) A collection of tales called 'Fireside Companion' has as a sub-title 'Tales of Home and Happiness' - c. 1856 - and has among its contents - Parental Affection, The Happy Family, Tenderness to Mothers, Family Love, The Home Circle.

(2) 'Leila' or 'The Island' (1839) - Ann Fraser - Tytler - 1877 edition - page 5.

(3) Ibid.

knows best' and 'little boys and girls should always conclude that what their papas and mammas tell them to do is right and should cheerfully acquiesce in their wishes whatever they may be' ⁽¹⁾ is regarded as just, ⁽²⁾ because where the child defies or acts contrary to the wishes of the parent, disasters follow. The corollary is, of course, equally true. Family harmony depends on the conscious acceptance by each member of the family, of obligations and duties. This dependence is stressed by Hannah More. 'The very frame and being of societies, whether great or small, public or private is jointed and glued together by dependence. Those attachments which arise from, and are compacted by, a sense of mutual wants, mutual affection, mutual benefit and mutual obligation are the cement which secures the union of the family as well as the state'. ⁽³⁾ The world of today may regard Mrs. Worthy, or Madame Rosier, or Mrs. Orme as over knowledgeable and exacting, and agree with Lord Frederick Hamilton that Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild were 'self-righteous prigs of the deepest dye', ⁽⁴⁾ but they were right in seeing duties as a unifying element in society, and rights as a disruptive agent. The cheerful performance of duties, and

(1) The Canary Bird - A.C.Mant - 1817 - page 168.

(2) The mother in Mrs. Markham's tale - The Dressing Room Door, New Children's Friend - 1832 - asked, 'Will you in future have so much confidence in me as to believe that when I lay any command on you, it is for your own good, even though you do not apprehend the reason, nor see the immediate end?' - page 101.

(3) Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education - H. More - Vol. II. - 1799.

(4) The Days Before Yesterday - Lord Frederick Hamilton - Black Jacket edition - page 42.

the carrying into public life the discipline and moral training of the home, would, they claimed lead to contentment and real happiness, but the home must never be forgotten nor must the thoughts stray far from it. When the canary in Alicia Mant's tale had left the safety and protection of the cage and room, he rued the new found freedom and came to the conclusion 'the novelty of my situation was far from having the charms which I had frequently pictured to myself that it must possess, and this I think is a strong argument in favour of contentment in our station, whether in relation to little birds, or to little boys and girls'.⁽¹⁾

(1) The Canary Bird - A.C. Mant - 1817 - page 38.

CHAPTER 6.

A NEW DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

The women writers of educational and moral tales look back rather than forward in their moral outlook. They are conventional and orthodox in most matters concerning conduct. Are they equally orthodox in their treatment of women and her place in society? Do they regard them as other than the 'fair sex'? To answer this it is advisable to retrace steps at least as far back as Lord Chesterfield (1694-1773) who, for almost a century was the frightful ogre of the female world, being accused, among other things, of advocating sexual immorality. The virtues he admired in women were cheerfulness of mind, tenderness and benignity of heart, natural breeding, good sense and beauty directed by judgment, the last named because he realised that beauty was to a woman what wit was to a man. These were the qualities which endeared women to men 'But', he wrote, 'how are they changed and how shocking do they become, when the rage of ambition or the pride of learning, agitates and swells those breasts, where only love, friendship and tender care should dwell'. Mrs. Orme would surely not disagree. It was later he told his son, 'Women are

(1) For a defence of Lord Chesterfield v. The Letters of Lord Chesterfield ed. Bonamy Dobrée - 1932 - pp. 162-172.

(2) Essay 'Common Sense' No. 93 - v. Chesterfield and his Critics - R. Coxon - 1925 - pp. 14 - 15.

only children of a larger growth; they have an entertaining tattle and sometimes wit; but for solid, reasoning good sense I never in my life knew one that had it, or who reasoned or acted consequently for four-and-twenty hours together', ⁽¹⁾ but where is the cynic, in his conception of marriage as a partnership, when in a letter to George Lyttleton (19th June, 1742) he congratulates him on his marriage and writes, '... to wish you joy were frivolous, that is certain and present; but whenever that does decline, as from its nature it one day must, may all its sweetness turn to strength ... and may that serener and more lasting state so insensibly succeed your present tumultuous one that the transition may not be perceived ... If she has a head to discern merit and a heart to value it, and if she brings but with her the truth, the tenderness and all the other virtues she will meet with, even my wishes for your mutual happiness can neither exceed nor survive it'. ⁽²⁾

In the same period Madame Geoffrin (1699-1777) who played an important part in French literary and artistic life wrote to the Empress Catherine of Russia, and in her letter gave an account of her grandmother's views on education for women, which may be summed up in the sentence, 'She regarded education as superfluous for a woman'. Mrs. Trimmer, Maria Edgeworth, and Mrs. Barbauld would have been horrified to cloak ignorance on a theme or subject in mother-wit as did Madame Cheminian, who

(1) Coxon - page 162.

(2) Letters of Lord Chesterfield - ed. Dobrée - 1932 - No. 726 - Vol. II. - pp. 501 -2.

'spoke so agreeably of the things she knew nothing of, that no one descried she should know them better; and when her ignorance showed itself too plainly, she extricated herself by her jests, which disconcerted the pedants who wished to humiliate her', and would have condemned the practice, while appreciating the humour of, her belief that if her granddaughter was a fool, 'knowledge would make her self-confident and unbearable, but if she had wit and sense she would make up the deficiency in knowledge by tact and perception'. Madame Geoffrin's grandmother, wise woman of the world, saw the value of a ready tongue and wit for a woman's battle with the world, but what the granddaughter owed to Madame Cheminian was what many of the writers from Mrs. Barbauld to Mrs. Sherwood, owed to their mothers. 'She taught me to read, and she made me read a great deal; she taught me to think and made me reason; she taught me to know men and made me say what I thought of them, and told me how she judged them also. ^(I) She obliged me to give her an account of all my movements and all my feelings and she corrected them with so much sweetness and in-

(I) Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802) an upholder of the proprieties, said that women ought to have a knowledge of men, even through the reading of novels for, 'how can young women who are secluded from the other sex from their infancy, form any judgment of men if they are not to be assisted by such books as delineate manners?' (Plan for the conduct of Female Education - 1797 - page 34).

(1)

dulgence that I never hid anything of what I thought or felt; my interior was as visible to her as my exterior. She said that masters would have made me lose my time, and she never gave me any. She could not endure the elegances that dancing masters teach; she only desired me to have the grace which nature gives to a well formed person'.⁽²⁾

The narrow limits which Madame Cheminian set for the education of women was broadened in the next period, when the Bluestockings, headed by the aristocratic Mrs. Delany (1700-1788), Mrs. Montagu (1720-1800), Mrs. Piozzi (1741-1821), and Mrs. Chapone (1727-1801) launched the attack which was to raise the moral and intellectual standards of the middle and upper classes.⁽³⁾ They stood for the principle 'that women ought to be liberally educated and that they had a right of entry with the intellectual world, that they were not mere ornaments for the drawing-room and ball-room, intended only for man's diversion, but fit to converse on an equality with them, to talk as Johnson and Reynolds understood talking, not merely the tittle-tattle of the tea-table.⁽⁴⁾ This conception of the cultured, intellectual woman, was not acceptable to Richard Lovell Edgeworth's grandmother who, according to her grandson, was singularly averse to all learning in a lady,

- (1) It was a common practice for the daughters in the tales of the 19th century to keep diaries which they showed their mothers, or to discuss with them their thoughts and feelings.
- (2) v. Madame Geoffin and her Salon - Janet Aldis - 1905 - pp. 11-13.
- (3) For an estimate of the 'Bluestockings', vide 'Discovery of the Bluestockings' - Thesis (1947) by Mary L. Robbie.
- (4) English Men and Manners in the 18th Century - H.S. Turberville - page 110.

beyond reading the Bible, and being able to cast up a week's household account, ⁽¹⁾ an accomplishment which was one that Miss Belmont declared was what man expected of women. ⁽²⁾

The strength of character and cultural activity which the Bluestockings sought to foster in women but not, however, by neglecting their traditional role, had few out and out devotees among men, who of the late eighteenth and (especially) the nineteenth century were willing to take women into an intellectual partnership, but could not see them in any other setting except the home. ⁽³⁾ Men still clung to man's protective instincts as far as women were concerned and were suspicious of independence in a woman. To Dr. Erasmus Darwin, (1731-1802) for instance, a womanly disposition was one that bowed to the storm and did not brace itself, was pliant rather than robust. Strength of character, however excellent, was, he thought, liable to alarm the members of both sexes. He much preferred 'softness of manners, complacency of countenance, gentle un- hurried motion' ⁽⁴⁾ and a voice clear and yet tender. William Godwin (1756-1836), who must have been an endless source of amusement to ladies like Mrs. Opie, (1769-1853) especially in

- (1) R.L. Edgeworth's Memoirs - 1820 - Vol. I. - page 105.
 (2) v. The Orphan of Tintern Abbey - Sophia F. Ziegenhirt - 1816 - Vol. I. - page 17.
 (3) In America, Mrs. Butler (Fanny Kemble), writing to a Mrs. Jameson (1835) mentions that women lectured upon all imaginable subjects from the franchise, public prostitution, to the 'frantic vagaries of so-called Free Love' - Records of Later Life - F. Kemble - Vol. I. - page 27.
 (4) A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education, etc. - E. Darwin - 1797 - pp. 10-11.

(I)

his amatory skirmishings, saw men and women as partners, each deriving benefit from the characteristics of the other. 'Woman stands in need of his (man's) constancy to inspire her with firmness and at present (1799) of his science and information to furnish to her resources of amusement, and materials for studying. Women richly repay us for all that we can bring into the common stock, by the softness of their natures, the delicacy of their sentiments, and that peculiar and instantaneous sensibility by which they are qualified to guide our tastes and to correct our scepticism',⁽²⁾ and at a much earlier date, the qualities which John Calvin (1509-1564) sought for in a wife were presumably what he expected to find in women in general - 'modest, decent, simple, contented, gentle, and able and willing to take care of him'.⁽³⁾ These were qualities similar to what Erasmus Darwin said would contribute in a large measure to reform the morals of the age.⁽⁴⁾

Although the men were willing to share intellectual pursuits, they expected certain conventions to be observed. The drawing-room, they granted, was a fit setting for a lady, but not the

- (1) 'It would have entertained you highly to have seen him (Godwin) bid me farewell. He wished to salute me but his courage failed him. "Will you give me nothing to keep for your sake, and console me during my absence" murmured out the philosopher, "not even your slipper? I had it in my possession once, and need not have returned it!" This was true; my shoe had come off, and he had put it in his pocket for some time.' - Memorials of the Life of Mrs. Opie - C.L. Brightwell - 1854 - pp. 59-60 - written when Mrs. Opie was Miss Amelia Alderson.
- (2) Letter to Mrs. Reveley - William Godwin - C. Kegan Paul - Vol. I.- pp. 336-7.
- (3) Calvin - R.N. Carew Hunt - Centenary Press - 1933 - page 100.
- (4) v. A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education, etc. - page 67.

study, and serious topics, such as politics and religion, were hardly suitable conversation between the sexes. Hannah More noted this in 1799 when she complained that even those women who kept the best company found it an established custom by the other sex to 'postpone everything like instructive discourse till the ladies are withdrawn; their retreat serving as a kind of signal for the exercise of intellect'.⁽¹⁾ Such a state of affairs existed at the house party at Barnard Castle, where the conversation between the sexes was clever and intelligent rather than profound and intellectual.⁽²⁾

There seems general agreement among the moral and educational tale writers of the early and mid nineteenth century, that women were not the intellectual inferiors of men, but that their sphere of influence was less, and predominantly that of the home. That being the opinion, it followed that the education of women should be strictly feminine and useful as far as it determined character, but that the acquiring of mere knowledge for 'show' and decorative purposes was the wrong aim of education,⁽³⁾ and that character was not to be sacrificed to accomplishments. The acquiring of knowledge was by no means condemned, but it was to be such as would bring pleasure to the domestic circle, give dignity to the character, and be the

- (1) *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* - Hannah More - Vol. II. - page 45.
- (2) *v. Modern Society* - a novel - Catherine Sinclair - 1837.
- (3) *v. Woman in her Social and Domestic Character* - Mrs. Sandford - 6th edition - 1839 - page 177.

(I)
 product of neither rivalry nor jealousy. There was a general dislike of the type who, like Lady Howard in 'Modern Accomplishments (1836) had early in life determined to be 'prodigiously clever', and agreement with Sir Francis Howard's opinion of his daughter's training under her tutors and governesses. Matilda Howard had to acquire a 'supercilious' knowledge of history and mathematics and had to repeat the names of every captain of cavalry at the Battle of Blenheim. Her governess had been dismissed for ignorance 'because she could not recollect how many children Queen Anne had', which the worthy baronet thought was stupid because not one of them lived a year. He also recalled that he had caught his daughter in tears over a primrose because she had called it a 'monopetalous Corrola' instead of 'some other designation equally insignificant to her'.⁽²⁾

It was at such useless knowledge that Mrs. Sandford complained. She knew that the acquiring of knowledge was not, in the nineteenth century a long laborious process⁽³⁾ - the short cut to Parnassus is not a modern attempt - and that in its ease there was the danger that in over-feeding, digestion might be

(1) v. Modern Accomplishments - Catherine Sinclair - 1836 - page 109.

(2) Ibid. - page III.

(3) 'If grammar be dry and abstruse, its necessity is superseded - if the dictionary be irksome, there is the interlined translation - if the classical author be obscure and ponderous, there are the lucid paraphrase and the elegant abridgment. Be the nut ever so hard, the kernel is extracted. Our very babes may suck the sweets of Froissart, Robertson, and Hume; and follow with infantile curiosity the retreat of the Ten Thousand' - Female Education - Mrs. Sandford - 6th edition - 1839 - pp. 180-1.

impossible, and that in such an anxiety to impart brilliancy, it was for display rather than for use. She pointed out that the acquisition of easy knowledge removed the dignity of knowledge, and, contrasting the training of boys who 'encounter the fag of the student before they can carry off the glory of the scholar', with that of a girl, recommended that the education of girls should be more solid and 'less flashy', and that 'instead of sipping like butterflies at every flower', they laid in a store of useful learning for future use, because 'it is not to glitter in a sunbeam and display a ceaseless variety of gay and gaudy colours, that woman should be educated; but to occupy her station with grace, and to fulfil its duties with humility'.⁽¹⁾ Duties, it will be noticed, Mrs. Sandford emphasised, not 'Rights'. Her circle did not see the problem of women as Mary Godwin Wollstonecraft saw it. Marriage, children, good works, were full time occupations. Broken marriages and the victims of what Mary Wollstonecraft aptly called 'left-handed marriages'⁽²⁾ were the result not of social conditions and woman's limited horizon, but of weak character and poor training in youth. To them there was no need for women to enter the arena of professional competition with men in medicine, law, or divinity, because the calling of wife and mother was of the noblest, and one for which women by their natures were eminently fitted. To them a woman's beauty was no

(1) Woman in her Social and Domestic Character - Mrs. Sandford-6th edition - 1839 - pp. 182-3.

(2) v. Rights of Women - Mary Wollstonecraft - 1891 edition - page 90.

greater asset than her intellect.

An excellent picture is given by Mr. Belmont, who held strong views on 'bluestockings', of what he considered an ideally educated woman. She must have firmly rooted religious principles which could withstand the onslaught of art and sophistry; be well read in the works of the best authors, both sacred and profane; have a thorough knowledge of the history, government, laws and constitution; be blessed with a retentive memory and discriminating taste and judgment; give an opinion when called upon with modesty and firmness; keep silent when in the company of men of scientific knowledge and through her attention to improve her own stock of knowledge; be proficient in French and Italian, the one for conversation, the other for poetry; be perfect in geography and astronomy; the last of importance because it not only 'enlarges the mind and understanding, but it also lifts the soul from earth to heaven and brings us to a more perfect knowledge of the Creator of life and light and convinces us more fully of our insignificance in the vast scale of created beings, thereby correcting that foolish pride which too often leads us to value ourselves too highly'. Belmont admits of Music, dancing and drawing provided they had amusement value only and did not engross that time 'that should be employed in the more necessary duties of domestic life'.^(I) Where could such a paragon be

(I) The Orphan of Tintern Abbey - S. Ziegenhirt - 1816 - Vol. I. - pp. 18-20.

found but among the Edgeworths, Barbaulds, Hamiltons, Sinclairs, Appletons of the period and their literary creations, and where could they spring from but some such room as belonged to the orphan of Tintern Abbey? - 'The walls were covered with a light plain paper; a neat sofa was placed on one side, with a long table before it, divided into three compartments, one for work, the middle a complete secretary, the other end materials for drawing; a harp, an upright pianoforte, a telescope fixed on a stand, a small bookcase filled with a choice selection of books in English, French, and Italian. ⁽¹⁾ - Where but from the 'middling' ranks of society and from that section of it that did not suffer from the fears that Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton (1758-1816) entertained of it, 'the silly gratification of being considered of a certain class,' ⁽²⁾ and which were fully sensible of the advantages they enjoyed and the opportunities of enlarging what Mrs. Hamilton called 'their sphere of observation' ⁽³⁾ on all sides.

- (1) The Orphan of Tintern Abbey - S. Ziegenhirt - 1816 - Vol. II.- page 209.
 (2) Memoirs of the Late Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton - Miss Benger - 1818 - Vol. I. - page 147.
 (3) Ibid. - Vol. I. page 147.

CHAPTER 7.

LIGHTER TOPICS.

The consideration and kindness which are always shown to deserving objects, in the moral and educational tales, were extended in full measure to the animal kingdom. As all living things are the creation of the Almighty, they serve a specific purpose - an often recurring theme - and because of this purpose, even the humblest creatures must not be despised. Cruelty in any shape or form is to be deplored, but the readers are warned not to indulge in over sentimentalising the sufferings of dumb creatures, and to avoid the danger of irrational prejudices. 'We may grieve', said Mrs. Mills, 'for the sufferings of the poor fly within the grasp of its enemy, but 'tis unjust for our resentment to rise against the spider who acts only in conformity to the stated laws providence has implanted in its nature'⁽¹⁾. Mrs. Benson reminded her children that tender feelings towards animals must not make people forgetful of those who had a higher claim upon their attention, namely the poor, and that no kind of food ought to be wasted on 'inferior' creatures, which was designed for mankind.⁽²⁾ One remembers that Chaucer's Madame Eglantine was a notorious sinner in that respect. There is rather a horrible example of cruelty in 'Anecdotes of the Wyndham Family' (1791). The

(1) Visit for a Week or Hints on the Improvement of Time - Lucy Peacock - 1794 - page 82.

(2) History of the Robins - Mrs. Trimmer. - page 7.

Wyndhams had called upon their neighbours, the Sidneys, and were much grieved to see a blind goldfinch in a cage. They were horrified to learn that the son, Ned, had blinded it with a red hot knitting needle to make it sing better. The same delightful youth summoned them all to the edifying spectacle of a cat tormenting a lame mouse, a spectacle which Arthur Wyndham would not look at because it was both cowardly and cruel. (I)

A love of animals raises some awkward questions. Philip Quarll doubted the ethics of killing animals for food, especially on an island where he was the interloper, but took refuge in the comforting belief that all things were created for the use of man. (2) Mrs. Sarah Trimmer, speaking through Mrs. Benson, deplored cruelty to animals, but had decided opinions on the future state of all dumb animals. 'It is wrong to grieve for the death of animals as we do for the loss of our friends, because they certainly are not of so much consequence to our happiness; and we are taught to think their sufferings end with their lives, as they are not religious beings, and therefore killing them even in the most barbarous manner is not like murdering a human creature, who is perhaps unprepared to give an account of himself at the tribunal of Heaven'. (3) In the same tale, Mrs. Wilson, the farmer's wife, defended the killing of chickens on economic grounds - they

(1) The Blind Child - Mrs. Pinchard - 1791.

(2) Children's Miscellany - 1788 - page 251.

(3) Fabulous Histories (History of the Robins) - Mrs. Trimmer - page 47.

would breed so quickly that in a short time man could not feed them - but endeavoured to make their short sojourn on earth as happy as possible. Mrs. Wilson had also strong convictions against angling and advocated the 'net', unlike Mrs. Butler (Fanny Kemble) who enjoyed fishing, but while she never became completely hardened to the alleged agonies of the fish, descried the use of worms and live bait, and to spare the worm, concocted as bait, a paste, 'most exquisitely compounded of rice, flour, peach brandy, and fine sugar'⁽¹⁾ - it is difficult to forgive the fish for scorning such ambrosial fare. Mrs. Wilson deals with the problem of 'pounding' cattle. There must have been many instances of 'impounders' of stray animals neglecting to carry out their obligations to supply them with sufficient food and water, because in the 'Cruelty to Animals' Acts of 1847 and 1854, any person is authorised to enter a place where animals have been impounded without food and water for more than twelve hours and supply them, the cost of such food to be paid, before removal, by the owner of the animal or animals. Mrs. Wilson's point of view was: 'I should much rather pound the owners, through whose neglect or dishonesty it generally happens that horses trespass on other people's land. If any beast accidentally gets into my grounds, I send it home to its owner, for it certainly is no wilful fault in the creature to seek the best pastures it can find'.⁽²⁾

(1) Records of Later Life - F.A. Kemble - 1882 - Vol. I. - page 67.
 (2) History of the Robins - Mrs. Trimmer - page 118.

The phenomenon of learned animals, such as the pig that could spell and tell the time is characteristically dismissed by Mrs. Trimmer with the explanation that there must be some trickery, that a wise providence has not endowed the brute creation with the faculty to attain human sciences, and consequently, while man can improve nature, he cannot change the nature of anything. 'In any case', said Mrs. Trimmer, 'it may be an agreeable amusement, but will never answer any important purpose to mankind'.⁽¹⁾ There spoke the voice of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Neither man nor beast must leave the niche appointed, nor strive against destiny; nothing is but what serves a useful purpose. Even refraining from crushing a caterpillar is not just an act of grace, for did not the Lady Augusta lose an eligible suitor because she purposely stepped upon a harmless caterpillar?⁽²⁾ In a different category from 'learned animals' are those endowed with an almost human sagacity and acumen. Such a one was Dash, who seeing Selima, the cat, stand shivering on the brink of the stream was tempted to take pleasure in her discomfort and fear. "Why Dash, my good fellow!" exclaimed Mr. Howard, 'this will never do - this is shameful want of gallantry on your part - fetch, Dash, fetch,' and he pointed to where poor pussy stood, with one paw in the water, shaking as if in an ague fit. Dash sprang across. His first intention evidently was to have seized Selima by the neck, for a jealous pang did sometimes assail

(1) History of the Robins - Mrs. Trimmer - page 49.

(2) Moral Tales - Maria Edgeworth - 2nd. edition - 1806 - page 199.

him, but he thought better of it, and stooping down, she jumped upon his back, and the next moment was deposited in safety at the feet of her little mistress." ⁽¹⁾ Jemmy, the donkey, puts the case for all domesticated animals when he brings his adventures to a close with the words: 'I positively assert, that I am a patriotic ass; love my country, respect the law, and take a lively interest in her prosperity; and though I stand up in the defence of my own class, I presume to think, the object I have in view does not, in the smallest degree, implicate us as a body. We are willing to give you our labour, submit to your guidance, and in all respects conduct ourselves as faithful servants, and the only return we ask is kindness - ⁽²⁾ the simple office of humanity'.

Not only do pets occupy very minor positions in the tales of the period, (1790-1840) but tales for children are not very informative about the games children and young people played in the early nineteenth century. There are the favourites of any age - climbing trees, fishing, marbles, archery, spinning tops, dressing and undressing dolls. Among the toys found are baby-houses, carts, coaches, whips, trumpets and bird-organs. ⁽³⁾ When Madame de Rosier took the young Harcourts to a large toy-shop which had been lately opened 'under the direction of an ingenious gentleman who had employed proper workmen to execute

(1) Leila, or The Island - Ann Fraser-Tytler - 1877 edition -page 39.

(2) The Adventures of a Donkey → Arabella Argus - 1815 - pp. 230-31.

(3) Instruments for teaching birds to sing - Oxford Dictionary.

rational toys for the rising generation', Herbert and his sister Favoretta, were horrified to find neither whips, phaetons, coaches, baby-houses, soldiers, nor drums. What they did see, Favoretta designated as vulgar looking and fit only 'for orange women's daughters' The Harcourts were not, however, 'rational children', at least until moulded and fashioned by the skilful hands of their governess, and consequently looked at the toys in the shop through prejudiced eyes. Great carts, wheel-barrows, bibloquets, battledores, shuttlecocks, cabinets with drawers for young mineralogists, magnifying glasses, materials for basket making, dry-printing presses, boxes of models of common furniture, small silk balloons which when inflated revealed a map of the world, (1) were no more to their liking than they would have been to Emily Barton who was led back to the childhood she was fast losing, through dolls, and doll's houses completely furnished. (2)

Maria Edgeworth, as a disciple of Locke and staunch follower of her father and Thomas Day, was a firm advocate of rational toys, toys which would not only divert but instruct, (3) and which gave employment for the hands as well as the head. With this rational outlook, there developed a moral one, and in the first decade of the nineteenth century there were produced ed-

(1) Moral Tales - M. Edgeworth → 2nd. ed. 1806 - Vol. III - page 18.

(2) v. Mrs. Leicester's School - Charles and Mary Lamb - 1809.

(3) 'A set of toys which are made to imitate the actions of men and women and the notes or noises of birds and beasts - many of these are ingenious in their construction and happy in their effect, but that effect unfortunately is transitory.'
(Practical Education - 1798 - Vol. I. - page 4.)

educational and moral games. In his 1815 edition of 'The Adventures of a Donkey', William Darton, Junior, advertised, along with 'Instructive Conversation Cards' and 'Quadrupeds on Cards', Newton's 'New Game of Virtue Rewarded, and Vice Punished', for the amusement of Youth of both sexes, on Canvas, with a case and Tetotum, Counters, and Pyramids, complete price 9s.', and Newton's 'New Game of the Mansion of Bliss'. The date of the 'New Game of Virtue Rewarded' seems to have been 1810. This game showed such symbolic scenes and figures as 'The Stocks', 'House of Correction', 'Faith', 'Providence'.⁽¹⁾ According to F.J. Harvey Darton, the production of the educational game got its impetus from the Abbé Gaultier who settled in France in 1780 and fled to England during the Revolution. In London he founded a school for educating the children of French refugees, wrote many educational books and invented games to go with them.⁽²⁾ Charades⁽³⁾ - which have a certain educational value - such as are to be found in 'Jane Eyre' and 'Vanity Fair' have no part, as far as has been ascertained, in tales for children, a fact little to be wondered at when the authors with the possible exceptions of Mrs. Sherwood and Maria

(1) v. Children's Books in England - F.J. Harvey Darton - C.U.P.)
- 1932 - page 153.

(2) Ibid. - page 152.

(3) In the Monthly Catalogue of the Monthly Review (July 1812) is advertised 'The Cabinet of Entertainment, a new and silent Collection of Aenigmas, Charades, Rebuses etc. with Solutions (1811) - Harmless Amusement'.

Edgeworth, did not seem to indulge in the pastime of play acting in youth. Dancing finds little place in the moral tales. Maria Edgeworth enjoyed Jane Taylor's 'Display', a tale for young people, but wished that the good people in it had not objected to the young people going to balls. ⁽¹⁾ She had no grievance against dancing, both that to be found in the Assembly Room and the spontaneous dancing of children, such as that of Susan and her friends when they welcomed home the lamb. The objection to dancing in the scheme of things is typical of the genuinely christian homes to which women like Jane Taylor belonged, and the Methodist, Mr. Leddenhurst expresses what must have been the opinion of many. He found that dancing indisposed the mind to serious reflection and serious enjoyment. He had grave doubts about the possibility of the flower of morality blooming in the heat of the dance hall, and declared that if he could attend such functions, as dance assemblies, without hurt to his own mind and to the mind of others he 'really should not feel disposed to go dancing through a world so full of sin and misery as this is'. ⁽²⁾ Mrs. Sherwood, whose youth was by no means devoid of dancing and charades, wrote with pride that at Nice when her family were much importuned by officers to attend a ball, 'not one of my young people wished to give way to the solicitations of the officers'.

(1) Letter from Maria Edgeworth to Mrs. Barbauld (1816) v. Memoirs of Mrs. Barbauld - A.L. le Breton - 1874 - page 171.

(2) Display - Jane Taylor - 3rd. edition - 1815 - page 100.

Dancing, to the Sherwoods, made no contribution to pious, beautiful and exalted associations. Honest convictions are to be regarded with respect but the modern mind cannot but regret that many of the young people of the early nineteenth century - at least in the tales - did not know the pleasure which could have been theirs

"When to the trembling string
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha'"

and when 'music arose with its voluptuous swell'.

In the works of Jane Taylor, Mrs. Sherwood and others, there is little of the sheer joy of living, of the dance which expresses happiness and contentment. The Children of Israel bringing home, in triumph, the 'Ark', and Susan and her companions leading home the lamb, are expressions of one and the same thing - happiness declared in rhythmic movement. E.A. Kendall (following Rousseau) realised the value of the natural expression of joy. His Charles Laltham, child hero of 'The English Boy at the Cape' (1835) took his emotional colouring from the world around him; his feelings had not been kept in check by discipline or by guile. 'Natural Man' wrote Kendall, 'in his joys is a gay, singing, shouting, leaping dancing creature. The nearer is man to nature, the more he is as picturesque as the landscape which surrounds him. All his emotions, all his circumstances and situations have their ex-
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pressions'.

(1) The English Boy at the Cape - E.A. Kendall - 1835 - Vol. I. - page 62.

Food, which like dancing, normally looms large on the child's horizon, is disappointingly absent from children's books and those written for an older generation. It is one of the traits of the British nation that, like love, the consumption of food is a matter for the individual conscience and not a subject for general conversation. Thomas Gisborne (1758-1846) gave as his four aids to health, wholesome food, early hours, pure air, and bodily exercise,⁽¹⁾ but did not suggest what he considered as 'wholesome food'. Arabella Argus does mention pigeon pie, in her 'Adventures of a Donkey' (1815) but with no great relish or enthusiasm, and the author of 'Going too Far' (1825), after giving the reader a tantalising whiff of food said, 'a summons to dinner interrupted the conversation and as the dinner-table generally supplies more food for the body than for the mind, we shall be excused for passing over the time it occupied'.⁽²⁾ Food for the mind was naturally of much more consequence except of course at Christmas, to a generation who believed that 'The Primary end of education is to train up the pupil in the knowledge and application of those principles of conduct, which will lead probably to a considerable share of happiness in the present life, but assuredly to a full measure of it in that which is to come.'⁽³⁾

(1) An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex - Thomas Gisborne - 1797 + page 90.

(2) Going too Far - 1825 - page 293.

(3) An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex - Thomas Gisborne - 1797 - page 37.

It remained for Mrs. Sherwood to keep the culinary banner flying, and although Mr. Fairchild deemed that his old friend, Mr. Crosbie thought overmuch about eating, the reader is never very far away from the odour of food, in the anecdotes of the Fairchilds. Apple dumpling, baked apples with butter and sugar upon them, piles of hot buttered toast, bread with 'real' butter, were much in favour with the Fairchilds. Baked apples and warm milk and water seems to have been the children's staple diet. But they had their moments when the moral world stood still. There was the never to be forgotten Sunday lunch, when the family sat down to a fruit-pie - made by Betty on the Saturday - cold roast fowl and potatoes. There was the jar of juicy damascenes by means of which the second daughter was taught a lesson on obedience. There was the dinner at Mrs. Goodwill's that consisted of roast fowl, boiled bacon, cold currant-and-raspberry pie, followed later by strawberries, sugar and cream. Then the party at Mrs. Cutshorter's - cake with plums in it, large apple pie, custards, cheese cakes, cakes, strawberries and cream, and innumerable cups of tea. There was the not-to-be-mentioned occasion when the children drank cider and felt tipsy as a result, and the picnic in the meadow when the Fairchild's ate bread, cheese, fruit pie, and father drank a bottle of beer. There were the haunch of venison, and pot of currant jelly to make sauce, which Mr. Obadiah Crosbie sent as an advance gift. Truly did the

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Fairchilds enjoy wholesome food.

One wonders how much the family would have enjoyed the bread and water diet that Harry Sandford so admired in the Apostles, and which Mr. Fairchild found a salutary corrective for his son Henry, or have been ecstatic over a dinner at Haworth with the Brontës, where the living was of the simplest - an occasional joint followed consistently by some form of milk pudding - and where the principal diet of the children (1820) seems to have been, milk puddings, milk and rice, Scotch porridge. ⁽²⁾ The appreciation of good wholesome food which is one of the many human traits of the Fairchild Family is put into its proper perspective in the scheme of things and never clouds moral issues. Food to the Fairchilds was a gift which was not to be wantonly discarded or misused. They would have agreed with the indignation of Fanny Kemble at the prevalent practice of American women of stuffing their children with sweetmeats and 'every species of trash', especially on train journeys - a practice not just confined to American women. Fanny Kemble on one occasion asked a young mother why she did so, and while no doubt expecting, and receiving the answer 'Keep baby good', was surprised that the mother did not realise she was injuring her child's health. 'I looked at her

(1) It is strange that Mrs. Sherwood and her daughter, Mrs. Kelly, omitted food in their school story, 'Boys will be Boys' (1854) in which are many of the situations which later appear in such classics as 'The Fifth Form at St. Dominics' and 'Fathers of Men' (E. Hornung).

(2) The Brontës and their Circle - Clement Shorter - J.M. Dent - 1914 - page 55.

own sallow cheeks' said Mrs. Butler, 'and rickety teeth, and could not forbear suggesting to her how much she was injuring her poor child's health'.⁽¹⁾ A modern father will have much sympathy with the gentleman whom Mrs. Butler once met on a Philadelphia boat. A 'sulky-looking' wife had committed to his care her three 'sulky-looking' children, and knowing nothing of the psychological approach to difficult children, he applied the temporary stoppage - a 'lump of cake'. Triumphant and at peace with the world, he offered a morsel to Mrs. Butler's child. The resultant dialogue is worth quoting:

"Why, Madam, don't you allow the little girl cake?"

"No, Sir."

"What does she eat, pray?"

"Bread and milk, and bread and meat."

"What! no butter? no tea or coffee?"

"None whatever."

"Ah!" - the poor man sighed as the chorus of woe arose again

from his own progeny, the cake having disappeared down their throats - "I suppose that's why she looks so healthy"⁽²⁾ - A moral tale in miniature and an excellent example of the restraint and common sense associated with the thinking middle class.

The characteristics of commonsense, dignity and usefulness which were the standards by which the writers of moral tales measured life and conduct, were also applied to beauty and dress. Puritanism had left a legacy of distrust of beauty and

(1) Records of Later Life - F.A. Kemble - 1882 - Vol. I. - page 172.

(2) Ibid. - page 173.

and personal adornment. Beauty was reckoned one of the dangerous gifts of God and was as much to be carefully watched in the nineteenth century as it was in the seventeenth when James Janeway (1636-1674) wrote -

"When by spectators I am told
 What beauty doth adorn me,
 Or in a glass when I behold
 How sweetly God did form me -
 Hath God such comeliness bestowed
 And on me made to dwell,
 What pity such a pretty maid
 As I should go to Hell!" (1)

In the tales, beauty of character and mind were more to be admired than beauty of face and person - no novel opinion - yet the writers made the best of both worlds, the world of goodness and the world of beauty, by depicting heroines who combined grace of mind with grace of person. The searcher after the ordinary would find it no easy task to discover a 'plain' heroine. Ellen Seyton⁽²⁾ is the least comely of innumerable heroines. Dr. Erasmus Darwin whose views on conduct can often be found illustrated in the moral tales,⁽³⁾ held decided opinions on dress. 'An elegant simplicity of dress', he wrote in 1797, 'is to be recommended in preference to that superabundance of ornament, where the lady herself is the least part of her'.⁽⁴⁾ and 'genteelity' as the 'motif' is the basis

(1) Quoted from Janeway by Mrs. E.M. Field in 'The Child and His Book' - 1891 - page 188.

(2) Going too Far - 1825.

(3) This does not mean that the authors read or were influenced by Darwin, but that they were all of the same 'vintage' in moral outlook.

(4) A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education - Erasmus Darwin - 1797 - page 81.

of this creation, 'As beauty consists of lines flowing in easy curves ... those parts of dress which are composed of such lines, are always agreeable. Thus a sash descending from one shoulder to the opposite hip or a Grecian veil thrown back and winding carelessly down behind, are always beautiful, but a few white ostrich feathers rising on the head before, and a train of silk sweeping on the ground behind, add so much grace to a moving female, as to attract all eyes with unceasing admiration', - a fashion more picturesque than useful. He thoroughly condemns the use of that 'coat of mail the whale-bone stays', and while in complete agreement with the return to simplicity and the classic line (one of the by-products of the French Revolution) would have disapproved of the fashionable ladies of France who 'joyfully abandoned their corsets and petticoats, and in some cases went so far as to discard the chemise'. He would not have been so flippant about the 'naked' ladies of the first decade of the nineteenth century as was the 'Gentleman's Magazine':

- (1) A Plan for the conduct of Female Education - Erasmus Darwin - 1797 - page 83.
- (2) Ibid. - page 82.
- (3) Mrs. Barbauld speaks of the 'small machine' armed with fish-bones and ribs of steel, wide at the top but extremely small at bottom 'in which detestable invention the queen (of fashion) orders the bodies of her female subjects to be enclosed: it is then by means of silk cords, drawn closer and closer at intervals, till the unhappy victim can scarcely breathe'. - 'A Legacy for Young Ladies' - Mrs. Barbauld - 1826 edition - page 175.
- (4) Elegant Modes in the Nineteenth Century - Angus Holden - 1935 - page 20.

"If Eve in her innocence could not be blam'd
 Because going naked she was not ashamed,
 Whoe'er views the Ladies as Ladies now dress,
 That again they grow innocent, sure must confess;
 And that artfully too they retaliate the evil; (1)
 By the Devil once tempted, they now tempt the Devil.

The train which Darwin admired, reached, by 1804, ridiculous proportions, attaining six yards for the street, and fourteen for the 'grande toilette'. (2)

It is not difficult to appreciate the view point of the Hoflands, Sinclairs, Aikens, and others of the sisterhood of letters. They saw in ornament and interest in dress not the expression of individuality, (3) but the signs of moral decay, the beginnings of a breach in the fortifications built against evil. Their notions of dress were on a par with their admiration of the domestic virtues; they detested the showy and spectacular in life as they detested the ostentatious in dress. They would have seen something more than lack of taste in the red hose of the Wife of Bath and in the dress of Mrs. Grote, (1792-1878) as when Mrs. Butler (Fanny Kemble) saw her for the first time, 'a figure dressed in a bright brimstone-coloured silk gown, made so short as to show her feet and ankles, having on her head a white satin hat with a forest of white

- (1) Quoted by the 'Gentleman's Magazine' - Oct. 1810 volume - page 320.
 (2) Elegant Modes in the Nineteenth Century - A. Holden - 1935 - page 21.
 (3) E.A. Kendall did not condemn ornaments - they were the natural expression of man's individuality. 'What patterns of ornament in all Nature's works, what profusion of ornament in all the works of God! (The English Boy at the Cape - E.A. Kendall - 1835 - Vol. I - page 63.

feathers',⁽¹⁾ or as on another occasion when "Grote" wore a black gown and scarlet shoes, and being proud of her legs which were 'uncommonly handsome and well made' lay 'on a sofa with her feet higher than her head, American fashion,⁽²⁾ the better to display or contemplate them'. In their dislike of the 'follies of fashion' the writers of moral tales were not being purely puritanical and priggish.⁽³⁾ They objected to the misuse of time and the evidence of a false sense of values.

(1) Records of Later Life - F. Kemble - 1882 - Vol. II. - page 65.

(2) Ibid. - page 65.

(3) Priscilla Wakefield (1751-1832) although a Quaker, did not observe their restrictions in dress, or abstinence from amusements. - v. Dictionary of National Biography.

CHAPTER 8.

MODES AND FASHIONS.

'The virtues of the home - if they be not nipped and blackened by a frost - become the excellencies of the citizen as naturally as the bud opens into the full-blown flower.'

Sir Henry Jones.

The publication of 'The Children's Miscellany' in 1788 serves as a convenient bridge between the last decade of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. It has an additional interest as being a fairly representative cross-section of what was deemed suitable and edifying for children of no specified age. The editor, in the advertisement to the collection, gives the history of the volume. Some gentlemen of means and literary ability intended to translate from various European languages whatever 'might engage the minds of the children to the improvement of their knowledge, and inspire them with an early love of virtue'. To this they proposed to add 'a judicious selection' from natural history, and 'many original pieces of their own', which were to be published in periodical form, but because of various accidents the project was abandoned. The 1788 volume was the result of the editor's determination that the papers of the contributors should not pass into oblivion, but would be 'no contemptible addition to that branch of literature which proposes to itself the important object of pleasing and instruct-

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ing children'.

The 'Rousseau' inspired tale is represented by Day's 'Little Jack', the story of a foundling who, with no advantage of birth nor education became a successful manufacturer. Suckled by a goat, the child became strong and active, discovering its strength through contact with its immediate surroundings and developing its limbs naturally, unhampered by clothing and bandages. There was no 'dame school' for Jack, but his foster parent, a poverty stricken old soldier, taught him the alphabet and the forming of words by tracing letters in the sand - thus anticipating the method Dr. Bell used in Madras (1789). He was also trained in simple morality the basis of which was 'telling the truth'. His feelings were natural, having an origin in loving what loved him and disliking what was inimical to him, a state of affairs which led to the exchange of many blows and loss of employment.

Observant, industrious, keen, he quickly learned the successive arts of the farmer, foundryman, stable-hand, saddler and carpenter. His accomplishments were the ornaments of the poor. Jack's early training in independence stood him in good stead when he was lost on the coast of Africa and enjoyed for a space the life of a Crusoe, as did his knowledge of saddle making and horses when he and the regiment were taken prisoners by the Tartars. The surrounding and capture of the

(I) v. The Advertisement of 'The Children's Miscellany' - printed for John Stockdale - 1788.

English soldiers was because of the strange ignorance of Tartar habits of warfare shown by the officer in command, an ignorance which was not shared by Jack. In Day's tale, the wild Tartars of historical fact are the simple but gentlemanly nomadic hordes which thronged the imagination of the theoretical lovers of the simple life. The Tartar chief who 'received the Europeans with great civility' and 'gently reproached them with their ambition in coming so far to invade a people who had never injured them', ⁽¹⁾ is an example of the idealised man of the wilds. As was to be expected from Day, the English soldiers, especially the officers, cut sorry figures in the eyes of their captors. They had not had the advantage of a useful education, and as Jack shared his presents of mutton and venison - the indications of his popularity with the Tartars, for had he not introduced them to the English saddle, the iron horse-shoe, and out-tartared the Tartars at their own game of horsemanship? - with his countrymen, he could not refrain from observing 'that it was great pity they had not learned to make a horse shoe instead of dancing and dressing hair'. ⁽²⁾ On his return to England, Jack took up 'forging' and became, through industry and application one of the most respectable and respected manufacturers in the country.

The 'Fortunate Isle' type, which has a setting neither in time nor space, has its imitation in 'The Little Queen'. In

(1) The Children's Miscellany - 1788 - page 49.

(2) Ibid. - page 55.

the fortunate Isle, the golden hours are passed in pleasant and useful toil, until ignorance, levity, and pride, in the persons of the king's daughter and her court sail into the harbour. Myra, the daughter, in a pique, orders all bees to be destroyed, all caterpillars (including the silk-worm) to be put to death, decrees which led to the cessation of the manufacture of silk, the departure from the island of manufacturers and silk-worm breeders, the use of tallow candles in the palace and the consequent interference in trade and industry - Utopia in ruins because youth would not listen to the voice of age and ripe experience. Myra learned the lesson that 'the errors of private persons can only affect a small number of individuals, but those of sovereigns may ruin nations'^(I).

Natural history is represented by 'The Elephant', 'The Lion', and 'The Rhinoceros'. In the cases of the lion and the elephant not only are strength and ferocity illustrated, but the qualities which they share with humans, as tenderness, gratitude, and gentleness.

The well worn theme of the Englishman returning home from India, a rich man with a fortune to dispose of, but uncertain which relative deserves a share, and the ensuing machinations of dishonest relatives, with the inevitable discovery, by chance, of a deserving (and poor) one, finds expression in 'The Three Sisters', while the discovery that good conduct can be found in the homes of 'quality' is illustrated in the tale

(I) The Children's Miscellany - page 78.

with the all-revealing title - 'Contrast'. Frederic is one of those boys dear to the heart of the moralist, modest, humane, studious, and feeling so much the obligations due to his mother that he 'did his best to requite them by pursuing her instructions with care, and by preferring her company to that of any other person'.⁽¹⁾ Jacob was thoughtless, lazy, ignorant, detested by all, even his mother, and although his home was near that of Frederic, the latter was 'too well-bred to chuse so vile a boy for a play-fellow'.⁽²⁾ As the way of the transgressor is hard, Jacob falls from a tree which he had been climbing in search of crow's nests, and breaks a leg. Frederic who had witnessed the incident reacts to it and the mother's lamentations about the additional burden of expense to be incurred, in the recognised manner. 'Little Frederic who was a witness to her complaints, afforded to them those tears which his own suffering could never extort from him. "Make yourself easy, my good neighbour" said the amiable boy, "and oblige me so far as to accept this new coin piece, which my good mamma has just given me, that I might buy me a fairing, but I can do without it better than you can"'.⁽³⁾ When Frederic is puzzled because contemplating the incident and the mother's anxiety about the future gives him more pleasure than grief, his mother explains that 'the consciousness of having done a benevolent action will

(1) The Children's Miscellany - page 107.

(2) Ibid. - page 108.

(3) Ibid. - page III.

(1)

be the most effective cordial for every painful sensation,¹
 a sentiment which the cynic might suggest as additional
 evidence that the performing of good is not entirely altruistic.

The 'genteel' domestic tale appears in 'The Nosegay', which deals with the dangers of wrong influences on character. The story is set in motion by a tragic result of the war in America between the French and the English. The death of Captain Dormer necessitates the return to England of his widow and two daughters, Fanny and Sophia. There, the mother instilled into her children the guiding principle that while music gave great delight and pleasure, personal sweetness and charm were more to be prized, and that no pleasure was equal to the joy of doing good. Fanny, however, influenced by the gay and glittering scenes which were prevalent in the London home of a relative, Lady Aubrey, forgot the 'innocent pleasures' of her own home, and became a conspicuous figure in the village, because of her pride and affected manners, so much so that 'all the village talked of her pride and lamented that the good Mrs. Dormer should have such a naughty little girl', whereas they said of Sophia, 'Here comes the good little girl; she will, one day, be as good a lady as her mamma'.⁽²⁾ The stage having been set, the tale followed a familiar pattern. Fanny found that being fashionable and proud had disadvantages in the loss of friends and the pleasure that good conduct brought. She

(1) The Children's Miscellany - page 112.

(2) Ibid. - pp. 138-9.

discovered that, unlike the 'Nosegay' which was to be the emblem of a great success, 'virtue never fades'.

It would have been surprising if the ship-wrecked mariner had not made his appearance in the collection, since Robinson Crusoe (1719) had been enthusiastically adopted as a children's book by the children themselves, and Rousseau had honoured it as Émile's first book of study. Defoe and Rousseau combine to give shape and body to the story of Philip Quarll⁽¹⁾ which concludes the volume. Here is the embodiment of the sentiment behind the cry 'How great is the superiority of the Savage! How "careless" life in the American forests or the plains of Tartary!' The trials of Philip Quarll and their successful issue, are a tribute to 'the wonderful powers of the human constitution when properly stimulated to action by necessity',⁽²⁾ assisted, however, by a generous element of luck and fortunate observation, because 'happening to eat of that part of the tortoise which is the most feeding and less hurtful, he was in no wise discomposed'.⁽³⁾ Experiencing for the first time the freedom which nakedness gave, Quarll rejoiced not only because of that freedom but that the monkeys accepted his intrusion in their domain, an acceptance which he thought 'must be a remnant of that awe, entailed by nature upon all

(1) The original Philip Quarll tale had a French youth as a 'Man Friday'. Later editions took liberties. Mary Elliott (Mrs. Belson) introduced a monkey as Man Friday. - v. The Child and His Book - Mrs. E.M. Field - 1891 - page 231.

(2) The Children's Miscellany - page 198.

(3) Ibid. - page 217.

animals, to that most noble and complete master-piece of the creation, called Man, which now appearing in the state he was first created in, and undisguised by cloaths, renews an image of that respect he had forfeited by his fatal transgression, which ever since obliged him to hide the beauty of his fabric under a gaudy disguise, which often renders him ridiculous to the rest of mankind, and generally obnoxious to all other creatures; making a pride of what he ought to be ashamed of'.⁽¹⁾

The truthful historian relates, however, that he caught cold at first. The earthly paradise now with its Adam and with neither Eve nor the Serpent to disturb it, gave Philip cause for his outburst, 'Pomp and greatness are but pageantry, which oftentimes prove more prejudicial to the actor than diverting to the beholder; ease and indulgence are apt to breed the gout, and various distempers, which make the rich more wretched than the poor'.⁽²⁾ No doubt his new philosophy enabled Philip to bear with equanimity what would have been to Stephano and Trinculo not only a disgrace, but infinite loss, the disaster which made him lose his brandy bottle.

After an idyllic existence of 15 years, for which he never ceased to praise his creator, he was in danger of being seized by some fisherman and borne off as a monstrosity, but a storm destroyed their ship and all were drowned save a youth who, after being Philip's companion for 10 years, ungratefully

(1) The Children's Miscellany - pp. 224 - 5.

(2) Ibid. - page 234.

swam out to a ship. Philip is 67 when he gains the companion for which he has pined, 'a companion far exceeding any he ever had waits his return, which was a beautiful monkey of the finest kind, and the most compleat of the sort, as though made to manifest the unparalleled skill of nature and sent him by Providence to dissipate his melancholy'.^(I) With a picture of Philip, who lies down with a peaceful mind, his sleep uninterrupted by fretful fancies, and Beaufidelle whose 'surprising tractability and good nature, joined to its matchless handsomeness gained its master's love beyond what is usual to place on any sort of beast', the reader lays down 'The Children's Miscellany'.

More than sixty years later was published a collection of tales called 'Fireside Companion' or 'Tales of Home and Happiness', and 'illustrated with fine engravings'. They were obviously written for less sophisticated readers than those of the 'Children's Miscellany', the majority of the stories being short, almost anecdotes, and dealing with virtues such as courage, sympathy, generosity, and humility, taken from history and from the lower and middle walks of life. Their titles explain their purpose, 'Generosity', 'Riches not necessary to Happiness', 'How to overcome Evil with Good', 'True Politeness', 'Benevolence', 'Patience', 'Honesty Rewarded' etc., such subjects and anecdotes as

(I) The Children's Miscellany' - pp. 332 - 333.

would have interested the Fairchild Family. In the collection were no allegories, fairy tales, desert islands, nor 'Noble Savages' - Towakoo, the native lad from the Sandwich Islands was a rascal, who, after a series of adventures, became Grand Visier, and was poisoned by his favourite wife. To offset this however, was the 'Humane Negro Woman', to whom the subject of her humanity gave two of the four brass buttons remaining on his waistcoat. By the middle nineteenth century, the Fortunate Isles type of story and the allegory had gone out of fashion with the middle class reader, although it did not entirely disappear. Alicia Mant in 'Caroline Lismore' (1815) makes Mrs. Conway present to her niece a manuscript which the former had written as applicable to her opinions on Fashion. This was an allegory on the evils of being a slave to Fashion, and was reminiscent of the type written by Addison, Goldsmith, and Dr. Johnson. It is not difficult to understand why the Allegories and tales, which had a location neither in time nor space, had gone out of favour. They had little application to existing life and circumstances, and moral truths lost their power and efficacy when translated into a bygone age and the realms of fancy. Many of the new readers were sprung from a literally minded and practical class. They were busy people whose interests centred in their homes. They were not interested in floating islands or sulky princesses, or personified abstractions of vices and follies, but liked to see everyday problems placed against a background with which they were

familiar. 'Nothing places abstract truth more vividly before the mind', wrote Catherine Sinclair, (1800-1864) 'than to see it represented acting and conversing in real life'.⁽¹⁾ The readers wanted no pied piper to lure them from the present, nor did they desire an 'escapist literature' but one which would bring them close to the realities of life, no matter if these realities stirred no laughter in the human midriff.

The evangelical movement and the awakened interest in religion as a guide to conduct, which reached its height about 1840, also contributed to a rejection of the allegorical and fanciful tale. Imagination clouds moral issues, and to both writers and readers as to Hannah More, contemplation of the ancient past, of myth and legend savoured of depravity, and tended to obstruct 'the pure doctrine taught on the mount'.⁽²⁾ So many of the writers preface their tales with apologies for giving moral instruction in the guise of stories, that it can be safely deduced that they were not entirely comfortable about the choice of medium. Many of them indeed hide their authorship, and not all surely from a sense of shame that fiction was not a woman's province. Catherine Sinclair whose 'Modern Society' (1837) was the rallying point of different types of tale - moral, religious, domestic, manners - and who had gathered at a house party at Barnard Castle, Inverness-

(1) Preface to 'Modern Accomplishments' - Catherine Sinclair - 1836 - page VII.

(2) v. Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education - Hannah More - Vol. II. - 1799. - page 33.

shire, a collection of humans or humours from society bores, heavy witted but gallant military gentlemen, 'ci-devant' governesses, ghosts and apparitions, to honest members of the 'labouring' classes, did not publish anonymously, but it was out of deference to her father's wishes. ⁽¹⁾ She defended the narrative form by referring to its use by Christ. 'Our Divine Teacher himself, has sanctioned by his use of parables, the employment of imaginary histories to illustrate and enforce religious duty', ⁽²⁾ and in her 'Modern Society' (1837) expanded her justification of the previous year by pointing out that many who would close at once 'the page of formal instruction or grave rebuke', might be induced to attend to a 'familiar' narrative exhibiting the development of taste and feeling in the genuine christian character'. ⁽³⁾ She, however, gives the warning that while it is desirable to exhibit the triumph of virtue in scenes of fancy 'where the characters cease to exist with the closing page' it must always be remembered that 'this world is not the place of retribution'. ⁽⁴⁾ Is there a shade of condescension in Catherine Sinclair's prefaces; a suspicion of conscious superiority to those who sought moral instruction through the entertainment of a novel? If there is some doubt about the answer, the author of 'Going Too Far' (1825) with tact dedicated her tale to 'all such persons as are inclined

(1) v. 'Mourning' insert in 'Modern Accomplishments' - 1836.

(2) Modern Accomplishments - Catherine Sinclair - 1836 - Preface, VII.

(3) Modern Society - Catherine Sinclair - 1837 - Preface, pp. IV - VII.

(4) Ibid.

to seek in a work of fiction, for something more than the mere amusement of an idle hour; and to those who turn with disgust from every instruction but that which is conveyed through the medium of entertainment'. In an earlier period, the author of 'Laura Valmont' (1791), defended her novel on the grounds that idlers will find it 'possesses at least the negative merit of being perfectly harmless' and that there was nothing in it which would induce his 'Grim Majesty' to visit the reader 'with a view of taking advantage of any idea raised by the sentiment expressed in it'.⁽¹⁾ In the case of 'Laura Valmont' there is little to commend it except the sentiment and the conclusion drawn that villainy and unbridled passions have their just punishment, that loyalty has its reward and suffering is finally triumphant.⁽²⁾

The 'Robinsonades'⁽³⁾ have only an occasional appearance between 1780 and 1840. This was undoubtedly due to the limited scope of the genus, the waning influence of the cult of the 'natural man', and the fact that a moral life is possible only in a community of people. Life on a desert island may afford

(1) v. Preface to 'Laura Valmont' - by a Lady (1791)

(2) The plot unfolds in a series of letters exchanged mainly between Honora Emeriton and her friend Louisa Luton. Would-be seducers, insipid editions of Richardson's *Lovelace*, a lady with a mysterious past, a surly and vindictive Scot, an unsympathetic father, a lost daughter, repentant villain, swooning heroine, a lover shot, a lover left as dead after a duel, a castle vaguely situated in the Highlands - all combine to make poor entertainment.

(3) A term coined by French bibliographers - v. *Children's Books in England* - F.J. Harvey Darton - 1932 - page 113.

an excellent training ground in patience, improvisation, and the carrying out into practice the theories of civilised life, and if by chance a strange islander appears, an opportunity to teach him, as did Robinson Crusoe, 'everything that was proper to make him useful, handy and helpful', but when it is a matter of conduct and the everyday problems that face members of a group or community, then the romantic island must give way to the prosaic drawing room and parlour. F.J. Harvey Darton has pointed out that few 'Robinsons' are genuine castaways, nor do they owe their misfortune to their own weaknesses. One does seem, however, to fulfil the conditions - 'Le Nouveau Robinson' (1779) by Joachim Heinrich Campe, which was translated by Campe into English as 'Robinson the Younger' (1781). An English version of Campe's tale with the title 'The New Robinson' was published in 1788 and 1789. - Campe's Robinson had nothing but his head and hands to depend on, and could not make a fire until a tree had been struck by lightning, whereupon he preserved the flame. In the frontispiece, according to Harvey Darton, he appears with a goat skin, a home made umbrella, a bow, a kind of spear, but no rifle. It is interesting to note that he met his adventures not in the course of nature but through defective home education, his parents allowing him to do as he pleased when he was young with the result that he had run away to sea. (I) Another, and more famous

(I) For a short account of the 'Robinsonnades' v. Children's Books in England - F.J. Harvey Darton - 1932 - pp. 115 - 116.

'Robinsonnade', 'Der Schweizerische Robinson' (1812-13) by Johann Wyss was issued in translation by William Godwin, trading at that time (1814) under his wife's name (and also writing as Edward Baldwin). In 1826 appeared 'The Rival Crusoes' by Agnes Strickland (1796-1874), and in 1839, by Ann Fraser-Tytler, 'Leila', or 'The Island'. This last tale has the laudable desire to depart from the usual in the moral and educational story setting, but neither in spirit nor form approximates, even remotely, to a 'Robinsonnade'. Mrs Barbauld, Thomas Day, and evangelicalism are more its foster parents than Daniel Defoe and Joachim Campe. The island may be deserted save for the hardy goat, but the conversation is about Isaac Newton, William the Conqueror, Ants, and kindness to dumb animals. Leila's father is another Mr. Barlow, but with a generous measure of the evangelical spirit. 'No being', said he to his daughter, 'is perfect in the sight of God, for we have all sinful natures',⁽¹⁾ and when, in a thoughtless moment, Leila had thrown away one of the precious needles, he reprimanded her with, 'you see what errors this impatience of temper is constantly leading you. I entreat, Leila, that you may watch over yourself and never cease to implore God's assistance to enable you to get the better of this fault'.⁽²⁾ The sojourn of father, daughter, and nurse, in the island is short, but one gains the impression that no matter how long they stayed on it, the father

(1) Leila - Ann Fraser-Tytler - 1839 - page 38.

(2) Ibid. - page 52.

would always remain an English gentleman, adjusting the island to himself and not himself to the island, and Leila would always, in essence, be the little girl who called a pink flower which she had noticed peeping from the leaves, Mary, Queen of Scots, beautiful but imprisoned, a pale one, Lady Jane Grey, a scarlet one with a big head, Queen Elizabeth - Leila did not admire 'Gloriana' - and who atoned for some real or fancied misdemeanour by some self-imposed discipline. The nurse noticed that Leila was in the habit of imposing some restraint upon herself at those times when she felt dissatisfied with her own conduct. ^(I) That essential of the religious moral tale, the 'sick bed' scene appears in 'The Island'. One wonders how Leila and the nurse would have fared on their island had the father died, as he very nearly did. Ann Tytler missed a glorious opportunity of writing something new and creating an arresting and interesting situation when she allowed Leila's father to recover.

The writers of moral and educational tales of the last decade of the eighteenth century were influenced by Thomas Day; not so much by his ideas, because they were practical enough to realise that society, as it was then constituted, could not carry them out, but by his procedure. Day showed a method by which interesting and out of the way facts and information could be presented to young people. This was through direct lectures, discussion, conversation and

questioning, methods of teaching in which the 'attentive' faculties were developed to the full, nor was 'animal' activity neglected. Day's removing Harry Sandford and Tommy Merton from their respective homes and placing them under the roof of their mentor and teacher, Mr. Barlow - after the fashion advocated in Rousseau's *Émile* - was not, however, adopted by the majority of the writers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. With them, the training was conducted in the home. Typical of this were two entertaining works which would probably not have been written, had it not been for the example of Thomas Day - 'Evenings at Home' (1792-95) by Dr. Aiken and Mrs. Barbauld, and 'Sketches of Domestic Education' (1815) by Alicia Mant. The title of each is significant - where home influences were bad, writers adopted the method of Day, the bachelor establishment being, of course, rejected in favour of that belonging to an aunt, or interested acquaintance. The attempt to instruct and impart knowledge through the medium of narrative took three major forms. There was the collection of odds and ends, anecdotes, short tales, dialogues of an ethical and educational value, having no unity except that of purpose and bound together under some such title as 'Evenings at Home', or 'Blossoms of Morality', or 'Sketches of Domestic Education'. An advance on this structurally was information collected and distributed throughout from a central source, a parent, or an aunt, or a friend, and where there was a continuous narrative, which, however, could not be

(1)
 termed a plot. The third advance was where there was an interest divided between the moral or instruction and the story, there being a well defined plot. To these one could apply the name 'novel'. Because of their length and topics they were principally for adults. Some were straight forward novels illustrating the advantages of 'good temper' and a wise upbringing. (2) Some revealed the dangers which arose from the frailties of the flesh and usually concerned honourable young men seduced from duty and goodness by beautiful women of loose morals. (3) To others there was the additional spice of mystery, the missing heir or heiress 'motif' or the appearance of a sinister figure which is, however, substantial and no visitant from the land of shadows. (4) But no matter the form, anecdote or 3-volume novel, the writers had a serious purpose.

An inquiry into titles and dates throws little certain light on the possibility that there were periods when recognised types of tale and themes had a vogue, but as a general observation, the shorter story, whether loosely combined or a collection in one or more volumes under a comprehensive title, and the family type of story, belong to the pre-1800 period, though one of the most popular of the family tales 'The History

- (1) v. 'History of the Robins' (1786), 'Anecdotes of the Wyndham Family' (1791), 'Visit for a Week' (1794), 'Conversations and Amusing Tales' (1799), 'Seabrook Village' (1811), 'The Canary Bird' (1817)
 (2) v. 'Family Affection' (1816), 'Display' (1815 - 3rd ed.)
 (3) v. 'Celebrity', Mary Pilkington (1825), 'Going Too Far' (1825)
 (4) v. 'Laura Valmont' (1791), 'The Orphan of Tintern Abbey' (1816), 'Ellen' (3rd. ed. 1815), 'Modern Society' (1837).

of the Fairchild Family' by Mrs. Sherwood (1775-1851), appeared in three parts in 1818, 1842, and 1847 respectively. Useful information stories and educational tales belong more to the later eighteenth century than to the nineteenth, though again, E.A. Kendall's 'The English Boy at the Cape' (1835), and Alicia Mant's 'Sketches of Domestic Education' (1815) are full of useful facts. (I) What can be stated with certainty is that the thread which runs through the early and mid-nineteenth century tales is a religious one, and that is the main difference between the eighteenth and nineteenth century writers. The late eighteenth century narrators aimed at showing the result of a faulty education; their mid-nineteenth century counterparts revealed the results of a life and education which had a religious foundation. The puritans had lingered long in the 'campos lugentes', dwelling on the joyless side of religion and worshipping the jealous avenging God of the Old Testament. The nineteenth century writers taught the consolation of religion. They belonged to the period of 'Spiritual Enthusiasm', 'Hope and Moral Endeavour', which lasted until about 1845, the period of W. Wilberforce's 'Practical View of Christianity' (1797) in which he insists on the corruption of

(I) Mary Pilkington (1766-1839) who was a moral 'hack' writer by necessity and who would presumably write to suit the taste of the moment, wrote her short tales mainly before 1800. (These show the influence of Marmontel, 1723-99 and Madame de Genlis, 1746-1830). Her later stories are of the novel variety - Celebrity (1825), The Mysterious Orphan (1809), Heiress of the Castle (1807) and include the popular 'animal' tale - Vicissitudes of a Cat (1802).

human nature, the atonement of the Saviour and the 'sanctifying influence' of the Holy Spirit; of T. Erskine of Linlathen who in 'An Essay of Faith' (1822) said that the 'inner witness of the heart' was of more value than creed or text and of Keble's National Apostacy: a sermon (1833).⁽¹⁾ Throughout the religious tales of the period, whether in the toleration of Jane Taylor, or the almost morbid high seriousness of the author of 'Going Too Far', the gentleness of Alicia Mant or the wit of Catherine Sinclair, there is apparent the joy, confidence and placidity which comes from a belief in the Bible and its teachings. To the modern mind there is something almost indecently ecstatic about the joy which they found in suffering and the contemplation of death, yet, writing in 1920, and looking back some twenty years before, Lord Frederick Hamilton enjoyed Mrs. Sherwood's 'Fairchild Family', not only because 'there was plenty about eating and drinking' but there were 'three or four very brightly written accounts of funerals in it'.⁽²⁾ 'Brightly' is hardly an epithet an adult would use when thinking of funerals and death, but it does express the atmosphere which pervades Mrs. Sherwood's death bed scenes. Mrs. Sherwood could harrow the soul, as well as stir the emotions of pity and sympathy and do it without the obvious striving for effect~~as~~ is found in the death of Langton in 'Going Too Far' (1825).

(1) v. Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature - ed. F.W. Bateson - Vol. III. (1800-1900) - pp. 55 - 57.

(2) The Days Before Yesterday - Lord Frederick Hamilton - Black Jacket edition - page 43.

Among the most readable of the writers with a strong religious vein permeating their tales were Jane Taylor (1783-1824) and Sophia Zeigenhirt. Both were middle-class in outlook with a clear conception of the responsibilities of the rich and the duties of the poor. Both visualise all social groups as separate entities, but dependent on each other, and both accept the view that the poor are good and naturally courteous while the wealthy are evil, as a piece of sentimental fiction. They would agree with E.A. Kendall's statement, 'a person in humble life will often push you from the pavement, where a prince of the blood would have given you the wall',⁽¹⁾ and disagree with Thomas Day's wholehearted belief that the 'lower' orders were naturally virtuous,⁽²⁾ a belief which is not shared by Mrs. Pinchard, a contemporary of Jane Taylor and Sophia Ziegenhirt. Writing in 1816, Mrs. Pinchard stated 'I am convinced that happiness and virtue are not confined to any particular station of life. I am far from supposing them incompatible with the highest rank, or the largest fortune, as one would imagine some of our late writers do, especially those who write for children; if we may judge by their invariably selecting their only virtuous characters

(1) English Boy at the Cape - E.A.Kendall - 1835 - Vol. III. - page 154.

(2) When Thomas Day and Richard L. Edgeworth were young men, they went to Dublin, the poverty of which caused this remark from the latter, 'Day's deep-seated prejudice in favor of savage life was somewhat shaken by this view of want and misery which philosophers of a certain class in London and Paris chose at that time to dignify by the name of simplicity' - R.L. Edgeworth's Memoirs - 1820 - Vol. I. - page 198.

from the very lowest walks of life, while those in a higher situation are described as involved in a vortex of dissipation, and totally ignorant even of the principles of religion'.⁽¹⁾

Neither Jane Taylor nor Sophia Ziegenhirt have much to offer in the way of novelty. Their instrument is that of other moralists and their tune similar. Miss Taylor followed the Edgeworthian pattern of a theme developed by contrasts, and repeated the old platitudes; 'Happy are they who do not go into company to perform, who can think an evening pleasantly spent that has been unproductive of compliment, and afforded no particular opportunity of displaying the favourite quality, or talent or acquirement'.⁽²⁾ She brought out the stock characters of the moral tale - pleasure loving parents, the spinster who is 'good for nothing but to be married, but who had not achieved the supreme object and whose bounds are so limited that the veriest trifle, a new stitch, or a new pattern became to her an affair of importance' and to whom 'the gossip of the neighbourhood seemed essential to her existence',⁽³⁾ the lower orders represented by a Susannah Davy who, true to form, 'had that nice sense of propriety, which secured her from the vulgarity of dressing beyond her station',⁽⁴⁾ and Betsy Pryke who had a haberdasher shop. Over all presided the Methodists, Mr. and Mrs. Leddenhurst. With Jane Taylor, goodness and serenity are not only

(1) Family Affection - Mrs. Pinchard - 1816 - pp. 6 - 7.

(2) Display - Jane Taylor - 3rd. edition - 1815 - page 36.

(3) Ibid. - page 50.

(4) Ibid. - page 64.

the result of an education on the correct lines, but the outcome of sincere religious convictions. Sham, hypocrisy, affectation and deceit which did such yeoman service in the tale where the main concern was the building of character, now serve a like task in building stable religious principles. To Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849) these faults evolved from faulty education especially in the home; to Jane Taylor they were the natural consequences of a weak religious education and served to mask such. Love of display and affectation led Elizabeth Palmer to attend Miss Pryke's prayer meetings, where the difference in station between Elizabeth and the others who were present made Elizabeth an object of consideration, and her desire to be noticed caused her to establish a Sunday School for the poor children of Broadisham, a project which she soon abandoned when the scarlet and gold of the military appeared in the district. In the Leddenhursts, Jane Taylor showed that religion need not dry up the wells of laughter nor be incompatible with the social graces, and that deep religious conviction did not necessarily rob a person of charm or drive joy and gaiety out of doors. 'It is not intended', said the governess, Miss Weston, to Emily, 'that we should walk through the world only by a sepulchral light, nor that we should be always turning aside from its pleasant fields, to wander among the tombs'.^(I) a sentiment shared by

(I) Display - Jane Taylor - page 123.

Mrs. Sherwood (I775-I85I) when she wrote, 'where there is more zeal than knowledge, it is always thought meritorious to die every day in the contemplation of the grave, the coffin, and the charnel-house'⁽¹⁾. When the Leddenhursts took up residence at Stokely, the fact of their being Methodists was a nine days' wonder. One lady of the neighbourhood could not understand what could have induced such a family as the Leddenhursts to be of that sect. She remembered that some poor folk in the district had borne a similar name, but then the poor were a strange lot. Finding the problem beyond her, she came to the happy conclusion that 'people of property may do any thing'. Yet, it was soon discovered that being a methodist did not prevent Mr. Leddenhurst from taking an interest in politics or revealing himself as acquainted with good manners. Emily was surprised that the Leddenhursts entered into conversation with whatever guests they had with more interest than would satisfy the demands of politeness instead of 'practising that dexterous conciseness of reply which brings a tiresome subject to the quickest possible termination'⁽²⁾. She forgot that to Mr. Leddenhurst 'every human being is interesting'⁽³⁾.

As one would expect from the author of 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star', Jane Taylor (I783-I824) was not devoid of humour. On occasion it has a mocking quality reminiscent of Swift. Mrs.

(1) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - I854 - page 226.

(2) Display, etc. - page 47.

(3) Ibid. - page 5I.

Palmer who tried to taste to the full the joys of this world and at the same time take a sidelong glance at the next in case of accidents, 'thought it prudent, however, to make some provision for the distant day, and was accordingly, constant at church, and charitable to the poor: by which means she concluded all would be safe, whenever she should be under the absolute necessity of going to Heaven'.⁽¹⁾ It bubbles as in the comment on Elizabeth's admirer 'It was surprising what silly things he would say rather than not say anything'.⁽²⁾ But the overall impression which 'Display' leaves is one of high seriousness, and the concluding sentence expresses the author's true purpose. Elizabeth Palmer, now Mrs. Robinson, is standing at the shop door with her husband, both having discovered that 'many persons of superior understanding, even of real taste and respectable information, are to be found standing behind a country counter'.⁽³⁾ Husband and wife bid farewell to Mr. Leddenhurst and his party and when the party is out of earshot of the young wife, Mr. Leddenhurst says 'This is a sight worth coming more than fifteen miles to see: the subjugation of a propensity that I had almost thought incurable, and I believe that nothing but religion will cure, the love of - Display'.⁽⁴⁾

'Seabrook Village' (I8II) by Sophia Ziegenhirt, has not the

(1) Display. etc. - page 90.

(2) Ibid. - page III.

(3) Ibid. - page I57.

(4) Ibid. - page 2I4.

interest of sustained narrative; rather has it the appearance of being a compendium of all that has come to be associated in some form with the moral and educational tale between 1790 and 1814. In it the world of action is far distant. War plays no part - it seldom did in the didactic tale unless, as in 'Family Affection' (1816), to serve as a background to the brilliance, magnanimity, and courage of the hero, or, as in 'The Nosegay',⁽¹⁾ the cause of a respectable and respected widowhood. The world in which the reader sojourns for a brief space is that of middle-class society as it could be found, though in a more vivacious form, in Norwich, Stoke-Newington, Clapham, Cowslip Green or Clifton. Mrs. Worthy's practice must have been duplicated in many homes - family rising at six o'clock in Summer and seven o'clock in Winter; elder daughters practising for half an hour, one on the pianoforte, the other on the harp, the younger members learning and repeating their lessons to the governess; at eight o'clock all adjourning to the mother's dressing room where she reads a selection from the morning service; breakfast followed by a sedate but instructive walk, such as Mrs. Mills took Clara and William;⁽²⁾ then the school with Italian, music, drawing, the use of the globes taught probably by the mother, dancing, writing and arithmetic taught by masters from the county town; English and French, taught by the governess; at 8 p.m. family and household

(1) v. The Children's Miscellany (1788).

(2) v. Visit for a Week - Lucy Peacock (1794).

assembling, selection of family prayers and lessons read. At Seabrook may be found the poor - the honest industrious poor with the hour glass and spinning wheel symbolic of work and the profitable passage of time, the wife-beater, the widow of sound christian principles, the drunkard and his indolent wife - whose suffering are alleviated by a Lady Bountiful, and whose spiritual welfare is cared for, Lady Bountiful insisting on her tenants attending Divine Worship. When the Rector questioned the ethics of Mrs. Worthy's having a dinner prepared at 'Seabrook House' for the poor tenants who went to church and her declaration that those who were irregular in their religious duties would forfeit all claim to her protection, as savouring too much of bribery, she replied, 'I think the means are laudable if the ends are answered' - Machiavelli donning angel garb - and clinched her argument by suggesting that by having a Sunday meal prepared at Seabrook House she thus enabled all members of a family to go to church. (I)

Scattered throughout 'Seabrook Village' are tales, probably based on fact, in which appear the situations and scenes dear to the pen of the moralist - the young lady of moderate fortune who, because of the stupid indulgence of parents and sycophant attitude of servants, contracts a secret marriage with a fisherman, and is expelled from home; the danger of being lured by the hope of making a fortune independent of industry and

dabbling in 'quick-rich' schemes such as the 'South Sea', instead of the 'old-fashioned way of getting money by doing their duty in the station of life they were born to';⁽¹⁾ the moral and spiritual decline that await the acquisition of wealth where hitherto contentment and modesty have reigned. In addition to the tales are the inevitable contrasts of types - the Worthy Family and their guests for a week, the Mordaunts, Sarah Marlow and Miss Graspall.

With Sophia Ziegenhirt the reader lives in a world where good breeding and manners are rated high in the catalogue of virtues; where entertainment is found in the home, not only in reading aloud,⁽²⁾ but in musical evenings. Often when Sir Everard, Lady Melmoth and family visited 'Seabrook House', the evening was pleasantly passed by Sir Everard playing the violincello, his lady, the harp, and Mrs. Worthy, the piano-forte.⁽³⁾ It was a world where edifying books were read, where no young lady would follow Rousseau's wisdom that young girls ought to be lively, playful and frolicsome, and ought to sing and dance as much as they pleased,⁽⁴⁾ but whose conversation would possess a stilted perfection:

- (1) Seabrook Village - Sophia Ziegenhirt - 1811 - page 98.
- (2) A practice in the nineteenth century which no doubt contributed to the respectability of pre-Victorian England and doubtless led to the publication in 1818 of the 'Family Shakespeare' edited by Thomas Bowdler, an expurgated and emended Shakespeare calculated to bring no blush to maiden cheeks, and to be read aloud with perfect propriety by the family.
- (3) Miss Molesworth's gift to Caroline Worthy on the latter's seventeenth birthday was Mrs. Chapone's 'Letters on the Improvement of the Mind' bound in blue morocco leather.
- (4) Rousseau's 'Emile' - W.H. Payne - New York 1926 - page 272.

'Pray Mamma', asked Catherine Worthy, 'What is your opinion of Sophia Lacy?'

'From so short an acquaintance, Catherine, I am incompetent to decide upon your question with precision, but from that little, I may venture to tell you it is highly favourable; I intend requesting her mother to let her spend the remainder of the year with me by way of assisting me in the instruction of Louisa and Constantia. I shall then have sufficient time for observation.' (I)

The acumen, poise, and restraint which characterise the actions of Mrs. Worthy and her family, have a quality too near perfection to be wholesome, and it is with a certain amount of satisfaction that the reader discovers that Mrs. Worthy's English was not always as good as her 'good works' although in all fairness to Mrs. Worthy, the lapse springs from the frailties of her creator. Nevertheless the imagination refuses to contemplate any of the Worthy family with the reputation of Fanny Kemble (1809-1893) at the age of seven⁽²⁾ or with the high spirits of the brother of Martha Butt (later Mrs. Sherwood) whom he used to push down the nursery stairs in a drawer.

Contemporary with Jane Taylor and Sophia Ziegenhirt but of a much stronger vintage, and connected in youth with the gay literary society of Lichfield, was Mrs. Sherwood (1775-1851), whose work has a fascination not unmixed with a repellent quality difficult to define, but having its origin in her pre-occupation with death-bed scenes and her unwavering belief in the natural depravity of the human race. The fascination of

(I) Seabrook Village - page 223.

(2) v. Fanny Kemble's experiences at Madame Faudier's Boarding School - Record of a Girlhood - F.A. Kemble - 1878 - Vol. I. - page 43.

her works, although a healthy minded child might be repulsed
 by them, as Sir Herbert Grierson was in his youth, ⁽¹⁾ springs
 from her personality, her command of the English language, and
 her sureness of touch. Like the other writers of moral tales,
 she has a definite message to deliver. With vivid memories of
 her own childhood, she knew the value of conscientious parents
 and the importance of early home training which, in her case,
 however, was more social than religious. Her father was the
 Rev. George Butt, Rector of Lichfield, a former captain of
 Westminster School. He was endowed with a high sense of duty
 and detested want of courtesy, 'not of mere common civility
 but of any deficiency of cheerfulness and kindness of address,
 even to the lowest persons'. ⁽²⁾ He seems to have been a wel-
 comed addition to the Lichfield ⁽³⁾ society which sparkled
 round the vivacious Miss Seward (1747-1809), with the brilliant
 eyes, glowing complexion and rich dark hair. ⁽⁴⁾ At Lichfield he
 met such personalities as Dr. Darwin, (Loves of the Plants)
 Mr. Edgeworth, Mr. Hayley (the poet), Mr. Day (Sandford and
 Merton) and Mr. Garrick - a society which Mrs. Sherwood, look-
 ing back, regarded as dangerous because fascinating and cal-
 culated to tempt the mind and soul from the things of the spirit
 to those of the perishable clay. As her father died when his

- (1) A Broadcast by Sir Herbert Grierson - 3rd January, 1950.
 (2) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - 1854 - page 47.
 (3) George Fox, the Quaker, (1624-1691) said of Lichfield "Woe
 to the bloody city of Lichfield! Woe to the bloody city of
 Lichfield!" v. A Swan and her Friends - F.V. Lucas - 1907.
 (4) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - 1854 - page II.

daughter was young (1795), she knew little about his spiritual state, but suspected that his religion was one of feeling rather than calculation and more of the heart than the head. (1) Consequently he had, in his daughter's estimation, no distinct ideas of human depravity. It was probably through her father that Mrs. Sherwood acquired poise in company, that and the conscious knowledge that the family could trace its descent to an ancestor who came to England with the Norman Conqueror.

Her mother, the daughter of Henry Sherwood, a merchant of London and Coventry, was of a retiring nature, detesting anything coarse or vulgar in speech, thought or action. Mrs. Sherwood attributed her mother's retiring nature to her lack of personal attractions and to circumstances. She was a 'very little woman, having a face too long in proportion, with too decided features. She was marked too with the small-pox and had no personal beauty but in her hands'. (2) This lack of good looks must have been accentuated in the contrast between herself and the three lovely daughters of Mrs. Woodhouse with whom Martha Butt resided at the age of 14. (3) The marriage of Martha Sherwood and George Butt (1773) was a happy one, although the young wife no doubt knew that grandfather Butt had steered the business through as money was needed in the Butt

(1) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - page 47.

(2) Ibid. - page 14.

(3) Mrs. Sherwood's christian names were Mary Martha, 'Mary' being in honour of Mary Woodhouse whom the Rev. George Butt had intended marrying but for her death.

'clan'. From her mother, Mrs. Sherwood learnt to discipline a naturally lively character. 'I never sat on a chair in my mother's presence' she wrote, ⁽¹⁾ and avers that she could never remember hearing one incorrect word proceeding from her lips. ⁽²⁾ In matters of judgment she was much influenced by her parents, especially her mother. When the Abbé Beauregard, under the guise of instructing her in botany, attempted to convert her to his faith, she was no match for him in the intricacies of debate, but stood four square against his wiles by taking her stand upon a recollection of her parents' teaching, 'Popery of course must be wrong, because my parents had said so, and because those people worshipped saints, and God alone, I had been taught was the fit object for worship'. ⁽³⁾

The infallibility of the parents' judgment was not questioned in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, at least in well conducted households. Arthur Wyndham who, boylike, admired the bravery of the heroes against odds, rather than their clemency in victory was reminded by his father that his sister Emily who had praised the magnanimity of Charles XII of Sweden had 'always read (History) with her mother, therefore her decisions were generally right.' ⁽⁴⁾

When the Rev. George Butt died, there followed an unpleasant period in Bridgenorth where the mother, taking too pessimistic a view of the family finance, secured cheap lodgings for herself and family. It was in this period that Mary

(1) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - page 39.

(2) Ibid. - page 96.

(3) Ibid. - page 96.

(4) Anecdotes of the Wyndham Family - Mrs. Pinchard - I79I - page 66.

Martha Butt and her sister undertook the conduct of a Sunday School and visited at Bath, Old Hannah More, the 'blessed Hannah' of Lady Cork, ⁽¹⁾ after braving the twittering dragons, Miss Kitty, Miss Patty, Miss Sally, and Miss More, Miss Butt reported that Hannah More 'spoke well, those about her gathering up her words carefully, though rather Boswellian like'. ⁽²⁾

At Bridgenorth, Martha Butt made an attempt to analyse her thoughts about religion, and reconcile her honest endeavour to be good and religious with her delight in the company of the gay young people with whom she associated and who tended to dissipate her most serious thoughts. Later, her doubts and deep consciousness of personal sin, no unusual trait in christian people - Mrs. Trimmer had a like humility - hardened into a solid core of belief, and she acquired the serenity which comes from unshaken religious conviction. The question of human depravity had been a vexed one with her and she had suffered much anxiety through her contention that she alone possessed this propensity to evil. Peace came and gave poise and point to her subsequent life when she was convinced in her own mind that 'original sin belonged to all the children of Adam', ⁽³⁾ and that tribulation and suffering were a means of spiritual purification. In her tale 'Grandmamma Parker', Mrs. Sherwood makes the schoolmaster explain the failure of Edward Parker at school to the fact that it is the real nature of

(1) Memorials of the Life of Mrs. Opie - C.L.Brightwell - page - 336.

(2) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - page 217.

(3) Ibid. - page 322.

every child of Adam to be utterly corrupt and that it was the parents' duty to check the breaking out of evil passions in their children.⁽¹⁾

With such a belief, the bark of the spirit was not diverted by the winds of controversy. It upheld her in the deaths of many of her children, her mother, and her husband; caused the uncompromising attitude towards sin, in her best known work 'The History of the Fairchild Family' or 'The Child's Manual' - a collection of stories calculated to show the importance and effects of a religious education⁽²⁾ (1818-1847); revealed an evangelism more severe than that of the missionary Henry Martyn (1781-1812) and made her seemingly unmoved by the pageantry and mystery of the East. The holy city of Benares was to her a pagan city, the air of which was polluted, and there was no romance in the natives she saw at Dinapur (where her husband's regiment was stationed). 'It is quite a mistake', she said, 'to suppose that the happiest persons are those who can live on the smallest means, for there is little or no peace in those dark villages, and though we did not understand a word which was said, we could read the indication of every vile passion in the countenance of almost every person we met'.⁽³⁾ Yet while she had no delusions about India

- (1) He also made a remark which is at the root of many failures in educating children. 'No schoolmaster could do anything with a wayward child, unless the parent went hand in hand with him and supported his authority at home'. - Juvenile Library - New edition, 1880 - Vol. III. - page 73.
- (2) Lord Frederick Hamilton attended in 1900, in London, a 'Fairchild Family' dinner, at which every one of the guests had to enact one of the characters of the book. - Days Before Yesterday - Black Jacket Edition - page 43.
- (3) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - page 305.

or the Indians, it is difficult not to believe that the cadencies of the following were not caught in the east.

"You may place papa", I replied, "a hundred handfuls of fragrant herbs and flowers before the nightingale, yet he wishes not in his constant heart, for more than the sweet breath of his beloved rose". and

"Ay", she answered, "but do you not know, my child, that your sister was not a true believer in our holy Prophet Mahomet? And the binding boughs of the tamarind tree over her remains are a sure sign that her spirit has not been permitted to enter within the gates of Paradise". (I)

Mrs. Sherwood's belief in the ever present reality of sin within the human frame is the antithesis of that which Thomas Day advocated in 'Sandford and Merton', that once children's classic described with such pardonable exaggeration as a book which 'lives on with its original freshness, firm as the enduring hills fraught with verdure and wild flowers, for it is enshrined in the heart of childhood and consecrated by its purest tears'. (2)

Day, speaking in the person of Mr. Barlow, said to Mr. Merton, when the latter had been bemoaning the fall from grace of his son Tommy, 'Do you imagine that half of the vices of men arise from real depravity of heart? On the contrary, I am convinced that human nature is infinitely more weak than wicked; and that the greater part of all bad conduct springs

(1) The Rose and the Nightingale - Juvenile Library - Mrs. Sherwood - 1880 edition - vol. III. p. 143 & p. 146. cf. with the language of the Indian woman Ghulestan, 'May they (jewels) one day assume new value in your eyes as the adornment of that woman who shall be happy in your love! - may she be possessed of beauty equal to that of a daughter of paradise! - may she love thee as the nightingale loves the rose'. - Family Affection - Mrs. Pinchard - 1816 - pp. 90-91.

(2) Memoir of Thomas Day - John Blackman - 1862 - page 10.

rather from want of firmness than from any settled propensity'.⁽¹⁾

With Day and Maria Edgeworth, the remedy was to remove the individual from the source of moral infection and by precept and example - especially the latter - to indicate the proper course. The individual was contaminated from without. With Mrs. Sherwood, the poison is from within, the antidote to be derived through Christ, the Bible, and prayer. Individual effort was not enough because, as she wrote in the introduction to the 'History of the Fairchild Family', 'They (Mr. & Mrs. Fairchild) knew that their hearts were very bad, and that they could not be saved by any good thing they could do: on the contrary that they were by nature fitted only for everlasting punishment'.⁽²⁾ Such a viewpoint throws into strong relief the significance of the death of young Augusta Noble, the victim of disobedience, who, through the negligence of well meaning but too indulgent parents, had forfeited her chances of eternal life. The funeral preparations, the hearse, the paraphernalia of mourning and the appropriate texts are described with a gusto which would have done credit to the Janeways of a past century. As a contrast is the death of little Charles Trueman, described with an intensesness and pathos wellnigh unbearable - the romance and poetry of life finding an outlet in emotion. With Mrs. Sherwood, the moral tale assumes a deeper and more sombre note. Not only are youthful peccadilloes

(1) Sandford and Merton - Day - 7th edition 1795 - page 12.

(2) History of the Fairchild Family - Mrs. Sherwood - 2nd edition - 1818 - page 2.

minor crimes against society and a social order to be accompanied by society's frown upon the offender, but are black spots upon eternity.

In spite of the strictness of Mrs. Sherwood's creed, she has succeeded in depicting in the 'Child's Manual', a human family, a very likeable and possible Lucy, Henry, and Emily, especially when the parents are not in the vicinity. She has succeeded in transferring to her fiction, the happiness which existed in her own home, a gift which she shares with Maria Edgeworth. Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild are so sympathetically drawn - within the limits of the role which their creator has cast for them - that the reader forgives Mr. Fairchild his bread and water punishments, his solitary confinements, his compelling his children to gaze at the decaying body of the murderer hanging on the gibbet, his whipping the hands of the children 'till they smarted again' because they displayed animal temper against each other, his wearing down his son's resistance to learning Latin, for the glimpse of the whole family partaking of an alfresco meal in the meadow near the haymakers, the children reading aloud, and the father lying on his back, with the bottle of beer conveniently near, while the air was filled with summer voices and the scent of new mown hay was in their nostrils.

The Fairchilds were typical of many a christian family of the period. Obedience was expected and demanded by the parent and person in authority. In 1693 John Locke gave this advice

to his friend Edward Clarke concerning the latter's son.

'Stubbornness and an obstinate disobedience must be mastered with force and blows; for there is no other remedy. Whatever particular action you bid him do, or forbear, you must be sure to see yourself obeyed; no quarter in this case, no resistance'. (I)

And did not Fanny Kemble recall punishments at the age of seven (1816) administered to her at the school in Boulogne where she was incarcerated in cellars, or banished to a lonely garret to contemplate the evil of her ways! She recalls that for some misdemeanour she was to be taken to witness the guillotining of a malefactor, but luckily, or by design, when she arrived, the execution was over. She saw, however, the guillotine, the gutters running red, and 'a sad looking man' busy about the machine, 'all which lugubrious objects', she wrote, 'no doubt had their due effect upon my poor childish imagination and nervous system, with a benefit to my moral nature which I should think highly problematical'. (2) Such punishments for breaches of discipline may appear excessive to the modern mind, but it is a recognised fact that the child is not so susceptible to the unpleasant as is thought. The normal healthy child educated and reared in normal surroundings has quick powers of recuperation. It is upon the sickly, the neurotic that a recital of horrors may have a harmful effect upon the mental and physical life. Lamb appreciated

(1) John Locke's Educational Writings - ed. J.W. Adamson - 1912 - page 40.

(2) Record of a Girlhood - F.A. Kemble - 1878 - Vol. I. - page 45.

the toughness of a child's imagination, and when Godwin (1756-1836) was rather dubious as to the reception the squeamish would give to expressions such as 'devoured their limbs, yet warm and trembling', 'lapping up the blood', or references to the giant's vomit, and the minute and shocking description of the blinding of Polyphemus, ⁽¹⁾ wrote: 'Dear Godwin - the giant's vomit was perfectly nauseous, and I am glad you pointed it out . . . If you want a book which is not occasionally to shock, you should not have thought of a tale which was so full of anthropophagi and wonders. . . As an author, I say to you, an author, Touch not my work. As to a bookseller, I say, Take the work such as it is, or refuse it. You are as free to refuse it as when we first talked of it. As to a friend I say, Don't plague yourself and me with nonsensical objections. I assure you, I will not alter one more word'. ⁽²⁾ Thomas Day, in the Sandford and Merton episode of the bull baiting was no less forthright. 'At length, with a furious effort that he (the bull) made he trampled one of his foes (one of the dogs) beneath and gored a second to that degree, that his bowels came through the wound'. ⁽³⁾ Day with his detestation of blood sports did not believe in half measures, nor did the moralists attempt to whitewash wrong doing. The deaths of the ungodly are not pleasant and the onlooker's feelings must not be spared

(1) All in Lamb's Tales from the Odyssey which he was writing for the Skinner Press.

(2) Letter to Godwin - March, 1808 - Godwin & his Friends - Kegan Paul - Vol. II - page 165.

(3) Sandford and Merton - 7th edition 1795 - Vol. II. - page 259.

nor must the reader be deprived of savouring to the full the deaths of the godly. Maria Edgeworth did not spare Mademoiselle Panache her final degradation. When the governess screamed, 'Ah scélérat! Ah scélérat! Il m'a trahi', on hearing of the elopement of Dashwood and Augusta, reader, author, and characters have neither pity nor mercy. To all it was too evident that Mademoiselle Panache had 'fatal reasons to lament the loss of her lover'⁽¹⁾.

Squeamishness in the nineteenth century was superficial, a legacy from the sentimentalism of the earlier age. The hard core was there which tolerated and approved of punishments as listed by the Rev. Sydney Smith (1771-1845) in an article written in 1823, in which he writes against the harsh and oppressive criminal code. 'One man is transported for stealing three bones and a pot of sausage . . . a third for extorting money . . . then comes a man who set his house on fire to cheat the Phoenix, and lastly that most glaring of all human villains, a poacher, driven from Europe, wife and child by thirty lords of manors, for killing a partridge'⁽²⁾. Sydney Smith, like many Englishmen of the period realised fully that human life counted for little when brought into collision with the 'sacred' rights of property and while holding that game ought 'in common fairness to belong to those who feed it, he

(1) Moral Tales - Maria Edgeworth - 2nd. ed. 1806 - Vol. II. - page 235.

(2) Quoted by H. Allsopp - The Change to Modern England - 1928 - page 117.

'denounced the cruel and unworthy expedient of spring guns and man-traps as vindictive and immoral, and impeached such efforts to protect the interests of the lord of the manor in the wider interests of humanity'.^(I) Robert Owen (1771-1858), revealed the shocking conditions of child labour in factories and mines, when examined (1816) by the Committee on Children in Manufactories, as did Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850) before the same committee, and the findings of the Committee on Factory Children's Labour (1832) were equally eloquent on the need for reform. The moralist was, however, not interested, economically, in the political, or industrial disputes of the day, as anomalies and injustices could be removed if the training of youth began at home and were in the hands of parents and guardians who took the view of Chaucer's 'poure Persoun' of a toun' that 'if gold ruste what shal iren doo?' and to whom honest precept and example were guide posts to a happier life, where happiness consisted in contentment with one's lot - the creed of the mother of Jemmy, the donkey. Jemmy had just drunk a pail of warm cow's milk and had been severely beaten by a dairymaid. He had complained to his mother that the milk had looked 'nice' and had tasted 'sweet' and that his mother's milk had often been sold by the farmer. 'All this may be true, Jemmy,' replied his mother, 'but it does not lesson your fault. In the first place, nature has kindly bestowed upon us a palate

(I) Life and Times of Sydney Smith - J.J. Reid - 4th ed. 1896 - page 197.

suiting to our station in life; delicacy of appetite would be a grievous misfortune to animals invariably left to provide for themselves. This freedom, however, by no means authorizes indiscriminate depredations on our part; happiness consists in being contented with our lot'.⁽¹⁾ If the punishment for wrong doing among children was at times harsh, the moralist - such as Mrs. Sherwood - regarded it as a discipline and a reminder that one's feet did not always fall upon easy places, and better a little physical and mental pain on earth, than the eternal penalties of Tophet.

In method, Mrs. Sherwood contributed nothing new in the writing of children's books. She took the path preceded and followed by others. Ethical arguments are in dialogue form; story is followed by appropriate text and prayer; stories appear within stories as those tales which the servant, John brought the children from the 'Fair'. John's tales were of the tract variety and evangelical in tone, as the titles imply - 'The Story of the Covetous Woman', 'The History of the Orphan Boy Whose Mother had Faith in God's Promises'⁽²⁾ 'The Account of the little boy who, through God's Grace turned his parents to Righteousness' - and evoked a delight among the

(1) The Adventures of a Donkey - Arabella Argus + 1815 - page 7.

(2) Written by Mary Belsen (Mary Elliott) - v. Children's Books in England - Harvey Darton - 1932. - page 170.

(I)

children which is strange to modern ears. Mrs. Sherwood's 'The Heron's Plume' could have been written by Maria Edgeworth but for such sentiments as 'The only one amongst them to whom a better spirit was given being Annabella, and this young girl was enabled, by the help of her Heavenly Father, not only to feel the ill effects of jealousy and angry passions in her own mind, but to endeavour to counteract them in the mind of her dear brother',⁽²⁾ and 'The Fall of Pride' would have pleased Thomas Day. It is the tale of a pampered son of a rich papa, who, through an act of disobedience would have died but for the timely aid of a despised orphan and a foul mouthed tinker's wife. This story has the usual ingredients - rich home, pauper home, pleasant sister, unpleasant brother, sycophant servants. Mrs. Sherwood's tales are readable because once they are 'under way', the moralist and the story teller are kept apart, and one could, as did Lord Frederic Hamilton, skip the prayers.⁽³⁾

While the tale is in the telling there is no constant re-

(I) Henry's comment on Emily's book 'The History of the Orphan Boy', when she remarked that the first picture must be the funeral of the poor little boy's papa or mamma was 'O how pretty'. He also used the expression 'pretty' when Lucy read out the title of her purchase, 'The History of the Good Child, etc.'. Mr. Fairchild said 'They appear to be very nice books. I see they are written in the fear of God; and the pictures in them are very pretty'. Lucy's comment was 'I do not care about pictures if it is a pretty book'. (History of the Fairchild Family - pp. 162-163) The Fairchild Family were not alone in the use of the word 'pretty'. It was Tommy Merton's comment at the conclusion of 'The Gentleman and the Basket-Maker'. (Sandford and Merton - Vol. I. - page 64.)

(2) Juvenile Library - Mrs. Sherwood - 1880 ed. - Vol. II. - page 26.

(3) The Days Before Yesterday - Lord Frederic Hamilton - Black Jacket Edition - page 43.

minder of the purpose, by wise maxims scattered throughout the pages. She knew that deeds talked louder than words to young readers. In 'The Heron's Plume', she wrote, 'My young reader should not be much troubled with many accounts of what Mrs. Collington thought and felt when she found herself mistress of such a place as Heron Hall, with its noble house, its wall, its gardens, its lake, and its heronry'⁽¹⁾. She has, nevertheless, the great fault of the moralist of the period. She puts her children into an adult world, or rather a children's world as pictured by adults. There is little colour and gaiety, little real laughter, and beauty, nothing of the thrill of the wind and rain on the face and the games of make-believe which give romance to the garden and the wood. Her tales are fiction with none of the magic in them which Robert Louis Stevenson said made fiction, romance. 'Fiction', he wrote, in a 'Gossip on Romance', 'is to the grown man what play is to the child; it is there he changes the atmosphere and tenor of his life; and when the game so chimes with his fancy that he can join in it with all his heart, when it pleases him with every turn, when he loves to recall it and dwells upon its recollections with entire delight, fiction is called romance'⁽²⁾. It was possibly this absence of magic which caused Sir Herbert J.C. Grierson to dislike her work, in his youth, that, and the absence of the humour which Mrs. Sherwood obviously possessed,

(1) Juvenile Library - Vol. II. - page 14.

(2) Memoirs and Portraits - R.L.Stevenson - Nelson Edition - pages 253-4.

as shown by the following dialogue between Mr. Henry Martin's chief 'Munshi', Sabat, and Sabat's Mohammedan wife Amina.

Amina: Pray will you have the goodness to inform me where the Mussulmen go after death?

Sabat: To hell and the devil.

Amina: You will go to heaven, of course, as being a Christian.

Sabat: Certainly.

Amina: Well then, I will continue to be a Mussulman, because I should prefer hell and the devil without you, to heaven itself in your presence. (I)

- a sounder argument against her conversion than the most logical theological discussion.

Like Mrs. Opie (1769-1853), Mrs. Sherwood must have possessed an almost endless supply of energy. Her capacity for writing was enormous. According to one of her biographers, she wrote 350 books, essays, tracts, pamphlets, left a full diary, and in the closing years of her life wrote from it her autobiography - a vast compilation with over half a million words. (2)

Much of the relatively high level of her writing was due to her natural ability, her early home life where she heard much excellent conversation, and the fact that her stories had a setting in reality with many incidents drawn from life. (3) As with Maria

(1) Life of Mrs. Sherwood - Sophia Kelly - page 379.

(2) Life and Times of Mrs. Sherwood - F.J.H. Darton - Intro. p. XII.

(3) The hero of 'Little Henry and his Bearer' was her first son, born on Christmas Day, 1805; her father was the model for Canon Bernard, her mother for Christina, and Lady Valentia - the subject of much local gossip at Stanford (v. Life and Times of Mrs. Sherwood - F.J. Harvey Darton - page 165) - for Margarita's mother in 'Margarita' (1799); an invitation to one of Elizabeth Hamilton's (1755-1816) literary parties formed material to be found in 'Caroline Mordaunt'; 'Henry Milner' was fashioned through the friction of thoughts in the mind of Mrs. Sherwood as she gazed for the first time on the beauties of Malvern; the story related by Mrs. Goodwill to the Fairchild children was one which Mrs. Butt had told her own family in the dusk of a winter evening. - v. Life and Times of Mrs. Sherwood by F.J. Harvey Darton as the authority on the sources of many of Mrs. Sherwood's stories.

Edgeworth, she had talked with, and met, many of her creations. They required no effort to be conjured up in her mind. Mrs. Sherwood's ability and industry brought its own reward, because not only were her tales immensely popular and had a wide circulation among the middle classes, but, speaking from a materialistic point of view, they assured for her a fair income. (I)

Other writers of the period who extol, in their stories, the advantages of religion, differ little in theme and outlook from Jane Taylor, Sophia Ziegenhirt, and Mrs. Sherwood, though differing, as is to be expected, in temperament and ability to write. There is a gentleness, for instance, about the work of Alicia Catherine Mant, author of 'The Canary Bird' (1817), 'Ellen' or 'The Young Godmother' (2nd, edition 1814), and 'Caroline Lismore or The Errors of Fashion' (1815), which is absent from Catherine Sinclair (1800-1864) who must have been a much more vital type of person, with a more forceful personality. Her 'Modern Accomplishments' (1836) and 'Modern Society' (1837) have nothing

(I) F.J. Harvey Darton, as a publisher, was more interested in Mrs. Sherwood's publications than was her daughter, Mrs. Kelly. He lists some of them -

George and his Penny (1816) - 16 editions by 1837.

Emily and her Brother (1816 at Id.) - 19 editions by 1837.

Sergeant Dale (1814) - 22 editions by 1834.

The History of Lucy Clare (begun at Bridgenorth - pub. in Calcutta 1814) - 22 editions by 1835. v. Life and Times of Mrs. Sherwood - F.J.H. Darton.

The Fairchild Family was reprinted as late as 1902, and the 'Indian Pilgrim' reprinted in the 20th Century - v. Dictionary of National Biography. Harvey Darton has some interesting facts about the remuneration of a few of her tales and literary work -

£21 for 'My Uncle Timothy'

£2 . 10/- for the 'Irish Orphans' (Youth's Magazine)

£80 for editing her father's novel 'The Spanish Daughters' - a sum she set aside for charity.

52 guineas a year for editing 'The Child's Magazine'.

of the pathos which is found in such a tale as Mrs. Pinchard's 'Family Affection' (1816), but have a sureness of touch and a sparkle which could only come from a mind which had no great problems to solve, ethical or financial, and from a pen which wrote out of interest, not necessity. Catherine Sinclair, although she lived a life full of philanthropic exertions and good works, could afford to launch into 'Holiday House' (1839) which, said Harvey Darton, was the first example of real laughter and a free conscience, and, quoting E.V. Lucas, 'the first example of modern nursery scepticism',⁽¹⁾ unlike Mrs. Hofland (1770-1844), and Mrs. Pilkington (1766-1839), who were compelled to keep writing, the one to maintain herself and a delicate husband, the other to eke out the uncertain assistance of a husband who was a naval surgeon. There is none of the grimness in Catherine Sinclair, which must have been in the author of 'Going Too Far' (1825), or that author's smugness in her righteousness. With crusading zeal, the author sets out to show that one cannot go too far in the spirit of religion. The tale with its obviously patterned action and stereotyped grouping of characters into those that exert good and those whose influence is bad, with the inevitable evil genius and the dupes of that genius, death bed horrors and eleventh hour repentances, is interesting to the student of the period as expressing what must have been the opinion of many God-fearing members of the middle class, on such things as books, the drama

(1) Children's Books in England - Darton - 1932 - page 226.

and on life in general. Henry Irwin, the hero, not the bold handsome hero of romance or the ill-starred hero of the Minerva Press, but a more stolid edition of Reuben Butler, condemned the theatre on the by no means original grounds that the scenes familiarise the beholder with the worst passions of human

(1) nature. In his condemnation of circulating libraries, Irwin had been forestalled by Sir Antony Absolute (in 1775) when he said to Mrs. Malaprop, 'Madam, a circulating library in a town is as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge! It blossoms through the year! . . . and they who are so fond of handling the leaves will long for the fruit at last', (2) and by The Monthly Review for November, 1823. (3) Henry Irwin regarded circulating libraries as a greater menace than the theatre.

'The worst drama' said he, 'which was ever exhibited on the stage has a less tendency to corrupt the mind than a certain species of reading which has long been the fashion, and particularly among females; I mean romances . . . I could most heartily wish the contents of every circulating library in the kingdom were consigned to one universal conflagration'. (4)

Contemporary writers came under his censure. Moore's Sacred Melodies (1816-1824) he protested were wrongly named because such strains would have with more propriety been addressed to Julia, Bessy, or Mary than to that God 'whose name he has dared

(1) Going Too Far - by a Lady - 1825 - page 100.

(2) v. Sheridan's 'Rivals' - first performed at Covent Garden, January 17, 1775.

(3) v. Monthly Review - November, 1823 - No. XXXIX.

(4) Going Too Far - by a Lady - 1825 - page 231.

to profane with his voluptuous worship'.⁽¹⁾ Lalla Rookh (published 1817), he admitted, fascinated him, but when he had closed the book, the only pleasing impression left on his mind was the 'triumphant recollection'⁽²⁾ that he was a christian. Nor did the giants of a past age escape, Fielding, Smollett, Richardson, - especially Richardson. 'An author may labour to prove, and he may do it with success, that vice brings its own punishment with it, but if in the progress of his work he presents the grossest images to the mind he is scarcely a moral writer: and this is a species of licentiousness in which if Richardson takes not the lead, at least he gives it to no other'.⁽³⁾ Henry Irwin is a composite picture and study of what the average middle class Englishman of the early nineteenth century would call 'a good man'. His graces are of the spirit rather than the body.

Among moral tales which would not be accepted as 'moral' by Henry Irwin, would have been those which emanated from the Minerva Press. The Minerva Press, which since its setting up by William Lane in Leadenhall Street, about 1770 had its sails trimmed to catch the passing winds of the popular fancy of the reading public, made full use of the moral tale. Its publications were moral in that they exposed villainy and presented the reader with the ultimate triumph of virtue, not, however,

(1) Going Too Far - by a Lady - 1825 - page 130.

(2) Ibid. - page 130.

(3) Ibid. - page 233.

without the villain putting up a stiff fight in the cause of evil. Although the moral was always there - and few tales in any language are without one - the reader's enjoyment was not marred by reaching the interest of the tale by means of stepping stones of moral maxims. They were frankly entertaining stories, exciting and intriguing, lachrymose, and 'never intended for re-reading and study but as a means of passive recreation'.⁽¹⁾ The titles have a fascination in themselves - 'Cesario Rosalba' or 'The Oath of Vengeance' (1819), 'The Assassin of St. Glenroy' (1810), 'The Nun of Santa Maria di Tindaro', 'The Bandit's Bride', 'Thaddeus of Warsaw' (1803), 'Wild Irish Girl' (1803), to name a few, though very few fulfil the promise of their titles. And if higher fare was required than a diet of love, mystery and misery,⁽²⁾ there was Robert Bage's (1728-1801) 'Man as he is' (1792) and 'Hermsprong' (1796). Less sensational reading, but in keeping with the demand for moral literature were tales such as 'Conscience' by Mrs. Milke whose 'Midnight Wedding' (1802) seems to have created a new boom in Minerva Press publications and who was encouraged to produce 'simple narratives founded on events within the bounds of probability',⁽³⁾ 'Conviction', 'Conduct' and 'Hope' or 'Judge without Prejudice'.

- (1) 'The Minerva Press' (1790-1820) - Dorothy Blakey - 1939 - page III.
 (2) The author of the Assassin of St. Glenroy - the name Antony Frederick Holstein was surely a pseudonym - also wrote 'Love, Mystery, Misery.'
 (3) The Englishman and his Books in the early XIXth Century - Amy Cruse - 1930 - page 96.

Where the Minerva Press publications differ most from those stories published by firms such as Darton, Saint of Newcastle and Houlston, was in atmosphere and tone. The Minerva Press did not avert its gaze from the seamy side of fashionable life, from seduction, unfaithfulness and second marriages, nor the spectacle of a hero caught up in a web of intrigue, an unwilling and undeserving victim. The pleasure the young miss 'just coming out' and the matron long past the heyday of youth, took in such themes, must have been by no means a moral one. Perhaps they found in 'The Fatal Revenge', or 'The Family of Montario', as many find today in modern films, an escape from unexciting lives, or maybe they were like Lord Macaulay (1800-1859) who wrote to his sister, Hannah (Dec. 24, 1832) 'My tastes are I fear, incurably vulgar, as you may perceive by my fondness for Mrs. Meeke's novels',^(I) or perhaps they were tougher in reality than the Emilys, Janes, and Lucys of the edifying moral tales. Madame Rosier, it may be remembered, recommended 'Zeluco' (1786) by Dr. John Moore (1779-1803) as suitable reading material for her charges, and that impossible tale of villainy is strong meat for a child's digestion. Zeluco's conduct is always represented as odious, yet the traveller through the pages of the novel has many a morass of vice to stumble through until he arrives at the moral. It is just possible that Madame Rosier had read Moore's 'Edward', (1796) that model of virtue, and had not been impressed.

(I) v. The Minerva Press (1790-1820) - Dorothy Blakey - 1939
- page 60.

Mary Russell Mitford (1787-1855) found enjoyment in 'The Beggar Girl' written by Mrs. Agnes Maria Bennett and published (1797) by the Minerva Press. Not only did she find such characters as Miss Feversham and Betty Brown a source of pleasure but the total absence of moral Maxims of the do-me-good air which one expects to find in Miss Edgeworth gives a freshness and truth to the "Beggar Maid" which I have never found in any fiction except that of Miss Austen'.⁽¹⁾ High praise indeed to name Mrs. Bennett in the same breath with Jane Austen, but, according to Miss Dorothy Blakey, both Scott and Coleridge were readers of Mrs. Bennett's novels.⁽²⁾ It is wrong to generalise on a whole literary field from an acquaintance of only a few works in that field, but it is safe to assume, choosing at random among the avowedly moral tales published by the Minerva Press, that the tone and method seldom varied, for mediocrity has few shades and seldom, if at all, do the glowing embers burst into flame. The impressions left after reading one or two novels are that the authors are leaving nothing in reserve, that they are straining to reach the required emotion, that they over-do the tears, misery, mystery or religious fervour, their bad are too bad, and innocent too innocent. A case in point is 'The Novice' or 'The Heir of Montgomery Castle' (1814) by Matthew Moral, Esq.⁽³⁾ with the

(1) Mary Russell Mitford in a letter to Mrs. Hofland (1770-1844).

(2) The Minerva Press (1790-1820) - Dorothy Blakey - 1939 - page 54.

(3) 'Matthew Moral' was a pseudonym for Mrs. Pilkington (1766-1839) v. Index of Authors under 'Moral' - The Minerva Press (1790-1820) - Dorothy Blakey - 1939 - page 335.

hero whose generosity and sheltered upbringing almost cause him to fall a victim to the allurements of gaming, drink, and the seductive charms of a lady of fortune, not to mention the machinations of a false friend. The aim of the novel was to show the benefit of a liberal education - a satisfyingly vague expression - the inevitability of disaster which is the consequence of a bad upbringing, and the consolation religion will bring the true penitent, an aim which does not differ from that of the other writers of the period, but would Maria Edgeworth, or Catherine Sinclair, or Alicia Mant, have written, 'frequently he (Frederick Montgomery) beheld his beloved Margaret training her blooming flowers before the clock had struck six, herself more blooming than the roses which her snowy hand so kindly cultivated'⁽¹⁾, and 'Mrs. Montgomery actually laughed until the emblems of sorrow rapidly coursed each other down her intelligent countenance'⁽²⁾? The title 'Novice' sums up the hero, Frederick Montgomery, who was a child in the ways of man and the devil, and who, until he visited London with his father, when he was a young man, had not gone beyond the confines of his father's estate. The love element has its ups and downs, through the mazes caused by misunderstandings, proud and obstinate parents on either side, 'maiden of low degree' situations. Margaret, thinking her

(1) The Novice - Mrs. Pilkington - Minerva Press - 1814 - page 20.

(2) Ibid. - page 77. Almost on a par, though more pedantic than silly, is Matilda Howard's 'I am sorry to see though, that there are some sad fractures and contusions among the branches, which will make amputation necessary'. (The March of Intellect - Catherine Howard - 1836 - page 223).

'squire of high degree' lost for ever to her, marries the persistent Dr. Tomkins who drinks himself to death and leaves her free to marry her Frederick. Their marriage disproves the latter part of the belief of Montgomery's father that 'provided a woman possesses sense and good temper, no man need fear wanting happiness in the married station - that is provided she is really attached to her husband; for his wishes will be her law; but I never knew one instance of conjugal felicity when there is a great disparity either in rank or fortune'.⁽¹⁾ About eleven years later, the Minerva Press published 'Celebrity' or 'The Unfortunate Choice' by the same author. The title is the theme. A young Irishman possessed of all the manly graces and wealth is led from the paths of probity by paying too much attention to popularity and the demands of the 'beau monde'. He becomes entangled with a lady of charm and loose morals, to his own humiliation, degradation and shame, to be won back to sanity and self-respect by his wife.⁽²⁾

The Minerva Press did little in the way of appealing to the eye, but in the early nineteenth century and continuing until well into Victoria's reign, there appeared the 'perfect drawing room book specially designed and constructed for the distinguished position it was to occupy' - the 'annual' with the 'pretty-pretty' names of 'The Keepsake', 'The Gem', 'The Book of Beauty', 'Friendships Offering', and 'Forget-me-not'. From

(1) The Novice - page 34.

(2) Generally speaking, the male characters are more firmly drawn than the female. The fair writers had no theories about the 'Rights of Women', or if they had, suppressed them in the interests of sales.

Lockhart it may be gathered that Scott was offered the editor-ship of 'The Keepsake' at £800 a year, (1828), but declined. ⁽¹⁾ He agreed, however, that 'Keepsake' would be allowed to print his 'long-forgotten juvenile drama of the "House of Aspen", with "Aunt Margaret's Mirror", and two other little tales, which had been omitted, at Ballantyne's entreaty, from the "second Chronicles of Croftangry"'. ⁽²⁾ With the fashionable annuals, the names were more important than the material, especially if the contributors were of some note in the literary world. Hood's 'I remember, I remember', appeared in 'Friendship's Offering', Macaulay's 'Armada' in 'Friendship's Offering' for 1833. FitzGerald had two poems in 'The Keepsake' of 1834, Ruskin two poems in 'Friendship's Offering' for 1838, and Landor and Dickens contributed to 'The Keepsake' of 1843, ⁽³⁾ but the attraction lay in the plates and general lay out. Of the plates in one issue of the 'Keepsake' Scott wrote, 'the plates are beyond comparison beautiful', but he said that the letter-press was indifferent, ⁽⁴⁾ and Lamb in his forthright manner speaking of 'annuals' in general said, 'I hate the paper, the type, the gloss, the dandy plates, the names of contributors poked up into your eyes on the first page'. ⁽⁵⁾ The earnest seeker after truth, morality, holy living and holy dying would catch glimpses here and there of figures from the

- (1) Lockhart's Life of Scott - The Library of Standard Biographies - ed. J.M. Sloan - 1904 - page 304.
 (2) Ibid. - page 305.
 (3) v. The Englishman and his Books - Amy Cruse - Harrap - 1930 - pp. 279-80.
 (4) Lockhart's Life of Scott - page 304.
 (5) Quoted by Amy Cruse - The Englishman and his Books - page 280.

moral tale, but the odour of sanctity would be overpowered by the sickly sweet incense from the forests of romance. Instead of pleasant walks where the beauties of nature could be studied in their relation to their creator, and where he could meet friends and exchange observations on life and conduct, he would find secret chests, crypts, treachery, double dealing, situations like that of the opera 'La Tosca', hatred, jealousy. He would also discover honour, true love, and beauty, but they would be in a 'Gothic' setting and have little in common with reality. Instead of the mansion in the park he would see the castle on the Rhine and the clergyman of the homespun tales would have become the hermit of the wood. He would before long have discovered that the plates held his interest and that the tales were an afterthought to illustrate them; ^(I) reason and thought were enslaved to the eye. The Keepsake for 1841, edited by the 'famous' Countess of Blessington, had fifteen plates. Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer contributed an Ode - 'The Last September', Marquess Wellesley 'Verses', the Honorable Mrs. Erskine Norton, 'The Monomaniac', the Countess of Blessington, 'Scenes in the Life of a Young Portrait Painter', Lady E,

(I) Mary Russell Mitford, (1787-1855), undertook to edit 'a very splendid Annual called "Finden's Tableaux"', and requested from a friend, Miss Harrison (Mrs. Acton Tindal) 'a poem, not shorter than forty or fifty lines . . . with a motto from any English poet . . . on the subject of the enclosed plate - which seems to me to represent a Georgian selling two beautiful girls for a Turkish harem'.
 - Letter to Miss Harrison, July 20, 1837 - Letters of Mary Russell Mitford - ed. H. Chorley - Second Series - 1872 - Vol. I. - page 267.

Stuart Wortley, 'The Pearl', Arthur Hume Plunkett, Esq. 'The Savooni', Miles Stapleton, 'Mahammed's Lamentation for his Mother, who died a Pagan', Sir Gardner Wilkinson, 'The Pasha's Father - and so on, a galaxy of literary dilettanti. J. Kenyon's 'Italy' is a fair specimen of the verse found in the 'annuals', conventional, lacking in the unexpected:

Fair blows the breeze - depart depart!
 And Tread with me th'Italian shore
 And feed thy soul with glorious art
 And drink again of classic lore.
 Or, pleased more pensive joy to woo
 At falling eve, by ruin gray
 Muse o'er the generations, who
 Have passed, as we must pass away.

'Curiosity' by Richard Westmacott promised by its title to be a moral tale but that promise was not fulfilled. It is no tale of the dangers attendant on curiosity but rather the 'mixture as before' - clandestine meetings, strange noises in the night, a heroine who wishes to marry beneath her and a lover of gentle birth. The maid Alice, a very good girl who never 'meant any harm' was 'born to be a lady's maid. Curiosity was a great ingredient in her composition, and anything like a secret offered to her imagination delight and interest beyond anything else this world, or her world, had to bestow'.^(I) Alice's curiosity was an innocent one. The Countess Blessington's own contribution might have pointed a moral, but the young artist's thoughts on his 'sitters' afford the lady a display of her well-known caustic wit. In the true tradition

(I) The Keepsake (1841) - edited by the Countess of Blessington - London - page 158.

of fashionable emotion is the outburst of the young artist as he soliloquises on his painting of Lady Emily Hume and her cousin Lady Isabella Crichton. 'In love, indeed! Bah! how I dislike this term, used by fashionable libertines to express some temporary caprice often felt for an unworthy object, by lawyers' clerks, ay, and even by men-milliners, to define the gross inclination excited towards some dress-maker, or retailer of tapes and bobbins. Beautiful Lady Emily! how different is the sentiment you excite in my breast! Even here, in the privacy of my studio, which this faint shadow of your loveliness seems to consecrate, I no more durst dwell on your pictured face, though wrought by my own hand, with other or freer gaze than that with which the devotee regards the idol of his worship . . . your presence transforms this homely room into a temple, whose sanctity I tremble to invade by the indulgence of one unholy desire, one earthly passion'.^(I) The description of Mr. Burnaby Tomkinson is far removed in spirit from the moral tales - 'The chin reminded one of the breast of the pelican, and seemed filled with some portion of the produce of the purple grape, so freely quaffed by its owner, and though closely packed beneath the cravat, was continually endeavouring to over pass its boundary. The lips were thick and dry looking, the nose of large dimensions, was of a still deeper tint of red than the cheeks; and the eyes resembled

(I) The Keepsake (1841) - edited by the Countess of Blessington - London - pp. 192-3.

nothing so much as bottled gooseberries. The forehead re-treated so suddenly, that it gave the notion of having so done to avoid a contact with the fiery red nose beneath, which seemed to have parched up the natural crystalline of the eyes that twinkled near them'.⁽¹⁾ None of the ladies who wrote edifying tales have anything even approximating the unkindness of the description of Lady Lanerton, 'a wealthy widow'. 'This lady was in her fortieth year, and had been so much less kindly treated by Nature than by Fortune, that her utmost efforts, and they were indefatigable, to supply the absence of every feminine attraction by the aid of art, only served to render her ugliness still more remarkable. A profusion of black ringlets fell over cheeks covered with rouge, and shaded eyes, whose obliquity of vision gave a peculiarly disagreeable expression to her countenance. Her lips were so unnaturally red, as to look like thin pieces of sealing-wax, and when open, displayed teeth whose decay might perhaps with reason be attributed to their proximity to their painted portals. A dress suited to blooming eighteen, and an affection unsuited to any age added to the disagreeable effect of this mass of ugliness . . .⁽²⁾

The fashionable 'annuals' of the early nineteenth century and the Mid Victorian period are so alien in topic, tone and

(1) The Keepsake - edited Countess of Blessington - 1841 - pp. 193-4.

(2) Ibid. - page 200.

appeal to the genuine moral tale that the discovery of a few grains of morality is not worth the trouble of the search. Caricature and an unpleasant wit are not potent weapons in the armoury of morality. This is understandable because in fiction, while freakish characters may be amusing, they are seldom edifying. Lady Bearcroft, ('Helen' - Maria Edgeworth - 1834) Lady Langdale, (The Absentee - 1812), Lady Susan Danvers, (Modern Society - 1837 - Catherine Sinclair), Miss Barbara Neville (Modern Accomplishments - 1836 - Catherine Sinclair), are on the verge of caricature but remain human and possible. There is nothing freakish about a publication in 1835 which brings one back on to the beaten track of the moral and educational tale. E.A.Kendall's 'English Boy at the Cape' (1835) like Catherine Sinclair's 'Modern Accomplishments' (1836), has many strands woven into its fabric. In it, the moral and educational tale extends its boundaries and enlarges its sympathies. The home and its immediate environment, with the narrow limits of a society revolving round the mansion house in the park give place to the wider vistas and interests of South Africa. As in the tales that combine education with narrative, the plot (sic) pattern is not complicated. Young Charles Laltham and his father sail for South Africa to find out the possibility of settling there. The ship is wrecked at no great distance from Cape Town and the father is drowned. Two of the three volumes deal with the attempt of Charles to

reach the farm of his god-parent, Martha Hoyland, and all three are expanded by lectures on such topics as the flora and fauna of South Africa, the origin of whirlwinds, land and sea surfaces, economics - where Kendall expounds on the theory that 'the richer the country, the poorer the masses' - tales of the generosity and sagacity of wild animals, and experiences among the Bushmen, Hottentots and Boers.

Although Kendall does not revive the theme of the 'noble savage', yet it is very noticeable that his native characters are conspicuous for kindness and generosity, much more so than the European. He has no delusions about England and the English, for after a riot at Cape Town, instigated by a party of drunken English sailors, he comments in no uncertain terms on what he calls the vice of the English, that of despising, insulting, and sometimes outraging everything that is not English. ⁽¹⁾ A second mate expresses Kendall's views. 'I like that English "pride" and "defiance" exceedingly well when there's a good reason for either, but at every other time, as I take it, it is the proudest thing in all the world, for the strongest man to be harmless, and for the boldest to be un-presuming; and as for "lords of human kind", shiver all my timbers if I don't think I've sometimes seen as good "lords" among some other sorts of people, as among us that are English only. ⁽²⁾ Suffering and trouble, Kendall maintained are

(1) v. English Boy at the Cape - E.A.Kendall - 1835 - Vol. III. - page II5.

(2) Ibid. - Vol. III. - page II7.

bonds which unite black races and the white, and the lessons learnt by Charles from his hardships are that the world is not such a bad place after all, and that the spirit of helpfulness is in the majority of people, from the Governor of Cape Town to the Bush-Maid. Charles gained his experience of life through suffering and would be more tolerant of other peoples, one imagines, than Laura (aged 12) who travelled the easy way. This little lady wrote to her friend Sophia about the Dutch - 'To every house there is a garden, both before and behind, ornamented in the most fanciful manner, with flowers, china vases, grottoes of shell-work, and trees cut into every whimsical shape you can imagine, with blue tigers, red wolves, green foxes, yellow rabbits, and white ravens, some designed for benches, others for fences. My mother regretted that so much pains and care were lavished on such trifling objects in which false taste was so obvious'.⁽¹⁾ The child of the early nineteenth century was not supposed to take delight in green foxes and yellow rabbits.

Kendall differs in no degree from his contemporaries and predecessors in the origin of his morality and guide to conduct. His sentiments are such as may be found in Mrs. Barbauld (1743-1825), Mrs. Trimmer (1741-1810), and Priscilla Wakefield (1751-1832). He believed in being contented with

(1) The Juvenile Travellers - 1801 - Priscilla Wakefield - 19th edition - 1850 - page 68. Perhaps Laura really enjoyed green foxes, and yellow rabbits, and the criticism was for her Mother's censoring of the letter before dispatch.

one's station⁽¹⁾ that the foundations of future conduct are laid
 and determined in the home,⁽²⁾ that it is impossible to satisfy
 children with false arguments,⁽³⁾ that in the performance of
 virtuous and generous deeds, the enjoyment to the performer,
 comes not so much from the greatness of the deed, as from the
 greatness of the desire.⁽⁴⁾ Unlike these ladies, however,
 Kendall, as did the author of the 'Memoirs of Mrs. Siddons'
 (1827),⁽⁵⁾ occasionally took a wistful look back in time, recog-
 nising that the past would not necessarily be bettered in the
 future. He regretted the decline of certain aspects of Feudal
 England, 'where the houses of the rich are, as it were the
 second houses of the poor, and where the children of the poor
 fall into employment and subsistence either in the kitchen or
 the field, under those whose fathers knew and employed the
 fathers of the children; and where, more than all, the roofs
 and precincts of the rich are so many schools of manners, of
 knowledge and of virtue, diffusing over the cottages at least
 a share of moral and intellectual advantages of the hall and
 castle; binding neighbourhoods in the bonds of reciprocal
 esteem; and rearing up, however, qualified by occasional
 errors and misunderstandings the peasant and his lord in
 mutual tempers of respect and kindness'.⁽⁶⁾ He differs also

(1) English Boy at the Cape - Kendall - 1835 - Vol. I. - page 25.

(2) Ibid. - Vol. I - page 29.

(3) Ibid. - Vol. II. - page 49.

(4) Ibid. - Vol. III. - page 204.

(5) v. Memoirs of Mrs. Siddons - J. Broaden - 1825 - Vol. I. - p. 267.

(6) English Boy at the Cape - E.A.Kendall - 1835 - Vol. I. - page 32.

from the religious group, and in so doing draws closer to the Edgeworths, in his tackling of the question of good and evil, which he approached from a utilitarian, rather than a religious, angle. Doing good and not evil, according to Kendall, ought to be an obvious obligation. 'Good', he argued, 'comes out of good, and evil out of evil; and this is just. But upon which particular person either will light, may be uncertain; and hence the interest of all that all should perform good, and all abstain from evil.'⁽¹⁾

In spite of much sound advice as 'Observe the ways of nature and of natural life - and think',⁽²⁾ and 'Let us take it (life) then, as we find it, today; and hope for it, for the best, tomorrow. Let us take it humbly and contentedly';⁽³⁾ observations such as 'Civilisation is the degree by which we have control over the natural emotions',⁽⁴⁾ 'no man except a vulgar man thinks that he loses anything of his own dignity by admitting, in all its degrees, the dignity of others',⁽⁵⁾ and 'The natural man, in his joys, is a gay singing, shouting, dancing creature . . . All his emotions, all his circumstances and situations, have their expressions. If his age has the stillness of evening, so also has his infancy the sprightliness of morning, and his manhood the glory of noon', Kendall re-⁽⁶⁾

(1) English Boy at the Cape - E.A.Kendall - I835 - Vol. II - pp. 52-3.

(2) Ibid. - Vol. II. - page 146.

(3) Ibid. - Vol. II. - page 296.

(4) Ibid. - Vol. I. - page 62.

(5) Ibid. - Vol. III. - page 153.

(6) Ibid. - Vol. I. - page 62.

veals in his story, a lack of humour, and at times a deadly dullness to which he provides a fitting style - 'Taking it for granted, then, that the image of Margaret has pleased the glance of the spectator, we assume that a steadier look has increased his pleasure; and, at the same time, that it has added to his instruction. We did not undertake our story, to hurry from the beginning to the end, and to pause at nothing, and to think of nothing, all the way we went along; but contrariwise, to dwell enough upon all its parts, and all its actors, to feel and to understand them; and there is nothing to be either felt or understood, unless, for a certain space at least, we fix upon it our attention'.^(I) Nevertheless with all his occasional pedantry and garrulity, Kendall has managed to put into his 'English Boy at the Cape' a spirit which is refreshing after a diet of Emilys, Almerias, Worthys, Truemans, Adoxas, and has created a hero who is not a puppet at the mercy or caprice of a superior and infallible intelligence, but a bewildered and sometimes very frightened little boy. The road is being cleared for the tale of adventure.

(I) English Boy at the Cape - E.A.Kendall - 1835 - Vol. I. - page 41.

CHAPTER 9.

GATHERING THE THREADS.

PERIOD SURVEY.

Few, if any, readers of the present age would declare that the majority of the tales with a moral or educational purpose passed the test that the 'Edinburgh Review' claimed was that of a good novel. In a criticism of 'Granby - a novel' (1826), the reviewer asks, 'Did it Amuse! Were you surprised at dinner coming so soon? did you mistake eleven for ten, and twelve for eleven? were you too late to dress? and did you sit up beyond the usual hour?' and added, 'If a novel produces these effects, it is good'.^(I) But most would agree that Eleanor Fitz-Patrick had made a valid criticism on books of the type that her cousin, Matilda Howard read. 'I could give you,' she said to Matilda, 'an abridgement of the whole contents without so much as glancing at one of the pages. Chapter I. - On the improvement of Time. Rise very early in the morning and never lose a moment all day afterwards. Chapter II. - On Conversation. Never speak till you are spoken to; invariably talk sense and praise every human being who is ever mentioned, without exception. Chapter III. - On Dress. To be neat, but not gaudy - elegant but not expensive. Chapter IV. - On Morals. To aim at every impossible perfection, and to pretend that you believe all other persons come nearer to it

(I) Edinburgh Review - Feb. 1826 - No. LXXVI.

(1)
 than yourself'. Granted that Eleanor was criticising books of the 'Advice-to-young-Ladies' type, yet her airy condemnation strikes at the heart of the matter - their limited creative freedom. They do not arrest attention because they have nothing of that imaginative quality which makes life as depicted in novels, unique. They have nothing of that union of a strangeness with a closeness of nature which 'produces the effect of being very nature itself' and which is, as Professor Henry Burrowes Lathrop maintained, the 'problem of the novel'.
 (2)

The writers had, however, no ambitions towards literary reputation, no desire to adorn a pedestal in some hall of Fame. Some were story-tellers by necessity, others by choice and the force of circumstances, but all had a sincere purpose in suggesting lines of conduct which would make their world a happier one. In that lies the importance of their tales. They form the prelude to the Victorian Age, the beginning of what was later to become a term, almost of abuse - 'Victorian'. They have a message for a so far distracted twentieth century in recalling to it the foundations on which Western civilisation is built, the Bible and the Home. The twentieth century can see the flaws in the reasoning of rationalists such as the Edgeworths. Their creed was a simple one, and the problem of human perfectibility, individual or social, was an

(1) Modern Accomplishments - Catherine Sinclair - 1836 - pp. 126-7.

(2) The Art of the Novelist - H.B. Lathrop - Harrap - 1921 - p. 49.

intellectual one. To them the root of evil was in ignorance, and the secret of salvation was knowledge. 'A more enlightened education' they thought was all that was 'needed to make man progressively better, and more enlightened government to make society progressively better'.⁽¹⁾ The very Rev. Dr. Baillie saw the weakness in rationalism 'in its exclusive stress upon the discursive intellect to the neglect of the other powers of the human spirit operative in its adjustment to reality',⁽²⁾ and contemporary with the Edgeworths, the English Baptist divine Robert Hall (1764-1831) made this comment on Maria Edgeworth's novels. 'She does not attack religion or inveigh against it; but makes it appear unnecessary by exhibiting perfect virtue without it. No books ever produced so bad an effect on my mind as hers. I did not expect any irreligion there. I was off my guard; their moral character beguiled me. I read volume after volume with eagerness, and the bad effects of them I experienced for months'.⁽³⁾ It is equally easy, from the pinnacle of twentieth century vaunted broadmindedness and tolerance, to fire shafts at the belief of the Hannah Mores and Mrs. Sherwoods, that little can be gained by kicking against the pricks and that all is for the best. 'People talk', said Dr. Prichard, 'a great deal about equality, and some say it is a very hard thing

(1) The Belief in Progress - John Baillie - O.U.P. - 1950 - pp. 175-6.

(2) Ibid. - page 178.

(3) Quoted by Geraldine E. Hodgson in her 'Rationalist English Education' - S.P.C.K. - 1912 - page 162.

that one person has many gifts of fortune, and others have none; and they even go as far as to say it would be better if there was every now and again a regular distribution of all property: but these people in their folly never think that it is God himself who has made this difference in one man's condition over or under another, and like all his other works he has so arranged it that the weak powers of man cannot oppose him'.⁽¹⁾ But the present age must admit that the hope for the future lies not only in human reason and the enlightenment which ought to follow in the wake of education, but in the belief that there is a spiritual as well as a rational approach to human problems.

The passion for social reform and the supreme confidence in the power of man, through the State, to attain a betterment in human affairs which was so marked in France in the second half of the eighteenth century, and which was spreading into England, passed by the novelists in the field of morals and education. They were typically English in their reliance not in concerted action, but on individual effort. Political reform, education, and even provision for 'indigent eld', were matters for the individual or the interested and benevolent

(1) Boys will be Boys - Mrs. Sherwood and Mrs. Kelly (her daughter) - Darton & Co. - 1854 - pp. 27-8.

(I)

volent group. They did not favour the workhouse; rather was their outlook that of Dr. Murray who said, 'Never furnish crutches to those who can be made to walk without them, for our prosperity depends on every individual doing as much as possible for himself'.⁽²⁾ Closely linked with individual effort was their emphasis on home influence,⁽³⁾ and the part to be played in the moulding of character by the adults in the home, not only by example, but by guidance in the conduct and supervision of things which at present are often placed in the charge of strangers. To the excuse that the tempo of modern life is quicker than that of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and that no modern parents have the time or leisure to pay such attention to the actions and conduct of their children as advocated by the Edgeworths, Alicia Mant, Lucy Peacock, and educationalists like Mrs. Hamilton, Richard Edgeworth gave the retort and put the position into its proper perspective: 'Fathers or mothers are not expected to

(1) v. The provision for the old lady in 'Display' (1815) and Matilda Howard's comment in 'Modern Society' (1837) 'I have often thought that some of those poor old creatures, when conveyed from their little quiet chimney corner to the large and lofty rooms in a hospital, must feel as strange and comfortless as the oyster did in the lobster's shell. How different from the cheerful contented poverty of poor old Janet,' etc. . . page 119.

Professor Saunders states that in Scotland in the period 1815-1840, there were no poor's houses outside the very largest towns . . . they were not institutionalized as in England. (Scottish Democracy 1815-1840 - J.L. Saunders - 1950 - page 195).

(2) Modern Society - Catherine Sinclair - 1837 - page 119.

(3) For an informative and brightly written account of Home education and the young lady, see Chapter II - The English Miss To-day and Yesterday - Alicia C. Percival - Harrap - 1939 - pp. 52-77.

devote the whole of their days, or even two hours out of the four-and-twenty, to the tuition or instruction of their children; that no father is expected, like Harry's father, to devote an hour before breakfast to the trying of experiments for his children; that no mother is required to suspend her toilet - no father to delay shaving - while their children blow bubbles, or inquire into the construction of bellows, windmill, barometer, or pump - Provided always that said fathers and mothers do, at any and all convenient times, introduce or suggest, or cause to be introduced or suggested, to their pupils, the simple elementary notions of science contained in the following pages, and provided always that they do at all times associate or cause to be associated pleasure in the minds of their children with acquisition of knowledge⁽¹⁾. - as sensible as his daughter's acknowledgement that the wilder accomplishments are not without their attraction⁽²⁾.

The point that Edgeworth père was making and one which was the theme, without exception, of contemporary, and later, 'edifying' novelists, was that parents had a responsibility towards their children in the matter of education and morals. The image of perfection is so constantly before their eyes,

(1) Intro. to 'Harry and Lucy' - 1887 edition - Routledge & Sons - pp. XI - XII.

(2) Letter to Mrs. Ruxton - March 1809 - 'The Grinding Organ' (a little play produced at home) went off ... better than I could have expected ... Sophy and Fanny were excellent, but as they were doomed to be good children, they had not ample room and verge enough to display powers equal to the little termagant heroine of the night' - Maria Edgeworth - Chosen Letters - F.V. Barry - 1931 - page 159.

that it is not one of the least of the accomplishments of the writers that their good heroines are attractive and possible. It is as if these heroines had acquired some of the forthrightness of their creators, and that quality of steadiness which, in their later years, would make the drunkard and the vagabond quail before their gaze. Very few of the heroes and heroines, especially in the tales for youth, are imposed upon. They can give a good account of themselves and can act upon advice such as Mrs. Delton gave, 'I am not fond', she said, 'of encouraging little girls to tell tales of each other, but when you are called upon in your own justification, Mary, it is your duty, to defend yourself, and therefore I beg to know exactly what has passed about this business'.⁽¹⁾ In a generation that is so insistent on its rights, it might be well to remember, as did the moral writers of the early nineteenth century, that 'duty' is a unifying influence, that universal brotherhood may be born of obligations and duties, and that as the poet saw it,

'Duty' might be
 'a light to guide, a rod
 To check the erring, and reprove'. (2)

Much of the interest in, and importance of, the moral tales lie in the fact that they are the expression of Middle Class morality which owes nothing to any science of ethics or profound philosophical theory of life, but has its origin in the

(1) The Canary Bird - Alicia C. Mant - 1817 - page 33.

(2) Ode to Duty - Wordsworth - ll. 3-4.

domestic virtues as practised in the home. Their cardinal virtues are those that Dr. Erasmus Darwin (1731-1832) listed: Sympathy or Compassion with the pains and pleasures of others, Prudence, Justice, Chastity, Fortitude, and Temperance. ⁽¹⁾ To these could be added the faults which they eschewed - Indolence, Hypocrisy, Pretence, Double-dealing. They were also akin to the spirit which lay behind a criticism of Scott's 'Lord of the Isles' (1815). The reviewer objected to the title as having little to do with the narrative and suggested that the real title, 'The Achievements of The Bruce', had been 'sacrificed to the unworthy attraction of romantic glitter and subaltern prettiness'. ⁽²⁾ Never did they fall into the error of making heroes of criminals or allowing the emotion of the moment to paint black, white. Lady Olivia Neville, firm of mind and delicate of body, refused to fashion saints out of criminals. 'There is a degree of vanity in our nature', she said, 'which the approach of death itself can scarcely overpower, and if ever there be a temptation to hypocrisy, or an occasion when hypocrisy is dangerous to the salvation of all, it is on such occasions as these, when a multitude beholds the greatest of criminals almost canonizes as a saint; - the least relic of him is carefully treasured - the very rope on which he was suspended becomes an object of inestimable value'. ⁽³⁾ Death

(1) A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education - Erasmus Darwin -

1797 - page 46.
 (2) Critical Review - 5th Series - Vol. II - 1818 - page 71.

(3) Modern Accomplishments - Catherine Sinclair - 1836 - page 162.

to them did not atone for a life of evil, nor were they much impressed with eleventh hour repentances, and would have agreed with some of the sentiments in an article on Maturin (1782-1824) which appeared in the 'London Magazine' for May, 1821. 'It is no excuse for a life of pleasure lusciously represented and tricked out in all the brilliant colouring which genius can bestow on it, that its inevitable end is penitence and affliction - it is no apology for the painted display of adultery, or seduction, that its artificial tints should be finally washed away by the tears of the criminal'.⁽¹⁾

⁽²⁾
Adultery and seduction, as in all ages, were to the writers unforgiveable offences against the moral code, too heinous and unthinkable to be paraded before the public gaze even in the guise of fiction.⁽³⁾ No more compromising were they on the question of second marriage, there being some strange stigma attached to second matrimonial ventures, though Mrs. Sophia Zigenhirt realised there might be occasions when a second marriage could be justified. Paulina, the heroine of 'The Orphan of Tintern Abbey' (1816) is the

(1) Article on Maturin - London Magazine - May 1821 - XVII - Vol. III.

(2) The Refusal - 3 volumes - Longman - 1810. 'Adultery in all its various forms, and under all the specious pretexts which can be devised to conceal or palliate its deformity, is the fashionable reigning vice, against which the artillery of Mrs. Prudentia is on this occasion principally directed'.
v. Critical Review - 3rd. Series - Vol. XX - May 1810 - page 34.

(3) This is not strictly correct, as adultery and seduction often formed the themes of novels printed by the Minerva Press, but they were avoided by the strict and reputable moral writers.

speaker. 'Thank you, my dear Madam, for your very interesting narrative, I own I should have been disappointed if Lady B- had married a second time.' To which "Madam" replied, 'It would undoubtedly have cast a shade on an unblemished character and yet, Paulina, she knew little happiness in her marriage with Lord B.-'⁽¹⁾ The number of second marriages in the tales between 1790 and 1840 must be infinitesimal.⁽²⁾ Mrs. Opie (1769-1853) once wrote to her friend Mrs. Taylor of Norwich, 'How dreadfully forlorn must be the situation of a widow! I think I shall write an essay recommending second marriages . . . I have learned to excuse nay to command, women for marrying again!⁽³⁾ And yet she did not obey her own command. None of the widows that appear in the pages of Lucy Peacock, Alicia Mant, Catherine Sinclair, and others of the sisterhood of letters, are, however, 'dreadfully forlorn', though they are never seen in the privacy of their own rooms, and alone with their own thoughts and memories, rather do they show a brave face to the world, and in no way approximate the mourning convention as visualised by the governess Miss Mara- bout, 'In lady Olivia's place, I should have sat in a darkened room, with my husband's miniature in my hair, a few select friends admitted occasionally to weep with me, my harp unstrung, and some volumes of pensive interest as the soothing companion

(1) The Orphan of Tintern Abbey - Sophia Zigenhirt - 1816 - Vol. II - page 252.

(2) There is one in 'The Novice (1814) by Mrs. Pilkington - Minerva Press.

(3) Memoirs of Mrs. Opie - C.L.Brightwell - 1854 - page 88.

of my lonely hours'.⁽¹⁾ Marriage was to them a serious business not to be entered lightly. It was no civil contract drawn up from purely practical and expedient motives but was based upon mutual attraction and esteem, and sanctioned by the church.⁽²⁾ Like Fanny Kemble, they did not picture marriage as a 'fairyland of enchantments within the mysterious precincts of matrimony',⁽³⁾ but as an alliance founded on sympathy, 'love of truth, the reverence for right, the abhorrence of all that is base and unworthy'.⁽⁴⁾ The young ladies in the tales are

(1) Modern Accomplishments - Catherine Sinclair - 1836 - page 133.

(2) cf. 'We (William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft) did not marry. It is difficult to recommend anything to indiscriminate adoption, contrary to the established rules and prejudices of mankind, but certainly nothing can be so ridiculous upon the face of it, or so contrary to the genuine march of sentiment, as to require the overflowing of the soul to wait upon a ceremony, and that which, wherever delicacy and imagination exist, is of all things most sacredly private, to blow a trumpet before it, and to record the moment when it has arrived at its climax' - 'Memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft' - Godwin - page 154.

Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft did marry. From a letter written by the latter to Amelia Alderson (Mrs. Opie) it can be gathered that Mary sought in marriage security and a firm anchor both for herself and her daughter Fanny (Imlay). - v. Memorials of the Life of Mrs. Opie - C.L. Brightwell - page 61.

cf. 'The Conjugal Union is contemplated not as a mere Contract for Cohabitation, but as an engagement binding the parties to mutual affection and to a community of the scheme and ends of life. Hence, a mere legal contract, which must regard action alone, cannot express its full import. The Sentiment of Duty must be brought into operation, and the appeal to this sentiment belongs to the province of Religion'. - Elements of Morality - William Whewell, D.D. - 1845 - Vol. I. - page 114.

(3) Records of Later Life - F.A. Kemble + 1882 - page 1.

(4) Ibid. - page 2.

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trained in the qualities which made for enduring marriages,
 though hardly in household management ⁽²⁾ and what the moderns
 would call 'the facts of life'. No need for them to dread
 what Mary Wollstonecraft feared when she wondered 'What lies
 ahead for the wife when the husband ceases to be the lover?
 Her training does not fit her for the part of companion and she
 is unable to secure her husband's respect before it is necess-
 ary to exert mean arts to please him and feed a dying flame,
 which nature doomed to expire when the object became familiar,
 when friendship and forbearance take the place of a more ardent
 affection'. ⁽³⁾ In all cases the writers are at pains to emphas-
 ise that the attraction is not so much physical as intellectual
 and that the graces of the mind and intellect are more enduring
 than the graces of the body.

(4)

What of divorce - that 'melancholy process of divorce',
 as Fanny Kemble called it? ⁽⁵⁾ The reviewer of the novel 'The
 Picture of the Age' (1800) passes sentence: 'In this picture
 the figures are not numerous or striking. Fanny marries one
 man, and loves another: her husband discovers her love for

(1) (In the Tales, marriage is the ultimate destiny of the heroines.)

(2) Writing in 1835, Mrs. Butler rued the narrow limits of her own education, an education which did not fit her for the onerous position as mistress of a house, six servants, etc. She regretted the Italian and music and would have sacrificed them for a 'little domestic economy' and knowledge of 'how much bread, butter, flour, eggs, milk, sugar, etc. ought to be consumed per week in a family of 8. v. Records of Later Life - Vol. I. - page 40.

(3) Rights of Women - Mary Wollstonecraft - 1891 edition - page 90.

(4) v. Elements of Morality - William Whewell, D.D. - 1845 - Vol. I. - page 115.

(5) Records of Later Life - F.A. Kemble - 1882 - page 29.

Henry, promotes a criminal intercourse between her and her favourite, and obtains a divorce; after which the lady gives her hand to Henry. Her friend Eliza espouses an old man, and, after his death, becomes the wife of his nephew. This novel was written with a view of recommending a facility of complete divorce, and a disregard even to very near affinity, in forming matrimonial connections'. After suspecting that the work was a translation from the French, he continues, 'We shall only add, that we are disgusted with the immoral tendency of the piece and do not approve the composition'.⁽¹⁾ Nor would the moralists of the early nineteenth century have approved. Neither they nor the critics could digest divorcees or a seduced lady winning through repentance to honour and respect. However much in private they may have experienced human sympathy for the fallen, it was not in the interests of morality to show it in their public life. Mary Wollstonecraft who probably regarded 'fallen women', or what she called the unfortunates of 'left handed marriages',⁽²⁾ as the victims of untrained emotion, openly declared, 'Still highly as I respect marriage, as the foundation of almost every social virtue, I cannot avoid feeling the most lively compassion for those unfortunate females who are broken off from society, and by one error torn from all those affections and relationships that

(1) Critical Review (1800) - A new Arrangement - Vol. 29 - page 471.
 (2) Rights of Women - Mary Wollstonecraft (1891 edition - intro. by Mrs. Henry Fawcett) - page 119.

(1) improve the heart and mind'. To Mary Wollstonecraft the remedy lay in educating women to recognise the difference between virtue and vice, and that could only be when women put a higher value on their importance to the community and to themselves.

Prejudices are long in dying and the stigma which was attached to divorce in the nineteenth century may have had something to do with the acerbities of Lady Holland ⁽²⁾ (d. 1845) who succeeded in establishing in London something of the 'salon' atmosphere which the society ladies had set up in Paris in the eighteenth century. Mr. Lloyd Sanders, in his study 'The Holland House Circle', gives an account of Lady Holland's irritating habits - her dropping of her fan without rhyme or reason, her seating sixteen guests at a table which could only cope with nine, her altering without warning seating arrangements at table. He relates that Lord Melbourne was so amazed at having to change when he had been seated to his liking, that he walked off to his house with the words "I'll be damned if I

(1) Rights of Women - Mary Wollstonecraft - 1891 edition - intro. by Mrs. Henry Fawcett - page 119.

(2) Carlyle said of her face in profile that it had something of the falcon's character as a falcon's bill had been straight. v. 'Charles Dickens' - Una Pope Hennessy - Reprint Society edition - 1947 - page 120.

Fanny Kemble's sense of propriety was offended by her. 'Well-bred persons are always at the mercy of ill-bred ones, and have an immense advantage over everybody who shrinks from turning a social gathering into closed lists for the exchange of impertinences'. - Records of Later Life - F.A. Kemble - 1882 - Vol. I. - page 97.

Lady Morley declared that her hostess was one of the few women of whom one could delight to relate scandalous anecdotes and yet visit her - Records of Later Life - Vol. I. - page 97.

dine with you at all'.⁽¹⁾ It was very possible that the deliberate impertinences that distinguished Lady Holland's manners, and the petty annoyances she caused her guests, were retaliations for the coldness of many of the society ladies towards her, ladies who no doubt raised inquiring and disapproving eyebrows at this unconventional divorcee who had violated their code.⁽²⁾

The brilliant and witty company (mainly masculine) that frequented Holland House and the abode of the banker-historian, George Grote (1797-1871), was far removed from that met with in the moral tales, with perhaps the exception of that in 'Tales of Fashionable Life' (1809-1812), but it did illustrate the atmosphere which the moralists considered fascinating but dangerous to spiritual health. Fanny Kemble sensed this when she described Mrs. Grote (1792-1878) as a 'sort of not-young-or handsome feminine oracle, among a set of very clever half-heathenish men', and quoted the Rev. Sydney Smith (1771-1843) as saying that he always expected to find an altar to Zeus in Mrs. Grote's drawing room.⁽³⁾ Maria Edgeworth could appreciate such a character, as witness Lady Delacour (Belinda), Lady Davenant and Lady Bearcroft (Helen), but the majority of female moral writers avoided the wit with the touch of malice,

(1) The Holland House Circle - Lloyd Sanders - page 66.

(2) She left her husband, Sir Godfrey Webster, for Lord Holland - an illegitimate son of her earlier association with Lord Holland, Charles Richard Fox, became a noted collector of Greek coins.

(3) Records of Later Life - F.A. Kemble - 1882 - Vol. II. - page 48.

as the Rev. Sydney Smith's comment on his host and hostess (the Grotes), 'I like them, I like them, I like him, he is so ladylike, and I like her, she's such a perfect gentleman',⁽¹⁾ and the sotto voce of Mrs. Chorley to her son (Henry Fothergill Chorley, the musical critic) about Mrs. Grote, 'Henry, my dear, who is the gentleman in the white muslin gown'.⁽²⁾ Nor did it suit their purpose to reveal the kindness which was often cloaked in a rough exterior, or depict the female counterpart to the Man in Black. Brusque in speech and manner, full of enthusiasms - the least successful of which was the laudable intention of making an 'honest woman' of Fanny Ellsler, the dancer - Mrs. Grote was capable of generous impulses. She undertook the entire care and charge of Fanny Ellsler's child while the mother was on a professional tour in America with the characteristic words, 'Well Fanny, send the brat to me; I don't ask you whose child it is, and I don't care, so long as it isn't that fool d'Orsay's,⁽³⁾ and I'll take the best care of it I can.'⁽⁴⁾ There is no bond between the society in the big Elizabethan Mansion of Lord Holland and that met in the rural mansions, the 'big house' of the tales, except that on

(1) Records of Later Life - F.A. Kemble - 1882 - Vol. II - page 65.

(2) Ibid. - page 66.

(3) Count d'Orsay was the stepson-in-law of Lady Blessington, mistress of the 'Gore House Salon'. 'The Count was one of the sights of London as he drove from his little house in Curzon Street to Hyde Park. To his smart hooded cabriolet was harnessed a seventeen-hand horse, and behind, clinging to the straps, bounced a tiny tiger'. - 'Dickens' - Una Pope Hennessy - Reprint Society edition - 1947 - page 117.

(4) Records of Later Life - F.A. Kemble - 1882 - Vol. II - page 55.

the surface at least both in ^{the} laughter, wit and learned discussions of the one, and the decorous, amiable and edifying talk of the other, the contemporary England seemed far away with its extremes of poverty and accumulating wealth, squalid misery, new luxuries, and a rapidly multiplying population, ⁽¹⁾ nor is there much affinity between the decorous and virtuous way pursued by the good mammas, moral aunts, and amiable cousins, in the tales, and the vivacious 'high jinks' of personalities such as Mrs. Opie, (at least in her earlier days) and Lady Caroline Lamb. ⁽²⁾ What the writers attempted to portray was a society that practised what Eleanor Fitz-Patrick of 'Modern Accomplishments' would have called the dull realities of life, and produced such members as Mrs. Sarah Hucks, whose obituary notice read: 'One trait of her character must not be forgotten, her particularly careful attention in forming the minds and morals of such young persons of her own sex, as came under her immediate protection, and whom it was her ambition and was considered by her as an imperious

- (1) The class depicted in the moral novels was middle class, especially that of a rural community. A later period was to couch a lance against the workhouse, factory, and mine.
- (2) Mrs. Opie wrote to her father (1814). 'I have seen, from head to foot, and touched the Emperor (of Russia). Other ladies touched his hand, I squeezed his wrists only', and then she adds, 'I bribed the porter and got into his hotel'. - Memoirs of Mrs. Opie - C.L. Brightwell - 1854 - page 158. There was the occasion when she and others were expecting the arrival of Blucher but he did not come. 'However we heard a distant, then a near hurra! and a violent knocking at the door. The hurras increased, and we all jumped up exclaiming "There's Blucher at last!" and the door opened, the servant calling out - "General Blucher" - on which, in strutted Lady Caroline Lamb in a cocked hat and a great coat!' - Memoirs of Mrs. Opie - page 163.

duty, to raise above the trifling accomplishments, and attention to personal attractions which too strongly mark the education of females of the present age, to moral and intellectual excellence, that dignity and refinement of character which qualifies them for the discharge of the important duties they may hereafter be called upon to fill in society?⁽¹⁾

They were not concerned with dramatic and sensational vices and virtues, but rather would be in agreement with Richard Lovell Edgeworth (1744-1817). 'The great virtues', he wrote, 'the great vices excite strong enthusiasm, vehement horror, but after all it is not necessary to warn the generality of mankind against these either by precept or example as against the lesser faults ... Show them the postern gates or little breaches in their citadel of virtue, and they fly to guard these'.⁽²⁾

The strongest claim among the writers for consideration as worthy a place, although a humble one, in the history of the English novel, lies in the moral and educational tales for young people. As in the adult tales, the spirit counts for more than the telling and sanity of view than for originality.⁽³⁾ Their tales, with the exception again of those of

(1) Obituary Notice - Mrs. Sarah Hucks - Gentleman's Magazine - August 1810 - page 193.

(2) Quoted by P.H. Newby in 'Maria Edgeworth' - British Novelist Series - 1950 - page 18.

(3) The tales are 'realistic' rather than 'romantic' in treatment. The romantic element is not absent from the ending of Maria Edgeworth's 'Good French Governess' or from Mrs. Sophia Ziegenhirt's 'Orphan of Tintern Abbey', but 'romance is the exception.'

educationalists like Maria Edgeworth, reveal no theory or science of education, and they do not seem to have unduly perturbed themselves about the 'presentation' of information to the child. What they did know was that ignorance was the parent of vice, but did not seem very clear about methods of imparting knowledge except in the cheerful delivery of facts which they thought would be useful and interesting, or 'amusing'. Sensible questioning on the part of children was encouraged - the adults were fortunate in having sensible children with whom to deal - and no question, sensible or irrelevant, was cavalierly treated. They were sound in their view that one of the best methods of imparting knowledge is through the medium of question and answer, and equally sound in the value of conversation ^(I) as a developer of mind and intellect, though it must be suspected that the 'learned' ladies who passed on information to their children or wards were themselves the product of large dozes of Richmal Mangnall or some other such purveyor of tabloid useful information. They were interested in education not on a grand

- (I) There were doubts as to the ultimate value of allowing children a share in general conversation. Eleanor FitzPatrick who prided herself on being up-to-date complained 'children are asked their opinions as soon as they can speak, consulted about their own education, and allowed to decide upon the relative advantages of schools and professions as if they really had the power of comparing them'. - *Modern Society* - 1837 - page II4.
 cf. Twenty years ago the High School boys went to school in the summer months at 7 and 9 in winter. They were ... wild, hardy mischievous, but among their seniors silent and modest, attentive to refined conversation when they were permitted to be present at it... now they go to school all the year round at 9 and 10 in the morning, look trig, are delicate, wear cravats, beaver hats and watches, sit at table with company and chatter upon almost all subjects with the most perfect self-possession and consequence. - *Letters from Edinburgh* - 1821 to Dr. L.M.Allan - *London Magazine* No. XIX - July 1821 - Vol. IV.

scale, but as it concerned themselves, their homes, and position in life - their heroines, almost without exception, had a home education - and it was from the class they represented that the great educational reformers of a later period (eg. Samuel Butler and Dr. Arnold) were recruited. 'It is not the great thinkers', wrote Dr. W.R. Hicks, 'who have shaped the course of English Education, or brought about its reform' and the same writer continued, that 'until late in the nineteenth century progress in secondary education was due, not to great writers and statesmen but to active individuals' ⁽¹⁾ They were individualists, each acting according to her own light ⁽²⁾ and not sinning against that light. It is no valid criticism that their individualism was a common one (in that their ideals were similar), because they were members of a class with much the same background and working towards much the same goal - the preparing of themselves and dependents for that position in society which was theirs by right of birth. Variations of temperament and outlook, as rationalism and evangelicalism, the dogmatic viewpoint of the Church of England Mrs. Trimmer ⁽³⁾ and the more elastic conscience of the dissenter Mrs. Barbauld

- (1) The School in English and German Fiction - W.R.Hicks - Socino Press - 1933 - pp. 2-3.
- (2) The only moral and educational tale written by a man, and read in this study has been 'The English Boy at the Cape'.
- (3) Edwin asked his father, Mr. Ambrose, why all people could not worship God alike. The answer was that since people did not dress alike, etc. why should they worship alike. 'Religion is one of the things in which mankind was made to differ' and the Creator has 'directed the mind and spirit with which he is to be worshipped, but not the particular form and manner'. - v. 'Difference and Agreement' from 'Evenings at Home' - Dr. Aiken and Mrs. Barbauld - pub. William P. Nimmo - Edinburgh - pp. 23-4.

are incidental, and merge eventually into the aristocratic point of view which is common to all and which colours unmistakably their philosophy of life.

The 'Juvenile' creations between 1790 and 1800 were more fortunate than those of the early and middle nineteenth century, because they were not quite so much in the constant glare of an all seeing eye - as stressed by the religious writers. 'Let her (any young lady) remember that there is an all-seeing eye, which is ever fixed upon her, even in her closest retirement', wrote Thomas Gisborne in 1797, ⁽¹⁾ an appeal to fear which would possibly have as much effect as it had in the 1870's when Aunt Lizzie successfully quelled a rebellion about the eating of rice pudding, by quietly remarking, 'It says in the Bible that the disobedient are to burn for ever in the Lake of Fire, with idolaters and murderers and liars'. ⁽²⁾ This almost superstitious fear which plays such a prominent part in the traditional conception of the Victorian family has no place in the tales outside the religious group; rather is the fear one that has a basis in the 'ego', a shrinking from the disgrace incurred in a mother's hurt expression and conversely the greatest reward is not tangible, but joy at the mentor's smile.

The all-seeing-eye fear taught one important lesson which

(1) An Inquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex - Thomas Gisborne - 1797 - page 214.

(2) A London Family - M.V. Hughes - 1946 - page 82.

did not pass unheeded in the tales, and that was the importance of paying strict attention to conduct and thought in one's private life. Real virtue lay not in the impression made in the full glare of society, but how one satisfied one's own conscience in the recesses of the personal life. The carvings at the base must not be more beautiful than those in the hidden shadows of the dome. It was with this in view that the surreptitious reading of novels of doubtful taste was regarded as a breach of faith to be punished by the withdrawal of parental favour. It was a cardinal offence to read secretly some circulating library romance of exciting but dangerous morality, and camouflage guilt by having within easy reach, Chambaud's Exercises, a portfolio of drawings or Mrs. Chapone's 'Letters'.

In connection with the choosing of reading material for their children, too many parents and guardians in the tales, qualified for the complaint which the 'Monthly Repository and Review' for March 1827 made - 'Too often books read and admired by the parents have been too hastily imposed upon their children as things which they must read and admire too and which it is a kind of disgrace not to like.'^(I) Few had enough faith in their training of children to allow the

(I) Article on Mrs. Sherwood's 'Lady of the Manor' - Monthly Repository and Review - March 1827 - New Series - Vol. I. - No. III. - page 195.

(1)
 child's instinct for the decent to gloss over the unsuitable.
 Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) judged better - 'Purified editions of noble books are monuments of wasted labour: for it ought to be with adults as it is with children; their purity should be an all-sufficient purifier',⁽²⁾ and the father of Agnes Strickland (1796-1874) was wiser, because although he normally neither permitted his children to read books of amusement unless they were of a 'superior' order and were calculated to form their minds and morals, nor allowed them to choose for themselves from the stories of his own library, yet finding out that they were reading 'Julius Caesar' by stealth, gave them leave to read Shakespeare, considering 'that their infant innocence would prevent them from receiving injury from these loose passages which the coarse manners of the age in which they were written had not only tolerated but probably admired'.⁽³⁾ More in harmony with the opinion of the ladies in the tales was that given by Elizabeth Appleton, 'Parents, governesses, henceforth tremble to give a book, a leaf, a line to your children, your pupils without having yourselves examined its sentiments, its moral, and its language'.⁽⁴⁾

One cannot but agree with the Edgeworths' view of education

- (1) It has never been established that a child has an instinct for the decent, but it may be taken for granted that a child normally brought up in a good home and receiving sound education will pass over the indecent.
 (2) Household Education - Harriet Martineau - 1861 - page 210.
 (3) Life of Agnes Strickland - Jane Margaret Strickland - 1887 - page 3.
 (4) Private Education - Elizabeth Appleton - 1815 - page 255.

as the development of capacity and a ripening of judgment,
 intellectual and moral, ⁽¹⁾ or with Mrs. Mills who showed to
 her nephew and niece that the wonders of the microscope
 'illustrated the greatness of the Being whose wisdom shines
 in the minutest of his works', ⁽²⁾ or with Elizabeth Appleton
 who insisted - as did Lucy Peacock - that the mother should
 as far as possible be with the child in his walks and in
 those moments of wonder when he asked why the clouds moved so
 fast, and why the grass was always green, ⁽³⁾ or with the firm
 facing of unpleasant facts such as suffering and death which,
 in Mrs. Sherwood's tales, was a discipline of the spirit, but
 these facts and aims, admirable in themselves, do not con-
 stitute the principal claim on the attention of the modern
 age. In spite of a William Maccall's gibe at the 'old maid'
 verb 'DO NOT', and his sweeping assertion that most books on
 education of the period were written by old maids, who knew

- (1) v. 'Rationalist English Educators' - Geraldine Hodgson - S.P.C.K. - 1912 - page 144. The writer correctly criticised the Edgeworths' hedonistic standards - 'where they failed was in their quaint and unobservant conviction that the immediate reward of virtuous conduct is invariably "pleasant", in the common and rather vapid meaning of the question begging epithet' - Rationalist English Education - page 148.
 The 'Monthly Repository and Review' for March 1827 had criticised stories for young people and wanted tales which taught 'something better than mere worldly morality' and which did not tutor them to be good by the 'notion of being "always happy"' - M.R. & R. - New Series, Vol. I. - No. III. - March 1827 - page 195. This article took the over serious and adult view that children should as early as they could bear it, be led to 'feel the ground on which they stand as candidates for immortality'.
- (2) Visit for a Week - Lucy Peacock - 1794 - page 120.
- (3) Private Education - Elizabeth Appleton - 1815 - page 53.

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as much about education as about horsedealing, and the undeniable fact that the writers could not (or did not) bring out the humour or pathos of childhood, or depict a Mamillius (Winter's Tale), a Marcius (Coriolanus), a Jane Eyre, a Paul Dombey, an Alice, a Huckleberry Finn, a Pet Marjorie, or a Christopher Robin, and share Wordsworth's ecstatic vision of childhood, yet they saw clearly that parent and teacher must pass on to children the torch of virtue undimmed. It was because they so whole-heartedly believed this, that the parent holds the centre of the stage and the home becomes the unit of the community, a unit from which went out in ever widening circles the impulses and waves of a sound christian morality.

(I) v. 'The Individuality of the Individual' - lecture delivered at Exeter, 29th March, 1844 by William Maccall and published by John Chapman - 1844, for 6d. - pp, 35-37.

CHAPTER IO.

CONCLUSION.

At a distance of over a century it is difficult to pass a fair considered judgment on the moral and educational tales of the early nineteenth century. To judge them from a literary standpoint; weigh up this and that contribution to the art of novel writing and attempt to balance matter with style, is to be unfair to the writers. Their work was frankly minor, and by adults was not regarded as other than for young people. It was not considered important literature. The modern age would find the tales not easy to read, both from a literary and subject interest. Their importance is historical. They belong to the age of respectability and however much the present age may dismiss them as adding nothing to the technique of the novel or as contributing little to the enjoyment of an idle moment, they must, even through sheer weight of numbers, have influenced the manners and conduct of many. With this in mind it is possible to avoid the danger of over-emphasising the weakness and of neglecting the importance of the tales. The writers cannot be dismissed simply as products of a period; they were a part of the history of the Middle Class and an indication of the sources from which that class derived its strength and weakness.

It is impossible to think in superlatives when dealing with

the moral and educational tales in the period 1790-1840.

That they appealed to the middle class readers of the day is proved by the number of editions many of the tales reached, but a vogue and numbers do not constitute an enduring literature, though numbers do indicate a demand. It is the work that can transcend the popular demand that lives, although it may not - and usually does not - found a school or fashion.

Judged as works of fiction, to them could be applied Scott's criticism of the characters of Charlotte Smith (1749-1806.)

In his 'Lives of the Novelists' he wrote, 'The characters of Mrs. Smith are conceived with truth and force, though we do not recollect any one bears the stamp of actual novelty'.⁽¹⁾

In all justice to the fair authors, however, 'novelty' as novelty was about the last thing they sought. Their characters bear too much the stamp of a purpose and as such have no independent life outside the orbit of their creators' plan, whether it is the duties of a godmother or the benefit of being able to say 'no'. The patterned action which is characteristic of the tales⁽²⁾ does not admit of spontaneity,

(1) The Lives of the Novelists - Scott - Everyman edition - page 332.

(2) Catherine Sinclair (1800-1864) at least was well aware that the expected was not necessarily the natural. In the Preface of the sequel to 'Modern Accomplishments' (1836), she said she had not intended carrying the same narrative on, but, many readers had objected to the want of a regular denouement in the previous work, where according to established etiquette virtue ought to be rewarded and vice brought to 'condign punishment'. 'This' she wrote, 'is very appropriately termed "poetical justice", because we observe no such results in actual life' - Preface to 'Modern Society' + 1837 - page VII.

nor does it permit any deviation from the strict design.

This neither makes for naturalness nor gives the reader the sense of pleasure which comes from the unexpected. It is moral uplift without the fire of enthusiasm. Maria Edgeworth's 'Tales of Fashionable Life' (1809-12) which 'can all too easily be pigeon-holed under a number of neat labels: Learn how to say No! (Vivian), Be Alert to Avoid Boredom (Ennui), Be prompt to Pay Your Debts (The Dun), Be Above Intrigueing for Advantage (Manoeuvring), Shun Empty Ambition (Almeria)⁽¹⁾' are not in themselves nor in their purpose very interesting, but when their inexorable march of disasters which spring from flaws of character, is forgotten, the recollection of the odd characters remains - Lady Langdale so delicately ridiculed by Grace Nugent, heroine of 'The Absentee' (1802) when the latter said, 'Lady Langdale, you may curtsey to me now, nobody is looking'; Lady Bearcroft who had risen above her station (Helen, 1834) and who complained of the over nicety of the world's taste and wanted a hearty laugh whenever possible; Lady Davenant (Helen) who told Helen that the namby-pamby, little-missy phrase, "Ladies have nothing to do with Politics" was nonsense - These belong to comedy and the domestic novel of manners, and are the cork jackets which sustain the tales in their seas of morality.⁽²⁾

page 59.

- (1) Maria Edgeworth - P.H.Newby - British Novelists Series - 1950 -
 (2) 'A book laden with an impeccable heroine ought to be covered all over with cork jackets, not to sink' - Mary Russell Mitford to Mrs. Hofland, March 18, 1819 - Letters of Mary Russell Mitford - edited by Henry Chorley - Second Series - 1872 - Vol. I. - page 52.

A sound philosophy of life built on personal experience and observation, and a sincerity of purpose, even allowing for the fact that many writers were like Agnes Strickland (1796-1874) who 'turned her attention to prose and found in juvenile works the means of obtaining a little ready money',^(I) and that it takes genius to rise above necessity and produce a masterpiece, are their greatest assets. Excluding the best of Maria Edgeworth, the highest praise that can be given the other writers is that their tales are readable, but very few readers would return to them, nor would they linger long in memory with characters which are too much the product of a moral purpose to be natural or entertaining company. The spirit of their tales is much more important than the letter, and it is not too much to claim for the sisterhood of writers of moral and educational tales, that spirit and influence which found expression not only in the founding of Queen's College and Bedford College, but in the refinement of taste and manners even in that strange world, the world of caricature. William Hogarth (1697-1764) had been representative of his age in the moral purpose of his work - the triumph of good and the damnation of evil, - as dramatised in the successive prints, 'The Rake's Progress', 'Marriage a la Mode', and 'The Harlot's Progress'. The critical spirit of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was illustrated in the caricatures of James Gillray (1759 - 1815) who attacked the social follies

(I) Life of Agnes Strickland - Jane Strickland - 1887 - page 17.

of the day, excessive gambling, sexual promiscuity and drunkenness. Much of Gillray's work reflected the coarseness of the early nineteenth century, a coarseness continued in the work of Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827) who was 'more pointlessly sensual' than Gillray. (1) Gillray's successor in the satirical world, George Cruikshank (1792-1878), used his talents not only in a genially humorous way (2) but entered into the world of temperance reform and moral propaganda when he produced a series of pictorial pamphlets and tracts such as 'The Bottle' (8 plates, 1847) and 'The Drunkard's Children' (8 plates, 1848). Dickens 'fell out' with him 'over his zeal to reform crapulous giants, or at any rate to get a moral out of them'. (3) In 1841, 'Punch' was born, announced into the world as a comic paper, 'without grossness, partisanship, profanity, indelicacy or malice'. (4) Caricature had donned white kid gloves.

The Vicar of St, Augustine's, Sheffield, commented (1906) about the change which had come over the new generation in its taste in books in general. 'We no longer hear of the "Moral Story": the goody-goody tale is vigorously banished: no one reads the "Fairchild Family", and the children's "Pilgrim's Progress" gives way to Henty's latest novel, and even small children are not taught 'Cautionary Stories in Verse'. Boys and girls must read only of adventure and sport. It is, of

(1) Aspects of British Art - ed. W.J. Turner - page 218.

(2) The Humorist (1819-21) and Life in Paris (1822).

(3) English Books- 1475-1800 - Sawyer and Darton - 1927 - Vol. II. page 136.

(4) Aspects of British Art - ed. W.J. Turner - page 220.

course, a healthy change: we must not make children into prigs....' ^(I) The change may be a healthy one, but children are as much in essence 'little prigs' now as they were in the mid-nineteenth century, and there is not much wrong with a training which could produce the English schoolmistress, Dorothea Beale (1831-1906) and the English novelist and writer on religious and educational subjects, Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901). The moral and educational tale was the result of a demand and a fitting into the spirit of an age. In the late years of the eighteenth century, the moral tale had been largely in the hands of intellectual women who were keenly alive to ideas and theories, philosophic and scientific, which were growing up around them. Over the tales fell the shadow of Rousseau and, as a religious background, a vague type of Deism. They had no common bond of religious ethics, but were concerned mainly with conduct, the acquiring of useful knowledge, the proper development of the senses, and the showing how the virtues, as illustrated in the ancient tales and fables, could be applied to modern life. They fulfilled a useful purpose in that being written for the edification of youth, they fostered the spirit of inquiry and that in a sane rational manner. By the middle of the nineteenth century

(I) How to Teach the Bible - Rev. A.F. Mitchell - second and revised edition - 1906 - page 93.

religion had taken a firm hold on the moral tale ^(I) with the result that the interesting out-of-the-way information which could be collected in the work of Mrs. Barbauld or Priscilla Wakefield retired into the background, and the tales assumed the dimensions and characteristics of tract literature. The new group of writers was not so politically advanced as the older, not so 'free' in thoughts and beliefs. They tended to narrow the social horizon and tighten the bonds of convention. They were adventurous neither in word nor deed, but staunch defenders of the proprieties. It was in a later period that Elizabeth Barrett (1806-61) fled from a 'Victorian' parent and security (1846), George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans 1819-1880) defied moral prejudices (1854) and Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855) depicted passions that no 'nice' lady

- (I) The late eighteenth century tales were not without their leavening of religion and realisation of the importance of a religious training in youth. Mrs. Trimmer's did and Mrs. Barbauld's work is not devoid of a religious atmosphere. A writer who called herself Harriet English complained (1799) about the ill-conducted education of youth. 'The instruction tending to promote the divine laws of religion, and the practice of virtue, finds no place in the modern system of education. If youth can be made to become brilliant wealthy and admired members of this world, the place they should be taught to expect in the next is not even thought of.'
- Dedication to 'Conversations and Amusing Tales offered to the Publick for the Youth of Great Britain.' pp. VII-VIII.

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ought to feel and to commit to print and paper.

A popular literature is generally mediocre in quality, not only because there must be a constant supply of books to meet the demand, but because the whim or phase of the moment admits of little originality or freedom of thought on the part of the writer; he must satisfy the whim. The most successful storytellers, in a period where one type of tale is popular and one message demanded, are those who can say something different on a well-worn theme or deliver an expected message in some unusual guise. That was the problem which faced the writers of moral tales between 1800 and 1840. There was little difficulty in entering the fiction market. The reading public was eager to read, to dip into the moral and religious fare offered them, especially as by the beginning of the nineteenth century virtue was 'advancing on a broad invincible front',⁽²⁾ and, as has elsewhere been indicated,⁽³⁾ a change had been taking place in manners and morals. Many of the writers did

(I) 'Currer Bell's heroines love too readily, too vehemently, and sometimes after a fashion which their female readers may resent; but they do their duty through everything and are healthy in action, however morbid in passion' - the judgment of Harriet Martineau (1802-76) - quoted by Janet E. Courtney in her book 'The Adventurous Thirties' - O.U.P. - 1933 - pp. 205 - 6.

Mary Russell Mitford (1787-1855) wrote to Mrs. Ouvry (1848) 'You will like "Jane Eyre". With all its coarseness and all its faults, there is a vividness and originality, and a very piquant preference of a great sinner to a great saint....' (Letters of Mary Russell Mitford - Second Series - ed. H. Chorley - 1872 - Vol. II. page 94.) But she had second thoughts in a letter to Mrs. Partridge (1849) 'Jane Eyre is a coarse book and one to which nobody will return'. (Letters. - ed. Chorley - Vol. I. - page 253.

(2) Victorian England - G.M. Young - O.U.P. - p. 4. (1st ed. 1836).

(3) v. Page 89, note (2) of this Thesis.

not survive first editions - as many do not in the present century - because they interpreted the mood of the moment too exactly and without freshness; other survived into the late years of the nineteenth century, not by virtue of their lesson, but because of a superior literary merit or some unusual setting as the Indian background of Mrs. Sherwood's tales.

By the early 'forties, the moral and educational tale which had been taken over by the religious group of writers with a consequent emphasis on the evil within rather than that without, and a resultant absence of cheer, had been devitalized by its absorption into tract literature, with, however, the beneficial effect of widening the circle of readers. The genus proper had blossomed into its finest flower in the work of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-91) whose "Heir of Redcliffe" (1853) aroused enthusiasm not only with Anglican Churchmen, the Tractarians, the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood of William Morris, Burne Jones, and D.G. Rossetti, (1) but officers in the army. (2) In Charlotte Yonge, the puppets come to life; morality is there, but it is woven into the texture of the plot, and goodness is disinterested. Her virtuous characters carry into manhood and womanhood the in-

(1) v. "The Victorians and their Books" - Amy Cruse - 1935 - pp. 50-52.

(2) This is not surprising, because, during the horrors of the Crimean War Charlotte Yonge's novel must have kept before their minds high ideals, noble passions and the perfect picture of a disciplined and devout family life.

fluences of an education based on religious and refined principles. The popularity of Charlotte Yonge was in full vigour by the 'sixties of the century, her works being read not only by the High Church circle but by the general reading public. (I)

In the 'fifties and 'sixties, the characters of the moral tales were coming out into the open world to do battle against vice, injustice and wrong, whether in the robustious society at Rugby School, or in the forecastle of an Elizabethan galleon, and the qualities of grit, determination and devotion to duty were winning a John Halifax not only a position of affluence, but a right to a place far in advance of the promise of his birth. As products of wise guidance, they were proving their worth beyond the domestic hearth. Yet there were forces arrayed against the portrayal of the very good. As far back as 1820, when there seems to be a lull in the prolific outpouring of moral tales, Mary Russel Mitford had praised an 'old novel' by Mrs. Bennet, called 'The Beggar Girl' because she saw in it not only the 'prodigious quantity of invention', but 'a freshness and truth' which she said came from 'the total absence of moral maxims of the do-me-good air', which one expects to find in Miss Edgeworth'. (2) In 1868 the non-conformist

(1) v. Amy Cruse - 1935 - page 58.

(2) Letter to Mrs. Hofland (probably about 1820) - 'Letters' ed. Chorley - 1872 - Vol. I. - page 69.

cf. Letter to Mrs. Ouvry, Oct. 28, 1847 - 'I suspect that very few clergymen's wives are liberal enough and wise enough to avail themselves of Miss Edgeworth's wonderful knowledge of children's nature and her power of arresting the attention. They will have books ostentatiously religious' Chorley - Vol. II. - page 90.

organ the 'British Quarterly' defended Tom Brown and Alice against Eric and 'goody-goody books' in general. (1) Twenty years before, Edward Lear (1812-1888) had written the 'Book of Nonsense', and in 1865, 'Alice in Wonderland' had charmed young and old. 'Eric or Little by Little' (Farrar) appeared in 1858; the same year saw Thackeray's 'The Rose and the Ring' which, while the conventions of the good rewarded and the bad punished, were followed, treats the moral light heartedly. (2) Sentimentalism, apparent in Charles Dickens (1812-1870), 'Eric, or Little by Little', and Florence Montgomery's 'Misunderstood' (1869) had a rival in the sensationalism of 'The Woman in White' (1860), 'The Moonstone' (1868), Le Fanu's 'The House by the Churchyard' (1863), and 'Uncle Silas' (1864), Miss Braddon's 'Lady Audley's Secret' (1862) and Mrs. Henry Wood's 'East Lynne' (1861), while in 1863 with the publication of Ouida's 'Held in Bondage', 'a gush of excitement, half delighted and half fearful shook the reading public'. (3) Before such, the moral tale paled into insignificance and faded into cheap tracts of the type such as 'Widow Clarke's House', 'The Wife's Secret', 'My Wife did it', 'Honesty the best Policy', 'Milly's Trials and (4)

- (1) v. footnote to p. 154 - Victorian England - G.M. Young - 1936.
 (2) Is there a hint of parody in 'The Rose and the Ring' - a parody on the moral tale? It is difficult to tell. If parody was intended, it was graciously done, and without malice.
 (3) The Victorian and their Books - Amy Cruse - 1935 - page - 327.
 (4) This tract had been published by the R.T.S. before 1819, and by 1849 had sold 37,745 copies - personal letter from the Religious Book Editor - Lutterworth Press - Oct. 20, 1949.

'Triumphs', 'Sandy's Faith', 'Mrs. Warley's Lodger', 'Fine-Weather Dick' and 'Comfort Cottage'.

By the time of Queen Victoria's accession (1837), the middle classes had been thoroughly indoctrinated with the ethical and moral code as illustrated in narrative form in the moral tales of the early nineteenth century. A standard of conduct had been laid down, which embraced Sabbath observance, responsibility and philanthropy, moral behaviour and discipline in the home. There was nothing nebulous or idealistic about life as depicted in the tales, nothing of the unpractical quality that Hazlitt (1778-1830) saw in the ideals of Godwin. (1) The manners of Parliament in the 'thirties might be, as G.M. Young suggested, (2) the worst on record, but there is little doubt that the tales contributed in building up a solid code of duty and self-discipline which stood the nation in good stead in the sudden acquisition of wealth, power, and knowledge which marked the Victorian era. The process had been going on since 1780. In the late eighteenth century, Thomas Day, Mrs. Barbauld, and Maria Edgeworth had prepared the minds of young people for the acquisition and digesting of knowledge; the writers of the early nineteenth century had acted as a curb on the extravagances and licences which are attendant on a revolutionary age, and had helped to keep alive the ideal of education for all - though not the modern one of

(1) v. Spirit of the Age - Hazlitt - 1825 - page 36.

(2) Victorian England - G.M. Young - 1936 - page 31.

equality of opportunity. The foundation having been well and truly made, the moral tale, because its aims and ideals had already been achieved, as far as the upper and middle classes were concerned, gave place to the economic, social and political problems which were courageously faced in 'Sybil' (1845), 'Mary Barton' (1848), 'Yeast' (1848), 'Alton Locke' (1850), and to a lesser degree 'John Halifax, Gentleman' (1856).

The educational and moral tale answered the need of the moment. When that need was satisfied, its work was done. It had sowed the seed which was to mature into a Florence Nightingale, a David Livingstone, a William Ewart Gladstone, a Macaulay, a Browning, a Ruskin and later a Meredith. It had strengthened the moral backbone of the country and prepared Britain for the role she had assumed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, that of moral leadership of the world.

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APPENDIX.

The often quoted opinion of Clara Reeve (1729-1807) that 'the great and important duty of a writer is to point out the difference between virtue and vice, to show one as rewarded, and the other as punished', embraces most books in the world of fiction, but a considerable number of tales which have a moral value have been omitted from this study as they do not entirely illustrate the characteristics of the type popular in the period 1790-1840, being written mainly for adults and having as background, some political and social theory, or satirical purpose. Mrs. Opie (1769-1853) for instance has little claim for consideration as a moral writer, because although her tales - 'Simple Tales' (1806), 'Temper' (1812), 'Tales of the Heart' (1820), 'Tales of Real Life' (1813), - have as their aim the regulating the heart and affections, their appeal and message are adult. Similarly, John Wilson (1785-1854), one of the 'Blackwood' group, wrote several tales - 'Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life' (1822), 'The Foresters' (1825), 'The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay' (1823), - which do draw pictures of the contentment which springs from the practice of virtue, of the lessons which could be learned from virtue and religion, and the importance of duty carried out cheerfully and courageously, yet there are a high seriousness and sentiment, Wordsworthian in flavour, which make them unsuitable for young people. More in keeping with the juvenile library were tales such as twenty selected by E.V. Lucas and collected in 'Forgotten Tales of Long Ago' (Wells, Gardner, Darton & Co., 4th impression, 1931), and those contained in the 'Moral Class Book' (Pub. W. & R. Chambers, 1851?) which describes 'the most important moral and economic duties of life. Illustrating them by means of Anecdotes, historical, and biographical, by Fables, and other Narratives, together with a selection of Scriptural Passages and Apothegms'.

Edifying and moral tales written expressly for the 'lower orders' have only been glanced at. The most prolific source of information on literature, cheap, informative, and moral, for the 'uncultivated', during the early years of the nineteenth century would normally have been the R.T.S. Publications, but unfortunately there is an almost complete lack of records for the early period of the Society, as these were burned in an air raid in 1941. The Society has tried to purchase copies of early books, but these were never dated and although the Minute Books from 1799 are in the Society's possession, when fiction was published the titles did not always appear in the Minutes.

Hannah More's 'Cheap Repository Tracts' (1795-98), were for the adult poor and while, as Miss Pauline Gregg wrote (v. 'A Social and Economic History of Britain' - Harrap, 1950, page 232), there was in Hannah More 'a deep sense of devotion to the poor in the earnestness with which she strove to win

the rude miners of the Mendips and their families to a knowledge of the Bible', yet she had, as had Mrs. Trimmer, the contemporary attitude towards the poor, and exhorted them to cling to the virtues of contentment, sobriety, humility, industry, and a respect for the British Constitution. Her attitude is expressed in her own words.- 'Those who are raised by some sudden stroke above the station in which Divine Providence had placed them, seldom turn out very good or very happy' ('The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain' - R.T.S. publication, 1884, page 48) - and in those of the 'Charity School, Spelling Book', (4th edition, 1798) 'Be graciously pleased, O, Heavenly Father, to give me strength and cheerfulness to labour and do (my duty) in that state of life which Thy Wisdom has seen fit to allot me'. (Prayer quoted by F.T. Harvey Darton - 'Children's Books in English' C.U.P. 1932 - page 162).

The aim and ideals of moral tales for the lower middle class are those mentioned in the Preface to Mrs. Hofland's 'The Good Grandmother' 1817 - 'To console the sorrows, stimulate the energies and encourage the efforts of the industrious poor, is the intention of the following simple story, but this end will certainly be obtained most effectually, by rendering it the medium of interesting the liberal and well-informed in the struggles to which the poor and ignorant are liable, and engaging them, both from principle and feeling, to assist these their "weaker brethren"'. Mrs. Hofland was writing not that the poor might read, but that through an awakened interest in and sympathy with the poor, the more fortunate members of the community could instruct and guide the less fortunate. Her tale renews the oft repeated warnings - the pernicious effect of such stories as 'The Midnight Hour', 'The Warning Bell', 'Horrors of the Dungeon'; the affectation and bad taste shown in naming children, Matilda Teresa, Julia, Mariana, Orlando, etc.; the almost certain disaster of unequal marriages: 'Be assured Mary', said Mr. Haywood the linen draper, 'Mr. Willis's attentions will soon cease when he perceives that they are painful to you, and take my word for it, Mary, that even were they tendered on the most honourable grounds, they would never conduce to your happiness. I have seen many unequal marriages, but scarcely ever saw one that was even tolerably happy to the person who was considered the exalted party'. (The Good Grandmother 1817, page 146.) With Mrs. Hofland, as with Maria Edgeworth there were no Murads the Unlucky in life.

'Country Stories' by Mary Russell Mitford, published about 1836, illustrate the innate nobility of the poor, as in Jesse Cliffe, born in a workhouse of a half witted orphan girl, and a sturdy vagrant, part tinker, part ballad singer, and extoll the simple virtues as in 'The Beauty of the Village' who, with her vaunted beauty marred by smallpox and an accident, learnt sweetness and gentleness, a corrected temper

and a purified heart to be a dowry far more precious than her transient beauty. Like her friend Mrs. Hofland, however, Mary Mitford wrote to interest her own class in the 'simple annals of the poor'.

'The Present of a Mistress to a Young Servant' (2nd edition, 1816), by Mrs. Taylor (of Ongar), will suffice to represent the type of book written for the guidance of the servant class. In the Advertisement, Mrs. Taylor explains that the work was not for competent servants, but for young girls at their first setting out in life, to prepare them, not only to be good servants, but good wives and mothers. Maintaining that example is in general more forcible than precept, the writer introduces a number of 'anecdotes and characters from real life'. She illustrates through short tales, such topics as 'Keeping in Place' (i.e. staying with the same mistress for a reasonable length of time), 'Good Temper', 'Speaking the Truth', 'Honesty', 'Sobriety', 'Cleanliness', 'Industry', 'Dress', 'Behaviour to Parents', etc. Like her contemporaries, Mrs. Taylor deprecated the poor desiring luxuries and consequently injuring their circumstances, as Mrs. Perry, who was in the 'constant habit of lying to account for the money she squandered away in gin, in snuff, in ounces of fine tea, and quarterns of fresh butter and in a variety of other unnecessary expenses' (page 38). She also stressed the cultivation of the sense of duty, and the pursuance of an honourable course even if it was distasteful. Sarah Lever, disappointed in love, in the recoil married a man whom she neither loved nor esteemed - he was stupid and clownish - and remained a faithful wife. The incredulity of servants is censured in the writer's warning against gypsies and fortune-tellers, and she humorously suggests, without, however, advocating the practice, that a gypsy could have no grouse if the person whose fortune was being told refused to pay, because if the gypsy really could see into the future, she or he would have had pre-knowledge that he would not be paid. Addison would have approved, as he would also Mrs. Taylor's advice to nursemaids that they ought not to terrify children with stories of ghosts, old men, and witches.

Equally important with the attempt to rouse the sympathy of the upper classes and to guide servants, was the attempt to woo youth along the paths of decency and probity. The Sunday Schools had done much, since Robert Raikes (1735-1811), had founded his first Sunday School at Gloucester (1780) with the laudable aim of preventing the hooliganism and malicious damage of which farmers and inhabitants of towns and villages complained, especially during Sundays, but the newly acquired art of reading had to be directed into proper channels. The importance of the child in the future history of the country was realised by more than one writer. Mrs. Trimmer in one of her pamphlets wrote, 'In order to check the progress of the national corruption which has of late years increased to a most alarming degree, it is certainly requisite to attend

assiduously to the rising generation since so much depends upon first impressions and early habits'. (Life and Writings of Mrs. Trimmer - by one of her family - 3rd. edition, 1825 - page 3). It was with something of this in mind that Martha Mary Butt (later Mrs. Sherwood) wrote 'Susan Gray' (1802). This was written at Bridgenorth, and the plot turned upon the special circumstances of the time when many towns were filled with soldiers. It was read chapter by chapter to the elder girls of the Sunday School conducted by Martha and Emily Butt, and later published in Bath. This tale, the author claimed to be the 'first narrative allowing of anything like correct writing, or refined sentimentality expressed without vulgarism, ever prepared for the poor, and having religion for its object'. (v. 'Life of Mrs. Sherwood' - Sophia Kelly - 1854 - page 219) - the important epithets are, 'correct', 'refined', terms which could not be applied to the 'penny histories' so widely read by the poorer classes.

The example of Mrs. Sherwood was not followed. The Committee for the distribution of Religious Tracts admitted that Children's Tracts had never 'taken on', and from 1803 onwards deplored the lack of juvenile material. In the adult field they were compelled to come to the conclusion that by 1805 most of the tracts failed on the score of entertainment, being far beyond the capabilities of the readers for whom they were designed. This resulted in a new series of tracts (May 1805) - 'The Fortune Teller's Conjuring Cap', 'The Wonderful Cure of General Naaman', 'The Stingy Farmer's Daughter', 'Tom Toper's Tale over his Jug of Ale' - which were designed to capture the hawker's market. (v. 'Let the People Read' - G. Hewitt - 1949 - pp. 28-9). The attempt to attract the juvenile reader followed a similar pattern, with an improvement in interest features commensurate with the child's understanding, allied with a more attractive format. Such was the 'Child's Companion' or 'Sunday Scholar's Reward' (1824).

The most attractive and the best work done by the R.T.S. was outwith the period 1790-1840, when the christian message was not too obviously and 'horribly' stressed, and when tract literature for the young to be read by all classes emerges from the valley of dry bones to find an honoured place in the domestic hearth. 'The Leisure Hour' - a family journal of instruction and recreation - was first published in 1852 and had a life of more than half a century. The evergreen 'Fifth Form at St. Dominic's' by Talbot Baines Reed, appeared as a serial in the 'Boy's Own Paper'. The reign of the 'fearful' moral tale was over.