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**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

English

**Fashioning Female Authorship in the Early Nineteenth Century: A Study of the  
Epistolary Friendship and Tractarian Fiction of Two Women from the Hampshire Gentry,  
1827–1842**

by

**Janet Davidson Carter**

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

March 2017





UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

## **ABSTRACT**

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

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### **FASHIONING FEMALE AUTHORSHIP IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY: A STUDY OF THE EPISTOLARY FRIENDSHIP AND TRACTARIAN FICTION OF TWO WOMEN FROM THE HAMPSHIRE GENTRY, 1827–1842**

Janet Davidson Carter

To date no major research has been undertaken on the correspondence of Anne Sturges Bourne and Marianne Dyson (1822-1871) located in the Hampshire Record Office. This valuable collection of letters not only offers a wealth of information about the letter-writing practices of women from the landed gentry, it also provides the opportunity to examine the letter as a cultural and historical artefact. By using Marilyn Friedman's theories on women's friendships and relational autonomy, this thesis has been able to combine the methodology required for studying letters as a genre with the concept of the letter as a purveyor of social and cultural experiences. This has resulted in an interdisciplinary study which has analysed the important role that letter writing played in the development of Anne and Marianne's friendship, while, at the same time, demonstrating their intellectual engagement with the prevalent literary, religious, and philosophical discourses of the day.

As a process which encouraged reflection, letter writing enabled these two women to develop a gendered subjectivity and to achieve degrees of personal autonomy in a social context. I argue that the supportive nature of their epistolary friendship empowered them to embrace life as single women and to pursue their shared ideals for the future, which, for them, meant a life spent in service to the Church and educating the poor. It also provided them with a route into authorship through their collaborative literary endeavours in support of the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the Oxford Movement, or Tractarianism as it was later called.

In the 1850s and 60s Anne and Marianne used the collaborative model of authorship they had developed for writing and publishing their own juvenile tales to support the novel writing of the major Victorian novelist, Charlotte Mary Yonge. While Yonge's habit of discussing her novels with friends and family is known from Christabel Coleridge's biography (1903), the empirical evidence found in the Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence provides a more nuanced account of the way in which literary collaboration could function. It also corroborates recent scholarly claims that female collaborative authorship was more commonplace in the nineteenth century than has hitherto been recognised. More significantly, the stories written by Anne, and Marianne in particular, were recognised in contemporary Tractarian circles as important contributions to the establishment of Anglo-Catholic doctrine for future generations. This marks Anne Sturges Bourne and Marianne Dyson out as part of a forgotten generation of women writers who paved the way, not only for Yonge, but for other known women writers of Tractarian fiction in the second half of the nineteenth century, such as Elizabeth Missing Sewell and Felicia Skene.



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## **List of Accompanying Materials**

**Appendix A:** Abbreviations used in the Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence

**Appendix B:** Digital images of significant letters from the Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence with edited transcriptions

**Appendix C:** Timeline of the Oxford Movement, 1827–1845

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**Appendix G:** The Tractarian fiction of Marianne Dyson and Anne Sturges Bourne





# DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, JANET DAVIDSON CARTER

declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

‘Fashioning Female Authorship in the Early Nineteenth Century: A Study of the Epistolary Friendship and Tractarian Fiction of Two Women from the Hampshire Gentry, 1827–1842’

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission.
8. Signed:.....

Date: .....



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## **Definitions and Abbreviations**

In their correspondence Anne Sturges Bourne and Marianne Dyson adopt the nineteenth-century epistolary convention of abbreviating commonly used words. They often abbreviate other words too. For the sake of fluency in the text, extracts from their correspondence are written out in full in this thesis. Appendix B contains a selection of significant letters referred to in the text. The digital images of the letters are followed by transcriptions which adhere to the original letter text as closely as possible so that these letters can be read in their original form. Appendix A contains the Key to the abbreviations used.



## Introduction

Friendship provides us with an inclination *to take our friends seriously* and to take seriously what our friends care about.<sup>1</sup>

Friendship offers personally as well as socially transformative possibilities usually lacking in other tradition-based close relationships, such as family ties.<sup>2</sup>

If kinship is a form of ascribed status, then friendship is a kind of achievement. Those who would be friends must exert themselves actively to sustain their relationship.<sup>3</sup>

Marilyn Friedman, *What Are Friends For?* (1993)

In 1845 Marianne Dyson wrote to her lifelong friend and correspondent, Anne Sturges Bourne, informing her that she had been re-reading Anne's letters. She is moved by them and admits to having kept them all 'from the first'.<sup>4</sup> In pondering over the fate of the letters for the future she confides in Anne that 'if I die first I will return them to you, if it should be otherwise I suppose they must be burnt, though many things innocent to be preserved would go with many which of course would not be so'.<sup>5</sup> In the event, Marianne did die first and so this important collection of letters has been preserved for posterity and my study of the epistolary friendship of these two women will shed light on Marianne's notions of what was innocent or otherwise. In the early nineteenth-century women from the landed gentry were still governed by the gendered codes and conventions of their upper-class status: values which placed constraints on the way in which they conducted their lives and their friendships. In transgressing these boundaries they risked the disapprobation of polite society for themselves and their families. However, as I will show in this thesis, sometimes the claims of friendship took precedence over those of family.

In recent decades there has been an increasing academic interest in women's eighteenth and nineteenth-century epistolary friendships. Scholars working from both historical and literary perspectives have looked to these written articulations of friendship to gain a greater understanding of the way in which women's epistolary practices met their emotional and

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<sup>1</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *What Are Friends For? Feminist Perspectives on Personal Relationships and Moral Theory* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 207.

<sup>3</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 209.

<sup>4</sup> Hampshire Record Office, Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence and sketchbooks, 9M55/F45/11 (18 August 1945).

<sup>5</sup> F45/11.

intellectual needs and provided a secure basis for them to explore their own interests and literary aspirations.<sup>6</sup> Women's life writing has also provided a new focus of enquiry as scholars seek to understand what motivates women to write and what this writing tells us about female authorship and the conditions in which it was produced.<sup>7</sup> My study of the epistolary friendship of Anne Sturges Bourne (1809-1891) and Marianne Dyson (1809-1878) and their fictional writing for young people will make an important contribution to our knowledge in these areas.<sup>8</sup>

Anne and Marianne were two Anglican women from the Hampshire landed gentry whose lifelong correspondence attests to the significant role that friendship played in their lives. Beginning in 1822 and continuing until 1871, the Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence spans the end of the Hanoverian period and the greater part of the Victorian era and documents many significant social and political events of this time. To date no major research has been undertaken on this very valuable collection of letters of which Anne's letters form the bulk, while Marianne's represent less than twenty per cent. The earliest holdings of Marianne's letters date from 1827, and, in choosing to focus on the correspondence from 1827 to 1842, I am availing myself of the period for which there are a greater number of Marianne's extant letters than in the later decades. However, the major significance of this time period for my enquiry resides in the fact that these letters afford a unique opportunity to explore in detail the way in which Anne and Marianne's friendship developed from adolescence to mature womanhood.

As Dena Goodman has pointed out in her study of the epistolary practices of eighteenth-century French women, 'letter writing was not an auxiliary to friendship; it was the matrix and the

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<sup>6</sup> See for example Sylvia Harcstark Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle: Women, Friendship, and the Life of the Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); Elizabeth Eger, *Bluestockings: Women of Reason from Enlightenment to Romanticism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (Ithaca, N.Y. & London: Cornell University Press, 2009); Leonie Hannan, 'Making Space: English women, letter-writing, and the life of the mind, c.1650-1750', *Women's History Review*, 21:4 (2012), 589-604; Leonie Hannan, *Women of Letters: Gender, Writing and the Life of the Mind in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016); Elizabeth Colwill, 'Epistolary Passions: Friendship and the Literary Public of Constance de Salm, 1767-1845', *Journal of Women's History*, 12.3 (2000), 39-68; George V. Griffith, 'An Epistolary Friendship: The Letters of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps to George Eliot', *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, 18.1 (2001), 94-100.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Amy Culley, *British Women's Life Writing, 1760-1840: Friendship, Community, and Collaboration* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); *The History of British Women's Writing 1750-1830*, ed. by Jacqueline M. Labbe (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Linda H. Peterson, *Traditions of Victorian Women's Autobiography: The Poetics and Politics of Life Writing* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia, 1999); Linda H. Peterson, 'Working Collaboratively: Mary Howitt and Anna Mary Howitt as Women of Letters', in Linda H. Peterson, *Becoming a Woman of Letters: Myths of Authorship and the Facts of the Victorian Market* (Princeton, N.J. and Woodstock, Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 96-130; Betty W. Rizzo, *Companions Without Vows: Relationships Among Eighteenth-Century British Women* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1994); Michelle Levy, *Family Authorship and Romantic Print Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

<sup>8</sup> The Hampshire Record Office gives Marianne's dates as 1808-1878. However, 16 February 1809 is the date recorded for Marianne's birth in her mother's devotional journal. An edited version of this journal was published by Marianne's half-brother, Charles Dyson, in 1833. See *Memorials of a Departed Friend*, new edn (London: J. G. and F. Rivington, 1839), p. 11.



medium in which friendship developed.<sup>9</sup> This was particularly true for Anne and Marianne who were only able to meet once or twice a year and my study will highlight the important role that letter writing played in developing and maintaining their friendship.<sup>10</sup> The Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence also provides an opportunity to explore the conventions associated with female epistolarity and to reflect on ways in which Anne and Marianne perceived their own identities as women within the privileged domestic environment of the country house and the wider world with which they engaged. My contention in this thesis is that, in a society which deprecated unmarried woman, the supportive nature of Anne Sturges Bourne and Marianne Dyson's epistolary friendship not only empowered them to embrace life as single women and to pursue their own shared ideals for the future, but also provided a route into authorship through their collaborative literary endeavours in the service of the Oxford Movement — the Anglican High Church movement which sought to reinstate the Catholic teachings of the Church Fathers to the established Church from the 1830s onwards.<sup>11</sup> This Movement was later known as Tractarianism due to the published *Tracts for the Times* (1833-1841) which accompanied its progress.

I will explore the epistolary friendship of these two women over three chapters, each chapter narrating a particular stage in Anne and Marianne's developing amity. Chapter 1 will concentrate on the correspondence in the late 1820s and I will argue that Anne and Marianne's regular letter exchange not only functioned as a substitute for face-to-face conversation and provided the means by which they could develop and maintain their lifelong friendship, it also served as a site of reflection which enabled them to become aware of their gendered subjectivity and individual identities. In Chapter 2 my focus will be on the letters from 1829 to 1833 and I will show that, influenced by the texts they were reading and discussing, Anne and Marianne's epistolary friendship took on a greater significance as they moved towards the autonomous decision to choose the stability of female friendship over conventional marriage, a choice which was predicated on their religious beliefs and their philanthropic desire to educate the poor. My third chapter will deal predominantly with the correspondence from 1833 to 1842, although, as in the previous chapters, I will have recourse to earlier and later letters to develop my argument. In this chapter I will discuss how these two women's epistolary friendship was put on a new footing when their mutual friend and correspondent, Mary Mordaunt, formed an epistolary triangle with them. This was an event which coincided with the publishing of the *Tracts for the Times*. I will examine the impact that the emerging Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the Oxford Movement had upon their three-way friendship and discuss their collaborative story writing in support of the

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<sup>9</sup> Dena Goodman, 'Letter Writing and the Emergence of Gendered Subjectivity in Eighteenth-Century France', *Journal of Women's History*, 17.2 (2005), 9-37 (p. 22).

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix C: 'Timeline for the Oxford Movement', which shows the meetings which can be identified from the Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence.

<sup>11</sup> George Herring, *What was the Oxford Movement?* (London & New York: Continuum, 2002), pp. 30-31.

Movement. I will also discuss Anne and Marianne's later literary collaboration with the major Victorian novelist, Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901), who has also been referred to as 'the novelist of the Oxford Movement' due, not only to her prolific output, but also to her constancy in promoting Tractarian ideals.<sup>12</sup>

## **I: Recovering a history of women's friendships and literary collaboration**

My opening extracts, written in the early 1990s by the feminist philosopher Marilyn Friedman, are taken from her ground-breaking hypothesis on the ways in which women are empowered through their friendships with other women.<sup>13</sup> In *What Are Friends For?* (1993) Friedman cites the quasi-voluntary nature of friendship as an important underlying factor in enabling this process to take place: that is to say, a close bond of friendship can only exist when the participants choose to make it that way.<sup>14</sup> Unlike other tradition-based relationships such as those which evolve through family ties, with friendships of choice the participants can develop the ways in which they want the friendship to progress. For this reason, Friedman suggests, voluntary friendships elicit particular moral requirements such as care, support, loyalty and intimacy, considerations not necessarily owed to others.<sup>15</sup> This can open up possibilities for individual moral growth based on the ability to recognise 'the morally relevant features of the experiences of our friends' which we can choose to pursue as options for our own lives; therefore, friends may help to foster our own moral autonomy.<sup>16</sup> Friedman also recognises the potential of voluntary friendships to support unconventional values which, in turn, can usher in important social change with respect to ameliorating women's lives in society.<sup>17</sup> These are significant claims for the life-changing effects of women's friendships and I will explore these assertions in my thesis with a view to establishing the historical importance of Anne and Marianne's epistolary friendship, both in terms of its significance to women's histories and in the context of their literary contributions to the Oxford Movement.

In a later work, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* (2003), Friedman pursues the idea that women can act autonomously. She discusses the problems faced in the 1980s by feminist theorists trying to locate notions of female autonomy within a traditional concept of autonomy 'biased toward male

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<sup>12</sup> Barbara Dennis, 'Novelist of the Oxford Movement', in *Characters and Scenes: Studies in Charlotte M. Yonge*, ed. by Julia Courtney and Clemence Schultze (Abingdon: Beechcroft Books, 2007), pp. 5-22 (pp. 5-6).

<sup>13</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *What Are Friends For? Feminist Perspectives on Personal Relationships and Moral Theory* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 187-255.

<sup>14</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 213.

<sup>15</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, pp. 207-08.

<sup>16</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, pp. 197, 202, 207.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.

social roles' and reflecting 'male conceits and delusions'.<sup>18</sup> In order to free autonomy from its male-centred discourse she suggests that new narratives involving women are needed; in particular, accounts that demonstrate ways in which women strive to express their deepest sense of self and commitment 'against patriarchal constraints'.<sup>19</sup> Although Friedman is referring here to global narratives in the present day, I believe it is equally possible to historicise her theory of relational autonomy by considering past accounts of women's struggles to free themselves from the gender constructions placed on their lives. Natalie Stoljar's recent appraisal of feminist theories on women's autonomy considers the ways in which new feminist perspectives on autonomy developed.<sup>20</sup> She claims that female philosophers typically rejected the notion of the atomistic self — identified in Kantian and Rawlsian conceptions of autonomy as being 'abstracted from the social relations in which actual agents are embedded' — arguing instead that because being a woman involves 'valuing social relationships of care', any theory of autonomy must also be 'relational'.<sup>21</sup> In other words, 'it must acknowledge that autonomy is compatible with the agent standing in and valuing significant family and other social relationships.'<sup>22</sup> The term 'relational autonomy' is, therefore, used to describe feminist reconceptualizations of autonomy which are premised on the fact that agents are both 'socially and historically embedded' and shaped by other factors such as class and race.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, relational autonomy is not a fixed concept, and, while Stoljar recognises five relational theories which underpin the different ways in which feminist philosophers have responded to contemporary universal practices of gender oppression, she points out that there is no consensus on a correct theoretical position.<sup>24</sup>

In *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* Friedman favours a procedural conception of relational autonomy. Stoljar points out that procedural theories have been foremost in the relational autonomy debate since the 1970s.<sup>25</sup> These hypotheses claim that 'autonomy is achieved when the agent undergoes, or has the capacity to undergo, an internal intellectual process of reflecting on her motivations, beliefs, and values, and then revising her preferences in the light of such reflection'.<sup>26</sup> This process is referred to as 'content-neutral' because 'the outcomes of the process of critical reflection,

---

<sup>18</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 81.

<sup>19</sup> Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, p. 100.

<sup>20</sup> Natalie Stoljar, 'Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2015 edition), ed. by Edward N. Zalta <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2015/entries/feminism-autonomy/>> [accessed 31 July 2016]. This article was first published online in 2013.

<sup>21</sup> Stoljar, Section 1: 'Introduction', in 'Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy', paras 2 and 3.

<sup>22</sup> Stoljar, Section 1: 'Introduction', para. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Stoljar, Section 1: 'Introduction', para. 3.

<sup>24</sup> Stoljar discusses the five accounts of relational autonomy under the following headings: Procedural Conceptions, Normative Competency Conceptions, Emotions and Self-regarding Attitudes, Dialogical Conceptions, and Strong Substantive and Socio-relational Conceptions. See also Section 9: 'Conclusion'.

<sup>25</sup> Stoljar, Section 3: 'Relational Autonomy', para. 4.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

whatever their content, will be autonomous'.<sup>27</sup> According to Stoljar, Friedman's model is one of the most well-known and influential versions of procedural and content-neutral conceptions of relational autonomy in feminist literature and I will use Friedman's theory of relational autonomy as a tool with which to assess the extent of Anne and Marianne's individual agency, both in the act of letter writing and in their lives and friendship.<sup>28</sup> This concept builds on Friedman's earlier hypothesis on voluntary friendship and moral growth and my use of both theories as a framework for my thesis will provide a sense of continuity. This is a significantly new approach to discussing women's correspondence, as, aside from the formalist approach to epistolary studies favoured in the late twentieth century, scholars today are more concerned with cultural practices and the important role that letters have played in the life of the individual and society in general.<sup>29</sup> While all of these aspects are pertinent to my study, and will also form part of my methodology, I believe there is a greater potential for understanding the time-specific friendship between Anne Sturges Bourne and Marianne Dyson by taking the interdisciplinary approach I have outlined above.

Friedman's theories are also part of a wider feminist discourse concerned with raising the profile of women's friendships within the philosophical discourse. In the late 1980s, Janice Raymond published *A Passion for Friends*, a text which challenges the world view that, unless a woman exists in relation to a man, 'women together are women alone'.<sup>30</sup> While this is not the case today, Raymond's concern three decades ago was to return female amity to a 'primary place as a basis of feminist purpose, passion, and politics'.<sup>31</sup> To this end, Raymond explores the history of women's friendships in its various manifestations in national, religious, and communal settings. In the late twentieth-century Derrida also noted the omission of women from the philosophical discourse and he questions 'the *double exclusion* of the feminine': that is to say, both the exclusion of heterosexual friendship and friendship between women.<sup>32</sup> However, as Barbara Caine has pointed out in her recent contribution to the text, *Friendship: A History* (2014), it is not to philosophy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that we have to turn for a discussion of women's friendship but to fiction.<sup>33</sup> Although depictions of female friendships had begun to appear in novels from the late seventeenth century onwards, it was the classical ideal of male friendship which had remained the dominant paradigm in literature. This model was underpinned by the

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Stoljar, Section 4: 'Procedural Conceptions', para. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Eve Tavor Bannet, 'Studies in British and American Epistolary Culture', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 35.3 (2011), 89-103 (p. 90).

<sup>30</sup> Janice G. Raymond, *A Passion for Friends: Towards a Philosophy of Female Affection* (North Melbourne, Australia: Beacon Press, 1986; repr. Spinifex Press, 2001), p. 3.

<sup>31</sup> Raymond, p. 9.

<sup>32</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, trans. by George Collins (London and New York: Verso, 1997), p. 290.

<sup>33</sup> Barbara Caine, 'Taking up the Pen: Women and the Writing of Friendship', in *Friendship: A History*, ed. by Barbara Caine (Equinox, 2009; London and New York: Routledge, 2014), pp. 215-22 (p. 215).

belief that, as only men could be virtuous, true friendship was not a possibility for women.<sup>34</sup> In spite of challenging this notion in their writings over the centuries, it was not until women became more prominent in the nineteenth century as novelists, essayists and political campaigners for women's rights that the social worth of friendship between women was recognised in the contemporary discourse on friendship.<sup>35</sup> In assessing the contribution of women novelists to this state of affairs, Caine cites Jane Austen as the most important writer to raise the profile and status of women's friendships at the turn of the eighteenth century.<sup>36</sup> Caine also discusses the fact that, as the new century continued, it became apparent from depictions of female friendship by novelists such as Charlotte Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell, and Louisa M. Alcott that there was an increasing acceptance of women's ability to maintain close bonds of friendship, a notion which also underpinned women's organised philanthropic and feminist activities.<sup>37</sup>

Janet Todd's seminal work, *Women's Friendship in Literature* (1980) led the way in scrutinising the depiction of female friendship in novels and she discusses the prominent role played by the eighteenth-century cult of sensibility in sentimentalising women's friendship both textually and in reality.<sup>38</sup> In her study Todd recognises that an ideal of female friendship was being promulgated by novelists such as Eliza Hayward, Charlotte Lennox, Mme de Graffigny and Fanny Burney, all of whom provided their virtuous heroines with a female confidante with whom they could share their 'pent-up emotions' and private yearnings.<sup>39</sup> A later work by Betty Rizzo entitled *Companions without Vows: Relationships among Eighteenth-Century British Women* (1994) broke new ground by analysing the different forms that women's companionate relationships could assume. While this book is not specifically about female friendships per se, this text's significance lies in the fact that it represents a milestone in the way in which scholars approached the topic of women's friendships. In using the life writing of middle- and upper-class women as well as fictional models to explore the companionate relationships between them, Rizzo's book stands in the gap between the earlier fiction-based assessments of women's friendships and those that came after, such as Sharon Marcus's *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (2007), which focuses more specifically on primary source material.

In her study of the life writing of middle-class Anglican women from 1830 to 1880, Marcus claims that the nature of women's friendships in the nineteenth century was either ignored or

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<sup>34</sup> Caine, 'Taking up the Pen', pp. 215-22 (p. 215); Caine, 'Introduction', in *Friendship: A History*, pp. ix-xvi (p. xii).

<sup>35</sup> Caine, 'Introduction', in *Friendship: A History*, pp. ix-xvi (p. xii).

<sup>36</sup> Caine, 'Taking up the Pen', in *Friendship: A History*, pp. 215-22, (p. 216).

<sup>37</sup> Caine, 'Taking up the Pen', in *Friendship: A History*, pp. 215-22, (p. 221).

<sup>38</sup> Janet Todd, *Women's Friendship in Literature* (New York: Columbia Press, 1980), p. 305.

<sup>39</sup> Todd, pp. 305-18.

misunderstood by scholars in the late-twentieth century.<sup>40</sup> She discusses the fact that feminist studies on family and marriage tended to exclude female friendship from their analysis and that the dominant paradigm within lesbian studies was a valorisation of women's friendships 'as a subset of lesbianism' and 'as a subversion of gender norms'.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, the use of this theory 'as a master discourse for understanding all relationships between women' has been an obstacle in developing an understanding of other types of female friendship.<sup>42</sup> Marcus's research has shown that friendship between women in the nineteenth century was not confined within a paradigm of homosexuality versus heterosexuality, but that a homosocial model was recognised as well.<sup>43</sup> It is into this latter category that Anne and Marianne's lifelong friendship falls. Marcus also recognises that, as an ideal, women's friendship in this period was defined by 'altruism, generosity, mutual indebtedness, and a perfect balance of power'; it offered 'a vision of perfect reciprocity' for those who had adequate means and the leisure to enjoy it.<sup>44</sup> This description of ideal female friendship, realised from Marcus's empirical research, gives weight to Friedman's hypothesis on women's friendships in as much as it concurs with her definition of ideal amity as one based in equality, mutuality and trust.<sup>45</sup> Marcus also makes a similar claim to Raymond when she contends that scholars have focused too narrowly on women's status as 'relative creatures' who are 'defined by their difference from and subordination to men'.<sup>46</sup> She sees this approach as limiting our understanding of 'gender, kinship, and sexuality'.<sup>47</sup> Such preconceptions, she argues, 'have led us to doubt the importance of relationships such as marriage between women, which was not only a Victorian dream but also a Victorian reality'.<sup>48</sup> While acknowledging that 'female marriage' and 'erotic infatuation' display some continuity with female friendship, Marcus makes the point that there are also significant discontinuities and that it is only by exploring the differences, often subtle, among conjugality, friendship, and infatuation, that the various social relationships can be properly understood.<sup>49</sup>

Marcus's claim that nineteenth-century female friendship was misunderstood by scholars might equally apply to some of the early studies on the bluestocking epistolary friendships of the eighteenth century. In assessing these relationships there was a tendency to regard the intensely affectionate language used in their correspondence by women such as Elizabeth Carter, Catherine

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<sup>40</sup> Sharon Marcus, *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 29.

<sup>41</sup> For an analysis of the feminist critique on women's friendships in the nineteenth-century see Marcus, pp. 9-14 and 29-30.

<sup>42</sup> Marcus, p. 12.

<sup>43</sup> Marcus, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup> Marcus, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 210.

<sup>46</sup> Marcus, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Marcus, p. 32.

Talbot and Elizabeth Montagu as an indication of romantic attachment or even as a precursor to lesbianism. Lillian Faderman describes the relationship between Elizabeth Carter and Catherine Talbot as that of 'lovers' and ascribes romantic connotations to Carter's epistolary rapport with Elizabeth Montagu.<sup>50</sup> In a more recent study, Alison E. Hurley has taken a similar stance arguing that in order to maintain their intimate friendships these three women turned to the provincial spa baths of places like Bristol, Bath, Tunbridge Wells, or Brighton, both metaphorically in their letters and in reality, as places in which to situate 'their idealized conversations'.<sup>51</sup> She suggests that in doing so 'the Bluestockings reveal more clearly the transgressive character of the kind of correspondence they desired'.<sup>52</sup>

On the other hand, Sylvia Harcstark Myers and Elizabeth Eger take a very different view and have provided alternative commentaries on the nature of the friendship which existed between Carter, Talbot and Montagu. Myers views the friendship between Talbot and Carter, and those which they cultivated independently with other women, as an attempt to create stable and supportive networks between women.<sup>53</sup> These friendships were based on a shared interest in female self-improvement and a mutual desire to encourage intellectual growth and literary output.<sup>54</sup> Myers strongly believes that their friendship was neither a passionate nor an exclusive one and that while the two women enjoyed each other's company they never expressed the desire to live together.<sup>55</sup> Eger takes a similar stance with respect to Carter's friendship with Montagu. She sees the intensely emotional relationship penned in the letters between Carter and Montagu as 'a sort of rational or platonic love' which was 'grounded in their shared Christian principles'.<sup>56</sup> Todd suggests that the sentimental friendships found in Richardson's novels were influential on the keen sensibilities of the Bluestocking circle, many of whom corresponded with him — an observation which may account for the emotional language used in Carter and Montagu's correspondence.<sup>57</sup> As Todd observes, in the eighteenth century female friendship can be considered as 'an historical phenomenon': one which, being 'fed by and feeding into fiction', adopted the 'language and dramatics of love' and most often revealed itself in the letters that women wrote to each other, both in fiction and in reality.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (1981; repr. New York: Harper Collins, 2001), p. 130.

<sup>51</sup> Alison Hurley, 'A Conversation of their Own: Watering-Place Correspondence among the Bluestockings', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 40.1 (2006), 1-21 (p. 8).

<sup>52</sup> Hurley, pp. 1-21 (p. 8).

<sup>53</sup> Sylvia Harcstark Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle: Women, Friendship, and the Life of the Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 76.

<sup>54</sup> Myers, pp. 79-81.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>56</sup> Elizabeth Eger, *Bluestockings: Women of Reason from Enlightenment to Romanticism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 98.

<sup>57</sup> Todd, p. 364.

<sup>58</sup> Todd, pp. 359-60.

Like the epistolary friendships of these bluestocking women, Anne and Marianne's mature friendship was grounded in a mutuality of female self-improvement, the desire for rational critical debate, and shared Christian beliefs. Myers and Eger's accounts of these bluestocking friendships not only provide an important context for Anne and Marianne's friendship, but also reveal the continuity that exists in the way in which intellectual women viewed their close friendships throughout the eighteenth and well into the nineteenth centuries. However, while the language used by Anne and Marianne to express their friendship is affectionate it is rarely emotional, and, in this respect, the expression of their amity contrasts sharply with both the bluestocking women discussed above and Marcus's middle-class subjects. Marcus suggests that, in the 1830s, when evangelical fervour and religious piety were at their height, Anglican middle-class women were more likely to emphasize friendship in emotional and religious terms than women from the upper classes.<sup>59</sup>

At the heart of nineteenth-century evangelical theology — whether it pertained to the Anglican community or to non-conformist denominations such as Methodists, Baptists and Congregationalists — was the need for a conversion experience: a regeneration of the soul brought about by repentance and the acceptance of Christ's atonement on the cross.<sup>60</sup> Evangelicals also stressed an experiential knowledge of Scripture as the source of God's revelation to mankind.<sup>61</sup> Unlike the Anglo-Catholic theology of the Oxford Movement which recognised the authority of the clergy and the traditions of the Church Fathers in mediating Biblical truths, Evangelicals, with their emphasis on an individual relationship with God, believed that each person was free to interpret God's revelation from Scripture in their own way.<sup>62</sup> Marcus discusses a letter of 1834 written by Mary Lundie Duncan which serves to illustrate the way in which Anglican middle-class women sought to reconcile their female friendships with evangelical piety. Mary begins by expressing her longing for a friend to whom she could unfold her heart and continues:

There is one here, and when circumstance permit us to meet, a sweet savour is shed around more than one succeeding day.—I have many Christian friends, but it requires an attraction of the heart, which may be better felt than described, to fill exactly the place

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<sup>59</sup> Marcus, pp. 28, 69.

<sup>60</sup> Mary Hilton, *Women and the Shaping of the Nation's Young: Education and Public Doctrine in Britain 1750-1850* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 138-39.

<sup>61</sup> Julie Melnyk, 'Women, writing and the creation of theological culture', in *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, ed. by Sue Morgan and Jaqueline de Vries (London & New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 32-53 (p. 36).

<sup>62</sup> Melnyk, pp. 32-53 (pp. 36, 39, 46).



Miss— does. Now do not think me a romantic girl, for my love to her is founded on love to God.<sup>63</sup>

Marcus comments that this writer, aware that 'her affection for her new friend was beginning to sound too similar to worldly "romantic" pleasures' places the relationship in a religious context.<sup>64</sup> This legitimising of female friendship in terms of Christian piety provided women with 'a model of how to love from afar'. The bond of friendship, which existed without physical presence, could be conceptualised as that of souls in unison, which, in turn, helped them to realise the evangelical desire for a personal relationship with a God they could not see.<sup>65</sup>

In her study of the life writing of mid-eighteenth-century Methodist women, Amy Culley discusses the way in which religious commitment could represent an act of independence for these women, and that, for some, the strong bond of 'spiritual kinship' led to the formation of female religious communities.<sup>66</sup> Culley also notes the central role that Methodist women's friendships played in their literary practices and she observes that 'as authors and editors' and in 'their self-representations', these women created 'a literary tradition that extends across generations'.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, their modes of literary production parallel those of the Bluestocking coterie as both groups have been shown to rely on conversation and correspondence in their 'interactive methods of textual production'.<sup>68</sup> This discursive mode of authorship is apparent in Anne and Marianne's fictional collaborations and will be explored in Chapter 3. However, my work differs from that of Marcus, Culley, and other scholars exploring women's friendships and their supportive literary networks, in as much as it concentrates exclusively on the familiar letter. Moreover, these studies take a broad perspective on their respective topics, whereas my study will take a detailed approach. I will focus on the letter text itself as a means of teasing out the thoughts, feelings and opinions of these two women with respect to their friendship, and their moral values and commitments, all of which motivated their collaborative writing practice.

It was not just in religious communities that women collaborated in textual production as Bette London's discussion of women's literary partnerships in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries makes clear.<sup>69</sup> London believes that unacknowledged collaborations far exceed known ones and that these tacit collaborations provided the route into authorship for many women, even though

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<sup>63</sup> [Lundie, Mary]. *Memoir of Mrs. Mary Lundie Duncan: Being Recollections of a Daughter by Her Mother*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Edinburgh: William Oliphant & Son, 1842), p. 129; quoted in Marcus, 63.

<sup>64</sup> Marcus, p. 63.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>66</sup> Amy Culley, *British Women's Life Writing, 1760-1840: Friendship, Community, and Collaboration* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 24.

<sup>67</sup> Culley, p. 21.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>69</sup> Bette Lynn London, *Writing Double: Women's Literary Partnerships* (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1999).

women's collaborative authorship, in general, 'had no place in the official record'.<sup>70</sup> The recent academic focus on women's life writing is now beginning to set the record straight in this area and in her study of women of letters in the nineteenth-century literary marketplace, Linda Peterson discusses the historical significance of the collaborative model of authorship favoured by the Quaker writer, Mary Howitt.<sup>71</sup> Although Howitt continued to embrace a mode of literary production associated with women, such as didactic fiction, poetry, 'sketches of rural and domestic life' and children's stories, she was known as a woman of letters in her day due to her contributions to major literary periodicals and her writing on behalf of radical social and political causes.<sup>72</sup> What sets her apart from other professional women writers is that she approached writing as a collective family venture and business opportunity involving herself, her husband William, and her gifted children.<sup>73</sup> The Howitt family first encountered this 'model of familial collaboration' in the 1820s through their contact with various literary friends, and, by the mid-nineteenth century, it had become a prominent mode of earning a living for writers and painters living in London.<sup>74</sup> However, as Peterson explains, in the late 1830s it was Mary Howitt and her eldest daughter, Anna Mary Howitt Watts, who became the joint collaborators and she argues that it is their 'articulation of an ideology of collaborative work' that makes these two women important in the history of women's authorship.<sup>75</sup>

London also poses the question as to whether, historically, collaborative authorship can be viewed as an 'anomalous occurrence' or as 'a common feature of most if not all authorship that passes for singular'.<sup>76</sup> As she acknowledges, the fact that the question can still be asked demonstrates 'our reluctance to dispense with the idea of the solitary author', an unwillingness which, in both academic discourse and the popular imagination, is intensified when the writing in question is deemed as having literary merit.<sup>77</sup> This is an important observation and one which Michelle Levy tackles in her text on family authorship and romantic print culture. She suggests that the studies of collaborative authorship, which first emerged in the 1990s, have been instrumental in 'realigning our understanding of authorial practices across a range of literary fields'.<sup>78</sup> In her own work Levy points out that the notion of the author as an individual genius became prevalent in the late eighteenth century, as authors, increasingly dependent on the literary marketplace for their livelihood, were keen to assert the property rights of their

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<sup>70</sup> London, p. 9.

<sup>71</sup> Linda H. Peterson, *Becoming a Woman of Letters: Myths of Authorship and Facts of the Victorian Marketplace* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 96-130.

<sup>72</sup> Peterson, p. 96.

<sup>73</sup> Peterson, p. 97.

<sup>74</sup> Peterson, pp. 97-98.

<sup>75</sup> Peterson, pp. 97-98.

<sup>76</sup> London, p. 3.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Michelle Levy, *Family Authorship and Romantic Print Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 10.

authorship.<sup>79</sup> The creative personas that writers such as Wordsworth, Byron and Mary Shelley fashioned for themselves during the Romantic period not only appealed to their contemporary readers, but also to twenty and twenty-first-century scholars who have continued to perpetuate the myth of the author as a solitary genius, in spite of the deconstruction and historicising of this idea which has taken place in recent years.<sup>80</sup> One such work is *Romantic Sociability: Social Networks and Literary Culture in Britain, 1770-1840* (2002) edited by Gillian Russell and Clara Tuite. In their introduction Russell and Tuite claim that in traditional representations of Romanticism the role of sociability has not been sufficiently recognised by scholars as having a critical value; this omission has perpetuated the idea of the lone poet as being 'withdrawn into productive introspection' and individualism.<sup>81</sup> The essays chosen in their volume demonstrate the part that 'private sociability' played in literary production and explore the social networks of important Romantic figures such as, Anna Barbauld, Frances Burney, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Godwin.<sup>82</sup> As my thesis will make evident, the concept of sociability as a contributory factor to literary production is a very significant one when viewed in the context of epistolary friendships.

## II: The gendered traditions of the landed gentry

My first chapter will lay down much of the groundwork for the rest of my thesis as I consider Anne and Marianne's adolescent correspondence in the late 1820s. The letters in this period take their reader into their privileged world of polite society, female self-improvement, philanthropy, and religious awakening, but this is also a world governed by the social conventions of the landed gentry, which, as Andrew Fletcher explains, had been perpetuated since the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>83</sup> At this time the gentry had succeeded in establishing a sense of class identity based on 'a set of distinct cultural and intellectual assumptions' which set them apart from the masses.<sup>84</sup> Instrumental in this accomplishment was the cementing of the Anglican Church to the new social scene where an alliance between the country squire and parson constituted the local ruling hegemony.<sup>85</sup> This consciously gendered view of their upper-class status was strengthened by the elaborate scheme of gender construction set out in the conduct

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<sup>79</sup> Levy, p. 9.

<sup>80</sup> Levy, p. 9.

<sup>81</sup> Gillian Russell and Clara Tuite, 'Introducing Romantic sociability', in *Romantic Sociability: Social Networks and Literary Culture in Britain, 1770-1840*, ed. by Gillian Russell and Clara Tuite (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 1-23 (p. 4).

<sup>82</sup> Russell and Tuite, pp. 1-23 (p. 17).

<sup>83</sup> Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 283.

<sup>84</sup> Fletcher, p. 283.

<sup>85</sup> Fletcher, p. 284.

books, sermons and other prescriptive literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>86</sup> The cultural historian, Linda Colley, explains that towards the end of the eighteenth century and throughout the first quarter of the nineteenth century the English patrician classes began to function as a homogeneous group in terms of lifestyles, marriage patterns, wealth, and ambitions.<sup>87</sup> In effect this meant that the patrician classes closed ranks and emerged as a 'genuinely British ruling group'.<sup>88</sup> During the eighteenth century the wearing of French fashions had been the main signifier of the landed classes' wealth and status; however, after the Napoleonic wars the need to exhibit patriotic sensibility prompted the English ruling class to present themselves in ways which were ostensibly British.<sup>89</sup> This resulted in the new cultural identity of the patrician male being aligned with the English public school. In these institutions the young men were taught the value of patriotism and given a classical education which reinforced patriotic values.<sup>90</sup> In spite of this move towards nationalism, the ability to speak French still remained a necessary requisite for entry into high society or 'high office' in the early decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>91</sup> Although there were public establishments for the education of girls, educationists and moralists in the late eighteenth century argued that the suitability of public-school education for boys made it unsuitable for girls and advocated that girls be educated in the home under the tutelage of their mothers.<sup>92</sup> Jessica Gerard, in her empirical study of life in the nineteenth-century country house, concurs with this but makes the additional point that fathers had a role to play too and there is evidence in Anne's letters to show that the instruction she received from her mother did not preclude her father's participation.<sup>93</sup> Gerard also confirms that gendered codes of behaviour were still the accepted practice amongst families from the landed gentry and one of my concerns throughout this thesis will be to show that Anne's upbringing and outlook on life was more grounded in the social and cultural traditions of the propertied classes than Marianne's.<sup>94</sup> This is an important consideration which, as I will show, impacts on their friendship in various ways.

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<sup>86</sup> Fletcher, pp. 283-84.

<sup>87</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1701-1837*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 164.

<sup>88</sup> Colley, p. 164.

<sup>89</sup> Colley, pp. 166-67.

<sup>90</sup> Colley, p. 167.

<sup>91</sup> Colley, p. 165.

<sup>92</sup> Michèle Cohen, "'To think, to compare, to combine, to methodise': Girl's Education in Enlightenment Britain", in *Women, Gender and Enlightenment*, ed. by Barbara Taylor and Sarah Knott (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 224-42 (pp. 227-28).

<sup>93</sup> Jessica Gerard, *Country House Life: Family and Servants, 1815-1914* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), pp. 80-81, 86.

<sup>94</sup> Gerrard, p. 70.

Anne was the only child of the Right Honourable William Sturges Bourne (1769-1845) and Anne Bowles ([c. mid-1770s]-1850).<sup>95</sup> Her mother was one of nine children and the third daughter of Oldfield Bowles of North Aston in Oxfordshire, who is described as a painter, musician, botanist and scientific farmer in *A History of the County of Oxford*.<sup>96</sup> Anne's father served as a Tory MP from 1798 to 1812 and again from 1814 to 1831 during which time, in 1827, he took the post of Home Secretary in Lord Canning's government for several months.<sup>97</sup> William Sturges Bourne succeeded to the estates of Temple Aston and Thrupp in Oxfordshire in 1821, having previously received an inheritance from his uncle Francis Bourne in 1803 on the stipulation that he took the additional name of Bourne.<sup>98</sup> The Sturges Bourne family moved in polite circles, both on their Testwood Estate in Eling, near Southampton, which was Mr Sturges Bourne's main country seat, and in their yearly pilgrimage to London for the parliamentary season. Anne's letters testify to the fashionable lifestyle they enjoy, mingling with the aristocracy and other members of the propertied elite. During the 1820s and 30s this annual migration to London provided Anne and Marianne with an opportunity to meet as the Dyson family sometimes took a house in town for a few weeks during the season. For the rest of the year they were dependent on their respective parents to arrange meetings for them and this does not appear to have been a priority in the Sturges Bournes's busy social calendar, in spite of the hopeful planning which takes place in Anne and Marianne's correspondence.<sup>99</sup> Even after their respective country-house estates were connected by rail in the 1840s, their infrequent pattern of meeting does not alter and this can be accounted for by their individual circumstances. Anne cared for her ageing parents until her father's death in 1845, and her mother's in 1850, after which she inherited and ran the Testwood estate until 1871 when she moved to Church Crookham, Hampshire, to be near to Marianne who was already living there.<sup>100</sup> Marianne's parents had died in the early 1830s, but she contracted a debilitating illness in 1838 which left her physically weak and eventually rendered her permanently infirm, thereby making rail travel difficult for her.

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<sup>95</sup> The date of Anne Bowles birth can be approximated between c. 1772 and c. 1781. These are the recorded birth dates of her older sister Mary and her younger sister Lucy according to the entry for 'Oldfield Bowles' in *The Peerage: A genealogical survey of the peerage of Britain as well as the royal families of Europe* <<http://www.thepeerage.com/p12542.htm>> [accessed 1 February 2017]; See also Anne's family tree of the Sturges Bourne family for the birth order of the sisters in Appendix B.

<sup>96</sup> A. P. Baggs, and others, 'Parishes: North Aston', *A History of the County of Oxford: Wootton Hundred (Northern Part)*, ed. by Alan Crossley (London: Victoria County History, 1983), xi, *British History Online* <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol11/pp6-21>> [accessed 14 August 2016], 6-21.

<sup>97</sup> David Eastwood, 'Bourne, William Sturges (1769–1845)', *Oxford DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3012>> [accessed 15 Aug 2016].

<sup>98</sup> David R. Fisher, 'Sturges Bourne (formerly Sturges), William, (1769-1845), of Testwood, nr. Southampton, Hants; Acton Hall, nr. Droitwich, Worcs and 15 Audley Street, Mdx', in Member Biographies, *The History of Parliament* <<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/sturges-bourne-william-1769-1845>> [accessed 1 August 2016].

<sup>99</sup> See Appendix C: 'Timeline for the Oxford Movement'.

<sup>100</sup> See Anne's letters to Marianne for 1871: HRO, 9M55/F34/16–F34/21.

Marianne was the daughter of Jeremiah Dyson who was the deputy clerk in the House of Commons from 1814 to 1822, the year of his retirement.<sup>101</sup> This mutual connection with the House of Commons may have been where the friendship between the Dysons and the Sturges Bournes originated. Marianne's mother was the daughter of the Rev. F. Newbolt of Winchester and Jeremiah Dyson's second wife. Marianne was the only child of the marriage although she had two older half-brothers and a half-sister from her father's previous marriage.<sup>102</sup> Like Anne, Marianne went to balls and other social events, but her family did not have the same social standing as the Sturges Bournes. K. D. Reynolds points out that women took their status, initially from their fathers, and subsequently from their husbands if they married, therefore, as the daughter of a Tory MP, Anne enjoyed a higher social status than Marianne.<sup>103</sup> After the death of his father Mr Dyson inherited an estate at Stoke, near Guildford, although he did not make this property his main residence; instead, on his retirement, he moved his family to Lavington, near Petworth, to a property thought to be inherited from his father-in-law, who had been the rector of nearby Graffham.<sup>104</sup> Marianne's great-grandfather had been a Quaker and a self-made man through his enterprise as a London tailor, and his substantial estate had been subsequently handed down through the male line of the family.<sup>105</sup> However, as religious non-conformists were prohibited from taking public office until the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828, Mr Dyson's appointment in the House of Commons demonstrates that his nonconformist roots had been left behind and that he and his family were now members of the Church of England.

From my description of Anne and Marianne's family backgrounds it becomes apparent that although Mr Dyson was a land owner, his inherited estate on his father's side came from his grandfather's middle-class commercial enterprise and not from the old money of the landed gentry. Amanda Vickery points out that the lesser provincial gentry can be subsumed into the commercial middle-classes below them or the landed classes above them and in the Dysons's case the mobility was upwards.<sup>106</sup> As Reynolds explains, defining the aristocracy as a coherent group in society is a 'notoriously difficult' task.<sup>107</sup> She discusses the fact that, in the nineteenth century, many wealthy persons and landowners did not hold titles. In addition, the aristocratic tradition of primogeniture left younger sons without claim to rank and fortune. On the other hand, persons of

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<sup>101</sup> For information about Jeremiah Dyson and his family see 'Jeremiah Dyson Civil Servant (1757-1835)', The Twickenham Museum <<http://www.twickenham-museum.org.uk/detail.asp?ContentID=423>> [accessed 14 August 2016].

<sup>102</sup> 'Domestic Occurrences: London and Middlesex' in *The Athenaeum: A Magazine of Literary and Miscellaneous Information*, ed. by J. Aiken (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1807), I, p. 646.

<sup>103</sup> K. D. Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 19.

<sup>104</sup> The Twickenham Museum.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *The Historical Journal*, 36.2 (1993), 383-414 (p. 395).

<sup>107</sup> Reynolds, p. 19.

inferior rank with sufficient monetary funds could emulate an aristocratic lifestyle and even become peers of the realm.<sup>108</sup> It is apparent from Marianne's letters, as well as Anne's, that both their families socialised with those of titled rank, and, although the Sturges Bourne and the Dysons are clearly not aristocracy they can be subsumed into that group socially by virtue of their country-house status and the values they shared with the propertied classes.

The social historian, Leonore Davidoff, reminds us that in the nineteenth century the family and household 'remain the primary "mediating institutions" in gender systems'; home is the place where individuals 'learn to speak a gendered language'.<sup>109</sup> Gerard's research into the lives of families in the nineteenth-century country house provides a valuable resource for understanding the socially embedded values of the landed gentry. She describes the explicitly gendered codes of conduct which were taught to boys and girls. Both sexes were taught to be courteous, well-mannered, charitable and honourable, but boys were expected to exhibit considerate, dignified and chivalrous behaviour, while girls were required to show their femininity through their modesty, delicacy and poise.<sup>110</sup> Girls were also taught from an early age to show deference to their brothers and sacrifice their own interest to these male siblings. In addition, both sexes were taught an 'elaborate system of etiquette devised to maintain social barriers'.<sup>111</sup> Gerard believes that it was this set of values which 'both defined and perpetuated the landed classes'.<sup>112</sup> This was a system which 'could only be learned within the family' and which taught children respect for their superiors, and their duties and responsibilities towards their inferiors.<sup>113</sup> At the head of this patriarchal model was the landowner. This was a position which held immense power and authority. It was derived from long-held customs and established within a social hierarchy of respect and deference, which not only held sway in the home with respect to his family and servants, but extended into the local parish with its working-class subordinates.<sup>114</sup>

### III: Liberal theology and Enlightenment traditions

It is against the background of moral abstract concepts such as these that Friedman believes, in later life, individuals may find themselves 'undergoing remarkable changes of commitment' prompted by the transformative power of friendship.<sup>115</sup> Friedman also makes the point that an individual's 'first values and moral rules' are learnt from the moral socialization imparted by those

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<sup>108</sup> Reynolds, p. 19.

<sup>109</sup> Leonore Davidoff, *Worlds Between: Historical Perspectives on Gender and Class* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 229.

<sup>110</sup> Gerard, p. 70.

<sup>111</sup> Gerard, pp. 48, 70.

<sup>112</sup> Gerard, p. 70.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Gerard, pp. 70-71.

<sup>115</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 196.

who look after us, usually our parents and family.<sup>116</sup> In the early nineteenth century the tenets of Christianity still informed the moral outlook of the majority of people. Within the Church of England three main parties were recognised: High Church, Broad Church, and Low Church.<sup>117</sup> Each of these denominations can be broadly categorised by its specific characteristics. In his biography of the Oxford Movement, George Herring contrasts the 'dry formalism' of traditional High Churchmen with the 'refreshing wind' of Tractarianism which sought to revitalise this orthodox Church party; while Julie Melnyk discusses Low Church theology in terms of its evangelical emphasis, and that of the Broad Church party as urging a liberal form of Anglicanism.<sup>118</sup> She points out that Broad Church Anglicanism 'encouraged tolerance for a wide range of theological views' and incorporated new intellectual ideas on Higher Biblical criticism and scientific discoveries.<sup>119</sup>

Marianne's theological leanings in the late 1820s and early 1830s can only be surmised from her appreciation of John Keble's *The Christian Year* (1827). This book was intended to be read as a companion volume to the Bible and the Anglican Book of Common Prayer and can be described more particularly as devotional poetry: that is, 'poetry which grows out of and is tied to acts of religious worship' such as that associated with liturgical forms in High Church Anglicanism or Roman Catholic religious practices in the nineteenth century.<sup>120</sup> On the other hand, it is apparent from Anne's letters in this period that she is comfortable with the liberal theology encouraged by Broad Church Anglicanism, religious values which may have become socially embedded through her father's religious leanings. The cultural historian, Peter Mandler, suggests that Mr Sturges Bourne shared a common way of thinking with a group of Anglican clerics known as the 'Noetics' — from the Greek for 'reasoners' — who were Dons and Fellows of Oriel College, Oxford, during the early part of the nineteenth century.<sup>121</sup> The religious writing of two of these Anglican Noetics, the Reverends Richard Whately and Thomas Arnold, features heavily in Anne and Marianne's epistolary discussions of the early 1830s. Whately and Arnold were particularly associated with the Broad Church movement and it is clear from Anne's letters that, at this point in time, she is endorsing their religious stance.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> W. J. Conybeare, 'Church Parties', *Edinburgh Review*, 98 (1853), 273-342 (p. 273).

<sup>118</sup> George Herring, *What was the Oxford Movement?* (London & New York: Continuum, 2002), p. 12; Melnyk, pp. 32-53 (pp. 36-37).

<sup>119</sup> Melnyk, pp. 32-53 (p. 37).

<sup>120</sup> G. B. Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry: The Tractarian Mode* (Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 6.

<sup>121</sup> Peter Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers: Christian Political Economy and the Making of the New Poor Law', *The Historical Journal*, 33.1 (1990), 81-103 (pp. 86, 98).

<sup>122</sup> Tod Jones describes Whately as the 'prototypical Noetic' whose expertise was in logic and rhetoric, while he believes that it was Arnold 'who made the greatest contribution to the development of the Broad Church movement. Tod E. Jones, *The Broad Church: A biography of a Movement* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2003), pp. 57, 62.



This was all to change in the mid-1830s with the publishing of the *Tracts for the Times*. While Marianne and Mary Mordaunt embraced the new doctrine being advanced in the *Tracts*, Anne's liberal Anglican background made it difficult for her to accept the new teaching. However, as I will argue, Anne's deep commitment to her friendship with these two women proved to be more important than holding onto the religious values imbibed from her father and she eventually chose to pursue her own course of moral autonomy by embracing Tractarian doctrine. My claim is substantiated by Anne's letter to Marianne of February 1845, written after the death of her father. In reminiscing about her relationship with him, Anne voices her regret that she had not valued her father enough while he was alive, possibly because she was '40 years younger'. For this reason she had been 'careless of his tastes', especially as hers 'were pulled the other way'. She had fretted because he 'could not bend the impressions of a long life' to embrace 'the new spirit of the age springing up' and so her 'church wishes for more liberty' were denied by her father's inflexibility.<sup>123</sup> This passage does more than confirm the frustration Anne felt at not being able to openly follow her religious inclinations, it also highlights the generational divide between Anne and her father in terms of his tastes and preferences for a bygone era and hers for the *zeitgeist* of her own age. As will become clear, Mrs Sturges Bourne also clung on to the past with regard to her pedagogical choices for Anne.

Another of the social and cultural traditions practised by the landed gentry was the polite art of letter writing. Rebecca Earle, in writing about women and the form of the familiar letter, notes that a substantial body of scholarly literature asserts that a 'feminisation' of letter writing occurred in France during the second half of the seventeenth century.<sup>124</sup> Goodman concurs with this idea when she explains that men of letters began to recognise that women of the court had a natural ability to write letters as 'an extension of their conversation'.<sup>125</sup> By the early eighteenth century, in England as well as France, it was generally held that, because of their easy and natural style of writing, women excelled as writers of the familiar letter.<sup>126</sup> Associated with this gendering of the familiar letter were the celebrated letters of the French aristocrat, Mme de Sévigné (1626-1696). Over the course of the eighteenth century her published correspondence came to be regarded as the exemplary model for literate French women to emulate.<sup>127</sup> Sévigné's letters were also revered for their feminine elegance in England and took on something of a cult status in the

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<sup>123</sup> HRO, 9M55/F21/4 (February 1845).

<sup>124</sup> Rebecca Earle, 'Introduction' in *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600-1945*, ed. by Rebecca Earle (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), pp. 1-12 (p. 6).

<sup>125</sup> Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (Ithaca, N.Y. & London: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 131.

<sup>126</sup> Earle, pp. 1-12 (p. 6).

<sup>127</sup> Joan Dejean records that 'pedagogical editions have long used selected correspondence to portray the author as the model of *ancien régime* elegance, as a role-model for young women, and as a tender mother'. Joan Dejean, 'Sévigné', *The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French* ed. by Peter France (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), p. 762.

late eighteenth century.<sup>128</sup> Among her admirers were: Horace Walpole, who spoke of her correspondence as ‘that divine woman’s letters’; the aristocratic Lennox sisters, Caroline and Emily, who both aspired to Sévigné’s style of writing; and Lord Chesterfield, who recommended them to his son as ‘gay and amusing letters’.<sup>129</sup> Many of the female Bluestockings, including Talbot, Carter, Montagu and Hannah More also read and admired Sévigné’s letters.<sup>130</sup> In the nineteenth century Sévigné was praised by the novelists Elizabeth Gaskell and George Eliot as a great literary lady.<sup>131</sup> Late in her life Gaskell wrote an unfinished memoir on Sévigné’s life, while Eliot thought her ‘the single instance of a woman who is supreme in a class of literature which has engaged the ambition of men’: in other words, while men aspire to be great letter writers, they cannot equal Mme de Sévigné’s literary prowess.<sup>132</sup> Virginia Woolf even considered that, had Sévigné been writing in the late nineteenth century, she might have become a great novelist.<sup>133</sup>

Nicole Pohl’s study of European salon culture has discussed ways in which the desire for rational conversation and the pursuit of intellectual improvement brought together, not only men and women from the ‘gentry and upper-classes’, but also ‘middling-class professionals’.<sup>134</sup> Pohl’s enquiry is premised on her claim that the letters of Mme de Sévigné serve as a ‘universal model for both literary and polite letter writing’ and thereby create a virtual community of writers which transcends both time and space.<sup>135</sup> Her research is based on a macro view of history and confirms the very important and influential nature of Mme de Sévigné’s correspondence in an international context. Máire Cross and Caroline Bland suggest that the letter’s relevance lies in its capacity to reveal ‘codes of behaviour and language’ which in turn provide specific insights into the social and cultural history of a given period and that such characteristics form part of a ‘micro view of history’.<sup>136</sup> It is in this latter context that my research will add another dimension to this debate.

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<sup>128</sup> Stella Tillyard, *Aristocrats: Caroline, Emily, Louisa and Sarah Lennox 1740-1832* (London: Vintage, 1995), p. 158.

<sup>129</sup> Tillyard, p. 95; See Lord Chesterfield’s letter to his son dated 20 July 1747, in *Letters written by Lord Chesterfield to his Son: Selected by Charles Sayle* (London and Newcastle-on-Tyne: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., [190?]), p. 40.

<sup>130</sup> Myers, p. 154; Nicole Pohl, ‘“Perfect Reciprocity”: Salon Culture and Epistolary Conversations’, *Women’s Writing*, 13.1 (2006), 139-59 (p. 147).

<sup>131</sup> Alain Jumeau, ‘Elizabeth Gaskell’s and George Eliot’s Common Interest in Two Literary Women of 17<sup>th</sup> Century France: Madame de Sablé and Madame de Sévigné’, *Revue LISA/LISA e-journal*, 7.3 (2009) <<http://lisa.revues.org/100>> [29 July 2016], 186-97 (para. 18).

<sup>132</sup> Elizabeth Gaskell to W. S. Williams, [?1862], in *The Letters of Mrs Gaskell*, ed. by J.A.V. Chapple and Arthur Pollard (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966; repr. Manchester: Mandolin, 1997), p. 675; George Eliot, ‘Woman in France: Madame de Sablé’, *Westminster Review*, (October 1854), 448-73, in A. S. Byatt & Nicholas Warren (eds.) *Selected Essays, Poems and Other Writings*, with an introduction by A. S. Byatt (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), pp. 8-37 (p. 10).

<sup>133</sup> Virginia Woolf, ‘Madame de Sévigné’, in *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays*, (London: Hogarth Press, 1981), p. 37.

<sup>134</sup> Pohl, pp. 139-59 (p. 142).

<sup>135</sup> Pohl, pp. 139-59 (pp. 139-40).

<sup>136</sup> Máire Cross and Caroline Bland, ‘Gender Politics: Breathing New Life into Old Letters’ in *Gender and Politics in the Age of Letter-Writing, 1750-2000*, ed. by Caroline Bland and Máire Cross (Aldershot & Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), pp. 3-14 (p. 7).

In her comprehensive study of Mme de Sévigné's correspondence, Michèle Longino Farrell claims that Sévigné was both ambitious for public recognition as an author and for social recognition and fulfilment in her own life-time.<sup>137</sup> Farrell argues that to achieve her aspirations and still remain within the bounds of seventeenth-century feminine propriety, Sévigné constructed an epistolary image of herself which conformed to the prescriptive codes set out for women in the letter-manuals and anthologies of the day.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, the 'maternal persona' projected by Sévigné in her letters to her married daughter, Françoise-Marguerite, Countess de Grignan — conforming, as it did, to 'the appropriate generic behaviour for women' — served to secure Mme de Sévigné's public recognition as an exemplary letter writer of female sentiments in her own time.<sup>139</sup> These codes and conventions, which are an intrinsic part of Sévigné's letters, have been reproduced in the various editions of her correspondence throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

It was Mme de Sévigné's aristocratic letters that Mrs Sturges Bourne chose as a model for Anne to emulate, and, in my first chapter, I will argue that the seventeenth-century codes of feminine propriety inherent in these letters continued to influence the gendered education of young gentlewomen in the early part of the nineteenth century. My intertextual analysis of Anne and Marianne's letters in the context of Sévigné's correspondence, will not only serve to uphold Pohl's virtual paradigm and give material substance to her hypothesis, it will also substantiate my own claims. It is my contention that Anne and Marianne's use of Sévigné's correspondence as a model for their own letter writing not only informed the style of their early letters and reinforced notions of femininity embedded in the highly institutionalized values of the landed gentry, but also contributed to a consciousness of their elite social status and was, therefore, instrumental in helping to form individual notions of self. This line of enquiry will do more than just confirm Mme de Sévigné's correspondence as a model for the 'feminine' familiar letter: with respect to Pohl's claims, it will also demonstrate continuity in the intellectual aspirations of educated women from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.

However, this was not the only female aristocratic model used by Anne's mother to educate her daughter in an intellectual and enlightened manner. There is evidence in Anne's letters to confirm that she read Mme de Genlis's educational treatise, *Adèle et Théodore ou lettres sur l'éducation* (1782) with her mother.<sup>140</sup> Stéphanie-Félicité, comtesse de Bruslart de Genlis and Marquise de Silléry (1746-1830) was a very influential eighteenth-century educator. As governess to the Duke of Chatres's twin daughters from 1777 and 'gouverneur' to his sons in 1782, one of whom was to become King Louis Philippe in the July monarchy of 1830-1848, Mme de Genlis's pedagogical

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<sup>137</sup> Michèle Longino Farrell, *Performing Motherhood: The Sévigné Correspondence* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1991), pp. 13-14.

<sup>138</sup> Farrell, pp. 16-17.

<sup>139</sup> Farrell, pp. 2, 14.

<sup>140</sup> HRO, 9M55/F3/18 (27 November 1825).

credentials were unquestionable.<sup>141</sup> This may have been an aspect of her life that appealed to Mrs Sturges Bourne, although it is equally possible that Anne's mother was already familiar with *Adèle et Théodore* from her own upbringing. Clarissa Campbell Orr, in her essay 'Aristocratic Feminism, the Learned Governess, and the Republic of Letters', discusses the fact that Mme de Genlis belonged to an eighteenth-century tradition of 'literary' and 'learned' governesses who operated within the courts of Europe.<sup>142</sup> Orr states that Genlis, in common with other aristocratic governesses such as Mme LePrince de Beaumont and Mme de la Fite, drew on the print culture of the cosmopolitan Republic of Letters for stories to include in their prescriptive advice for their privileged clientele.<sup>143</sup> The eighteenth-century Republic of Letters was first and foremost concerned with science and Enlightenment reason. It embraced all intellectuals, men and women, and represented an international community who communicated through letters, journals and academies.<sup>144</sup> Orr discusses the fact that, as French was the language of polite society, this was 'predominantly a francophone discourse' with a frame of reference which embraced 'French social practices and historical examples.'<sup>145</sup>

In choosing Mme de Genlis's pedagogical treatise in preference to those of other contemporary educational theorists, such as Richard and Maria Edgeworth's *Practical Education* (1798) or Hannah More's *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799), Mrs Sturges Bourne was not only demonstrating her cultural solidarity with *ancien régime* enlightenment principles, but she was also perpetuating the traditions of the landed gentry and their belief in the superiority of French women's aristocratic models for the education of their daughters. Orr also suggests that in the advice literature of Mme de Genlis and her contemporaries there was an 'underlying sense of female moral superiority' towards 'exploitive and irresponsible male behaviour' and female extravagance and empty-headedness.<sup>146</sup> In addition these educational mentors 'fostered women's sense of autonomy within a broader ethos of social and moral responsibility toward the family and social dependants, and gave them a critique of marriage in both its positive and negative aspects'.<sup>147</sup> It is feasible to suggest, then, that these tropes,

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<sup>141</sup> Dow notes that Genlis's celebrity may have contributed to the attraction of *Adelaide and Theodore* in England and on the continent. Gillian Dow, 'Introduction' in Stéphanie-Félicité de Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore, or Letters on Education*, ed. by Gillian Dow (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007), pp. i-xx (pp. ix, xi).

<sup>142</sup> Clarissa Campbell Orr, 'Aristocratic Feminism, the Learned Governess, and the Republic of Letters', in *Women, Gender and Enlightenment*, ed. by Barbara Taylor and Sarah Knott (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 306-25 (p.306).

<sup>143</sup> Orr, pp. 306-25 (p.306).

<sup>144</sup> The Republic of Letters coexisted with the nation-states of Europe from roughly 1660-1789. Lorraine Daston, 'The Ideal and Reality of the Republic of Letters in the Enlightenment', *Science in Context*, 4 (1991), 367-86 (p. 369).

<sup>145</sup> Orr, pp. 306-25 (p. 306).

<sup>146</sup> Orr, pp. 306-25 (p. 307).

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

inherent in *Adèle et Théodore*, were influential in shaping Anne's worldview, and possibly Marianne's too as she was also familiar with this work.<sup>148</sup>

#### IV: The transformative power of friendship

Another area I will explore in Chapter 1 is the way in which Anne and Marianne's letters functioned as a site for rational debate, not only for literature, but also in the context of the wider social, political, and religious debates of the late 1820s. A yearning for moral compatibility can also be detected as they reiterate the desire to think and feel the same in matters of literary taste and theological doctrine. Two texts, in particular, impacted on their lives at this time, the first of which was Schiller's poem 'Die Ideale' (The Ideals). Anne and Marianne use this text as a platform to discuss their different approaches to life, which, as I will discuss, not only aids their developing sense of individual identity, but also demonstrates the central role that letter writing and literature play in this process. The second text was Keble's *The Christian Year* (1827). The Reverend John Keble (1792-1866) became one of the main leaders of the Oxford Movement in the early 1830s and his devotional poetry was to have a significant impact, not only on the lives of Anne and Marianne, but also on the lives of countless other women in the nineteenth century. Elizabeth Gray believes that Keble became a poetic father to Victorian women writers in the sense that he functioned as a 'guarantor of moral correctness' so that poems written according to his model were legitimised as appropriate verse forms for a female author.<sup>149</sup> In fact, Gray describes Keble's *Christian Year* as 'the runaway bestseller of the Victorian period' which reached 158 editions by 1873.<sup>150</sup> For Anne and Marianne, *The Christian Year* was to become the bedrock of their Christian faith, and Keble, who they referred to as the 'Saint', can be said to have become their spiritual father during the late 1820s and early 1830s.<sup>151</sup>

In Chapter 2 I will focus more specifically on the nature of Anne and Marianne's epistolary friendship in the period from 1829 to 1833 and the extent to which certain texts inform their ideas about friendship. As Friedman points out, 'we evolve with our friends the particular ways in which we will interact, the extent of mutual support and nurturance, the depth of shared intimacy, and so forth.'<sup>152</sup> However, as previously noted, male writers had for centuries perpetuated the notion that a virtuous relationship of mutual trust and equality could only exist

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<sup>148</sup> See Anne's letter to Marianne 9M55/F4/19 (8 October 1826).

<sup>149</sup> F. Elizabeth Gray, "'Siren Strains': Victorian Women's Devotional Poetry and John Keble's *The Christian Year*", *Victorian Poetry*, 44.1 (2006), 61-76 (p. 63).

<sup>150</sup> Gray, 61-76 (p. 63).

<sup>151</sup> HRO, 9M55/F37/11 (January 1831); F40/24 (7 September 1836).

<sup>152</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 208.

between men.<sup>153</sup> Anne and Marianne do not challenge these assertions in their correspondence, but, based on their reading of German texts by Schiller and his contemporaries, they simply appropriate the classical discourse on male friendship as a virtuous model for their own amity. By tracing the moral development of their friendship through its various stages in the first part of this chapter, I will show how Anne and Marianne move away from this classical model to one which is more in line with their evolving Christian values and beliefs.

This is also a period in which Anne and Marianne's correspondence takes on a more intimate tone as they begin to discuss what their friendship means to them using the poetry of writers such as Coleridge and Schiller to express their feelings. It is at this point that parts of their letters are occasionally marked 'private', a sign that they are taking some control over who reads their letters. Goodman has argued that the practice of letter writing and reflection was instrumental in helping women to achieve 'degrees of autonomy within the context of human relationships'.<sup>154</sup> She is referring here to the theory of relational autonomy and is acknowledging the importance of women's correspondence as a medium which encourages reflection on the values and commitments assimilated from their social and conventional practices.<sup>155</sup> As Friedman explains, being able to reflect critically on the norms of the cultural milieu to which you have become familiarised opens up the possibility of breaking away from those traditions and is, therefore, an important part of the process towards achieving some degree of personal autonomy.<sup>156</sup> By focusing on specific discussions in Anne and Marianne's letters, my aim is to demonstrate the way in which Anne and Marianne achieve degrees of personal autonomy within the context of Friedman's hypothesis.

Another area of particular significance which I will discuss in this chapter is Anne and Marianne's involvement with philanthropy. Traditionally, an upper-class woman's philanthropic role was a paternalistic one as she ministered to the needs of the local poor in her capacity as the wife or daughter of the landowner.<sup>157</sup> However, in the first half of the nineteenth century women's philanthropic activities adapted to the changing social and political climate of the age as the prevalent theories of political economy responsible for the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act altered the way in which charity was administered to the poor.<sup>158</sup> Encouraged by the writings of Hannah More, in particular, philanthropy also became the province of Evangelical middle-class

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<sup>153</sup> Marc Brodie and Barbara Caine, 'Class, Sex and Friendship: The Long Nineteenth Century', in *Friendship: A History*, ed., by Barbara Caine (first published by Equinox, 2009; London and New York: Routledge, 2014), pp. 223-77 (pp. 226-27).

<sup>154</sup> Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters*, p. 3.

<sup>155</sup> Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, p. 60.

<sup>156</sup> Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, p. 60.

<sup>157</sup> Gerard, p. 122.

<sup>158</sup> See Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103.

women.<sup>159</sup> For Anne and Marianne philanthropy translated into a concern to educate lower-class girls in their local parishes, both with respect to their place in society, and, as a means to enable them to better their station in life. It has been pointed out by scholars that this type of charity was not necessarily designed for the benefit of the poor as much as for their better-off masters and mistresses who required a workforce in the factory and servants in their homes.<sup>160</sup> While it is apparent from their correspondence that Anne and Marianne regarded a life in service as the optimum choice for their young female pupils, my aim is to show that these two women shared a genuine concern for the welfare of their scholars, both before and after their involvement with the Oxford Movement.

Chapter 3 deals with Anne and Marianne's correspondence from 1833 onwards. In the first part of the chapter I will discuss the formation of Anne and Marianne's epistolary triangle with Mary Mordaunt and the effect that the new teaching of the Oxford Movement has upon the moral status of their friendship. Besides Keble, John Henry Newman was the other prominent Tractarian leader in the 1830s, and, while Marianne delights in the spiritual mysticism of the Anglo-Catholic doctrine which he expounds, Anne finds it difficult to acquiesce to both the mysticism and the political nature of Newman's writing. It is in this chapter that I will rely most on Friedman's ideas about the transformative power of friendship as I seek to explain how Anne's commitment to her friendship with Marianne and Mary was the motivating force which enabled her to overcome her reservations about the theology of the Oxford Movement in order to teach Anglo-Catholic doctrine to her Sunday-school pupils.

In Part 2 my discussions will focus on Anne and Marianne's fictional endeavours in support of Tractarian ideals, not only with respect to their own collaborative writing, but also their collaboration with the Tractarian novelist Charlotte Yonge. Although Yonge's novels no longer enjoy the prominence that they did in the nineteenth century, her work still remains an important academic focus for scholars working on Victorian women's writing. Anne and Marianne's own story writing prefigures Yonge's prolific contribution to the Oxford Movement and I will argue that — apart from Yonge and the other acknowledged female writers of Tractarian fiction, Elizabeth Missing Sewell and Felicia Skene — women's writing, as a means of promoting the teachings of the Oxford Movement, has not been given sufficient recognition, either by Tractarian scholars, or within the history of women's writing in the nineteenth century.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Dorice Williams Elliott, *The Angel out of the House: Philanthropy and Gender in Nineteenth-Century England* (Charlottesville and London: University Press, Virginia, 2002), pp. 55-58.

<sup>160</sup> Anna Moltchanova and Susannah Ottaway, 'Rights and Reciprocity in the Political and Philosophical Discourse of Eighteenth-Century England', in *The Culture of the Gift in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. by Linda Zionkowski and Cynthia Klekar (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 15-35 (p. 27).

<sup>161</sup> J. Russell Perkin, *Theology and the Victorian Novel* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill Queen's University Press, 2009), p. 19.

Therefore, I will lay claim to Anne and Marianne's place amongst the first generation of women who sought to disseminate the religious ideology of the Oxford Movement through their writing: a group which includes women who were acclaimed in their day and have subsequently been forgotten, such as Harriet Mozley, sister to Newman, and the artist, Maria Rosina Giberne, who was one of Newman's story-writing protégées and lifelong correspondents.<sup>162</sup> This is an important claim and one which supports the growing awareness amongst twenty-first century scholars that, historically, authorial collaboration between women was an acceptable and commonplace phenomenon. In this instance, these two women were not writing for personal recognition but in support of the cause for Catholic truth. The collaborative nature of Anne and Marianne's association with Charlotte Yonge and the significant roles they played in supporting her literary endeavours adds further weight to my claim for their recognition as first-generation writers of Tractarian fiction.

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<sup>162</sup> Portraits of John Henry Newman by Maria Rosina Giberne were included in the National Gallery's Centenary Exhibition held 2 March – 20 May 1990. See Susan Foister, *Cardinal Newman 1801-90: A Centenary Exhibition*, introduction by Owen Chadwick (London: National Portrait Gallery Publications, 1990), pp. 36, 38, 58.



## Chapter 1: Letter Writing and the Development of a Gendered Subjectivity

Selves are formed not against relationships with others, but in in the context of them.<sup>1</sup>

Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman*

### Introduction

In her study of women's epistolary practices in eighteenth-century France, Dena Goodman highlights the important role that letter writing plays in developing a concept of self.<sup>2</sup> The young women discussed by Goodman corresponded regularly with someone of their own age and rank and in doing so formed lasting friendships.<sup>3</sup> The similarities between this situation and that of Anne Sturges Bourne and Marianne Dyson can be noted here. Goodman also points out that the letters of her female subjects do more than reveal an insight into their lives; they allow us, the readers, to see how their gendered identities were 'constructed intersubjectively' through the practice of letter writing.<sup>4</sup> One of my primary aims in this chapter is to explore some of the ways in which Anne and Marianne's regular letter exchanges in the late 1820s enabled them to develop a gendered subjectivity in the context of their lives as privileged women. As mentioned in my main introduction, Marianne's extant letters do not begin until 1827 and there are further gaps in the subsequent chronology. However, as Máire Cross and Caroline Bland state in their exploration of letter writing as a genre: 'The letter articulates more than the voice of the author. The recipient is also present.'<sup>5</sup> It is possible, therefore, for me to infer some of Marianne's responses from Anne's letters in my discussions.

Anne's voice emerges as the dominant voice in their early epistolary exchanges, possibly due to her higher social standing. She is also more forthright in her opinions and more decided and vocal on the many issues relating to the wider social, political, cultural and religious milieux of the day. When we do hear Marianne's voice it is a quieter reflective voice which provides a foil to Anne's

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<sup>1</sup> Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (Ithaca, N.Y. & London: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Dena Goodman, 'Letter Writing and the Emergence of a Gendered Subjectivity in Eighteenth-Century France', *Journal of Women's History*, 17.2 (2005), 9-37 (pp. 12, 19).

<sup>3</sup> Goodman, 'Letter Writing', pp. 9-37 (pp. 13, 20).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Máire Cross and Caroline Bland, 'Gender Politics: Breathing New Life into Old Letters', in *Gender and Politics in the Age of Letter-Writing, 1750-2000*, ed. by Caroline Bland and Máire Cross (Aldershot & Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), pp. 3-14 (p. 4).

outspokenness. Nevertheless, these inequalities in their developing relationship are potentially problematic for their friendship as Marilyn Friedman discusses. She suggests that friendship is a 'culturally idealized relationship' and cites 'equality, mutuality and trust' as being the most commonly recognised ideals associated with it.<sup>6</sup> She also acknowledges that, in reality, friendship often falls short of these values: envy and self-regarding needs may undermine genuine affection; while equality and mutuality may be compromised by 'tendencies to defer or to dominate'.<sup>7</sup> Another of my aims in this chapter, then, is to consider some of the ways in which Anne and Marianne's amity evolves in the late 1820s in the context of the moral considerations which Friedman believes are an inherent part of the voluntary nature of friendship.

Anne and Marianne's correspondence in this period also articulates an important developmental stage in their lives as they discuss what it means to be young gentlewomen taking their place in polite society; As Cross and Bland point out, the letter, as a purveyor of 'codes of behaviour and language', can reveal specific insights into the social and cultural history of a given period.<sup>8</sup> Life in the nineteenth-century country house was a comparatively insular affair. Most country houses were fairly remote and social contact with other country-house families was limited to a comfortable travelling distance.<sup>9</sup> The close family ties of the landed classes meant that there was a good deal of contact with relatives, but this involved staying for long periods of time in each other's homes.<sup>10</sup> Adolescent girls were particularly affected by these circumstances as they were kept close to their mothers until they came out in society and then they would be heavily chaperoned — hence the need for strong friendships through regular correspondence.<sup>11</sup> These are important considerations which show the sheltered and narrow social environment in which Anne and Marianne were brought up. By exploring some of Anne's letters from the late 1820s and early 1830s my aim is to provide a comprehensive view of the respective roles played by her parents, both in terms of her education and with respect to the transmission of the acceptable codes and conventions of female propriety in the early nineteenth century.

My first task in this chapter, however, will be to consider Anne and Marianne's letters in the context of the feminine familiar letter. For young gentlewomen, like Anne and Marianne, who had to learn to engage with polite society, the ability to write *elegant* letters was an essential requirement which acted as a marker of their refinement and social status.<sup>12</sup> Mrs Sturges Bourne knew that letter writing was also an art that had to be learned in much the same way as polite

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<sup>6</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *What Are Friends For? Feminist Perspectives on Personal Relationships and Moral Theory*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 210.

<sup>7</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 210.

<sup>8</sup> Cross and Bland, 'Gender Politics', pp. 3-14 (p. 7).

<sup>9</sup> Jessica Gerard, *Country House Life: Family and Servants, 1815-1914* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 57.

<sup>10</sup> Gerard, p. 57.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85-87.

<sup>12</sup> Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters*, p. 2.

conversation and it seems likely that it was she who instigated Anne's correspondence with Marianne to enable her to develop this skill.<sup>13</sup> In choosing the letters of Mme de Sévigné as a model for Anne, Mrs Sturges Bourne was providing her daughter with examples of female letter writing which were prized for their natural grace and conversational spontaneity.<sup>14</sup> However, as my closer investigation of both Sévigné's authorship and the subsequent changes made to her letters before publication will show, the history of the letters of the celebrated Marquise is a complex one, not only with regard to the seventeenth-century gender codes inherent in her letters, but also in the eighteenth-century editorial changes made to the letter text before publication. Sévigné's correspondence with her married daughter also provided a behavioural paradigm that privileged the mother's influential role in her daughter's life. Furthermore, the serious pedagogical texts which they read together authorised a corresponding educational paradigm in the Sturges Bourne household and sanctioned a model of self-improvement for young gentlewomen which encouraged rational and intellectual thought. Mme de Genlis's educational treatise, *Adèle et Théodore ou lettres sur l'éducation* (1782), which took the form of an epistolary novel, also provided a model for female self-improvement, emphasising the importance of the mother and daughter relationship in the transmission of culturally orthodox texts.

This was not the only area of cultural importance diffused through Genlis's writing. Clarissa Campbell Orr claims that Mme de Genlis, Mme LePrince de Beaumont and Mme de la Fite, in their role as contemporary educators in the royal circles of Europe, endorsed rational religion in their advice literature, believing that philosophical free-thinking was 'damaging to women's interests'.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, they defended Christianity in the belief that religious discourse was important for women as it gave them 'a technology of selfhood' which enabled them to make value judgements about the behaviour of the men and women in their social circle.<sup>16</sup> This was particularly important for young gentlewomen as my discussion of the insular nature of their upbringing will show. According to Orr, Mme de Genlis, in particular, insisted that 'religion provided the only basis for morality', a foundation that Mrs Sturges Bourne also endorsed. This may have been one of the reasons why she clung on to Genlis's pedagogical model of *ancien*

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Sarah Josepha Hale, 'Mme de Sévigné and her Times', in *The Letters of Madame de Sévigné*, The Library of Standard Letters comprising Selections from the Correspondence of Eminent Men and Women, ed. by Mrs Sarah Josepha Hale (New York: Mason Brothers, 1856), I, xi-xvii (p. xi).

<sup>15</sup> Clarissa Campbell Orr, 'Aristocratic Feminism, the Learned Governess, and the Republic of Letters', in *Women, Gender and Enlightenment*, ed. by Barbara Taylor and Sarah Knott (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 306-25 (p. 307).

<sup>16</sup> Orr, 'Aristocratic Feminism', pp. 306-25 (p. 307).

*régime* France in preference to contemporary treatises such as the Edgeworths's *Practical Education* which discounted the need for religious instruction.<sup>17</sup>

Anne and Marianne's regular letter exchanges also provided the medium through which they could maintain something approaching conversation, yet this did not always provide a satisfactory alternative for speech. The conventions of polite letter writing and the expectation that a woman's familiar letter would appear natural and effortless brought its own complications. To write in the manner of Mme de Sévigné necessitated the construction of a witty and polished dialogue, which could often be misconstrued by the recipient. Roger Chartier also reminds us that familiar letters could not be considered as 'the place for intimate outpourings'.<sup>18</sup> Familiar letters could be added to by family or friends, read aloud to others, passed on, or even copied out.<sup>19</sup> As Roger Sales notes in his discussion of the Regency letters of Jane Austen, letter writing was 'a relatively private activity', but, at the same time, an 'extremely public one'.<sup>20</sup> He makes the point that Austen's familiar letters reflect the duality of this private/public dichotomy in as much as he can detect 'thematic and stylistic features' which subsequently make their appearance in her novels.<sup>21</sup>

The awareness that their letters might be shared with others was an ever-present reality for Anne and Marianne and impinged on their developing friendship in the 1820s. Cross and Bland suggest that since letters are 'acts of self-preservation' they need to be read with 'an awareness of what the writer wanted the recipient to find'.<sup>22</sup> Anne's letters, in particular, appear to be written with a wider audience in mind. Marianne, aware of the potential for duplicity in Anne's written discourse, wrote on one occasion of her longing for 'one moment of that real talk now'.<sup>23</sup> Marianne, in her plaintive longing for a *real* conversation with Anne, is recognising the artificial and constructed nature of her letters. By the same token, it is noticeable that Anne's letters of the 1830s become more inward-looking in terms of her topics of conversation, and less stylised than those written earlier. I attribute this change to the increasing intimacy of her friendship with Marianne in the 1830s and her desire to express herself on a more personal level. As Chartier has

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<sup>17</sup> Orr, 'Aristocratic Feminism', pp. 306-25 (p. 318); The preface to *Practical Education* states that the treatise is suitable for those of all religious and political persuasions, as, having 'no ambition to gain partisans or to make proselytes', the authors do not feel the need to put forward any views on these matters. Maria Edgeworth and Richard Edgeworth, 'Preface', in *Practical Education*, 1<sup>st</sup> American edn, 2 vols (New York: Self, Brown & Stansbury, 1801), I, i-vi (p. v).

<sup>18</sup> Roger Chartier, 'Introduction: An Ordinary Kind of Writing', in Roger Chartier, Alain Boureau and Cécile Dauphin, *Correspondence: Models of Letter-Writing from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, trans. by Christopher Woodall (Cambridge: Polity, 1997), pp. 1-23 (pp. 19-20).

<sup>19</sup> Chartier, 'Introduction', pp. 1-23 (p. 19-20).

<sup>20</sup> Roger Sales, *Jane Austen and Representations of Regency England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 54.

<sup>21</sup> Sales, p. 31.

<sup>22</sup> Cross and Bland, 'Gender Politics', pp. 3-14 (p. 7).

<sup>23</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/6 (12 March 1829). An edited transcription of this letter can be found in Appendix B.

observed, self-censorship and restraint could be lifted when the writer could count on the discretion of the addressee.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Chartier, 'Introduction', pp. 1-23 (p. 20).



## Part 1: Madame de Sévigné and the Polite Art of Letter Writing

I hope you will love Mme Sévigné as much as we do, or I will quarrel with you most grievously.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1.1: Constructing the model: patriarchy and the letters of Mme de Sévigné

Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, Mme de Sévigné, was a French aristocrat, and, as such, had access to the Court of Louis XIV at Versailles.<sup>2</sup> In the seventeenth century men of letters identified the elegant conversations of court women as ‘naïve and natural’ and therefore a more authentic representation of spoken French than that of men.<sup>3</sup> A contemporary of Mme de Sévigné, La Bruyère, pointed out that if women would always be correct in their grammar and spelling they could achieve that which is ‘best written in our language’.<sup>4</sup> La Bruyère praised the natural qualities of letters written by women in his canonical text, *Les Caractères* (1687).<sup>5</sup> However, as Michèle Longino Farrell points out in her analysis of Mme de Sévigné’s letters, La Bruyère’s praise is somewhat ambivalent and can be read in terms of a ‘gender-orientated opposition’ disguised in ‘familiar nature-versus-culture terms’.<sup>6</sup> In other words, men are writing from a culturally superior position due to their classical education, while women’s writing emanates from their natural ability to express sentiment. Farrell claims that the rise in letter-writing manuals in the seventeenth century, which included advice for women letter writers, not only shows that letter writing as a genre was becoming increasingly gendered, but also that, while male authors were guiding women in their expression, they were also subtly prescribing their behaviour.<sup>7</sup>

One such prescriptive text by Charles Du Boscq, while it grants women’s letters epistolary significance and applauds their literary quality, subtly erodes this praise by describing ‘eloquence, rhetoric, and wisdom’ — male attributes — as being ‘unseemly qualities’ in women’s letters.<sup>8</sup> The text also reinforces the standard commonplaces for women’s behaviour of the time as that of ‘affection, friendship, and faithfulness’, thereby limiting the scope of their writing ambitions.<sup>9</sup> It is

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<sup>1</sup> Anne’s letter to Marianne, HRO, 9M55/F2/15 (10 December 1824).

<sup>2</sup> Michèle Longino Farrell, *Performing Motherhood: The Sévigné Correspondence* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1991), p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (Ithaca, N.Y. & London: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 118.

<sup>4</sup> Jean de La Bruyère, ‘Des Ouvrages de l’esprit 37’, *Les Caractères ou les mœurs de ce siècle* (Paris: Editions Garnier Frères, 1962), p. 79; quoted in Farrell, p. 30. I have used Farrell’s translation from the French text.

<sup>5</sup> Farrell, pp. 29-30.

<sup>6</sup> Farrell, pp. 30-31.

<sup>7</sup> Farrell, pp. 27, 29, 39.

<sup>8</sup> Farrell, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

interesting to note that in his articulation of women's friendships as affectionate and faithful, Du Boscq is taking a very different stance to the sixteenth-century philosopher, Michel Montaigne. In her consideration of *De l'Amitié*, Montaigne's influential essay on friendship written in 1580, L. Bellee Jones makes the point that Montaigne rejected women as suitable candidates for the type of virtuous friendship men could enjoy because he believed that women did not have the necessary affection to maintain friendship through hard times.<sup>10</sup> Affection and faithfulness are two of the attributes which Marilyn Friedman believes can be realised in women's friendships when the participants take the time to nurture and maintain their amity through communication, shared activities and 'mutual positive self-affirmation'.<sup>11</sup> These are recognisable traits in Anne and Marianne's developing friendship as my subsequent discussions will show.

When it came to her own letters, Mme de Sévigné exhibited an awareness of the gendered context in which she was writing. In keeping with the style prescribed for women in the letter-writing manuals of the day — while denying that she ever consulted them — the Marquise disguised the artifice of the letter, making her dialogic, witty, and conversational style seem natural, (as opposed to learned), which was the quality most admired by men of letters in France at this time.<sup>12</sup> Farrell suggests that to read Sévigné's letters is 'to read the self and the life' that she invented for herself.<sup>13</sup> This was particularly true when it came to presenting an image of motherhood in her letters and necessitated drawing on language borrowed from men's discourses on maternity as the only model available to her.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the maternal role which Sévigné constructed in her letters reflected the interests of 'the prevailing patriarchal order'.<sup>15</sup> The fact that Mme de Sévigné had internalised the dominant social codes of the day, and successfully represented them back to the French 'philosophes' and men of letters who dictated entry into the literary canon, secured her a dominant place in the eighteenth-century canon of published letters.<sup>16</sup>

However, when it came to publishing Mme de Sévigné's letters the very qualities of naturalness that La Bruyère had originally praised, were suppressed by male editorial practices, or as Roger Dûchane, editor of a twentieth-century edition of Sévigné's *Correspondance*, puts it: the letters

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<sup>10</sup> L. Bellee Jones, 'Donne's Petrarchan Heart as Speculum Amicitiae', in *Friendship in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age*, pp. 707-26 (p. 717).

<sup>11</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *What Are Friends For? Feminist Perspectives on Personal Relationships and Moral Theory*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 209.

<sup>12</sup> Farrell, pp. 16-17.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.18.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 17.



ceased 'to be spoken confidence' and became instead 'written discourse'.<sup>17</sup> When the first official edition of Sévigné's letters was published in 1734-1737 by Denis-Marius Perrin, he made editing choices which Dûchane considered defaced the correspondence 'in the name of taste'.<sup>18</sup> In the nineteenth century new manuscripts of Mme de Sévigné's letters had emerged which illustrated the extent of the alterations made by Perrin in his eighteenth-century edition.<sup>19</sup> While Perrin did not misrepresent Sévigné's maternal 'expressions of feelings' he did, however, make corrections to the grammar, spelling and vocabulary.<sup>20</sup> In addition, clichés had been substituted for novel expression, and Perrin had shortened the letters to make them a more fashionable length.<sup>21</sup> Janet Altman refers to these editing choices as 'redressing' the correspondence in order to 'readdress' it to a contemporary readership.<sup>22</sup> Goodman argues that in redressing Sévigné's letters to conform to male standards of taste they became 'the basis of a mixed-gender epistolary model' in which 'the woman's stylistic voice was materialized in a written form imposed on it by men of letters'.<sup>23</sup>

Considered in the light of this discussion the published letters of Mme de Sévigné emerge as a male-sanctioned model which reinforces the seventeenth-century construct of women's femininity and women's prescribed role both within the family and society. At the same time the male seal of approval on Mme de Sévigné's correspondence also authorised women to write letters. Goodman points out that the pedagogues and men of letters, by presenting women with model letters, gave them the literary tools with which to write their own accomplished letters.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, while letter writing was seen as a way of containing women's literary ambitions, 'women burst open the seams of epistolary theory' and refashioned their letters to incorporate their own interests and engage in rational critical debate.<sup>25</sup> Goodman also believes that by choosing their own words and articulating them in their letters for the addressee to read, reflect on, and make their own considered response, the authority of the author is asserted; women did not challenge the gendered tropes of letter writing, they exploited them.<sup>26</sup> As I will show in Chapter 3 of this thesis, the practice of letter writing also empowered women to extend the boundaries of their writing and become writers of fiction. Before Anne and Marianne could

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<sup>17</sup> Farrell, p. 35; Sévigné, *Correspondance*, ed. by Roger Dûchene, 3 vols (Paris: Editions Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1972-1978), I, 799; quoted in Farrell, p. 35. I have used Farrell's translation from the French text.

<sup>18</sup> Farrell, p. 35.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Janet Gurkin Altman, 'The Letter Book as a Literary Institution 1539-1789: Towards a Cultural History of Published Correspondence in France', *French Studies*, 71, Men/Women of Letters (1986), 17-62 (p. 19).

<sup>23</sup> Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters*, p. 116.

<sup>24</sup> Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters*, p. 333.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

explore these latent possibilities they first had to become aware of their gendered identities and what it meant to be privileged women in early nineteenth-century England.

Anne's first reference to Mme de Sévigné appears about two years into her correspondence with Marianne in December 1824. She informs Marianne that she has been reading the letters of Mme de Sévigné with her mother 'for some years and [we] are never tired of her'.<sup>27</sup> Anne continues: 'I hope you will love Mme Sévigné as much as we do, or I will quarrel with you most grievously.'<sup>28</sup> It can be deduced from this remark that Marianne was not yet familiar with Sévigné's letters and it is possible that Mrs Sturges Bourne and Anne had been encouraging Marianne to read them to assist in developing her letter-writing skills. Anne's dominant voice is already being heard in this early letter exchange and it intensifies when it becomes apparent that Marianne does not share her regard for Mme de Sévigné:

Mamma and I are very angry with you about dear Mme de Sévigné; I had meant to send you a list of her merits but I have now not time and you must send me first your accusations.<sup>29</sup>

Frustratingly we do not have Marianne's response to this letter which culminates in a tirade of reproach from Anne:

We are shocked at your opinion of Mme de Sévigné, we think nobody more worthy of love, esteem and respect. I am sure her conduct during her short life was most exemplary; and you cannot but admire her devotedness and sacrifice to the interest of her children.<sup>30</sup>

In this early exchange over Mme de Sévigné's letters it is the Marquise's character which Anne is defending. However, Sévigné's strongly expressed love for her daughter in the letters was, by eighteenth-century standards, most unconventional.

Perrin, the editor of 1734-1737 editions of Mme de Sévigné's published correspondence, dealt with her passionate declarations by seeing them as part of her basic character: 'the noble, delicate, and varied expressions she uses to express her affections are no less a part of her than the affection itself.'<sup>31</sup> This may have been the aspect of Mme de Sévigné's character which was so admired by Anne and Mrs Sturges Bourne and possibly what Marianne saw, like the bluestocking,

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<sup>27</sup> HRO, 9M55/F2/15 (10 December 1824).

<sup>28</sup> F2/15.

<sup>29</sup> HRO, 9M55/F3/1 (8 January 1825).

<sup>30</sup> HRO, 9M55/F3/6 (23 May 1825).

<sup>31</sup> Altman is quoting from the preface of Perrin's 1734-37 edition of Mme de Sévigné's letters; 'The Letter Book', p. 55.

Elizabeth Carter, as ‘carried rather too far’.<sup>32</sup> Farrell describes it as Sévigné’s ‘inscribed performance of the maternal role’ which was addressed to ‘a generalized audience’ and intended for ‘general consumption’.<sup>33</sup> Mme de Sévigné frequented the salon of Mme de Scudery in Paris and it was commonplace for her manuscript letters to be copied and passed around amongst her friends and acquaintances.<sup>34</sup> Letters were regarded not just as purveyors of news and gossip, but appreciated for their artistic merits as well, and, as Farrell points out, Sévigné’s letters became famous in her own time.<sup>35</sup>

The suitability of Mme de Sévigné’s familiar letters as models for young people had been noted by Sévigné’s granddaughter. In her preface to Perrin’s editions of her grandmother’s correspondence Mme de Simiane remarked that the letters were ‘full of “judicious reasoning”’ which she saw as being very useful for educating those in their formative years.<sup>36</sup> After the French Revolution Sévigné’s correspondence was specifically marketed towards youth, appearing in a volume entitled ‘*Manuel épistolaire à l’usage de la jeunesse . . .* (Paris: Capelle et Renand, An II)’.<sup>37</sup> Throughout eighteenth-century France Sévigné’s letters were held up as a model for young women to emulate because they expressed the desirable qualities of natural femininity and sensibility.<sup>38</sup> In England in the mid-nineteenth-century Elizabeth Gaskell could express her surprise that she had met with ‘a supposed-to-be well-educated young lady who knew nothing about Madame de Sévigné, who had been to me like a well-known friend all my life’, a sentiment which is echoed by Anne and Mrs Sturges Bourne after Sévigné’s death.<sup>39</sup>

A perusal of the *Reading Experience Database* (RED) confirms that Sévigné’s letters were widely-read in middle- and upper-class circles in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As well as the female Bluestockings named in my introduction, other educated women include Elizabeth Wedgewood, Frances Burney, Sarah Harriet Burney, Mary Shelley, Lady Harriet Cavendish, Mary Berry and Lady Eleanor Butler, to name a few of the more recognisable readers. All of these

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<sup>32</sup> *A Series of Letters between Mrs. Elizabeth Carter and Miss Catherine Talbot, from the Year 1741 to 1770. To which are added Letters from Mrs Elizabeth Carter to Mrs Vesey, between the years 1763 to 1787; published from the original manuscripts in the possession of Rev Montagu Pennington*, 4 vols (London: F.C. and J. Rivington, 1809), I, 81.

<sup>33</sup> Farrell, p. 14.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Altman, ‘The Letter Book’, pp. 55, 57.

<sup>37</sup> Altman, p. 57.

<sup>38</sup> Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters*, p. 53.

<sup>39</sup> Elizabeth Gaskell writing to W. S. Williams in *The Letters of Mrs Gaskell*, ed. by J.A.V. Chapple and Arthur Pollard (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966; repr. Manchester: Mandolin, 1997), Letter 499 [?1862], p. 675; HRO, 9M55/F3/15 (20 October 1825).

women record a positive response to Mme de Sévigné's letters.<sup>40</sup> Elizabeth Barrett, on the other hand, did not admire the letters due to 'the rhapsody of the style' which she thought was 'so affected, so disgusting, so entirely FRENCH, that every time I open the book it is rather as a task than a pleasure', although she did think that the French was excellent.<sup>41</sup> However, it is not always clear from these readers' comments whether the letters were being read in French or in one of the numerous English translations which were published throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in England.<sup>42</sup>

Barrett's view, written sometime in 1818, is a reflection of a more general attitude towards the French during the early decades of the nineteenth century. The cultural historian, Gerald Newman, explains that towards the end of the Napoleonic Wars British periodicals expressed an almost 'obsessive concern' with French morality and 'repeatedly sharp antitheses were drawn between "English" and "French" traits'.<sup>43</sup> In England a woman was castigated for deviating from her sex's point of honour; whereas, in France, little or no consequence was attached to such violations.<sup>44</sup> According to Newman, the view generally held in the periodicals was that because the French 'act from feeling' and the English 'act from principle', 'they cannot feel as men, but only as Frenchmen'.<sup>45</sup> In the event, this attitude does not appear to have coloured Mrs Sturges Bourne's perception of the pedagogical worth of the seventeenth-century letters and memoirs of French aristocratic women. As well as reading the letters of Mme de Sévigné with Anne, Mrs Sturges Bourne also read with her the correspondence of Mme de Maintenon (1635–1719), the untitled queen of Louis XIV, and Mme de Motteville's *Memoirs sur Anne d'Autriche et sa Cour*, the mother of Louis XIV.<sup>46</sup> Effectively then, Anne's mother was presenting Anne with a woman's perspective on the French Court in one of France's major periods of artistic and architectural

<sup>40</sup> 'Sévigné', *Reading Experience Database 1450-1945*

<[http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/UK/search\\_basic\\_results.php?keyword=sevigne&page=2&page=3&page=4&page=1](http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/UK/search_basic_results.php?keyword=sevigne&page=2&page=3&page=4&page=1)> [accessed 21 February 2015].

<sup>41</sup> *The Brownings' Correspondence*, ed. by Philip Kelley and Ronald Hudson, I (Winfield: 1984)

<[http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/UK/record\\_details.php?id=15975](http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/UK/record_details.php?id=15975)> [accessed 3 November 2016], p. 66-67.

<sup>42</sup> Mme de Sévigné's translated letter collections appeared in England in 1764, 1768 and 1811, and the selections in 1727, 1800 and 1802. *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English*, ed. by Olive Classe, 2 vols (Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000), II, 1263-64. However, Alain Kerhervé in his list of English translations of Sévigné's letters includes additional dates and excludes others as follows: 1727, 1732, 1745, 1759-1765, 1768, 1798 and 1800. Alain Kerhervé, 'Introduction', in *The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer (1763)*, ed. by Alain Kerhervé (Newcastle on Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), pp. ix-xxxix (p. xxxiv).

<sup>43</sup> Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), p. 240.

<sup>44</sup> Newman, p. 240.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> HRO, 9M55/F2/15 (10 December 1824); 9M55/F3/1 (8 January 1825); 9M55/F4/12 (9 July 1828); 9M55/F4/16 (23 August 1826); Anne d'Autriche (1601-1666) was Louis XIII's queen consort and she initially acted as regent when her son Louis XIV came to the throne in 1661. 'Anne of Austria', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/26258/Anne-of-Austria>> [accessed 13 October 2016].

history. These texts may also have been orthodox histories passed on from mother to daughter in the traditions of the landed gentry.

### 1.1.2: Readdressing the letters of Mme de Sévigné

The first French volume of Sévigné's correspondence to be printed after her death in 1725 selected only the letters which contained narratives of major historical events from 1670–1676 and anchored them in the life of the court in keeping with the tradition of letter-book publishing.<sup>47</sup> An edition of 1726, published by Bussy-Rabutin's son, Amé-Nicolas, dealt with the familial content of the letters by contextualising them within the framework of a shared family history.<sup>48</sup> However, Perrin's edition of 1734–37 opened the way for a new kind of writing; one which was 'more intimately tied to personal and private history' and 'more independent of court and salon'.<sup>49</sup> In her consideration of French seventeenth and eighteenth-century published letter books, Altman claims that the posthumous publication of Sévigné's letters in France is historically linked to changes in the 'topography and politics of literary space between 1670 and 1770'.<sup>50</sup> This is a phenomenon which relates, more specifically, to the early eighteenth-century paradigm shift towards 'historical narrativity as a primary value'.<sup>51</sup> She also reminds us that the publisher's concern with the literary values of the letters, in his redressing and subsequent readdressing for a contemporary readership, cannot be separated from the social and cultural value systems of the time.<sup>52</sup>

One of the earliest English translations of Mme de Sévigné's letters, published by Edward Curll in 1727, offered his readership a more titillating experience than the two earliest French editions. Eve Tavor Bannet describes the fascination of an English eighteenth-century readership with published letters that were ostensibly 'private'; that is, 'hidden' or 'secret' and not intended for publication.<sup>53</sup> She points out that the title which Curll gave to the volume of Mme de Sévigné's correspondence enticingly reflected this interest.<sup>54</sup> *Court Secrets; or, the Lady's Chronicle Historical and Gallant, From the Year 1671, to 1690, Extracted from the Letters of Mme de Sévigné which have been suppressed at Paris* contains extracts from Sévigné's letters which recount the day to day gossip of the court in a monthly format, ostensibly for 1671, but some of the later months

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<sup>47</sup> *Lettres choisies de Madame la Marquise de Sévigné à Madame de Grignan sa fille. Qui contiennent beaucoup de particularitez de l'Histoire de Louis XIV* (1725). Altman, 'The Letter Book', pp. 54–55.

<sup>48</sup> Altman, 'The Letter Book', p. 49.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Altman, p. 52.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>53</sup> Eve Tavor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1680–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 250.

<sup>54</sup> Bannet, p. 250.

contain letters from subsequent years.<sup>55</sup> Curll's selective editing reflects his astuteness in publishing with the market-place in mind.

Interestingly, the Marquise's letters did not generally find their way into the eighteenth-century letter-writing manuals.<sup>56</sup> Konstantin Dierks, in his study of the familiar letter, is of the opinion that the aim of these letter writing manuals was 'to carve out a distinct cultural space for the middling sort' somewhere between polite society above them and the 'lower sort' beneath them.<sup>57</sup> With the rise of what Susan Whyman has called 'epistolary literacy', a growing number of women were teaching themselves to write letters, but the models being presented to them were not the celebrated letters of Mme de Sévigné and her contemporaries but home-grown models.<sup>58</sup> *The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer* (1763) was the first manual to be addressed specifically to women and it contained no letters by Mme de Sévigné.<sup>59</sup> The text was a compilation of epistolary examples taken from previously printed sources and it alleged a British style of letter writing, the adherents to which would outshine their female French counterparts in the epistolary graces.<sup>60</sup> Whyman claims that from the 1760s onwards the English public were moving away from French letter-writing models and concentrating on a gentrification of their own language and prose in 'an easy natural style of writing'.<sup>61</sup> Traditionally, the practice of letter writing formed part of aristocratic culture as it was considered to be an elite and literate art form which set them apart from the rest of society.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, as those further down the social hierarchy learnt to write letters maintaining the superiority of their own letter-writing practices became even more important to the ruling classes. As noted in my main introduction, French was still the language of polite society in the early nineteenth century; therefore, in choosing to read Mme de Sévigné's letters in French with her daughter, Mrs Sturges Bourne was effectively distancing herself and her family from the newly literate sections of society.

Although Anne never makes any direct reference to Mme de Sévigné's writing style in her own letters, her admiration for Sévigné's witty, conversational style of writing is apparent in her early correspondence to Marianne:

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<sup>55</sup> Curll, *Court Secrets* (London: 1727), pp. 39-41.

<sup>56</sup> The exception was John Newbery's *Letters on the most common, as well as the most important occasions in life* (1764) in which Mme de Sévigné was listed in the frontispiece as exemplary letter writer. Kerhervé, pp. ix-xxxix (p. xxxiv).

<sup>57</sup> Konstantin Dierks, 'The Familiar Letter and Social Refinement in America, 1750-1800', in *Letter writing as a social practice*, ed. by David Barton & Nigel Hall (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 2000), pp. 31-41 (p. 37).

<sup>58</sup> Whyman uses the term 'epistolary literacy' to explain a growth in popular literacy rates between 1660 and 1800. Susan E. Whyman, *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1660-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 9.

<sup>59</sup> The only female French letter writer included was the Marquise de Lambert (1647-1733) and her letters were chosen for 'her sense of propriety and her interest in education', Kerhervé, pp. ix-xxxix (p. xxxiii).

<sup>60</sup> Clare Brant, *Eighteenth-Century Letters and British Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 40.

<sup>61</sup> Whyman, p. 29.

<sup>62</sup> Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters*, p. 2.

I will answer for your loving Mme de Sévigné when you have gone further and her daughter is married and she writes to her. Have you come to the letter about Mademoiselle's marriage, it is so clever [?]<sup>63</sup>

Sévigné's correspondence with her married daughter, Françoise-Marguerite, comtesse de Grignan, began in February 1671, but Anne's comments on 'Mademoiselle's marriage' do not, in fact, refer to the wedding of Sévigné's daughter; instead, they refer to a letter written by Sévigné to her cousin, Philippe Emmanuel, marquis de Coulanges, on 15 December 1670 announcing the news that Anne-Marie-Louise d'Orléans, Louis XIV's first cousin who was known simply as 'Mademoiselle', was to marry Monsieur de Lazun.<sup>64</sup> This particular letter was possibly the most well-known of Sévigné's letters and Goodman discusses the fact that Manon Phlipon, who was later to become Mme Roland, imitated the style of this letter by way of a shared joke when writing to her correspondent Henriette Cannet in 1774.<sup>65</sup> In April 1827 Anne also writes to Marianne in a style reminiscent of Sévigné's famous letter and I will return to this later.<sup>66</sup> The above extract from Anne's letter does more than just highlight Anne's appreciation of Sévigné's intellectual abilities: it gives us a valuable insight into the way in which Anne and Marianne were adopting a methodological approach to their reading. Anne's choice of vocabulary in this passage, and also in an earlier letter when she requests Marianne to 'tell me where you are' in Sévigné's correspondence, demonstrates the importance that they place on reading the same text as a shared activity.<sup>67</sup> This practical way of reading can be observed throughout the correspondence and provides a basis for their discussions; however, in the context of their developing friendship, it also serves to strengthen the bond of amity between them. In this instance, Anne's extract implies that both she and Marianne are reading Sévigné's letters in the same edition; one which adopts a chronological sequence rather than an arrangement of the letters by individual correspondents.

In his account of the publishing history of Mme de Sévigné's letters, M. de Monmerqué, bibliographical contributor to *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné, de Sa Famille et de Ses Amis* (1818),

<sup>63</sup> HRO, 9M55/F2/16 (22 December 1824).

<sup>64</sup> Mme de Sévigné to M. de Coulanges, 15 decembre 1670, in Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, marquise de Sévigné, *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa Famille et de ses Amis, avec Portraits, Vues, et Facsimile*, ed. by J.J. Blaise, 10 vols (Paris: J.J. Blaise, Libraire de S.A.S. Madame La Duchesse D'Orleans Douairière, 1818), I, Hathitrust Digital Library <<http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89084487313;view=1up;seq=476>> [accessed 3 November 2016], 212-14; 'Anne-Marie-Louise d'Orléans, duchess de Montpensier', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/391065/Anne-Marie-Louise-dOrleans-duchess-de-Montpensier>> [accessed 3 November 2016].

<sup>65</sup> Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters*, p. 150.

<sup>66</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/13 (24 April 1827).

<sup>67</sup> HRO, 9M55/F2/15 (10 December 1824).

credits Philippe-Antoine Grouvelle with being the first to arrange a collection of Sévigné's letters in a chronological order. This is a configuration which J.J. Blaise, the editor of the 'nouvelle édition' of 1818, also adopts.<sup>68</sup> However, as Altman points out, in the earliest eighteenth-century editions of Sévigné's correspondence the chronological ordering of her letters was seen as an important aid in assisting the reader to make sense of the correspondence as a narrative.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, Monmerqué's claim for the chronological configuration of the Marquise's letters as a recent innovation was possibly a marketing ploy. As in Grouvelle's earlier 1806 edition<sup>70</sup>, Blaise begins his chronological sequence in 1647 with Sévigné's earliest correspondence to her cousin, comte de Bussy-Rabutin, and intersperses it with letters from other family members and friends up to 1671. From 1671 onwards Sévigné's letters to her daughter, Mme de Grignan, form the bulk of the correspondence, which is again peppered with letters to and from Bussy-Rabutin and her other correspondents up to her death in 1696. After this the editor includes the correspondence between the remaining family members, in particular, that of Mme de Grignan, Mme de Simiane, and M. and Mme de Coulanges.

In a letter of 3 August 1825, Anne comments on this last section, remarking that she is in agreement with Marianne in her opinion of Mme de Grignan and Pauline [Mme de Simiane]: an opinion unfortunately lost with Marianne's missing letters. Anne's subsequent aside in French strengthens the assumption that they were both reading the same edition of Sévigné's correspondence: 'vous savez que je ne le suis jamais sur le chapitre de sa grand mère' (you know that I have never been in this chapter about her [Pauline's] grandmother before).<sup>71</sup> It can be deduced from this comment that Anne and Marianne were either reading the letters chronologically as the editor intended, or, that this was the first time that their respective mothers had allowed them to read this part of the correspondence. In Mme de Genlis's educational treatise, *Adèle et Théodore*, her fictional Baroness, Mme d'Almane, did not give Sévigné's letters to her daughter to read until she was fifteen.<sup>72</sup> This was possibly due to the scandalous nature of the court gossip which Sévigné artfully hinted at in some of her letters.<sup>73</sup> Anne had been reading the Marquise's letters with her mother from a much younger age and it is feasible to assume that Mrs Sturges Bourne would have censored letters that she thought inappropriate for Anne to read.

<sup>68</sup> *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa Famille et de ses Amis* (1818), I, 5, 18.

<sup>69</sup> Altman, *The Letter Book*, pp. 52-53.

<sup>70</sup> *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné à sa Fille et à ses Amis: Nouvelle édition mise dans un meilleur ordre, enrichie d'éclaircissemens et de notes historiques, augm. de lettres, fragmens, notices sur Mme de Sévigné et sur ses amis, éloges et autres morceaux inédits ou peu connus, tant en prose qu'en vers*, ed. by Philippe-Antoine Grouvelle, 12 vols (Paris: Bossange, Masson et Besson, 1806).

<sup>71</sup> HRO, 9M55/ F3/10 (3 August 1825). Author's translation.

<sup>72</sup> Stéphanie-Félicité de Genlis, 'Course of Reading pursued by Adelaide, from the Age of six Years, to Twenty-two', in *Adelaide and Theodore, or Letters on Education*, ed. by Gillian Dow (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007), pp. 473-77 (p. 475).

<sup>73</sup> Farrell, pp. 112-13.



Blaise's new edition was advertised as 'le plus complet qui existe peut-être dans son genre'.<sup>74</sup> Its authenticity as the most up-to-date collection of Sévigné's correspondence is underpinned by Monmerqué's scholarly bibliography on all the previously published editions of Sévigné's letters.<sup>75</sup> Monmerqué points out in great detail the deviations previous editors have made from Perrin's original text and demonstrates how this edition rectifies them. In addition, an historical narrative of the life of Mme de Sévigné and her family by M. de Saint-Surin provides the context for the chronological arrangement of the family correspondence.<sup>76</sup> This 1818 edition also claims to have uncovered new unpublished letters in respect of Mme de Sévigné and other family members. The reader's attention is drawn to these by means of three asterisks against the relevant letters.<sup>77</sup> This system has proved very fortuitous as it has enabled me to make significant links with evidence found in Anne's letters which, as I will explain, enables me to state categorically that Blaise's new edition of 1818, or one of its later reprints, was the text that Anne and Marianne were both reading.<sup>78</sup>

Continuing her remonstrance over what Anne sees as Marianne's lack of appreciation for Mme de Sévigné and her letters, Anne writes in French in October 1825:

Hélas! ma chère, nous pleurons la mort de notre Sévigné, nous en sommes toutes tristes et eperdues, il nous semble d'avoir perdue une vrai amie. Vous avez le coeur bien dur si vous n'êtes point attendrie en lisant la belle et touchant letter de Mme de Grignan, acrite peu de temps après la mort subite de sa mère. Elle montre un coeur sensible et tender [ . . . ] La lettre suivante de Coulanges à Pauline.<sup>79</sup>

This letter was written during a period from August 1825 to January 1826 when Mrs Sturges Bourne was encouraging Anne and Marianne to use their letter exchanges as a means of improving their language skills by writing, variously, in French, Italian and German.<sup>80</sup> In this passage Anne is relating to Marianne how she and Mrs Sturges Bourne were brought to tears on reading of the death of Mme de Sévigné in a letter written by Mme de Grignan to M. de

<sup>74</sup> *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa Famille et de ses Amis* (1818), I, 5.

<sup>75</sup> 'Notice Bibliographique', in *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa Famille et de ses Amis* (1818), I, 13-48.

<sup>76</sup> 'Notice sur Mme de Sévigné, sur sa Famille et ses Amis', in *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa Famille et de ses Amis* (1818), I, 49-148.

<sup>77</sup> *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa Famille et de ses Amis* (1818), I, 7-8. The editing details given in the 'Observations' in volume 1 state: 'Les lettres qui n'ont jamais été imprimées sont indiquées par trois astérisques \*\*\*'. *Lettres*, p. 48.

<sup>78</sup> Further editions of this text were published in 1820, 1823 and well into the twentieth century. *WorldCat* <[https://www.worldcat.org/search?q=Lettres+de+Madame+de+Se%CC%81vigne%CC%81+de+sa+Famille+et+de+ses+Amis&qt=results\\_page](https://www.worldcat.org/search?q=Lettres+de+Madame+de+Se%CC%81vigne%CC%81+de+sa+Famille+et+de+ses+Amis&qt=results_page)> [accessed 3 November 2016].

<sup>79</sup> HRO, 9M55/F3/15 (20 October 1825).

<sup>80</sup> See Anne's letter of 29 June 1825, HRO, 9M55/F3/9. Anne and Marianne wrote in these foreign languages from 3 August 1825 until 10 January 1826. Sometimes they wrote in one or more of these languages for a whole letter, and, at other times, just in parts.

Pomponne on 15 July 1696.<sup>81</sup> It is apparent from these remarks that, like Gaskell, Anne and her mother also relate to Mme de Sévigné as a true friend and hearing of her death they feel sad and distraught. Anne charges Marianne with having a hard heart if she doesn't 'melt' when reading the beautiful and touching letter written by Sévigné's daughter which laments the loss of her mother. However, what is really significant in this passage is the information that Anne gives to Marianne to enable her to locate and read the letter for herself. Anne thinks that Mme de Grignan's letter follows M. de Coulanges's letter to Pauline, Mme de Simiane. In fact, in Blaise's 1818 edition, Anne is only one letter out as M. de Coulanges's letter is written on 7 June 1696 and it is Mme de Coulanges's letter, written on 8 June, which actually precedes Mme de Grignan's. However, this is a minor detail; the significant fact is that Mme de Grignan's letter has three stars by it, which, according to the editor, means that this letter had never been published before. Therefore, Anne and Marianne could not have read it in any previous edition of Sévigné's correspondence.<sup>82</sup> In the light of this evidence I will use Blaise's French edition when quoting from Sévigné's letters in the following section so that we, the readers, have access to the same text that Anne and Marianne were using.<sup>83</sup>

### 1.1.3: Imitating Sévigné: a display of polite letter-writing skills

La Bruyère had claimed that women's letters had 'the charm of novelty' and could render 'an entire feeling through one word'; furthermore, they 'express delicately a thought that is delicate' and 'have an inimitable mode of association, which follows naturally'.<sup>84</sup> The following passage from one of Sévigné's letters to Mme de Grignan illustrates this observation:

Je suis en fantaisie d'admirer l'honnêteté de ces messieurs les postillons, qui sont incessamment sur les chemins pour porter et reporter nos lettres; enfin, il n'y a jour dans la semaine où ils n'en portent quelqu'une à vous et à moi; il y en a toujours, et à toutes les heures, par la campagne: les honnêtes gens! Qu'ils sont obligeants! et que c'est une belle invention que la poste, et un bel effet de la Providence que la cupidité! J'ai quelquefois envie de leur écrire pour leur témoigner ma reconnaissance, et je crois que je

<sup>81</sup> *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa Famille et de ses Amis* (1818), x, 219.

<sup>82</sup> Mme de Grignan to M. de Pomponne, 17 July 1696, *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa Famille et de ses Amis* (1818), x, Hathitrust Digital library  
<<http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hwawx1;view=1up;seq=237>> [accessed 3 November 2016], p. 219.

<sup>83</sup> See Appendix D for the English translation. As there is no English translation of this particular edition I have used a mid-nineteenth-century translation of the relevant letters which conveys a sympathetic interpretation of the French. *The Letters of Madame de Sévigné*, The Library of Standard Letters comprising Selections from the Correspondence of Eminent Men and Women, ed. by Mrs Sarah Josepha Hale (New York: Mason Brothers, 1856), I.

<sup>84</sup> Jean de La Bruyère, 'Des Ouvrages de l'esprit 37', p. 79; quoted in Farrell, p. 30. I have used Farrell's translation from the French text.

l'aurois déjà fait, sans que je me souviens de ce chapitre de Pascal, et qu'ils ont peut-être envie de me remercier de ce j'écris, comme j'ai envie de les remercier de ce qu'ils portent mes lettres: voilà une belle digression.<sup>85</sup>

What immediately strikes the reader in Mme de Sévigné's letters is how similar the dialogue is to someone talking and the way in which Sévigné moves seamlessly from one thought to the next incorporating sentiment, wit, and even a literary reference to Pascal, which demonstrates to the reader her intellectual ability to relate her knowledge of classical texts to everyday matters in a witty and matter-of-fact way. The reference is possibly to Blaise Pascal's quotation from Tacitus: 'Kindness is welcome to the extent that it seems the debt can be paid back. When it goes too far gratitude turns to hatred.'<sup>86</sup> In her analysis of Mme de Sévigné's letters, Jo Ann Marie Recker makes the point that wit requires the manipulation of language and an ability to make 'apt, precise, comparisons producing a shocking combination of ideas that are seemingly unrelated to each other', which is exactly what Sévigné has done in this passage.<sup>87</sup>

Sévigné also had the ability to see the theatricality of a situation and this can be attributed to her stylistic affinity with the playwright Molière and his sense of the comic which she appreciated in his work.<sup>88</sup> Recker has described Sévigné's use of wit and irony as an intentional element of display designed to draw attention to her intellectual superiority.<sup>89</sup> This is demonstrated in the letter which Anne so much admired to Marianne in December 1824 when Sévigné wrote to Coulanges to announce the news of Mademoiselle's marriage. Sévigné writes:

Je m'en vais vous mander la chose la plus étonnante, la plus surprenante, la plus merveilleuse, la plus miraculeuse, la plus triomphante, la plus étourdissante, la plus inouïe, la plus singulière, la plus extraordinaire, la plus incroyable, la plus imprévue, la

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<sup>85</sup> Mme de Sévigné to Mme de Grignan, 12 July 1671, *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa Famille et de ses Amis*, (1818), II, 114; See Appendix D for an English translation of this and subsequent quotations from Madame de Sévigné's letters.

<sup>86</sup> Tacitus, *Annals*, IV, 18; quoted in Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. by A.J. Krailsheimer (1966) rev. edn (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 63; Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), was a French mathematician, physicist, religious philosopher, and prose writer. He promulgated a religious doctrine that 'taught the experience of God through the heart rather than through reason'. Lucien Jerphagnon and Jean Orcibal, 'Blaise Pascal', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/445406/Blaise-Pascal>> [accessed 3 November 2016].

<sup>87</sup> Jo Ann Marie Recker, *"Appelle-Moi Pierrot": Wit and Irony in the Lettres of Madame de Sévigné*, Purdue University Monographs in Romance Languages, 21 (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 1986), p. 3.

<sup>88</sup> Recker, pp. 1-2.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

plus grande, la plus petite, la plus rare, la plus commune, la plus éclatante, la plus secrete jusqu'à aujourd'hui.<sup>90</sup>

With her extraordinary use of repetition and superlatives in this passage, Sévigné is building up to the final dramatic climax — the sensational news that she wants to tell Coulanges — the revelation that 'la grande Mademoiselle [. . .] Mademoiselle, petite-fille de Henri IV [. . .] Mademoiselle, cousine-germaine du Roi; Mademoiselle, destinée au trône' is to be married to M. de Lazun.<sup>91</sup>

While nothing that Anne writes is as extreme or witty as the examples above, the following letter written to Marianne in April 1827 serves to show that Anne was attempting to display her own literary accomplishments by imitating Sévigné's witty, conversational style in her own writing. About to experience her first season in polite society she begins her letter by discussing the Sturges Bourne's imminent departure for London for 'the long season' and the problems of the wintry weather before moving on to a more consciously constructed dialogue in which she describes a young acquaintance, Lady Frances, who plays her guitar to them:

The guitar is come, and she sings to us every evening, the prettiest selection of things, Italian, German, Spanish, light and grave, and the voice is so sweet, and so flexible, and the words so clear and the face so smiley, and the figure so bending, and the whole thing so perfectly lovely that in short there is no going to bed.<sup>92</sup>

As in Mme de Sévigné's letter to Coulanges, Anne also uses dramatic description to produce a sense of theatricality. By repeating the word 'so' as she lists each of Lady Frances's female attributes Anne succeeds in, not only heightening the drama of the aristocratic lady's musical performance, but also the beauty of the lady herself. The fact that Lady Frances sings in Italian, German and Spanish demonstrates the importance that modern languages played in the education and accomplishment of gentlewomen in the early nineteenth century. Anne's letter continues:

I only hope Mr Dyson does not read these letters, or he will think me cracked, and I remember that you too, though you make a mighty fuss if I write realities, are very soon apt to think any fancy goes too far. So I will have done and try to write a rational letter in

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<sup>90</sup> Mme de Sévigné to M. de Coulanges, 15 December 1670, *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa Famille et de ses Amis* (1818), I, 212.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 214.

<sup>92</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/13 (24 April 1827).

the sobering air of London engagements to London people, common faces and crepée [crimped] heads.<sup>93</sup>

Being aware that Marianne is in the habit of showing her letters to her parents, and that Mr Dyson might read this one, Anne adds a witty disclaimer to the effect that her next letter will be a rational one. In an attempt to make light of the carefully constructed description of her aristocratic acquaintance Anne is acknowledging the display aspect of her letter-writing skills; she makes a distinction between the 'realities' she usually writes and the self-conscious theatricality of 'fancy' in her description of Lady Frances playing the guitar. Fancy is a word Anne often uses and here she is using it to describe her associative powers of memory as opposed to her creative imagination. This is a distinction made by Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria* (1817) and one which I will discuss more fully in Part 3.<sup>94</sup>

#### 1.1.4: Learning to write a 'beautiful' letter

Once Anne and Marianne were out in society their letters reveal that the gap in their social standing has become apparent to them both. Mr Sturges Bourne's position as an MP ensured that his family moved in exclusive circles in London during the parliamentary season and at private country houses during the remainder of the year. Marianne's insecurities come to the fore in a letter of May 1827 when she thanks Anne for writing 'in the old way'.<sup>95</sup> She finds Anne's letter

very charming and [it] made me think how little I expected a few years ago to be as happy when you came out, do not be angry, but I had all manner of uncomfortable ideas in that of which you write, dearest child as you are, oftener than ever.<sup>96</sup>

Marianne was aware that she was not Anne's social equal and it is possible that she thought that Anne would neglect their epistolary friendship once she became preoccupied with her new social life. In addition, Anne's tendency to dominate in their correspondence implies an underlying hierarchical structure to their relationship. This is confirmed by Anne's letter of February 1828 written to Marianne while their respective families were in London for the season. Anne informs Marianne:

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<sup>93</sup> F5/13.

<sup>94</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria: Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, ed. by James Engell and W. Jackson Bate, Bollingen Series: The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 75 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 304.

<sup>95</sup> HRO, 9M55/F35/4 (16 May 1827).

<sup>96</sup> F35/4.

I shall be quite ready to meet as often as you please, and I hope Mrs Dyson and Fanny [Frances, Marianne's half-sister] will be in walking humour, and you shall call for me every day, and you must come to me every evening that I send.<sup>97</sup>

At this point in time Anne and Marianne's friendship does not consist of the equality and mutuality that Friedman believes constitute two of the main ideals associated with women's friendships. She makes the point that hierarchy and domination in close friendship 'undermine the voluntariness of the relationship': that is to say, when these conditions are present in a mutually chosen friendship they 'override the consent of one or both parties'.<sup>98</sup> She suggests that for the voluntary nature of friendship to continue, there needs to be a 'measure of roughly equal and mutual adaptation' for those who are already friends, or in the process of becoming so.<sup>99</sup> This is an issue I will return to later in this chapter.

In order to tackle her dissatisfaction with Marianne's letter-writing style, Anne adopts a mentoring role towards her. In September 1827 Marianne had written two letters giving long descriptions of the games of charades she had been playing with her cousins.<sup>100</sup> After the first letter Anne tactfully asks for 'the delightful usual sort of letters with long talks in them just like bits of our conversation'.<sup>101</sup> Here Anne is alluding to the conversational aspect of the letter dialogue, but, by making a comparison with spoken dialogue, she is acknowledging the difference between the written and the spoken word. On receiving the second letter she justifies her first request by writing 'I only wanted a little more talking and now you will think me unreasonable'.<sup>102</sup> In Anne's eyes Marianne's letters were not conforming to the natural conversational style expected from a young woman in polite society; neither did they have the interesting content which was such a main feature in Mme de Sévigné's correspondence. Anne's encouragement continues over the succeeding months and in February 1829 she can write to Marianne:

A thousand thanks dearest for such a nice letter. You ask me what they should be, only take this for a pattern. I would send it back to you for the purpose only I cannot spare it. It was so full of Brightoncy and so refreshing and amusing and so satisfactory about Mary

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<sup>97</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/7 (28 February 1828).

<sup>98</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 211.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>100</sup> HRO, 9M55/F35/7 (September 1827); 9M55/F35/8 (6 September 1827).

<sup>101</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/30 (9 September 1827).

<sup>102</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/31 (16 September 1827).

[Mordaunt] and Miss Dalrymple sounds interesting and I should like to have the rest of the stories.<sup>103</sup>

At the point of writing the Sturges Bournes had just left Brighton to take up residence in London for the season, leaving the Dyson family to continue their stay in Brighton until early April.<sup>104</sup> Anne uses the term 'Brightoncy' to refer to the content of Marianne's letter which revives happy memories for her of the two months spent in the company of Marianne, and also with Mary Mordaunt, the daughter of Lady Mordaunt who was a relative on Anne's mother's side of the family.<sup>105</sup> As my subsequent chapters will show, Mary will become a significant third person in Anne and Marianne's epistolary friendship.

Marianne's letter now moves seamlessly over a considerably variety of topics ranging from the postal system, her health, who she has visited, what they discussed, a ball she is going to, what the weather is like, what she is reading, the fact that their maid's husband has died, some interesting historical facts about Walter Scott relayed by Miss Dalrymple, the foggy weather, and, finally, she asks Anne to pay three bills for Mrs Dyson in Regent Street.<sup>106</sup> Marianne also engages with humour when she offers the following description of the arrival of Lady Mordaunt's new cap, which was

so peculiarly becoming that I thought myself quite fortunate to arrive when it was tried on for the girls' opinions, the black lace trimmings and lilac ribbons with the black velvet gown were quite perfect.<sup>107</sup>

The everyday topics that Marianne is describing in this letter are all acceptable subjects for women to write about. Neither she nor Anne are engaging with abstract concepts or making any pretence towards the eloquence, rhetoric, or wisdom which du Boscq had assigned to the male realm of letter writing. This is one of Marianne's intermittent extant letters and it is worth remarking on the fact that Marianne displays a greater willingness to talk about feelings and emotions than Anne, as is shown by the fact that her letter recounts in great detail a conversation in which Mary revealed her hopes and fears for the future to Marianne.

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<sup>103</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/3 (18 February 1829); The Sturges Bourne and Dyson families both took houses in Brighton from December 1828 to January 1829: a fact confirmed by the absence of letters during this period.

<sup>104</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/9 (10 April 1829).

<sup>105</sup> On Anne's recommendation, the Dyson family had previously made the acquaintance of Lady Mordaunt when both she and the Dysons were staying in Brighton on an earlier occasion in December 1827. HRO, 9M55/F5/40 (13 December 1827).

<sup>106</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/2 (13 February 1829). This letter is transcribed in full in Appendix B.

<sup>107</sup> F36/2.

Marianne also feels confident enough to attempt her own witty description of a female acquaintance. In a slightly later letter of February 1829 she recalls her experience of hearing Miss Honeywood play her guitar:

I speculated upon her with her well made, peaked, becoming, blue gown, and pretty figure, and almost pretty face, and very pretty eyes, and animation, and thinking, seeming so exactly what one fancies at 17, just come out with all her accomplishments, and probably thinking it all so very pleasant.<sup>108</sup>

Marianne is using repetitive language and short broken phrases to dramatize her account in a way which is strongly reminiscent of Anne's choice of histrionic vocabulary in her description of Lady Frances playing the guitar. Both of these letters ultimately refer back to Mme de Sévigné's famous account of Mademoiselle's engagement.

Marianne's chatty conversational style of writing continues in her letters and in November 1829 Anne can write:

Now I am going to thank you for another very nice letter, you have got into such pleasant ways of writing [. . .] and I believe it raises Mamma's opinion of you exceedingly, she thinks you describe sermons so well, and it is a subject of our intercourse that she was not aware of.<sup>109</sup>

With this letter it is not just Anne who is pleased with what Marianne has written; Mrs Sturges Bourne has also read the letter and has registered her approval. This implies that Marianne has reached some sort of milestone in her letter writing that conforms to the high standard expected, not just by Anne, but by Mrs Sturges Bourne as well. The fact that Anne and Marianne are discussing sermons has also received her approbation. To have her daughter and Marianne exhibiting this degree of piety reflected well on her maternal role as moral educator and affirmed the suitability of Marianne as a correspondent for Anne. It can be noted here that, in her letter, Marianne is not only adhering to the codes and conventions of polite letter writing, but, by simply describing the contents of the sermons in her letter she is also showing her awareness of feminine propriety — engaging with theology was considered a male prerogative. However, at this point in time, Marianne had yet to achieve a 'beautiful' letter: this was the accolade that Mme de Sévigné sought in her own correspondence with her cousin Monsieur le comte Bussy-Rabutin.

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<sup>108</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/1 (6 February 1829).

<sup>109</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/29 (November 1829).



Farrell argues that Sévigné's ideas about what constituted a 'felicitous letter' coincided with La Bruyère's and she worked on achieving such a letter in her lengthy, albeit sporadic, correspondence with Bussy-Rabutin from 1646 until 1692.<sup>110</sup> She defers to his criticism of her letters not only as a man of letters and taste, but in her recognition of his position as the landowner and titled head of the noble lineage of Rabutin. As she is a widow, her cousin is also the male authority in Mme de Sévigné's life.<sup>111</sup> In a letter written to Bussy-Rabutin in the early days of their correspondence, Sévigné offers her own judgement that she has not yet achieved a 'beautiful' letter.<sup>112</sup> That tribute is later awarded to her by her cousin when he writes: 'In truth, nothing is more beautiful or more charming than your letter, for in it there are many comments of the greatest sense in the world, written the most agreeably.'<sup>113</sup> Bussy-Rabutin also cites wit, mood and good material as criteria necessary for achieving this model.<sup>114</sup> In a similar way in December 1829 an exultant Anne writes to Marianne:

Now I have to thank you for a delightful letter, what Mamma calls a beautiful letter – I never felt what letters were so entirely as now, and what a great deal they supply, filling up gaps in one's fancy.<sup>115</sup>

Mrs Sturges Bourne can be seen here echoing Bussy-Rabutin's appraisal of Mme de Sévigné's 'felicitous' letter. Unfortunately, the letter referred to is not extant, but it can be surmised from Anne's comments that Marianne has supplied enough detail about people, places, and events to enable Anne and her mother to use their associative powers of memory, implied by the word 'fancy', to visualise Marianne's encounters, and, thereby, to enjoy vicariously her experiences of them.

Farrell explains that, in the context of Sévigné and Bussy's correspondence, the cousins believed that the achievement of a 'beautiful' letter was dependent as much on their relationship as it was on their rhetoric.<sup>116</sup> The fact that their correspondence was based on mutual understanding and compatibility made it incumbent on the addressee to inspire the writer to compose with the 'moment of reception' in mind, and this could only be achieved by the affirming nature of praise.<sup>117</sup> In the examples quoted above I have traced this idea in action as Anne, in the context of her self-appointed mentoring role, relates to Marianne the pleasure that Marianne's

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<sup>110</sup> Farrell, pp. 34, 57.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 57-64.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>113</sup> Sévigné, *Correspondance* (Pléiade ed., 1972-78), I, L. 275, p. 515; quoted in Farrell, p. 64. I have used the English translation of Bussy-Rabutin's letter supplied by Farrell in the text.

<sup>114</sup> Farrell, p. 64.

<sup>115</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/34 (14 December 1829).

<sup>116</sup> Farrell, pp. 63-64.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

conversational letters have given her. In doing so, Anne is not only affirming Marianne as a competent letter writer, but, more importantly for their friendship, she is acknowledging Marianne's efforts to adapt to her social and personal need for a friend with whom she can correspond on equal terms. Marianne, on her part, is demonstrating her willingness to work towards mutual compatibility and understanding in her friendship with Anne. This discussion has presented a rather one-sided picture of Anne and Marianne's developing friendship; however, in Part 3 of this chapter I will show that Anne was also prepared to work towards these goals in her desire to be an important part of Marianne's life. Prior to that I want to explore some of the ways in which Anne's gendered subjectivity, and Marianne's by implication, was formed in relation to her parents and the role that paternal approval played in affirming correct feminine behaviour and moral values.

## Part 2: Reinforcing Gender Distinctions in the Country House

We must be very careful, not to inflame the minds of women, or raise them above themselves: they are born for a uniform and dependent situation, and ought to possess mildness, sensibility, and a just way of reasoning, and should have resources against idleness, with great moderation in their inclination and passions.<sup>1</sup>

There is nothing to be depended on but a constant practice of virtue.<sup>2</sup>

Mme de Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore*

### 1.2.1: The mirror of mother and daughter

As part of the codes of behaviour prescribed for women in the seventeenth century there was a prevalent notion that the mother, as a virtuous woman, should serve as 'an exemplary mirror to her daughter' and that the daughter should become a 'reflection of her mother's behaviour'.<sup>3</sup> As Farrell argues, the image of motherhood incorporated in Sévigné's letters can be seen as a maternal construct. Nevertheless, it is an expostulation of maternal love and solicitude for her daughter's well-being which demonstrates the Marquise's involvement in every aspect of Mme de Grignan's life and provides an exemplary model for her to imitate. This mirroring paradigm was still very much to the fore in the mores of the landed gentry in the early nineteenth century. Jessica Gerard points out that a mother's power 'lay in the example of her own pious and virtuous character, and in her gentle, loving influence and guidance'.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, in choosing Mme de Sévigné's letters for Anne to emulate, Mrs Sturges Bourne not only provided a model which would shape Anne's female perspective on letter writing, but she also presented her with a seventeenth-century example of the mother/daughter relationship. It is reasonable to assume that Mrs Sturges Bourne would have read Mme de Sévigné's correspondence as a model for her own letter-writing practices and that, in repeating this exercise with Anne, she was perpetuating the cultural orthodoxy of these letters within the traditions of the landed gentry. As Sarah Bilston points out in her assessment of maternal counsel in the mid-Victorian advice literature, this was a necessary

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<sup>1</sup> Stéphanie-Félicité de Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore, or Letters on Education*, ed. by Gillian Dow (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007), p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore*, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Michèle Longino Farrell, *Performing Motherhood: The Sévigné Correspondence* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1991), p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Jessica Gerard, *Country House Life: Family and Servants, 1815-1914* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (Ithaca, N.Y. & London: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 71.

step in ensuring that the codes of feminine propriety socially embedded in the mores of one generation were reproduced in the next.<sup>5</sup> Mothers were advised to read only orthodox texts with their daughters to ensure that they would become 'like their mothers through reading like them and thinking like them'.<sup>6</sup>

The orthodoxy of the texts Mme de Grignan was reading in 1671 is confirmed by Mme de Sévigné's observations to her daughter in the following letter:

The books you read are well chosen. Petrarch must certainly give you a good deal of pleasure, especially with the notes you have. Those of Mademoiselle de Scuderi on some of his sonnets, rendered them very agreeable. As for Tacitus, you know how much I was charmed with it, when we read it together here; and how often I used to interrupt you, to make you observe the periods, where I thought the harmony particularly striking. But if you stop half way I shall scold you; it will be doing great injustice to the dignity of the subject, and I shall say to you, as a certain prelate did to the queen mother, "This is history; you know what stories are already."<sup>7</sup>

In this passage Sévigné is emphasising the involvement with her daughter's reading practices which her maternal role allows her. Her tone is authoritative as she reminds Mme de Grignan of the instruction she gave to her regarding the correct way to read Tacitus when they were together; she also uses the mother/daughter relationship to assert her right to act in the same manner even though her daughter is married and living away from home. The writers mentioned in this excerpt testify to the intellectual quality of Mme de Grignan's education. Tacitus, a historian writing in the first century AD, was celebrated as being one of the greatest prose writers in the Latin language.<sup>8</sup> However, it can only be conjectured from this extract as to whether Mme de Grignan was reading Tacitus in the original Latin or in translation. Anne and Marianne's letters do not record them reading the works of Tacitus, but Anne's letters do describe their discussions of Petrarch's *Canzoniere* in some detail in 1825. This not only demonstrates a continuation in the

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<sup>5</sup> Sarah Bilston, "'It is Not What We Read, But How We Read': Maternal Counsel on Girls' Reading Practices in Mid-Victorian Literature', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 30. 1 (2008), 1-20 (p. 1).

<sup>6</sup> Bilston, pp. 1-20 (p. 1).

<sup>7</sup> Mme de Sévigné to Mme de Grignan, June 28, 1671, in *The Letters of Madame de Sévigné*, The Library of Standard Letters comprising Selections from the Correspondence of Eminent Men and Women, ed. by Mrs Sarah Josepha Hale (New York: Mason Brothers, 1856), I, 54-55.

<sup>8</sup> Publius Cornelius Tacitus (26-c.120 AD) recorded the history of the Roman Empire in the first century AD in his *Annals* and *Historiae*. Alexander Hugh MacDonald, 'Tacitus', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/579997/Tacitus>> [accessed 4 November 2016].

orthodoxy of this text as appropriate reading for female self-improvement, but also sanctions the same aspirations in succeeding generations of women who use Sévigné's letters as models.<sup>9</sup>

Mme de Genlis, in her educational treatise, *Adèle et Théodore*, also stresses the importance of keeping daughters close by their mothers so that they could converse with them on all subjects and monitor their reading practices and experiences.<sup>10</sup> The first indication that Anne and her mother were familiar with Genlis's pedagogical text is found in the following extract written by Anne to Marianne on 27 November 1825:

Nous commençons le 4<sup>e</sup> tome de Mme de Genlis, qui deviant fort agréable; je prends assez d'intérêt à l'aimable Adèle, mais la vanité de Mme de Genlis me fait mal au coeur.<sup>11</sup>

Although Anne speaks highly of *Adèle et Théodore*, it appears that she is unconvinced of Genlis's personal merits and thinks her too vain. In the light of Mrs Sturges Bourne's determination to improve Anne's language skills in 1825, Anne's remarks in French almost certainly reflect the fact that she was reading the treatise in this language.

The first English translation of Genlis's text appeared as *Adelaide and Theodore, or Letters on Education* in 1783, quickly followed by a new edition in 1784 and subsequent reprints in 1788 and 1796.<sup>12</sup> This demonstrates the great popularity of the work at a time when there was a growing desire in Britain to see improvements in education.<sup>13</sup> Clarissa Campbell Orr makes the point that, although the advice literature of Mme de Genlis and her fellow governesses was specifically addressed to aristocratic women, it was eagerly received by the gentry and middling orders as well.<sup>14</sup> Genlis's epistolary novel is an account of Adèle and Théodore's education by their parents, the Baron and the Baroness d'Almane, who retire to their country estate in Languedoc in order to educate their children in private and away from the distractions of the French Court. Both children are essentially under the Baroness's tutelage, but tutors are employed to assist in the

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<sup>9</sup> HRO, 9M55/F3/1 (8 January 1825) and HRO, 9M55/F3/2 (28 January 1825); Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374) was an Italian poet who revived an interest in Antiquity and greatly influenced Renaissance Humanist thought across Europe from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries. 'Petrarch', in *The National Gallery* <<http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/glossary/petrarch>> [accessed 4 November 2016].

<sup>10</sup> Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>11</sup> Author's translation: 'We begin the fourth volume of Mme de Genlis, which becomes most agreeable; I take enough interest in the likeable Adelaide, but the vanity of Mme de Genlis sickens me.' HRO, 9M55/F3/18 (27 November 1825).

<sup>12</sup> Gillian Dow, 'Introduction', in Stéphanie-Félicité de Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore, or Letters on Education*, ed. by Gillian Dow (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007), pp. ix-xx (p. ix).

<sup>13</sup> Gillian Dow, 'The British Reception of Madame de Genlis's Writings for Children: Plays and Tales of Instruction and Delight', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 29 (2006), 367-81 (p. 368).

<sup>14</sup> Clarissa Campbell Orr, 'Aristocratic Feminism, the Learned Governess, and the Republic of Letters', in *Women, Gender and Enlightenment*, ed. by Barbara Taylor and Sarah Knott (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 306-25 (p. 307).

learning of foreign languages and drawing. The Baron is also depicted as being involved with Theodore's education, to whom he will teach Latin at the age of twelve or thirteen.<sup>15</sup> Genlis includes an appendix at the end of the novel entitled in the English version, *Course of Reading pursued by ADELAIDE, from the Age of six Years, to Twenty-two*, and it is possible to correlate some of Anne and Marianne's reading experiences with those of Adèle.<sup>16</sup>

### 1.2.2: Perpetuating the orthodox texts of the landed gentry

In the first instance, Mme de Genlis stressed the importance of a good command of the 'living languages' to enable both young men and women to be able to read the works of poets such as Milton, Tasso and Ariosto.<sup>17</sup> For this reason her fictional Adèle learnt Italian and English as well as her own native language.<sup>18</sup> As previously discussed, Mrs Sturges Bourne had ensured that Anne could correspond with Marianne in French, Italian and German. Although Anne and Marianne's correspondence does not mention Milton, they did read Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1532) in Italian from 1822 onwards.<sup>19</sup> This text was a particular favourite with Anne and Marianne and they discuss it in some detail in their early correspondence. The two young women also appear to be familiar with Tasso's celebrated work, *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1581), as, in January 1828, Anne encourages Marianne to talk to their mutual friend Mary Mordaunt about it.<sup>20</sup> Other classic Italian works which Mme de Genlis deemed important for Adèle's education were the works of Petrarch and Dante, poets whose works were also read and discussed by Anne and Marianne.<sup>21</sup> Anne and her mother also learnt Spanish in order to read both Cervantes's *Don Quixote* and an unnamed work by Calderón, thereby demonstrating their commitment to reading texts in the original language.<sup>22</sup> In April 1826 Anne informs Marianne that 'Don Quixote goes on charmingly though not fast. Mamma is at this moment learning verbs which will do as well as my

<sup>15</sup> Dow, 'Introduction', in *Adelaide and Theodore*, pp. ix-xx (pp. xii, xiii); Genlis, 'Letter XVI: Baron d'Almane to the Viscount de Limours', *Adelaide and Theodore*, pp. 37-40.

<sup>16</sup> Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore*, pp. 473-77.

<sup>17</sup> Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore*, p. 39.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>19</sup> HRO, 9M55/F1/2 ((December 1822).

<sup>20</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/1 (7 January 1828); Torquato Tasso was a post-Tridentine Catholic and a classical humanist. His greatest work, *Gerusalemme liberata* (Jerusalem Liberated) was an epic poem set in 1099 which told of the storming of Jerusalem by the Crusaders interlaced with 'the delights of romance'. Anthony M. Esolen, 'Introduction', in Torquato Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*, ed. and trans. by Anthony M. Esolen (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 2000), pp. 1-6 (p. 1).

<sup>21</sup> Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore*, pp. 475-76; The first recorded reference to Petrarch is in Anne's letter to Marianne dated 4 November 1824 (HRO, 9M55/F2/13), and to Dante on 2 May 1823 (HRO, 9M55/F1/9).

<sup>22</sup> Calderón is first mentioned on 13 December 1825 (HRO, 9M55/F3/19) and Cervantes's *Don Quixote* on 16 December 1822 (HRO, 9M55/F1/3); Calderón was a dramatist and poet of the Golden Age of Spain. Alexander A. Parker, 'Pedro Calderón de la Barca, (1600-1681)', *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/89287/Pedro-Calderon-de-la-Barca>> [accessed 4 November 2016].

learning them, indeed I never find a difficulty.'<sup>23</sup> Her letters also record that she read Shakespeare. Mme de Genlis had included Shakespeare and *Don Quixote* in Adèle's reading programme: the former she read in English and the latter in a French translation.<sup>24</sup>

Familiarity with the language and culture of other European nations, then, was still considered part of a gentlewoman's cosmopolitan social identity in the early nineteenth century. The epic romance literature that Adèle, Anne and Marianne were reading, which described the chivalric codes and manners of feudal Europe, also endorsed moral values based on religion, virtue and chastity and these feminine ideals continued to fashion notions of womanhood at this point in time. The moral abstract values contained in these medieval and early modern texts would prove to be foundational for Anne and Marianne as they began to embrace a life of celibacy as women adherents of the Oxford Movement in the late 1830s. As Kate Flint in her consideration of the nineteenth-century 'woman reader' has observed, childhood and adolescence was the time when young female minds were considered to be most 'susceptible and suggestible'.<sup>25</sup> Flint also points out that opinion was divided amongst the educationalists about different types of reading and whether some could cause more damaging effects than others.<sup>26</sup> Women were also thought to be more impressionable than men and more preoccupied with romantic ideas; therefore, more easily corrupted by what they read and the main concern revolved around women as readers of the novel.<sup>27</sup> This was a concern shared by Mrs Sturges Bourne and it appears that the negative aspects of novel reading were so deeply embedded in Anne's psyche that in 1848, as a mature adult, Anne could write that she felt 'rather ashamed' at having ordered and read *Jane Eyre*.<sup>28</sup>

In their adolescent years, however, Anne and Marianne were both allowed to read the novels of Walter Scott. The fact that his work was based on historical realities and could be relied on not to contain anything improper for a young lady to read may have been the reason why it was deemed suitable for the two young women.<sup>29</sup> Another novel they were allowed to read was Samuel Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison*. Marianne appears to have been reading the work in 1822, but Anne was not allowed to read it until she was out in society at the age of eighteen or nineteen.<sup>30</sup> With respect to *Grandison*, Mme de Genlis's views are worth noting. Adèle's mother, the Baroness d'Almane, informs her correspondent that she objects to girls being allowed to read novels at their most impressionable age of sixteen or seventeen. Furthermore, she knows of 'only

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<sup>23</sup> HRO, 9M55/F4/4 (15 April 1826).

<sup>24</sup> Shakespeare is first mentioned in Anne's letter to Marianne of 16 June 1827 (HRO, 9M55/F5/22); Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore*, pp. 475-76.

<sup>25</sup> Kate Flint, *The Woman Reader 1837-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 10.

<sup>26</sup> Flint, p. 11.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 24.

<sup>28</sup> HRO, 9M55/F24/1 (7 January 1848).

<sup>29</sup> William St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 160, 220.

<sup>30</sup> HRO, 9M55/F1/2 (December 1822); HRO, 9M55/F6/4 [1828].

three novels which have any morality in them; *Clarissa*, which is the best, *Grandison* and *Pamela*'.<sup>31</sup> For this reason, the Baroness continues, 'my daughter shall read them in English, when she comes to be eighteen'.<sup>32</sup> This very definite advice might have influenced Mrs Sturges Bourne's decision not to allow Anne to read *Sir Charles Grandison* until she was a young adult, a situation which Anne accepted reluctantly. Anne mentions the novel in one of her earliest letters to Marianne written in December 1822: 'I beg you will not talk to me of Sir Charles Grandison, as Mama has no idea of letting me read it for a long time.'<sup>33</sup> However, the upper-class cultural mores inherent in *Sir Charles Grandison*, together with the novel's affirmation of English religious and national identity, may have been why Mrs Dyson considered it appropriate reading for Marianne at an earlier stage in her life.

Anne and Marianne's education also included the traditional feminine accomplishments of drawing, music, singing and dancing together with self-improving subjects such as history, geography, natural sciences, English literature and mathematics: all of which topics, apart from mathematics, are included in Adèle's reading list and confirmed by Gerard as being suitable subjects for young gentlewomen to learn in the early nineteenth century.<sup>34</sup> Orr points out that Mme de Genlis's advice literature also taught her pupils to respect scientific knowledge, which she saw as the antidote to ignorance and superstition.<sup>35</sup> Anne read scientific treatises as well as attending lectures on geology and chemistry at the Royal Institution in London, which she describes to Marianne in her letters.<sup>36</sup> Marianne shares her interests to some extent and they discuss colour theories in the spring of 1824, but she does not share Anne's enthusiasm for reading the treatises.<sup>37</sup> In a letter of December 1827 Anne records that Mary, the daughter of Lady Mordaunt, is also reading scientific treatises, an event which shows that engagement with such rational pursuits was acceptable within the Sturges Bournes's social circle.<sup>38</sup>

As we have seen, the broad education Anne received from her mother was both sanctioned and encouraged by the pedagogical models of Mme de Sévigné and Mme de Genlis. Furthermore, Genlis's underlying emphasis on rational religion in her treatise provided Anne with a paradigm which confirmed the place of religion and religious discourse as an essential component of her womanhood. As well as reading and discussing sermons with Marianne, Anne also liked to attend

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<sup>31</sup> Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore*, p. 114.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> HRO, 9M55/F1/2 (December 1822).

<sup>34</sup> Gerard, p. 50.

<sup>35</sup> Orr, 'Aristocratic Feminism', pp. 306-25 (p. 318).

<sup>36</sup> Letters which record Anne attending scientific lectures or reading scientific treatises are HRO, 9M55/F/1/5 (20 March 1823); 9M55F1/6 (3-4 April 1823); 9M55F1/7 (19 April 1823); 9M55/F5/39 (4 December 1827); 9M55/F7/2 (12 February 1829).

<sup>37</sup> HRO, 9M55/F/2/2 (7 April 1824); 9M55/F/2/3 (17 April 1824).

<sup>38</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/40 (13 December 1827).



the Bishop of London's lectures while she was in London during the parliamentary season.<sup>39</sup> As Orr has claimed, religious discourse provided women with a moral standard against which they could evaluate the values and behaviour of those they came into contact with. To what extent Marianne was influenced by these educational models is less easy to determine, and, as I will discuss in Part 3 of this chapter, an upbringing influenced by the revealed religion of the Bible rather than the more rational forms of natural theology prevalent at this time, formed the moral criteria by which Marianne judged some of the literary texts she was reading.

### 1.2.3: Eliciting paternal approval

While it was Mrs Sturges Bourne who ensured that Anne became proficient in modern European languages and read English literature, Italian classics, and French aristocratic women's histories with her, Mr Sturges Bourne also had a role to play in Anne's education. Anne's father read male-authored factual accounts of history to his wife and daughter in the evenings and as an activity when extended family or friends were present.<sup>40</sup> On one occasion Anne writes that 'Papa is reading us partly Gibbon in the evening', and on another, 'Clarendon is almost done, thanks to Papa's indefatigable voice'.<sup>41</sup> Mr Sturges Bourne was also involved in teaching Anne mathematics, and, in a letter of December 1824, she records that she is 'doing some Euclid with Papa'.<sup>42</sup> In these instances gender differences are reinforced by the sex of the reader and gender-appropriate reading material. It is also worth noting here that, while Mrs Sturges Bourne read with Anne in private, Mr Sturges Bourne's reading activities had a more public face, even in the domestic environment. However, as Gerard notes, while the landowner was content to delegate 'child-rearing' to wives and other trusted teachers, he used his 'exalted position' to fashion his children's 'system of values'.<sup>43</sup> From an early age sons and daughters learnt their father's 'firmly held principles and high expectations' and developed a reluctance to do or say anything which they believed would not please him or that he would not approve of.<sup>44</sup>

As well as contributing to Anne's education Mr Sturges Bourne was also involved with maintaining Anne's correspondence with Marianne. In his capacity as an MP Mr Sturges Bourne was entitled to frank and receive letters free of charge and so it was he who provided the means by which

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<sup>39</sup> See HRO, 9M55/F10/3 (n.d.). From its contents, this letter is correctly archived in 1832 and was written in March or April of that year. See also 9M55/F11/9 (March 1833)

<sup>40</sup> HRO, 9M55/F3/16 (3 November 1825).

<sup>41</sup> Edward Gibbon's *Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-1788), HRO, 9M55/F2/16 (22 December 1824); The Earl of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* (1702), 9M55/F4/1 (10 January 1826).

<sup>42</sup> HRO, 9M55/F2/16 (22 December 1824).

<sup>43</sup> Gerard, p. 71.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

their letters were sent and received.<sup>45</sup> In April 1827 Anne explains to Marianne that her reliance on her father to frank her letters governs the regularity of her replies.<sup>46</sup> However, being dependent on Mr Sturges Bourne for sending Anne's letters did, occasionally, cause Marianne some frustrations and in October of 1829, anxious for news from Anne, she sends the instruction: 'pray write without a frank.'<sup>47</sup> Susan Whyman points out that as postal services expanded, people of all ranks structured their daily routines around those of the Royal Mail.<sup>48</sup> This was certainly the case in the Sturges Bourne household. With the arrival of the post something of a daily ritual took place. This was the time when letters were opened, read, and discussed.<sup>49</sup> While there is nothing in Anne's letters to suggest that her father ever read her correspondence, it was at times like this that she occasionally expressed a feeling of awkwardness with Marianne's lack of content in her letters.

In September 1827 Anne explains to Marianne that she just wants something 'letter sounding to read to Papa when he says, well what is there in that long letter from Petworth, what do you talk about?'<sup>50</sup> What Anne actually meant was that there was nothing 'approaching news' in Marianne's letters that she could read out to her father.<sup>51</sup> On another occasion Anne writes:

I believe that he [Papa] rather wonders that I can read him so little out of the said Gazette [Mr Sturges Bourne calls Marianne's letters "The Brighton Gazette"], and that you never vouchsafe a word about the weather, which you know is a matter of interest to him.<sup>52</sup>

From this exchange it becomes apparent that Mr Sturges Bourne expected to hear news about the Dyson family, events, or even just the weather from Marianne's letters. After reproaching Marianne for her lack of news Anne adds a disclaimer in her text: 'I do not like though to suggest alterations and you know for myself it would be all the other way'.<sup>53</sup> The meaning of this last comment is unclear, and, although it could be construed as affectation on Anne's part — concerned as she was to raise the standard of Marianne's letters to something approaching Mme

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<sup>45</sup> As a Member of Parliament Mr Sturges Bourne was entitled to a free frank to send letters up to a maximum of 10 a day and at the same time to receive up to 15 free letters a day. This meant that Anne and Marianne generally did not have to consider the financial implications of writing to each other, but only the weight of the letter which was restricted to 1oz. 'The House of Commons, Post Office Factsheet G20 General Series' (revised September 2010) <<http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-information-office/G20.pdf>> [accessed 4 November 2016], p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/10 (4 April 1827).

<sup>47</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/14 (31 October 1829).

<sup>48</sup> Susan Whyman, *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1660-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 58-59.

<sup>49</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/2 (12 February 1829).

<sup>50</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/31 (16 Sept 1827).

<sup>51</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/5 (6 March 1827).

<sup>52</sup> HRO, 9M55/F8/3 (21 January 1830). This letter was written while the Dysons were over-wintering in Brighton.

<sup>53</sup> F8/3.

de Sévigné's genteel seventeenth-century model — I believe that, on this occasion, Anne's motive for complaining about the lack of news in Marianne's letters has more to do with pleasing her father than herself. This deeply embedded notion of duty towards the male authority figure is hard to shake off in adulthood. Anne's un-willingness to displease her father in small matters is reflected in issues of greater import in the late 1830s as she conceals her commitment to the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the Oxford Movement from Mr Sturges Bourne to avoid his displeasure.

#### 1.2.4: Women and the ambiguity of politics

Another area in which Anne outwardly deferred to her father was in his aversion to discussing politics with her. In his study of the roles played by aristocratic women in the early nineteenth-century political realm, Peter Mandler identifies the new 'norms of the self-governing, rational individual' as a liberal political subjectivity in which, he claims, both upper- and middle-class women participated.<sup>54</sup> Citing evangelicalism, education, and philanthropy as the motivating criteria which united them, Mandler argues for a wider understanding of the role played by aristocratic women in redefining the public sphere.<sup>55</sup> In this context, Anne's endeavours to keep herself aware of current affairs mark her out as a modern intellectual woman. However, her attempts to engage her father in political conversation are met with frustration. Anne's letters from the late 1820s and early 1830s relate how she is often in the room when Mr Sturges Bourne is discussing politics with male relations or colleagues. In a letter of February 1827 she confesses to Marianne that she usually listens in so that she can form her own opinions.<sup>56</sup> This was still the case in March 1831 when Anne wrote to Marianne informing her that 'Papa refers to the [Reform] bill and the papers: indeed I never learn anything from him but by hearing him talk to some other wise body'.<sup>57</sup> A year later when the passage of the Reform Bill has reached a critical stand-off in Parliament, Anne offers Marianne her own opinion on what she has heard discussed:

I listened to Lord Harrowby and Papa till I understand rather better about that fatal Monday's division, but whatever was meant the effect has surely been to show the power

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<sup>54</sup> Peter Mandler, 'From Almack's to Willis's: Aristocratic Women and Politics, 1815-1867', in *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics 1750 to the Present*, ed. by Amanda Vickery (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 152-67 (p. 153).

<sup>55</sup> Mandler, 'From Almack's to Willis's', pp. 152-67 (p. 153).

<sup>56</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/4 (26 February 1827).

<sup>57</sup> Anne's comments refer to the Reform Bill which became the Reform Act in 1832. HRO, 9M55/F9/1 (1 March 1831).

of the mob, tho' 1.3.2 odium on the king and queen, and give Lord Grey a complete dictatorship.<sup>58</sup>

Anne has shown herself to be an astute observer of the political climate in these remarks; nevertheless, she was essentially eavesdropping on matters which were not supposed to concern her. On the other hand, when Mr Sturges Bourne discussed political matters with his parliamentary colleagues within the home he was effectively bringing the public political sphere into the domestic environment: a circumstance which challenges the late twentieth-century view of separate spheres for men and women and adds weight to recent histories of masculinity that locate male political life in a 'broader domestic, private hinterland'.<sup>59</sup>

In her discussion of the academic convergence between gender history and political history in recent years, Amanda Vickery endorses the notion that if politics 'could suffuse the supposedly private world of home, family and relationships between men and women' then 'personal issues of sexuality and sexual difference' could inform politics.<sup>60</sup> Mandler concurs with this idea suggesting that in an age when politics were often conducted in private, women were presented with opportunities to influence public life.<sup>61</sup> This does not appear to have been the case in the Sturges Bourne household, though, and there is no evidence in Anne's letters to suggest that Mr Sturges Bourne ever discussed politics with his wife, or that Mrs Sturges Bourne had an interest in politics. Nevertheless, the fact that Anne's father allowed her to listen to important, sometimes ministerial political conversations represents something of a public/private ambiguity. It is possible that Anne's father may not have been aware that she was listening, that he was careless, or that he had no objection to her knowing what was being discussed. If latter case, his acceptance of her presence might suggest that he did not mind her knowing about current political affairs, but, in the interests of feminine propriety, he could not allow her to take this interest any further. Mr Sturges Bourne, therefore, resisted Anne's attempts to draw him into political discourse, as is shown by her letter to Marianne written in January 1833:

I make remarks upon the address of Ministers supporting a Tory speaker against their Whig friend, but I get no answer, so I suppose it is silly, and as he [Papa] has told me nothing, I can tell Mr Dyson nothing.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> HRO, 9M55/F10/6 (29 March 1832).

<sup>59</sup> Amanda Vickery, 'Introduction', in *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics 1750 to the Present*, ed. by Amanda Vickery (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 1-56, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> Vickery, 'Introduction', in *Women, Privilege, and Power*, pp. 1-56, (pp. 3-4).

<sup>61</sup> Mandler, 'From Almack's to Willis's', pp. 152-67 (p. 155).

<sup>62</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/4 (29 January 1833).

Possibly due to his former position as assistant clerk in the House of Commons, Mr Dyson liked to receive political titbits through Anne's correspondence with Marianne. It is interesting to note in the context of this discussion that Mr Dyson does not have a problem with Anne discussing politics and I will come back to this.

However, Mr Sturges Bourne's reluctance to engage with Anne in any sort of political dialogue can be explained: firstly, within the context of what Mandler refers to as 'the very masculinised culture of political virtue'; secondly, in terms of the conservative reaction to women's assertiveness in the wake of the French Revolution; and thirdly as being due to the increasing influence of Evangelicalism and the belief that a woman's role was primarily that of a wife and mother.<sup>63</sup> The desire to present the British ruling aristocracy as the antithesis of the feminised French court of pre-revolutionary France manifested itself at the turn of the nineteenth century in a strongly masculine culture which was based on male comradeship.<sup>64</sup> Men's shared experience of a classical education together with the 'male arts of the public meeting and public oratory' found their greatest expression in the 'tight' fraternities of the House of Commons and the House of Lords.<sup>65</sup> It was also a culture which took a dim view of women engaging with politics. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Baron W. H. Lyttleton wrote to his wife Sarah on 7 October, 1819 that '[I]t is a very good habitual state of mind for a woman not to concern herself at all about politics' and Lord Holland thought that ladies who meddled with politics created mischief.<sup>66</sup> Mr Sturges Bourne's close friendship with George Canning, who persuaded Sturges Bourne to take the office of Home Secretary in his Conservative government in April 1827, may also have had a bearing on his attitude towards Anne and politics. Canning believed that

a woman has no business at all with politicks, or that if she thinks at all about them, it should at least be in a feminine manner, as wishing for the peace and prosperity of her country – and for the success and credit of those of her family (if she has any) who are engaged in the practical part of politicks.<sup>67</sup>

I would suggest, then, that Mr Sturges Bourne did not discuss politics with Anne because, as her father, he felt responsible for containing her interest in politics within the male-constructed boundaries of feminine propriety.

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<sup>63</sup> Mandler, 'From Almack's to Willis's', pp. 152-67 (p. 157); Vickery, 'Introduction', in *Women, Privilege and Power*, pp. 1-56 (p. 14).

<sup>64</sup> Mandler, 'From Almack's to Willis's', pp. 152-67 (p. 157).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Correspondence of Sarah Spencer, Lady Littleton, 1787-1870*, ed. by Hon. Mrs Hugh Wyndham (London: John Murray, 1912), p. 207; Mandler, 'From Almack's to Willis's', pp. 152-67 (p. 159).

<sup>67</sup> 'The Letter-Journal of George Canning, 1793-1795', *Camden Fourth Series*, 41, ed. by P. Jupp (1991), 23-293, (p. 284).

Not everyone in the Sturges Bournes's social circle agreed with this state of affairs. There is evidence in one of Marianne's letters to show that an active interest in politics was not just an acceptable occupation for a gentlewoman in the early nineteenth century, it was a desirable one. As previously discussed, Marianne had spent an evening in Brighton in the company of Lady Mordaunt and her daughter Mary in March 1829. Writing about the events of the evening a disconcerted Marianne relays the following to Anne:

I wish you had heard Lady Mordaunt's burst this night on not taking interest in politics, it grew so personal that Mary said I looked conscious, and I was obliged to answer it personally at last, and then she softened and smiled as usual, it began by her reading me your letter.<sup>68</sup>

As can be gathered from this incident Marianne did not share Anne's interest in political matters, but it seems that Lady Mordaunt thought that it was of primary importance for educated women to take an interest in current affairs. Although it is not clear whether Anne had written separately to Lady Mordaunt, or whether it is Anne's letter to Marianne that was read out, the letter obviously contained something of a political nature.

Marianne, in fact, was concerned that Anne took too much interest in this subject. Discussing politics in an earlier letter of 12 March 1829 Marianne had written:

I think it is too serious for ladylike warmth which is innocent on less important matters, and perhaps a touch of my passive obedience makes me willing to be quietly governed, without much thought of my own. I understand perfectly the reasonableness of your thinking and knowing more, and your head suits it, and takes it in clearly, only I would not have you being warm either, or condemning other people, for really with the best intentions people may think both ways, and it is not a thing to cry out and sound about like a matter of taste.<sup>69</sup>

This appears to be Marianne's own assessment or one learned from her mother because, as previously noted, Mr Dyson liked to receive political snippets of information from Anne. It can be deduced from this exposition that Marianne's view of women and politics concurs with the patriarchal model articulated by Mr Canning, and, in this instance, demonstrates her complicity with gendered codes of propriety for women with respect to politics. As Mandler suggests,

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<sup>68</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/7 (21 March 1829).

<sup>69</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/6 (12 March 1829).

'beneath the surface of familial solidarity' men and women still held conflicting views about the public role of women.<sup>70</sup>

While Anne outwardly acquiesced to her father's wishes it did not prevent her from following her own interest in politics and she continues to form her own opinions on current affairs from whatever sources she can find, one of these being the newspapers:

I try to inform myself having always found such common knowledge a thing spurned in society, and Papa would take it for granted, and think it stupid to despise it, but I suppose he never advised me to read papers in his life.<sup>71</sup>

In this extract Anne is lamenting the fact that political matters are not widely discussed in polite society. This is a situation which her father not only appears to approve of, but reinforces by not encouraging his daughter to read newspapers. In her hypothesis on relational autonomy Friedman states that, for a woman, the attainment of any degree of autonomy involves 'reflecting on one's deeper wants, values, and commitments, re-affirming them, and behaving and living in accordance with them even in the face of at least minimal resistance from others'.<sup>72</sup> In this instance Anne's decision to pursue her own interests in the face of active discouragement from her father constitutes a degree of personal autonomy in her life. In the final part of this chapter I will continue to explore ways in which Anne and Marianne's epistolary friendship not only enabled them to develop a sense of their own identity as gentlewomen, but also to develop a language of literary criticism through which to articulate their own viewpoints on secular and religious literature.

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<sup>70</sup> Mandler, 'From Almack's to Willis's', pp. 152-67 (p. 156).

<sup>71</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/14 (16 August 1834).

<sup>72</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 99.





## Part 3: Finding a Voice of their Own

If kinship is a form of ascribed status, then friendship is a kind of achievement. Those who would be friends must exert themselves actively to sustain their relationship.<sup>1</sup>

Marilyn Friedman, *What are Friends for?*

### 1.3.1: Intersubjectivity and the importance of the regular letter exchange

In her consideration of Mme de Sévigné's correspondence, Michèle Farrell discusses the prevalent seventeenth-century notion that the familiar letter could function as a substitute for face-to-face conversation.<sup>2</sup> However, for the letter to function in this manner a certain letter-writing etiquette had to be adhered to, which Mme de Sévigné and her cousin, Bussy-Rabutin, realised in their correspondence.<sup>3</sup> Each appreciated the need to maintain the correct rhythm of the letter exchange by taking turns in writing and by ensuring that the interval between letters was short enough to allow for the train of thought in the dialogue to be continued.<sup>4</sup> The benefit of this model of correspondence was that the writer and recipient could enjoy a form of written conversation which helped to compensate for the lack of physical presence.<sup>5</sup> Anne and Marianne adopted this 'conversational model' of letter writing by adhering to a regular weekly letter exchange, although this was sometimes thwarted by the workings of the postal system. In February 1829 Anne complains that 'the crossing of our letters is something dreadful, we have never answered a question that is, never talked, since we parted'.<sup>6</sup> It is apparent from these comments that Anne regards the conversational aspects of their written dialogue as a substitute for physical presence. Dena Goodman adds yet another dimension to the practice of letter writing with her claim that 'as a conversation in writing, correspondence is dialogue with reflection', a process which she believes enables the construction of the self intersubjectively.<sup>7</sup> Anne and Marianne's regular letter exchange, therefore, was not only crucial for the maintenance of their friendship, but also for the development of an individual sense of self.

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<sup>1</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *What Are Friends For? Feminist Perspectives on Personal Relationships and Moral Theory*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> Michèle Longino Farrell, *Performing Motherhood: The Sévigné Correspondence* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1991), p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> Farrell, p. 72.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/3 (18 February 1829).

<sup>7</sup> Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (Ithaca, N.Y. & London: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 3; Dena Goodman, 'Letter Writing and the Emergence of a Gendered Subjectivity' in *Eighteenth-Century France*, *Journal of Women's History*, 17.2 (2005), 9-37 (p. 12).

Marianne also recognised the benefit of a regular correspondence with Anne. Early in May 1827, after Anne had moved with her family to London for her first season in polite society, Marianne wrote that she hoped to receive a letter from Anne by Wednesday in order to restart their regular letter exchanges.<sup>8</sup> Marianne's letter is one of a flurry which occurred around the time of Anne's *coming out* into society and these letters, in particular, demonstrate how the letter text aids the development of a gendered subjectivity. The first letter I want to consider from this period is Anne's letter to Marianne written in late April or early May of 1827:

And you will please to remember that you have always time and that the keeping up my fancy of chivalry and all those pretty things in the midst of politics, balls and gay cousins and tiresome mantua makers, depends solely on you, and that the most extravagant Spenserian [illegible word] letters, will do me the most good. Your reading above a quarter of one debate for my sake, is a point I very much doubt.<sup>9</sup>

In this passage Anne is referring back to her adolescence when she and Marianne read and discussed the merits and shortcomings of late medieval/Renaissance romance fiction such as Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.<sup>10</sup> In an earlier letter to Marianne, Anne had admitted to having outgrown a belief in the veracity of the epic poems of writers such as Ariosto and Spenser.<sup>11</sup> Realising that Marianne was reluctant to dispense with her belief in the chivalric heroes of her youth Anne indulges Marianne by asking her to write extravagant Spenserian letters to keep up Anne's fancy of chivalry.

Interestingly, Anne's use of the word 'fancy' accords with Coleridge's etymological definition in his *Biographia Literaria* in which he distinguishes fancy from the imagination. Coleridge describes fancy as 'a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space' which must 'receive all its materials ready made from the law of association': in other words, fancy cannot operate without the individual bringing his or her associative power of memory into play. Therefore, when Anne engages with this mode of thought she is enabled to recapture the shared pleasures of their youth from reading Marianne's letters.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, the imagination can be described as a creative power and therefore of a higher order, or as Coleridge puts it: 'the living Power and

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<sup>8</sup> HRO, 9M55/F35/3 (8 May 1827). This letter is transcribed in full in Appendix B.

<sup>9</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/14 [1827]. Although undated, this letter appears to be in the correct conversational sequence. This letter is transcribed in full in Appendix B.

<sup>10</sup> The earliest version of *Orlando Furioso* appeared in 1516 and the completed poem was published in 1532. The first half of *The Faerie Queene* was published in 1590 with a second instalment in 1596.

<sup>11</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/4 (26 February 1827).

<sup>12</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria: Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, ed. by James Engell and W. Jackson Bate, Bollingen Series: The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 75 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 304-05.

prime Agent of all human Perception'.<sup>13</sup> Rosemary Ashton, in her study of the reception of early nineteenth-century German thought in England, points out that, as a philosopher, Coleridge wanted to 'free the creative imagination' from the associative qualities of fancy.<sup>14</sup> This ambition can be seen as a reflection of Coleridge's desire to elevate the creative abilities of the poet to a higher level. In the passage above Anne is also pointing out that, while she enjoys Marianne's literary discourse, in order for their written conversation to be mutually agreeable she would like some political discussion too. Not being able to engage in political conversation with her father, Anne is hopeful that Marianne will.

Marianne's reply of 8 May 1827 is defensive. She informs Anne that she has both read and listened to political speeches, but she does not understand what she sees as the fickleness of politicians in the way that they change their party allegiance; and the system of party opposition 'seems so strange' and 'so like a game'.<sup>15</sup> Her letter continues:

I will not pass any more time in offending you and expressing my own ignorance, but I am quite satisfied that beyond knowing who is prime minister, and what Mr Sturges Bourne is, I have no business with politics [. . .] so I shall let them govern me just as they please and not divert my thoughts from the furling streams, and warbling birds, and budding flowers, and verdant fields, and all the other poetical things that I am in profession of, but keep to my own Ideale and leave you to the Wirklichkeit [reality] you claimed last year; it would be a charming opportunity for Schiller stanzas, with the contrast of a lady in a bower and a lady at a banquet or a ball, and to enliven it you must go out, which indeed I want you to do, as you are in London, and can do nothing better, except indeed settling the affairs of the nations which I suppose employs most of your time.<sup>16</sup>

Here Marianne is referring to Schiller's poem 'Die Ideale' (The Ideals) (1795–1796). In this poem Schiller uses contrasting stanzas to highlight the idealism of a young man in love with life and the beauty of nature with the disillusionment of his older self when the harsh realities of life have dissipated his earlier dreams of future happiness. He eventually realises that the only constants which have sustained him throughout are 'Friendship' and 'Employment'. The notions of friendship and employment as sustaining ideals in life are important concepts for Anne and Marianne and ones which I will explore in my next chapter. Marianne's suggestion that they write

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<sup>13</sup> Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, p. 202.

<sup>14</sup> Rosemary Ashton, *The German Idea: Four English Writers and the Reception of German Thought 1800–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 50.

<sup>15</sup> HRO, 9M55/F35/3 (8 May 1827).

<sup>16</sup> F35/3; Both Anne and Marianne read the works of Walter Scott and Marianne's reference to 'a lady in a bower' might be an allusion to Edward Waverley's romantic vision of 'Lady Waverley seated in her bower' in Scott's novel *Waverley* (1814). Sir Walter Scott, *Waverley* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1917), p. 33.

some Schiller stanzas harks back to May or June of the previous year when Anne had proposed that they ‘make some alternative stanzas à la Schiller’ to illustrate their individual way of thinking about life.<sup>17</sup> In the excerpt above Marianne is articulating her own imaginative sense of self in the context of Anne’s more rational and worldly characteristics and interests. She pictures Anne in the midst of polite London society keeping up with the latest political debates, while she prefers to see herself communing with nature in her own poetic sense of the ideal.

### 1.3.2: Schiller, Coleridge, and an idealized vision of humanity

The deep intellectual thinking which suffuses ‘Die Ideale’ is far more complex than my brief synopsis and Marianne’s simplification of Schiller’s poem into contrasting ideas about life would suggest. ‘Die Ideale’ is a minor poem from Schiller’s third period of 1795–1796, a period also marked by Schiller’s treatise ‘On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry’ (1795–1796).<sup>18</sup> In his consideration of this essay Martin Travers explains that Schiller recognises two types of poet: ‘the naïve and the sentimental’.<sup>19</sup> The former follows ‘simple nature’ and his own feelings, restricting himself ‘merely to reproducing the external world’; whereas, the latter engages his intellect and ‘reflects about the impression that objects make upon him’.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, the naïve poet, as a result of ‘the single relationship’ he has with his subject matter, will produce a singular outlook, which, in turn, will evoke ‘the same mode of feeling’ in the reader.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, the sentimental poet’s reflective approach and the ensuing emotions that arise from it are capable of exciting a mixture of feelings conveyed by the poet’s ‘conflicting intellectual and emotional states’.<sup>22</sup> John Herman Merivale, a nineteenth-century translator of Schiller’s poems, construes ‘Die Ideale’ as being ‘more subjective and personal to the Poet’ than ‘most of the Author’s contemporaneous productions’.<sup>23</sup> He points out to his readership that the poet himself describes this work as a ‘plaintive poem’: ‘the cry of Nature’ and ‘an expression of pain’ in which ‘strength and compression of sentiment’ would be out of place.<sup>24</sup> ‘Die Ideale’, then, can be viewed as a sentimental poem which is capable of evoking great depth of feeling and emotion in its readers.

<sup>17</sup> 9M55/F4/10 (May/June 1826).

<sup>18</sup> ‘Poems of the Third Period: Ideal, Didactic, Epigrammatic, 1795, 1796’, in *The Minor Poems of Schiller of the Second and Third Periods with a few of those of Earlier Date*, trans. by John Herman Merivale (London: William Pickering, 1844), pp. 46-90 (pp. 56-62).

<sup>19</sup> Martin Travers, ‘Introduction’, in *European Literature from Romanticism to Postmodernism: A Reader in Aesthetic Practice*, ed. by Martin Travers (London and New York: Continuum, 2001), pp. 1-12 (p. 11).

<sup>20</sup> Martin Travers, ‘Reflective and non-reflective modes of artistic creation, Friedrich von Schiller: On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry (1795-6)’, in *European Literature from Romanticism to Postmodernism*, pp. 59-61 (p. 60).

<sup>21</sup> Travers, ‘Reflective and non-reflective modes of artistic creation’, pp. 59-61 (p. 60).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>23</sup> John Herman Merivale, “‘Die Ideale’”, in *The Minor Poems of Schiller*, pp. 56-62 (p. 56).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Lesley Sharpe, in her assessment of Schiller's writing, points out that 'the gulf between the idealist's vision and the intractability of life is a theme that runs through both the dramas and the poetry'.<sup>25</sup> She further observes that Schiller engages 'through aesthetics and poetry with one of the vital concerns of the age, the loss of wholeness in modern man's existence, and searches for renewal and reintegration in a dynamic relationship between art, morality and politics'.<sup>26</sup> In Schiller's work the desire to reconcile seemingly polarised concepts resulted from the inability of a generation to realise the Enlightenment vision of a better world freed 'from the constraints of tradition'.<sup>27</sup> Ashton suggests that for Schiller and his contemporaries the imagination was 'the important faculty which reconciled the oppositions of man and nature, subject and object, mind and matter'.<sup>28</sup> What mattered to Schiller was the synthesis of these opposites in an idealised vision of humanity in harmony with itself and the world about it.<sup>29</sup> Sharpe concludes that Schiller 'was on one of the most important sources of new critical ideas' and that 'his impact on the German Romantics can hardly be overestimated'.<sup>30</sup>

'Die Ideale' is just one of many works by philosophical German writers which can be seen as representative of the 'new poetics' which had developed in Germany in the late decades of the eighteenth century.<sup>31</sup> Influenced by the philosophy of Kant, writers such as Schiller, Schelling, the Schlegel brothers, Jean Paul, and Hegel developed theories about the nature of the poet's creativity.<sup>32</sup> This influence also extended to England and among others, Coleridge, who, from the last decade of the eighteenth century, considered plans with publishers to promote German literature in Britain. In 1796 he proposed to the London bookseller, Robinson, his idea of translating all the works of Schiller into English. This was a scheme which never came to pass, but Coleridge did translate Schiller's drama *Wallenstein* (1799) in 1800.<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately for Coleridge he had published his translation at a time when there was an Anti-Jacobin backlash against Schiller, his German contemporaries and his English supporters.<sup>34</sup> The journalist who reviewed his work in *The Monthly Review* in October 1800, thought that a more 'judicious alteration of Schiller's work would have been more acceptable to readers of good taste'.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Lesley Sharpe, *Friedrich Schiller: Drama, Thought and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> Sharpe, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ashton, p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> Sharpe, pp. 138-39.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>31</sup> Ashton, p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ashton, pp. 27-30.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 30-31.

<sup>35</sup> 'The *Piccolomini*, or the First Part of *Wallenstein*: a Drama in Five Acts. Translated from the German of Frederick Schiller by S.T. Coleridge', *The Monthly Review*, 33 (London: R. Griffiths, 1800), 127-31 (p. 128).

By the second decade of the nineteenth century British sympathy for the German states — which were now under the control of Napoleon Bonaparte — and the visit of Mme de Staël and A.W. Schlegel to England in 1813 created a more favourable climate for the reception of German literature in England.<sup>36</sup> John R. Davis concurs with this in his assessment of the influence of Germany on British culture in the nineteenth century. He points out that interest in German philosophy, literature, and theology had begun just after the turn of the century amongst British intellectuals and that by the 1840s there was a widely held belief that Germany led Europe intellectually.<sup>37</sup> Although Coleridge had prepared the way for the reception of German aesthetics in England, it was Carlyle at the end of the 1820s, who was responsible for drawing attention to German thought and creating a 'more favourable intellectual atmosphere in which Coleridge could be reassessed and properly celebrated'.<sup>38</sup> In 1823 Coleridge's translation of *Wallenstein* was favourably reviewed by J.G. Lockhart in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and the publicity which this generated resulted in a new interest in *Wallenstein* and Schiller's work in general.<sup>39</sup>

Anne, however, favoured the earlier assessment of Coleridge's writing. On reading Coleridge's translation of *Wallenstein* in April 1826 she wrote to Marianne:

We are lent Coleridge's *Wallenstein*, some of the fine parts are well done, the more familiar and recondite scenes, sadly prosy, common and almost vulgar. I am sorry Papa and Mamma should see Schiller in such diminished glory.<sup>40</sup>

It can be deduced from this excerpt that Mr and Mrs Sturges Bourne were not able to read Schiller's *Wallenstein* except in translation. On the other hand, Anne, as an intellectual young woman born towards the close of the Napoleonic Wars, had learnt German as part of her education and developed her own interest in German aesthetics. Realising that such candid criticism of Coleridge, who was a celebrated poet and writer, would have been thought unseemly in a young gentlewoman, Anne qualifies her comments by adding 'but don't tell anybody that I make these objections, because he is reckoned beautiful, but I think more of the beauty in Schiller's than Coleridge's'.<sup>41</sup> Anne's trepidation in criticising Coleridge's translation of *Wallenstein* can also be accounted for by the fact that Coleridge was a friend of Sir George Beaumont, the

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<sup>36</sup> Ashton, pp. 62-63.

<sup>37</sup> John R. Davis, *The Victorians and Germany* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), p. 9.

<sup>38</sup> Ashton, p. 66.

<sup>39</sup> Ashton, pp. 16, and fn. 63, p. 184.

<sup>40</sup> HRO, 9M55/F4/5 (24 April 1826).

<sup>41</sup> F4/5.

Regency patron and art critic, who, in turn, together with his wife, Lady Beaumont, were close family friends of the Sturges Bournes.<sup>42</sup>

### 1.3.3: Defining a sense of self in the context of Schiller's ideals

As well 'Die Ideale', Anne had read three of Schiller's major works by the time that she was out in society: *Wilhelm Tell* (1804), *Der Geisterseher* (The Ghost Seer) (1787–1789), and *Wallenstein* (1799).<sup>43</sup> From Anne's letters it can be deduced that, apart from *Der Geisterseher*, Marianne had also read these texts. There is also evidence in one of Anne's letters to suggest that she was reading 'Die Ideale' from an edition of Schiller's collected poems entitled, *Gedichte* (Poetry), which was published from 1800 to 1803.<sup>44</sup> Like Marianne, Anne used the conflicting themes which Schiller strived to reconcile in his writing to contrast their differences and so define her own sense of self. In returning to the letter exchange in the early part of 1827 it is possible to elicit a sense of how Anne and Marianne used the contrasting facets in Schiller's concept of idealism in an intersubjective way. In a letter of 4 February 1827 Anne complains of the coldness in their Testwood house:

You do not feel for these rauhen wirklichkeiten (harsh realities). I believe your Ideale can warm you, but mine quite fail of doing so: the most sunny imagination of brilliant fantasies are not warm to the feel, any more than the pleasure of scenes now beautifying the beautiful view from the window upon which all the time an icy wind is blowing.<sup>45</sup>

In this excerpt Anne is acknowledging that Marianne uses her imagination in a creative way and is capable of creating poetic fantasies, while Anne admits to being too much of a realist — albeit in rather a profound way — to ascend to the heights of imagination which sustain Marianne. Anne's choice of vocabulary to describe the scene outside her window suggests that, as a realist, she has to rely on her associative memory to express her thoughts.

It can also be surmised from this passage that Anne understands the distinction between 'fancy' and 'imagination' in Coleridgean terms. In a later letter to Marianne written in August 1828, after

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<sup>42</sup> Margaret Greaves, *Regency Patron: Sir George Beaumont* (London: Methuen, 1966), pp. 15, 103; See the letters of Sir George Beaumont to Mrs Sturges Bourne prior to her marriage when she was Miss Anne Bowles of N. Aston, Woodstock. HRO 38M49/C6/25 (1803-1824).

<sup>43</sup> HRO, 9M55/F2/9 (22 June 1824); 9M55/F3/4 (6 May 1825); 9M55/F4/4 (15 April 1826).

<sup>44</sup> See Anne's letter to Marianne of 29 September 1828 (HRO, 9M55/F6/33) which mentions the fact that her cousin, Mary Holbech, has translated 'Die Glochen' (Song of the Bell) and 'Die Ideale' from Anne's copy of *Gedichte*; 'Gedichte, 2 vols. Leipzig: Crusius, 1800–1803' cited in Steven D. Martinson, 'The Works of Friedrich Schiller', in *A Companion to the Works of Friedrich Schiller*, ed. by Steven D. Martinson (New York: Camden House, 2005), pp. xi-xiv (p. xii).

<sup>45</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/1 (4 February 1827).

they had spent some time together in the Isle of Wight on holiday with their respective families, Anne complains:

I have been in a stupid state since you went, a great interest and energy of ideas and conversations and fancies leaves a sort of commonplace reaction which perhaps you have felt, and I thought we had been rather too decided about the benefit of imagination.<sup>46</sup>

Although not explicit, this extract suggests that Anne and Marianne had been discussing literature in terms of fancy and the imagination. As Anne's letters document, she was an avid reader of literary reviews as well as newspapers which might account for her awareness of this intellectual debate.<sup>47</sup>

The final letter in this sequence that I want to consider is Anne's reply on the 12 May to Marianne's of the 8 May and the way in which Anne compensates for Marianne's absence by making her present in her own letter. Anne continues their previous dialogue by remarking that she would like to see how Marianne reacted at an opera: would she be 'quite bewildered and dazzled', or would she be 'rational and criticizing'.<sup>48</sup> Anne writes:

There is more of Ideale in it than anything that you imagine to exist in London. Do not fancy that I should be the less enchanted with your bowers, if I were to go to them fresh from *Semiramide* and I fear I shall not keep up the Schiller plan, in which each party ought to advocate the superiority of her own enjoyments. I shall think of you when I see a quadrille of flowers and leaves dressed from Dryden at the Caledonian ball on Monday. Such a debasement you would think it: the Almack's band instead of a nightingale and the chalked floor for grass.<sup>49</sup>

In an overt display of her letter-writing skills, Anne's witty repartee reinforces the conversational aspects of their dialogue as an enjoyable experience for them both and provides a splendid example of how written dialogue can act as a substitute for physical presence. Firstly Anne reassures Marianne that, in spite of the pleasure of finding 'Ideale' in a London opera, she stills enjoys Marianne's poetic visions of nature. Secondly, Anne's choice of vocabulary draws Marianne into her world of polite society, not only by saying that she will think of her when she

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<sup>46</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/28 (22 August 1828).

<sup>47</sup> In a letter to Marianne of 13 February 1827 Anne records that she copied out the new publications from 'every Literary Gazette'. HRO, 9M55/F5/2; On 6 February 1829 Marianne writes to Anne that she has read the Literary Gazettes that Anne had left for her after their time in Brighton together. HRO, 9M55/F36/1.

<sup>48</sup> 9M55/F5/15 (12 May 1827).

<sup>49</sup> F5/15; *Semiramide* was an opera by Rossini first performed in London in 1824.



sees a quadrille danced, but, from her privileged position as a letter-writing confidante she can also articulate an imagined response from Marianne, visualising her disdain for the artificial representations of nature in the ballroom.

My discussion of this letter sequence has not only demonstrated ways in which the conversational aspects of a regular written discourse can function as a substitute for physical presence, but has shown how Anne and Marianne's perception of their individual sense of self was formed in the context of their differences. However, their correspondence in the late 1820s also exhibits an awareness that the required veneer of the polite letter was an encumbrance to their growing friendship. Marianne, in particular, felt the frustration of this. On returning home in August 1828, after a two-week holiday on the Isle of Wight with their respective families and missing her daily conversations with Anne, she writes: 'I long so for your first letter, which must do its best to supply your actual self.'<sup>50</sup> Marianne is recognising the polite codes and conventions of letter writing which Anne adheres to and in asking Anne to supply her 'actual self' in her next letter she is encouraging Anne, in spite of these constraints, to articulate her real thoughts and feelings. This is an interesting reversal of roles, as, in this instance, it is Marianne and not Anne who is trying to instigate a change in their letter-writing practices. Marianne's wish for more veracity of self in their letters can be attributed to the growing strength of their friendship which also manifested itself in a desire to think and feel the same.

In January 1828 Anne had confided in Marianne that she was glad they felt the same way about balls: an opinion which she qualifies in February when she sympathises with Marianne about being 'taken about like a victim to the balls' which neither she nor Marianne enjoy.<sup>51</sup> This desire for mutual compatibility also extended to the literature they were reading as is shown by Marianne's letter to Anne of 14 November 1828. Marianne begins by thanking Anne for 'the poetical extract' from Dante: 'I am not bent upon defending the sweet lines but I am glad we agree in liking (I do not really mean so cold a word) the rest of it; it is curious how much we are alike.'<sup>52</sup> In the same month, writing about a difference of opinion over an unnamed historical text, Anne tells Marianne: 'I cannot bear that we should differ, or appear to differ so much on any subject.'<sup>53</sup> Anne's comments testify to the fact that, like Marianne, she also wants them to be in agreement in their literary tastes; however, at this point in time, religious poetry proved to be a contentious issue.

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<sup>50</sup> HRO, 9M55/F35/12 (21 August 1828).

<sup>51</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/3 (21 January 1828); 9M55/F6/6 (11 February 1828).

<sup>52</sup> HRO, 9M55/F35/14 (14 November 1828).

<sup>53</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/40 (25 November 1828).

### 1.3.4: *The Christian Year*: a matter of taste?

In 1827 John Keble published *The Christian Year*, his volume of devotional poetry arranged around the structure of the Anglican year. Marianne's half-brother, Charles Dyson, was, like Keble, an ordained priest in the Church of England and he was instrumental in persuading Keble to publish his poems.<sup>54</sup> The two men had met and become close friends at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in the second decade of the nineteenth century.<sup>55</sup> Marianne is keen to alert Anne to this work and writes in September 1827:

I forgot to tell about two little volumes of poems by Rev. Keble, a friend of Charles, and we like a great deal of them exceedingly, some stanzas so pretty and full of feeling, though parts are rather confused, I should like you to read them.<sup>56</sup>

Anne's reply on 23 October shows that she is in agreement with Marianne's assessment of Keble's work:

Mamma read some of the first volume and thought it so confused and far-fetched that she could not much get on with it, and I confess I thought so too, though I found some beauty [. . .] I hear it was written for the benefit of the Coleridge and Wordsworth school, which would explain the odd affected style.<sup>57</sup>

Anne's comment about the 'odd, affected style' of the Lake Poets' work could be attributed to the many derogatory literary reviews written in the early nineteenth-century which often accompanied the publication of a new work by Wordsworth or Coleridge.<sup>58</sup>

One of the charges that was levelled against the poets was their effusive use of language: for example, in 1814 *The Edinburgh Review* published a review of Wordsworth's poem, *The Excursion*, citing 'the profuse and irrepressible wordiness which deluges all the blank verse of this school of poetry'.<sup>59</sup> The theologian, David Jasper, provides the connection between the work of Wordsworth, Coleridge and *The Christian Year* when he claims that Keble's theological and devotional reflections were drawn from analogies with nature and were greatly influenced by 'the

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<sup>54</sup> John Taylor Coleridge, *A Memoir of the Rev John Keble, M. A., Late Vicar of Hursley* (Oxford & London, James Parker & Co., 1869), p. 36.

<sup>55</sup> Coleridge, *A Memoir of the Rev John Keble*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>56</sup> HRO, 9M55/F35/8 (6 September 1827).

<sup>57</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/35, (23 October 1827).

<sup>58</sup> See Mary Poovey, *Genres of the Credit Economy: Mediating Values in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), pp. 294-96.

<sup>59</sup> Francis Jeffrey, 'The Excursion, being a portion of the Recluse, a Poem by William Wordsworth', *The Edinburgh Review*, 47 (Nov. 1814) (repr. in *The Edinburgh Review* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, Nov. 1814-Feb. 1815), xxiv, 1-30 (p. 1)).

poetic genius of the Romantics'.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, in spite of her reservations about Keble's work, Anne is trying to like it for Marianne and her family's sake. She writes to Marianne in November 1827: 'do not fancy me prejudiced against Keble; I am quite ready to be made to like him when we are together in town.'<sup>61</sup> In this instance Anne is displaying a willingness to adapt to Marianne's opinions about the devotional worth of Keble's poetry, a move on her part which shows the value that she places on her friendship with Marianne.

As the impending meeting draws near Anne is still trying to convince herself of the poetical merits of Keble's verse and in February 1828 she writes:

Bring Keble, of course, how you will succeed with me I cannot tell. I never knew you like poetry that I did not, and I do not think Mrs Dyson or Eliza [Elizabeth Dyson, Marianne's sister-in-law] would be prejudiced, but still I do not feel that I could like that involved language. Even Lady Beaumont does not. She says there is total want of ear, though she likes the thoughts.<sup>62</sup>

In this passage Anne is appearing to defer to Lady Beaumont's taste in literary matters and, like Lady Beaumont, she is judging the merits of Keble's poetry in terms of literary criticism. This way of appreciating secular and religious poetry in an indiscriminating way can be seen in the context of the new German theological liberalism that was being introduced into England in the 1820s.

In his essay on 'Ways of Reading', William McKelvy states that from 1825 onwards German historical criticism became the focus of much debate amongst Anglican clergymen in the form of published books, essays and reviews.<sup>63</sup> Prominent contributors to this debate were Thomas Arnold, Hugh James Rose, Connop Thirlwall and E.B. Pusey, who would later become one of the main leaders of the Oxford Movement.<sup>64</sup> Niebuhr's *History of Rome* (1811) was one of the earliest German texts to promote the new historical criticism and it was reviewed by Arnold who applauded the 'high excellence' of the research and recommended it for public reading.<sup>65</sup> Others saw the new criticism as a threat to Church and State stability predicated, as it was, on the levelling of "'revealed" texts with those of purely human origin': in other words, German historicists were adopting a 'scholarly creed' that alleged that all ancient books, whether sacred

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<sup>60</sup> David Jasper, 'The Poetry of the Oxford Movement: Theology in Literature', *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church*, 12 (2012), 218-31 (pp. 228-29).

<sup>61</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/36 (5 November 1827).

<sup>62</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/8 (27 February 1828).

<sup>63</sup> William McKelvy, 'Ways of Reading 1825: Leisure, Curiosity and Morbid Eagerness', in *John Keble in Context*, ed. by Kirstie Blair (London: Anthem Press, 2004), pp. 75-88 (pp. 79-80).

<sup>64</sup> McKelvy, 'Ways of Reading 1825', pp. 75-88 (pp. 79-80).

<sup>65</sup> Thomas Arnold, 'Romische Geschichte, Von B. G. Niebuhr. History of Rome', *The Quarterly Review*, 32.63 (1825), 67-92, in *British Periodicals* < <https://search.proquest.com/docview/2483789?accountid=13963> > [accessed 31 January 2017], (pp. 67-68).

or profane texts, 'had to be read in the same manner'.<sup>66</sup> This effectively meant that reliable history texts and mythological and Greek poetical texts were being compared with each other and also with Scriptural narratives.<sup>67</sup> Coleridge took a similar attitude to literary criticism, and Steven Prickett, in his consideration of Coleridge's *On the Constitution of Church and State* written in the late 1820s, asserts that in Coleridge's view, literary criticism 'is *neither* a secular *nor* a religious activity', but one that 'partakes of both worlds'.<sup>68</sup>

One of Keble's concerns in publishing *The Christian Year* was to counteract what he viewed as the intellectual pride embodied in modern print culture, and, more specifically, in the periodical reviews, which encouraged 'things of a sacred character' to be subjected to the same indiscriminating intellectual criticism as those of a secular cast.<sup>69</sup> In an essay in *The Quarterly Review* of 1825 Keble holds up Spenser as the pre-eminent sacred poet of England.<sup>70</sup> Citing allegory as the mode which Spenser chose for his tale of chivalry, romance and courtly manners in *The Faerie Queen*, Keble contends that Spenser, with 'propriety and grace', fashioned a virtuous and pious gentleman, or nobleman, for the purpose of inculcating 'the love of better and more enduring things' into his contemporary readership.<sup>71</sup> McKelvy suggests that in adopting an allegorical discipline in his own poetry Keble was hoping to prevent his own readers from 'becoming unrestrained and self-sufficient'.<sup>72</sup> Keble wanted to impart the sobriety found in 'matters of practical religion' that he considered the antidote to the 'unbounded curiosity' with which his contemporaries were seeking 'excitement of every kind' with a 'morbid eagerness'.<sup>73</sup>

By April 1828 Anne can write of Keble that 'the general taste for him is creeping on'.<sup>74</sup> Anne also feels obligated to Keble for the enjoyment she is finding in his poetry and she now appreciates the meditative quality in his verse which she thinks 'ought to be deep and concealed if you are to expect real good and pleasure from it'.<sup>75</sup> She assures Marianne:

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<sup>66</sup> McKelvy, 'Ways of Reading 1825', pp. 75-88 (pp. 79-80).

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>68</sup> Stephen Prickett, *Narrative, Religion, and Science: Fundamentalism versus Irony, 1700-1999* (Port Chester, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 168.

<sup>69</sup> McKelvy, 'Ways of Reading 1825', pp. 75-88 (pp. 76, 84, 85).

<sup>70</sup> John Keble, 'The star in the east; with other poems', *The Quarterly Review*, 32.63 (June 1825), 211-32, in *British Periodicals*, <<https://search.proquest.com/docview/2480213?accountid=13963>> [accessed 31 January 2017], (p. 231).

<sup>71</sup> Keble, 'The star in the east', pp. 211-32 (pp. 228, 231).

<sup>72</sup> McKelvy, 'Ways of Reading 1825', pp. 75-88 (p. 85).

<sup>73</sup> John Keble, 'Advertisement', *The Christian Year: Thoughts in Verse for the Sundays and Holydays throughout the Year*, 16<sup>th</sup> edn (Oxford: J.H. Parker and London: J.G. and F. Rivington, 1837), p. v.

<sup>74</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/12 (22 April 1828).

<sup>75</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/13 (29 April 1828).

I am equal quite to you, Mamma enjoys some very much, Papa just likes some bits, but I cannot make him understand that he is not to read them all through, and not to read the one for the day unless it is a good one.<sup>76</sup>

From these comments it seems that Anne has discovered that the way to enjoy Keble's poetry is through selective reading. Part of the problem with getting to like Keble's poetry was, for Anne, an intellectual one and a matter of taste. Anne had to overcome the fact that, for her, Keble's verse was not good poetry when measured against the Lake Poets, Schiller and other German literature. However, there is something else at work in Anne's change of heart with respect to Keble's verse: she is beginning to experience the transformative power of friendship discussed by Friedman.<sup>77</sup> Anne has persevered in reading *The Christian Year* as a result of her growing friendship with Marianne and her desire for their mutual compatibility. In this instance it is Anne who is adapting to Marianne's needs, and, in doing so, Anne has opened herself up to a new set of religious values which she may not have previously considered and which will prove to be life changing in the years to come. In the meantime, however, Anne was still intent on trying to improve Marianne's taste in contemporary literature.

### 1.3.5: German literature, Coleridge, and intellectual sophistication

Anne thought Schiller's work was the epitome of good taste and in February 1827 she had written to thank Mrs Dyson for her 'admiration of my dear Schiller, which is not more than I expected from your taste and judgement'.<sup>78</sup> Anne also wanted Marianne to share her tastes in literature so that they could engage in intellectual discussions in their letters. It was important to Anne that Marianne should cultivate a taste, not only for Schiller, but for other German writers as well. While in London in May 1827 Anne had read *Die Schuld* (Guilt) (1816) by Müllner: a play described as a fate tragedy and a very successful stage production in early nineteenth-century Germany.<sup>79</sup> Although Anne feels unable to compare Müllner's work to Schiller's she wants Marianne to read it with her when the Dysons arrive in London in a few weeks' time.<sup>80</sup> The hoped for meeting never transpires and so, when Anne finds a copy of *Die Schuld* in a 'dusty old shop in Tavistock Street', she sends it to Marianne.<sup>81</sup> Regrettably, we do not have Marianne's response to this gift and Anne does not mention it again, but the encouragement to read German literature continues.

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<sup>76</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/12 (22 April 1828).

<sup>77</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 196.

<sup>78</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/4 (26 Feb 1827).

<sup>79</sup> Peter Jelavich, 'Amandus Gottfried Adolf, 1774-1829', *McGraw-Hill Encyclopaedia of World Drama: An International Reference Work*, ed. by Stanley Hochman, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 5 vols (McGraw-Hill Inc., 1984), I, 451.

<sup>80</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/17 (28 May 1827); HRO, 9M55/F5/18 [1827].

<sup>81</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/24 (30 June 1827).

In September 1828 an interesting exchange of letters takes place. Anne is reading Klopstock, whose writing she thinks 'worthy of the Ideale'.<sup>82</sup> From this remark and her opinion of Müllner's work above it is becoming apparent that Schiller's writing has now become the benchmark by which Anne judges other German texts. She writes to Marianne:

I have blamed myself for not being more fond of those delightful passages in the 1<sup>st</sup> volume. I must say for people who pretend as we do to be intellectual and exalted in our tastes, it is very wrong, and I beg you will try again.<sup>83</sup>

It is clear from this passage that Anne considers the reading of German literature a matter of good taste and a signifier of her own intellectual sophistication and she wants Marianne to be like her in appreciating these works. This is a telling passage which not only reveals Anne's assessment of her own elite status, but confirms the general intellectual shift away from French high culture to German aesthetics in the early nineteenth century. Marianne's reply, therefore, must have caused Anne some disappointment:

I do not pretend to be intellectual or exalted, and I cannot admire Klopstock I mean in general, some bits you know I like, and the general strain when it is not overwhelmingly prosy.<sup>84</sup>

Marianne's response indicates that she and Anne differ considerably in their intellectual aspirations and although Marianne is reading German texts there is something in the work she is not comfortable with. This antipathy also extends to the work of Coleridge as is shown by a rather heated letter exchange the following year.

Writing to Marianne on 4 March 1829 Anne observes

The Marmion is charming and quantities of other poems and bits of poems, which I am sure you must have felt, some of the very things that we have said and thought so often, and so out of the common way and so much harmony of metre and good sound. Nothing but a prejudice you have against the Coleridge and Wordsworth School could prevent your admiring the Sibylline Leaves (which I know you did not properly, or you would have

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<sup>82</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/32 (22 September 1828). It is not clear which of Klopstock's texts Anne is reading.

<sup>83</sup> F6/32.

<sup>84</sup> HRO, 9M55/F35/13 (26 September 1828).

talked of them), what the ground is I do not know, not obscurity, for Keble beats them far, and you know we have agreed to find it no fault.<sup>85</sup>

In this extract Anne is reproaching Marianne for what she sees as a prejudice towards Wordsworth and Coleridge's work as she knows that Marianne has enjoyed Scott's *Marmion* (1808) and appreciated other poetry in terms of its lyrical qualities. In her final remark it can be noted that Anne is comparing Keble's devotional verse to that of Coleridge's secular verse in the *Sibylline Leaves* (1817), albeit on the basis of obscurity.

Replying quickly on 6 March Marianne defends herself against the charge of prejudice:

I did talk to you, my dearest, of the Sibylline Leaves though very differently from you: a fact that you solve in the same easy way as other difficulties by saying it is only my prejudice against the School in general; now really I began with a very favourable inclination to the Ancient Mariner, and I did continue to like a few stanzas, but there is so much affectation in the style of the poetry throughout, and so little that I would very much admire.<sup>86</sup>

It appears from this extract that the difficulties Marianne is referring to are those of agreeing on matters of literary taste. Marianne's main criticism of Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is that she finds it affected. This is also a view taken by the *Monthly* and *Critical Reviews of Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 and noted by Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria* as 'an elaboration of ornament in addition to strained and elaborate diction'.<sup>87</sup> Marianne also takes a very different view to Anne when it comes to comparing secular and religious poetry as a continuation of her letter shows:

It really hurts me that you should name Keble's obscurity in the same sentence, is there anything like his feelings? I would be ready to have my taste improved if you would set about it, but I doubt the success.<sup>88</sup>

It can be deduced from the latter remark in this passage that Marianne has no desire to change the way in which she views Coleridge's work, but from the preceding comment it is clear that she is not reading the lyrical verse of Keble and Coleridge in the same way as Anne. In Marianne's

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<sup>85</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/6 (4 March 1829).

<sup>86</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/5 (6 March 1829).

<sup>87</sup> Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>88</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/5 (6 March 1829).

mind Keble's sentiments and Coleridge's sentiments are not comparable and there is a good reason for this.

In his discussion of Keble and the 'ethos' of the Oxford Movement, James Pereiro is of the opinion that Keble believed the true poet 'is the one who uses ideas and language calculated to raise religious and moral associations'.<sup>89</sup> In fact, Keble did not believe that a poet's merit consisted in 'the possession of sensibilities different from or more intense than those of other people', but that the poet's talent consisted in the ability to awake in the minds of his readers 'the particular feelings and emotions with which the various objects of his art are naturally associated'.<sup>90</sup> In order to achieve this objective the poet needs to consult his own feelings, but he can rely on them only in as much as 'he knows them to be in unison with those of mankind at large'.<sup>91</sup> In other words, Keble believed that the poet's work was to illuminate and reinforce moral truths by a process of association — something akin to Coleridge's use of the word 'fancy' — in which the reader brought his or her knowledge and experience of the Bible and the natural world into play. In his poems, therefore, Keble used allegory and biblical typology to uphold this theory.<sup>92</sup>

Coleridge, on the other hand, saw his role as a poet in terms of the imagination and the poet's ability to be part of the eternal creative process.<sup>93</sup> This immediately identifies his position as a poet in terms of his own creative 'genius' and therefore at odds with Keble's understanding of his role as a poet. Stephen Prickett suggests that at the heart of Coleridge's lyrical verse was a concern to change the way in which the reader experienced life by using symbols rather than allegory to evoke a change in perception.<sup>94</sup> He explains this in relation to Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by saying that the poem is not an allegory about man's spiritual progress, but a 'particular experience of breakdown and regeneration' shown symbolically to the reader, and, that in order to read the poem fully, the reader must 'share the experience'.<sup>95</sup> Prickett goes on to say that 'what is important about a symbol, in this sense, is that it alters us'.<sup>96</sup> I would suggest, then, that for Marianne with her heightened awareness of the sincerity and biblical truth in Keble's verse, she found the *Ancient Mariner* disturbing and too much of a contrast to Keble's poetry which she had by this time grown to love and admire.

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<sup>89</sup> James Pereiro, 'John Keble and the Ethos of the Oxford Movement', in *John Keble in Context*, ed. by Kirstie Blair (London: Anthem Press, 2004), pp. 59-72 (p. 65).

<sup>90</sup> John Keble, 'Poems by William Wordsworth', *The Quarterly Review*, 14.27 (October 1815), 201-25, in *British Periodicals* <<https://search.proquest.com/docview/2485200?accountid=13963>> [accessed 31 January 2017], (p. 209).

<sup>91</sup> Keble, 'Poems by William Wordsworth', pp. 201-25 (p. 209).

<sup>92</sup> McKelvy, 'Ways of Reading 1825', pp. 75-88 (p. 85).

<sup>93</sup> Amanda Gilroy, 'Women Poets 1780-1830', in *Approaching Literature: Romantic Writings*, ed. by Stephen Bygrave, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: The Open University, 1998; repr. 1999), pp. 183-203 (p. 212).

<sup>94</sup> Stephen Prickett, *Coleridge and Wordsworth: The Poetry of Growth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 15.

<sup>95</sup> Prickett, *Coleridge and Wordsworth*, p. 15.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*



Anne and Marianne's letter exchange continues and Anne's prompt reply on 7 March shows the strength of feeling involved in their dispute:

Yes my dear, you are prejudiced against Coleridge and unfair upon me. I never said his religious feelings compared with Keble's. Whose could I? But I said that he was not more obscure, I think less so, you could not make that an objection. [. . .] I will say it is prejudice because I had rather not think it want of taste and poetry.<sup>97</sup>

Anne's closing remark brings us to the root of Anne's concern both with Coleridge's work and that of Klopstock: Marianne was not displaying what Anne considered to be appropriate taste. As in the case of polite letter writing, Anne was concerned to raise Marianne's standards in taste to a level which Anne deemed appropriate to her own and which befitted the intellectual sophistication of gentlewomen from the propertied classes. However, there may also have been genuine disappointment that Marianne did not share her taste in literature.

This represents something of a stalemate situation when considered in the light of Anne and Marianne's earlier attempts to adapt to each other's tastes and opinions. However, the fact that Marianne does not defer to Anne's opinions as her social superior is an indication that their friendship has reached a degree of equality. I would go further and suggest that Marianne's insistence on maintaining her own opinions about Coleridge's work actually marks her out as Anne's intellectual equal. As Friedman points out, in a mentor/mentee relationship which begins with a 'formal inequality of social position' the 'excellences' in the student can inspire sufficient respect to counteract this initial imbalance.<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, one friend's 'superiority' in a particular area — Anne's knowledge of politics and her ability to discourse in an intelligent and rational manner comes to mind here — is balanced by the other friend's superiority in another area.<sup>99</sup> Friedman cites 'the vitality of imagination' as a possible balancing constituent to the other friend's particular strength which, coincidentally, describes one of Marianne's strong contributions to the friendship.<sup>100</sup> As I will show in my next two chapters, the strong commitment they both felt towards their friendship was sufficient to override any differences of opinion they may have had in literary or religious matters.

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<sup>97</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/8 (7 March 1829).

<sup>98</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 190.

<sup>99</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 189.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*



## Chapter 2: 'Friendship' and 'Employment': The Sustaining Ideals in Life

Of all that train, so bright with gladness,  
 Oh, who is faithful to the end?  
 Who now will seek to cheer my sadness,  
 And to the grave my steps attend?  
 Thou, Friendship, of all guides the fairest,  
 Who gently healest every wound;  
 Who all life's heavy burdens sharest,  
 Thou, whom I early sought and found!

Employment too, thy loving neighbor,  
 Who quells the bosom's rising storms;  
 Who ne'er grows weary of her labor,  
 And ne'er destroys, though slow she forms;  
 Who, though but grains of sand she places  
 To swell eternity sublime,  
 Yet minutes, days, ay! years effaces  
 From the dread reckoning kept by Time!<sup>1</sup>

Friedrich Schiller, 'Die Ideale'

### Introduction

In my previous chapter I discussed how, in the late 1820s, Anne and Marianne used Schiller's poem, 'Die Ideale', as a way to define their own attitudes to life. Schiller's opposing concepts of youthful idealism and life's realities offered the two young women a literary precedent in which they could situate their own disparate views: Marianne preferred to see life through a poetic and imaginative lens; while Anne's rational nature prevented her from living on this higher plane. In this chapter I will show that literary ideals continue to inform their written discourse in the early 1830s and serve to formulate ideas and values that have a significant bearing on the moral way in which their friendship develops. In assessing the potential sources for moral growth available to friends, Marilyn Friedman points out that, in instances when the morally educative value of a

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrich von Schiller, 'The Ideals', in *The Poems of Schiller*, trans. by Edgar Alfred Bowring (New York: John B. Alden, 1883), p. 111.

literary work can be discerned, it has the potential to transform the reader's existing mores.<sup>2</sup> I will argue, therefore, that Schiller's notions of 'friendship' and 'employment' — extolled as the sustaining ideals in life in my opening quotation — are fundamental to Anne and Marianne's way of thinking at this time. These two concepts are inextricably linked, not only in the poem but in Anne and Marianne's vision for their own lives, and will provide the rationale for this chapter. The period under discussion in this chapter, 1829–1833, represents a significant time of transition in the lives of these two women as their friendship deepens and they contemplate the possibility of a life of spinsterhood. Anne and Marianne's prolific correspondence for 1829 reveals a great deal about the nature of their amity at this stage in their lives and I will draw on Sharon Marcus's examination of female friendship in the life-writing of Anglican middle-class women from 1830 to 1880 to provide a context for my discussion.

Marcus makes a claim for the friendships between her middle-class subjects as 'sentimental' and she believes that, in the nineteenth century, the understanding of women's sentimental friendships was distinct from the ways in which it was understood by previous generations or, indeed, those to come.<sup>3</sup> According to Janet Todd, sentimental friendship between women had its genesis in the eighteenth-century 'cult of sensibility' and reached its apotheosis in the epistolary novel.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the middle-class family features prominently in the novel and Todd links this to the symbiotic relationship which existed between the growth of the novel and the rise of the bourgeois family in eighteenth-century Britain and France.<sup>5</sup> It is possible to find literary precedents for this type of friendship, such as the one between Clarissa Harlowe and Anna Howe in Richardson's novel, *Clarissa*. In the novel Anna constantly advocates spinsterhood as a viable alternative to marriage, and, accordingly, she urges Clarissa 'to throw out the conventions of patriarchy' and embrace the single life with her in a loving reciprocal friendship.<sup>6</sup> This is not tenable for Clarissa who has 'too well internalized the rules of a dutiful daughter' which decree heterosexual marriage as her only option.<sup>7</sup> Todd is of the opinion that the novel shows how both women 'care about female autonomy', but that for Clarissa there is no way out of her dilemma.<sup>8</sup> She concludes that while the expression of sentimental friendship in some novels is radical and extreme, it is limited in action; instead of subverting the 'reductive claims of patriarchy' it draws

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<sup>2</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *What Are Friends For? Feminist Perspectives on Personal Relationships and Moral Theory*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 201.

<sup>3</sup> Sharon Marcus, *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 27–28.

<sup>4</sup> Janet Todd, *Women's Friendship in Literature* (New York: Columbia Press, 1980), p. 305.

<sup>5</sup> Todd, p. 306.

<sup>6</sup> Todd, pp. 52, 56.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53–54.

back, so that by the end of the novel the female protagonist is more accepting of society's limitations for her than at the beginning.<sup>9</sup>

It becomes clear from Marcus's discussions of women's nineteenth-century sentimental friendships that significant changes have occurred, not only in the way in which female amity was perceived in society, but also in the new confidence which women drew from their friendships. Marcus notes that, while 'novelists and deeply religious women' articulated an ideal of reciprocity in their friendships, women who held more worldly views on life tended to highlight ways in which friendship introduced 'an element of play into the gender system', a circumstance which licensed women to be 'more assertive and spontaneous with their female peers than they were with men'.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, Marcus suggests:

Friendship allowed women to compete for and charm each other, to develop their intellectual and aesthetic tastes, to augment their worldly ties, and to deepen their spiritual ones. Its pleasures and passions were also closely allied to the love of kin and the delights of marriage.<sup>11</sup>

While these broad revelations about nineteenth-century female friendship do not necessarily resonate with Friedman's claim for the morally transformative power of women's voluntary friendships, they demonstrate, nevertheless, ways in which women's amity was fuelling their growing sense of personal autonomy.

Marcus cites Romanticism and Evangelicalism as the two great movements which changed the language in which friendship between women was expressed in the nineteenth century — that is in terms of personal inclination, affinity, emotion and religious faith — and she discusses the ways in which evangelical fervour precipitated these changes.<sup>12</sup> However, the main focus of her study is to provide evidence that relationships between women were a 'constitutive element' of ideas about gender and sexuality in this period and so precludes any detailed analysis of the ways in which Romantic literature contributed to a change of language in the life-writing of her middle-class subjects.<sup>13</sup> I will argue that Anne and Marianne's epistolary discussions of Romantic literature not only informed their vision of ideal friendship, but also provided a language through which they could express the way they felt about their amity. This is a previously unexplored area in women's nineteenth-century life-writing, and, while my study will complement Marcus's research on middle-class women's friendships, its greater significance lies in the fact that it opens

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<sup>9</sup> Todd, p. 319.

<sup>10</sup> Marcus, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Marcus, p. 72.

<sup>12</sup> Marcus, pp. 28, 62-67.

<sup>13</sup> Marcus, p. 4.

up new perspectives on ways in which higher-status women legitimised their friendships within the contemporary literary discourse.

In a similar way to Marcus's middle-class subjects, Anne and Marianne's epistolary friendship enables them to develop a sense of female agency and make autonomous choices for their own lives. Their regular letter exchange, as a practice which involves social interaction, constitutes one of the preconditions which Friedman sees as necessary for the development of relational autonomy, which as we have seen, seeks to explain the ways and social conditions in which women can achieve degrees of autonomy in the context of their relationships with others. By close textual analysis of some of Anne and Marianne's correspondence in the early 1830s, I hope to show that, as these two women become increasingly motivated by shared philanthropic values and commitment to their friendship, they began to make choices for their own lives which did not conform to the gendered expectations placed on women of their social class.

Anne and Marianne were not alone in their wish to ameliorate the lot of the poor as the outworking of their Christian faith. Susan Mumm makes the point that during the nineteenth century women's organised philanthropy, while concerned with the practical realities of alleviating suffering, was generally motivated by religious belief and 'organised around denominational affiliations'.<sup>14</sup> Anne K. Mellor notes that thousands of voluntary associations, organised and run by women, sprang up in the early part of the century and catered for 'every imaginable group of sufferers'.<sup>15</sup> In her discussion of philanthropy and gender in the nineteenth century, Dorice Williams Elliott cites the conduct books, novels and religious tracts of Hannah More, which portray charitable works as a necessary part of middle- and upper-class domesticity, as the source of 'naturalizing' female philanthropy in this period.<sup>16</sup> Mellor concurs with this assessment when she states that at the heart of More's reforms was her desire that women should be educated to understand their proper role in society.<sup>17</sup> However, she also points out that More's didactic teaching, though essentially conservative, was radical in terms of its moralizing aspects; More called for a change in the moral behaviour of the nation and Mellor argues that the significant impact her writing had on all the social classes averted a 'French-style' revolution in

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<sup>14</sup> Susan Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures', in *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, ed. by Sue Morgan and Jaqueline de Vries (London & New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 54-71 (p. 54).

<sup>15</sup> Anne K. Mellor, *Mothers of the Nation: Women's Political Writing in England, 1780-1830* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana U. P., 2002), p. 27.

<sup>16</sup> Dorice Williams Elliott, *The Angel out of the House: Philanthropy and Gender in Nineteenth-Century England* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2002), p. 55.

<sup>17</sup> Mellor, p. 26.

England.<sup>18</sup> It is not insignificant, then, that Hannah More has been called ‘the most influential female philanthropist of her day’ and ‘probably the most influential woman of her day.’<sup>19</sup>

Sarah Trimmer, More’s eighteenth-century contemporary, was also an important female philanthropist and her *Oeconomy of Charity*, first published in 1787, was subsequently revised and republished in 1801 in order to accommodate her views that educating the poor in free Sunday schools was an important charitable office that ‘ladies’ could perform and subscribe to.<sup>20</sup> Elliott points out that the writings of both Trimmer and More upheld the ‘agrarian-paternalist economic and social system’ that was familiar and safe to them, even as they were rewriting the tenets of female philanthropy.<sup>21</sup> As Mellor has recognised, More’s writing ‘implicitly defined what we might now call “middle-class values” as normative for the nation as a whole’ and that in doing so ‘she subtly undercut the social prestige and political authority of the aristocracy’.<sup>22</sup> In a similar vein, Elliott argues that Sunday schools succeeded in ‘inculcating values associated with the middle class’ due to the fact that they rewarded the “‘upright conduct” and pious habits’ which Trimmer advocated.<sup>23</sup> These observations beg the question: how, if at all, does this paradigm of middle-class philanthropy accommodate the traditional paternalism of women from the landed gentry in the early 1830s? This is an under-researched area of scholarship and one which I will address in the second part of my chapter as I explore how Anne and Marianne’s paternalistic attitudes, imbibed from their youth, translated into practical philanthropy in respect of their Sunday-school teaching. I will refer to their specific model of paternalism as ‘Anglican country-house paternalism’ to reflect not only the traditional parish-centred ties and co-operation between the Church of England and the local landowner, but also the ways in which a providential notion of class hierarchy shaped their views towards the poorer classes.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Mellor, pp. 14, 18.

<sup>19</sup> F. K. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 6.

<sup>20</sup> Mrs Trimmer, *The Oeconomy of Charity; or, An Address to Ladies; Adapted to the Present State of Charitable Institutions in England, With a Particular View to the Cultivation of Religious Principles, among the Lower Orders of People*, 2 vols (London: J. Johnson and F. and C. Rivington et al, 1801), I, 5-6.

<sup>21</sup> Dorice Williams Elliott, ‘The Gift of Education: Sarah Trimmer’s *Oeconomy of Charity* and the Sunday School Movement’, in *The Culture of the Gift in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. by Cynthia Klekar and Linda Zionkowski (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 107-22 (p. 108).

<sup>22</sup> Mellor, p. 25.

<sup>23</sup> Elliott, ‘The Gift of Education’, pp. 107-22 (p. 116).

<sup>24</sup> K. D. M. Snell, ‘The Sunday School Movement: Child Labour, Denominational Control and Working-Class Culture’, in K. D. M. Snell and Paul S. Ell, *Rival Jerusalems: The Geography of Victorian Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 274-320 (p. 316).





## Part 1: The Stability of Female Friendship

It is well if I can regain a few Brighton ideas. I go on with every half hour marked out by some necessary thing which I do very carefully, a life which would suit Mary very well I think, but it would soon stupefy me, and though you would not think it, I have not Ideale enough about me to raise me above those dusty walks Channing talks about so I must take care how I walk in them, and I think a great deal of you, of German and of Keble will be necessary to my well doing, and our old maid scheme must conclude it.<sup>1</sup>

### 2.1.1: The nature of female amity

The above passage is from an undated letter of Anne's which appears to have been written to Marianne in June 1829.<sup>2</sup> Enough information is provided for the reader to conclude that, for Anne, as an intellectual woman, a domestic life would not be satisfying enough, neither would a life dwelling in the imaginary realm sustained only by concepts of an 'ideal' world. Anne is thinking of this ideal world when she mentions William Ellery Channing's discussion of the 'tendency and purpose' of poetry to 'carry the mind beyond and above the beaten, dusty, weary walks of ordinary life'.<sup>3</sup> However, Anne is clear that what is important to her is her love of German language and literature, John Keble's poetry in *The Christian Year*, and Marianne herself. Her last comment in the above extract implies that a change in the status of her friendship with Marianne has taken place; between them, they have concocted 'an old maid scheme', which, from Anne's perspective, would appear to be a preferable alternative to the domestic drudgery of married family life. The change in Anne and Marianne's relationship can be traced back to the two months spent together with their respective families in Brighton between December 1828 and January

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<sup>1</sup> HRO, 9M55/F1/15 [n.d.]. This letter is transcribed in full in Appendix B.

<sup>2</sup> This letter is incorrectly archived as c. 1823 and can almost certainly be dated to sometime in the first two weeks of June 1829 and possibly written while the Sturges Bourne and the Dysons were in London. Anne's letter of 16 May 1829 (9M55/F7/16) discusses the fact that the Dyson family are to visit London in June. Anne's next extant letter of 13 June 1829 (9M55/F7/17) discusses time spent with Marianne and Mary Mordaunt in London. In addition, Anne's undated letter appears to have been written hurriedly and is simply addressed to Miss M. A. Dyson suggesting that it may have been delivered by hand. This, together with the fact that Anne talks about Channing and Keble in her undated letter, which she also does in her letter of 22 June 1829 (9M55/F7/18), provides further evidence for the letter having been written to Marianne in early June.

<sup>3</sup> William Ellery Channing, *Remarks on the Character and Writings of John Milton occasioned by the Publication of his lately discovered 'Treatise on Christian Doctrine'*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Boston: Isaac R. Butts, 1826), p. 7; Channing was an American Unitarian minister.

1829.<sup>4</sup> Lady Mordaunt and her two daughters, Mary and Emma, were relatives of Mrs Sturges Bourne and also of the party staying in Brighton.<sup>5</sup> Anne and Marianne's mutual friendship with Mary, who is mentioned above, also dates from this time.

The Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence records that this was the third time in 1828 that the two families had spent time in each other's company, having met in London during March and spent two weeks holidaying on the Isle of Wight in August.<sup>6</sup> Prior to that the only other recorded account of their meeting is in December 1826 when Marianne visited Testwood with her parents for three days.<sup>7</sup> Writing two years to the day in December 1830 Anne describes the 27 of December 1828 as a particularly memorable and significant day for their friendship:

It seems very fit, my dearest, that I should write to you, if it was but for the sake of this day 2 years. Can we ever forget it? with its glow and sunset, and the delicious talks.<sup>8</sup>

Anne is remembering their 'delicious talks' in a language which reflects the poetic sentiment expressed about the natural world, not only by Schiller and Coleridge, but also by Keble, a sign that this memory was formed in the context of what they refer to in their letters as 'Ideale'. This is a very important concept for them both in terms of their friendship and one to which I will return.

The fact that their friendship has become more meaningful to them both from that special day in December 1828 is clearly evidenced by a change of language in Marianne's letters. In February 1829 Marianne, who is still in Brighton after the Sturges Bournes's departure for London, writes to Anne: 'How I will expect a letter' and signs herself 'Ever my very own Annie, your affectionate Marianne'.<sup>9</sup> In a later letter written on 12 March, Marianne reflects on the time she has spent with Mary since Anne left:

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<sup>4</sup> See Anne's letter of 30 November 1828 (HRO, 9M55/F6/41) which mentions the two families meeting up in Brighton. This is Anne's last extant letter until 5 February 1829 (HRO, 9M55/F7/1) in which she describes her journey to London from Brighton.

<sup>5</sup> Before her marriage to Sir Charles Mordaunt (died 1823) in 1807, Lady Mordaunt was Marianne Holbech, the daughter of William Holbech by his first marriage. William Holbech married again to Anne Woodhouse in 1772 and they had one son, also called William (1774-1856), who married Lucy Oldfield Bowles in 1805, one of Mrs Sturges Bourne's younger sisters. Therefore Lady Mordaunt and William Holbech the younger are half-sister and brother. *The Peerage: A genealogical survey of the peerage of Britain as well as the royal families of Europe* <<http://www.thepeerage.com/p3063.htm#i30627>> [accessed 25 November 2016]; *The Peerage*: <<http://www.thepeerage.com/p3068.htm#i30671>> [accessed 25 November 2016].

<sup>6</sup> See Anne's letters HRO, 9M55/F6/9 (5 March 1828) and 9M55/F6/26 (August 1828). See Marianne's letter 9M55/F35/12 (21 August 1828).

<sup>7</sup> HRO, 9M55/F4/22 (24 November 1826) and 9M55/F4/23 (17 December 1826).

<sup>8</sup> HRO, 9M55/F8/32 (27 December 1830.)

<sup>9</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/1 (6 February 1829).

I suspect one great charm I find in our walks and talks is the right of saying as much about you, and talking in the plural as much as I please, and that profound respect she has for you encourages one in saying anything we share.<sup>10</sup>

The affectionate language used by Marianne in signing off and the fact that she now feels able to talk about her friendship with Anne in more permanent terms implies that she and Anne have a new shared understanding of their friendship.

In the mid to late nineteenth century female friendship was seen as an affectionate relationship which helped to reinforce a woman's femininity through its propensity to nurture the 'feminine virtues of sympathy and altruism'.<sup>11</sup> As Sharon Marcus points out, these were attributes which were believed to make women 'good helpmates' for their husbands.<sup>12</sup> Marilyn Friedman takes a similar stance when she recognises that friendship allows its participants to be 'influenced by someone else's choices and desires', mitigated as they are through 'the affection and concern the other feels for us'.<sup>13</sup> In this way the voluntary nature of friendship aids the development of 'a moral attitude of respect' for people who are not part of our circle of friends.<sup>14</sup> However, in the early nineteenth century, friendship between women was also recognised as 'a social bond comparable to kinship and conjugal love'.<sup>15</sup> Marcus describes 'the ease with which women viewed their husbands as friends' as carrying over into 'a propensity to describe friends as spouses'.<sup>16</sup> She also points out that the strongest expressions of 'playful attraction and love' were penned between women who never became lovers.<sup>17</sup>

It is apparent from one of Marianne's letters, written in February 1829, that this type of language was in common usage amongst her friends and acquaintances. In relating to Anne the proceedings of an evening spent at a ball in Brighton, Marianne describes her new acquaintance, Miss Dalrymple, walking about with one of the patronesses with 'her prettiest soft sedate looks, under which her playfulness was lurking'.<sup>18</sup> Marianne relates how Miss Dalrymple talked with Miss C. Long on the sofa and how this made her feel envious, nevertheless, Marianne generously remarks:

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<sup>10</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/6 (12 March 1829). An edited transcription of this letter can be found in Appendix B.

<sup>11</sup> Sharon Marcus, *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 26.

<sup>12</sup> Marcus, p. 26.

<sup>13</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For? Feminist Perspectives on Personal Relationships and Moral Theory*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 215.

<sup>14</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 215.

<sup>15</sup> Marcus, p. 29.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>18</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/4 (29 February 1829).

I do not wish to grudge her anything good, after the tender enquiries I had from her some time ago about Miss Sturges Bourne and the observation on her delightfulness waiting for my assent. I was obliged, as Mary [Mordaunt] said, to praise my own wife. By the by the poor thing clearly envies us, and said very plaintively though merrily, that she never had a wife and never should. Emma [Mordaunt] offered her services but was told she could only be a sister.<sup>19</sup>

It is clear from this extract that Anne and Marianne's special friendship was public knowledge amongst their female peers and it can be assumed from this fact that their respective parents were aware of it as well.

Although Mr and Mrs Sturges Bourne had originally encouraged Anne and Marianne's epistolary friendship, the change in status of their daughter's amity with Marianne may have caused them some disquiet. Anne's parents wanted her to marry and it can be surmised that their lack of social intimacy with the Dyson family in the years that followed was a concerned parental response to Anne's deepening commitment to her friendship with Marianne. As young gentlewomen Anne and Marianne did not have the freedom or the means to visit each other independently and so their social contact was controlled by the plans of their respective parents. It is apparent from the correspondence that, while the Dysons continued to over-winter in Brighton for the next two years, the Sturges Bournes did not join them again. Furthermore, apart from Marianne's brief visit to Testwood in November 1830, there is no indication that Anne and Marianne spent time together either in 1831 or 1832.<sup>20</sup> In a letter of June 1833, Anne laments that they have only met for four days in one year and so are due a 'cycle of longer meetings'.<sup>21</sup> This may refer to Marianne's visit to Dogmersfield in January 1833 where Anne and her family were staying with Lady Mildmay.<sup>22</sup> However, unlike Anne's parents, Mr and Mrs Dyson actively encouraged Marianne's friendship with Anne and the reasons for this will be discussed later.

Anne's reply to Marianne's letter of 12 March 1829 confirms the new status of their friendship.<sup>23</sup> In her letter she encloses 'some scraps' of Coleridge's poem 'Dejection: an Ode' intended to convert Marianne to an admiration of the poet — a further indication of the mentor/mentee relationship which exists between them at this point in time. Anne cautions Marianne that 'they are only for your perusal' and she underlines parts, which, it can be assumed, she particularly

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<sup>19</sup> F36/4.

<sup>20</sup> For the 1830 meeting see Anne's letters HRO, 9M55/F8/29 (November 1830) and 9M55/F8/30 (November 1830) and Marianne's letter 9M55/F37/6 (17/18 November 1830).

<sup>21</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/17 (2-4 June 1833).

<sup>22</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/1 (21 January 1833). The small village of Dogmersfield in North Hampshire is where Charles Dyson takes up the living offered to him by Lady Mildmay in 1836.

<sup>23</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/9 (19 March 1829).

admires herself and wants to share with Marianne.<sup>24</sup> The extracts are written on a separate, smaller sheet of paper and not included in the main text of the letter, which would make it easier for Marianne to withhold the poetry from anyone wanting to read her letter. It is worth noting here that, in the light of Friedman's theory of relational autonomy, this action can be viewed as Anne making an autonomous choice with respect to her friendship with Marianne. She is insisting on some privacy for her intimate thoughts, and, in doing so, is subverting one of the social conventions of polite letter writing: the expectation that a woman's familiar letter is also addressed, albeit indirectly, to the wider audience of family and friends.

Referring to these extracts, Anne suggests to Marianne that 'the first idea has a little obscurity but much beauty, and the whole has true Ideale' and she quotes the following passages as set out below:

O Lady we receive but what we give  
 And in our life alone does nature live  
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud,  
 And would we aught behold of higher worth  
 Than that inanimate cold world allow'd  
 To the poor loveless ever anxious crowd  
 Ah! From the soul itself must issue forth  
 A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud  
 Enveloping the earth  
 And from the soul itself must there be sent  
 A sweet and potent voice of its own birth  
 Of all sweet sounds the life and element.

.....

We in ourselves rejoice  
 And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight  
All melodies the echo of that voice  
All colours the suffusion of that light.

.....

There was a time when tho' my path was rough  
 This joy within me dallied with distress  
 And all misfortunes were but as the stuff  
Whence fancy made me dreams of happiness

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<sup>24</sup> F7/9.

For hope grew round me like the twining vine,  
 And fruits and foliage not my own, seemed mine  
 But now afflictions bow me down to earth  
 Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth  
 But oh, each visitation  
 Suspends what nature gave me at my birth  
 My shaping spirit of Imagination.<sup>25</sup>

Coleridge originally composed his poem, 'Dejection: An Ode', in April 1802 as a verse-letter to Sara Hutchinson, with whom Coleridge was 'hopelessly in love'.<sup>26</sup> Sara was the sister of Mary Hutchinson who became Wordsworth's wife in October of that year. Coleridge revised the poem 'as a sort of wedding gift' to Wordsworth, and it was published in *The Morning Post* on 4 October 1802 addressed to 'Edmund', Wordsworth's poetic name.<sup>27</sup> In 1817 Coleridge made further revisions and published the poem in his collection entitled, *Sibylline Leaves*, this time addressed to a 'Lady'.<sup>28</sup> This is the most well-known version of the poem and the one from which Anne is quoting.<sup>29</sup>

It is significant then, that in spite of very minor revisions in the parts that Anne is quoting from, the wording and sentiment of 'Dejection' remain unchanged whether the addressee is male or female. The depersonalisation of the soul in this poem provides a context in which Anne can situate her friendship with Marianne, which can be interpreted as a union of souls in communion with God through his creation. In turning to the intellectual symbolism inherent in Coleridge's verse, Anne is also contextualising their friendship within a contemporary literary discourse which has its roots in the liberal theology of the Broad Church movement as will become clear from my discussion in the next section. It is worth noting that Anne's articulation of her friendship with Marianne is very different to that of Marcus's evangelical middle-class women, as discussed previously, who sought to legitimise their friendships within a paradigm of Christian piety. Anne is also recognising 'true Ideale' in Coleridge's poem, and, before I discuss Anne's appropriation of Coleridge's verse more fully, I want explore what Anne might have understood by the term 'Ideale' with respect to Coleridge's 'Dejection'.

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<sup>25</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/9; For Anne's extracts from 'Dejection: An Ode' see Section IV. 47-55, Section V. 71-75, and Section VI. 76-86, in *Romanticism: An Anthology*, ed. by Duncan Wu, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998; repr. 2000), pp. 545-46.

<sup>26</sup> *Romanticism: An Anthology*, fn. 2, p. 495; pp. 495-504.

<sup>27</sup> *Romanticism: An Anthology*, fn. 1, p. 507; pp. 507-11

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 544-48.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, fn. 1, p. 544.

### 2.1.2: 'Ideale' and a concept of God in nature

Tod Jones, in his biography of the nineteenth-century Broad Church movement, identifies Coleridge as the probable founder of this movement.<sup>30</sup> He describes this form of Anglican liberalism as being characterised by its 'vital intellectual and liberty-loving impulses'.<sup>31</sup> According to Jones, what is central to Coleridge's vision of the cosmos is the concept of God as the creator of both the visible material world and the invisible world. The visible world is the world of nature, and, being created by God, is infused with his spirit, while the invisible world, which is pure spirit, is also eternal, infinite, and ultimate reality. For Coleridge, then, God is both immanent in the temporal world of nature, to which he has given the reality of both form and substance, and also transcendent to his creation.<sup>32</sup> However, the philosopher Charles Taylor points out that 'a reading of "religion" in terms of the distinction transcendent/immanent' can only be understood in the context of ideas which informed the development of modern secular society in the West.<sup>33</sup> In the pre-modern period belief in a God who ruled transcendentally over his creation remained unchallenged and unproblematic until the European Renaissance ushered in new humanistic ideas which challenged the sovereignty of God by introducing concepts of human agency.<sup>34</sup> These latter ideas reached their apotheosis in the Enlightenment when a 'powerful humanism' affirmed the importance of preserving earthly life on the one hand, while denying the possibility of supernatural intervention on the other.<sup>35</sup> According to Taylor, the rendering of human life as merely one dimensional encountered resistance from long-standing traditions: one of which was the belief in a transcendent God. Romantic writers and artists took up the cause of a world 'denuded of meaning', but the simplicity of the old order was no longer available to them. Western civilization had eroded the previous forms of simple 'naïve' belief and replaced them with other 'construals of moral/spiritual' lived experience.<sup>36</sup>

The poet, therefore, could no longer turn to the 'age-old views of nature' as a source for his poetic images: 'nature which once was prior to the poem and available for imitation' now shared with the poem 'a common origin in the poet's creativity'.<sup>37</sup> Whereas previously the transcendent world had been described by the language of theology and metaphysics, it had now become the domain of the poet who rendered it indirectly accessible to his readers by using the language of the symbol. Unlike allegory, which Keble used in his poetry and which relies for meaning on

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<sup>30</sup> Tod E. Jones, *The Broad Church: A Biography of a Movement* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2003), p. 2.

<sup>31</sup> Jones, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup> Jones, p. 14.

<sup>33</sup> Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 13-15.

<sup>34</sup> Taylor, pp. 98-99.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 371.

<sup>36</sup> Taylor, pp. 12, 371-72.

<sup>37</sup> Taylor, p. 353.

images described in literal language, the 'subtler language' of the symbol both partly reveals and partly obscures meaning.<sup>38</sup> Jones claims that what was important for Coleridge was the ability of the human soul to attain to a 'state of being' in which the individual begins to 'recognise creation as an interwoven system of signs that bear witness to the attributes of the Creator'.<sup>39</sup>

We have already seen that Anne understood the concept of the symbol from her debate with Marianne about the merits of Coleridge's poetry and it is apparent that she is responding to Coleridge's hidden metaphors in her choice of extracts from 'Dejection'. The emphasis on the soul as a mediating power which can reach a higher level of sublime experience of God in nature is evident in the second half of Anne's first extract, the poet having already set up the potential for this experience by defining his relationship with his addressee as an elemental bond with nature in the first part. Anne's underlining of 'ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud' emphasises the beauty of Coleridge's imagery and also serves to personalise the affinity that she and Marianne feel with the natural world. This concurs with Stephen Prickett's reading of these lines when he suggests that the 'glory' and 'fair luminous cloud' are 'the symbolic "wedding garment" of the mind's union with nature that occurs in every act of human perception'.<sup>40</sup> I would suggest that Anne's underlined passages in the second extract augment this idea by invoking the natural senses of sight and sound as receptors of this glorious union. In a letter of July 1829 Anne had praised Coleridge's ability to describe 'the influences of nature on the mind' and to convey 'a great feel of Ideale'.<sup>41</sup> Her underlined passages in the third extract can therefore be read in the light of Prickett's comments when he suggests that references to 'joy' in Coleridge's poetry result from a perception of 'intermittent moments of unity between man and nature'.<sup>42</sup> Edmund Burke, in his *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757), proposes the idea that words could be used to invoke sublime passions in the reader or listener.<sup>43</sup> I believe that, for Anne, the 'true Ideale' which she found in Coleridge's 'Dejection' not only refers to the idea of communing with God through his creation, but can also be understood in experiential terms as a sense of the sublime conveyed through the language used by the poet

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<sup>38</sup> Taylor, p. 357.

<sup>39</sup> Jones, p. 15.

<sup>40</sup> Stephen Prickett, *Coleridge and Wordsworth: The Poetry of Growth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 37.

<sup>41</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/21 (20 July 1829).

<sup>42</sup> Prickett, p. 102.

<sup>43</sup> Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 149, 158-61.



### 2.1.3: Fashioning a virtuous ideal for women's friendship

In an uncertain world of marriage prospects for women Mr and Mrs Dyson recognised the benefits of female friendship for Marianne.<sup>44</sup> Mr Dyson clearly valued Marianne's relationship with Anne, not just for the political titbits which Anne shared with him, but possibly because Anne's higher status furnished his family with introductions to more elite society, as in the case of Lady Mordaunt whom they met in Brighton for the first time in December 1827.<sup>45</sup> In addition, Anne's rational and intellectual approach to life not only benefited Marianne in terms of self-improvement, but, it seems, the whole family. In a letter of October 1829 Marianne shares with Anne that 'we are reading Tucker to be with you'.<sup>46</sup> This remark, which refers to Abraham Tucker's *The Light of Nature Pursued* (1768–1778), recommended to Anne by Mrs Dyson, implies a respectful deference and hints at the possibility of future discussion based on their shared reading. In the same letter Mr Dyson asks if Anne knows Cunningham's sermons and Marianne discloses that her father is 'quite as impatient as me for your letter'.<sup>47</sup> It is also apparent, from an earlier letter written by Marianne, that Mrs Dyson actively encouraged her friendship with Anne: 'Mama has begged me to send you a bit on friendship that she thought would suit you, and that you may suppose I did not read without thinking of you'.<sup>48</sup>

The passage, from Edward Young's *Night Thoughts* (1742–1745), is from a poem entitled 'On Time, Death, and Friendship' which is dedicated to the Earl of Wilmington:

Celestial happiness, whene'er she stoops  
To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,  
And one alone to make her sweet amends  
For absent heaven – the bosom of a friend;  
Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,  
Each other's pillow to repose divine.

.....

Of friendship's fairest fruits, the fruit most fair  
Is virtue, kindling at a rival fire,  
And, emulously, rapid in her race.

<sup>44</sup> Bridget Hill points out that until the 1851 Population Census the exact number of unmarried women in Britain was unknown. However, the official statistics in 1851 show that there were more than a million unmarried women over the age of 25 and reveal a large surplus of women over men. This surplus was increasing and by the second half of the century was seen as a serious problem in society. Bridget Hill, *Women Alone: Spinsters in England 1660-1850* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 2.

<sup>45</sup> HRO, 9M55/F5/40 (13 December 1827).

<sup>46</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/14 (31 October 1829).

<sup>47</sup> F36/14.

<sup>48</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/13 (22 October 1829).

O the soft enmity; endearing strife!  
This carries friendship to her noon tide point,

This extract is taken from the section on 'Friendship' in the poem, and, as well as his male dedicatee, the poet is addressing his thoughts to a male friend called 'Lorenzo'. Here Marianne is applying Young's sentiments on men's friendship to her own amity with Anne. Following Anne's lead she underlines the part that most conveys her own feelings, which, in this case, situates their friendship within a religious context, albeit a classical one. In his consideration of *Night Thoughts* Stephen Cornford sheds some light on why Marianne and her mother might have been reading this mid-eighteenth-century poem; Cornford describes the work as one of the most well-known, influential, and widely-praised poems in the nineteenth century.<sup>49</sup>

What comes across most strongly in the last two lines of Marianne's extract from Young's poem is the belief that true friendship lasts a lifetime and provides a metaphysical bond which endures into eternity. In 'Die Ideale' Schiller praises the sustaining qualities of true friendship with its capacity to heal a friend's wounds and share his life's burdens, while remaining faithful to the grave. These are ideals informed by the philosophical discourse on male friendship propounded by Cicero in *De amicitia* written in 44 BCE: a treatise on friendship which the historian, Albrecht Classen, believes constitutes one of the texts on which 'the entire discourse of [male] friendship' was founded in the Middle Ages and early modern period.<sup>50</sup> He discusses the fact that '[male] friendship has always been a hallmark of high culture, of idealism, and of philosophical, ethical approaches to life' and that the medieval writers, Petrarch, Dante and Boccaccio, were all early proponents of this ideal in their writing.<sup>51</sup> It can be noted here that the friendship which Anne and Marianne enjoyed was also based in an elite culture of self-improvement and centred on shared literary interests and rational discourse, and, apart from Boccaccio, these were writers whose work Anne and Marianne were reading in their adolescent years. This classic Italian literature would have accustomed these young women to masculine ideals of friendship which were also promoted in the chivalric romances of Ariosto and Spenser, which, as previously noted, made a great impression on their young minds. As Marcus points out, female friendship was 'utterly absent from the philosophical discourse on amity' in the nineteenth century and it has become apparent that Anne and Marianne were deriving their notions of what constituted true friendship

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<sup>49</sup> Stephen Cornford, 'Preface', in *Edward Young, Night Thoughts*, ed. by Stephen Cornford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. ix.

<sup>50</sup> Albrecht Classen, 'Introduction: The Quest for a Human Ideal and Value: From Antiquity to the Early Modern Time', in *Friendship in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age: Explorations of a Fundamental Ethical Discourse*, ed. by Albrecht Classen and Marilyn Sandidge, *Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, 6 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), pp. 1-182 (pp. 6-9).

<sup>51</sup> Classen, 'Introduction', pp. 1-182 (pp. 60-67, 181).

from a classical literary ideal.<sup>52</sup> However, it was not just the supportive or intellectual aspects of male friendship that Anne and Marianne were appropriating, it was the virtuous nature as well, and, for them, this translated as Christian virtue.

One of Anne and Marianne's foremost concerns in respect of their growing friendship with Mary Mordaunt was to infuse her with their concept of 'Ideale'. In May 1829, after reading 'Die Ideale' with her as 'the theme of their conversation', Anne remarks to Marianne that 'we talked of the deficiencies, and the Keble's that would do and the general subject.'<sup>53</sup> This suggests that Anne and Mary, and by implication Marianne as well, find something lacking in Schiller's concept of Ideale which Keble's poetry supplies. Earlier, in September 1828, Anne had informed Marianne that her cousin, Mary Holbech, was also learning German. This is a further indication that reading German literature formed part of a young woman's self-improvement in the early nineteenth century. Having read some Klopstock and 'the Ideale' in German with her cousin Mary, Anne remarks to Marianne that they then read 'with very good effect "No rather steel thy melting heart" and "Thy treasured hopes and raptures high"'.<sup>54</sup> These are individual stanzas from Keble's poems in *The Christian Year* for 'The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity' and 'St. Philip and St. James', respectively.<sup>55</sup> Anne writes 'we need not long for any other conclusion', which implies that the sentiments expressed by Keble in these two stanzas somehow complete the sentiments expressed in Schiller's 'Die Ideale'.<sup>56</sup>

Anne continues deliberating on this idea and writing to Marianne in October 1828 returns again to Keble's verses in 'The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity' and informs her that 'the first two stanzas of Ideale come first, and then Keble makes a sort of answer'.<sup>57</sup> To illustrate Anne's meaning I will discuss the first three stanzas of this poem which are as follows:

Is this a time to plant and build,  
Add house to house, and field to field,  
When round our walls the battle lowers,  
When mines are hid beneath our towers,  
And watchful foes are stealing round  
To search and spoil the holy ground?

Is this a time for moonlight dreams

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<sup>52</sup> Marcus, p. 27.

<sup>53</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/14 (12 May 1829).

<sup>54</sup> HRO, 9M55/F6/33 (29 September 1828).

<sup>55</sup> John Keble, *The Christian Year: Thoughts in Verse for the Sundays and Holydays throughout the Year*, 16<sup>th</sup> edn (Oxford and London: J.H. Parker and J.G. and F. Rivington, 1837), pp. 236-37 and 323-24.

<sup>56</sup> F6/33.

<sup>57</sup> 9M55/F6/35 (15 October 1828).

Of love and home by mazy streams,  
 For Fancy with her shadowy toys,  
 Aerial hope and pensive joys,  
 While souls are wandering far and wide,  
 And curses swarm on every side?

No—rather steel thy melting heart  
 To act the martyr's sternest part,  
 To watch, with firm unshrinking eye,  
 Thy darling visions as they die,  
 Till all bright hopes, and hues of day  
 Have faded into twilight gray.

In the first verse Keble frames his question in relation to earthly values, which in Schiller's poem equate with 'Fame' and 'Fortune'.<sup>58</sup> In his second stanza Keble's concern is to expose the shallowness of an idealistic vision of life based on dreams of love and home while there are still souls to be saved. This latter verse has a ring of 'Die Ideale', not only because Keble, like Schiller, uses a poetic language illustrated with images of nature, but also because, like Schiller, he invokes a concept of abstract classical deities as unreliable guides to life, as in the case of 'Fancy' with her shadowy toys. This verse also has resonances of the *wirklichkeit*, or reality, of the poet's broken dreams in 'Die Ideale'.<sup>59</sup> In the third stanza Keble admonishes his readers to reject their visions and hopes for the future, even before they have experienced the futility of them, and he calls them to take the hard path of the Christian life. In effect, then, Anne and Marianne were using the devotional verse of Keble to supplement Schiller's concept of 'Ideale' and the benefits of virtuous male friendship, and, in doing so, were grounding their own friendship in Christian ideals instead of classical ones.

#### 2.1.4: Building the 'fabrick' of eternity

Virtuous friendship, however, was only one of Schiller's sustaining ideals for life; virtuous employment was the other, and it is these ideals working together that Schiller believes are capable of sustaining a young man as he endures the trials of life on earth. In the final stanza of 'Die Ideale' Schiller uses the word *Beschäftigung* for his personification of 'Employment' and this definition accords with current lexicography in that it is used in phrases such as 'eine

<sup>58</sup> See stanzas 7-9 inclusive in Appendix E.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., see stanzas 8 and 9.

Beschäftigung suchen', meaning 'to look for employment or a job'.<sup>60</sup> In his mid-nineteenth century appraisal of the poem, John Herman Merivale remarks that Schiller's friend and correspondent, Wilhelm von Humboldt, reasoned with Schiller that the word *Thätigkeit*, now spelt *Tätigkeit* and meaning 'Activity', would have been a more fitting choice with which to express 'the state of mind to which it is meant to refer'.<sup>61</sup> Merivale records that Schiller refused to change the word, indicating that Schiller's original choice was a specifically reasoned one.<sup>62</sup> In his use of the word *Beschäftigung* Schiller is conveying something greater than just *Thätigkeit*. His word imagery suggests that the act of being continuously employed in worthwhile pursuits equates to creating something tangible that has fabric or form, and, while this form grows slowly on earth, it will come to fruition in the next life.

This was also the view held by the Anglican cleric, Richard Whately, in his *A View of the Scripture Revelations Concerning A Future State* (1829). This was a compendium of lectures about the afterlife, which Anne describes as having helped to clear and settle her own ideas about the Christian life in this world and the next.<sup>63</sup> As noted in my main introduction, Whately subscribed to the liberal theology of the Anglican Broad Church movement with its intellectual emphasis on German historical criticism. Anne first draws Marianne's attention to the text in April 1829 when she asks her if she has 'read Whately like the rest of the world', a remark that indicates the considerable interest amongst the reading public in Whately's new hypothesis.<sup>64</sup> In his text Whately clearly states his opinion that life on earth is 'not only a *trial*, but also a state of *preparation* for another'.<sup>65</sup> He suggests: 'Great indeed must be the change which the best Christian must undergo, before he can be qualified for the society of heaven: but the change must be begun and carried on, as far as possible here, or it never will be completed there.'<sup>66</sup> Christian friendship takes on an important role in bringing this to fruition. Whately believes that it is incumbent on friends to promote each other's eternal welfare by reciprocal encouragement to aim towards a higher state of Christian excellence while on this earth.<sup>67</sup>

In February 1830 Anne is still trying to persuade Marianne to read Whately's text:

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<sup>60</sup> See stanza 11, Appendix E; *Reverso*, Collins German-English online dictionary <<http://dictionary.reverso.net/german-english/Besch%C3%A4ftigung>> [accessed 20 November 2016].

<sup>61</sup> *The Minor Poems of Schiller of the Second and Third Periods with a few of those of Earlier Date*, trans. by John Herman Merivale (London: William Pickering, 1844), p. 57.

<sup>62</sup> Merivale, p. 57.

<sup>63</sup> HRO, 9M55/F8/4 (29 January 1830); 9M55/F8/5 (5 Feb 1830).

<sup>64</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/12 (16 April 1829).

<sup>65</sup> Richard Whately, *A View of the Scripture Revelations Concerning A Future State* (London: B. Fellowes, 1829), p. 207.

<sup>66</sup> Whately, p. 208.

<sup>67</sup> Whately, p. 228.

Do you remember being offended at my making you read his essay on truth to do you good? Still I am not afraid and if you did object to anything you will forgive it for the sake of the lecture I mentioned on the occupations and state of society of the blest – a whole lecture on it and yet not fanciful. But now I cannot tell you, and it only cost 5. 6., and you must get it before you write to me again.<sup>68</sup>

Again, this extract highlights Anne's adopted role of mentor to Marianne which here takes on a very determined quality. In the particular lecture which Anne recommends to Marianne, Whately is suggesting that as the Bible reveals so little of what the afterlife will be like, it is difficult to imagine a glorified life in Heaven.<sup>69</sup> He refutes the idea that the state of rest in the afterlife will be an 'inactive or stationary state' and suggests that 'the desire of some kind of employment,—the desire of improvement and advancement of some kind or other [. . .] are all natural to man' and that 'the blest in the next world will not be changed in this respect'.<sup>70</sup> Whately's comments here can be situated within a wider discourse prevalent in the 1820s: that of *bildung*, the notion promulgated by German writers, such as Humboldt and Goethe, in particular, of the desirability of a life of continuing self-education and self-cultivation.<sup>71</sup> Like Humboldt and Goethe, Whately's concepts are delivered in the context of male education; however, his sanctioning of continuing self-improvement, in this life and the next, may well have been what Anne found so appealing in his writing and which prompted her remark about Whately helping to settle her ideas about the Christian life.

In addition to reading Whatley, Anne and Marianne were avidly reading the *Sermons* (1829) of the Anglican clergyman, Thomas Arnold, who was also a Broad Churchman. Arnold writes in a similar vein to Whately about the value of earthly employment:

For although the actual occupation in which many men are engaged, is in itself the very line of duty; yet they themselves make it unworthy of an heir of immortality by the spirit with which they enter on it. Earthly things are precious, when we use them as the materials with which we may build up for ourselves a heavenly habitation; and the humblest and most ordinary trade or employment may be carried on with such a temper and such as heart, that it may advance us daily on our way to heaven.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> HRO, 9M55/F8/5 (5 Feb 1830).

<sup>69</sup> Whately, pp. 212-14.

<sup>70</sup> Whately, pp. 228, 230.

<sup>71</sup> W. H. Bruford, *The German Tradition of Self-Cultivation: 'Bildung' from Humboldt to Thomas Mann* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. ix, 27.

<sup>72</sup> Thomas Arnold, *Sermons by Thomas Arnold, D.D. Head Master of Rugby School, and Late Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (London: J.G. & F. Rivington, 1832), p. 147.

As well as describing an educational process, the word *bildung* can also convey the idea of forming or creating something, and although Arnold does not use the word in this extract, he employs this secondary meaning to produce a metaphorical picture of the Christian, who, by approaching his daily employment in a right spirit can build a metaphysical edifice for the afterlife.<sup>73</sup> This is an image which has overtones of Schiller's vision in 'Die Ideale'.

Marianne agreed with Anne in liking what Arnold had to say, but she did not share Anne's exalted opinion of Whately as Anne's letter of March 1830 demonstrates:

So you are disappointed and I said too much, and I have reproachful feelings about Mr Dyson's 5. 6. I read your sentences over and over again, and lamented that we should differ at all about it and that I should not know exactly beforehand how you will like a thing. However Lady Mordaunt sides with you, or rather she goes farther (it is very fair of me to tell you so) and therefore I will suppose that you are right and we are wrong.<sup>74</sup>

Unfortunately, the letter of Marianne's to which Anne is referring is not extant, but it can be surmised from Anne's agitation that Marianne has strongly denounced Whatley's views on the afterlife. Anne is grieved that Marianne does not share her assessment of Whately's writing, but with the added weight of Lady Mordaunt's opinion she is willing to concede that Marianne must be right. This extract also implies that Anne is reading Whately with one or both of her parents, who are apparently of the same opinion as Anne about the usefulness of this liberal Anglican clergyman's teaching. In spite of this setback to Anne's mentoring, I believe that, for Anne and Marianne in the early 1830s, the theological writings of Whately, and Arnold more particularly, affirmed Schiller's concept of friendship and employment as sustaining ideals for life. As I will show, this intimate pairing of the two ideals is an intrinsic part of the way in which Anne and Marianne perceive and articulate their own close friendship in their letters of the early 1830s, which, by this time has been extended to include Mary Mordaunt.

### 2.1.5: Extending the circle of friendship

In her directive to the middle-class daughters of England in 1842, Mrs Ellis emphasises that true female friendship cannot exist successfully when it is 'narrowed up between two individuals, and confined to that number alone'.<sup>75</sup> She recognises the bond that exists between specially chosen

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<sup>73</sup> *Reverso*, Collins German-English online dictionary <<http://context.reverso.net/translation/german-english/Bildung>> [accessed 20 November 2016].

<sup>74</sup> HRO, 9M55/F8/8 ([March] 1830). An edited transcription of this letter can be found in Appendix B.

<sup>75</sup> Sarah Stickney Ellis, *The Daughters of England: Their Position in Society, Character and Responsibilities* (New York: D. Appleton, 1842), p 198; Mrs Ellis dates the Preface to *The Daughters of England*, '10 January 1842', and she states that she is directing her observations to the 'middle ranks of society', p. vi.

friends — an acknowledgement which resonates with Friedman's description of the voluntary nature of friendship discussed in my main introduction — but suggests that for this relationship to flourish it needs to be extended through a circle of mutually supportive friends who 'love and trust each other'.<sup>76</sup> Anne and Marianne's social circumstances appear to prefigure this advice. From the late 1820s onwards they realised the benefits of maintaining a social network of female friends with whom they could enjoy opportunities for conversation, shared reading, and mutual affection on a fairly regular basis. Anne continued to value the companionship of her many female cousins, while Marianne spent a great deal of time with the four Sargent girls, who were of a similar age to her and the daughters of the Rev. John Sargent, the local rector and squire of the parish of Lavington in Sussex where the Dysons lived until they moved to nearby Petworth in October 1830.<sup>77</sup>

In addition, Anne and Marianne's letters for 1829 record that, after their time spent together in Brighton with Mary Mordaunt, they each begin an individual correspondence with her. For Anne, her family's regular contact with the Mordaunts meant that she was able to spend more time with Mary than she did with Marianne, especially during the London season. Apart from the occasional petty rivalries recorded in their letters, Mary's inclusion as a mutual friend in their relationship did nothing to alter Anne and Marianne's commitment to their own special friendship. In fact, in a letter of October 1830, Marianne appealed to Anne for the partiality or special attention which Friedman suggests is due to a chosen friend.<sup>78</sup> She writes:

If Mrs Bourne considered our case properly, she would send you some day next month to us with Mrs James, just as you did at Walton, and I have as good a claim as Lady Mordaunt, and friendship ought to gain at least as much as festivities.<sup>79</sup>

Walton-on-Thames was the home of the Mordaunt family and it appears that Anne had travelled there chaperoned by a friend or servant, possibly to celebrate some special occasion. In this extract Marianne is making a claim for the relationship of close friendship as being equally deserving of attention as that of relatives.

For Mary, however, her new friendship with Anne and Marianne proves to be a life-changing experience, not only with respect to her levels of confidence, but also with regard to her intellectual development. In March of 1832 Marianne informs Anne that she has received a letter from Mary which contains

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<sup>76</sup> Ellis, pp. 198-99.

<sup>77</sup> For background on Rev John Sargent's life see David Newsome, *The Parting of Friends: A Study of the Wilberforces and Henry Manning* (London: John Murray, 1966), pp. 119-22.

<sup>78</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 212.

<sup>79</sup> HRO, 9M55/F37/4 (6 October 1830).



all manner of tenderesses and recollections of Brighton 3 years ago, after her own old way, only instead of her childishness, such well-expressed sentences, that the difference amused me.<sup>80</sup>

Marianne was thinking back to the time spent alone with Mary after Anne had departed for London in January 1829 and recollecting the letter she had written to Anne in which she had shared Mary's thoughts with her. Marianne had confided that Mary 'had never been talked to but as a child' and that she knew 'her thoughts were so poor' but she felt she 'could not express them'.<sup>81</sup>

Mary was slightly younger than Anne and Marianne, and, just as Anne had adopted a mentoring role towards Marianne, she was now taking a similar responsibility in her relationship with Mary. Anne's letter to Marianne written in July 1831 tells a very different story of Mary's intellectual abilities. Anne writes that she is reading Klopstock, Fouqué and Wordsworth with Mary 'under the Tulip Tree'.<sup>82</sup> She reports that 'Mary was very dear and so very worthy of the innumerable things we read'.<sup>83</sup> Anne's love of intellectual conversation is coming to the fore here and it can only be imagined from this scant information that Anne is picking out passages from these authors' works as she seeks to inculcate Mary with some deep philosophical concept, possibly 'Ideale'. As Marcus points out, female friendship allowed women 'to develop their intellectual and aesthetic tastes'.<sup>84</sup> It can also be noted that, in line with Friedman's hypothesis on mentoring relationships, Mary is now inspiring Anne's respect with regard to her ability to understand deep cerebral concepts, thereby resulting in a friendship that is on a more intellectually equal footing than previously. In the years that follow this triangular friendship continues to flourish and to provide a supportive base through which these three women can develop their own sense of female agency.

### 2.1.6: Developing 'autonomy competency'

According to Friedman, the concept of relational autonomy can be further divided into two sub-sections: substantive autonomy and content-neutral autonomy.<sup>85</sup> Substantive autonomy is content-neutral autonomy augmented by the fact that the agent is actively seeking to pursue an autonomous lifestyle and is committed to autonomy as a value per se.<sup>86</sup> On the other hand, content-neutral autonomy does not insist on a person being concerned about the fundamental

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<sup>80</sup> HRO, 9M55/F38/2 (26/27 March 1832).

<sup>81</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/2 (13 February 1829).

<sup>82</sup> HRO, 9M55/F9/9 (14 July 1831).

<sup>83</sup> F9/9.

<sup>84</sup> Marcus, p. 72.

<sup>85</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 20.

<sup>86</sup> Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, pp. 20-21.

value of autonomy, but recognises that personal autonomy occurs when a person acts in accordance with those deep concerns which have been the focus of sustained reflection over a period of time.<sup>87</sup> She explains that most people's commitments and values are derived from the 'social norms and conventional practices' of the culture in which they live.<sup>88</sup> When a person engages in critical reflection on these normative values one of two things happens: their reflections either re-affirm society's conventions, or they begin to offer 'the potential for a personal repudiation of assimilated norms', particularly when those standards are oppressive to women.<sup>89</sup>

I want to return now to my opening quotation at the beginning of Part 1 of this chapter in which Anne is bemoaning the restrictions of a life of domesticity and reminding Marianne of the 'old maid scheme' they had devised. Anne would have been well aware that to elect for conventional marriage was to choose a life which, not only subordinated her person and her property to her husband and exposed her own life to the risks of child-birth, but would also have curtailed the freedom she enjoyed to pursue her own rational and intellectual lifestyle. In 1829 when Anne wrote this letter she had reflected on the societal norms and conventions of her culture and decided that life as a spinster based on the affection and support of female friendship was, for her, a preferable alternative to being a wife and mother. While the idea was still in its embryonic form at this point in time, it is clear that Anne and Marianne were beginning to think in terms of autonomous life choices. As Friedman explains:

Someone is more autonomous the more she can succeed in pursuing her concerns despite resistance. Minimally autonomous choice or action requires, then, values or commitments of sufficient depth or strength as to persist somewhat in the face of obstacles and resistance, including those posed by social conditions.<sup>90</sup>

The only resistance offered to Anne and Marianne's friendship at this point in time appears to be Mr and Mrs Sturges Bourne's reluctance to organise face-to-face meetings for their daughter and Marianne, which, given the Sturges Bournes's busy social life, might not even have been apparent to the two young women. As Anne and Marianne's commitment to each other, to Mary, and to their Christian piety deepens, the possibility of living out their 'old maid scheme' becomes more of a reality. My discussion in the remaining part of this chapter, therefore, will be concerned with

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., pp. 19-21.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., pp. 60, 78.

<sup>90</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 13.

showing that there is a trajectory in the way in which Anne and Marianne move towards fulfilling the acknowledged criteria for achieving degrees of personal autonomy in their own lives.

When considered in the light of content-neutral autonomy the ability to think and reason emerges as a fundamental requirement for what Friedman calls ‘autonomy competency’: that is the development of an effective set of capacities that enable an individual to act in an autonomous manner in relation to ‘some significant range of circumstances in ways that reflect and issue from deeper concerns’.<sup>91</sup> In other words, a person needs to possess the capacity for developing values and commitments of their own, which, through the process of self-reflection and reaffirmation become sufficiently part of that person’s identity to allow them to make choices and undertake actions which reflect those commitments.<sup>92</sup> In 1832, Anne and Marianne’s letters reveal a much franker expression of their real feelings than previously, possibly due to Marianne’s need for support, and Anne’s desire to comfort her through Mrs Dyson’s last illness and eventual death in the September of that year. I will use extracts from these letters to show that, by this time, they have both reached a position of autonomy competency.

What comes across most clearly in these letters is that they have internalised Whately and Arnold’s beliefs that this life is a preparation for the next and it is therefore important to work to that end while on this earth. A letter of Marianne’s to Anne in March 1832 encapsulates her feelings about friendship and employment within this context. Writing to Anne about a friend, Ann Ward, who had almost died recently, Marianne expresses some deep thoughts on the matter:

I pity her most sincerely for returning to life, but I am very selfishly glad. Having no idea of happiness beyond home but from friends, I felt it was parting with one of my “store” here though it was to paradise; and that I was losing a constant resource for affection and the highest kind of goodness; after all I may rejoice in it, because as she lives it is right she should live, and she may be happy here, and certainly will be useful to her utmost power.<sup>93</sup>

In this extract Marianne is not just articulating how much she values female friendship on this earth as a source of affection for herself, but commending the goodness which she finds in Ann Ward and her desire to be useful to others. Effectively, then, Marianne is identifying Christian friendship and time employed in the service of others as values which she endorses for herself.

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<sup>91</sup> Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, p. 13.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> HRO, 9M55/F38/2 (26/27 March 1832)

A later letter written in June confirms Marianne's Christian faith as the basis on which she is seeking to build a heavenly future. She confides in Anne that she is 'haunted by that sense of insecurity and necessary change in all that seems to make part of oneself'.<sup>94</sup> This is a reference to the inevitable death of her mother and her feelings of insecurity about the future. She continues:

Comparatively speaking, I am not what is called worldly-minded, strange if I was; the walking by faith, not by sight, setting affections on things above, being pilgrims etc. is delightful and soothing, and encouraging.<sup>95</sup>

In spite of the necessary change which will affect her life Marianne is secure in her Christian beliefs. Through the process of self-reflection and reaffirmation, which is aided by her regular letter-exchange with Anne, Marianne has developed her own religious values and commitments to the extent that they have become part of who she is as a person and has thereby developed 'autonomy competency'. She is now in a position to make autonomous choices which reflect those commitments.

In a similar way, a letter of Anne's written in September 1832 to comfort Marianne after her mother has died, establishes her own autonomy competency as she makes it clear that she is also seeking to live a life based on the shared values and commitments of Christian friendship and virtuous employment:

I do so feel that I must hover nearer to earth and less in light, but I believe we are not to fight against our natural bent of mind, but take it as marking out our lives for us, mine upon earth, yours a little in the clouds. I have sometimes thought I was improved, my pleasures of a higher order, and a more constant looking to duty, and habit of making effort in every thing, and allowing no indulgence that can enervate me. And sometimes I fancy that to work on from right motives is enough without any heights of meditation and communion – but this would be fallacious, and I must remember how Arnold says that doing good is not our chief business here, but fitting ourselves for heaven.<sup>96</sup>

In acknowledging once again their different characters and approaches to life, Anne is situating her discourse in the context of her friendship with Marianne. Anne confesses that while she strives to enjoy the experience of the Christian life on a higher, meditative plane like Marianne,

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<sup>94</sup> HRO, 9M55/F38/5 (7 June 1832).

<sup>95</sup> F38/5.

<sup>96</sup> HRO, 9M55/F10/16 (n.d.). This letter is correctly archived in 1832 and follows on from Anne's letter of 13 September (F10/12) written after Mrs Dyson's death earlier in the month. An edited transcription of this letter can be found in Appendix B.

she feels that she is falling short of this objective and wonders if it might be enough to just ‘work on from right motives’, such as doing good to and for others through habit and duty. However, it is in her closing remarks that the real motivational aspect of her faith is disclosed. Like Marianne, Anne’s over-riding belief is that the object of life on earth is to make herself fit for heaven and this extract illustrates the extent to which Anne has reflected on Arnold’s teaching about the eternal value of a Christian’s daily occupations. In her letter to Marianne, Anne is reaffirming this value for herself.

### 2.1.7: Making autonomous life choices

This same letter of Anne’s tells us that having achieved autonomy competency Anne is also thinking about making an autonomous life choice. Her letter is marked ‘Private’, which, as previously mentioned, not only contravenes the conventions of polite letter writing, but indicates that Anne may have other motives for only wanting Marianne to read the letter. Anne writes:

If for myself, without the ties of kindred or the gilding of high fancies, that will smooth it all for you, I feel that same future to be the most suitable, and that which I wish to wish for and am bringing my mind to, how much more for you. When one’s happiness has not to be reflected to others, it becomes a thing of very small importance. Your fate has made me think, and Mamma too, and when she dwells on the comfort of your brothers, I know what she means. But I think I am made of harder and sterner stuff than you and could better stand alone. For their amusement it would be well that I should marry – for nothing else, and I am well content to think that I have seen the last of real attentions and proposals.<sup>97</sup>

Although the opening lines of this extract are a little unclear, Anne seems to be imagining her own situation in the future after her parents have died. She refers again to Marianne’s ability to live in a higher realm of the imagination than she, herself, is capable of, and seems to be inferring that Marianne’s future will be as a single woman. This is also the future that Anne wishes for them both which she clarifies in the next sentence by remarking about happiness not having to be reflected to others, meaning possibly a husband and children. She thinks that she would cope better with being single than Marianne being of ‘harder and sterner stuff’. Without actually stating it, Anne appears to be reaffirming the earlier idealistic vision of their ‘old maid scheme’. Anne’s last sentence, which refers to the fact that her parents would like her to marry ‘for their

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<sup>97</sup> F10/16.

amusement' and 'nothing else', strikes a rather bitter note and it could be that Anne felt her own wishes for the future were not being taken seriously by her parents.

This appears to be a key decisive moment for Anne. Marianne's fate as a spinster has been sealed by her mother's demise, and, as the only unmarried daughter she has been left with the care of her father. Anne is reassuring Marianne that a single life is what she wants for herself as well and she strengthens this assertion by adding that she hopes she will not be bothered with any more proposals of marriage. As Marcus points out, for women who had financial stability, as in Anne and Marianne's respective situations, choosing female friendship over conventional marriage was often seen as a more attractive proposition.<sup>98</sup> In spite of Anne's lack of enthusiasm, Mrs Sturges Bourne clearly wanted Anne to marry, as indicated in one of her occasional letters to Marianne in August 1833, when, in the light of a recent suitor, she informs Marianne of the 'possibility of Anne's marriage'.<sup>99</sup> However, Anne's decision to remain unmarried is confirmed by the fact that she continues to reject possible suitors, as is testified to in letters written in 1834 and 1836.<sup>100</sup> Friedman has stated that a person is more autonomous if she 'acts in a social environment that obstructs her choices or actions'.<sup>101</sup> In Anne's case she was a young gentlewoman who, according to the role determined for her by the conventions of polite society, was expected to compete with other women at balls and other social functions to find a suitable marriage partner.<sup>102</sup> However, as Anne was due to inherit the Testwood estate after her parents died, she had no actual need of marrying, other than, perhaps, for her parents' amusement.

In an earlier letter written in April 1832 Marianne had admitted that her 'haunting fear' was of a long life and this letter records her struggle to come to terms with the possibility of a single life: one which was decreed by circumstances and not as a result of an autonomous choice like Anne.<sup>103</sup> However, according to Friedman, this does not preclude other choices that Marianne may make about her future from being recognised as autonomous. As well as her main contention that personal autonomy can only be reached when some form of resistance has been overcome, Friedman points out that a content-neutral theory also accommodates a lower threshold for determining the point at which choices are deemed autonomous:

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<sup>98</sup> Marcus, p. 4.

<sup>99</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/36 (August 1833).

<sup>100</sup> For references to Anne having suitors see HRO, 9M55/F11/29 (n.d.), but clearly 1833 from contents of letter; 9M55/F39/6 (1 March 1834); 9M55/F40/18 (30 March 1836).

<sup>101</sup> Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, p. 20.

<sup>102</sup> Joan Perkin, *Women and Marriage in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 6.

<sup>103</sup> HRO, 9M55/F38/3 (27 April 1832).

It is indeed a significant threshold for someone with a stable array of deep and persistent concerns to become capable of reflectively reaffirming her deeper concerns and to behave in ways that accord with those concerns because of those reflections.<sup>104</sup>

She goes on to say that ‘a major qualitative difference emerges with behaviour that begins to be self-reflective in this way’ and that ‘this qualitative difference in agency’ is acknowledged by content-neutral accounts as autonomous behaviour.<sup>105</sup> In Marianne’s case her Christian beliefs and friendship with Anne and Mary reflect some of her deepest values and commitments. When, in 1834, she embraces the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the Oxford Movement, it can be said that she has ‘reflectively reaffirmed her deeper concerns’ and is acting in accordance with them, thereby making this choice an autonomous one for her.

Having made the choice to remain single in 1832 and encouraged Marianne, and, by implication, Mary to do the same, Anne can write to them both the following year expressing a revised set of values and commitments for them to consider in the light of their three-way friendship. In her letter to Marianne of June 1833, Anne addresses a separate page to Marianne and Mary, which, after Marianne has read it, she is to pass on to Mary.<sup>106</sup> Reflecting on her friendship with them both she confides that, in spite of her enjoyment of their ‘real and deep codges [talks]’ when they are together and ‘the looking up to two such minds’ as theirs, she still feels that there is no entire satisfaction and ‘no complete leaning on the best things here’.<sup>107</sup> She continues by saying:

This is the crux of that question – why cannot I stay in the beauty of nature, and what am I still craving for? It is the reason too of what we called this calculating spirit, in talking and friendship – the difficulty of being understood, or talking as one means, or keeping high enough. All this has a deep source, and it is no chance and no misfortune that we are unsatisfied and that we look on, it is to be turned to a very high purpose, and to make us look really forward, but we need not look to a future life for one firm and abiding hold since even here it is given to us. I feel as if from year to year this lesson would be more forced upon us, and would gain strength from every chance and change and trial, and that even our hermit spirits might dwell and move more apart without one particle of love being lost.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>105</sup> Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, p. 21.

<sup>106</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/20 (26 June 1833).

<sup>107</sup> F11/20.

<sup>108</sup> F11/20.

Prior to writing this letter, Anne had recorded that she had been thinking of the ‘wildness’ of her ‘blowy evening walks’, with ‘every object new and strange about me’: in other words, Anne had been trying to draw from nature feelings of ‘Ideale’, but was finding that the metaphysical connotations of nature no longer satisfied her inward longings.<sup>109</sup> She also admits that what she had looked for in their friendship — in terms of a sense of fulfilment from their deep intellectual conversations — only partly meet her expectations now. Anne believes that this is part of a ‘divine’ plan to keep them striving towards a higher goal, not just for their heavenly future, but for their earthly one too.

Anne is now contextualising their three-way friendship within a religious discourse of suffering and self-denial. This is a sentiment made more potent by her use of the metaphor ‘hermit spirits’ to describe their individual Christian lives, which, while being tested by earthly trials in order to strengthen their Christian resolve, will do nothing to change the loving relationship they have with each other. This more abstemious discourse is based on a revised set of values and commitments which is the result of Anne’s deep philosophical thinking about the way in which she sees her future life taking shape. She is moving closer to an understanding of her friendship with Marianne and Mary which, in spite of the fact that poets such as Coleridge and Schiller infused their work symbolically with their own Christian beliefs, is more deeply grounded in the revealed religion of the Bible than in a poetic ideal. In other words, Anne is not only questioning the intellectual basis of her friendship with Marianne and Mary, but also the values which led to the original appropriation of a literary ideal of classical male friendship for Marianne and herself. She is now articulating their mutual friendship in a different context: one which emphasises the rigour of the Christian life and has overtones of Keble’s verses for ‘The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity’, which I discussed earlier.

This is an indication that Anne is beginning to respond to the Anglo-Catholic doctrine inherent in Keble’s poetry in *The Christian Year*. On 14 July 1833, a few weeks after Anne had written this important letter, Keble was to preach a sermon on ‘National Apostasy’ at the opening of the Oxford Assizes as a response to the interference of the reformed Whig Parliament in Church matters.<sup>110</sup> This event is traditionally regarded as the start of the Oxford Movement of which Keble was one of the main leaders.<sup>111</sup> In her letter, Anne is recognising that a new chapter is beginning, not only in their lives, but for their three-way friendship as well. In November of 1834 Marianne’s letter to Anne begins ‘Dear Angles’ and makes reference to connecting ‘3 sides of a

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<sup>109</sup> F11/20.

<sup>110</sup> George Herring, *What was the Oxford Movement?* (London & New York: Continuum, 2002), p. 15.

<sup>111</sup> Herring also discusses the fact that recent scholarship has argued for an earlier nascence of the Oxford Movement in the late 1820s. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-47.



triangle'; Marianne is also thankful for 'the triangle coming and love always'.<sup>112</sup> These sentiments not only express the value of female friendship to single women in the nineteenth century, whether chosen autonomously or otherwise, but demonstrate a new commitment by these three women, not only to each other, but, as my consideration of their triangular relationship in Chapter 3 will show, to the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the Oxford Movement as well. In the next part of this chapter I will continue to consider the period from 1829 to 1833 as a time of transition as I explore the material outworking of Anne and Marianne's virtuous ideals, both in the context of their friendship and in the way in which they employed their time in the service of the poorer classes.

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<sup>112</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/15 (1 November 1834).



## Part 2: Sunday-School Teaching: A Virtuous Female Employment

Early in the day Dorothea had returned from the infant school which she had set going in the village, and was taking her usual place in the pretty sitting room which divided the bedrooms of the sisters, bent on finishing a plan for some buildings (a kind of work which she delighted in).<sup>1</sup>

George Eliot, *Middlemarch*

### 2.2.1: The changing nature of paternalism

George Eliot's *Middlemarch* is set in the years just prior to the passing of the 1832 Reform Act.<sup>2</sup> Her heroine, Dorothea Brooke, lived in a quiet country-house, and her family connections, 'though not exactly aristocratic, were unquestionably good'; she even had 'a Puritan gentleman' for an ancestor.<sup>3</sup> As well as being an heiress Dorothea was extremely devout, and, although Eliot does not specify any particular denomination or creed to which she adhered, she does relate how Dorothea would kneel on the floor and pray for the sick like one of the Apostles, fast like a Papist, and sit up at night reading 'old theological books'.<sup>4</sup> This latter description combines the puritan zeal of a Methodist with a caricatured notion of a convert to the Anglo-Catholic Oxford Movement. Eliot, with her intuitive feel for a particular moment in time and her detailed research into the recent historical past, is effectively giving her readers a snapshot of the world in which Dorothea lived. This imagined realm is not very far removed from the world to which my own heroines belonged, although, at this point in time, their commitment to Tractarian doctrines was still in its embryonic form. In 1832 Marianne had written to Anne that 'the wish to do good' is never 'out of my mind': an indication that, like Dorothea, she longs for 'work' with a purpose and a chance to do the good that her religious beliefs required of her.<sup>5</sup> In the early nineteenth century this was a real possibility for women and spread before Anne and Marianne, as an invitation to

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<sup>1</sup> George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, Introduction and Notes by Doreen Roberts (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 2000), p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Doreen Roberts, 'Introduction', in George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, Introduction and Notes by Doreen Roberts, pp. vii-xxi (p. ix).

<sup>3</sup> Eliot, *Middlemarch*, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Eliot, *Middlemarch*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>5</sup> HRO, 9M55/F38/4 (18 May 1832); Susan Mumm notes that what is clear from women's writing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is that their philanthropic activities gave them a sense of purpose. Susan Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures', in *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, ed. by Sue Morgan and Jaqueline de Vries (London & New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 54-71 (p. 57).

personal fulfilment, was a whole realm of philanthropic activity for women, but, like Dorothea, they gave their time and their patronage to infant schools.

In the early decades of the nineteenth century women of the propertied classes were generally restricted to rural philanthropy having no traditional ties with the urban poor.<sup>6</sup> Dorice Williams Elliott is of the opinion that to supplement this void Hannah More drew on the 'rhetoric of Evangelical reform' and the 'conventions of conduct book literature' to portray her vision of a society where women from the ranks of both the middle and upper classes could administer a new form of paternalism: one that gave them a more central role, while accommodating and serving the needs of commerce as an extension of their domestic duties.<sup>7</sup> As Peter Mandler has noted, there was a 'crisis of paternalism' within English landed society in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.<sup>8</sup> The commercial interests of rural landlords came into conflict with the time-honoured rights of their labourers, thereby causing landlords to abdicate their 'traditional responsibilities to protect (and control) rural communities'.<sup>9</sup>

Jane Nardin discusses this issue in relation to Hannah More's philanthropic activities in the Mendips, demonstrating that More was very aware of this situation. From 1789 to 1803, encouraged and supported by the philanthropist and reformer, William Wilberforce, Hannah and her sister Martha (Patty) undertook a raft of charitable activities in the villages around Cheddar establishing day schools and Sunday schools and devising all manner of schemes to bring relief to the poor parishioners there, often at the expense of their own health.<sup>10</sup> Sir Charles and Lady Middleton were also patrons of her charitable work in the Mendips and Nardin has analysed More's manuscript correspondence with them. Her findings reveal that in these letters, written to discuss the harrowing conditions in which the rural poor subsisted, More had voiced the opinion that both the Church of England and the state were negligent in discharging their duties and responsibilities to the poor.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, when it came to articulating her new vision of paternalism she redefined the relationship between benefactor and recipient.<sup>12</sup> Instead of the act of philanthropy being the 'natural debt' that the landowner owed to the worker for his labour, the

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<sup>6</sup> Dorice Williams Elliott, *The Angel out of the House: Philanthropy and Gender in Nineteenth-Century England* (Charlottesville and London: University Press, Virginia, 2002), p. 58.

<sup>7</sup> Elliott, *The Angel out of the House*, pp. 55-58.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers: Christian Political Economy and the Making of the New Poor Law', *The Historical Journal*, 33.1 (1990), 81-103 (p. 83).

<sup>9</sup> Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103 (p. 83).

<sup>10</sup> Jane Nardin, 'Hannah More and the Problem of Poverty', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 43.3 (2001), 267-84 (p. 267).

<sup>11</sup> Nardin, pp. 267-84 (pp. 271-74).

<sup>12</sup> Elliott, *The Angel out of the House*, p. 58.

language used by More in her writing labelled the ‘favors of the rich as charitable gifts’, thereby inspiring a sense of obligation in the recipient.<sup>13</sup>

More was not alone in using this form of rhetoric. Sarah Trimmer also viewed acts of charity to the poor as gifts which might engender a sense of obligation.<sup>14</sup> Reading Trimmer’s treatise on the *Oeconomy of Charity* in terms of a ‘gift exchange’ rather than positioning it within the context of the conflicting ideologies of ‘traditional paternalism and emergent capitalism’, Elliott argues for a ‘more nuanced and historically sensitive’ appreciation of Trimmer’s work.<sup>15</sup> She points out that recent scholarship has viewed the Sunday-school movement as a form of social control which upheld a system of deferential paternalism between the classes and consolidated the growing power and influence of the middle classes.<sup>16</sup> However, Elliott contends that, while Trimmer did advocate a form of education which she believed would prevent ‘sedition or class mobility’, her underlying conviction was that the poor had ‘a right to be able to read’.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, in giving the ‘gift of education’ to the poorer classes, Trimmer was also aware that the desired ‘interchange’ of ‘benevolence’ and ‘gratitude’ was a risk, as the hoped-for obligatory response from the recipient could not always be guaranteed.<sup>18</sup> It is this risk factor that positions Trimmer’s gift of education as a ‘disinterested’ gift, a status which allows the gift to retain ‘a measure of altruism as a motive’.<sup>19</sup>

### 2.2.2: Mrs More and Mrs Trimmer: emulated or ignored?

Anne and Marianne were both familiar with the work of Hannah More, as a letter of Marianne’s written to Anne in January 1831 demonstrates:

I cannot feel happy that you do not [?digest] Hannah More as I do. Few mines are richer to my mind, more congenial or more useful [ . . . ] I fully answer for you enjoying her if you had tried in earnest.<sup>20</sup>

Marianne might have been referring here to More’s *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799) which sold over 19,000 copies.<sup>21</sup> The above extract illustrates their divided

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<sup>13</sup> Elliott, *The Angel out of the House*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>14</sup> Dorice Williams Elliott, ‘The Gift of Education: Sarah Trimmer’s *Oeconomy of Charity* and the Sunday School Movement’, in *The Culture of the Gift in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. by Cynthia Klekar and Linda Zionkowski (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 107-22 (108).

<sup>15</sup> Elliott, ‘The Gift of Education’, pp. 107-22 (p. 110).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>17</sup> Elliott, ‘The Gift of Education’, pp. 107-22 (pp. 111-12).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 108-09.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>20</sup> HRO, 9M55/F37/11 [January 1831].

opinions on the merits of Hannah More and her writing. Anne's response to Marianne's encouragement to persevere with More's guidance on the moral character of 'women of rank and fortune' can only be conjectured from some of her later remarks.

In August 1831 Anne wrote to Marianne encouraging her to read a book by William Wilberforce which she is sure Marianne would rank among her favourites, 'especially as it reads rather in the tone of H. More.'<sup>22</sup> It might be deduced from this statement that Anne did persevere with Hannah More's writing in the light of Marianne's earlier remarks, but Anne gives no affirmation of this in her letters. It is not until September 1833 that Anne mentions More again when she records reading 'Hannah's 4 vols' with her mother. The work Anne was reading was almost certainly the *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Mrs Hannah More*, ed. by William Roberts and published in 4 volumes shortly after More's death in 1833.<sup>23</sup> Although she declares the *Memoirs* 'very interesting', Anne remarks that Hannah's 'own letters do not particularly strike me' and 'I never could like her style'.<sup>24</sup> It seems that Anne is more concerned here with the style of More's letters than she is with the content; therefore, her criticism can be viewed in the context of my earlier discussion on the art of letter-writing as a female accomplishment. In Anne's mind Hannah More's letters do not conform to the high standards of letter writing that she is used to within her own social circle and her remarks exhibit a judgmental awareness of class difference.

A later letter of Anne's written in October 1834 shows that, from her continued reading of More's letters and memoirs, she has now become aware of the extreme difficulties experienced by Hannah in her Sunday-school enterprise. She remarks to Marianne that her 'admiration' of Hannah 'is greatly increased' and 'rests chiefly on the parish plans so persevered in against such great obstacles and disappointments'.<sup>25</sup> This is where Anne's praise ceases and she continues by wondering if Hannah was 'quite aware of the vanity that [?]spoiled] her character a little' or the lack of humility she exhibited in regard to the success of her books and 'thinking it necessary to write so many books, and therefore in a hurry always'.<sup>26</sup> As Nardin has argued, vanity and the lack of humility in a woman were characteristics frowned on by most of More's contemporaries.<sup>27</sup> They believed that 'women of good character must, above all else, be humble and modest'.<sup>28</sup> This

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<sup>21</sup> Jane Nardin, 'Hannah More and the Rhetoric of Educational Reform', *Women's History Review*, 10.2 (2006), 211-28 (p. 225).

<sup>22</sup> HRO, 9M55/F9/11 (7 August 1831); The book was possibly Wilberforce's *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes in this Country Contrasted with Real Christianity*. It was published in 1797 at a time when he was encouraging More in her philanthropic work. Nardin, 'Hannah More and the Problem of Poverty', pp. 267-84 (p. 267).

<sup>23</sup> See Nardin, 'Hannah More and the Problem of Poverty', pp. 267-84 (p. 269).

<sup>24</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/23 (23 September 1833).

<sup>25</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/21 (31 October 1834).

<sup>26</sup> F12/21.

<sup>27</sup> Nardin, 'Hannah More and the Rhetoric of Educational Reform', pp. 211-28 (p. 220).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

is an opinion that Anne obviously shared. From the above account of Anne's attitude towards Hannah More and her Sunday-school work it is apparent that, while Anne admires her qualities of dedication and perseverance, she is neither impressed by her letter writing nor her copious output of books. This attitude reveals that, for Anne, it was Hannah More's 'incorrect' public face that she was objecting to rather than her philanthropic activities.

It could be surmised that, in admiring Hannah More's writing, Marianne would also have read some of Sarah Trimmer's eighteenth-century educational treatises, but there is no mention of Trimmer in Marianne's extant correspondence before 1834. However, it is possible that the *Oeconomy of Charity* did not come to Anne and Marianne's attention as it was not reprinted after the 1801 edition.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, Trimmer's *The Teacher's Assistant*, which was first printed in 1792 and consisted of lectures in the catechetical form for instructing the poor, continued to be reprinted and produced in modified editions right through the nineteenth century.<sup>30</sup> The fact that Trimmer does not feature in any of Anne's correspondence may have been because Trimmer's writing was addressed to a middle-class audience, and, as a member of the landed gentry Anne had no need of being taught her paternalistic duty.

In the late eighteenth century, the education of the lower classes was a controversial issue; opinion was divided between those in positions of power as to whether literacy would help to ameliorate the widespread discontent amongst the disenfranchised or simply serve to provide a tool for spreading radical dissent.<sup>31</sup> This latter opinion fuelled the 'Blagdon Controversy' of 1800 to 1803, in which the schools established in the Mendips by Hannah More and her sister Martha were publically vilified as 'seminaries of fanaticism, vice, and sedition' by those who, either opposed education of the poor per se, or saw it as the province of the Anglican Church.<sup>32</sup> In fact, More only regarded reading as necessary in so far as it allowed the poor to understand the Scriptures. She also stressed that she allowed no writing in her schools as her object was not to teach the poor 'dogmas and opinions', but only to 'form the lower class in habits of industry and

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<sup>29</sup> WorldCat records no reprints or further editions for the *Oeconomy of Charity* until 1995 when the original 1801 edition was reprinted by Thoemmes Press <<https://www.worldcat.org/title/oeconomy-of-charity-or-an-address-to-ladies-adapted-to-the-present-state-of-charitable-institutions-in-england-with-a-particular-view-to-the-cultivation-of-religious-principles-among-the-lower-orders-of-people/oclc/875139444/editions?referer=di&editionsView=true>> [accessed 21 November 2016].

<sup>30</sup> For the various editions of Sarah Trimmer's *The Teacher's Assistant Lectures in the Catechetical Form, being Part of a Plan of Appropriate Instruction for the Children of the Poor* see WorldCat <<https://www.worldcat.org/search?q=ti%3Athe+teacher%27s+assistant+au%3Atrimmer&fq=&dblist=638&fc=yr:25&qt=show+more+yr%3A&cookie=>> [accessed 21 November 2016].

<sup>31</sup> Alan Richardson, *Literature, Education, and Romanticism: Reading as Social Practice, 1780-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 65.

<sup>32</sup> Nardin, 'Hannah More and the Problem of Poverty', pp. 267-84 (p. 268).

virtue' and 'such coarse work as may fit them for servants'.<sup>33</sup> Trimmer uses this latter idea in her *Oeconomy of Charity* in an effort to galvanise the 'ladies' she was addressing into action.<sup>34</sup> In return for the provision of Charity and Sunday schools that would teach 'religion and virtue' to the poor, Trimmer holds out the promise of 'faithful and conscientious servants'.<sup>35</sup> As Elliott points out, this type of rhetoric implies the 'binding obligations' that accompany the gift of education.<sup>36</sup> However, as previously mentioned, Trimmer also recognised that the gift of education was a risk and this is corroborated by an account in Anne's letters.

In their youth Anne and Marianne both had young scholars to whom they taught the Anglican catechism.<sup>37</sup> Two of Anne's scholars, who were sisters, subsequently became servants in the Sturges Bourne household. In March 1832, Anne relates to Marianne that Maria Dorling, the elder sister, is being sent home from Testwood as she is dying of consumption. The younger sister, Sarah, who Anne reads with every morning, is helping out on a temporary basis. Anne writes that Sarah's 'time is for the kitchen, and I hope she will be in ours some day, but at 15 it would not do to give her real hard work'.<sup>38</sup> Although Anne is giving much of her time to teaching Sarah to read, her comments do not suggest that it is a foregone conclusion that Sarah will stay on and work for them. When, in fact, Sarah was offered the position of kitchen maid in February 1833, she declined it, 'fearing the hard work'.<sup>39</sup> Sarah was obviously kept on in some other capacity as in February 1835 Anne conveys the news to Marianne that Sarah Dorling and the kitchen maid are going, leaving Anne disappointed with Sarah who has been 'tossy and vain'.<sup>40</sup> Anne laments that '18 is the age of follies' and asks whether Marianne can help to find new servants.<sup>41</sup> In this instance 'the gift of education' almost bore the desired fruit in the recipient but it was not sustainable. This narrative not only highlights the problem for upper-class households of finding and keeping good servants, it also demonstrates that, to some extent, Anne's gift of reading to Sarah was a disinterested gift; Anne and her mother demonstrated a certain amount of altruism and even compassion in accommodating Sarah's foibles and reluctance to do kitchen work.

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<sup>33</sup> Mary Sturt, *The Education of the People: A History of Primary Education in England and Wales in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 7; R. Brimley Johnson, *Letters of Hannah More* (1925), p. 183; quoted in Sturt, p. 13.

<sup>34</sup> Mrs Trimmer, *The Oeconomy of Charity; or, An Address to Ladies; Adapted to the Present State of Charitable*

*Institutions in England, With a Particular View to the Cultivation of Religious Principles, among the Lower Orders of People*, 2 vols (London: J Johnson and F. and C. Rivington, 1801), I, 5.

<sup>35</sup> Mrs Trimmer, *The Oeconomy of Charity*, I, 10-12.

<sup>36</sup> Elliott, 'The Gift of Education', pp. 107-22 (p. 112).

<sup>37</sup> HRO, 9M55/F1/3 (16 December 1822).

<sup>38</sup> HRO, 9M55/F10/2 (2 March 1832).

<sup>39</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/7 (February 1833).

<sup>40</sup> HRO, 9M55/F13/5 (25 February 1835).

<sup>41</sup> F13/5.



### 2.2.3: Anglican country-house paternalism in action

Traditionally it was common practice in most rural parishes for the local clergy and gentry to combine forces to provide Sunday teaching for the poor.<sup>42</sup> It was a natural progression, therefore, for Anne and Marianne to move from teaching the Anglican catechism to their respective scholars to taking a Sunday-school class, and, judging from a remark made by Marianne to Anne in June 1832 — that she thought herself ‘inferior to most young ladies’ in this enterprise — Sunday-school teaching was an occupation regularly undertaken by young women in their social circle.<sup>43</sup> In the catechism, which all Anglican children had to learn, they had to promise to obey and submit to ‘King, governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters’, as well as ordering themselves ‘lowly and reverently’ to all their betters.<sup>44</sup> In teaching this catechism to their scholars Anne and Marianne were maintaining the deferential form of Anglican country-house paternalism which they had internalised from their youth. However, while inculcating a subordinate role to the poorer classes, this catechism also confirmed their own more elevated place in the social hierarchy: a position which came with duties and responsibilities and the weight of which Marianne felt keenly as her letter to Anne in April 1829 demonstrates:

Can you discover whether your children are very glad to see you again? I wish I could, but of course they say nothing: I enjoyed having them last week, but I feel so afraid of not doing right; one must think of the Catechism.<sup>45</sup>

This is the first mention of Sunday-school teaching in Anne and Marianne’s correspondence and it clearly shows Marianne’s apprehension about this new role which her social standing demands of her.

Anne’s subsequent letters do not offer any comment on Marianne’s concerns, but Marianne broaches the subject again in October 1829 when she writes to Anne: ‘I wish I could talk to my chicks as you do, I can but teach and use other people’s words and when I attempt talking, I get hot and frightened and stop.’<sup>46</sup> By this time Anne and Marianne have adopted the affectionate term of ‘chicks’ for their Sunday-school pupils and in November 1829 Anne writes a long reply to Marianne:

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<sup>42</sup> K. D. M. Snell, ‘The Sunday School Movement: Child Labour, Denominational Control and Working-Class Culture’, in K. D. M. Snell and Paul S. Ell, *Rival Jerusalems: The Geography of Victorian Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 274-320 (p. 316).

<sup>43</sup> HRO, 9M55/F38/5 (7 June 1832).

<sup>44</sup> Mary Hilton, *Women and the Shaping of the Nation’s Young: Education and Public Doctrine in Britain 1750-1850* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 89-90.

<sup>45</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/10 (25 April 1829).

<sup>46</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/14 (31 October 1829).

Now to the children, I often get frightened like you, the effect is that I talk quick, and instead of being impressive get into the same sentences and truisms that they have heard a 100 times. But both they and I get on from time to time, and now I would let you into the room, instead of sending you to the 2<sup>nd</sup> class not to hear me, but about 6 of them who are so clever, and understand figures [numbers] and similes so well. And then 6, or rather 3 very dear ones out of them, I think about and love, and attend to, while the others who are dull or pert, I ought to take more pains to improve. It strikes me one ought to do more about their characters, but how I do not know.<sup>47</sup>

This is a very revealing passage which tells us a great deal about Anne's attitude both to her teaching and to her scholars. Like Marianne, she also experiences fear when teaching a group of children, which obviously frustrates her as she cannot teach in the manner she thinks she ought to. What is of particular significance, though, is the fact that Anne is analysing her teaching using literary terminology. Anne's love of literature and language is literally overflowing into the classroom and she takes pride in the fact that some of her scholars are clever enough to do sums and understand similes.<sup>48</sup> Although Anne confesses to being particularly fond of three children, on whom she lavishes more attention, she is also aware of the need to try and improve the characters of the less likeable ones.

In the *Oeconomy* Trimmer encourages her addressees 'to exert their endeavours towards producing that good understanding between the poor and their superiors, which naturally springs from the interchange of benevolence and gratitude'.<sup>49</sup> Hannah More's mandate to upper- and middle-class women was similar in as much as she encouraged them to maintain harmonious class relations with the poor.<sup>50</sup> Anne's relationship with her young pupils is still in its embryonic stage, but, by her own account, she is motivated by altruistic feelings and a desire to improve the understanding and character of her pupils. However, the strong affectionate language which Anne uses in respect of several of her scholars also suggests that, even at this early point in her life, Anne is regarding her Sunday-school teaching as an outlet in which she can displace her maternal feelings.

Anne's letter of November 1829 is also significant for another reason: she is articulating her thoughts on the theological works of the Anglican clerics, Abraham Tucker, Thomas Arnold and Philip Shuttleworth, and taking pleasure in the fact that Marianne has very similar opinions to her own about the ideas contained within their texts. This circumstance not only confirmed the

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<sup>47</sup> HRO, 9M55/F7/30 (November 1829).

<sup>48</sup> Anne's letter to Marianne of 16 December 1822 (HRO, 9M55/F1/3) mentions that her young scholar is 'getting on well with her summing and writing'.

<sup>49</sup> Trimmer, *The Oeconomy of Charity*, I, 8.

<sup>50</sup> Elliott, *The Angel out of the House*, p. 55.

validity of their shared religious beliefs, in this instance, but was also gratifying in the context of their friendship. With her 'chicks' in mind, Anne writes: 'I think of you when I walk to them on Sunday' and she also hopes that '¼ before 2' is the time that Marianne is also walking to Sunday school so that, although apart, they can think of it as a shared experience in the context of their close friendship.<sup>51</sup> During the early 1830s Anne and Marianne continue to share their experiences with regard to their Sunday-school teaching, and, in November 1830, Marianne informs Anne that her idea of 'perfect happiness' is to walk to nearby Byworth and teach in the Sunday school.<sup>52</sup> She writes to Anne that 'her chicks are small, very perfect, but without the idea of questioning about what they say, but they take pains and I hope I do when I am there to attempt it'.<sup>53</sup> In her *Sunday-School Catechist* (1788) Trimmer had proposed a more enlightened version of learning which required the child to reflect on the question being asked and to produce an answer which, while still maintaining official Anglican doctrine, would demonstrate their understanding of that question.<sup>54</sup> In his discussion of the catechistic method of teaching children advocated by Trimmer, Alan Richardson points out that this system was prevalent in secular as well as religious teaching in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.<sup>55</sup> In the instance above, Marianne's comments suggest that she wants her scholars to produce considered answers and not just 'correct' ones, an attitude which implies that this type of catechism was known to her.

Marianne's teaching tactics were to follow a method used by her friend Caroline Sargent at the Lavington Sunday school. This involved giving the children 'a subject on which to find texts in their Bibles'.<sup>56</sup> Marianne reports to Anne in April 1832 that the children find it interesting and 'if they bring some [texts] that have no connection you have an opportunity of asking why they did and what they thought about it'.<sup>57</sup> On the other hand, Anne adopted a strategy of reading Bible passages to the children. In July 1831 she writes to Marianne: 'I begged them to make observations, and ask difficulties, upon which one proposed "O generation of vipers", and another, a passage that suited her faults particularly'.<sup>58</sup> This account of Anne's teaching method offers the pupils a chance to ask questions of her in a reversal of the adult/child catechistic relationship. This 'levelling' of education is a subject addressed by Wordsworth in his poems, 'Anecdote for Fathers' and 'We Are Seven', from *Lyrical Ballads* (1798). These are poems which

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<sup>51</sup> F7/30.

<sup>52</sup> Byworth was close to Petworth to where the Dyson family had recently moved. HRO, 9M55/F37/9 (November/December 1830).

<sup>53</sup> HRO, 9M55/F37/8 (November 1830).

<sup>54</sup> Richardson, p. 69.

<sup>55</sup> Richardson, p. 67.

<sup>56</sup> HRO, 9M55/F38/3 (27 April 1832).

<sup>57</sup> F38/3.

<sup>58</sup> HRO, 9M55/F9/9 (14 July 1831); 'O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.' Matthew 12. 34.

Anne and Marianne knew well and which, as I will discuss below, appear to have been influential on Anne's attitude to the young scholars she was teaching.

While there is no indication in Anne and Marianne's letters that they initiated the Sunday schools they were teaching in, there is some evidence of the roles and responsibilities taken on by them. Writing to Marianne in January 1834, Anne advises her that she has 'made over her Sunday girls to Mrs Jennings, my infant school mistress'.<sup>59</sup> This statement indicates that Anne has some authority in the running of her local Sunday school. However, a letter written by Marianne in 1837 positions that authority in the context of an upper-class 'visitor'; she cautions Anne that some faults in the scholars 'are better watched and checked by the school mistress' rather than by themselves as visitors.<sup>60</sup> Trimmer advises that, as well as examining the children on their catechism, 'one Visitor' can 'take the entire instruction of a class'.<sup>61</sup> In addition, 'other books for the amusement and instruction' of the scholars can be used 'at the discretion of the visitor'.<sup>62</sup> Trimmer's recommendations and my discussion of Anne and Marianne's teaching methods highlight the fact that a certain amount of autonomous choice was ascribed to the role of the female visitor in the early part of the nineteenth century.

#### 2.2.4: Cottage nymphs in the classroom

In 1826, Anne's friend and correspondent, Susan Ryder, had set up an Anglican Sunday school in her own local parish of Hemel Hempstead.<sup>63</sup> In March 1830, during a family visit to Mr Ryder, Anne taught a class of girls there in her capacity as a female visitor.<sup>64</sup> Writing to Marianne on the 29 March 1830 Anne describes her Sunday-school class of 'clever and pretty cottage nymphs' as being much like other children except for 'a beautiful Lucy whose language would do for one of Wordsworth's people'.<sup>65</sup> This latter remark is a reference to Wordsworth's use of vernacular language in much of his poetry, and more specifically in *Lyrical Ballads*.<sup>66</sup> The picturesque language that Anne is using to describe her pupils refers Marianne to Wordsworth's idealised depictions of the rural poor in this volume. In a later letter to Marianne written in May 1830,

<sup>59</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/1 (2 January 1834). This letter is transcribed in full in Appendix B.

<sup>60</sup> HRO, 9M55/F41/9 (1837).

<sup>61</sup> Trimmer, *The Oeconomy of Charity*, I, 189.

<sup>62</sup> Mrs. Trimmer, *The Sunday-School Catechist: Consisting of Questions for the Use of Visitors and Teachers* (London: T. Longman, G. G. J. and J. Robinson and J. Johnson, 1788), p. xviii.

<sup>63</sup> HRO, 9M55/F4/24 (29 December 1826); Susan Ryder was a former friend and correspondent of Anne's who died of tuberculosis in July 1828. Their extant correspondence from 1810 to 1827 forms part of the Sturges Bourne/Dyson collection, HRO, 9M55/F54.

<sup>64</sup> HRO, 9M55/F8/10 (29 March 1830).

<sup>65</sup> F8/10.

<sup>66</sup> Wordsworth's 'Advertisement' to the 1798 volume makes it clear that his aim is to 'ascertain how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purpose of poetic pleasure.' *Romanticism: An Anthology*, ed. by Duncan Wu, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998; repr. 2000), p. 189.

Anne mentions her regret that she may never see or teach the girls in this Sunday-school class again, particularly Lucy whom Anne is glad to have known 'as a proof that the cottage girl of a poem does exist in real life'.<sup>67</sup> She continues: her 'perfect elegance of form, and manners, and language, are beyond what they describe, besides the real beauty, and the bright fair skin that looks as if no sun had shone upon it.'<sup>68</sup> The second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*, published in 1800, contained four poems written by Wordsworth, which, though not conceived as a series, have come to be known as the Lucy poems.<sup>69</sup> The fourth one entitled, 'Three years she grew in Sun and Shower', meditates on Lucy's organic beauty of form and face which had been moulded to perfection by Nature herself, and, from Anne's lyrical description of her scholar Lucy, this is probably the poem to which she is referring.<sup>70</sup>

However, as mentioned above, there were specific issues at stake for Wordsworth in two of his poems from *Lyrical Ballads*. Richardson suggests that 'We Are Seven' — a poem centred on a 'little cottage girl' — and its masculine counterpart, 'Anecdote for Fathers', critique the Anglican catechistic method proposed by Mrs Trimmer in her *Sunday School-Catechist*. He argues that Wordsworth believed this way of questioning placed children in an untenable position and suggests that for a child to provide the questioning adult with the type of considered response required, the child is either reduced to lying, as in 'Anecdote for Fathers', or in obstinately resisting the adult's questions as 'We Are Seven' demonstrates.<sup>71</sup> For Richardson, both poems emerge as 'monologic discourse disguised as dialogue' that displaces the authority of the adult and child relationship by reversing those roles while still maintaining 'the hierarchical structure of their relation'; or, as James Holt McGavran, Jr. proposes:

Both narrator and reader [. . .] are offered an opportunity to learn from 'a little cottage Girl' [. . .] and 'a boy of five years old' of the interaction of the human consciousness with the natural world, and of a spirit that pervades and transcends both.<sup>72</sup>

In effect, Wordsworth is declaring the visionary nature of children in these poems and protesting against an ideological construction of childhood, which, compounded by the catechistic system of teaching, denies them the freedom and 'the power' to develop their own creative imagination

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<sup>67</sup> HRO, 9M55/F8/13 (1 May 1830).

<sup>68</sup> F8/13.

<sup>69</sup> *Romanticism: An Anthology*, pp. 326-29. There is also a fifth poem called 'She was a Phantom of Delight' that is sometimes classed among them. *Ibid.*, fn. 1, p. 326.

<sup>70</sup> *Romanticism: An Anthology*, p. 328.

<sup>71</sup> Richardson, pp. 67-69; See Appendix F for the poems, 'We Are Seven' and 'Anecdote for Fathers'.

<sup>72</sup> Richardson, p. 71; James Holt McGavran, Jr., 'Catechist and Visionary', in *Romanticism and Children's Literature in Nineteenth-Century England*, ed. by James Holt McGavran (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1991), pp. 54-71 (pp. 54-55).

and intuitive spirituality.<sup>73</sup> Anne's pride in her own Sunday-school pupils is reiterated in a letter to Marianne of August 1831 when she writes: 'many of them are really girls of very superior talent and understanding.'<sup>74</sup> For Anne, the ability of her scholars to understand and not just reproduce learnt responses would have been very gratifying when considered in the light of her aesthetic appreciation of 'We Are Seven' and 'Anecdote for Fathers'.

It is possible that ideas gleaned from these two poems, the Lucy poems, and Wordsworth's *The Excursion* (1814), which Anne also records reading in her letter of 29 March 1830, led her to describe the Sunday school which Susan Ryder had established as having 'all the moral beauty and sentiment that is wanting to real schools'.<sup>75</sup> Anne's remark about 'real' schools is a reference to the National schools which were being set up in parishes across the country from the early 1820s onwards as a voluntary initiative connected with the Church of England.<sup>76</sup> Her comments may also have been prompted by Wordsworth's advocacy of a system of national education in Book IX of *The Excursion*.<sup>77</sup> In a note to Book IX Wordsworth praises 'the discovery of Dr. Bell' which 'affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect'.<sup>78</sup> This is a reference to Andrew Bell's 'Madras' system of education, a monitorial system in which older children taught the younger ones under the supervision of the schoolmaster. Richardson makes the point that Wordsworth's 'public advocacy of Bell', which was penned in the years prior to the publication of *The Excursion*, needs to be seen as a form of resistance to the secularization of education, a view shared by Coleridge and Southey as well.<sup>79</sup> He explains that, although the Lake poets are usually seen as 'defenders of the child's freedom and imagination', at the turn of the century this system represented a means to cure 'England's social ills and political unrest'.<sup>80</sup> For these men Bell's system of education, which stressed strict conformity to Church of England disciplines and doctrines, was seen as a method which would foster and maintain the 'discipline of virtue' amongst children of the working classes.<sup>81</sup> As Anne K. Mellor has argued, Hannah More's didactic writing, which taught middle- and upper-class women their philanthropic duty and the lower classes their place in society, served a similar purpose.<sup>82</sup> Wordsworth's brother, Christopher, was instrumental in setting up the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in Accordance with the

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<sup>73</sup> Richardson, pp. 38, 68, 71-72.

<sup>74</sup> HRO, 9M55/F9/11 (7 August 1831).

<sup>75</sup> F8/10.

<sup>76</sup> Pamela Silver and Harold Silver, *The Education of the Poor: The History of a National School, 1824-1974* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974; repr. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2007), p. 3.

<sup>77</sup> See Wordsworth's 'Argument' at the beginning of Book IX, in William Wordsworth, *The Excursion: A Poem*, new edn (London: Edward Moxon, 1853), p. 314.

<sup>78</sup> Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, p. 374.

<sup>79</sup> Richardson, p. 101.

<sup>80</sup> Richardson, p. 95.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 101-02.

<sup>82</sup> Anne K. Mellor, *Mothers of the Nation: Women's Political Writing in England, 1780-1830* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana U. P., 2002), p. 14.

Principles of the Established Church in 1811.<sup>83</sup> This society was responsible for ensuring that National schools in England and Wales adopted Bell's educational methods.<sup>84</sup> Anne's views on National schools will be discussed later in this chapter, but, prior to that, I want to examine her views and attitudes to the poor beginning with her response to Wordsworth's depiction of the poor in *The Excursion*.

### 2.2.5: Providence and an idealised view of the poor

In her letter to Marianne of 22 March 1830 Anne reveals her unease with Wordsworth's choice of language in his descriptions of the common people:

The people are too wise for their station and one does not get over such things as the [illegible word] and "happily apprenticed", because he carries too far the union of imagination with common life.<sup>85</sup>

Anne thinks that Wordsworth's portrayal of poor people's abilities with respect to their lowly station in life is too unrealistic. The art and literary critic, Ann Bermingham, also takes issue with Wordsworth's idealisation of the poor in his lyrical verse. She sees it as symptomatic of something much more fundamental to society: the 'unquestioning acceptance of the very idea of a social hierarchy.'<sup>86</sup> In her discussion of the naturalistic style of art prevalent in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries, she suggests that the 'naturalism' of paintings by artists such as John Constable and John Sell Cotman visually reinforced the 'intricate variety of a complex social hierarchy as a reflection of nature'.<sup>87</sup> This visual imagery served to reaffirm both a conservative view of society, such as that promulgated by Burke' in his *Reflections*, and a liberal one as demonstrated by Wordsworth in his celebration of 'low and rustic life' in *Lyrical Ballads*.<sup>88</sup> Bermingham's argument focuses on the simple and picturesque language used by the poet as he empathises with his subjects, but she claims that his poetic sensibility ultimately depends on a nostalgia which views the impoverished way of life of the rural poor from a safe distance.<sup>89</sup> This way of thinking was also reflected in the discourses on natural theology and political economy of

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<sup>83</sup> Richardson, p. 97.

<sup>84</sup> Sturt, pp. 27-29.

<sup>85</sup> HRO, 9M55/F8/9 (22 March 1830); 'Happily apprenticed' is taken from the following lines in Book 1 of *The Excursion*: 'That she had parted with her elder child; | To a kind master on a distant farm | Now happily apprenticed.', p. 30.

<sup>86</sup> Anne Bermingham, 'System, Order, Abstraction: The Politics of English Landscape Drawing around 1795', in *Landscape and Power*, ed. by W.J.T. Mitchell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 77-101 (p. 98).

<sup>87</sup> Bermingham, 'System, Order, Abstraction', pp. 77-101 (pp. 97-98).

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Bermingham, 'System, Order, Abstraction', pp. 77-101 (p. 98).

the period and premised on the widely-held belief that a human being's station in life was determined by God through the Providence of Nature.<sup>90</sup>

This latter idea was certainly the message that came across in a tract called *The Work-House Boy*, printed for the Religious Tract Society in 1825 and discussed by Anne in a letter to Marianne of March 1830.<sup>91</sup> The story is narrated by a 'visitor' who recounts the life of Tom, a young boy who took up residence in the workhouse at the age of four after his mother had died:

Of all the good boys in the school Tom was the best, and by his meek and obliging disposition, his readiness in learning, and the quickness of his comprehension, he soon became a general favourite.<sup>92</sup>

Tom left the workhouse at the age of fourteen and found employment, but, after four years, ill-health compelled him to take 'refuge' in the workhouse again. Here he 'received continued kindness from the master and matron'.<sup>93</sup> Included in the text are a series of letters to his remaining family which are purported to have been written between 1822 and his death in 1824 and tell of his Christian conviction and happiness in the state to which God has called him. One of Tom's last utterances was: 'I trust I shall be taught to adore his providence, and never repine at his will'.<sup>94</sup>

There is nothing written in Anne's letters to suggest that she thought this idealised picture of the workhouse was anything but true, and, in her letter of March 1830, she remarks that 'surely in the lowest classes you would find some such as the "Workhouse Boy", scattered about, though as yet they are few'.<sup>95</sup> Anne had previously sent a copy of this tract to Garton Sargent, brother to Marianne's female Sargent friends, as he lay dying of tuberculosis in October 1829.<sup>96</sup> In a later letter of May 1831, Marianne reported a conversation with Mrs Sargent who 'showed me your book the W. house Boy and alluded to the pleasure it had given Garton towards the last'.<sup>97</sup> Anne's further acceptance of both the providential order, and the benevolent sanctuary of the workhouse, is illustrated by a letter written in December 1833. She advises Marianne, in a very matter of fact way, that one of her scholars, Emma Beare, 'is going in all her beauty to the new

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<sup>90</sup> Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103 (pp. 86-89).

<sup>91</sup> HRO, 9M55/F8/8 (March 1830).

<sup>92</sup> *The Work-House Boy; Containing His letters, with a Short Account of Him, by the author of "Friendly Advice to Parents on the management and Education of their Children"* (London: J. Nisbet, 1825), p. 6.

<sup>93</sup> *The Work-House Boy*, p. 6.

<sup>94</sup> *The Work-House Boy*, p. 39.

<sup>95</sup> F8/8.

<sup>96</sup> HRO, 9M55/F36/13 (22 October 1829).

<sup>97</sup> HRO, 9M55/F38/1 (22 May 1831). This letter should be catalogued F37 and filed with the letters of 1831 not 1832.



workhouse, too far to come to school I think'.<sup>98</sup> If this is the same Emma Beare, aged fifteen, who is shown in the entries for the workhouse in the 1841 census for Testwood, she would have been just seven when she went there.<sup>99</sup>

This providential attitude to the poor is further reflected in some of the language used by Anne in her letters of the early 1830s. In 1831, during the passage of the Reform Bill through parliament, Anne is discussing the civil unrest in the country in terms of how it affects her happiness and the happiness of her family and social circle. She appears to be aware of the gravity of the situation and some of her letters discuss the riots occurring up and down the country which could affect their personal safety and that of the landed classes generally.<sup>100</sup> Anne confides to Marianne in March 1831 that at the moment the country's politics 'are as dark as possible', but she is relieved that 'it has not interfered yet, that I can see, with any body's happiness, and I yet hope it may not'.<sup>101</sup> To our modern way of thinking this statement seems very unfeeling in the light of the harsh realities suffered by the working poor in the early nineteenth century, but Anne was simply articulating the belief that with her social standing came the right to happiness. This view was premised on the theories that underpinned a concept of Christian political economy, which, in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, was derived from the intellectual theorizing of the Oriel College Noetics.

In order to construct their hypothesis the Noetics combined the disciplines of natural theology and political economy and had recourse to both Scriptural evidence and the inferences which could be inferred by moral reasoning.<sup>102</sup> Drawing on the work of Thomas Malthus, who believed that humanity was condemned to 'a bare subsistence' by 'the principle of population', they reasoned that 'the natural progress of human achievement' could only be attained by working towards higher levels of virtue.<sup>103</sup> This was a reversible state from which it was possible to rise through individual 'industry and prudence' in order to reap not only material rewards but spiritual ones as well.<sup>104</sup> By this reasoning, wealth served as a 'visible token of virtue'.<sup>105</sup> However, those who chose not to pursue the upward course through idleness engendered their own fate and had to be left to reap the just rewards from their lack of industry; human governments were powerless to create virtue but they could destroy it by institutionalising what should be a matter

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<sup>98</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/34 (24 December 1833).

<sup>99</sup> HRO, 1841 census on microfiche M186.

<sup>100</sup> See for example HRO, 9M55/F12/17 (n.d.) and 9M55/F12/19 (n.d.). These two letters are catalogued in 1834, but from the contents they are clearly from the early part of 1831.

<sup>101</sup> HRO, 9M55/F9/3 (21 March 1831).

<sup>102</sup> Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103 (pp. 86-87).

<sup>103</sup> Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103 (pp. 87, 89).

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

left to Providence and not Christian charity.<sup>106</sup> There is an example of this way of thinking in Anne's letter to Marianne of 15 January 1837. Anne writes critically of a Lady B. who lent a Miss Clark £20 instead of the £10 asked for: 'there are some people who cannot be helped and if poverty is their own fault it is not right to give them more than maintenance.'<sup>107</sup> This same thought process which blamed the poor for their own poverty also sanctioned the right of the virtuous — who were providentially the wealthy — to constitute the ruling hegemony. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the virtuous were also endowed with 'special attributes' that differentiated them 'qualitatively from the lower ranks'.<sup>108</sup>

One of the principles that the Noetics discussed in their writing and which underpinned the rationale for the new Poor Law Act of 1834 was the interrelatedness of virtue and happiness. Virtue was seen as a pre-requisite to happiness, for 'only through the medium of virtue, can any substantial or lasting happiness be realized.'<sup>109</sup> This was the opinion of Thomas Chalmers, who, though a Church of Scotland divine, embraced Noetic thinking.<sup>110</sup> In his study of Christian political economy, Anthony Waterman points out that Chalmers's main contributions to this concept were made at a time 'when it was necessary to distinguish its ethical tradition clearly from that of Philosophic Radicals', and that Chalmers, like Whately, believed that 'Man is not a utilitarian either in his propensities or his principles [. . .] Virtue is not right, because it is useful; but God hath made it useful, because it is right.'<sup>111</sup> The premise on which happiness was based was a strongly debated subject in the nineteenth century and had its roots in two schools of thought: one centred on the law of God, as discussed above; while the other was premised on the law of utility. Anglican clerics could preach that the route to human happiness was through virtuous living and actions, but those of a Utilitarian persuasion believed the Benthamite maxim that happiness could be legislated for in economic terms.<sup>112</sup> Bentham was a dissenter and his principle of 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' was formulated as an 'objective standard' which would reconcile the happiness of the individual with that of public interest.<sup>113</sup> However, for the ruling classes the reward of virtue was not only wealth, but happiness and security as well,

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<sup>106</sup> Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103 (pp. 87, 89).

<sup>107</sup> HRO, 9M55/F14/2 (15 January 1837).

<sup>108</sup> Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103 (pp. 87-89).

<sup>109</sup> Thomas Chalmers, *On the Power, Wisdom and Goodness of God, as Manifested in the Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral and Intellectual Constitution of Man*, 2 vols (London, William Pickering, 1833), II, 66.

<sup>110</sup> Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103 (fn. 20, p. 86).

<sup>111</sup> Anthony Michael C. Waterman, *Revolution, economics and religion: Christian Political Economy, 1798-1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 249; Chalmers, *The Bridgewater Treatises, Treatise 1*, II, 65-66; quoted in Waterman, p. 249.

<sup>112</sup> F. Rosen, 'Individual Sacrifice and the Greatest Happiness: Bentham on Utility and Rights', *Utilitas*, 10.2 (1998), 129-43 (p. 130).

<sup>113</sup> Rosen, pp. 129-43 (p. 130).

views which Anne appears to share.<sup>114</sup> In a letter written to Marianne at the end of 1831 she is reflecting on a bad outbreak of cholera in Sunderland and a year of riots in Poland, Britain, and France; however, she insists that 'we have a right to be sanguine in as much as we may probably have to live through a time of much greater change than our country has lately seen.'<sup>115</sup> Her letter continues 'some of our tory friends are very happy and call this the calm of indifference'.<sup>116</sup> These views support the belief that, as members of the virtuous ruling class, their privileged position in society is ordained by Providence.

Early in his political career Mr Sturges Bourne had been responsible for two Parliamentary Bills designed to make administrative amendments to the Poor Law. These were passed in 1818 and 1819, respectively, and known as the Sturges Bourne Acts.<sup>117</sup> Mandler has analysed the role played by Sturges Bourne in this undertaking and believes that he, together with the other commissioners, 'shared intellectual roots with the Noetics'.<sup>118</sup> These non-compulsory Acts allowed electing parishes to make changes to the way in which poor relief was administered by the introduction of 'select vestries' of property-owning ratepayers and the employment of waged assistant overseers.<sup>119</sup> The legislation was designed to restrict the amount of poor relief paid out in each parish, and, selection of worthy recipients could be determined by 'the character and conduct' of the applicants — 'the idle and the profligate' being deemed unworthy.<sup>120</sup> This criterion is in line with the Noetic reasoning that each individual is responsible for the rewards of their own industry. The historian, David Filtness, believes that the 'critical importance' of the Sturges Bourne Acts has only been recognised in recent years.<sup>121</sup> He argues that as well as reflecting the prevalent early nineteenth-century discourse on self-help as the 'accepted approach to ameliorating poverty', these Acts also played a vital role in shaping 'the discursive background to the Poor Law Reform Act of 1834'.<sup>122</sup> In the light of his previous experience, William Sturges Bourne was one of the commissioners appointed, in 1832, by the reformed Whig government to investigate the failings of the existing Poor Law.<sup>123</sup> According to Mandler, the

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<sup>114</sup> Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103 (p. 101).

<sup>115</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/19 (n.d.). This is another of the small group of letters which have been incorrectly catalogued in 1834 as the subject matter clearly refers to events which happened in the autumn/winter of 1831.

<sup>116</sup> F12/19.

<sup>117</sup> Samantha A. Shave, 'The Impact of Sturges Bourne's Poor Law Reforms in Rural England', *The Historical Journal*, 56.2 (2013), 399-429 (p. 400).

<sup>118</sup> Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103 (pp. 93, 98).

<sup>119</sup> Shave, pp 399-429 (p. 400).

<sup>120</sup> Shave, pp 399-429 (p. 403).

<sup>121</sup> David Filtness, 'Poverty, savings banks and the development of self-help, c. 1775-1834' (doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, Queen's College, 2013)

<<http://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.590240>> [accessed 19 September 2016], pp. 20, 194.

<sup>122</sup> Filtness, pp. 20, 206.

<sup>123</sup> Mandler, 'Tories and Paupers', pp. 81-103 (p. 98).

findings of this committee under-pinned the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.<sup>124</sup> Anne's apparent unconcern for the lot of the poor in 1831 can be seen, therefore, as a reflection of her belief in a Providential order for mankind and the liberal Anglican theology imbibed from her youth. However, by the beginning of 1834, a change can be noted in her attitude to the poorer classes which is shown by her increasing desire to be more involved with the educational welfare of her Sunday-school pupils. This can be attributed to the emerging doctrine of the Oxford Movement.

### 2.2.6: 'I am very particular about my rights of interfering with poor'

There is little mention of Anne's Sunday-school teaching in her letters of 1833. Mr Sturges Bourne's parliamentary business and the demands of polite society had kept Anne and her family in London for the first half of the year and this is reflected in the topics discussed by Anne in her letters to Marianne. As Susan Mumm has pointed out, the actual commitment of middle- and upper-class women to philanthropy could be spasmodic and was often dictated by other activities such as the social season or travel.<sup>125</sup> However, at the beginning of 1834 a change in Anne's epistolary discourse with Marianne can be noted; Anne is no longer writing about polite society and contemporary literature but is now assailing Marianne with opinions and questions about the new *Tracts for the Times* which she knows to be connected with Oriel College, Oxford. Like the Noetic school, the Oxford Movement had its beginnings at Oriel in the first two decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>126</sup> Anne appears to be puzzled by the divisions which the *Tracts* have incurred amongst these Oxford men. Writing to Marianne in December 1833 she remarks: 'It is very odd how all those Oriel men have split. I wonder if they ever thought alike, or how Arnold and Whately put their Church sentiments to sleep.'<sup>127</sup> Anne's latter remark may refer to the fact that Arnold and Whately were both looking to reform the Church of England: Arnold with a new model of a National church which tolerated 'a wide divergence of beliefs and practices'; and Whately, who proposed the separation of the Church from the legislative body of the State.<sup>128</sup> As the Tractarian scholar George Herring points out, the changes which were being promulgated in the *Tracts for the Times* represented just one set of ideas among many in the 1830s.<sup>129</sup> He argues that what the High Church leaders of the Oxford Movement offered as an academic and clerical solution to the divisions in the Church was 'their own ecclesiastical version of Tory Radicalism':

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., pp. 99-100.

<sup>125</sup> Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures', pp. 54-71 (p. 62).

<sup>126</sup> Tod E. Jones, *The Broad Church: A Biography of a Movement* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2003), p. 56.

<sup>127</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/34 (24 December 1833).

<sup>128</sup> George Herring, *What was the Oxford Movement?* (London & New York: Continuum, 2002), pp. 15-16; Jones, p. 90.

<sup>129</sup> Herring, p. 23.

that is to say, their vision combined extreme conservatism with unprecedented radicalism as they sought to bring the teachings of the early Church Fathers and the seventeenth-century divines back to the Anglican Church.<sup>130</sup> Herring also suggests that the Oxford Movement is characterised by its rejection of the Protestant Reformation and its glorification of the Catholic past.<sup>131</sup> This was a time when the word 'Catholic' simply implied a universal church.

In spite of her reservations, it appears that Anne's reading of the *Tracts* galvanised her into a renewed commitment to the education of the poor. The scale of Anne's vision is highlighted in a letter written to Marianne, dated 2 January 1834. In this letter Anne is replying to some comments that Elizabeth Dyson, Marianne's sister-in-law, had made in Marianne's previous letter. Anne writes excitedly:

Elizabeth makes my mouth water talking of National School. Afraid of it – no – so that by subscription, or by situation like hers, I had a right to interfere – I am very particular about my rights of interfering with poor etc., but I love authority.<sup>132</sup>

It can be noted that the tone of Anne's letter has become more authoritative in respect of the poor. This may be the result of reading Newman's directive in his tract on the Catholic Church where he writes: 'Complete our Lord's declaration concerning the nature of His kingdom, and you will see it is not at all inconsistent with the duty of our active and zealous interference in matters of this world.'<sup>133</sup> It could be that, emboldened by Newman's encouragement to 'zealous interference' in worldly matters, Anne has applied this to her own paternalistic right to teach the children of her parish the tenets of the Anglican faith. Anne's reference to National schools in her letter is in the context of patronage; Elizabeth Dyson, as an Anglican clergyman's wife, would have been in a better position to have an educational input than Anne, but Anne would have been able to contribute by subscription or other means to the establishing and maintaining of a National school in her locality.<sup>134</sup>

Anne's letter of 2 January 1834 continues:

I sometimes comfort myself with the faults and failures of the National system, when I think of our unprovided state here. I should like to have one not appreciated, and then I could alter the ways and books, though I think I want no books out of the society except if

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<sup>130</sup> Herring, pp. 9, 30-31.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., pp. 1-2.

<sup>132</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/1 (2 January 1834).

<sup>133</sup> *Tract 2* (9 September 1833), 'The Catholic Church', in *Tracts for the Times by Members of the University of Oxford* (London and Oxford: J. G. and F. Rivington, and J. H. Parker, 1834), I, (1833-34).

<sup>134</sup> Silver and Silver, p. 3.

I could find them reading class books for older children on common subjects – not directly religious [. . .] I think my beau ideal would be a clever dame, or rather girl who would have no system but what I told her and a moderate no. of girls not taking places and then constantly teaching.<sup>135</sup>

In this extract Anne is making the point that, while her Sunday school lacks resources and the National schools do not, the latter system is not proving to be the educational panacea dreamt of in the first decades of the nineteenth century. In fact, as Richardson has observed, in the late 1820s Wordsworth and Coleridge recanted their original support for Bell's Madras system believing that the rigidity and emphasis on instruction in the National schools detrimentally affected the child's imaginative development and possibly aggravated 'the social ills it set out to remedy'.<sup>136</sup> Anne, with her love of authority, is musing on how she would run her own school system as an alternative to the National one. Although she favours the monitorial form of teaching, Anne's vision is much broader than the narrow religious teaching on which these schools were premised.<sup>137</sup> Books from the National society, therefore, were to be excluded. While Anne never becomes a schoolmistress in the sense she is talking about, she is able to live out the vision in her fictional writing. As I will discuss in Chapter 3, Anne's eponymous heroine, Olive Lester, fulfils Anne's educational fantasy by adopting the teaching methods, described below, in a slightly later letter of Anne's.

Confident in her ability to provide a suitable education for children of the poorer classes, Anne would enlist the help of an all-female staff. In a vision of female autonomy, her desire to be in complete control of proceedings dispenses with the need for male authority. Anne shows herself even more progressive when she writes to Marianne in May 1834:

I saw no good spelling lessons at Nisbet's and therefore send you some out of those used at the Lancaster schools. The whole set is rather elaborate, and is the instrument by which such great proficiency is attained there – the monitors being trained to teach upon each board giving lessons on every word and texts on every Scripture one, the result of which is a wonderful correctness of language, and understanding of words and things. I do not see why all this is not transplantable into national schools, of course the system is beyond us, but you will find the easier part of great use, and if you will ask questions upon each word after it has been well spelt in class, (each a letter, and then in chorus), A.

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<sup>135</sup> F12/1.

<sup>136</sup> Richardson, pp. 103-04.

<sup>137</sup> Sturt, pp. 28-29.

[?child's name] will soon learn to do it and they will at least know a few things thoroughly, no matter if they are but chairs and tables.<sup>138</sup>

Joseph Lancaster was a Quaker and he gave his name to the schools run on the monitorial system of education which he had devised at the same time as Bell was developing his Madras system; however, the two systems were conceived independently of each other.<sup>139</sup> Anne is not allowing her judgement about the value and proficiency of the spelling lessons to be clouded by the fact that the material was developed for use in dissenting schools. The fact that she is actually sending Marianne lessons on spelling indicates that their Sunday-school remit has now been enlarged. Whether that was down to the influence they had as upper-class visitors to their respective schools is not clear, but, what does emerge from this discussion is that Anne is beginning to think and act in a more autonomous way in relation to her Sunday-school teaching.

In her discussion of relational autonomy, Marilyn Friedman suggests that while a woman might become more autonomous in respect of particular traditions, values, or authority, the act of doing so does not preclude a dependency on other people or relationships, nor does it refute a woman's own social history or hinder her own personal development.<sup>140</sup> In my next chapter I will discuss a change in the dynamics of Anne and Marianne's epistolary relationship as Anne's dependency on Marianne's friendship reaches a new level. In a reversal of their mentor/mentee relationship Anne begins to rely on Marianne's theological knowledge to assist her with teaching the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the Oxford Movement to her Sunday-school pupils. Marianne has now become the more authoritative figure with respect to Church doctrine due to the fact that her half-brother, the Rev. Charles Dyson, and his wife Elizabeth, are intimate friends and correspondents of Keble and other leaders of the Oxford Movement.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/8 (May 1834); Nisbets was a bookseller in Berners Street London. There is an edited transcription of this letter in Appendix B.

<sup>139</sup> Richardson, p. 91.

<sup>140</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 104.

<sup>141</sup> John Taylor Coleridge, *A Memoir of the Rev John Keble, M. A., Late Vicar of Hursley* (Oxford & London: James Parker, 1869), pp. 35-45.





## Chapter 3: Fulfilling the Ideals of Youth: Epistolary Friendship and the Oxford Movement

Our stars have certainly decreed that we are not to know each other after the fashion of other people that we are to write more words than we shall ever speak.<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

Anne wrote these words to Marianne on 2 January 1834 at the start of a year that was to usher in some important changes to the way in which they perceived their close friendship. In this extract Anne is recognising the importance of her correspondence with Marianne as the vehicle which allows them to maintain and develop their amity. She is also implying a greater significance for the future due to the fact that, towards the close of 1833, Anne, Marianne and Mary's three-way epistolary friendship acquired a more formal standing: one which can be loosely described as a sisterhood and can be seen as a response to the new Anglican High-Church teaching emerging in the *Tracts for the Times*. This change in the status of their friendship can be seen in the light of my earlier discussions, both as a further progression in their individual and collective moral development, and as exhibiting a degree of autonomous choice. However, in this relational context, the early *Tracts* provoked a measure of disharmony in their epistolary network. Anne found it difficult to reconcile both the political nature of the *Tracts* and the new ideas about Church doctrine with her existing Anglican beliefs. On the other hand, it is evident from the excited tone of Marianne's letters that she finds Tractarian theology rejuvenating, not only for the Anglican Church, but for her personal faith as well. This is a situation which might have caused a rift in a nominal friendship, but, as I hope to show, Anne and Marianne's deep commitment to their own friendship and to their epistolary triangle with Mary was too strong to be overpowered by any such disagreements between them.

Although Mary is frequently mentioned in Anne and Marianne's correspondence, her reaction to Tractarian teaching can only be surmised from their discussions. Nevertheless, a few of their letters do contain comments written by Mary when she was present at the point of writing and it seems fitting to give her a voice, albeit a retrospective one, at the beginning of this chapter. In October 1840, as her contribution to Marianne's letter to Anne, Mary wrote the following words:

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<sup>1</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/1 (2 January 1834). This letter is transcribed in full in Appendix B.

We have been agreeing how wonderfully we find the visions and cravings of our youth fulfilled to us by Her [the Church] views as She sets them before us, and how wonderfully it contributes to happiness and satisfaction.<sup>2</sup>

In this passage Mary is adopting the Tractarian way of referring to the Anglican Church as the 'Mother Church' and her words are an important testimony to the fact that she and Marianne believe that the ideals of their youth — female friendship and a shared vision of lives lived in service to the poor — have now been fulfilled by a Church reinvigorated by the teachings of the Oxford Movement.<sup>3</sup> The Church of England, now cast in a female nurturing role, had provided these unmarried women with an important philanthropic part to play in the practical outworking of the Church's calling to educate and bring the lower orders into the fold: a mission that, as we will see, is also promulgated in the collaborative fictional writing they undertake with Anne.

In this same letter Marianne and Mary had also been discussing the way in which they had come to a quiet acceptance of Anglo-Catholic doctrine through their reading of 'old writers of Church history'.<sup>4</sup> Marianne writes, 'I hear Her voice and do not question whence it comes', although, she tells Anne, Mary suspects that 'you will ask where She is speaking from'.<sup>5</sup> The playfulness of this latter comment is born out of the familiarity engendered by Anne, Marianne and Mary's long and faithful epistolary friendship and refers to Anne's need to have things explained rationally. The remark itself was prompted by Anne's previous letter in which she had expressed her desire to have Church doctrine defined in such a manner that she could teach it to her Sunday-school pupils.<sup>6</sup> Marianne remembers them 'having the same difficulty a few years back' and she advises Anne that to get 'familiarized with ideas and digest them gradually by reading such things as She [the Church] alludes to, [is] better than [?]always] going straight into a controversial argument'.<sup>7</sup> However, in the early days of the Oxford Movement, it was not only the political nature of Anglo-Catholic theology that Anne struggled with, it was its mystical element as well. This is an area I will discuss in some detail as it has a significant bearing on the different ways in which Anne and Marianne understand Anglo-Catholicism. The doctrinal inconsistencies in the *Tracts* and sermons of the main leaders were also a point of contention for Anne. As George Herring points out, 'a Tractarian "creed" did not emerge, fully formed, in 1833' or at any other time; in fact, many of the ideas put forward by the Movement's leaders took years and sometimes decades to come to fruition, by which time the exponent could have changed his original position, as in Newman's

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<sup>2</sup> HRO, 9M55/F44/2 (24 October 1840).

<sup>3</sup> There are numerous analogies to the Church of England as the 'Mother' Church in Keble's *The Christian Year*.

<sup>4</sup> F44/2.

<sup>5</sup> F44/2.

<sup>6</sup> HRO, 9M55/F17/16 (August 1840).

<sup>7</sup> F44/2.

case with his conversion to the Roman Catholic Church in 1845.<sup>8</sup> Marianne's letter of October 1840 makes it clear that she and Mary found it helpful to consult older texts on Church history to aid their understanding and she advises Anne to do the same.

Marilyn Friedman claims that friendship can broaden our empirical basis for evaluating both our existing moral guidelines and new alternatives offered to us.<sup>9</sup> One of my aims in this chapter is to explore ways in which Anne and Marianne's friendship offers them opportunities for moral growth. Friedman explains that because friends differ from each other in many ways, each friend 'conceptualizes experience and comprehends its significance in terms that are at least different from one's own'; consequently, the narratives she recounts may not coincide with our own.<sup>10</sup> As noted, Anne and Marianne's reception and experience of Tractarian theology is very different. However, as Friedman also points out, the mutual intimacy of friendship and the sharing of perspectives can foster 'vicarious participation in the very experience of moral alternatives'.<sup>11</sup> I will argue, therefore, that, by articulating their individual viewpoints in their letters, Anne and Marianne were able to understand the outworking of Anglo-Catholic doctrine in each other's lives. This enabled Anne to accept and move closer to Marianne's more spiritual understanding of the mystical elements of Anglo-Catholicism without compromising her own rational integrity. In consequence, rather than their differences diminishing the bond of friendship between them, they effectively contributed to a strengthening of their own relationship and also to their triangular friendship with Mary.

As spinsters, Anne, Marianne and Mary relied on their bond of friendship to provide them with a secure base of mutual support and shared affection. While this relationship was mainly enacted through correspondence, it can be described as 'a community of choice', albeit a small triangular one.<sup>12</sup> This is the epithet which Friedman gives to voluntary communal friendship, which, she suggests, offers its participants new perspectives from which to redefine themselves, and the opportunity to realise personal and moral growth with those who share the same dreams and aspirations.<sup>13</sup> In the second part of this chapter, I will explore ways in which these three women's supportive epistolary network enables them to redefine themselves as writers of children's stories. This literary endeavour not only provides them with suitable material to read to their Sunday scholars, but also enables them to disseminate their shared Anglo-Catholic values and practices more widely as they join the ranks of women who publish their writing anonymously in the periodical press.

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<sup>8</sup> George Herring, *What was the Oxford Movement?* (London and New York: Continuum, 2002), p. 25.

<sup>9</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *What Are Friends For? Feminist Perspectives on Personal Relationships and Moral Theory*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 198.

<sup>10</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 199.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 253.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 255.

Michelle Levy, in her consideration of women and print culture from 1750 to 1830, makes it clear that a woman's place in the early nineteenth-century literary marketplace was an ambiguous one. She discusses the fact that, although there were no 'separate spheres' or 'separate print cultures' for men and women in the print market, gender still impacted on women's involvement with print and they 'faced challenges and opportunities unique to their sex'.<sup>14</sup> On the one hand, women were castigated for their authorship and their voracity for novel reading, while, on the other, they 'initiated genres' in their writing that were directly related to their needs and experiences as women.<sup>15</sup> Levy also suggests that women benefited from the late-eighteenth-century 'print boom' in as much as their involvement in specific 'fields of culture' reflects a proportionally higher growth rate than that of male authors.<sup>16</sup> One of these areas of growth was that of children's literature, the writing of which was relatively straightforward emanating, as it did, from women's domesticity. Middle and lower-class women writers often used this genre to supplement their income.<sup>17</sup> As Linda Peterson observes in her appraisal of the literary marketplace, it was the vast increase of periodicals in the 1820s and 1830s and the substantial fees paid by publishers for literary work that made the possibility of earning a living as a writer a reality, not only for middle-class men, but for their female counterparts as well.<sup>18</sup>

Women from the upper echelons of society writing Anglo-Catholic children's fiction also benefitted from these increased publishing opportunities for women, not least because they could keep their identity a secret. As Alexis Easley states, 'to be a woman author in Victorian society was to be "first person anonymous"'.<sup>19</sup> This was a position which both constructed and subverted 'notions of authorial identity', as will become clear from my appraisal of the epistolary triangle's collective writing endeavours.<sup>20</sup> The popularity of the periodical also proved a useful tool for disseminating religious ideas. In July 1838 John Henry Newman took over the editorship of the *British Critic*, a High-Church periodical, which, in his hands, effectively became the mouthpiece of the Oxford Movement.<sup>21</sup> At the beginning of 1842, Marianne, together with Charles and Elizabeth Dyson, initiated a new periodical, *Magazine for the Young*, for the purpose

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<sup>14</sup> Michelle Levy, 'Women and Print Culture, 1750-1830', in *The History of British Women's Writing, 1750-1830*, ed. by Jacqueline M. Labbe, *The History of British Women's Writing*, 5 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 29-46 (p. 30).

<sup>15</sup> Levy, pp. 29-46 (p. 30).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 31-34.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30-33.

<sup>18</sup> Linda H. Peterson, *Becoming a Woman of Letters: Myths of Authorship and Facts of the Victorian Marketplace* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 2-3.

<sup>19</sup> Alexis Easley, *First Person Anonymous: Women Writers and Victorian Print Media, 1830-1870* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> Easley, p. 2.

<sup>21</sup> S. A. Skinner, 'Newman, the Tractarians and the *British Critic*', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 50. 04 (1999), 716-59 (pp. 717, 721).

of disseminating Anglo-Catholic doctrine to a juvenile readership.<sup>22</sup> It was initially published by the London-based printer, James Burns, a Tractarian sympathizer, and Marianne and Elizabeth edited it from January 1842 until the end of the year when Anne Mozley took on the role.<sup>23</sup> This represents a significant initiative by the Dyson family and it can be noted that, as well as incorporating religious and nonfictional material, the new periodical provided a vehicle for publishing the children's tales which Marianne, Mary, Anne, and Elizabeth too in her role of overseer of the epistolary triangle, collaborated on. In later years the magazine also attracted contributions from Charlotte Mary Yonge and Anna Lefroy, Jane Austen's favourite niece, the latter being recognisable from her initials 'I.A.E.L'.<sup>24</sup> In 1851 another new magazine made its debut; this time specifically marketed for young people from the middle and upper echelons of society.<sup>25</sup> This periodical entitled, *The Monthly Packet of Evening Readings for Younger Members of the English Church*, was edited by Yonge and published by Henry Mozley and Son.<sup>26</sup> The aim of *The Monthly Packet* was 'to secure the loyalties of the next generation of Tractarians, by ensuring that their early associations were entwined with Church of England doctrine of the purest kind'.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Ellen Jordan, Charlotte Mitchell and Helen Schinske, "'A handmaid to the Church': How John Keble shaped the life and work of Charlotte Yonge, the 'novelist of the Oxford Movement'", in *John Keble in Context*, ed. by Kirstie Blair (London: Anthem Press, 2004), pp. 175-91 (p. 179).

<sup>23</sup> HRO, 9M55/F45/4 (10 October 1842); Charlotte Mitchell, Ellen Jordan and Helen Schinske, 'Introduction to Letters 1834-1849', in *The Letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901)*, pp. 1-14 (fn. 3, p. 13); Anne Mozley was the sister of the Derby printers, the Revs James and Thomas Mozley, who were also Tractarian sympathizers. 'Letters 1834-1849', in *The Letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901)*, pp. 15-60 (fn. 2, p. 80).

<sup>24</sup> Brian Alderson, 'Some Notes on James Burns as a Publisher of Children's Books', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 76. 3 (1994), 103-26 (pp. 108, 111).

<sup>25</sup> 'Letters 1850-1859', in *The Letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901)*, pp. 73-221 (fn. 6, p. 82).

<sup>26</sup> Mitchell, Jordan and Schinske, 'Introduction to Letters 1850-1859', in *The Letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901)*, pp. 61-72 (p. 61).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 61-72 (p. 64).



## Part 1: The Epistolary Triangle

“How very beautiful these gems are!” said Dorothea [. . .] “it is strange how deeply colours seem to penetrate one, like scent. I suppose that this is the reason why gems are used as spiritual emblems in the Revelation of St. John. They are like fragments of heaven.”<sup>1</sup>

“They are lovely,” said Dorothea, slipping the ring and the bracelet on her finely-turned finger and wrist, and holding them towards the window on a level with her eyes. All the while her thought was trying to justify her delight in the colours by merging them in her mystic religious joy.<sup>2</sup>

George Eliot, *Middlemarch*

### 3.1.1: The chrysolite ring and the mystical world of Anglo-Catholicism

In February 1833 Anne had given Marianne a birthday present of a ring set with a chrysolite gemstone and had asked Marianne to wear it ‘and remember this winter by it’.<sup>3</sup> The giving of gifts, poems, and miniatures, as tokens of friendship, had been a common practice between aristocratic women for centuries, and, in the nineteenth century, it also became prevalent amongst middle-class women and especially between ‘deeply religious women’.<sup>4</sup> For female friends the ‘object that epitomized friendship was the gift’ and they frequently exchanged the same tokens as spouses giving a lock of hair or a ring.<sup>5</sup> As mentioned in my previous chapter, Marianne had visited Anne during the Sturges Bourne’s stay with Lady Mildmay at Dogmersfield in January 1833 and it appears that the short time spent together had increased the bond of friendship between them. In a covering letter sent with the ring Anne informs Marianne that the stone represents armour, but does not elucidate any further.<sup>6</sup> However, this remark might have a biblical significance and could allude to the breastplate of Aaron, brother of Moses and High Priest to the twelve tribes of Israel.<sup>7</sup> Some English translations of the Bible record that chrysolite was one of the twelve gemstones sewn into the breast piece of Aaron’s priestly garment and Anne

<sup>1</sup> George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, Introduction and Notes by Doreen Roberts (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 2000), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Eliot, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/7 (February 1833).

<sup>4</sup> Sharon Marcus, *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 4, 57.

<sup>5</sup> Marcus, pp. 4, 40.

<sup>6</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/7 (February 1833).

<sup>7</sup> Exodus 28. 15-17.

may have had this account in mind.<sup>8</sup> This is not the only biblical reference to chrysolite in the Bible though. As Eliot's Dorothea reminds us, St John prophesied that gemstones would adorn the foundation of the walls of the New Jerusalem: spiritual emblems of the magnificence of the new heavens and the new earth which would come into being at the second coming of Christ. Chrysolite is recorded as being one of these emblems.<sup>9</sup>

Marianne also believed that gemstones were spiritual emblems and in her reply to Anne on 24 March 1833 she suggests that the chrysolite's original meaning has to do with the 'character of an emblem of earthly and unearthly imaginations', which, 'though forgotten for a time' was 'remembered afterwards'.<sup>10</sup> She elucidates further by writing:

And when I look at it and think of its nature, it seems in every way so fit an emblem of a Christian calling, the reflected light, the solidity, the purity, the imperishable material, may God help and strengthen us both my own dearest in our paths, however difficult those may be, and knit our hearts together as long as we are in this world, and make you feel when present things try to engage you that it is a pilgrimage, and make me feel when indolence creeps upon me, that it is a strife. (F38/8)

The 'Chrysolite', as Marianne refers to the ring, has not only become a treasured token of her friendship with Anne but also an emblem of their Christian walk through life together. Marianne confides in Anne that she wears 'the Chrysolite' all the time and thinks of it 'as a means to remind me of every vow' (F38/8). The vows Marianne is referring to can only be speculated on, but, in the context of this extract, would appear to be the vows of lasting friendship and commitment she has entered into with Anne. When viewed in the light of their relational autonomy these pledges provide the basis of their relationship and the security to embark on a lifetime of spinsterhood.

Like Dorothea, Marianne justifies her enjoyment of the ring by attaching religious mystical properties to the gemstone.<sup>11</sup> She also shares with Anne that she regards the Chrysolite 'as a memorial of all that is most sacred and most daily too' (F38/8). In *The Christian Year* Keble emphasises the sacred nature of daily life to a devout Christian and Marianne may have taken up this idea from his devotional verse. Julie Melnyk, in her study of women and theological cultures in nineteenth-century Britain, sheds further light on this notion when she writes that the

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<sup>8</sup> The *New International Version* of the Bible and the *Jubilee Bible 2000* specify chrysolite as one of the twelve gemstones. However, other biblical translations substitute peridot, emerald, carbuncle, beryl, or, more commonly, topaz in place of chrysolite. *The Bible Hub* <<http://biblehub.com/exodus/28-17.htm>> [accessed 26 January 2017].

<sup>9</sup> Revelation 21. 19.

<sup>10</sup> HRO, 9M55/F38/8 (24 March 1833). Further references to this letter will be placed in the text.

<sup>11</sup> HRO, 9M55/F38/7 (February/March 1833).



sacramental nature of Anglo-Catholicism 'provided for the possibility of discovering God's revelation in ordinary life', or, more precisely, that everyday actions and objects took on an 'almost mystical significance'.<sup>12</sup> This concept, in its biblical sense, can be attributed to the mysticism of the Eucharist and the belief that the bread and wine of communion transmuted into the body and blood of Christ.<sup>13</sup> In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the Eucharist had played a minor role in the life of the Church, being celebrated on just a few major feast days.<sup>14</sup> One of the main concerns of the Tractarian leaders was to reinstate this sacrament to its rightful position as the main focus of worship on all Sundays and Holy days. It was this visible expression of the life of the early Church which they believed would help to reinvigorate the spiritual life of the Church of England.<sup>15</sup> In his essay 'John Keble and the Ethos of the Oxford Movement', James Pereiro discusses the fact that the main censure of Keble's sermon on National Apostasy in July 1833 was aimed at the indifference of a country which followed 'the rule of public opinion' rather than 'the rule of truth' enshrined in the laws of the Church.<sup>16</sup> This had culminated in a lack of respect for all that was sacred in daily life and Keble, together with the other Tractarian leaders, wanted to see the Anglican Church restored to its rightful place in the life of the Nation.<sup>17</sup>

In continuing her letter of 24 March 1833, Marianne states her opinion that that there cannot be 'genuine Christianity' without 'more government of self, more energy, more control, more meekness, more good feeling towards others and command of one's own sinfulness or prejudices' (F38/8). This attitude equates with the 'moral disposition or character' that Pereiro imports to Keble's use of the word 'ethos' in connection with the ability of an individual to receive divine truths and Marianne is recognising her responsibility as a Christian to align herself with Keble's teaching on the sacred nature of daily life.<sup>18</sup> It can also be gleaned from Marianne's letter that Anne had previously counselled her to think more rationally and to take her time in forming opinions which can then be acted on without 'uncertainty or wavering' (F38/8). Marianne acquiesces to Anne's advice, which, she admits, 'I have oft received with irritation and capriciousness', but now regards as the partiality of Anne's friendship towards her and is, therefore, treating as providential guidance (F38/8). As we have seen, partiality is one of the moral requirements which Friedman believes is due a special friend. Marianne expresses her gratitude to Anne for this singular attention by writing: 'God bless you my dearest for all your

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<sup>12</sup> Julie Melnyk, 'Women, writing and the creation of theological culture', in *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, ed. by Sue Morgan and Jaqueline de Vries (London & New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 32-53 (p. 41).

<sup>13</sup> Melnyk, pp. 32-53 (p. 41).

<sup>14</sup> George Herring, *What was the Oxford Movement?* (London and New York: Continuum, 2002), p. 37.

<sup>15</sup> Herring, pp. 29, 30, 37.

<sup>16</sup> James Pereiro, 'John Keble and the Ethos of the Oxford Movement', in *John Keble in Context*, ed. by Kirstie Blair (London: Anthem Press, 2004), pp. 59-72 (p. 69).

<sup>17</sup> Pereiro, pp. 59-72 (p. 69).

<sup>18</sup> Pereiro, pp. 59-72 (p. 64).

tenderness for me' (F38/8). Marianne is now accepting Anne's guiding hand on the basis of their intimate friendship and the belief that Anne's rational advice is providentially ordained to balance her own imaginative waywardness, all of which are signified for Marianne in the chrysolite ring – the symbol of their friendship and devotional duty. As a result, she assures Anne that she is 'very clear now that realities are to be earnestly attended to' and thinks that, 'from youth to maturity' she may have been too much influenced by 'romance' literature (F38/8). However, in spite of this admission, it seems that Marianne's imagination is not so easily contained.

In this same letter Marianne describes to Anne how she 'had an impulse one night to write a bit of dialogue with the Chrysolite' which she continues to do 'when she is not too sleepy' (F38/8). Marianne describes to Anne how 'the Church asks questions on temper, spending time etc. and it [the Chrysolite] answers personifying the 2 selves one feels' (F38/8). Marianne is referring here to the conflict between the earthly desires of her humanity, which encourage her indolence, and the higher plane of Christian morality which her spiritual self is seeking to attain. As Melnyk points out, Anglo-Catholic doctrine provided 'a mystical tradition which allowed women greater scope for reimagining the relationship between God and human beings'.<sup>19</sup> A year later Marianne is still discoursing with the Chrysolite, and Elizabeth Dyson, Marianne's sister-in-law, informs Anne in Marianne's letter of July 1834, that she 'may see by the enclosed how she [Marianne] discourses with Chrys'.<sup>20</sup> The enclosure is missing but Elizabeth continues: 'I made her write it in the book so you may keep it.'<sup>21</sup> From this piece of information it appears that Marianne is keeping a journal of what she will later refer to, in a letter to Anne written in 1845, as her 'Chrys. History'.<sup>22</sup>

It is worth quoting from Marianne's letter of 21 July 1845 as this retrospective insight gives us, the readers, an understanding of the importance of Marianne's 'Chrys. History' to the relational development of her friendship with Anne. It also shows the way in which she adopted derivations of the word Chrysolite to symbolically represent an abstract spiritual concept which was difficult to define and articulate. She writes to Anne:

And years ago you understood my Chrys. History as I could not have reckoned on anybody understanding it, and you have always understood it just as it is, affecting the inner life though not the outward and so real thoughts so dreamy – just as really did a new world open to me in 1834 when first I knew δ's [Newman's] sermons and then through H. W. [Henry Wilberforce] learnt more of his meaning, and then had his other volumes. All our Ideale and our serious thoughts and all we cared for found their place for me in the

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<sup>19</sup> Melnyk, p. 41.

<sup>20</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/12 (9 July 1834).

<sup>21</sup> F39/12.

<sup>22</sup> HRO, 9M55/F45/9 (21 July 1845).

Chrystism. Of course  $\delta$  did not begin it, but he expounded it to me and many others who therefore looked to him as their benefactor and priest as really as my Chrystism was one of peace and happiness beyond what I had fancied before, and its memory is a [illegible word] and a blessing.<sup>23</sup>

In this extract the word 'Chrystism' appears to represent a state of being for Marianne which might be best explained as transcendental, reflecting, as it does, an inner life experienced through the mind, senses and emotions. This excerpt also reinforces the importance of 'Ideale' as a developmental stage in Marianne's other-worldly journey. In my preceding chapter, I discussed the concept of 'Ideale' in Coleridgean terms and the fact that, for Coleridge, God was both immanent in the visible world of nature and transcendent to his creation in an invisible spiritual world. When Marianne explains that their Ideale and serious thoughts found their place for her in the Chrystism she is describing an invisible world of pure spirit which is eternal, infinite, and, for Marianne as it was for Coleridge, ultimate reality. Looking back over the years, Marianne discusses the fact that this invisible world has been made more potent and real for her by the mystical Catholic doctrine of the early Church fathers which Newman is imparting through his *Parochial Sermons*, the first volume of which was published in 1834 and the subsequent five volumes between 1834 and 1842.<sup>24</sup>

It can be noted that Marianne is using a letter of the Greek alphabet as a pseudonym for Newman in this passage. This idea can be traced to a volume of poetry called *Lyra Apostolica* (1836) which was mainly the work of Newman and Keble, but included poems by other Tractarian leaders as well. They defined their own contributions by signing their poems with a letter from the Greek alphabet: for example, ' $\delta$ ', delta, and ' $\gamma$ ', gamma, stood for Newman and Keble respectively.<sup>25</sup> The Tractarians also used nicknames in their writing: referring to themselves as 'Apostolicals' to denote their adherence to the doctrine of the Apostolic succession; styling the old-school High Churchmen as 'Z's'; and calling Anglican Evangelicals 'X's' or 'Peculiar' because of their 'peculiar' or 'distinctive theology'.<sup>26</sup> These are nicknames and symbols that Anne and Marianne also adopt in their letters from 1836 onwards. This appropriation of Tractarian epithets, which also includes the nicknames with which the Oxford men refer to themselves, signifies the extent to which Anne, Marianne, and Mary by implication, are affiliating themselves with the ideology of the Oxford Movement.

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<sup>23</sup> F45/9.

<sup>24</sup> Ian Ker, 'Newman, John Henry (1801–1890)', *Oxford DNB*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edn, May 2011 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20023>> [accessed 7 March 2016].

<sup>25</sup> See 'Advertisement', in *Lyra Apostolica*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Derby: Henry Mozley and Sons; and London: J.G. and F. Rivington, 1837).

<sup>26</sup> Herring, p. 48.

### 3.1.2: Tracts, secrecy, and triangular friendship

It is clear that Anne is enjoying the new status of her triangular friendship with Marianne and Mary, possibly because it gives her a sense of agency which is generally lacking in her life. Writing on 2 January 1834, she begins her letter to Marianne: 'Dear Owl and Owlet sit up in your high place, or some oratory, and mumble each other, and let me supply the missing angle and codge [talk] with you.'<sup>27</sup> Owl and Owlet were the names Marianne had ascribed to Elizabeth and herself. Charles and Elizabeth Dyson had moved to Petworth at the beginning of 1833 to care for the elder Mr Dyson and support Marianne after the death of her mother the previous year.<sup>28</sup> Charles Dyson also had a nickname, the 'Simorg', and his Dogmersfield curacy, of which he was the incumbent from 1836 onwards, was known as the 'Nest', inferring that a Simorg was a bird too, possibly from ancient mythology.<sup>29</sup> It seems that Elizabeth was an 'honorary' angle as it was Anne, Marianne and Mary who had begun to refer to each other as the three angles of a triangle, each with their designated symbol: < for Marianne; > for Mary and ^ for Anne. Elizabeth, as the wise 'Owl', appears to have taken on the role of surrogate mother/chaperon to Marianne, and, in this capacity, she was party to Marianne's correspondence with Anne and often added comments to Marianne's letters in the same way that Mrs Sturges Bourne did to Anne's.

From the repartee that occurs between herself and Elizabeth as they take turns to write to Anne, it is clear that Marianne is also revelling in the novelty of writing in this way. However, this does not prevent her from occasionally insisting on some privacy in her correspondence with Anne. This is illustrated in Anne's letter of February 1834 when she writes to Marianne: 'I suppose it is right to write privately or you would not ask.'<sup>30</sup> Anne's cautiousness in this situation could be attributed to her strong sense of propriety with regard to the fact that Elizabeth and not Marianne's mother is now overseeing Marianne's letters. On another occasion Elizabeth writes on the flaps of Marianne's letter that she is 'in fear and trembling' as Marianne has told her not to read a certain part of what she has written.<sup>31</sup> Albeit in jest it seems that Elizabeth is ready to respect Marianne's desire for privacy and she writes to Anne in July 1834: 'She [Marianne] is so right in keeping parts of your poor letters for her own two eyes.'<sup>32</sup> However, writing privately does cause Anne some difficulty at times as she is in the habit of reading Marianne's correspondence to her mother. In May 1836 she describes to Marianne how, because two thirds of Marianne's letter was marked 'private', she had to tell her mother that the parts she did not

<sup>27</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/1 (2 January 1834).

<sup>28</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/12 (March 1833); Mr Dyson, the elder, died in the autumn of 1835. John Taylor Coleridge, *A Memoir of the Rev John Keble, M. A., Late Vicar of Hursley* (Oxford & London: James Parker, 1869), pp. 38-39.

<sup>29</sup> Coleridge, *A Memoir of the Rev John Keble*, p. 41.

<sup>30</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/4 (25 Feb 1834).

<sup>31</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/17 (22 November 1834).

<sup>32</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/12 (9 July 1834).

read out contained story plots.<sup>33</sup> Marianne, it seems, with her new sense of confidence, which in all probability can be attributed to the security and support of the epistolary triangle, is feeling empowered to take control of the public aspect of her correspondence.

There is evidence in Anne's letter of 2 January 1834 to suggest that Elizabeth also wrote to Mary in Marianne's letters:

What a good thing it would be if > [Mary] ever read anything that was not Apostolical. I defended her to Mamma by saying how good it was to take on one subject at a time and study all that had a bearing upon it, thinking to myself, yes, one at a time, but all the year, and every day this is her subject. Well owl knows best, and the food agrees with the birdie.<sup>34</sup>

The last sentence suggests that it is Elizabeth, as 'Owl', who is responsible for the theological leanings of Mary, who is, of course, the birdie. It is also clear from this extract that Mary is totally immersing herself in the *Tracts for the Times* and other material related to the Oxford Movement. Given this fact, and the inter-relatedness of Marianne and Mary's relationship with Elizabeth, it is feasible to assume that Mary was in collaboration with Marianne in forming their epistolary sisterhood. However, there may also have been another influence on Mary's Anglo-Catholic leanings, her romantic attachment to Thomas Dyke Acland (1809-1898), a disciple and close friend of Newman's. Thomas Acland, or the 'Duck', as he was commonly referred to in Anne and Marianne's letters, was the eldest son of Sir Thomas Dyke Acland of Killerton House in Devon.<sup>35</sup> The couple planned to marry but permission was refused by Acland's father in 1835 and he did not relent until 1841 when the marriage eventually took place.<sup>36</sup> In the meantime Mary was more in need than ever of the love and support of her triangular friendship with Marianne and Anne.

As Friedman points out, friendships have no socially-defined purpose apart from that which the friends, themselves, evolve and it is apparent from Marianne's letter to Anne written on 24 December 1833 that she is busy evolving the way in which she sees their newly established sisterhood developing.<sup>37</sup> She writes: 'I am afraid this letter will displease our sweetest History, for it is not very manifesto like [. . .] I have scratched to Angle M[ary]. I will scratch you a manifesto

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<sup>33</sup> HRO, 9M55/F40/21 (12 May 1836).

<sup>34</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/1 (2 January 1834).

<sup>35</sup> *Memoirs and Letters of The Right Honourable Sir Thomas Dyke Acland*, ed. by Arthur H.D. Acland (London: Printed for Private Circulation, 1902; repr. Nabu Press, 2010), pp. 27-28.

<sup>36</sup> HRO, 9M55/F40/3 (1/2 May 1835); *Memoirs and Letters of The Right Honourable Sir Thomas Dyke Acland*, p. 95.

<sup>37</sup> Marilyn Friedman, *What Are Friends For? Feminist Perspectives on Personal Relationships and Moral Theory*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 220.

next time.’<sup>38</sup> Marianne’s reference to ‘our sweetest history’ is an acknowledgement of their long and faithful friendship. However, the mention of a ‘manifesto’ in her letter cannot be explained by any of Anne’s preceding letters, but it can be explained by the manifesto-like qualities of the early *Tracts for the Times*. Written by Newman but published anonymously, the first three individual *Tracts* appeared in print on 9 September 1833: *Tract no.1* held up the Apostolic Succession as the true foundation of the Church through which the power to forgive sins, teach the Word of God, and to celebrate the Eucharist had been passed from Jesus to the Apostles and down through the centuries by way of the Anglican bishops; the second *Tract*, entitled ‘The Catholic Church’, made it clear that the right to control spiritual and sacramental matters lay within the province of the Church and could not be legislated for by the State as in secular matters; while the third *Tract* was concerned with the move of the clergy themselves to make changes to the Anglican Liturgy and Burial Service.<sup>39</sup> Newman considered that any such action would weaken the authority of the Church and set a precedent for further change.<sup>40</sup>

The purpose of these three *Tracts* was not only to present an alternative source of authority for the Anglican Church, one which was grounded in Church history and not in the laws of Parliament, but to reintroduce Catholic doctrine and practice to the Church with its ‘mystical interpretation of Scripture’ as a way of communicating divine truth.<sup>41</sup> Previously, in February 1833, the reformed Whig Parliament had begun to interfere in Church matters by seeking to abolish bishoprics in Ireland. This was followed by Keble’s sermon on ‘National Apostasy’ in July 1833. Herring offers an alternative view of the significance of this event to that of Pereiro discussed earlier; he regards Keble’s sermon as a response to what Keble, and other like-minded clergymen, saw as an attack on the privileges of the Anglican clergy.<sup>42</sup> In desiring a manifesto for her three-way friendship with Anne and Mary, Marianne is taking her lead from the *Tracts* and reinforcing the serious intent of their epistolary triangle by demonstrating her affinity with the new Movement’s rationale. As their letters for 1834 show, their understanding of the word ‘manifesto’, as it relates to their own circumstances, does not consist in doctrinal statements to be adhered to, but rather constitutes that part of their letters in which they discuss the theological writings of Anglican clergymen who are either part of the Oxford Movement or in empathy with it.

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<sup>38</sup> HRO, 9M55/F42/12 (24 December 1833). Although clearly dated this letter is archived with Marianne’s letters for 1838.

<sup>39</sup> Herring, pp. 29-30.

<sup>40</sup> For Newman’s views see *Tract III* (9 September 1833), ‘Thoughts respectfully addressed to the Clergy on Alterations in the Liturgy’, in *Tracts for the Times by Members of the University of Oxford, 1833-34*, (London: J. G. & F. Rivington & Oxford: J.H. Parker, 1834), I.

<sup>41</sup> Herring, pp. 29-30; Pereiro, p. 64.

<sup>42</sup> Herring, pp. 15-16.

### 3.1.3: Sisterhoods and fraternities

A letter of Anne's written to Marianne in September 1833 shows that she also regarded their triangular friendship in terms of a sisterhood. Having acquainted Marianne with the fact that their family friends, the Hallams, had just lost their son Arthur, who 'died suddenly in Vienna', she remarks: 'Ellen [Arthur's sister] and he were devoted to each other, far more than a common sisterhood.'<sup>43</sup> In order to illustrate the strength of such a remarkable bond between brother and sister Anne uses the phrase 'common sisterhood' as a comparison which, though it could refer to the commonplace nature of devoted female friendships, is more likely to be a tongue-in-cheek reference to the new status of her friendship with Marianne and Mary. In 1829, Hallam, together with Alfred Tennyson, who became his closest friend, had been elected to membership of a male fraternity at Cambridge known as the Apostles, which, like the epistolary triangle, took the form of a secret society and was also founded on deep moral beliefs, albeit based on a different religious foundation.<sup>44</sup> It is worth discussing the exploits of some of these young Apostles to show the very different way in which young gentlemen evolved a role for their fraternity.

In his consideration of the Apostles' society in the early 1830s, Peter Allen notes the intellectual qualities of the young men and the fact that their political and religious views were 'markedly avant-garde'.<sup>45</sup> Hallam and Tennyson became part of an inner circle known as the 'mystics'. This was a distinct group who, under the leadership of F.D. Maurice, were directly influenced by the writing of the Romantic poets. Maurice believed that 'social regeneration' would not be achieved by political change but 'through the spiritual influence of modern literature', and, more specifically, the writings of Shelley, Wordsworth and Coleridge — poets who promoted moral and religious truths in their writing.<sup>46</sup> Based on Coleridge's writing, Maurice developed his own 'theology' of 'philosophical idealism' which offered his fellow Apostles a means to develop personal moral growth through contemplation and by submitting to 'the dictates of duty' as they strived for a higher state of being.<sup>47</sup>

In 1830/31 Hallam and Tennyson were part of a group of Cambridge Apostles who joined an insurrection against King Ferdinand VII of Spain in an attempt to restore the Spanish constitution which had been suppressed in the 1820s.<sup>48</sup> The initiative came from John Sterling, president of the Union society at Cambridge, whose father, Edward, publicised in *The Times* the plight of Spanish

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<sup>43</sup> HRO, 9M55/F14/5 (n.d.). This letter is incorrectly archived in 1837. It refers to Arthur Hallam's recent death which took place on 15 September 1833.

<sup>44</sup> Peter Allen, *The Cambridge Apostles: The Early Years* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 130.

<sup>45</sup> Allen, p. 1.

<sup>46</sup> Allen, pp. 36, 79.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>48</sup> Eric W. Nye, *John Kemble's Gibraltar Journal: The Spanish Expedition of the Cambridge Apostles, 1830-1831* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 2.

emigré families living in London. Money was raised to help them, which, as the prospect of revolution grew in Spain, was put towards financing the uprising.<sup>49</sup> In his account of John Kemble's journal, one of the Apostles involved in the rebellion, Eric Nye, describes the expedition as being a 'blend of idealism and daring, of theory and practice, of thought and energy' which 'seems perfectly to fulfil the principles the Apostles espoused from the beginning: a union of faith and works'.<sup>50</sup> Nye also describes how most of the accounts of the intended overthrow 'resonate with symbolism' and are filled with the intrigue of 'secret meetings, assumed names, hidden messages' and so forth.<sup>51</sup> What stands out, in particular, for him is that the young men who undertook this daring adventure were acting on the Coleridgean notion that 'freedom is a condition of the spirit' and 'not just a form of government'.<sup>52</sup>

An account written by Graham Greene in 1937 and discussed in September 2015 by John Pemble in the *London Review* emphasises the 'Romantic' aspects of this mission.<sup>53</sup> In his critique of Greene's narrative, Pemble describes the non-combatant role played by Tennyson and Hallam in the Pyrenees of delivering secret despatches to the leaders of the uprising. He cites several direct quotations from Hallam included in Greene's version of events, one of which reads: 'A wild bustling time we had of it. I played my part as conspirator in a small way, and made friends with two or three gallant men.'<sup>54</sup> Pemble also relates through Hallam's words that on returning home via Dublin the young men 'enjoyed fine nights on deck with "certain agreeable samples of womankind", singing songs and reading Scott aloud'.<sup>55</sup> Safely back in Cambridge and reflecting on his adventures, a despondent Hallam mused that 'after helping to revolutionise kingdoms, one is still less inclined than before to trouble one's head about scholarships, degree, and such gear' and he longed for 'the ferment of minds, and the stir of events, which is now the portion of other countries'.<sup>56</sup> However, the insurgence was a failure and the Spanish leader, General Torrijos, and the remaining conspirators, whose number included a personal friend of Sterling's, the English military officer, John Boyd, were captured and executed in December 1831.<sup>57</sup>

Nye's account of the Cambridge Apostles' exploits has been made possible by the recent recovery of many primary documents. What is interesting about this scholarly version of events and Greene's account interpreted through Pemble's review is that, while the emphasis is different, in both accounts the young men are motivated by a sense of mission based on their moral sense of

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<sup>49</sup> Nye, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> Nye, pp. 1-2.

<sup>51</sup> Nye, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>53</sup> John Pemble, 'A Spanish girl is a volcano', review of *John Kemble's Gibraltar Journal: The Spanish Expedition of the Cambridge Apostles, 1830-31*, by Eric Nye, *London Review of Books*, 37.17 (2015), 29-32.

<sup>54</sup> Pemble, p. 29.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Nye, p. 4.



Romantic idealism. For some of the party, and John Kemble in particular, it was also a sexual adventure and Pemble discusses Kemble's erotic love affair with a young Spanish woman whom he later discovers to be a prostitute.<sup>58</sup> What emerges from this discussion is the amount of autonomous freedom that privileged young men had in comparison to their female counterparts; their daring adventures and sexual permissiveness contrast sharply with the modesty and virtue expected from English gentlewomen in the early nineteenth century. Furthermore, while a male fraternity could seek an outlet for their sense of moral injustice by joining a Catholic insurrection against a Catholic king — a scenario which would have added extra frisson to their escapades — young gentlewomen had to set their sights closer to home and fulfil their perceived moral mission through philanthropic works. Nevertheless, it was still possible for Anne, Marianne and Mary to find a measure of excitement in the mundanity of their letter exchanges. In view of the controversial nature of the *Tracts for the Times* in Anglican circles from 1833 onwards, their use of a coded language not only provided a foil to the outside reader, but proved an enjoyable diversion for them: the air of secrecy affording the sense of adventure which was missing from their lives.

### 3.1.4: *Tracts for the Times*: first impressions

The regular correspondence of the epistolary triangle also provided a forum for discussing the *Tracts for the Times* and Marianne is almost holding her breath as she waits for Anne's reaction to her reading of the new *Tracts*. In her letter to Anne of 24 December 1833 Marianne writes: 'as it happened I had been trying to hope it, nor dared its hope that you had taken to it all so kindly, and set about reading so candidly and soberly. I am quite satisfied.'<sup>59</sup> On this note, Marianne cautiously ventures her own favourable opinion of them:

I do think that without defending the Tracts throughout or looking on them as a consistent system to be strictly abided by, that the diffusion of knowledge with respect to the Church, her claims and those of her Ministers, is a History much wanted and likely to be useful in the present day.<sup>60</sup>

Due to Charles and Elizabeth's close friendship with Keble, Marianne was much more open to engaging with the new ideas coming out of Oxford than Anne and so it was important to her that Anne did not reject this new Church teaching without giving it due consideration. If Anne and

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<sup>58</sup> Pemble, p. 31.

<sup>59</sup> HRO, 9M55/F42/12 (24 December 1833).

<sup>60</sup> F42/12.

Marianne were to move forwards in their friendship together and as a sisterhood in their epistolary triangle with Mary, they also needed to be as one in their core theological beliefs.

Like Marianne's parents, Elizabeth Dyson also valued Anne's analytical approach and held her opinions in high esteem. Utilizing the flaps of Marianne's letter of 24 December 1833, Elizabeth writes to Anne:

I am very desirable to know what you think of the Tracts, the subjects they treat of and think it would be a desirable thing that some of the writers should know your thoughts – your name of course not being mentioned – but strongly the class of persons you represent [ . . . ] It is of great importance that they should know how their Tracts work upon the Laity, and whether they are not clearly understood. We think many things too strongly, and some carelessly expressed, therefore you will not hurt our feelings – and we will be very discreet.<sup>61</sup>

Anne replies in an undated letter, but clearly responding to Elizabeth's invitation as she writes: 'I really am afraid of saying anything after Eliza's flaps. I do not feel I ought to have an opinion and I fear to quote others wrongly.'<sup>62</sup> In writing about women and theology in the nineteenth century, Rebecca Styler notes that women from High Church traditions which upheld ecclesiastical authority tended to respect male clerical authority and that it was not considered correct female behaviour to engage with theology in its formal sense.<sup>63</sup> Anne, it seems, was aware of the inappropriateness of what Elizabeth was asking her to do. However, Elizabeth's request to Anne presents something of a dichotomy here. In requesting Anne's opinions on behalf of the writers of the *Tracts*, Elizabeth is citing Anne's social standing as being of primary significance regardless of her gender. As K D. Reynolds points out, within the confines of their families and their own social class, aristocratic women 'were first and foremost women' but in relation to the rest of society their position in society took precedence over their gender.<sup>64</sup> Although Anne was not an aristocratic woman in the narrow sense of the word, that is to say her family were not nobility, Elizabeth, nevertheless, appears to be appropriating Anne's upper-class position in society to legitimise her request.

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<sup>61</sup> F42/12.

<sup>62</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/27, (n.d.). From its content this letter clearly answers Marianne's letter of 24 December 1833 (F42/12) and was written before Marianne's next letter of 8 January 1834 (F39/1).

<sup>63</sup> Rebecca Styler, *Literary Theology by Women Writers of the Nineteenth Century*, The Nineteenth-Century Series (London: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 11-12.

<sup>64</sup> K. D. Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 4.

In spite of her own trepidation, Anne offers a long critique of the *Tracts* she has read, some of which I will discuss here.<sup>65</sup> She reports to Marianne and Elizabeth that she thinks the *Tracts* ‘very instructive’ and that she usually ‘likes their spirit’, but ‘cannot judge whether they will do good’.<sup>66</sup> Nevertheless, Anne does like the *Tract* on ‘alterations’ — a reference to *Tract III* by Newman — which, as discussed above, was concerned with the move of the clergy themselves to make changes to the Anglican Liturgy and Burial Service. Anne remarks: ‘I quite feel with it, but many serious people do not.’<sup>67</sup> Anne’s observation on *Tract III* can be seen in the light of her opinions about Arnold and Whately and her disapproval of their proposed Church reforms discussed in my previous chapter. She continues her diatribe in the letter by articulating her concerns about the confused and controversial nature of the content of some the *Tracts*:

The 7<sup>th</sup> tract I think confused, and cannot make out the “Episcopacy an accident” — nor in what “apostolic vicars”, without [?delegates] would differ from presbyters. When Keble says the only church in the realm which has the Lord’s body to give etc. does he exclude Catholics, who trace the same succession, and whose ordination we acknowledge, or does he include them, and set them above Presbyterians? How do you define “The Church of Christ” of which ours is a branch? Perhaps they would rather not define it. Why are we to say the Church in England? Does it mean that it is diminished?<sup>68</sup>

From this torrent of criticism and other remarks that Anne makes in her letter, it seems that her reading of the *Tracts for the Times* has had an unsettling effect on her long-held views of the Anglican Church. This extract also demonstrates that Anne’s opinions are given from a knowledge base that exemplifies the breadth of her reading, which not only includes sermons and other religious writing, but also matters of Church history. Aware that she has been very opinionated she writes to Marianne: ‘now I have said too much, but is only for you and Liz.’<sup>69</sup> In replying on 8 January 1834, Marianne informs Anne that ‘you are not to think that it is a new topic of controversy.’<sup>70</sup> Marianne is referring here to furore that has been raised in Ecclesiastical circles by the *Tracts*, but she reassures Anne that ‘it appears that the Bishops in several Dioceses have openly declared for the Apostolic cause’.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Anne’s complete discussion can be read in the edited transcription of her letter in Appendix B.

<sup>66</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/27, (n.d. [c. December 1833-January 1834]).

<sup>67</sup> F11/27.

<sup>68</sup> F11/27; The episcopacy refers to the Anglican Church hierarchy of bishops, priests or presbyters, and deacons.

<sup>69</sup> F11/27.

<sup>70</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/1 (8 January 1834).

<sup>71</sup> F39/1.

It seems that Anne is anything but reassured by Marianne's cheerful and enthusiastic reply. Her acute sense of feminine propriety is aggravated by the fact that Marianne has not only asked Charles Dyson for the answers to Anne's questions, for which she hopes Anne will not be angry, but that, in the past, she has also applied to the clerical husbands or fiancées of her four female Sargent friends when they have been at nearby Lavington. In replying to Marianne Anne writes:

I cannot talk to you alone, and some observation of mine careless as usual will be quoted in public, and all the lovers applied to answer it. What need had you to lay me at all in the matter? I hope you did say nothing of my opinions, for certainly if I have any you do not know them, seeing we never exchanged one thought on the subject.<sup>72</sup>

In her eagerness to convince Anne of the soundness of the new doctrine Marianne has unintentionally offended Anne. It appears that Marianne's perception of feminine propriety is not as highly developed as Anne's which might be accounted for both by her lower social position and her different perspective on life. However, as Friedman points out, if friendship is to continue a course of moral development it is important for each friend to understand how the other friend is affected by the social circumstances and arrangements in which she lives and the behaviour exhibited by other people towards her.<sup>73</sup>

### 3.1.5: Friendship and moral development

There were significant differences between the ways in which Marianne's household operated and that of the Sturges Bournes, which Marianne recognised and articulated very succinctly in her letter to Anne of 21 February 1835:

I ought to remember, especially when you talk of my nonsense, that whilst I am in an Apostolic atmosphere, yours is a Conservative one, and that though there may be oxygen in both, they are not precisely of the same nature.<sup>74</sup>

Marianne's initial comment refers back to Anne's letter of 29 January 1835 in which Anne had politely written, 'my dear, begging your pardon, you write religious nonsense about the fall of the Church being for her good.'<sup>75</sup> This is a reference to the controversy over Church reform and possibly Peel's 'Tamworth Manifesto' which was published in the newspapers on 19 December

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<sup>72</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/32 (n.d.). Although undated, Anne's letter clearly answers Marianne's letter of 8 January 1834 (F39/1).

<sup>73</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 200.

<sup>74</sup> HRO, 9M55/F40/1 (21 February 1835).

<sup>75</sup> HRO, 9M55/F13/3 (29 January 1835).

1834. Peel was the Tory Prime Minister for a brief spell from December 1834 to April 1835 and his manifesto promised that a review of both civil and ecclesiastical institutions would be done with care, and abuses and grievances dealt with.<sup>76</sup> In her letter Anne intimates that Marianne has misunderstood the politics and reassures her that the Church is in safe hands. She writes: 'I am willing to trust Sir Robert [Peel] and the Archbishop is very cautious and very conservative'.<sup>77</sup>

Marianne's astute summing up of Anne's world as a conservative one, not only encompasses the political environment in which Anne lives, but also her socially and culturally embedded notions of correct feminine behaviour, which had resulted in Anne's indignant response to Marianne's earlier indiscretion in January 1834. In referring to her own circumstances as 'Apostolic' Marianne is acknowledging the prevailing religious atmosphere in the Dysons's home together with the fact that, socially, most of their friends are also connected with the Oxford Movement. Friedman refers to this type of insight into a friend's social and familial circumstances as the first of two kinds of "'inductive" moral knowledge': that is, an understanding of the background which helps to shape our friend's moral codes and values.<sup>78</sup> The second means of obtaining 'moral knowledge' about our friend can be derived from observing the way in which she lives her life and the extent to which this empirical knowledge equates with the moral guidelines which she professes.<sup>79</sup> Friedman also suggests that, while similarities between friends facilitate trust within the relationship, differences remain and the importance of these differences should not be underestimated.<sup>80</sup>

At the beginning of 1834 the underlying ethical premise on which Anne, Marianne and Mary's close friendship was based consisted both in the shared socially embedded moral values of an Anglican country-house paternalism, with its emphasis on the responsibilities of the gentry towards the poorer classes, and in their own principled Christian beliefs, which, in spite of some doctrinal differences, came together in their mutual reverence for Keble and his poetry in *The Christian Year*. In view of the 'sweet history' of their long epistolary friendship, these three women were very aware of each other's profession of Christian faith and the ways in which it was outworked in daily life. According to Friedman, there is 'an important moral interplay' between the differences and similarities which friends exhibit in their relationships which affect the level of moral growth that can be achieved.<sup>81</sup> She believes that 'the more alike friends are, the less likely they are to afford each other radically divergent moral perspectives in which to participate

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<sup>76</sup> John Prest, 'Peel, Sir Robert, second baronet (1788–1850)', *Oxford DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edn, May 2009 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21764>> [accessed 19 March 2016].

<sup>77</sup> HRO, 9M55/F13/3 (29 January 1835).

<sup>78</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 200.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 203.

<sup>81</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 203.

vicariously'.<sup>82</sup> In these instances, while moral development may not amount to a 'radical transformation of deep-level, abstract moral commitments', it can be construed as 'a fuller articulation of the moral values' which the friends already hold.<sup>83</sup> Friedman does not discuss moral growth in terms of degree, as she does in her concept of relational autonomy, but, given Anne, Marianne and Mary's existing mutual commitment to a base-line Anglican morality, I believe it is also possible to discuss their moral development as a matter of degree when considered in the light of the doctrinal changes ushered in by the Oxford Movement.

While little is known of Mary's character traits enough has been gleaned from the correspondence to deduce that Marianne and Mary share a common acceptance of Tractarian teaching. Although this did not amount to a significant change in these two women's deepest Christian values, it did equate to the adoption of a new set of ethical rules and principles of doctrine with which to live by: religious tenets which found their greatest expression in the reinstatement of the Apostolic succession to the Anglican Church as well as the main Catholic sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist.<sup>84</sup> In the light of Friedman's hypothesis, Marianne and Mary's moral development can be thought of as a fuller articulation of their previously held moral values. However, in the context of the religious and political climate of the day, their adherence to Anglo-Catholic doctrine also makes their choice a radical one. In a society which exercised a strong prejudice towards Roman Catholics, adhering to Tractarian ideology was not without its risks. The Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829 had expanded the civil rights of Roman Catholics in Britain and their numbers were growing.<sup>85</sup> The literary historian, Michael Wheeler, notes that, after 1833, the position of Anglo-Catholics was the same as that of Roman Catholics as far as Protestants were concerned, and the charge of 'No Popery' was levelled at both in a 'confused and unfocused way'.<sup>86</sup> In February 1834, Elizabeth Dyson had warned Anne about the danger of allegations of 'Popery' if she tried to openly teach Anglo-Catholic doctrine to her Sunday-school scholars: 'you would be in so much danger' she wrote to Anne and counselled her to take a non-direct approach.<sup>87</sup> From this perspective, then, Marianne and Mary's commitment to the Oxford Movement emerges as a more significant moral shift and can be thought of in terms of degree.

For Anne, however, the doctrinal change from the intellectualism of Broad-Church Anglicanism to the mysticism of Anglo-Catholicism is a leap too far at this point in time and there is no evidence in her letters to suggest that she made any doctrinal alterations to her Sunday-school lessons after Elizabeth's advice in February 1834. While her letters continue to record her admiration of

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Herring, pp. 29-31.

<sup>85</sup> Melnyk, p. 38.

<sup>86</sup> Michael Wheeler, 'Preface', in *John Keble in Context*, ed. by Kirstie Blair (London: Anthem Press, 2004), pp. xi-xiii (p. xii).

<sup>87</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/4, (1 February 1834).

Keble and his poetry, it appears she has trouble digesting what Newman has to say. Marianne, on the other hand, is beginning to develop her strong reverence for Newman and is keen for Anne to do the same. Having read the first volume of Newman's *Parochial Sermons* in June 1834, Marianne reports to Anne that she has been deeply affected by reading them.<sup>88</sup> In spite of her impatience for Anne to read and discuss the sermons with her, Marianne is cautious about recommending the book to Anne. She thinks Anne 'would agree with his [Newman's] taste for self-denial' in the book, but is 'afraid of putting it too strongly forward'.<sup>89</sup> Marianne was cautious with good reason as she knew Anne had strong reservations about some of Newman's *Tracts* and had previously complained of Newman's book, *The Arians of the Fourth Century* (1833), as being 'ascetic' with 'much obscurity'.<sup>90</sup> In answering Marianne in her letter of 2 June 1834 Anne writes: 'I am glad I am not obliged to like every word of Newman on pain of your heavy displeasure, it makes me nervous.'<sup>91</sup> From this slightly irritated response it can be gleaned that Anne is feeling under some pressure from Marianne to be in accord with her about Newman's teaching.

As a single woman, Anne was at a particular disadvantage with regard to gaining an understanding of Anglo-Catholic theology. As Melnyk notes, 'the authority of the all-male clergy' and their emphasis on classical education presented 'significant barriers' to women wishing to participate in theological thought.<sup>92</sup> She suggests that this was further compounded by the Tractarian emphasis on the pre-reformation Church tradition and the Apostolic Succession.<sup>93</sup> In fact, in August 1834, Marianne remarks on 'how little knowledge a woman has' in comparison to all the books that men read.<sup>94</sup> Although Anne was able to keep herself informed about theological matters to a great extent there were times when she recognised her own limitations. Her dilemma is apparent in a letter of May 1835 in which she writes to Marianne:

I have borrowed Knox's 2<sup>nd</sup> vol. but it is so difficult and bewildering that I believe I ought not to have looked at it unless I could really study it, and had somebody to tell me whether or not he is right'.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/9 (2 June 1834).

<sup>89</sup> F39/9.

<sup>90</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/22 (August 1833).

<sup>91</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/13 (22 July 1834).

<sup>92</sup> Melnyk, p. 37.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/13 (12 August 1834).

<sup>95</sup> HRO, 9M55/F13/8, (27 May 1835); The volume of Knox's work refers to *Thirty Years' Correspondence between John Jebb, Bishop of Limerick, and Alexander Knox*, which appeared in 2 volumes in 1834. Alfred Webb, *A Compendium of Irish Biography* (Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, 1878); Peter Nockles points out that the Irish High Churchman, Knox, and Bishop Jebb have been regarded by scholars as 'precursors of the Oxford Movement' due to the fact that their theology provided a bridge between that of the Evangelicals and High Churchmen. Knox, in particular, emphasised the need to nurture 'the interior life' of the Church which had been neglected since the Reformation for fear of accusations of 'popery'. Peter Nockles, 'The Oxford Movement and the Legacy of Anglican Evangelicalism', in *The Dynamics of Religious Reform in Northern*

While Marianne could, and did, frequently consult her brother Charles and the Apostolic 'lovers-in-law' of the Sargent girls at Lavington, as is apparent from my earlier discussions, Anne could not ask her father for advice; in fact, in February 1839, she mentions to Marianne that her father has 'no taste for extreme High Church'.<sup>96</sup>

Friedman proposes that, at times, a friend needs to have the flexibility to subordinate her own standards to those of trusted friends; in times when 'we doubt our own moral rules, values, or principles', or do not know exactly what to believe, as is apparent in Anne's situation here, we can determine '*whom to believe*'.<sup>97</sup> Friendship emerges, then, as a constant which allows the participants to orientate themselves.<sup>98</sup> The first evidence that Anne is tentatively moving towards this position is to be found in Anne's letter of 16 August 1834 when she signs her letter to Marianne 'yours apostolical'.<sup>99</sup> By October 1834, she can write to Marianne: 'Then as to teaching apostolical things – I wish you would help me' and 'how far am I to explain the apostolic succession'.<sup>100</sup> In a reversal of their mentor/mentee relationship Anne is relying on Marianne as a trusted, and indeed, better-informed friend, to help her understand Tractarian theology and explain it to her Sunday-school pupils. This is an indication that their friendship has reached a new level of equality and mutuality which supersedes the earlier differences in their social status discussed in my first chapter. However, Anne's decision to teach Anglo-Catholic doctrine to her Sunday scholars cannot be viewed, at this stage, as an adherence to Tractarian theology per se, but needs to be seen in the context of her deep friendship with Marianne and Mary as acquiescence to *their* strong belief in the veracity of Anglo-Catholic theology. It can also be considered in the light of Anne's and Marianne's earlier pledge to a life of friendship and Christian devotion, as symbolised by the chrysolite ring.

A year later, in July 1835, Anne writes to Marianne even more strongly about her concerns with Newman's doctrine in which she thinks there are some 'very strong things' such as 'matters of Church discipline' being made 'quite points of faith'.<sup>101</sup> She is even more disturbed by Newman's belief in the 'constant agency' of angels 'in the uniform events of the physical world', and, while she imagines that 'there is no harm in exercising our fancy about the work allotted to angels', she does not think that it is fair of Newman 'to require assent to this assumption'.<sup>102</sup> It is clear from these remarks that Anne's rational mind is having difficulty coming to terms, not only with

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*Europe 1780-1920*, ed. by Joris Van Eijnatten and Paula Yates (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2010), pp. 53-66 (p. 54).

<sup>96</sup> See, for example, Marianne's letter HRO, 9M55/F39/12 (9 July 1834); See Anne's letter 9M55/F16/2 (11 February 1839).

<sup>97</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, pp. 200, 205.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

<sup>99</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/14, (16 August 1834).

<sup>100</sup> HRO, 9M55/F12/21 (31 October 1834).

<sup>101</sup> HRO, 9M55/F13/10 (25 July 1835).

<sup>102</sup> F13/10.



Newman making Church discipline a faith issue, but also with the supernatural side of Anglo-Catholicism. By January 1836, however, it appears that Anne is beginning to appreciate the mystical elements of Anglo-Catholicism and this time she writes: 'I think 'Chrys-ism pleases me more and more and I see its abiding beauty, and can feel in my flatness what > [Mary] says in her sorrow that it is no use to make dreams of earthly things or of aught but a Chrys.'<sup>103</sup> In other words, earthly plans disappoint, therefore, it is better to concentrate on that which is spiritual. Mary's sorrow at this point in time can be accounted for by her dashed hopes of marriage to Thomas Acland.

Marianne, on the other hand, is moving even deeper into the mystical realm of Anglo-Catholicism. Writing about Newman and his sermons in April 1836, she confides in Anne that she has 'turned more than ever to that solitary and meditative spirit who so lives in the invisible world – his 3<sup>rd</sup> vol. has things in it that to me are thrilling [ . . . ] there is a sermon on Mary's Good Part and fully suited to me'.<sup>104</sup> Marianne is identifying here with the solitary transcendental life that Newman leads and also with the biblical Mary who sat at the feet of Jesus while her sister Martha busied herself in preparing food for their guest. In the story Martha expresses her indignation to Jesus at being left to serve alone, but Jesus replies that 'Mary hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken away from her'.<sup>105</sup> In expounding this story, Newman explains that Mary's portion is allotted 'to the unmarried' who are able to devote themselves more fully to serving God.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, 'the Aged and the Children', 'the Priests of God', and 'the spirits of the just made perfect' are also included in 'the company who stand in Mary's lot'.<sup>107</sup> In essence, Newman believes that Mary's portion is a favoured one which is not granted to everyone, consisting, as it does, of being 'at rest', 'continual praise and prayer', and serving 'God in His Temple'.<sup>108</sup> Newman's teaching was an important confirmation to Marianne, as a spinster, of her worth in the eyes of the Church. This was a high calling that was not granted to everyone.

It may have been that, over time, the high regard which Newman placed on a life of celibacy contributed to a softening of Anne's attitude to Tractarian teaching. In July 1842 she could write to Marianne: 'The Duck [Thomas Acland] will not despise me for being a spinster – that is one good thing'.<sup>109</sup> As will become clear in Part 2 of this chapter, the celibate life is an important tenet

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<sup>103</sup> HRO, 9M55/F40/13 (16 January 1836).

<sup>104</sup> HRO, 9M55/F37/12 (7/8 April 1836). This letter has been re-catalogued as F40/19 and is archived as such.

<sup>105</sup> Luke 10. 41-42.

<sup>106</sup> John Henry Newman, 'Sermon 22: The Good Part of Mary', in *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, 8 vols (London and New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1907; rev. 2001), III, 318-35 in *Newman Reader—Works of John Henry Newman*, The National Institute for Newman Studies <<http://newmanreader.org/works/parochial/volume3/sermon22.html>> [accessed 4 April 2016], (p. 324).

<sup>107</sup> Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, III, 318-35 (p. 326).

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 330.

<sup>109</sup> HRO, 9M55/F18/8 (13 July 1841).

of Anne and Marianne's Anglo-Catholic faith and one which has an impact on their fictional writing. In her hypothesis on friendship and moral growth Friedman states that 'through fostering our moral growth, our friends may, thus, occasion our moral autonomy'.<sup>110</sup> This has proved to be true for Anne with regard to her own friendship with Marianne and their triangular friendship with Mary. Anne's initial viewpoint on Anglo-Catholic theology was very different to that of Marianne and Mary, but her commitment to these two women and their Church beliefs enabled Anne, by degrees, to move closer to Marianne and Mary's position with respect to Anglo-Catholic doctrine without compromising her own rational integrity. In doing so, she maintained the theological equilibrium which formed the basis of their shared Christian friendship.

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<sup>110</sup> Friedman, *What Are Friends For?*, p. 202.

## Part 2: Anonymous Writers of Tractarian Fiction: A Communal Endeavour

Of all the sorrows in which the female character may participate, there are few more affecting than those of an Authoress; — often insulated and unprotected in society — with all the sensibility of the sex, encountering miseries which break the spirits of men! <sup>1</sup>

Isaac Disraeli

### 3.2.1: Gender, class, and the early nineteenth-century literary marketplace

As my opening epigraph suggests, a lone woman wishing to enter the print market was at a considerable disadvantage. When Isaac Disraeli wrote these words at the beginning of the nineteenth century he had in mind Eliza Ryves, a young Irish poet and dramatist. Ryves was from 'a family of distinction', but, deprived of her inheritance by some form of legality, she was obliged to try and support herself by her writing. Although a woman of great sensibility and intelligence who did become a published author, she was unable to successfully negotiate a fair return for her work in the literary market place of late-eighteenth-century London and eventually died in poverty.<sup>2</sup> In this extract Disraeli is highlighting the commercial aspects of the male-dominated literary market place and the unprotected and often maligned status of women, but this was not the only consideration that women had to deal with. In the early nineteenth century to be recognised as an author subjected both men and women to the linguistic distinction between writing as a profession — as a man or woman of letters remunerated for their labours — or as a trade: a distinction which hinged on whether the selling of a manuscript to a publisher could be considered a commercial act.<sup>3</sup> Either way the end result was the same, financial reward, which to the traditional 'man of letters', whose scholarly pursuits bore witness to the leisure and wealth of his position in society, would have been totally unacceptable.<sup>4</sup>

Eliot provides a rather extreme example of such a landed gentleman in Mr Casaubon, Dorothea's husband in *Middlemarch*. In addition, her portrayal of Casaubon's dismissive attitude to Dorothea, as she seeks to develop her own mind by assisting her husband in his studies, reflects the pejorative attitude prevalent towards women with 'bluestocking' leanings in the 1830s and 40s.

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<sup>1</sup> Isaac Disraeli, *The Calamities and Quarrels of Authors: with some inquiries respecting their moral and literary characters, and Memoirs for our Literary History*, new edn by the Right Hon. B. Disraeli (London and New York: Routledge, Warnes, and Routledge, 1859), pp. 106-07.

<sup>2</sup> Disraeli, pp. 106-09.

<sup>3</sup> Linda H. Peterson, *Becoming a Woman of Letters: Myths of Authorship and Facts of the Victorian Marketplace* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Peterson, p. 3.

This attitude was also recognised by Anne.<sup>5</sup> In a letter written to Marianne in January 1833 Anne reveals that she has been assisting one of her female relatives, Mrs Tuckfield, with a new periodical that she is seeking to establish.<sup>6</sup> Anne writes: 'It troubles me that if known to be Mrs Tuck's (I suppose it will not be generally) I shall be asked if I helped and it is such a sin to be blue!'<sup>7</sup> Anne's reference to being thought of as 'blue' implies that she was keen to distance herself from the eighteenth-century Bluestockings who were ridiculed in early nineteenth-century satires.<sup>8</sup> This attitude towards intellectual women can be traced to a conservative post-revolutionary backlash against women writers and the fact that the 'conspicuous learning' of women such as Elizabeth Montagu and Elizabeth Carter challenged new nineteenth-century ideals of 'retired, domestic femininity'.<sup>9</sup> A later letter to Marianne records Anne's thankfulness that she is 'not guilty of any article [Anne's underlining]'.<sup>10</sup> Anne's acute consciousness of her social standing and the feminine codes and conventions ascribed to women of her class made her very protective of her reputation. From her perspective any involvement with the literary interests of a periodical incurred the risk of censure in polite society. It seems, therefore, that women born into the conservative traditions of the landed gentry were doubly constrained by their birthright; not only were they expected to abide by the codes and conventions of polite society, but any public demonstration of knowledge in the literary marketplace or association with the commercial aspects of literary production could endanger their reputations.

Elizabeth Dyson, it seems, was no respecter of the codes and conventions of polite society when it came to spreading the Anglo-Catholic gospel. It was she who first encouraged Anne, Marianne and Mary to write stories for their Sunday-school pupils. Marianne's letter to Anne, written in January 1834, tells of her sister-in-law's deep concern with the present state of the Anglican Church. Relaying Elizabeth's thoughts as she writes, Marianne reports that, as a clergyman's wife, Elizabeth hears about the state of things in many parishes and is in a good position 'to judge of the tone of the times, the readiness to ridicule the clergy and the writings spread among the lower orders'.<sup>11</sup> Feeling prompted by the need to address this issue, Elizabeth wrote to Anne in Marianne's letter of 1 February 1834 admitting that, collectively, supporters of Tractarian teaching had been 'very deficient in not familiarizing the minds of the poor' to the importance of the Apostolic succession and the Episcopacy.<sup>12</sup> She also admits that she has 'shrunk from teaching

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<sup>5</sup> See Moyra Haslett, 'Bluestocking Feminism Revisited: The Satirical Figure of the Bluestocking', *Women's Writing*, 17.3 (2010), 432-51.

<sup>6</sup> This periodical was entitled *The Children's Weekly Visitor and Mother's Friend* but appears to have been a short-lived venture and I have not been able to trace the magazine in any records.

<sup>7</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/3 (26 January 1833).

<sup>8</sup> Haslett, p. 435.

<sup>9</sup> Haslett, p. 433.

<sup>10</sup> HRO, 9M55/F11/18 (10 June 1833).

<sup>11</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/1 (8 January 1834).

<sup>12</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/4, (1 February 1834).

on many things' because of 'false delicacy' and the fear that the children would think she was 'canvassing against the Dissenting minister'.<sup>13</sup> In these circumstances Elizabeth advises Anne to

impress upon your scholars the reason why you wish them to follow their regular minister, because he has been regularly ordained, and is trained down, as it were, to teach certain Doctrines, which learned men have proved from Scripture to be true [. . .] These things might I think be introduced sparingly in stories mixed up with narrative and picturesque descriptions (I mean like some of Mrs Sherwoods) with very good effect – I wish you would do some such thing, and give me the office of a blessing and adding to; for I cannot make stories a bit, though I have a distinct beau ideal in my head – something made up of Mrs Sherwood, Deathbed scenes, less sentiment than the former and more detailed descriptions than the latter.<sup>14</sup>

In her capacity as a Tractarian clergyman's wife and the overseer of the theological leanings of the epistolary triangle, Elizabeth is effectively issuing these young women with a mandate to write children's fiction indirectly inculcating Anglo-Catholic doctrine.

It is also apparent from Elizabeth's remarks that she, and, by inference, Anne and Marianne as well, are familiar with Mrs Sherwood's tales for children. In October 1834 Marianne mentions that she is working through 'Mrs Sherwood's Church Catechism' with her Sunday scholars.<sup>15</sup> Mary Martha Sherwood was one of the most prolific and well-known writers of moral didactic tales for children in the nineteenth century, most of which used the conversational mode of question and answer, echoing the catechetical teaching of Mrs Trimmer.<sup>16</sup> Apart from Mme de Genlis, Sherwood is the only other female writer of tales for children referred to in the Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence. In her assessment of Sherwood's fiction, Patricia Demers argues that her work can be considered 'as part of the expanding Romantic corpus': a remark she qualifies by defining Sherwood's brand of Romanticism as Evangelical.<sup>17</sup> She explains that Sherwood is less concerned about controlling or conquering nature than in 'transcending or allegorising it as a testing ground and model for heaven'.<sup>18</sup> Allegorical fiction was seen as an

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<sup>13</sup> F39/4.

<sup>14</sup> F39/4.

<sup>15</sup> HRO, 9M55/F39/14 (23 October 1834); Marianne might have had access to this catechism in a volume of collective catechistical stories by Sherwood first published in 1817: for example: 'A Series of Questions and Answers illustrative of the Church Catechism', in *Stories Explanatory of the Church Catechism* (Burlington, N. J.: David Allinson, 1823).

<sup>16</sup> Patricia Demers, 'Mrs Sherwood and Hesba Stretton: The Letter and the Spirit of Evangelical Writing of and for Children', in *Romanticism and Children's Literature in Nineteenth-Century England*, ed. by James Holt McGavran (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1991), pp. 129-49 (p. 129).

<sup>17</sup> Demers, pp. 129-49 (pp. 130-31).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

important way of inculcating religious doctrine into young minds and one text which became increasingly popular as a children's tale during the nineteenth century was John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.<sup>19</sup> In fact, on one occasion, Charlotte Yonge wrote to Marianne recommending 'the dear old *Pilgrim's Progress*' for 'Mrs Dyson's Sunday evening selections', as she is sure her juvenile listeners 'could learn nothing but good'.<sup>20</sup> However, as Mary Hammond points out in her assessment of the story's publishing history, the vast quantity of editions produced for children in this period needs to be viewed in the context of the general diversification of the publishing industry and the targeting of niche markets.<sup>21</sup> As well as the juvenile market, adult editions of Bunyan's seventeenth-century fable also proliferated. These volumes were designed and marketed to appeal to both a middle- and upper-class readership.<sup>22</sup>

In the nineteenth century it was believed that literature had the power to 'engage the reader's sensibilities' because it appealed both to the emotions and the imagination.<sup>23</sup> This made literature an important medium, both for conveying religious ideas and for constructing them. Rebecca Styler discusses the fact that women writers were conscious of the power of fiction to rival formal theological discourse. She cites the journalist and writer, Frances Power Cobbe, as well as novelists such as Margaret Oliphant and Geraldine Jewsbury who 'claimed a spiritual vocation in writing fiction'.<sup>24</sup> George Eliot, on the other hand, believed that 'art' was a more effective way of communicating moral concepts than sermons or philosophical essays; while on the male front, Thomas Carlyle, in his lecture, 'The Hero as Man of Letters', acclaimed 'the priest-like role' of this eponymous status to disseminate 'spiritual light' with the consent of his readership.<sup>25</sup>

### 3.2.2: Enlisting women writers to 'the cause of Catholic truth'

This was a state of affairs which deeply troubled Newman. In 1829 he wrote to his mother: 'We live in a novel era—one in which there is an advance towards universal education. Men have hitherto depended on others, and especially on the clergy, for religious truth; now each man attempts to judge for himself.'<sup>26</sup> Newman's comments might have been a reference to a phenomenon that, in 1842, he referred to as 'Broughamism', which, as William McKelvy explains,

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<sup>19</sup> Mary Hammond, 'The Pilgrim's Progress and its Nineteenth-Century Publishers', in *Reception, Appropriation, Recollection*, ed. by W. R. Owens and Stuart Sim, Religions and Discourse, ed. by James M. M. Francis, 33 (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 99-118 (pp. 101-02).

<sup>20</sup> 'Letters 1850-1859', in *The Letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901)*, ed. by Charlotte Mitchell, Ellen Jordan and Helen Schinske (2007), pp. 73-221 (p. 81).

<sup>21</sup> Hammond, pp. 99-118 (p. 102).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 103-04.

<sup>23</sup> Rebecca Styler, *Literary Theology by Women Writers of the Nineteenth Century*, The Nineteenth-Century Series (London: Ashgate, 2010), p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> Styler, pp. 4-5.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> John Henry Newman, Letter 'to his mother [13 March 1829]', in *John Henry Newman, Selected Writings to 1845*, ed. by Albert E. Radcliffe (New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 6.

was a term used by Newman in a derogatory way to describe ‘the age’s faith in the power of reading to redeem the lower and middle orders’.<sup>27</sup> In 1825 the Whig politician, Henry Brougham, had established himself as a major patron of several contemporary institutions, one of which was the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Brougham believed in the efficacy of print to put Scripture into the hands of the masses. Furthermore, in the face of failed attempts to establish a national readership which was frustrated by both Dissenting and Establishment bodies, the only way to educate the lower orders, morally, was the mass production of short affordable books.<sup>28</sup> Critics of Brougham’s system saw it as an attempt to ‘usurp ecclesiastical authority’ and replace the function of the Church with ‘the compensatory institution of reading itself’, albeit with a theological emphasis.<sup>29</sup> McKelvy concludes that Brougham, more than any other single figure, was responsible for the promotion of reading throughout the nation and the rapid increase in the print market which succeeded in promoting unmediated reading of the Bible across the whole of the hierarchical class structure.<sup>30</sup> Literature, then, was a powerful tool for disseminating theological ideas as the leaders of the Oxford Movement were also aware.

A decade prior to Keble’s mentoring of Charlotte Yonge as a writer of Tractarian fiction, Newman was exhorting young women to write juvenile tales which upheld the tenets of the Oxford Movement. Writing to his friend and colleague Rev. Henry Woodgate on 18 December 1836, Newman ventured to inform him that ‘I have set some young ladies in several places to write Apostolical tales’.<sup>31</sup> It is apparent from Newman’s earlier letter of 2 December, written to one of his married sisters, Jemima Mozley, that Henry Wilberforce had already been urging a young lady by the name of Maria Giberne to write ‘some Apostolical stories’: a circumstance which Newman strongly applauded and which resulted in Maria sending her manuscripts to him, which he subsequently both approved and criticised.<sup>32</sup> Newman was acquainted with Maria through her elder sister’s husband, Walter Mayers, the Anglican clergyman who had been instrumental in

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<sup>27</sup> William McKelvy, ‘Ways of Reading 1825: Leisure, Curiosity and Morbid Eagerness’, in *John Keble in Context*, ed. by Kirstie Blair (London: Anthem Press, 2004), pp. 75-88 (pp. 76-77).

<sup>28</sup> McKelvy, pp. 75-88 (p. 77-78).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>31</sup> John H. Newman to H.A. Woodgate, 18 December 1836, in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. for the Birmingham Oratory with Notes and an Introduction by Thomas Gornall, S.J., ‘Liberalism in Oxford January 1835 to December 1836’ (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), v, 394, in *Newman Reader—Works of John Henry Newman*, The National Institute for Newman Studies <[http://newmanreader.org/works/letters\\_diaries/svolume\\_V.pdf](http://newmanreader.org/works/letters_diaries/svolume_V.pdf)> [accessed 3 May 2016].

<sup>32</sup> John H. Newman to Mrs John Mozley, 2 December 1836, in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, v, 387; For Newman’s critical input see, for example, Newman’s letter to Miss Giberne, [3 May] 1837, in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. by Gerard Tracey, ‘The Via Media and Froude’s Remains January 1837 to December 1838’ (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), vi, 63-64, and Newman’s letter to Miss Giberne, 24 July 1837, vi, 3, in *Newman Reader—Works of John Henry Newman*, The National Institute for Newman Studies <[http://newmanreader.org/works/letters\\_diaries/svolume\\_VI.pdf](http://newmanreader.org/works/letters_diaries/svolume_VI.pdf)> [accessed 19 April 2016].

forming Newman's early religious beliefs.<sup>33</sup> While there is no evidence in Anne and Marianne's correspondence to suggest that they or Mary had been enlisted by Newman in this writing venture, it is possible that Henry Wilberforce, as well as Elizabeth Dyson, might have been influential on the epistolary triangle's decision to write children's tales. Marianne's childhood friend from Lavington, Mary Sargent, married Henry Wilberforce in July 1834 and the couple kept in regular contact with Marianne.

As it happened, Newman's vision extended far beyond one or two women writing children's fiction for what he termed 'the cause of Catholic truth'.<sup>34</sup> In February 1837 Newman had written to Charles Anderson outlining his plans for 'a library on all subjects for the middle classes and the Clergy—what the Christian Knowledge Society might provide'.<sup>35</sup> He continues:

I am getting one or two ladies to write stories for children or young people. I have got another's hymns—and some of our men here have published lately the life of Ambrose Bonwick, and Vicentius's Commonitorium in a convenient form. Parker too has lately published Jeremy Taylor's Golden Grove.<sup>36</sup>

Newman's plans never came to fruition, though, and in January 1838 he wrote to his sister Jemima telling her that since his 'engagement with the British Critic' the possibility 'of undertaking anything else' has been destroyed.<sup>37</sup> In the above extract Newman is clearly delineating the separate roles of men and women with regard to authorship: men dealt with theological subjects while it was acceptable for women to write hymns and children's tales. As Julie Melnyk discusses, 'religion was regarded as one of the socially acceptable areas of interest, experience, and even a degree of predominance for women'.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Joyce Sugg, 'Giberne, Maria Rosina (1802–1885)', *Oxford DNB*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/51387>> [accessed 4 May 2016].

<sup>34</sup> John H. Newman to Miss Holdsworth, 27 April 1838, in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, VI, 237–38.

<sup>35</sup> John H. Newman to C.H.J. Anderson, [23 February] 1837, in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, VI, 32.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.; William Beveridge, *The Life of Mr Ambrose Bonwicke. To which are added, Thoughts on Christian Education* (Oxford: 1834); *Vincentii Lirinensis Commonitorium. Vincentius of Lirins Commonitory: for the Antiquity and Universality of the Catholic Faith against the Profane Novelties of all Heretics, with an Introduction and an Appendix and The Golden Grove: a Guide to Devotion*, by Jeremy Taylor, D.D., late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, with an Engraving of the Golden Grove in Carmarthenshire. These two books are listed in 'Works lately published by J. H. Parker, Oxford; and J. G. and F. Rivington, London in 1837', in *Bent's Monthly Literary Advertiser*, No. 390 (London: 1837), p. 77.

<sup>37</sup> *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, VI, 192.

<sup>38</sup> Julie Melnyk, 'Women, writing and the creation of theological culture', in *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800–1940*, ed. by Sue Morgan and Jaqueline de Vries (London & New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 32–53 (p. 32).



Maria Giberne's first tale, *Little Mary*, was published in 1840 and it caught the attention of Anne the following year. She writes excitedly to Marianne: 'Have you seen Little Mary, or shall I send it you – I want so much to know what you think of it [. . .] you will not doubt whose it is when you have read it.'<sup>39</sup> This latter comment infers that, although the book was published anonymously, Anne and Marianne both knew, or knew of, the author. Maria Giberne was also known to Jemima Mozley, and, in February 1837, Newman had suggested to Jemima and her sister-in-law, Anne Mozley, that, as they were pursuing a literary project themselves, they might work together with Miss Giberne, but that 'it was a profound secret'.<sup>40</sup> However, a few days later a distressed Newman wrote to Jemima:

My dear J. how could Anne Mozley let out to M. Giberne that she knew M. G. was writing something. You have got me into great trouble—but you can do nothing, or it will be made worse. It seems such a breach of confidence in me.<sup>41</sup>

This episode shows that, in the early nineteenth century, it was not unusual for women to write collaboratively; it also emphasises the anonymity that women writers were keen to maintain with respect to their literary endeavours and possibly more so in the Catholic context in which they were writing. It is also apparent that the anonymity of a lone woman author could not be guaranteed and she was at risk of being recognised in her immediate circles. As will become clear, this was a circumstance that greatly troubled Anne.

Determined to win the hearts and minds of the next generation, Newman had written to Henry Wilberforce in May 1838 asking him to write an article for the *British Critic* attacking the moralising children's literature of the day.<sup>42</sup> His suggestion was that Wilberforce should 'take Tract Number 80 and illustrate it negatively, i.e. by its breach, out of modern books for children—*Their* faults might be brought out effectively'.<sup>43</sup> Isaac Williams was the author of *Tract* 80 (1837) entitled 'On Reserve in communicating Religious Knowledge' and Newman's concern was that 'modern Tracts for children' contravened the principle of 'reserve' which was one of the hallmarks of the teachings of the Oxford Movement.<sup>44</sup> George Herring explains that the principle of reserve

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<sup>39</sup> HRO, 9M55/F18/10 (19 March 1841).

<sup>40</sup> John H. Newman to Henry Wilberforce, [18 February 1837], in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, VI, 30.

<sup>41</sup> John H. Newman to Mrs John Mozley, 21 February 1837, in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, VI, 31.

<sup>42</sup> John H. Newman to Henry Wilberforce, 19 May 1838, in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, VI, 245.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> See *Tract* 80, 'On Reserve in Communicating Religious Knowledge', in *Tracts for the Times by Members of the University of Oxford*, new edn (London: J. G. & F. Rivington & Oxford: J.H. Parker, 1840), IV, (1836-37), 1-82.

was based on the early Church practice of ‘holding back, or reserving, the most sacred parts of Christian doctrine’ from both heathens and those who were not morally or spiritually ready to understand them.<sup>45</sup> Newman’s objection to contemporary juvenile tales was that it merely taught children ‘how they ought to be educated’ and not the true sacramental nature of the Christian faith as revealed in the Scriptures.<sup>46</sup> Newman also had a very different perspective to Elizabeth Dyson on the worth of Mrs Sherwood’s tales and he singles this author out, in particular, writing: ‘Mrs Sherwood is another I should *principally* attack, were I you—both because her works are so popular, and because she has turned Universalist.’<sup>47</sup> This latter accusation might be accounted for by the fact that Sherwood had produced two allegorical tales, *The Indian Pilgrim* (1818) and *The Infant’s Progress: from the Valley of Destruction to Everlasting Glory* (1821). The former was set in ‘a realistically detailed India’ and ‘designed to instruct the Hindu’ about the Christian faith, while the latter claims an ‘Indian locale’ and is overtly based on Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*.<sup>48</sup> It is clear from this discussion that Newman was recognising the power of literature to form young minds. More significantly, however, he was recognising that this power lay in the pen of the woman writer.

### 3.2.3: Authorship: a ‘triangular field’

Amongst Marianne’s letters to Anne, written in January 1839, is one solitary letter written by Marianne to Mary.<sup>49</sup> This is a very significant letter, not only due to its being unique in the collection, but also because it provides an example of the way in which their epistolary triangle functions as a collaborative mechanism for writing stories. In this letter Marianne lays out in some detail an idea for a catechistical tale to read to their Sunday-school pupils. The idea for the story had been suggested by Anne and Marianne writes, ‘it seems to me a very triangular field for us to

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<sup>45</sup> George Herring, *What was the Oxford Movement?* (London & New York: Continuum, 2002), p. 43; For a comprehensive discussion of the doctrine of reserve see Susan E. Colón, ‘Realism and Reserve: Charlotte Yonge and Tractarian Aesthetics’, in *Charlotte Yonge: Rereading Domestic Religious Fiction*, ed. by Tamara S. Wagner (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 9-23 (pp. 11-15).

<sup>46</sup> John H. Newman to Henry Wilberforce, 19 May 1838, in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, VI, 245.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Demers, pp. 129-49 (pp. 135-36).

<sup>49</sup> HRO, 9M55/F42/4 (n.d.). This letter has a hand-written date of ‘Jan 14<sup>th</sup> Niton’, and, although archived with the letters for 1838, it is clear from the contents that it was written in January 1839. Therefore, in all further references to this letter, I will use the date of 14 January 1839. It is also assumed in the HRO online synopsis that Marianne wrote this letter to Anne, whereas a close examination of the ‘angle’ symbols used by Marianne to denote the different members of their epistolary triangle indicates that it is Mary who is the recipient and that Marianne asks her to forward the letter on to Anne. During the period from November 1838 to April 1839 the Dyson family were having an extended stay at Niton on the Isle of Wight and Marianne’s letter 9M55/F42/10 (1 November [1838]) and Anne’s letter 9M55/F16/3 (5 April 1839) delineate this time period. The holiday was obviously for health reasons as this correspondence discusses a mysterious debilitating illness effecting Marianne’s health and the fact that Charles Dyson is also unwell.

make one'.<sup>50</sup> Marianne proposes that the heroine be called Rachel and that she will live with some relatives in an old farmhouse 'in the village where her childhood was spent' (F42/4). Marianne is having difficulty deciding on all the family except for two sisters aged 10 to 14, one of whom she is inclined to name Kitty, who, in fact, becomes either Ann or Ellen in the finished version. Marianne puts in an interesting aside to Mary here writing, 'how like ^ [Anne] and I settling our families in our own childhood' (F42/4). This information suggests that Anne and Marianne knew each other prior to starting their correspondence in 1822 at the age of thirteen. In Marianne's fictional world the two sisters are to work in the dairy and do housework. They do not go to school but are taught by their older cousin Rachel. Marianne describes her ideas for Rachel's character to Mary:

She should be come from service on the death of the lady whom she had always served with a pension and a good many of her mistress's books and more of her knowledge, having rather been her companion than her maid in reading to her etc. – her health worn with nursing and not equal to much exertion, but to be useful in some way – of course a perfect Church woman, and most humble both as to her learning and her willingness to consort with her inferiors in knowledge. (F42/4)

This extract portrays Rachel as a lady's maid who had been benevolently treated and educated by her mistress. The qualities which Marianne is attributing to Rachel's character — dutiful, humble and giving — are those which Marianne was eager to instil into her female scholars as a preparation for their own lives which might also be spent in service.

Marianne's overall plan is to base Rachel's teaching around the Anglican Church calendar and Keble's *Christian Year*. The opening scene will take place on Advent Sunday so that Rachel 'may say Advent things that are expedient' and question the two girls on the Collect; and 'in answers she may give forth some to the ideas of the Christian Year Advent which might profitably be put forth' (F42/4). As Marianne's mention of questioning the girls suggests, the narrative is to take the form of a catechism: the popular question and answer form of narrative used in Mrs Sherwood's didactic fiction for children. However, Demers points out that Sherwood's catechistical tales did not promulgate any particular denominational bent, whereas it is clear from this discussion that Marianne's story proposes to promote the Anglo-Catholic orthodoxy of the Oxford Movement.<sup>51</sup> Although Rachel is described as being 'in deep mourning for her mistress' she is 'disposed to be cheerful and even merry on occasions', being sustained by her delight in her mistress's views of

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<sup>50</sup> HRO, 9M55/F42/4 (14 January 1839). Further references to this letter are placed in the text. This letter is transcribed in full in Appendix B.

<sup>51</sup> Demers, pp. 129-49 (p. 134).

‘Church and Chryst’ (F42/4). In other words Rachel is to reflect the Anglo-Catholic mystical spirituality of her mistress and, hence, of Marianne herself.

According to Marianne, when Anne proposed the idea for the story she had specified that ‘she would like to have an Avice in humble life’ (F42/4). Avice was the eponymous heroine of a story that Marianne had begun in 1834. Although the tale of Avice was never published, it can be deduced from snippets in the correspondence that Avice was a devout and deeply spiritual young woman who lived a life of celibacy as the outworking of her Anglo-Catholic beliefs. Therefore, in asking for an Avice-like heroine from a modest background, Anne was proposing a devout and humble Anglo-Catholic woman as an example which their Sunday girls could relate to. However, in her articulation of the role of an apostolic spinster in the story of Rachel, which is enacted both through the upper-class mistress and the lower-class maid, Marianne is also ascribing worth to her own position in society. In this sense her story writing can be seen as an extension of herself and as a more public expression of her deepest values and commitments which are such a crucial part of the relational autonomy she shares with Anne and Mary.

By 1842 Marianne had finished the task of writing out a fair copy of Avice. The following extract from Anne’s letter to Marianne provides a wonderful insight into how the manuscript was constructed:

I cannot quite get used to Avice in her new dress. I loved all the different hands and they told so much of the moods of each piece, and now looking connected, one expects more of a complete story – I hope you will take the greatest care of the old bundle – could not I have it, when you have copied it all? What a thing to ask! I hope you will not leave out a morsel of the old bits. I love their divineness and simplicity.<sup>52</sup>

This passage does more than just illustrate the fragmentary make-up of the epistolary triangle’s literary production. It evokes the intimacy of Anne, Marianne and Mary’s sisterhood and their communal endeavour to write a piece of work that reflects their deepest values and commitments. Anne speaks with pride of ‘Avice in her new dress’; the fictional Avice is their literary creation, an apostolic Churchwoman like themselves, and Anne is delighting in all the different hands which created her and the moods of each piece which reflect the individual contribution of each member of the triangle. By asking for the old bundle of manuscript fragments she is recognising the worth of their collaborative literary endeavour and expressing her fear that this precious record of their collective authorship might be lost.

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<sup>52</sup> HRO, 9M55/F19/13 (May/June 1842).

### 3.2.4: A relational model of authorship

I return now to Marianne's letter of 14 January 1839 as it sheds light on the ways in which the epistolary triangle's collaborative model functioned in terms of an authorship which was both relational and practical. In this letter Marianne informs Mary that she is also considering introducing an earlier piece of writing into the tale of Rachel: a story called 'Ivo and Verena' which was still a work in progress at this point in time. It was eventually published by Burns as *Ivo and Verena: or the Snowdrop* in 1842. She explains to Mary how the inclusion of this story would open up opportunities for Anne to write something related to her particular interests:

Ivo might come in as a story, the reading of which was suggested by a walk to see skaters, and be told as a treat on Xmas evenings, by which means any facts of ^s [Anne's] might be told about cold countries, and in summer she would have full scope for hot countries. This is on the supposition that if ^ [Anne] made anything of the kind she would like to put in in here and there, as her leisure and fancy served. Let her give it to me to read and I will copy it. (F42/4)

Marianne's reference to skaters reflects the fact that the story is to be set in a Scandinavian country, and, given Anne's predisposition towards rationality and factual information, Marianne has thought of a way in which Anne's expertise in this area could be brought in. Her final comment reveals that she is taking on the role of editor by incorporating individual contributions into the main text of the story.

Marianne concludes her letter by writing to Mary: 'There now, think about it, and send this [letter] with any suggestions of your own to ^ [Anne] as soon as you conveniently can' (F42/4). Having outlined her plot, Marianne now wants Mary to send both Marianne's letter and her own ideas to Anne in what I perceive is Anne's role as literary critic for the group as a later comment of Marianne's in this letter verifies:

I am tired of Ivo, and have persevered in trying to amend him as ^ [Anne] wished, thinking it might be good practice to try to clean one's style etc.' (F42/4)

Anne's role and the reason for Marianne's weariness with Ivo are further elucidated by Anne's comments to Marianne in a later letter of 4 July 1839:

Why did he [Ivo] ride home alone from the feast – were the others drunk? How could he see the snowdrops so far off, and how big was the island I fancied it some sect but afterwards you made it a colony. I hope you will make haste and finish it.<sup>53</sup>

In this extract Anne appears to be honing in on what she regards as inconsistencies in Marianne's text. However, as Levy points out, 'writing of all kinds' was part of the daily lives of women in this period and they 'became accustomed to having their work received and critiqued by others'.<sup>54</sup> Marianne, it seems, took no offence and in her reply of 6 July, when Elizabeth was encouraging Anne to come and visit Marianne by 'railroad', she writes: 'I never doubt my ^s [Anne's] love whether she comes or stays away.'<sup>55</sup> Marianne's health, at this point in time, was beginning to be compromised by an illness which left her physically weak, while Mrs Sturges Bourne's ill health prevented Anne from visiting Marianne as often as she might have liked to.

In the event, Anne did respond to the invitation to contribute to Marianne's story of Rachel as Marianne's letter written in November 1840 demonstrates: 'Best thanks for Rachel we think her very charming, and Elizabeth hopes you will keep on supplying hints for another part, against they may be used.'<sup>56</sup> It is not apparent in Anne and Marianne's correspondence as to whether Mary is contributing to this tale, but in December 1839, when Anne is still considering her involvement, she writes, 'I would willing do some only tending for Rachel if you like, only > [Mary] would do it better.'<sup>57</sup> This suggests that Mary may have already written something suitable for this story. There is evidence, however, that Mary and Marianne did write a religious creed at this time, which Anne used in her Sunday-school teaching. Details of this are given in Appendix G. By June 1842 the first three parts of Marianne's story, now entitled *Conversations with Cousin Rachel*, had been published anonymously as individual tracts with the final part awaiting completion.<sup>58</sup> The complete story was eventually published in two volumes in 1844. However, in the published text a third, younger sister, called Lucy has been added as well as two brothers: the younger, William, is described as 'a cripple', while John is the oldest sibling in the family.<sup>59</sup> Each of the four parts contain a series of dialogues, mainly between Rachel and her young charges, and are aimed at instilling good habits for daily living based on obedience to Church teaching and an acceptance of the providential order. As Rachel tells Ellen in one of the opening dialogues, 'we are to do our

<sup>53</sup> HRO, 9M55/F16/4 (4 July 1839).

<sup>54</sup> Michelle Levy, 'Women and Print Culture, 1750-1830', in *The History of British Women's Writing, 1750-1830*, ed. by Jacqueline M. Labbe, *The History of British Women's Writing*, 5 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 29-46 (p. 34).

<sup>55</sup> HRO, 9M55/F43/3 (6 July 1839).

<sup>56</sup> HRO, 9M55/F44/3 (11 November 1840).

<sup>57</sup> HRO, 9M55/F16/9 (7 December 1839).

<sup>58</sup> 'Didactic Fiction', in *The Christian Remembrancer: A Monthly Magazine and Review* (London: Burns, 1842), III, 74.

<sup>59</sup> *Conversations with Cousin Rachel*, (London: Burns, 1844), p. 5. Google ebook.

duty in that station in which it has pleased God to place us.’<sup>60</sup> As well as Rachel, the observations and imparted wisdom of Mrs Randall, their mother, together with Miss Seymour and Mr Croft, the Sunday-school teachers, all serve to reinforce Ann, Ellen and Lucy’s place in the social hierarchy. There is no plot to the story; the narrative simply traces Ellen and Ann’s moral preparation and eventual placement in service as lady’s maids. Through Rachel’s wise and concerned council the two young women learn to be dutiful, obedient, and content with their station in life. The dialogues in *Conversations with Cousin Rachel* are well written and present imaginative scenarios which provide a wealth of comprehensible information on an Anglo-Catholic view of the Church of England in the mid-nineteenth century. In the context of a belief in a divinely ordered society, the story mirrors the perspective of its female writers and provides an important contemporary insight into the way in which a life in service was seen by the upper-class female patron as mutually beneficial to both parties: all of which make this relatively unknown children’s tale a valuable cultural and historical document as my later discussion of the epistolary triangle’s Tractarian legacy will confirm.

With respect to Marianne’s proposal to refer to ‘Ivo and Verena’ in the text of *Cousin Rachel* it appears that she changed her mind; instead, in Part 4 of the published text, she refers to Baron de la Motte Fouqué’s allegorical tale of *Sintram und seine Gefährten* (1811) to explain to Ann and Ellen that ‘when a person has resisted the temptation to sin, and has reconciled his mind to the prospect of death, temptations and terrors lose their power over him’.<sup>61</sup> La Motte Fouqué (1777-1843) was a German Romantic writer whose books were not only avidly read by Anne and Marianne, but ‘had a cult following amongst Tractarians’.<sup>62</sup> It may have been that Marianne chose Fouqué’s *Sintram* in preference to *Ivo and Verena* because she considered it carried more authority than her own tale which had been strongly influenced by the former.<sup>63</sup> Fouqué’s hero, Sintram, was the son of a Nordic warlord and his pious Christian wife, Verena. The story is set in Norway in the late Middle Ages and tells of Sintram’s spiritual journey from youth to mature manhood and his struggles against sin and the temptations of the flesh. Sintram becomes a knight and is aided in defeating his personified adversary, ‘Sin’, by the wise council of the chaplain from his father’s castle. His reward is to see his father repent of his former heathen ways and die in peace. After this Sintram is reunited with his mother, who, distressed by her husband’s former unholy ways, had retired to a convent. Sintram lives out the rest of his life pursuing his knightly duties and defending his land from evil.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>61</sup> *Conversations with Cousin Rachel*, Part 4, p. 59; The first English translation of *Sintram und seine Gefährten* appeared in 1814 as *Sintram and his Companions*.

<sup>62</sup> ‘Letters 1834-1849’, in *The Letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901)*, pp. 15-60 (fn. 4, p. 50).

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

*Ivo and Verena* is also set amongst medieval Nordic tribesmen, but, unlike Fouqué, Marianne gives her hero no romantic temptations. Ivo converts from his heathen beliefs to Christianity early on in the story and remains celibate throughout his life. This story gives freer rein to Marianne's imagination than *Conversations with Cousin Rachel* and a fuller synopsis of the plot is included in Appendix G. Although the underlying didactic message of *Ivo and Verena* remains the same as in *Cousin Rachel* — the importance of adhering to Anglo-Catholic Church practices and beliefs — its focus is very different. In this story Marianne is effectively preaching to the heathens, or at least, those who do not profess the Anglo-Catholic faith. Ivo's life as a Christian believer is devoted to Tractarian principles and tempered by trials and physical suffering; however, it is also presented as a model which draws others to convert to the faith. The story also differs from *Cousin Rachel* in as much as it has a vibrancy and immediacy which is designed to capture the interest of the young reader: a quality which, as we will see, was also recognised by contemporary reviewers.

As to Verena, Ivo's twin-sister, who is modelled on *Sintram's* pious mother, she also lives her life based on Anglo-Catholic teaching, remaining celibate and dutifully serving her heathen father. After his death she devotes herself to serving Ivo until his untimely demise. Freed from these womanly duties she fulfils the rest of her life 'in prayer, and praise, and charity, and though she looked forward to the hour of release, she waited for it patiently'.<sup>64</sup> This extract from the closing passage in the story resonates with Marianne's 'haunting fear' of a long life as a single woman, as discussed in Chapter 2, and illustrates the extent to which Marianne's heroines were modelled on her own experiences of life. Throughout this allegorical tale, snowdrops in the landscape are used as a symbol of the purity of the celibate Christian life. It is worth noting that the frontispiece to the 1844 edition of *Ivo and Verena, or the Snowdrop* depicts a tombstone in the form of a cross with the image softened by a solitary clump of snowdrops.<sup>65</sup> This is an image of the grave of the Christian missionary, who, in the story, was martyred for his faith. However, it can also be read as a representation of the long-awaited death after a life lived according to the Anglo-Catholic ideals of purity in body, mind and spirit: ideals which Marianne and Anne, as Apostolic spinsters, were also striving to achieve.

### 3.2.5: The ambiguity of collaborative authorship

Anne demonstrates the value she places on the story of *Ivo and Verena* by reading the manuscript to her Sunday scholars in 1839, prior to its publication: 'We have got him [Ivo] to the castle, and

<sup>64</sup> *Ivo and Verena, or the Snowdrop* (London: James Burns, 1844), p. 162.

<sup>65</sup> *Ivo and Verena, or the Snowdrop*, 1844, 'Frontispiece'  
[https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=2OsXAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA31&lpg=PA31&dq=ivo+and+verena&source=bl&ots=O2LeYbsgmJ&sig=oi\\_DEHatRx5h2wak7mQcharV8BU&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjK14bF5KjRAhUslcAKHSgkD3wQ6AEIRTAk#v=snippet&q=the%20snowdrop&f=false](https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=2OsXAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA31&lpg=PA31&dq=ivo+and+verena&source=bl&ots=O2LeYbsgmJ&sig=oi_DEHatRx5h2wak7mQcharV8BU&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjK14bF5KjRAhUslcAKHSgkD3wQ6AEIRTAk#v=snippet&q=the%20snowdrop&f=false) [accessed 4 January 2017].



are going to convert him, but I am sorry to say they thought Verena would teach him.’<sup>66</sup> Unlike *Conversations with Cousin Rachel*, Anne’s only contribution to this story appears to be by way of literary criticism. With respect to their literary collaboration in general it can be surmised that the epithet of author is invested in the person who is responsible for the invention of the storyline and writes the greater part of the text. This idea is corroborated by the production of Anne’s story, *Olive Lester: the Lamé Girl, a Tale*, which was serialized anonymously in *Magazine for the Young* in 1842 under Marianne and Elizabeth Dyson’s editorship.<sup>67</sup> A synopsis of this story can also be found in Appendix G. It is interesting to note that there is no reference to the story of Olive in Anne and Marianne’s correspondence until November 1840: an omission which suggests that, while Anne had previously collaborated on *Conversations with Cousin Rachel*, she had not initiated a story of her own until this later stage, probably due to her concerns over the propriety of authorship for herself.<sup>68</sup> It is also possible that by 1840 Anne felt confident that the relational mode of collaboration practised by the epistolary triangle offered sufficient authorial ambiguity not to comprise her own social position, and that this, together with the accepted practice of anonymous publication in the periodicals, provided enough security to allay her fears about being censured for any involvement in writing children’s fiction.

Anne confirms her position as the main author of *Olive Lester* when she writes to Marianne:

Mine [Olive story] gets on a pace and I see Mrs Owl is determined not to insert any – she must do some death bed, and leave Mrs M’s notions or somebody’s of how this old man dies. I had not fancied the night scene so early in the illness [. . .] She must really do some filling up, as it is so very fragmentary.<sup>69</sup>

This passage not only confirms that the story is Anne’s, but it also highlights some of the tensions of relational collaboration. Anne is lamenting the fact that Elizabeth Dyson does not seem prepared to comply with Anne’s request for assistance. This could be due to Anne’s tendency for ruthless literary criticism. When Anne hears that the story had been criticized for its lack of religious content by Charlotte Moysey, one of her female cousins, she lays the blame squarely at the feet of Elizabeth. Defending her own position to Marianne, Anne writes in June/July 1842: ‘It was written hastily and handed to Owl’ and ‘bits on her [Olive’s] confirmation and first communion and on Death bed repentance [Olive’s grandfather] were essential and that I had been much disappointed that they were not inserted.’<sup>70</sup> Anne goes on to explain that she had not

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<sup>66</sup> HRO, 9M55/F16/7 (5 August 1839).

<sup>67</sup> ‘Index’, in *Magazine for the Young* (London: Burns, 1842), p. iii.

<sup>68</sup> HRO, 9M55/F44/3 (11 November 1840).

<sup>69</sup> HRO, 9M55/F19/13 (May/June 1842).

<sup>70</sup> HRO, 9M55/F19/16 (June/July 1842).

attempted to write these scenes herself because she felt it would have been 'great presumption in one so unfit as me' in the light of the 'sacred subjects' that she was dealing with.<sup>71</sup> Again, we see Anne's notions of feminine propriety coming to the fore in her hesitation to publicly cross the line into the male territory of theology.

However, in this same letter, Anne reports to Marianne the following remark made by her cousin Charlotte: 'how could anyone who could write that have been so deficient that there was so little of individual support or mention of our Saviour'.<sup>72</sup> This comment, by its impersonal nature, suggests that Charlotte was unaware of Anne's literary involvement with *Olive Lester*. After the criticism of religious inadequacy levelled at this text, Anne considers that some revisions might be necessary and she suggests to Marianne that 'if Olive is ever published separately' it could be done by 'not altering dialogues, but by introducing more regular teaching by Mrs M'. This is a reference to Mrs Morton, the local clergyman's wife, who takes a keen interest in the orphaned Olive's education and eventually helps to train her as a schoolmistress. Anne continues her letter by asking Marianne and Owl to think about her proposal to introduce more regular teaching into *Olive* and to 'write it separate, as I have said nothing to Mamma'.<sup>73</sup> It is unclear from this remark whether Anne is referring to the fact that she has not told her mother that she is planning to insert more Anglo-Catholic doctrine into the story of Olive, or whether Mrs Sturges Bourne is unaware that Anne has even participated in the writing of a published story. In discussing Olive with Marianne in August 1842 Anne remarks that her mother 'likes the death being rather sad and comfortless': a comment which refers to the death of Olive's grandfather, and, while these remarks demonstrate that Mrs Sturges Bourne has read the story, they do not act as confirmation that Anne's mother knows the extent of her daughter's literary involvement with this tale.<sup>74</sup>

As with Marianne's two juvenile tales, *Olive Lester* promotes the sacramental nature of Anglo-Catholicism and uses the main character as an unwitting model for others to follow. The story also reflects Anne's interest in schools and her dream of educating children in line with her own ideas. In fact, Olive's teaching methods are very similar to Anne's account of the Lancaster School system which I discussed at the end of Chapter 2:

In her hand she held a large spelling-board, from which she was teaching. When the children had spelt the words over from the board, she hid them, and made them spell

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<sup>71</sup> F19/16.

<sup>72</sup> F19/16.

<sup>73</sup> F19/16.

<sup>74</sup> HRO, 9M55/F19/20 (26-27 August 1842).

from memory,—first a letter each, then a word, then altogether, till they laughed at the spirit with which the lesson went on.<sup>75</sup>

Anne's rose-tinted view of the workhouse also comes to the fore in this story and Anne portrays it as a place of refuge and learning for Olive after her grandfather has died. Again, this is a well-written story, but, as my later discussions will show, it does not appear to have made the lasting impact of Marianne's two stories.

An earlier letter, written to Marianne in 1841, reveals a great deal about Anne's attitude to being known as writer, both with respect to her own circumstances and also that of the other two members of the epistolary triangle:

I have done Olive all but the denial part and the fitting up [. . .] But I doubt if I can ever let her come out – I had a great fright last night, Mr Stansfield was talking about lending libraries and poor books and said “has not Mrs Inchfield written many lately”. I said only the books about school – “Oh then it must have been Mrs Acland” – I said she had only helped to write some catechism or little school books – “Oh then I was misinformed, I thought some much nearer me had a hand in it” and praised ladies who did such things. I made some vehement denials, which I hope are not untrue and said “I know a lady who wrote some of those books but she is no relation of mine”. I do not know what he meant or knew [. . .] however my guilt is so slender that I should not care who knew the tenth, if they would believe it, but they would take leave from one's admissions to make such dreadful surmises. I do not think it matters a bit for you nor > [Mary], who is already celebrated as a great educator – but it would horrify me.<sup>76</sup>

It is clearly Anne's concern about her own social status that most troubles her. Her admission of knowing a lady writer of books for the poor, a possible reference to Marianne, is followed by a distancing of herself and her family as she apprises Mr Stansfield that she is in no way related to this lady. The 'dreadful surmises' that would follow an admission of authorship can only be conjectured, but, while they could relate to myths about 'Bluestockings' and censures of commercialism, as previously discussed, it was more likely to have been her own family circumstances that were the primary cause for concern as I will explain below. Some light is shed on Anne's reference to Mary being a 'celebrated educator' by the following extract from an earlier letter of Marianne's written to Anne in November 1840: 'Of course > [Mary] must apply

<sup>75</sup> 'Olive Lester', in *Magazine for the Young*, (August) (London: Burns, 1842), 177-86 (p.181).

<sup>76</sup> HRO, 9M55/F18/3 (n.d.) This letter is archived in 1841 and as Anne's story, *Olive Lester*, began to be serialized in January 1842 this probably correct.

the profits of her Lessons, when there are any – I very much like her books of Instructions and find so much in them to teach from.’<sup>77</sup> It can be deduced from these comments that Mary had been writing educational manuals which Marianne found very useful in teaching her own pupils.

Comparing her situation again to that of Marianne and Mary, Anne complains to Marianne in December 1842:

I do not think you can quite put yourself in my place – nor > [Mary] either – though she knows what different opinions in family are. She belongs as you do to one who is embarked on the cause, and has only got to follow him. In the mood in which Papa is now, in consequence of all that has lately come to light, I should half scruple to buy or read Plain Sermons and I sometimes think my silence even is hardly respectful.<sup>78</sup>

In this extract Anne is pointing out that Marianne and Mary have the leadership and support of their menfolk with respect to the Catholic cause — Charles Dyson in Marianne’s case and Thomas Acland, who is now Mary’s husband. Anne, on the other hand, is obliged to keep silent with respect to Tractarian theology. It is apparent from this extract that Anne’s father was unhappy with the state of affairs in the Church. In 1841 Newman had published *Tract 90* articulating his view that the doctrine of the Anglican Church could be interpreted in a Catholic as well as a Protestant context and the furore that this caused in Church circles continued for several years.<sup>79</sup> It is apparent, then, that as well as the fact that Anne still had doubts about the propriety of authorship for herself, her main concern at being known as a writer of Tractarian fiction was due to her father’s disapproval of the way in which Tractarian doctrine was proceeding.

### 3.2.6: The epistolary triangle’s Tractarian legacy

Anonymous publication in the literary market place enabled the epistolary triangle and Anne, in particular, to maintain a cloak of secrecy; however, this journalistic convention is problematic for scholars working in this field of study today. As Alexis Easley points out, the difficulty with anonymity in the periodical press is that ‘legions of Victorian women journalists remain relatively unknown to us’.<sup>80</sup> Unattributed authorship has also made it difficult to identify Marianne and Anne’s stories in editions of *Magazine for the Young* and *The Monthly Packet* – the more so, because the two women often discuss their stories in terms of characters rather than by the

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<sup>77</sup> HRO, 9M55/F44/4 (21 November 1840).

<sup>78</sup> HRO, 9M55/F19/29 (25 December 1842).

<sup>79</sup> Herring, pp. 62-63.

<sup>80</sup> Alexis Easley, *First Person Anonymous: Women Writers and Victorian Print Media, 1830-1870* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 2.

title.<sup>81</sup> Anonymity in the periodical press could also lead to wrong attribution of authorship as a short review of *Conversations with Cousin Rachel* in *The Church Magazine* for October 1841 demonstrates. The literary critic writes: ‘Three parts of these dialogues are now published, and when we say that they are written by Archdeacon Wilberforce, of Surrey, we need not add more recommendation of them.’<sup>82</sup> This authorial assumption refers to Samuel Wilberforce, the third son of William Wilberforce. Samuel Wilberforce had written a series of didactic tales entitled *The Rocky Island, and other Parables* (1840) which were reviewed earlier in the January 1841 edition of *The Church Magazine*. It may have been that the reviewer, who commends these stories as ‘more appropriate and interesting’ than any that he knows, recognised similarities between these tales and *Conversations with Cousin Rachel*.<sup>83</sup> On the other hand, he may just have been misinformed via the literary grapevine as there is no indication in either the January or the October edition of the publication as to why *Cousin Rachel* might have been attributed to Wilberforce. A perusal of the title pages of the respective texts adds no further illumination. The 1844 edition of *Cousin Rachel* displays only the title and the publisher with no preface or any other paratext to suggest the identity of the author; whereas, the title page of Wilberforce’s *Parables* clearly identifies him as the author.<sup>84</sup>

However, a later review in *The Christian Remembrancer* for January 1842 indicates that it may have been the literary worth of *Cousin Rachel* which accounted for its wrong attribution in *The Church Magazine*:

The improvement in the region of literature we have been considering is very marked indeed. For Children, we have the Archdeacon of Surrey’s beautiful Parables, and the tales in Mr. Burns’ smaller series, among which, the “Conversations with Cousin Rachel” are on all hands allowed to hold the foremost and a most worthy place.<sup>85</sup>

It is clear from this reviewer’s comments that *Cousin Rachel* is rated as highly as Wilberforce’s *Parables* in terms of didactic quality and literary merit. In the realm of High-Church fiction for

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<sup>81</sup> A list of stories which can be attributed to Marianne and Anne are listed in Appendix G.

<sup>82</sup> *The Church Magazine*, 34 (London: Wertheim, 1841), III, 313-14 (p. 314).

<sup>83</sup> *The Church Magazine*, 25, III, 23-24 (p. 23).

<sup>84</sup> Samuel Wilberforce, *Rocky Island and other Parables* (London: Burns, 1840), Google ebook <[https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ZQ9hAAAAcAAJ&pg=PP10&lpg=PP10&dq=the+rocky+island+and+other+parables&source=bl&ots=svHgURcQa0&sig=oxlB3Et\\_8oSqaTvLGq2VNFN25bQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEWjg6szP3fPQAhWBKsAKHTeDDHAQ6AEINDAE#v=onepage&q=the%20rocky%20island%20and%20other%20parables&f=false](https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ZQ9hAAAAcAAJ&pg=PP10&lpg=PP10&dq=the+rocky+island+and+other+parables&source=bl&ots=svHgURcQa0&sig=oxlB3Et_8oSqaTvLGq2VNFN25bQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEWjg6szP3fPQAhWBKsAKHTeDDHAQ6AEINDAE#v=onepage&q=the%20rocky%20island%20and%20other%20parables&f=false)> [accessed 13 January 2017]; *Conversations with Cousin Rachel* (London: Burns, 1844), Google ebook <[https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=5NYDAAAQAAJ&pg=RA1-PA66&lpg=RA1-PA66&dq=conversations+with+cousin+rachel&source=bl&ots=42K2ygGvad&sig=cnjYL1clFhcQe6rPOIWTCKAsxjU&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEWjThKTlpL\\_RAhUqKsAKHSAoAtcQ6AEIMTAF#v=onepage&q=conversations%20with%20cousin%20rachel&f=false](https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=5NYDAAAQAAJ&pg=RA1-PA66&lpg=RA1-PA66&dq=conversations+with+cousin+rachel&source=bl&ots=42K2ygGvad&sig=cnjYL1clFhcQe6rPOIWTCKAsxjU&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEWjThKTlpL_RAhUqKsAKHSAoAtcQ6AEIMTAF#v=onepage&q=conversations%20with%20cousin%20rachel&f=false)> [accessed 13 January 2017].

<sup>85</sup> ‘Didactic Fiction’, in *The Christian Remembrancer* (1842), III, 74-89 (pp. 82-83).

children this is a significant accolade. It would be interesting to know Anne and Marianne's response to these particular reviews, but, to date, I have not found any evidence that they discussed these literary opinions.

It can only be conjectured, then, as to whether the writer of a later review of *Ivo and Verena* in *The Church Magazine* for November 1842 also had in mind the Archdeacon of Surrey as author when he wrote the following:

The perusal of this little work is as refreshing as the dew to the parched parterre. It is written with a view to awake pious feelings and to instil into the young the necessity and value of those solemn ordinances which belong to our holy religion; but the reader must be acquainted with the historical parts of the New Testament, fully to estimate its value.<sup>86</sup>

The latter reference to the depths of historical knowledge displayed about the New Testament is of itself a testimony to Anne and Marianne's intense study of the early Church Fathers. *The Christian Remembrancer* for November 1842 also gives the work a glowing report:

We turn, with unmixed pleasure, to an ancient, Norwegian tale, 'Ivo and Verena'. We expressed our high sense of its merits a month or two ago, and can do no more at present, for it is too beautiful and perfect to break. It breathes that severe and yet gentle, poetical spirit which is to be found under none but catholic influence.<sup>87</sup>

The reviewer continues by comparing the work, in this instance, to the Roman tales of Archdeacon R. Wilberforce as it 'represents the spread of the Gospel in its true light'.<sup>88</sup> Robert Isaac Wilberforce was the younger brother of Samuel Wilberforce, but I have not been able to ascertain the title of the book in which his Roman tales are incorporated. However, the reviewer in this periodical ascribes a significant literary worth to *Ivo and Verena* as well as recognising the author's integrity as a purveyor of biblical truths.

The fact that *Conversations with Cousin Rachel* has been attributed to Archdeacon Samuel Wilberforce and *Ivo and Verena* compared with Archdeacon Robert Wilberforce's work in two High-Church periodicals demonstrates the significance of these works in Tractarian circles. There is also documentary evidence which reveals that the literary appeal of these stories continued throughout the nineteenth century. With respect to *Cousin Rachel*, a letter of Charlotte Yonge's

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<sup>86</sup> 'Review of Books', in *The Church Magazine*, 47 (London: B. Wertheim, 1842), IV, 403-07 (p. 406).

<sup>87</sup> 'Didactic Fiction', in *The Christian Remembrancer* (1842), IV, 528-46 (p. 546).

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

written to Mrs Drew in 1888 articulates her high opinion of this text as ‘reading for young servants’.<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, Yonge believes that ‘no book was ever quite equal to the *Conversations with Cousin Rachel*’ which, she believes, Masters still publishes.<sup>90</sup> The influence of *Ivo and Verena* on subsequent generations of children can be gauged by the comments of Christabel Coleridge, Yonge’s first biographer, who wrote in 1902 that Marianne’s ‘charming story Ivo and Verena will be remembered by many as one of the joys of youth’.<sup>91</sup> This is also testified to by the fact that, in 1908, recalling her childhood reading, Lady Frederick Cavendish could write that ‘among other beloved books’ was ‘*Ivo and Verena*’.<sup>92</sup> The popularity of *Ivo and Verena* throughout the nineteenth century is also demonstrated by the fact that numerous editions of the book continued to be published.<sup>93</sup> One of these editions reached the library of Mrs Ellen Haven Ross of Boston in the USA as is shown by the book plate in a copy of the 1844 edition of *Ivo and Verena* digitised by Google in 2009.<sup>94</sup> Previously, in 2006, Google Books had digitised the 1844 edition of *Cousin Rachel*, and, more recently, the cultural significance of both books has been recognised by Kessinger and other publishers in their reproduction of facsimile copies of these books.<sup>95</sup>

*Olive Lester* was also well reviewed in *The Christian Remembrancer* for 1846. Published again by Burns, but this time in the form of a small book, the reviewer writes: ‘Three Tracts, somewhat sisterly in aspect, have reached us: “Biddy Kavanagh,” “Dorcas Green,” “Olive Lester.”’<sup>96</sup> He suggests that ‘all are good, and suited for school prizes; but our favourite is “Olive Lester,” in which there is a firm and vigorous touch in character drawing’.<sup>97</sup> This time the reviewer has successfully identified the gender of the writers. *Dorcas Green* was another tale that Anne was

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<sup>89</sup> *Some Hawarden Letters, 1878-1913, Written by Mrs Drew (Miss Mary Gladstone) Before and After her Marriage*, chosen and arranged by Lisle March-Phillipps and Bertram Christian (New York: Dodd Mead & Co., 1918), p. 281.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.; There was a new edition of *Conversations with Cousin Rachel* published in London by Masters between 1865 and 1872. See WorldCat  
<<https://www.worldcat.org/search?q=ti%3Aconversations+with+cousin+rachel&qt=advanced&dblist=638>> [accessed 15 December 2016].

<sup>91</sup> Christabel Rose Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge: her life and letters* (London: Macmillan, 1903), p. 147.

<sup>92</sup> ‘The Secret of Miss Yonge’s Influence’, in Ethel Romanes, *Charlotte Mary Yonge: An Appreciation* (A. R. Mowbray: London, 1908), pp. 196-200 (p. 196).

<sup>93</sup> See WorldCat

<<https://www.worldcat.org/search?q=ti%3AIvo+and+Verena%2C+or+the+Snowdrop&fq=&dblist=638&fc=y r: 25&qt=show more yr%3A&cookie>> [accessed 21 May 2016].

<sup>94</sup> This book was digitised by Google as part of their Internet Archive Book Reader series  
<<https://archive.org/stream/ivoandverenaors00dysogooq#page/n2/mode/2up>> [accessed 19 December 2016].

<sup>95</sup> Kessinger Publishing produced facsimile copies of *Ivo and Verena* in 2009 and 2010, and Palala Press in 2016, while the publishers Bibliobazaar and Lang have produced facsimile copies of *Conversations with Cousin Rachel* in 2009 and 2013 respectively.

<sup>96</sup> ‘Notices’, in *The Christian Remembrancer: A Quarterly Review* (London: James Burns, 1846), XI, 236; *Olive Lester* (priced at eightpence and one shilling cloth-bound) and *Dorcas Green* (eightpence) are both advertised in Burns’s ‘Classified List of Books’ for ‘Lending Libraries, School rewards, etc.’ under ‘Works Published by James Burns’ in the supplement to Rev Edward Monro, *The Dark River: An Allegory* (London: James Burns, 1845), pp. 1-24 (pp. 22-23). Google ebook.

<sup>97</sup> *The Christian Remembrancer* (1846), XI, 236.

working on in 1842 as a comment in her letter of June/July 1842 reveals. After the criticism of *Olive Lester*, Anne wants Marianne and Elizabeth to have ‘a look in Dorcas and see if she is safe’: that is to say, contains enough sound religious doctrine.<sup>98</sup> Prior to *Dorcas Green* being published in book form, the story was also serialised in *Magazine for the Young* in 1842.<sup>99</sup> Anne also contributed illustrations for the production of *Olive Lester* as the following extract shows: ‘He [Burns] has made me a lovely Olive – I will design him some more now he has changed his engraver.’<sup>100</sup> Clearly, in this instance, Anne felt that the previous engraver did not do justice to her drawings, but it is apparent from other comments in her letters that designing illustrations for the epistolary triangle’s literary productions is one of Anne’s roles.<sup>101</sup> While these juvenile stories attributed to Anne were considered of good quality by their reviewers at the time of writing, I have found no evidence that any of them were subsequently reprinted.

Marianne continued to write and publish children’s fiction during the 1840s, as is shown by Anne’s request in 1845 that she send ‘any new story of yours’ that would ‘edify and amuse us’.<sup>102</sup> This was written shortly before her father’s death, after which, Anne was left with care of her ageing mother and helping her to manage their Testwood estate. This meant that Anne was no longer at liberty to write until after her mother’s death 1850. In 1843, Marianne and Charlotte Yonge began their life-long friendship and Charlotte started to contribute children’s stories to *Magazine for the Young*.<sup>103</sup> According to Christabel Coleridge, it was in the spring of 1850 that Marianne gave Charlotte the manuscript for a story which she ‘did not feel was entirely successful’.<sup>104</sup> This story, simply known as *Guy*, at this point in time, was to become *The Heir of Redclyffe*.<sup>105</sup> While space does not permit an account of the plot or characters in this novel, it can be noted that, like *Ivo and Verena*, *The Heir of Redclyffe* was also influenced by Fouqué’s *Sintram and his Companions*.<sup>106</sup> Coleridge describes how the plot was developed by Charlotte and Marianne through detailed discussion in their correspondence and she includes Yonge’s letters for the 1850s in her biography to support this claim.<sup>107</sup> Charlotte’s nickname for Marianne was ‘Driver’, as in slave driver, and she refers to herself as Marianne’s slave, a whimsical indication

<sup>98</sup> HRO, 9M55/F19/16 (June/July 1842).

<sup>99</sup> ‘Index’, in *Magazine for the Young* (London: Burns, 1842), p. iii.

<sup>100</sup> HRO, 9M55/F19/3 (February 1842).

<sup>101</sup> See Anne’s letters, HRO, 9M55/F17/11 (19 June 1840), 9M55/F31/26 (n.d.) [1841], 9M55/F19/7 (April 1842).

<sup>102</sup> HRO, 9M55/F21/2 (January 1845).

<sup>103</sup> Ellen Jordan, Charlotte Mitchell and Helen Schinske, “‘A handmaid to the Church’: How John Keble shaped the life and work of Charlotte Yonge, the “novelist of the Oxford Movement”, in *John Keble in Context*, ed. by Kirstie Blair (London: Anthem Press, 2004), pp. 175-91 (p. 179).

<sup>104</sup> Coleridge, p. 162.

<sup>105</sup> HRO, 9M55/F26/8 (April 1851).

<sup>106</sup> Mitchell, Jordan and Schinske, ‘Introduction to Letters 1850-1859’, in *The Letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901)*, pp. 61-72 (p. 66); See also Julia Courtney, ‘*Sintram* and *The Heir of Redclyffe*’, in *The Review of the Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship*, 18 (2004).

<sup>107</sup> Coleridge, p. 163.



that their relationship was one of mentor and mentee.<sup>108</sup> Marianne is referred to as 'Guy's mother' in their correspondence and Charlotte openly acknowledges that the story was Marianne's original creation.<sup>109</sup> The novel was eventually published at the beginning of 1853 and its great success launched Yonge's international career as a writer.<sup>110</sup>

In February 1853 Charlotte wrote to Marianne about a time of reflection she had spent with John Keble, her spiritual mentor, over the book's success. Charlotte confided in Marianne how they discussed the dangers of pride in a situation like this and Keble's advice that 'in this case I might dwell on how much it [the story] is yours'.<sup>111</sup> In the context of religious women's literary collaboration this is an important revelation. As well as protecting anonymity, collaborative authorship, it seems, was also a way of ensuring that its female participants did not become guilty of the sin of pride. After Marianne's death in 1878, Yonge wrote of her:

I have known her thirty-five years, and she has been a great help and blessing throughout my life. Scarcely a story of mine but has been read and discussed with her, and I don't know anyone I owe so much to after my father and mother and Mr. Keble.<sup>112</sup>

What is clear from this discussion is that Marianne played a very significant role in Charlotte Yonge's life, both as a friend and literary collaborator, and it is apparent that Yonge's popularity as an author was partly secured through Marianne's mentoring and support.

However, what is not so well-known is Anne Sturges Bourne's literary collaboration with Charlotte Yonge and Marianne. Anne's relationship with Yonge was largely conducted through her correspondence with Marianne but she also met Charlotte on at least two occasions and there was some correspondence between them in the late 1850s.<sup>113</sup> After the success of *The Heir of Redclyffe*, Anne readily adopted the role of literary critic again, this time with respect to Yonge's novels. Writing to Marianne in December 1853, she acknowledges the safe arrival of Charlotte's manuscript for her new novel, *Heartsease*, which was subsequently published in 1854. Her letter is incomplete but there is enough information to deduce that Anne has commented on the work. She writes 'you might send this on if you think fit [. . .] I do not know how much to criticise or

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<sup>108</sup> Mitchell, Jordan and Schinske 'Introduction to Letters 1834-1849', in *The Letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901)*, pp. 1-14 (p. 12).

<sup>109</sup> Coleridge, p. 166.

<sup>110</sup> 'Introduction to Letters 1850-1859', in *The Letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901)*, pp. 61-72 (p. 61).

<sup>111</sup> Charlotte Yonge to Miss Dyson, 23 February 1853, in Coleridge, pp. 191-93 (p. 192).

<sup>112</sup> Charlotte Yonge to 'My dear Florence', 1 October 1878, in Coleridge, pp. 319-20 (p. 320).

<sup>113</sup> For Anne's meetings with Yonge see HRO, 9M55/F26/8 (April 1851) and 9M55/F28/12 (1854); See HRO, 9M55/F55, 'Letters from Charlotte M. Yonge, and ?William Yonge, her father, from Otterbourne, to Anne Sturges Bourne, 1857-1860'.

whether it is bothering'.<sup>114</sup> Anne's tentative remarks indicate that she is unsure as to whether her criticism will be well-received by Charlotte. Nevertheless, as a subsequent undated letter relates, this does not stop her sending 'my second dose of remarks' directly to Charlotte and 'a scrap' for Marianne to read and send on.<sup>115</sup> Anne wants to know Marianne's thoughts on the book 'if indeed there is not too much of your counsel for you to give an opinion – at least it all has your imprimatur I conclude and I fancy John somewhat in your moulding'.<sup>116</sup> John was one of the main protagonists in this novel and Anne is recognising Marianne's influence in his characterisation as well as her general collaboration with Yonge throughout the novel.

It is clear from Anne's later correspondence with Marianne that her critical comments had, in fact, been welcomed by Yonge. In the summer of 1856 Anne wrote to Marianne 'I feel highly honoured in being promised Louis'.<sup>117</sup> Louis is the hero of Yonge's *Dynevor Terrace* which was published in 1857. In November 1856 Anne had received a manuscript copy via Marianne and her subsequent letter offers her initial opinion of the work.<sup>118</sup> It is interesting to note that she thinks the story unlike some of Yonge's other books, which 'catch the jargon but make the characters unnatural' and wonders if 'Laura Pearson's entreaty through me' had any effect.<sup>119</sup> Anne clarifies this remark by instructing Marianne to 'ask the Slave [Charlotte Yonge] what she thinks of my doing her good'.<sup>120</sup> From these comments it can be deduced that Anne had previously criticised, through a third party, what she considered to be an 'unnaturalness' in some of Yonge's earlier fictional characters, and, noting the change in *Dynevor Terrace*, she is keen to know if it was her criticism that prompted this remodelling. In a further letter Anne articulates her enjoyment of the story and offers more detailed criticism, both positive and negative, of the plot and the characters and concludes by asking Marianne to pass her letter on to Charlotte.<sup>121</sup>

It is also apparent from the Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence that, in the 1850s and 60s, Anne and Marianne were again collaborating on a literary project. A letter of Anne's written to Marianne in January 1855 seems to suggest that she and Marianne had been invited to contribute to a story in *The Monthly Packet*, possibly by Charlotte. Anne writes: 'As to Sophy time it is a thing I do not look for as my life has been very busy – nor do I know what to do to her – do you? What is the idea of the new story?'.<sup>122</sup> Writing again in March 1855 Anne informs Marianne that 'I have

<sup>114</sup> HRO, 9M55/F27/32 (30 December 1853).

<sup>115</sup> HRO, 9M55/F28/1 (c. 1853-1854).

<sup>116</sup> F28/1.

<sup>117</sup> HRO, 9M55/F29/18 (July-August 1856). This letter is incorrectly catalogued as F29/19.

<sup>118</sup> HRO, 9M55/F29/27 (November 1856).

<sup>119</sup> F29/27.

<sup>120</sup> F29/27.

<sup>121</sup> HRO, 9M55/F29/28 (1856).

<sup>122</sup> HRO, 9M55/F28/21 (January 1855).

had C[harlotte] Y[onge]'s version of W. Lowe'.<sup>123</sup> Sophy and a clergyman called Mr Lowe appear in 'Minor Cares': a story which had, in fact, already been serialised in *The Monthly Packet* since February 1853, possibly by Yonge as Anne's second letter indicates. A subsequent letter of Anne's provides evidence that, in spite of her reservations, she joined with Marianne to contribute to this story: 'I send the wind up of Sophy but I think you might amplify the Lent bit.'<sup>124</sup> A later letter of Anne's, written in September 1857, mentions another of the main protagonists, an older woman called Eleanor.<sup>125</sup> In 1853, at the start of this published serial, Sophy is described as an upper-class young woman aged nineteen. Throughout the tale she is instructed by Eleanor on right attitudes and responses towards her mother, her duties and her own desires in life, a scenario which has much in common with *Conversations with Cousin Rachel*. When the serial finally ends in September 1858, under Anne and Marianne's collaborative authorship, Sophy has experienced enough of the frivolities and disappointments of life, which include an inappropriate romantic attachment to a clergyman, to realise that she has found her real rest in working humbly and diligently at the tasks she has been allotted in life.<sup>126</sup> Some work on the identity of contributors to *The Monthly Packet* has been done by Charlotte Mitchell using details from Yonge's bank account, but Marianne Dyson and Anne Sturges Bourne are not among those listed.<sup>127</sup> To my knowledge, no other work has been done on identifying contributors to this periodical; therefore, the collaboration of these two women on 'Minor Cares' both adds to our knowledge of authorship in this magazine and implies the possibility of other literary collaborations amongst its contributors.

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<sup>123</sup> HRO, 9M55/F28/27 (March 1855).

<sup>124</sup> HRO, 9M55/F25/19 (1855).

<sup>125</sup> HRO, 9M55/F30/13 (September 1857).

<sup>126</sup> 'Minor Cares', in *The Monthly Packet of Evening Readings for Younger Members of the English Church*, 93 (London: John and Charles Mozley, 1858), xvi, 311-22.

<sup>127</sup> Charlotte Mitchell, 'Charlotte M. Yonge's Bank Account: A Rich New Source of Information on her Work and Life', *Women's Writing*, 17 (2010), 380-400.



## Conclusion

My main focus in this thesis has been on the epistolary friendship of Anne Sturges Bourne and Marianne Dyson and my primary aim to reveal what their correspondence tells us about the empowering nature of female friendship in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Their letters, which have never been closely examined before, reveal the remarkable resilience and fortitude of these two women in accepting — even insisting upon — life as spinsters in a world which maligned this social status.<sup>1</sup> My contention is that the over-riding factor which enabled them to accept this role was the affectionate and secure base of their lifelong epistolary friendship. This acceptance was also premised on their religious beliefs and the fact that without the constraints of married life they could be more useful members of society. With the advent of the Oxford Movement their three-way epistolary friendship with Mary Mordaunt began to function as a supportive base which allowed them to venture into the world of print in the furtherance of Tractarian ideals. This was an undertaking which, for Anne in particular, was not an easy decision to take in the light of her father's social position and his lack of empathy with the Oxford Movement. Their literary endeavours provided them with a collaborative model of authorship which they were eventually able to use to support the writing of the major Tractarian novelist, Charlotte Mary Yonge in the 1850s and 60s. Previous work on Yonge has failed to account for the importance of networks of female friendships in the nurturing of a literary career and my thesis addresses this issue.

One of the main challenges of this study has been how to effectively approach the examination of the letter as an historical and cultural artefact while taking into account the early nineteenth-century codes and conventions of polite letter writing. As with any major study of an historic correspondence there are certain factors which have to be taken into consideration, not least the time-specific context in which the letter exchange took place. In the case of the Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence it became clear that issues of class and gender were also important determinants which needed to be examined: firstly, with respect to the way in which letter writing was perceived as a skill to be learned; and, secondly, with regard to the display aspects of the feminine familiar letter, a convention which presumed a wider readership than just the recipient. Once I had established the formal constraints of this type of communication I was able to explore the historical and cultural relevance of Anne and Marianne's letter texts. Caroline Bland and Máire Cross have pointed out that it is immaterial whether the letter has an intimate or a formal character; what is of primary importance is the fact that the letter contains a real dialogue with an intended recipient, and, as such, is the 'engagement of the writer with the

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<sup>1</sup> Bridget Hill, *Women Alone: Spinsters in England 1660-1850* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 8-9.

present'.<sup>2</sup> However, while this is an important observation about the unique ability of letters to record the views of the writer in a given set of circumstances or events, caution is still needed in taking the written text at face value. The feminine familiar letter, as practised by early nineteenth-century women in polite society, was required to demonstrate their ability to write interesting conversational text displaying wit, elegance and intellect, a veneer which could mask or disregard the writer's real thoughts or feelings.

My examination of some of Anne and Marianne's earlier correspondence has been able to demonstrate how two young women educated in this epistolary art were able to strike a delicate balance between duty and self-exploration. What has also become clear is that as friendship develops so does the confidence and trust between the participants and maintaining the polite façade becomes less relevant. At this stage the familiar letter can begin to function as a reflective site in which each friend can think about what they are learning of the other's social circumstances, personal characteristics, likes and dislikes, and so forth, and compare it with their own lives. This contemplative exercise, referred to as 'intersubjectivity' by Dena Goodman, can aid the development of a gendered sense of self. My intertextual analysis of specific letters written by Anne and Marianne in 1829 has revealed the way this worked in practice; it also emphasises the differences in these two women's social standing. As the daughter of a Member of Parliament Anne was expected to involve herself with all the trappings of London polite society which included attendance at prestigious balls and dinner parties; whereas, Marianne's experience of polite society operated on a much more provincial level. Nevertheless, their written dialogue reinforces the gendered codes and conventions of their social class. It also highlights their compatibilities and differences as friends which the two young women discuss in some detail. In particular, they dwell on Anne's love of politics and her rational and intellectual approach to life and the way in which this contrasts sharply with Marianne's imaginative qualities and her belief that, as a woman, she need not trouble herself about political matters.

These different approaches to life are an important aspect of Anne and Marianne's amity, both in terms of developing an individual sense of self and in the context of Marilyn Friedman's hypothesis on the morally transformative possibilities inherent in women's friendships. The regular letter exchange, as a practice which encourages reflection, also offers each participant the chance to consider the values and commitments which are important in their lives. This, in turn, facilitates the making of reasoned choices and judgements which, in a social context, can lead to degrees of personal autonomy. It is this inherent capacity of the familiar letter to function on so many different levels, together with my use of Friedman's theories on women's friendships and

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<sup>2</sup> Caroline Bland and Máire Cross, 'Gender Politics: Breathing New Life into Old Letters' in *Gender and Politics in the Age of Letter-Writing, 1750-2000*, ed. by Caroline Bland and Máire Cross (Aldershot & Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), p. 7.

relational autonomy, which has enabled me to combine the methodology required for studying letters as a genre with the concept of the letter as a cultural and historical artefact.

### **Refashioning the familiar letter and the transformative power of friendship**

As previously noted, polite letter writing was a skill which had to be learned and Mrs Sturges Bourne chose the aristocratic letters of Mme de Sévigné as a model for Anne to emulate. One of the aims in my first chapter was to consider the significance of this choice, not only in terms of Anne and Marianne's epistolary practice, but also in the context of the gendered traditions of the landed gentry. Anne, in particular, worked hard on her letters in order to achieve the natural conversational style required of a young gentlewoman. This may have been from a desire to please her mother, who, as we have seen, was keen to perpetuate the gendered traditions of the landed gentry. It is clear from Anne's letters that she and her mother empathised with Mme de Sévigné and her separation from the daughter she loved. As Anne's comments on Sévigné's death indicate, they regarded her as a friend. On the other hand, Marianne had to be persuaded through Anne's mentoring tactics to persevere in trying to write a 'beautiful' letter, the standard which, in the eyes of Sévigné's cousin, comte de Bussy-Rabutin, was the highest accolade he could give to a woman's familiar letter. Anne and her mother were finally able to award this merit to one of Marianne's letters in December 1829. However, Marianne disliked the artificial nature of Sévigné's letters and I have argued that her motivation for learning to write a beautiful letter was to please Anne and achieve a measure of equality in their friendship rather than for the sake of the achievement itself. In spite of Marianne's reservations about Mme de Sévigné's correspondence, there is sufficient empirical evidence in these two women's letters for the late 1820s to establish the fact that the youthful epistolary practice of Anne Sturges Bourne and Marianne Dyson was modelled on that of Mme de Sévigné. This is an important finding which, while it substantiates Nicole Pohl's claim for a virtual community of writers who used Mme de Sévigné's letters as a model for both 'literary and polite letter writing', also represents a significant contribution to our understanding about how, and why, upper-class women used Sévigné's correspondence as a model.<sup>3</sup>

As Goodman reminds us, Sévigné's letters also gave women the literary tools to refashion the familiar letter in keeping with their own interests.<sup>4</sup> Leonnie Hannan has written about ways in which seventeenth and eighteenth-century literate women used the discursive space of the letter

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<sup>3</sup> Nicole Pohl, "'Perfect Reciprocity': Salon Culture and Epistolary Conversations', *Women's Writing*, 13.1 (2006), 139-59 (pp. 139-40).

<sup>4</sup> Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (Ithaca, N.Y. & London: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 333.

‘as an instrument for self-education and self-fashioning’.<sup>5</sup> She explains that, for these women, the familiar letter became the ‘key channel for intellectual participation’.<sup>6</sup> This was still the case for literate women in the early nineteenth century and it is clear from Anne and Marianne’s correspondence that they were refashioning the familiar letter to reflect their own intellectual and literary interests. German writers such as Schiller, Klopstock, and Fouqué, and the contemporary work of the Lake Poets and Scott were just some of the authors whose works they were reading and discussing. Their early letters, in particular, reveal the extent and variety of their reading material and this is an area which would reward further study. Nevertheless, my thesis has shown that Anne and Marianne enjoyed a written form of rational discourse within an intellectual framework of female self-improvement. By honing in on their joint obsession with Schiller’s poem, ‘Die Ideale’, and their disagreement about the literary merits of Coleridge’s poetry, I have been able to explore some of the cultural ideas which informed their reading in this period. Furthermore, by considering Anne’s initial response to John Keble’s *The Christian Year* it has been possible to contextualise Anne and Marianne’s discussions on secular and religious literature within the contemporary debates on German aesthetics and German historical criticism. It is clear from this that Anne and Marianne, as educated gentlewomen, were engaging with some of the complexities inherent in these concepts.

It was not just the nature of their intellectual discourse that made Anne and Marianne’s letters personal to them. With the advent of Tractarian teaching and the formation of their epistolary triangle with Mary Mordaunt in the mid-1830s, these three women introduced their own coded language into the letter text. This was a refashioning of the familiar letter which signified their affinity with the Oxford Movement and supplied a collective sense of female agency which was generally absent from their lives as women. In the light of the controversy provoked by the *Tracts for the Times* and the perceived threat of Roman Catholicism for the country at large, this also represents a significant attempt to render the contents of their letters less accessible to the outside reader. This way of adapting the familiar letter, which also included marking certain parts *private* on occasions, allowed these women to quietly transgress the codes and conventions of polite letter writing while still maintaining its outward form. This subtle transgression intensifies in the late 1830s and early 1840s as Anne, Marianne and Mary begin to write juvenile fiction in support of Tractarian doctrine. In order to accommodate their evolving roles as authors they use the letter text for discussing their storylines, writing passages to be incorporated into each other’s tales, and debating the correct way of disseminating Anglo-Catholic doctrine to their young

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<sup>5</sup> Leonie Hannan, ‘Making Space: English women, letter-writing, and the life of the mind, c.1650–1750’, *Women’s History Review*, 21.4 (2012), 589–604 (p. 590).

<sup>6</sup> Hannan, pp. 589–604 (p. 601).



readers. My thesis has been able to demonstrate that, in their hands, the feminine familiar letter has now become a site of literary collaboration and theological debate.

With respect to Mme de Sévigné's letters and the gendered traditions of the landed gentry, it has become clear that the Marquise's correspondence was just one of the *ancien régime* aristocratic models of education favoured by Mrs Sturges Bourne. Apart from the correspondence of Mme de Maintenon and Mme de Motteville's *Memoirs sur Anne d'Autriche et sa Cour*, the other significant pedagogical text used by Anne's mother was Mme Genlis's treatise, *Adèle et Théodore*. This latter text had a significant influence on the reading material which Mrs Sturges Bourne chose for Anne. As we have seen, in spite of this carefully orchestrated reading programme Anne's intellectual preferences as a young woman were for reading German literature, which, in 1825, she referred to as 'that delightful language'.<sup>7</sup> This contrast in literary interests can be attributed to the wide generation gap between Anne and her mother. As noted in the main body of my thesis, Germany was beginning to replace France as the intellectual hub of Europe in the early decades of the nineteenth century and Anne and Marianne's letters in the late 1820s and early 1830s are located on the cusp of this changeover. While Mrs Sturges Bourne still upheld the pre-eminence of French intellectual culture, Anne and Marianne's letters provide empirical evidence that the new emphasis on German aesthetics and philosophical thought in male intellectual circles in Britain also informed female self-improvement at this time.

The insular nature of Anne and Marianne's country-house upbringing ensured that they were only instilled with the moral abstract values of their parents and other close family members. While I have discussed the fact that Anne initially shared Mr Sturges Bourne's leanings towards liberal Anglican theology, space and the focus of this thesis has not permitted an in-depth discussion of the considerable part that nineteenth-century Anglican doctrinal belief played in the culture and politics of the day. The three main denominations recognised in the Church of England at this time — namely, High Church, Broad Church and Low Church — each took a different stance, both on doctrine and in the way in which they conducted their Church services. These distinctions were by no means clear-cut, but, nevertheless, still had the ability to influence the world views of their adherents. What has become clear, however, is the extent to which Anne and Marianne engaged with these different theological discourses in their letters. In Anne's case, she even attended the lectures given by prominent bishops in London. In the context of their close friendship, these two women attached a great deal of importance to being able to share the same doctrinal beliefs. The desire to be of one mind on theological issues is first expressed in their letters after the publishing of John Keble's *The Christian Year* in 1827 and the influential role which Keble's poetry played in bringing these two women to a shared understanding of the revealed religion of the Bible has

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<sup>7</sup> HRO, 9M55/F3/1 (8 January 1825).

been discussed in some detail in Chapters 1 and 2. Furthermore, in order to refashion the classical model of male friendship they had appropriated from Schiller's 'Die Ideale', Anne and Marianne used Keble's devotional verse to Christianize this model in line with their own beliefs. In the early 1830s their reading of the liberal theology of Richard Whately and Thomas Arnold brought new perspectives to their religious values and affirmed Schiller's ideal of virtuous employment in the temporal world. For Anne and Marianne this meant educating girls in their Sunday-school classes, not only in the tenets of the Anglican faith, but also in terms of reading and spelling. Anne and Marianne's well-informed debates about the *Tracts for the Times* and Newman's sermons also demonstrate their serious engagement with Anglo-Catholic theology. The depth of their understanding and knowledge of Tractarian doctrine becomes apparent from the praise accorded to their stories by the literary critics.

While Marianne and Mary embraced Tractarian doctrine from the beginning, Anne struggled with the mystical aspects of Anglo-Catholicism and the political nature of some of the *Tracts*.

Friedman's insights into women's friendships and moral growth have been invaluable in enabling me to discuss the way in which Anne came to a point, in October 1834, where she felt able to teach the tenets of Tractarian theology to her Sunday-school pupils, not because she was convinced of the total rightness of this doctrine, but because she had faith in Marianne and Mary's belief in its veracity. For Anne, maintaining her commitment to the deep friendship she had formed with these two women became more important to her than holding onto the socially embedded moral values imbibed from her parents, and, in particular, those of her father. It was in the context of this secure base of friendship that Anne was enabled to develop her own moral autonomy. All of these different aspects of Anne and Marianne's interaction with the changing face of Anglican doctrine in the early nineteenth century provide new empirical evidence of these two women's serious engagement with the theological issues of their day.

### **Becoming authors: relational autonomy and literary collaboration**

Another area which my study has highlighted is the way in which issues of class and denominational variances in doctrine govern the ways in which different groups of Anglican women sought to validate their close friendships in the late 1820s and early 1830s. At the beginning of my second chapter I discussed Sharon Marcus's claim that, in the wake of Romanticism and Evangelicalism, the language in which female friendship was expressed in the nineteenth century had changed from that of the previous century. I pointed out that, while Marcus explores some of the ways in which Evangelical fervour brought about specific changes in the language used to articulate female friendship, she does not discuss specific ways in which

Romantic literature modified the language used by her middle-class subjects.<sup>8</sup> My discussion of the way in which Anne and Marianne used the language of Romanticism to describe their friendship goes some way to filling this gap in our knowledge. As we have seen, Anne and Marianne's epistolary friendship was grounded in a strong framework of upper-class female self-improvement which had a strong bias towards the Romantic poets and German historicism, all of which was not necessarily a concern for middle-class Anglican women whose lives were immersed in the tenets of their Evangelical belief system. In this chapter I also explored the extent to which Anne and Marianne's socially embedded paternalistic values could be discussed within a paradigm of women's Evangelical middle-class philanthropy. It has been difficult to draw any definitive conclusions from this exercise other than to point out that, while Anne and Marianne were aware of the catechistic methods of teaching children and used them for their own teaching purposes, Anne, at least, does not appear to have been directly influenced by the philanthropic instruction of either Hannah More or Sarah Trimmer. Nevertheless, the correspondence of these two women articulates a genuine concern for the welfare of their Sunday-school pupils and their desire to see them improve their lot in life, a concern reiterated in their Tractarian fiction.

I concluded my discussion of Anne and Marianne's friendship in Chapter 2 by considering it in the light of Friedman's account of relational autonomy. This theoretical model has enabled me to demonstrate the process by which Anne and Marianne were able to achieve varying degrees of personal autonomy in their respective social situations. What has become apparent from this exploration is that, although Marianne's route into spinsterhood was determined more by her social circumstances than by active choice, her decision to embrace Tractarian doctrine in 1834 can be seen as an autonomous one based on the reaffirmation of her deepest values and commitments: that is, her Anglican faith and her supportive friendship with Anne and Mary. Conversely, premised on the fact that her parents would have liked her to marry, Anne's decision to remain single and embrace a life of female friendship can be considered as an autonomous choice. It can be concluded from this that, in line with Marcus's findings, close friendship between women gave them a sense of agency which they could not exercise within a heterosexual relationship.<sup>9</sup> In addition, as well as giving them active choice in their relationships, women's friendships also gave them an outlet to discuss their religious beliefs, which, for Anne and Marianne, not only played a vital role in their moral development, but enabled them to explore their creative abilities as writers of Tractarian fiction.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Sharon Marcus, *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 28, 62-67.

<sup>9</sup> Marcus, p. 26.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

Writing tales for children that inculcated religious values was seen as an acceptable occupation for middle-class women in the early nineteenth century and the didactic fiction of women like Mrs Trimmer and Mrs Sherwood was popular and well-received. The power of the woman's pen was recognised by John Henry Newman and Henry Wilberforce who actively enlisted the support of women sympathisers to write juvenile tales supporting the Catholic cause of the Oxford Movement. What has emerged from my discussion of Newman's correspondence is the length he was prepared to go to promote Anglo-Catholic doctrine, even to the extent of denigrating the work of women writers who did not support the cause, such as Mrs Sherwood. It has also become clear that the propriety of authorship for women from the landed gentry was still an unresolved issue at this point in time. Anne felt she was transgressing the feminine codes of propriety by writing fiction and her reluctance to initiate a story of her own until 1840 can be imputed to an awareness of this. Anne's letters continue to reiterate the concern that her writing activities will become known outside the epistolary triangle and her anxiety is fuelled by the fact that her father did not share her Anglo-Catholic vision for the Church. While it is possible that Mr Sturges Bourne was not actually aware of her literary endeavours in support of the Oxford Movement, it seems unlikely that Mrs Sturges Bourne could have been totally unaware of her daughter's writing activities; however, there is no definitive evidence in Anne's letters to suggest anything to the contrary. If this was indeed the case, Anne's writing of juvenile stories for the purpose of disseminating Tractarian doctrine represents a very significant degree of personal autonomy. It also demonstrates the extent to which Anne had come to believe in the veracity of Tractarian teaching for herself. It is clear from her letters that Anne went out of her way not to disrespect her father's values and religious beliefs, seeing it as her duty to maintain a peaceful equilibrium in the home. On the other hand, she was motivated by the belief that, in writing for the Catholic cause, she was serving the Church. This vision, which she shared with Marianne and Mary, represented a higher claim on her life in terms of duty and devotion, and was, therefore, the overriding factor which allowed her to act in such a surreptitious manner towards her parents.

The empirical evidence found in Anne and Marianne's correspondence sheds new light on the way in which literary collaboration could function. The collaborative model of authorship which Anne, Marianne and Mary constructed was based, like their relational autonomy, on shared Anglo-Catholic values and their commitment to educating the poor. While their mode of writing acknowledges the predominance of one main authorial figure, it is more concerned with accommodating each member's strengths in the process of textual production, making their way of working relational as well as collaborative. In the nineteenth century the ability to write and publish covertly was aided by the way in which the literary market place functioned: women could choose to keep their identity a secret by publishing anonymously. As scholars working in this field are currently acknowledging, the practice of collaborative writing made it difficult — then as now

— to establish who had written what.<sup>11</sup> For women like Anne, who were particularly concerned to keep their authorial identity a secret, the additional anonymity provided by literary collaboration gave them an added measure of security. It also helped to salve their consciences when asked if they had written children's stories, as in Anne's case when Mr Stansfield asked her this very question. However, for Tractarian women, there was an even greater significance attached to collective literary production — it helped to protect their devotional integrity. Charlotte Yonge feared that the success of *The Heir of Redclyffe* would make her exalt in her own achievements until Keble pointed out that the original story was Marianne's and counselled her to think of this in order to prevent her from falling prey to the sin of pride. This revelation brings a whole new perspective to women's collaborative projects when viewed in the context of their religious networks.

With respect to Anne and Marianne's literary legacy, it has become apparent that Marianne's stories were highly regarded in the Tractarian circles of her day. The literary critics praised her children's tales for their literary quality, knowledge of the Bible and Church history, and the integrity of the Anglo-Catholic doctrine presented. Although Anne's juvenile tales were favourably reviewed at the time, none of them were ever reprinted. On the other hand, Marianne's *Conversations with Cousin Rachel* and *Ivo and Verena* were reprinted throughout the nineteenth century and continued to elicit praise from those who had read these stories in their youth. These two women also leave an additional legacy, both with regard to their collective contributions to *The Monthly Packet* and with respect to their collaborative input into the novels of Charlotte Yonge. Anne and Marianne transferred the relational model of authorship which they developed in the late 1830s to their collaboration with Yonge in the 1850s and 1860s. Marianne's chief role in the epistolary triangle was that of writer and editor, and, while it has not been possible to establish Marianne's literary contributions to Yonge's work, the fact that she always read and commented on Yonge's writing sees her taking on the role of editor again in this second communal enterprise. Anne's main engagement with the epistolary triangle, apart from when she was working on her own storylines, was to suggest ideas for new stories, design illustrations, and to contribute text to Marianne's tales from time to time. She also fell naturally into the role of literary critic, which has emerged as the main aspect of her collaborative relationship with Yonge.

To conclude, this thesis has shown that, while women from the landed gentry were constrained by the codes and conventions of their class, and the duties and responsibilities which came with their privileged position in society, they were still able to choose how they wanted to cultivate their female friendships, make informed decisions about whether or not to marry, and fulfil their own literary aspirations when it came to writing. Certainly, the opportunities for leisure and the

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<sup>11</sup> Alexis Easley, *First Person Anonymous: Women Writers and Victorian Print Media, 1830-70* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 2.

financial security which they enjoyed were major contributory factors in their decision making, but, in Anne and Marianne's case, I have shown that the centrality of shared religious beliefs in their lives and epistolary friendship was the guiding force which motivated their actions. In addition, the supportive base of their triangular friendship with Mary Mordaunt enabled them to undertake their collaborative writing projects in support of Tractarian ideals, without which it is probable that these three women would never have become authors. In this thesis, therefore, I have contributed, not only to our knowledge about genteel women's epistolary practices and ways in which they could develop their own agency through the reflective aspects of letter writing, but I have also shown that the practice of letter writing helped to pave the way for literary production. It has also become evident from this latter line of enquiry that Marianne Dyson and Anne Sturges Bourne belong to the first generation of women writing juvenile Tractarian fiction and deserve to be recognised as such, not necessarily on the literary merit of their work, but because of the important role that they played as women in establishing the Anglo-Catholic teaching of the Oxford Movement for future generations. This conclusion is reinforced by Anne and Marianne's collaborative efforts in support of Charlotte Yonge's literary career and it has become clear that Marianne's friendship with Yonge played a significant part in helping to establish her as a major Victorian author. Although Marianne's mentoring role is acknowledged by Yonge scholars, my study of the Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence offers a more nuanced account of the literary production of these Tractarian women than has hitherto been recognised. It also reveals the important role that friendship played in women's lives and literary production and demonstrates continuity with other women's religious networks as a means of self-expression and moral agency.

## Appendices





## **Appendix A: Abbreviations used in the Sturges Bourne/Dyson correspondence**



B. <sup>p</sup> - Bishop	Ap. Success. <sup>n</sup> - Apostolic Succession	mourn. <sup>g</sup> - mourning
D. <sup>ss</sup> - Duchess		mys. <sup>f</sup> - myself
L. <sup>d</sup> - Lord	bec. - because	nev. - never
L. <sup>y</sup> - Lady	bef. - before	noth. <sup>g</sup> - nothing
M. <sup>r</sup> - Mr	belong. <sup>g</sup> - belonging	nurs. <sup>g</sup> - nursing
M. <sup>rs</sup> - Mrs	bey. <sup>d</sup> - beyond	Parl. <sup>t</sup> - Parliament
Sq. <sup>re</sup> - Square	cert. <sup>y</sup> - certainly	pleas. - pleasure
S. <sup>t</sup> - Saint	Ch. - Church	read. <sup>g</sup> - reading
St. <sup>s</sup> - Saints	childh. <sup>d</sup> - childhood	S. - School
S. <sup>t</sup> - Street	cogitat. - cogitations	seem. <sup>g</sup> - seeming
c. <sup>d</sup> - could	Conf. - Confirmation	serv. - service
f. <sup>rm</sup> - from	descript. <sup>n</sup> - description	somet. <sup>s</sup> - sometimes
fr. - from	diff. <sup>y</sup> - difficulty	suggest. <sup>s</sup> - suggestions
sh. <sup>d</sup> - should	discuss. – discussion[s]	think. <sup>g</sup> - thinking
v. - very	dream. <sup>g</sup> - dreaming	tho' - though
th. <sup>r</sup> - their	educ. <sup>d</sup> - educated	try. <sup>g</sup> - trying
w. - with	Episcop. <sup>y</sup> - Episcopacy	Ver. - Verena
w. <sup>d</sup> - would	even. <sup>s</sup> - evenings	vol - volume
w. <sup>h</sup> - which	ev. <sup>g</sup> - evening	writ. <sup>g</sup> – writing
y. <sup>r</sup> - your	ev. <sup>ry</sup> - every	Xtians - Christian's
y. <sup>rs</sup> - yours	expect. <sup>g</sup> - expecting	
2. <sup>d</sup> - 2 <sup>nd</sup>	forw. <sup>rd</sup> - forward	Chrys. - Chrystism/Chrys-ism
3. <sup>d</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup>	fright. <sup>d</sup> - frightened	codge – chat
C. Y. - <i>Christian Year</i>	giv. <sup>g</sup> - giving	schoolery – story writing
/ . . / - ( . . )	hav. <sup>g</sup> - having	schooleries – story writing
	hersf. - herself	
ab. <sup>t</sup> - about	impress. - impression	
accus. <sup>d</sup> - accustomed	incl. <sup>g</sup> - including	
Adv. <sup>t</sup> - Advent	inf. - inferior	
affect. <sup>y</sup> - affectionately	inst. <sup>d</sup> - instead	
ag. <sup>n</sup> - again	keep. <sup>g</sup> - keeping	
ag. <sup>st</sup> - against	learn. <sup>g</sup> - learning	
alw. <sup>s</sup> - always	light. <sup>g</sup> - lighting	
alw. <sup>ys</sup> - always	look. <sup>g</sup> - looking	
anyth. <sup>g</sup> - anything	manif. - manifesto	
	medit. <sup>n</sup> - meditation	



**Appendix B: Digital images of significant letters from the Sturges  
Bourne/Dyson correspondence with edited transcriptions**



## Synopses of Letters

### **Letter 1: HRO, 9M55/F5/14 (n.d.) [1827] Anne to Marianne**

This letter is used in Part 3 of Chapter 1 to illustrate something of Anne's first season in polite society. It also gives additional information about Anne and Marianne's different ways of viewing life and shows how they draw on characters from the books they are reading to describe their friends and acquaintances.

### **Letter 2: HRO, 9M55/F35/3 (8 May 1827) Marianne to Anne**

Marianne's letter, also used in Part 3 of Chapter 1, replies to Anne's above and highlights the way in which they are using Schiller's poetical ideals as a context in which to describe their own characteristics. It also continues their discussion of real people in terms of book characters and provides the reader with a fuller picture of Marianne's political stance at this point in time.

### **Letter 3: HRO, 9M55/F36/2 (13 February 1829) Marianne to Anne**

This is the letter described by Anne as Marianne's 'nice letter' and is discussed in Part 1 of Chapter 1. Apart from illustrating the natural conversational style, which so delighted Anne and her mother, this letter also highlights the extent to which Anne and Marianne's reading material informs their discussions.

### **Letter 4: HRO, 9M55/F36/6 (12 March 1829) Marianne to Anne**

This letter provides a greater insight into the time that Anne and Marianne spent together in Brighton during the winter months of 1828/29. It also highlights the strength of Marianne's feelings about politics and the need she feels to make Anne understand her reasons for not sharing her friend's enthusiasm for this subject (discussed in Part 2 of Chapter 1). Additional information is provided about Marianne's growing friendship with Mary Mordaunt and Mary's regret at leaving Brighton and the time spent with Marianne (discussed in Part 1 of Chapter 2).

### **Letter 5: HRO, 9M55/F1/15 (n.d.) [June 1829] Anne to Marianne**

Anne's 'old maid scheme' letter forms the basis of my discussion in the first part of Chapter 2 and is therefore included in full here. The writing appears hurried and parts are difficult for the outside reader to understand not being party to the context in which they were written.

### **Letter 6: HRO, 9M55/F8/8 [March] (1830) Anne to Marianne**

I have used extracts from this letter in Chapter 2 to discuss Anne and Marianne's differing opinions about Whately's book, *A View of the Scripture Revelations Concerning A Future State*

(1829). Anne's justification of her own opinion is worth reading in this letter, even though she is prepared to acquiesce to that of Marianne and her family.

#### **Letter 7: 9M55/F10/16 (n. d.) [1832] Anne to Marianne**

This letter has provided valuable insights into Anne's thoughts and feelings about her future as a single woman which are informed both by her friendship with Marianne and Mary and her religious ideals. Although I have used several extracts from this letter in Part 1 of Chapter 2, I consider it worth illustrating and transcribing here.

#### **Letter 8: 9M55/F11/27 (n.d.) [c. December 1833-January 1834] Anne to Marianne**

This is an important letter which relays Anne's initial response to the *Tracts for the Times* and gives a much fuller account of her views at this point in time than I have been able to discuss in Part 1 of Chapter 3.

#### **Letter 9: HRO, 9M55/F12/1 (2 Jan 1834) Anne to Marianne**

I have used extracts from this letter in Part 2 of Chapter 2 and Part 1 of Chapter 3; however, this is a significant letter and being able to read the letter as a whole gives the outside reader a better appreciation of Anne's excitement at the beginning of her 'sisterhood' with Marianne and Mary.

#### **Letter 10: HRO, 9M55/F12/8 (May 1834) Anne to Marianne**

In Part 2 of Chapter 2 I discussed Anne's opinion of the Lancaster school system and its relevance to National schools; however, in this letter, there is also a good description of the teaching methods used and the way in which Anne thinks they might be adapted for use with their Sunday-school pupils. In another section Anne describes the situation she and her mother found themselves in having attended a dinner at the Duchess of Kent's residence without Mr Sturges Bourne. Anne also relays her thoughts on seeing the young Victoria for the first time. This additional information not only demonstrates the high circles in which Anne and her family moved, but Anne's descriptive prose highlights the role of letter writing as a precursor to writing fiction.

#### **Letter 11: HRO, 9M55/F42/4 (14 January 1839) Marianne to Mary**

This is Marianne's one extant letter to Mary, which I have used extensively in Part 2 of Chapter 3 and is, therefore, transcribed in full.



**Item 12: HRO, 130A08/3 (n.d.) Anne's Family Tree**

While quite difficult to read, this is an interesting document which has been very useful in working out the relationships on Anne's mother's side of the family. It was almost certainly done by Anne, possibly in her adolescent years when she and Marianne discussed making 'pedigrees' of various European royal families.



## Letter 1: HRO, 9M55/F5/14 (n.d.) [1827] 2 sheets

Anne Sturges Bourne to Marianne Dyson (no addresses or postal markings)

Sheet 1, pages 1 to 4

I sh<sup>d</sup>. not have enjoyed it so last year, or even two months ago, when you thought me insufficiently political, but the prophetic similarity to the present times & the very true portrait, as it seems to me, of Mr. Canning surely make it more interesting to any body, than at the time it was written or even published. I like Candance exceedingly, more than George. She is so natural & not more perfect than the people. I find I was mistaken about her age but the author contradicts myself. I have been looking forward to visiting Papa in his office to see 4 vols of manuscript letters of Dr. Johnson & Dr. Johnson, but they have returned them, & I am very angry.

9M55 F5/14 Sunday

I will not say thank you for your short stay but I hope you are not getting into the way of regarding me so for all my long letters. It are so much more interesting in me than in you, but you will please to remember that you have a sweep time, & that the keeping my fancy & shivvies & with those pretty things in the middle of politics, balls, & gay courtes, & various mantua making, depends solely on you, & that the most extravagant, & peculiar comradish letters, will do me the most good. Your reading above a practice of one, debate

for my sake, is a point I very much doubt, but I recommend you what you will like much better. Some treatises published once a fortnight, called "Library of useful knowledge" they are detached, one on & work science, all hit off by Mr. Thompson, & quite excellent. We are in a happier state than when I wrote last, Papa having entered on his business & not being yet in the house, he has time for riding & is perfectly well & as comfortable in mind as can be expected. I have just heard that dear Eliza reached home safely yesterday, without being the worse for the journey & the joy of being with her sisters again must be her good. I was at a party of the ladies Bathurst & met the Vards, I had a good talk with Anne, who looked full as shy as frightened as you, but was very nice, & I found courage to talk of Dr. Pina, & only felt rather ashamed of being now reading it. For so far from being distressed like you, I felt I could surely have said much more than I did. I am prieved my dear to say so unkindly & I think but I am delighted with it. I have not done the 2. or for I only read it at odd minutes, & like to make it last & think with great pleasure that there are two whole vols before me. I do not wonder at or blame you the least, the



## Letter 1: sheet 2, pages 5 and 6

94655FS/14 PV  
 We have a new Lodge with  
 Falkland, how you will  
 gaze at him. He is much  
 what I expected, but perhaps  
 less plain, not as the looking  
 of course, but there is a  
 certain goodness & gravity  
 in his eye & it is a beautiful  
 Vanduyke. You will like to  
 know that he had a very  
 nice wife. Letice, poor &  
 charming, who fell in love  
 with him for his mind &  
 was quite worthy of him & he  
 married at 21, & supported his  
 father by her poverty, so that  
 they lived abroad some time  
 as in town, pretty well,  
 & Mr. Frances, whom I saw  
 the other night at a dinner  
 party, & there are smart people  
 & a young lady going to America,  
 & she looked so exalted above  
 them all in her simplicity

It is very hard that you will  
 not believe facts. I c. bring  
 you vouchers from some of  
 the most discerning people  
 who are never deceived by  
 any thing before. I am  
 perfectly assured her. I do  
 hope you w. or I should very  
 much change my opinion  
 if you & believe that you would  
 not admire Imo, Isabella  
 or Bradamante, if they c. be  
 brought to life. Now goodbye  
 G. W. D. H.





## Letter 2: HRO, 9M55/F35/3 (8 May 1827) 2 sheets

Marianne Dyson in Petworth to Anne Sturges Bourne in London

Sheet 1: pages 1 to 4

been a great while scattered, & nothing  
new and new but you may suppose  
I am not likely to be the warmer  
or to grow weary about any of the  
enquiries nor even about Zenobia  
though she is interesting enough to  
wish to hear more of her. The only  
few evenings that we have not  
left Bournemouth to see the sun set, the  
good B. has carried us an immense  
number of times from  
England to Rome to get hills, &  
hills, & descents, without yet dis-  
covering I. Catherine, which are thought  
suppose to be the full extent of wishes  
I have dispensed with. You do  
me great injustice about the politics,  
for I have not only listened to the  
debates after dinner, as if it was  
a history of the civil wars, but I  
have read a speech & a half & dis-  
missed others, & really should not be  
satisfied without knowing some-  
thing of a change like the present, but  
do not praise me yet for now come  
my confessions which with such you

9M55 F35/3 P1  
Monday

My dearest Annie,

I had been very impatient  
from Wednesday till yesterday  
at an interruption in the course  
of things which has made me so  
leaving to-day, & I hope to have a few  
more <sup>next Wednesday</sup> lined, even if they are but a few  
to restore the order; though indeed  
I am not at all insensible to  
your constancy & your good-  
ness about writing & I could say  
several pretty things about it if  
I thought you would care to hear  
them, but I shall keep them till  
you have shown your wishes  
still more in the midst of dis-  
sipation, though I begin to perceive  
that you will not have a regular  
season, & you will not be a regular  
coming out young lady nor I  
Bournemouth a regular hanging out

depression, nor all your thoughts  
devoted to manna-makers &  
parties, & you will not leave  
town if you were to leave it, as  
totally different person from the  
one who entered it. And you do  
not seem much to need my  
letters to preserve you from con-  
fusion & I am very  
proud of my piece, but I. James  
will fill it much better, & he you  
guardian being dogmatist by  
her beautiful presence & make  
when she is not present, do not  
doubt my desire to see & adore  
her, I already lament over her  
name which certainly was in-  
vented for old maids & not for  
an Estella or a Bertha, if you  
and settle who she is most like, I  
will think of her by that name, but  
at present I am distracted with  
variety. You may think yourself  
with off that I am excited by two  
rainy days for last week was so  
perfectly luminous & so perfect in

all sorts of idle happiness, taking  
down all the books I owned &  
writing extracts, & carrying them  
into the woods & then sitting &  
pondering, & reading, & thinking  
of the pleasantest fancies, & some-  
times wondering how people could  
exist in London that I should  
hardly have written intelligibly to  
a town lady. Your favorite flower  
leaf is so pretty & so suited to the  
season, & withal so thoughtful, for  
with the next time I went to the  
Liphavoor which is a place that  
it always seems to me most agree-  
able of the boys who drive the cows  
there, I passed through the space into  
a field whilst the nightingale was  
singing I thought it very hard with  
see queen & think I said, though to be  
sure I had not thought of moonlight  
& in the middle of the day I could  
hardly expect them. The most rational  
thing we do is to read Gibbons which  
is so pleasant. I hope to be much  
the wiser for collecting all the ideas  
that once were on my head & had

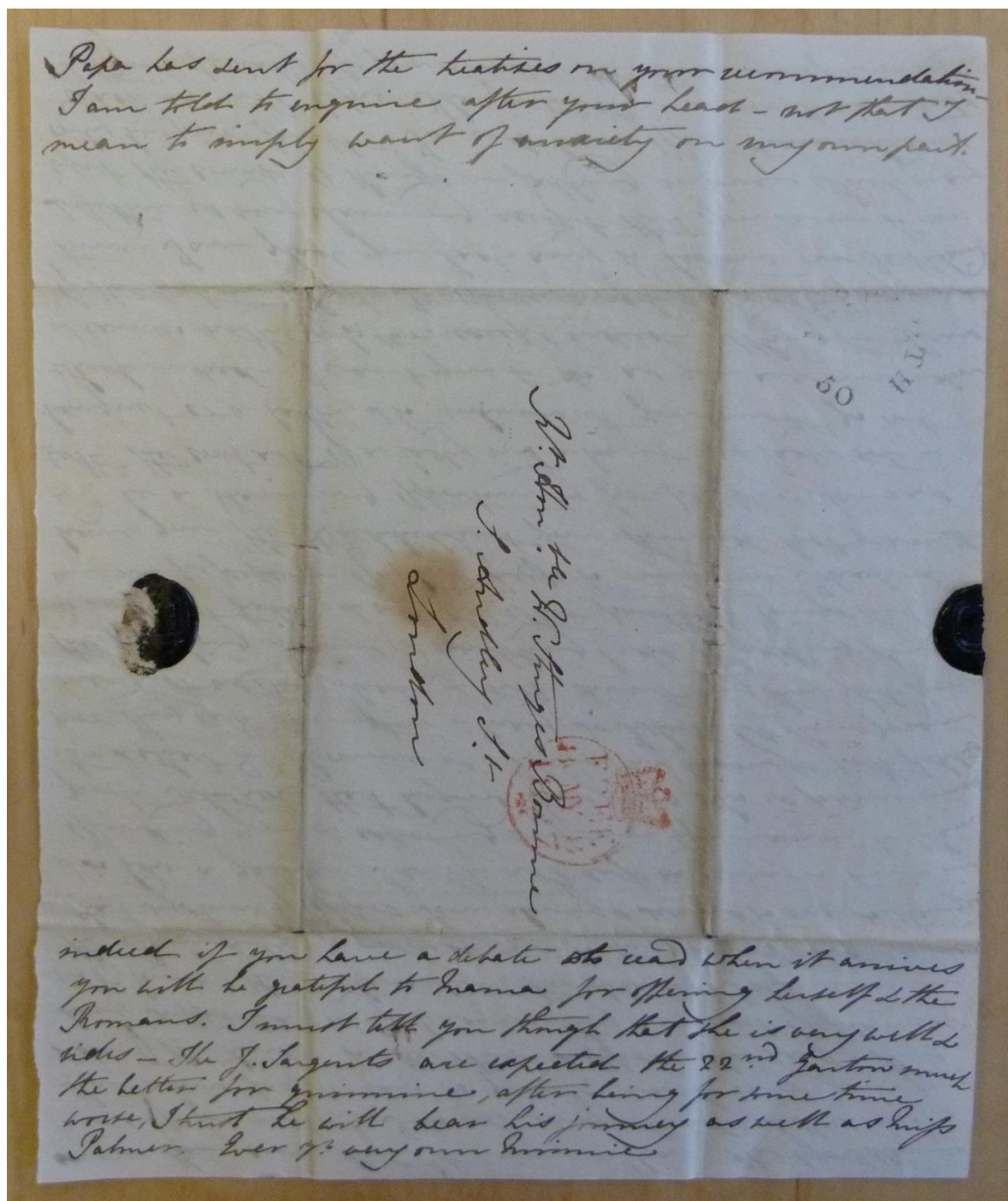




more than ever, that the more I hear, the less I blame  
myself for neglect, I do not understand & I never  
shall, how people can so quietly waltz over from one  
side of the house to the other & oppose the party they  
have supported only because they are out of place, &  
not lower their character, the debates I held and in  
the Peninsula provoked me to the greatest degree, &  
that system of opposition always seems to me so strange  
& so like a game. I will not pass any more time in  
offending you & exposing my own ignorance, but I am  
quite satisfied that beyond knowing who is prime min-  
ister & what Dr. Bowne is, I have no business with politics  
nor they with Clarendon & I, so I shall let them govern  
me just as they please & not divert my thoughts from  
the purring steamers, & warbling birds, & budding flowers  
& verdant fields, & all the other practical things that I  
am in possession of, but deeps to my own I shall &  
have you the Winkhishent you charmed last year; it  
will be a charming opportunity for Schiller stanzas,  
with the contrast of a lady in a tower & a lady at a  
banquet or a ball, & to whom it you must go out,  
which indeed I want you to do, as you are in London  
& can do nothing better, except indeed settling the affairs  
of the nation which I suppose employs most of your  
time. I am glad you had any to bestow on Fathland,  
& Letter is very charming except that you seem to in-  
vert the course of things in falling in love which may  
only be your fault. I must leave off to draw & hear  
teaching, not before I have written a most respectable  
letter especially if you observe the closeness of the writing,



Letter 2: sheet 2, page 6







## Letter 3: HRO, 9M55/F36/2 (13 February 1829) 2 sheets

Marianne Dyson in Brighton to Anne Sturges Bourne in London

Sheet 1: pages 1 to 4

She is writing herself, I believe, so I will leave her alone, & by way of being done with people, I must tell you of a new acquaintance, Miss Dalrymple, whom Mr. D. begged Anne to visit. She was young, & left at a boarding school, for her health, just by way of charming for the 18th left her family in Scotland, all of some interest, & we found her pretty mannered, pretty looking, & talking pretty well, & asked her to tea, & I am happy to say she is coming again, for just before she went, after giving glimpses of her true & within nature, she happened to mention the Bride of Lammermoor, & she told me was perfectly true in the whole foundation of the story, the heroine was a daughter of Lord Stair's, her great, great, great grandfather, I am afraid the great, great, great, granddaughter of Lord Stair can have no tinge of the same, & she has a son, Rotherford, who instead of dying

I thought you very good, my dearest Anne, on Friday concluding that the cover of the postcard of a long letter this week, & had not arrived, & I hope will not arrive to-morrow, but next day, for I cannot do any writing, I have so much to tell you: after being so long used to the happy days when I had all my say, I think I shall be happy to hear of your return, & this post I will tell you of the blackish pen, & my only means of telling you now - however I do not mind to begin, & I shall be much better than at Bath, & I am sure you will not begin with me, & I have told you about the will, & I am sure you will be so good as to

by becoming that I thought myself quite fortunate to have when it was told for the girl's opinion, the black lace mourning & black silks, with the black velvet gown were quite perfect & I sat opposite, enjoying all & thanking myself, for not having thought enough of the convenience of the lady; but what is now fresh in my head is Mary's driving with us yesterday, & after tea sitting over mamma's fire with the intention of reading, but it lay suspended on her lips, & I felt myself obliged to give up mine, & we had a good huzzammyer; he said she wanted to talk to me & began of her own accord, & told me the truest things of her father, whom she had always thought perfect without knowing that she thought so, & had delightful recollections of her. She now praised, & had found out by degrees how people thought of her, & at last said with the quietest earnestness "think what her child ought to be."

I know I am not worthy of her, I ought to be so much better, & then she said her brother was worthy, & so good, though nobody knew him: & then she talked of her childhood, & not having begun to think till the last two years, & her thoughts were so poor, & when they moved on her she did not express them, though she agreed that I told her that for her, & she had never been told to act as a child, & had nobody to be with a friend; you may suppose that I long to talk on & I daresay we shall: she was much pleased with your letter, & mentioned (as a novelty to me) something about your visit here being when Maria & I had on their journey; by the way, she very much liked the last stanza of St. Stephen & quite entered into what I told her of my ideas about it, & we discussed the 24th & she had been trying to find your "music" in the words "at" she was not quite convinced.






## Letter 3: sheet 2, page 5

as I tell upwards, vanished for 10 or 12 years, during  
 1<sup>st</sup> time he travelled into every part of the world &  
 then came to his friend Lt. Peterborough saying  
 he'd serve under him & seek a grave, & he  
 found in Catania; Lucy's mother was such  
 as she is in the novel, & is still supposed to have  
 been a witch, & is buried upright by her own doing  
 in a mine, & there witches meet, & pretend that  
 if her coffin tells, the house of Delguyre & Camp  
 are lost, "certainly," Miss D. says. "He is quite upright  
 seeing I have of his kind, besides all the rest of the  
 family." her mother came just as she had informed me  
 that she had a store of ghost stories & other witch  
 conduct, & I had informed her that I had the danger  
 of believing not only ghosts but witches & fairies. We  
 had the Dashwoods the same night & they were  
 very nice, & Sophy very radiant, & I had a little  
 with her in a fly one morning, to visit a young  
 invalid friend of Mr. Wicksteed's. We are going to a  
 bath at the New Steyne to-morrow. Do not think  
 we have been bright, all fog except one lovely day  
 but now there is a fine & wind sea; my only bathing  
 has been every day close to it, & one morning on  
 the sands before breakfast, nice & splashing & re-  
 mind me of you, the noise of the town so  
 far off that I can hear the gentlest ripple, the sun  
 shining through fog on the wet sand, chairs & piers  
 indistinct, casts in motion, all to your heart's content.  
 The sweet Southampton are not original like Indine  
 & Intram, but true Tongue, all off & shivery,  
 though the time is Charles & the same the siege  
 of Tunis, & there are Hanover, & startled me at  
 first, but I think the German hero is exactly





BRITISH MUSEUM



Mr. Don. the  
 H. Georges Bonne  
 J. Anstey St  
 London

his supplicating this  
the broken English  
For Boatswain's best  
and innocent. She  
says her punishment  
husband, & Professor

one of his knights, rather Otto-like, & one of the ladies  
is a Quakerist Lambergenian living in an oasis, &  
the whole copies all the kitchikheit of Robertson &  
dickinson shirahy. It is nice to say Solanga's sister  
yet remains unsprung. Anna used Alpbach  
thing, debates, & a pamphlet of Lot St. Harolds. you  
w. admire her. She likes the shirahy of the thing but  
not its magic. I have mourned over the domestic



## Letter 4: HRO, 9M55/F36/6 (12 March 1829) 2 sheets

Marianne Dyson in Brighton to Anne Sturges Bourne in London

Sheet 1: pages 1 to 4

Let it be now on its way to  
 town, & to give a further  
 proof of our growing <sup>friendship</sup> you  
 shall tell me how <sup>many</sup> <sup>more</sup>  
 gowns are to be made this  
 year. I cannot think what  
 delectable subject I have to talk  
 about, <sup>other</sup> unless it is  
 Mary, & you with like to hear  
 all the progress of our ac-  
 quaintance. It is most  
 satisfactory. He grows very ten-  
 der about parting, & assures  
 me that I am a principal  
 cause of his great regret at  
 leaving Brighton. It is one  
 of the merits I have found  
 in her, that her words never  
 go beyond her meaning, at  
 least as far as I can judge.  
 There is a great truth & clear-  
 ness as far as her ideas go,  
 & you will feel for her sort of  
 envy at leaving Dr. & Mrs.  
 Wedgwood. ~~What~~ I think  
 Burke's analogy, whilst she  
 does her every day education,  
 though she gently allows that she is too young

I have nothing about my dear-  
 est Anne, nothing about visiting  
 & enjoying a bright sea & spark-  
 ling vapors in the atmosphere, &  
 the enjoying dust & wind, & last  
 enjoying a bright sun with the  
 sensitive feeling of spring  
 warmth. I now long to expose  
 in a talk with you, as I used  
 to do in Regency days if I have  
 one moment of that real talk  
 now! & that we value it more.  
 I think we did, but I have a  
 great deal to say, so that better  
 begin. I shall just consider the  
 chapter of our differences, in  
 an amicable manner, for  
 especially just now, feeling rather  
 kind & very tender, I am in  
 something of a humor. So kindly  
 shall not tell we meet, & then  
 you shall find me the most  
 docile, at least if not the most  
 persuadable of hearers; in

the meantime I marvel at Dr.  
 Beaumont's Larcher, whatever it  
 may consist in. Dr. brings Mrs.  
 Bourne to a point & with  
 hearing of Charlotte, remember-  
 ing as I do, her unhappily lame  
 little Marjory. Dignity is the  
 very thing I meant to tell you,  
 both my fancy, & I have a  
 collection of Joan & occa-  
 sional descriptions of scenes  
 that were very descriptive, but  
 I had a general impression of  
 its being affected & meaning to  
 have great effect & feeling. I am  
 for politics. I know you think  
 me at the present moment  
 perfectly insensible to all that  
 is passing, but that is far from  
 the case; only I am perfectly  
 convinced that I cannot tho-  
 roughly understand the cause,  
 & I think it too serious for  
 ladylike pampering. It is im-  
 portant on our important matters  
 perhaps a touch of my paper  
 obedience which will nothing  
 to be quietly governed, with-

out much thought of my own.  
 I understand perfectly the rea-  
 sonableness of your thinking &  
 knowing more, & your lead-  
 ing into it & taking it in clearly,  
 only I do not have your very  
 warm either, or condemning  
 other people, for really with the  
 best intentions people may  
 think both ways, & it is not  
 a thing to cry out & quarrel  
 about like a matter of taste;  
 but do not forbear telling me  
 anything there is to be said.  
 Papa will like it, & I shall not  
 object. I do not say Dr. is  
 prejudiced & will not hear  
 & will not alter, & will not  
 be like other people, & do not  
 think it wrong if I rather  
 try to keep peace & forbearing  
 out of my heart, & I do only  
 make me usefully concern-  
 ed, & do not come natu-  
 rally enough to be unavailing.  
 Oh. Now I must thank you  
 for your trouble about the





Letter 4: sheet 2, page 5

Q 1355 F36/6 P3.

I suspect one great charm I find in our walks & talks is the right of saying as much about you, & talking in the plural as much as I please, & that perhaps respect she has for you encourages me in saying anything that we share; she owns she was a little afraid, a little even to the last, though she thinks now you are gone, she sh<sup>d</sup> not be afraid at all: Emma has had a cold & got rid of it quickly & seems to be a great matter; I told you that she passed one evening with them us, & so did Mr. & Mary. & Mary has often dined with us; I have enjoyed a good admiration of beautiful little things in my little. i. talks with Emma, more I am afraid there was quite consistent with my looking being pleasant, but Mr. & Mrs. since she got near them in her new house, are quite delicious; there is one with hills & gulls & hardly any visible sea or sky, but a true Brighton house that gives such a true idea of it. I had a nice scrambling walk with Papa the other day, across downs & fields, & hope for more now that the ground is dry. Columbus is very interesting, very amusing, & very occasions. I'd hear his trials, with his great mind & firm principles, it is easy to reconcile oneself to his having great pains as well as great pleasures, but those poor savages who were so happy, so kind, so hospitable, so admiring the Spaniards, & to hear of their finding



always delightful, caring for nothing so much as  
his happiness; by the by, I was so pleased with the  
plan Chamber's had of employing all his gains  
in a musade, so much more consistent  
with his character than enriching himself. I  
seemed at first to be his object. I think you  
can hardly avoid finding this letter dull, but

Wm. Allen & Co.  
St. James Bond  
J. Stanley & Co.  
London

wretchedness they had no idea of, amongst Christians  
to have them pinning under their slavery, & divine  
into such feelings, is a sort of discomfort that one  
does not know how to get over; Columbus does  
his best, but I wd hardly forgive him for making  
war against the Indians whom his countrymen  
had proscribed, & imposing tribute; Isabella is





Letter 5: HRO, 9M55/F1/15 (n.d.) [June 1829] 1 sheet

Anne Sturges Bourne to Marianne Dyson (no address or postal markings)

Sheet 1: pages 1 to 4

inquired much about H. P. G. son's  
cannot work. touching S. I could give  
no satisfactory answer, never  
having seen it. She has taken  
up again an ottomane which  
was put by dressing her

9 M55 F1/15 p1

My dearest which

I feel that you will want  
to hear from me to make  
amends for this. I can fancy  
you thinking and talking  
as if it was all my fault.  
I could tell you philosophically  
that 2 days out of 2 months  
are nothing, that all the  
times we might have met  
& did not choose, my pen  
surpass the hours of those 2 days  
or describes to you how penitently  
I say, you had better not go  
till Monday, & all that &  
talk about tombs & swags  
as my interests are not  
in the least mixed up. But  
this you could call impertinent

troubles, & does the powers for  
government & the ground while  
she teaches the children  
I read on good of a thing it better  
called us, indeed a paper on you know  
it. It is German & about Walden  
negotiated, but they had done them  
before I had done my work. So I do not  
know how it will.

Miss M. H. Dyson

so like Geminio, I will not  
say it. We have Tuesday still  
dearist, & we will make the  
best of it, & we will get together  
all we have to say against  
it, or rather you will, for my  
thoughts & occupations will  
furnish nothing interesting  
& it is well if I can regain  
a few Brighton ideas. I go  
on with very half hour  
marked out by some necessary  
thing all which I do very  
carefully, a life that would  
with many pretty well I  
think, but it would soon  
stoppage me. & though you will  
not think it, I have not  
I shall enough about me to  
raise me above those dusty

selfs charming talks about  
so I must take care how  
I walk in them, & I think  
a great deal of you, of your  
& of little will be necessary  
to my well-being, & our (I mean)  
scheme must conclude it.  
how good bye, I wonder if you  
have written to me.

V. Ann

I cannot add a little bit to  
refresh <sup>myself</sup> after putting things into  
a box which they cannot by any  
possibility fit. Mr. P. Dyson  
told me that Mr. Bird in  
addition to other desagreements  
has taken such a quantity of  
ether that nobody can stay in  
a room after he has been  
visiting, & it was smelt all over  
the hall at one time. She



Letter 6: HRO, 9M55/F8/8 [March] (1830) | sheet

Anne Sturges Bourne from 'Testwood' to Marianne Dyson in Bedford Square, Brighton

Sheet 1: page 1

9 M 55 F8/8 P1 Testwood  
Saturday

My dearest — We are pinned down without any certain prospect of moving, & Papa is bed again with his poor knee, without any impudence or cold to trace it to, & after a week of fine weather, rids, & allures. He has certainly never been free from it for long since the attack, but any thing so serious so soon again, & did not fear, some does not know what dependance to place upon recovery. He has not been up since Wed? It is not so bad as before, & only in one knee, neither has he been so small, & it is going off, but it is a sore thing, & gentlemen mind that sort of confinement very much, but he is always a model of patience. I know how you will all be sorry for him. He was to have been in town Thursday, & see at Arline Park to meet him, next Friday — now all times & places are uncertain, but I trust Westbrook will at last be accomplished. Mamma is as stout as usual. As you are disappointed — & I said too much, & I have upbraided Mrs. Dyson's S. O. I read your sentences over & over again, & lamented that we should differ at all about it, & that I should





Letter 6: sheet 1, pages 2 and 3

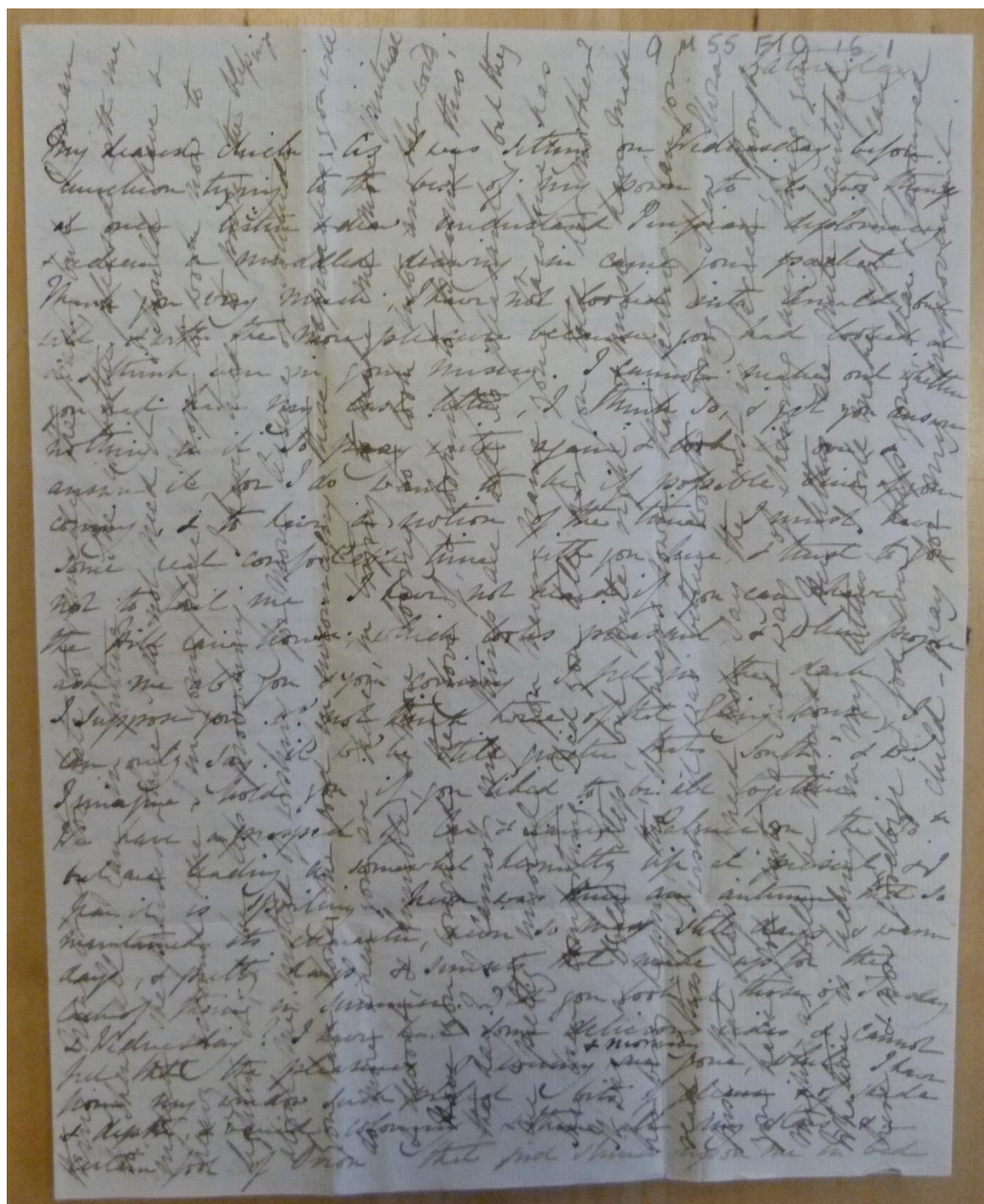
not know exactly beforehand how you will like a thing. However I understand I am getting on, or rather she goes farther (it is very fair of me to tell you so) & therefore I will suppose that you are right & we are wrong. But the word controversy is too strong. It makes one think of particular people & books, violence & party spirit. I am told that H. Hall, from break up, or some such season, reads little, & comes out with his original opinions, perhaps without knowing how odd they will appear. If he had deigned to consult other books more, I dare say his would have been better, but I like to see the originalities. In fact I do not think easy books like Arnold quite enough cheap, but find the advantage of a little deep thinking & investigation, & besides giving a great interest & clearing up difficulties. And in this mood I have so enjoyed his 1<sup>st</sup> Paul, but one does not feel cheap the same. I have looked at the sentence in the introduction. I do not think it goes farther than Arnold in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Paul & spirit. There is indeed a more excellent way. I think he means that no condition quite precludes people from such knowledge, & meets in the most proper way such people as the "Workhouse Boy," scattered about, though as yet they are few. Perhaps I have said too much, perhaps not enough to make it clear, but I cannot bear that we should not think just alike, except upon Jacobitism, & has been a long-allowed subject. We have a book about Francis 1<sup>st</sup>. I am not sure I do not know, as there seems



**Letter 7: 9M55/F10/16 (n. d.) [1832] 1 sheet**

**Anne Sturges Bourne to Marianne Dyson at 'New Grove', Petworth**

Sheet 1: page 1







**Letter 7: sheet 1, pages 2 and 3**

through the little drink of igit that I see. All the different  
aspects of nature are the chief events of my life & I mention  
that I better than being taken up with the affairs of our  
neighbours. The little I will be going soon to Brighton I fear  
she is obliged to do so for her health & besides has a  
sister dying there the widow of J. porch, but she is a painful  
thing to have the dear old thing alone, as she will be  
dying part of the time, & she cannot read. I is not  
very well. I have been much struck with the calm  
of the day in which this poor Caroline lives to balance  
her duties, & she is very dear in talking out to me. You  
V. have liked the day in V. she talked of the difficult task  
of not forgetting her children, that she hardly dared dwell  
upon or hear others talk of the delightful spirit of her little  
son, because it was so easy to love it too much. I have  
not made much of her. I like I am getting into a good letter  
to her & I shall begin at once. I do not the last time, because  
it was a letter of pleasure, but did not the life, praise the person  
but my son, how can any son letter of mine than yours  
be as that, & you all yours, will you understand how  
I loved the trouble you had taken? I have not surprised  
at your missing more after what you said of not being able  
to bear a moment of it. I thought not comfortable. But  
indeed, dearest I do not think you have much more to struggle  
with now & so long to have you here to comfort - it will be  
and for you, but it can only be the comfort of natural affection  
you have no shell in the office like those who would you, &  
when they could say something good, I do only wish you. I  
have you understood how I have struck upon you, & how  
strong it seems that the story of a mind like yours should  
ever have seemed to fall short in interest, of the shining  
century brightness upon Mary's path. It never can be so again  
although after years it may seem to others somewhat  
dull & blank. I shall now that there are brighter visions  
than often to me. I shall not wish any thing else for  
you, so not fear it. If for myself, without the loss of  
painted on the piling & high ranges that will smooth  
it all for you, I did this summer picture to be the most

[illegible]



My dear Eliza, to say an impertinent thing at once. I must say something  
in return for your 2 other letters - they have delighted me, & do really  
your friendship. I am glad to have your authority, or, I presume, that there will  
think it worth my while to say so, because I have a great deal of strength but will give  
myself up to administer to the little or less, but I am so much in a hurry that I  
only tell that the good which must be all on your side, I can hope only to administer  
to you that I must thank for Miss Lett's letter - it is a great pleasure to read it, & I  
I hope to be able to tell you all I can about the burial of the poor girl, & the  
very beautiful, & much the happiness, & the "Belief" of a part of the people, & the other very  
good too, & the others. I am sure, I must not say so, in my letter, but I am a thorough  
for her. For who else has the happiness of seeing him, in such full and true health  
years ago, precious to the rest of us. I am a great admirer of his, & the beautiful  
world in which, through the natural world. Love & affection? A. P. S.





Letter 8: 9M55/F11/27 (n.d.) [c. December 1833-January 1834] 2 sheets

Anne Sturges Bourne from 'Testwood' to Marianne Dyson at 'New Grove', Petworth

Sheet 1: page 1

9M55 F11/27 P1  
 Testwood  
 Wednesday  
 My dearest - I thank you for your pity, & am very  
 sorry you have been anxious, but we are in no distress,  
 & laugh about Mamma's sprain, which hurls to  
 the window, & looks at the moon & the stars, & will  
 arrange the poor's closet itself. I was going to write  
 when I had made myself ecclesiastical enough, &  
 had courage to write, which to you, is a new thing.  
 And I thought you w<sup>d</sup> not hear, & was so tired of  
 telling it. Its origin seems, after many deliberations  
 to be traced to trying to step on a foot that was  
 perfectly asleep, & somehow twisting it, but she did  
 not know at the time that had put her into so  
 great pain, & a nervous convulsion, & swelled her  
 ankle in a minute, & turned her foot in. I was  
 rather frightened about it then, wrapped it in  
 vinegar poultice, & so waited for Caldwel to say  
 that she had broken no bone, which it seems she  
 might just as well have done. He has made a  
 fine cure of it, & she has had no pain since that  
 night. It happened before tea, when she had been  
 sleeping - we got her settled to sleep after some looks  
 about 2 in the morning - & that was the end of the  
 suffering - but suffering increases confinement, in con-  
 sequence, many things besides pain, & in that sense  
 I suppose Mamma used it, for she knows Mamma  
 was not ill. Now you will fancy how we have done

how fondly she is a foolishly wise letter, as you may have noticed, did you see the  
 Sunday  
 Monday  
 & Tuesday  
 Wednesday  
 & last  
 Grand  
 I have  
 been  
 riding  
 & riding  
 when I  
 could  
 & finally  
 trying  
 to be  
 diligent  
 how far  
 to have  
 no  
 escape



## Letter 8: sheet 1, page 2

very snugly in the sitting room, & how much she has  
 read, & cut out, & been read to & chatted, & written letters,  
 & made herself very comfortable when she had not the  
 fidgets, & escaped many a chance of cold. She will  
 go down soon. I am sure there have been pouring  
 days enough to make you happy - we think them rather  
 sad. I want to have my mind cleared about some  
 things, not but what your letters have been most  
 delightful. I could not understand where & how all  
 the people lived. how infinitely prophetic seems to  
 sketch, & it takes in you & all the lovers - how is it  
 & will the Mannings be there till then? & where  
 did they honeymoon? What are H. W.'s  
 prospects, & where, & is he in orders yet, & what  
 will be the name of his tract. Do you make out  
 what side the Evangelical party take in general  
 about these church matters? I heard they rather  
 bent to the counter address to the Archbp. for  
 alteration. I really am afraid of saying anything  
 after Olivia's flaps. I do not feel that I ought to have  
 an opinion, & I fear to prove others wrong. I do not  
 exactly understand how the tracts are suited to the times  
 seeing the man has been entirely ag. ch. temporalities  
 & bishops' votes, at least I had supposed so, no spiritual  
 rights questioned, nor the grounds of episcopacy called in  
 question, though very likely forgotten. We can none of us  
 make out why they fear Parl. altering the liturgy. Indeed  
 the enemies of the Ch. C. do not care for making improvements.  
 They must mean seriously whether wisely or not. I like the  
 list on alterations very much, & quite feel with it, but  
 many serious people do not - might not we concede them  
 a few improvements, so that we are sure they are improvements.





Letter 8: sheet 2, page 3

Does not the introduction to the Prayer Book authorize them? SM 56 f11 27  
 The page at the back of Noble's reference - seems the work of some body  
 in a great, unwise fuss - may we not more safely leave them the  
 bishops' hands, who have much more means of moving the world.  
 I think the tract very instructive, & like them I think usually. I  
 cannot judge whether they will do good - I sh<sup>d</sup> fear the existing  
 are more topics of controversy & discussion, & I sh<sup>d</sup> think are more  
 in the world. The 1<sup>st</sup> tract I think confessed, & cannot make out the  
 "Episcopacy an accident" - nor in what "apostolic vicars", without delegates,  
 sh<sup>d</sup> differ from presbyters. When Noble says "the only ch. in this  
 world S. has the words only to give" - i.e. does he exclude Catholics, who  
 have the same succession & whose ordination we acknowledge, or does  
 he include them & set them above Presbyterians? How do you define  
 "the church of Christ" of which ours is a branch? Perhaps they sh<sup>d</sup>  
 rather not define it. Why are we to say the ch. in England, does  
 it mean that it is diminished. R. Nelson is a very clever man,  
 I suppose there are such poor men, or some who can understand it,  
 but I cannot fancy them. Mr. Otley says you sh<sup>d</sup> only get ridiculed by  
 using the argument of the App. Success. with the poor, & they sh<sup>d</sup> still say  
 "Mr. Stevens at the Chapel, is as pious a man ~~as~~ as you" & sh<sup>d</sup> ask how  
 a hunting, quavelling clergyman sh<sup>d</sup> be the successor of the apostles, &  
 you sh<sup>d</sup> not beat them out of this. I liked the sermon who is very clear.  
 The Sunday lessons are Helios' Noble, somewhat far fetched, but very likely  
 true. The selection of bishops by laymen rather pleased me, as interfering  
 with the succession, but I see they rest upon consecration & I suppose in  
 theory they might refuse to consecrate though they never do. A Hooker approves  
 of the King appointing, & doubtless it strengthens that tie of Ch. & State sh<sup>d</sup> the  
 enemies are so trying to break. I suppose I always believed the succession,  
 & I hope one may hold it, without ~~being~~ excluding from the ch. of Christ, &  
 laying that strong charge of presumption on the whole Presbyterian clergy. How  
 I have said too much, but it is only for you & her. & I have only 2 questions to  
 ask. 1. What do you do abt. appointing poor, lecturers, or make a difference  
 or seem unconcerned. & 2. Where did Timothy & Titus die? & how long

Now, which tear off this slip. It is very hard of people to be such reports  
 I wish I sh<sup>d</sup> trace it. It was for nobody who had been us - & really if one may ask so I have  
 one friend for a week are in 4 years, together with 3 more pills, what is to be done.  
 I sh<sup>d</sup> be sorry if they heard it - otherwise do not much care. Which's hand cut? is not  
 a good sample of her, you must have have longed to know the inside. I fear you think  
 friends sh<sup>d</sup> stop & whisper, who have no "RT"! Nor even Madame Des. or is it  
 a report to find as they state is free to love you! Maria liked V. letter so much I said reproach  
 "you see that people can be happy when they are married" - If S. reproach I feel is completely  
 undeserved. That I shall turn her over to you, who must by this time have learnt how  
 to put in love, how to receive a proposal, and how to accept one, or you must be stupid  
 than I take you to be. When to hear of your six happy young people so well paired. Mr. Reddy,  
 who has been troubled of having married those girls in 4 years, she is nothing to Mr. Argent, who did nothing





I have just begun the book and am enjoying it perhaps a little, like going to begin. I have been a very slow writer. I hope to have to write a book.

only sleep out in him before  
having the road down the  
val. st. is going to build  
house and think it a fine  
very long etc.

Miss R. Spence  
New York  
New York

I wish I had been good. No not think that Miss being very pretty made them less engaging. I  
 cannot remember Caroline. I know a De Witt girl, Josephine and Miss. I do not talk to you  
 longer about Anne. I cannot remember her. I am sure that we can make some to have any  
 kind of letter of really little and some more. I wrote to my lady, but not L.D. I say still  
 I want to know that she is going to marry Sir John. I cannot have heard of it from the  
 most gossip, rubbed out, but I have heard that she must be married up to my very  
 young man, who could have been at 5 or 6 years, and that father put him with my friend.  
 I believe in a likelihood to make a terrible good girl happy, but I do not suppose, that  
 it will come with his heart as any thing less than his heart, and then she was a Welch  
 girl who seemed to love him, but my own heart was not for the old man living up to him. He was  
 a little and kind to me. He was with him. I am not little to me, but I left to come, and at  
 attention and kind to me.



Letter 9: HRO, 9M55/F12/1 (2 Jan 1834) 1 sheet

Anne Sturges Bourne to Marianne Dyson (no addresses)

Sheet 1: pages 1 to 4

very particular about my rights of  
interfering with poor de, but I love  
authority. I sometimes comfort myself  
with the faults & failures of the National  
system when I think of our unprovided  
State here. I should like to have one  
well appreciated, & then I could alter the  
say, & books, though I think I want  
no books out of the Society except  
if I could find them, reading de's  
books for older children on common  
subjects - all directly religious. There  
are 3 or 4 delightful for little children.  
Some schools would be very nice  
where the same is possible & constantly  
overlooked, but the benefit is limited.  
I think my dear child would be  
a dear name, or rather pick & choose  
from no system but what I think her  
moderate no. of girls will take from  
a them constantly teaching. I think my  
dear child's see something of this sort  
but Marianne finds it difficult to  
keep in good training. The Revell's are poor  
& I have made over Sunday pick to Dr. James  
my infant schoolmistress & am anxious to  
see what kind of her room will hold them.  
My dear child makes me hope for something  
better, but I believe I must go on as I am  
arranging every thing, & hope the boys will find  
something when they leave my school.

Jan 2. 2  
Dear Mr & Mrs - I'd up in my room  
place, or from oratory, & miserable each  
other & let me supply the lacking angle  
& lodge with you. I don't only have good  
you are to write me those delicious  
bits, how I love - Our stars have  
certainly decreed that we are not to  
know each other after the fashion  
of other people, but we are to write  
more words than we shall ever speak  
so I will take the words written in those  
pretty characters - thankfully. I send my  
love, anticipated as it is, because  
it explains the mysterious personal.  
but I see it was not, not only, but  
brought that accusation against me.  
Marianne has loved to say even in  
private. What I see thinking of  
writing, what a good thing it would  
be if I were read any thing that was  
not apostolical. I defended her to  
Marianne by saying how good it was  
to take one subject up at a time &  
study all that had a bearing upon it,  
thinking to myself. Yes, one at a time  
time, but all the year, & every day  
this is too subject. Will not discuss  
what I the good after the the cordie

What sort of children does Marianne  
mean, even those that we angles  
write about with such indiscretion  
that I fear it will look very bad to  
our educators in our letters - & the  
saying which sometimes does not  
sound the matter much.  
I wish I made as good use of my  
words as you, who never stop to get  
out, or say, it is just the most unlucky  
time, or he idly on the sofa & sit  
idly over the fire, or vex at the  
days going without once doing a  
bit more than in half a day, &  
get angry as I did, because after  
I had worried myself up from damps  
against Ministers & succeeded in be-  
coming idle, I was only told not to  
go to church for the first thing.  
I had unluckily not been well before  
my cord, & had Caldwell, & then he  
& Marianne pinched the two together  
dear child that I was very ill. But  
I know too well to mind them, & will  
not take any more physic, saying  
that I take some iodine to help my  
feel not to swell, & being an old  
friend of ours, & a person of sympathy  
& importance, the idea is rather  
sublime.  
Now what have I to write about.  
Any more Knoxism? I know I am  
not fit to decide, & I know one ought to  
judge from John's sermon, not his old  
private opinions, but do not they believe  
to what might be called esoteric doctrine  
& do not they require too much learning  
for understanding the Bible, & so on  
the thought of the ministers who from  
the Bible alone have learned the things  
necessary to salvation. I think they had  
little knowledge of the poor. I had no  
opportunities. I had not the taste  
& strength for knowing them.  
The first day school girls, now abt. 11. - change  
impressed me by her knowledge of Bible  
history & doctrine, & her correct definition  
& knowledge on many subjects, &  
though her father who was a carpenter  
and taught her or made her read many  
books - but I found they had only a little  
I makes my mouth water, talking of  
National school. I paid 4/- as to  
that by subscription, or by subscription like  
here. I had a right to interfere. I am





## Letter 10: HRO, 9M55/F12/8 (May 1834) 1 sheet

Anne Sturges Bourne in Grosvenor Place, London, to Marianne Dyson

Sheet 1: pages 1 to 4

history - he has much pleased with him  
when he examined her 2 years ago, &  
he will again for her confirmation in  
July. Mamma's eyes are not better,  
nor the better for last night.  
The Holbros with Mary only, are at  
Mumant's, which is comfortable, only they  
are carrying Mrs. Much business. Anne  
is gone to the Westbarns, to go with them  
to Dublin Bay for sailing, & Lucy  
likes to do very much, tho' she will have  
rail road & Steamboat, & to come back  
in July to be confirmed. London is very  
empty & pleasant. I should's speech has  
just informed as what he means from  
to want to do, which is, convenient &  
creditable to all parties - he dismissed  
if Mr. G. Pitt has opened people's eyes,  
if they wanted it, as to his complete  
improvement, & he will easily keep, both  
the request in common over the heads  
of his poor friends if they fail to control  
his will in all their measures. It is capricious  
they will get through business as quickly as  
possible. I saw Mr. Otley, who had been at  
Paradise, & had seen something such a heap of  
the change & a human very afraid about the  
future of the articles as concerns the  
he believed in Julia's marriage - I have  
used 5. national sermons & a couple of them  
is striking as the old ones. It looks as if there  
was some much to say about the same old  
I believe there is. I am sorry to see this. The

Paradise come tomorrow. I am very fond of the  
the strength in Devon is a good man for good things, but  
they have never been so long in there. 9M55 F12/8

My dearest. The coach, or Charles's  
coach, whichever conveys you  
to London, shall take this too. I think  
I have sent all your articles. I got  
the best pictures I could find at  
Wickham's, not having been able to go  
into the city, but Mr. I must with any  
letter, or any good reading lessons on board,  
I will secure them. I had no good spelling  
lessons at Wickham's, & therefore sent for  
some out of those used at the Lambeth  
School. The little set is rather elaborate  
& is the instrument by which each great  
disposition is obtained there - the mottoes  
being framed to teach upon each board  
from lessons on every word & trace on every  
writing one the result of which is a wonderful  
correctness of language & understanding of  
words & things. I do not see why all this is  
not transplantable into national schools.  
Of course the system is beyond us, but for all  
that the same real spirit we & if you will  
ask printers upon each word after it has been  
well set in type, each a letter, & then in  
columns. A. M. M. M. will soon learn to do it  
they will at least know a few things thoroughly  
the matter of them see but clearly & in the  
I have sent the maps in a sheet for travelling.

I wrote you much paper that & the lessons  
on boards or on cards with letters, or rather  
Beech with paper them, for I am sure  
your pasting will be better as had as mine  
you should keep the pictures for a treat to  
be shown only to you.  
It has been a sad time of deaths indeed.  
Mr. James & was added to the number  
for us. I believe it is settled that  
Miss Capton will remain at Mumant's  
& the caretaker at Quodsworth, holding the  
living. Our history is that he came  
back from Westbarn last Monday, after  
the following Sunday at Mumant's. It was  
lovely, & the sitting on that terrace in  
the smell of fragrant flowers & with all garden  
business about, & all birds singing was  
different from any thing I have done  
this spring. I turned very cold again  
when he came back, & Papa got a little  
cold, having had one more or less all  
the spring, & another fresh bout a  
day or two at Paradise's lecture on  
Saturday, & has been miserably  
uncomfortable with cough & headache  
actually driven to keep in the house &  
he will seldom do. I believe it is the  
sort of influenza at present, but coughs  
are much harder to get rid of than the  
common feverish cold. He was obliged

to go without him to the office last  
night, but happily got excited on some  
long walk to the carriage after an hour  
& a half waiting - part of this was spent  
well enough sitting under the staircase  
seeing other people file down it, with  
a Danish ambassador, whom I have  
taken an especial fancy to since I saw  
him at dinner. So pretty, fresh & natural  
appearance, so clinging to her 13 brothers  
& sisters, & to the post chaise, & so lovely  
here. Then there was a good scene  
in a tiny waiting room near the door  
full of impatient visitors, the more  
favored sitting, the rest leaning against  
the wall & under the indiscreet fear  
that enough might pour in to stop  
the further path in - Only at long  
intervals a carriage was announced or  
a voice called from the passage - "Miss  
Georgiana! make haste, & quicken!" one  
a little. Victoria looked pretty enough  
I do not think there is any one else  
like her, & so she is well proportioned  
enough, she has so good a right to be a  
little person as any body else. Her  
countenance is quite beautiful - her nose  
never seems stopped, & the defined  
radiations are amusing. B. & B. & B.  
says she is down & very well informed,  
& very good Latin scholar & fond of












## Letter 11: sheet 2, pages 5 to 8

help with bits of Owl has good, but  
 write some suggestions here. He likes  
 G. Hook exceedingly, & loves him for  
 that he says of his Reformers - I feel  
 to care much more for them now that  
 I think them persecuted than I ever  
 did when all the world praised them.  
 I expect the papers for this day (P. H. H.)  
 inspire them with perfect  
 seems no reason for our being un-  
 grateful. Also he pretty admirer  
 Dr. Pusey. I cannot like Mr.  
 Piddell, he prands & preaches as  
 reflects, till he seems to me to have  
 no impress. - Owl complains of his  
 head-aching. I have not begun here.  
 him, had so many books to read  
 about, you will not think that impru-  
 dent. He & I say's Confess'ants  
 on leisure. I'll use all of Pusey's  
 for Conf. I don't think you were better  
 right to read Calhoun as you talk of  
 him - but seemed to be Calhoun's  
 when he discoursed at them.  
 Suppose they generally like being  
 taught, & may not think the same  
 things dry that we did. I have left  
 copy for Owl in cover. I wish you joy  
 of your journey at the party. I believe  
 they had left at the Penny Post, & so

the right way is a Heathen, I suppose  
 to look this, & say, I don't like  
 doubt, Piddell & the last, help,  
 & America. But this might be true.  
 died & the story improved, by making  
 so & so to say what is the suspicion  
 they was martyred, while they passed  
 children; they might have been taken  
 for their father's house to one of his  
 enemies & being allowed to wander  
 out they had met this man, who told  
 them such things as suited their child.  
 Lord. Mr. has often taken away  
 by the steam & so taken home his  
 head, & says that he heard, & that  
 stored in his mind things like to the  
 political habits & principles, & that  
 till he found him, among the steam,  
 when he going to seek Mr. or as he had  
 being made prisoner. He first heard  
 at the party's table and was as  
 very much altered, no need he know  
 what it was. I want to try to explain  
 to you the idea I have at each, & to  
 the end, being help, we - but in brief  
 for you, as we do, one thing chiefly  
 to be avoided is generalizing in a way  
 to put their attention to sleep. I think  
 one should be practical by things brought  
 home to them familiarly, & so cause the  
 attention. One should ask them the lessons by  
 smile, anecdote, &c., & then another

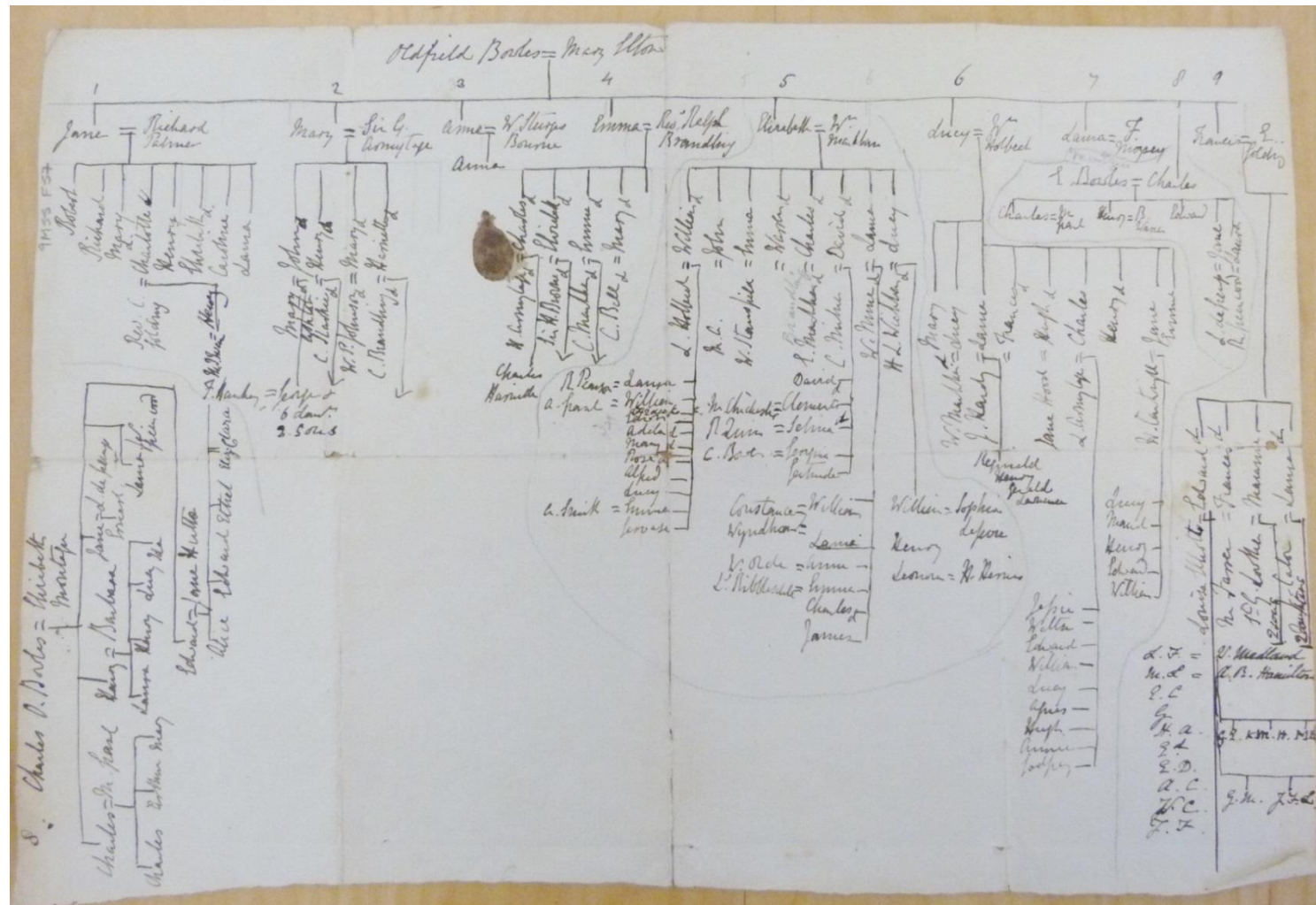
part. I don't think you dry statements  
 of doctrine, hard words & they were  
 explained, & fine & kind passages  
 for really good critics. I don't think  
 I very much, nor yet. When he suited  
 me, but he satisfied w. the drift  
 being apparent & likely to be impress.  
 I think this to gain more attention  
 & he of more use than help to one  
 level. I think might simulate over.  
 I think you understand & agree, you  
 must tell me. - You & I must watch  
 the confessions of our Roman's pupils.  
 I'll not say anything too free.  
 also he desires to them. I don't think  
 they might have a married brother  
 or sister w. children, give occasion  
 to heart of children. I do not feel  
 competent to answer all the infant  
 school I am right enough as teach  
 my tiny Sunday class at Dover, this  
 love them - but tell me the results  
 of your cogitation & discuss. I have written  
 my headache away for the present.  
 my last posture is  so that to  
 head is much about paper, I presume  
 it cannot hurt eyes, & as they only  
 ache for sympathy w. head, they get  
 worse rather than better by total

illness, it aggravates a nervous head.  
 - ache. It is not at all actual headache  
 but rather heaviness & odd sensations  
 I am going to try a cold hip bath  
 w. money, & I look forward with great  
 anxiousness of pleasure as a water cure  
 might feel. Mr. Brooks says  
 my pulse is better. Hope you  
 & Elizabeth did not last week?  
 the ball, this but did not cause them  
 tell me if you are quite well after.  
 Mr. Holmes & his wife are like  
 people in a book. My own dear, I  
 must have many more things to say,  
 but I seem to have said a good many.  
 You need not pity me, being I am  
 very comfortable & very much spoiled  
 with getting. I have not yet said  
 but I specially like of 10th Oct. & so  
 does Owl. If he has a mind, he  
 may startle a bit. Note you he may  
 be nice bits for used - I have pretty  
 nearly written my own part again.  
 I feel as if in a few months time,  
 I might look to do the same again.  
 I think it will be very advantageous  
 to make the dialogues as I  
 have proposed, & any body might





**Item 12: HRO, 130A08/3 (n.d.) Anne's Family Tree**





## Letter Transcriptions

### Letter 1: HRO, 9M55/F5/14 (n.d.) [1827]

Anne to Marianne (no addresses or postal markings)

(Two sheets transcribed in full)

I will not say thank you for your short shabby bit; I hope you are not getting into the way of repaying me so for all my long letters w.<sup>h</sup> are so much more virtuous in me than in you. And you will please to remember that you have always time, & that the keeping up my fancy of chivalry & all those pretty things in the midst of politics, balls, & gay cousins & tiresome mantua makers, depends solely on you, & that the most extravagant Spenserian [illegible word] letters, will do me the most good. Your reading above a quarter of one debate for my sake, is a point I very much doubt, but I recommend you what you will like much better, some treatises published once a fortnight called 'library of useful knowledge'[:] they are detached, one on each science, all hitherto by M.<sup>r</sup> Brougham, & quite excellent.<sup>1</sup> We are in a happier state than when I wrote last, Papa having entered on his business, & not being yet in the house [of Parliament] he has time for riding & is perfectly well & as comfortable in mind as can be expected, & we have just heard that dear Eliz.<sup>th</sup> reached home safely yesterday, without being the worse for the journey & the joy of being with her sister [Mrs Sturges Bourne] again must do her good. We were of a party of the ladies Bathurst & met the Wards, I had a good talk with Annie, who looked just as shy [and] frightened as you, but was very nice, & I summoned courage to talk of De Vere, & only felt rather ashamed at being now reading it, for so far from being distressed like you, I felt I could sincerely have said much more than I did. I am grieved my dear to say so unfriendly a thing, but I am delighted with it. I have not done the 2.<sup>d</sup> vol for I only read it at odd moments & like to make it last & think with great pleasure that there are two whole vols before me. I do not wonder at or blame you the least. I sh.<sup>d</sup> not have enjoyed it so last year, when you thought me sufficiently political, but the prophetic similarity to the present times, & the very true portrait, as it seems to me, of Mr Canning must make it more interesting to anybody, than at the time it was written, or even published. Hitherto I like Constance exceedingly, more than Georgina. She is so natural & not more perfect than other people. I find I was mistaken ab.<sup>t</sup> her age but the author contradicts himself.

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<sup>1</sup> Brougham wrote in 1826 that books were essential to the education of the people. William McKelvy, 'Ways of Reading 1825: Leisure, Curiosity and Morbid Eagerness', in *John Keble in Context*, ed. by Kirstie Blair (London: Anthem Press, 2004), pp. 75-88 (p. 77).

I have been looking forward to visiting Papa in his office to see 4 vols of manuscript letters of L.<sup>d</sup> Ormond, the L.<sup>d</sup> Ormond, but they have removed them, & I am very angry.

We have a new Lodge with Falkland, how you will fuss at him.<sup>2</sup> He is much what I expected, but perhaps less plain, not noble looking of course, but there is a certain goodness & gravity in his eye, & it is the beautiful Van Dyke. You will like to know that he had a very nice wife, Lettice, poor & charming, who fell in love with him for his mind & was quite worthy of him & he married at 21, & offended his father by her poverty, so that they lived abroad some times. Susy is in town, pretty well, & L.<sup>y</sup> Frances, whom I saw the other night at a dinner party, & there were smart people & a young lady going to Almack's, & she looked so exalted above them all in her simplicity. It is very hard that you will not believe facts. I c.<sup>d</sup> bring you vouches from some of the most soberminded people who were never bewitched by any thing before. Mamma perfectly adores her & I do hope you w.<sup>d</sup> or I should very much change my opinion of you & believe that you would not admire Mina, Estrella or Bradamante, if they c.<sup>d</sup> be brought to life.<sup>3</sup> Now goodbye Y.<sup>r</sup> own A.S.B.

## Letter 2: HRO, 9M55/F35/3 (8 May 1827)

### Marianne in Petworth to Anne in London

(This letter answers Anne's letter F5/14. Two sheets transcribed in full)

My dearest Annie,

I had been very impatient from Wednesday to yesterday at an interruption in the course of things which has made me so happy lately, & I hope to have a few lines next Wednesday even if they are but a few to restore the order; though indeed I am not at all insensible to your constancy & your goodness about writing & I would say several pretty things about it if I thought you would care to hear them, but I shall keep them till you have shewn your virtue still more in the midst of dissipation, though I begin to foresee that you will not have a regular season, & you will not be a regular going out young lady nor Mrs Bourne a regular bringing out chaperon, nor all your thoughts diverted to mantua. makers & parties, & you will not leave town if you ever do leave it, a totally different person from the one who entered it. And you do not seem much to need my letters to preserve you from common sense though I am very proud of my office, but L.<sup>y</sup> Frances will fill it much better, & be your guardian fairy & Logistilla by her beautiful presence & image

<sup>2</sup> Part 25 of *Lodge's Portraits* contains 'Lord Falkland from Van Dyke, by J. Thomson, Ridley'. *Newton's London Journal of Arts and Sciences for the year 1827* (London: Sherwood, Gilbert & Co.), XIII, 244.

<sup>3</sup> Mina could be a reference to Minnatrost, an important female character in Baron de la Motte Fouqué's *The Magic Ring* (1825); Estrella is the heroine from Lope de Vega's *La Estrella de Sevilla* (1623), a 'comedia', or three act play combining comic and dramatic elements from the Spanish Golden Age; Bradamante was a female Christian knight in Ariostos's *Orlando Furioso*. These were all characters frequently discussed in Anne and Marianne's early correspondence.



when she is not present, do not doubt my desire to see & adore her, I already lament over her name which certainly was invented for old maids & not for an Estrella or a Bertha, if you w.<sup>d</sup> settle who she is most like, I w.<sup>d</sup> think of her by that name, but at present I am distracted with variety. You may think yourself well off that I am cooled by two rainy days, for last week was so fearfully bewitching & so passed in all sorts of idle happiness, taking down all the books I found & writing extracts from them & carrying them into the woods & then sitting & wandering, & reading, & thinking of the pleasantest fancies, & sometimes wondering how people could exist in London that I should hardly have written intelligibly to a town lady. Your favourite flower & leaf is so pretty & so suited to the season, & withal so tantalising, for really the next time I went to the holly arbour, which is a place that it always seems to me must make [?frets] of the boys who drive the cows there, I peeped thought the copse into a field whilst the nightingale was singing & thought it very hard not to see queen & white fairies, though to be sure I had not dressed by moonlight & in the middle of the day I could hardly expect them. The most rational thing we do is to read Gibbon who is very pleasant, & I hope to be much the wiser for collecting all the ideas that once were in my head & had been a great while scattered, & taking in new ones, but you may suppose I am not likely to be the warmer or to grow easy about any of the emperors nor even about Zenobia though she is interesting enough to wish to hear more of her. The very few evenings that we have not left Burnet to see the sun set, the good B.<sup>p</sup> has carried us an immeasurable number of times from England to Rome to get [?hills] & [illegible word], & [illegible word], without yet [illegible word] Q[ueen] Catherine, which I thought myself informed in the matter before to the full extent of my wishes I c.<sup>d</sup> have dispensed with. You do me great injustice about the politics, for I have not only listened to the debates after dinner, as if it was a history of the civil wars, but I actually read a speech & a half & skimmed others, & really should not be satisfied without knowing some thing of a change like the present, but do not praise me yet for now come my confessions which will shock you more than ever, that the more I hear, the less I blame myself for neglect, I do not understand & I never shall, how people can so quietly walk over from one side of the house to the other & oppose the party they have supported only because they are out of place, & not lower their character, the debates I did read in the Peninsula horrified me to the greater degree, & that system of opposition always seems to me so strange & so like a game; I will not pass any more time in offending you & expressing my own ignorance, but I am quite satisfied that beyond knowing who is prime minister & what M.<sup>r</sup> Sturges Bourne is, I have no business with politics, nor they with Lavington & Mary<sup>4</sup>, so I shall let them govern me just as they please & not divert my thoughts from the furling streams, & warbling birds, & budding flowers, & verdant fields, & all the other poetical things that I am in profession of, but keep to my own Ideale & leave you to the Wirklichkeit [reality] you claimed last year; it w.<sup>d</sup> be a charming opportunity for Schiller stanzas,

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<sup>4</sup> Mary Sargent, Marianne's friend and daughter of the Rev John Sargent the local vicar.

with the contrast of a lady in a bower & a lady at a banquet or a ball, & to enliven it you must go out, which indeed I want you to do, as you are in London, & can do nothing better, except indeed settling the affairs of the nations which I suppose employs most of your time. I am glad you had any to bestow on Falkland, & Lettice is very charming except that you seem to invent the course of things in falling in love which may only be your fault. I must leave off to draw & hear reading, not before I have written a most respectable letter especially if you observe the closeness of the writing, indeed if you have a debate to read when it arrives you will be grateful to Mama for offering herself & the Romans. I must tell you though that she is very well & rides – The J. Sargents are expected on the 22.<sup>nd</sup> Garton much the better for [illegible word], after being for a time worse, I trust he will bear his journey as well as Miss Palmer. Ever y.<sup>r</sup> very own Minnie

Papa has sent for the treatises on your recommendation. I am told to enquire after your head – not that I mean to imply want of anxiety on my own part.

### **Letter 3: HRO, 9M55/F36/2 (13 February 1829)**

#### **Marianne in Brighton to Anne in London**

#### **(Transcribed in full)**

I thought you very good, my dearest Anne, on Friday, concluding that the cover was the foretaste of a long letter this week w.<sup>h</sup> has not arrived, & I hope will not arrive tomorrow but next day, for I cannot delay writing, I have so much to tell you; after being so long used to the happy days when I said all my say daily I think whatever happens, of repeating it to you, & this poor bit of paper & blackish pen are my only means of talking now – however I do not mean to begin groaning, & really I am much better than at Bath, w.<sup>h</sup> I give you credit for being really glad of. I must begin with Mary -. I w.<sup>d</sup> have told you about two nice eveng.<sup>s</sup> there & a new cap of L.<sup>y</sup> M[ordaunt]'s so peculiarly becoming that I thought myself quite fortunate to arrive when it was tried for the girls' opinion, the black lace trimmings & lilac ribbons, with the black velvet gown were quite perfect & I sat opposite enjoying all & blaming myself for not having thought enough of the continuance lately; but what is now fresh in my head is Mary's dining with us yesterday & after tea sitting over Mama's fire with the intention of reading [the] Ring<sup>5</sup>, but it lay unopened on her lap, & Keble found himself open on mine, & we had a good huggermugger; she said she wanted to talk to me & began of her own account, & talked in the nicest strain of her mother, whom she had always thought perfect without knowing that she thought so, & had delightful recollection of her w.<sup>h</sup> she now prised, & had found out by degrees how people thought of her, & at last said with the greatest earnestness "think what her child ought to be, I know I am not worthy of her, I ought to

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<sup>5</sup> Baron de la Motte Fouqué, *The Magic Ring* (1825).

be so much better;" & then she said her brother was worthy, & so good, though nobody knew him: & then she talked of her childishness, & not having begun to think till the last two years, & her thoughts were so poor, & when they rounded on her she c.<sup>d</sup> not express them, though she agreed that Keble often did for her; & she had never been talked to but as a child, & had nobody to be really a friend; you may suppose that I long to talk on & I daresay we shall: she was much pleased with your letter, & mentioned /as a novelty to me/ something about your visit here being like Max & Thekla<sup>6</sup> on their journey; by the by she very much liked the last stanza of S.<sup>t</sup> Stephen<sup>7</sup> & quite entered into what I told her of my ideas about it, & we discussed the 24.<sup>th</sup> & she had been trying to find your "music in the heart" w.<sup>h</sup> she c.<sup>d</sup> not quite remember. She is writing herself, I believe, so I will leave her alone, & by way of having done with people, I must tell you of a new acquaintance, Miss Dalrymple, whom Mrs D[alrymple] begged Mamma to visit; she was young, & left at a boarding school, for her health, /not by way of learning for she is 18/ & all her family in Scotland, all w.<sup>h</sup> sounded interesting, & we found her pretty mannered, pretty looking, & talking pretty Scotch, & asked her to tea, & I am happy to say she is coming again, for just before she went, after giving glimpses of patriotism & enthusiasm, she happened to mention the Bride of Lammermore<sup>8</sup> w.<sup>h</sup> she told me was perfectly true in the whole formation of the story; the heroine was a daughter of Lord Stair's, her great. great. great grandfather /I am afraid the great. great. great. granddaughter of Lord Stairs can have no tinge of [?thankism]/ & the hero a Lord Rotherford, who instead of dying as Scott represents, vanished for 10 or 12 years, during w.<sup>h</sup> time he travelled into every part of the world & then came to his friend Lord Peterborough saying he w.<sup>d</sup> serve under him & such a [?grave] w.<sup>d</sup> be formed in Catalonia; Lucy's mother was much as she is in the novel, & is still reported to have been a witch, & is buried upright by her own desire, in a [illegible word] where witches meet, & foretold that if her coffin fell, the house of Dalrymple w.<sup>d</sup> want an heir, "certainly," Miss D. said, "she is quite upright, seeing I have 9 brothers, besides all the rest of the family:" her fly came just as she had informed me that she had a store of ghost stories & other Scotch wonders, & I had informed her that I had the character of believing not only ghosts but witches & fairies: we had the Dashwoods the same night & they were [page torn ?very] nice, & Sophy very radiant, & tête à tête with her in a fly one morning to visit a young invalid friend of L.<sup>y</sup> Wilmot's. We are going to a ball at the New Steyne [historic area of Brighton] t. morrow. Do not think we have been [?bright], all [illegible word] except one lovely day, but now there is a fine S. wind sea; my only walking has been every day close to it, & one morning on the sands before breakfast, nice & sparkling & reminding me of you, the noise of the town so far off that I c.<sup>d</sup> hear the gentlest ripple, the sun shining through fog on the wet sand, Chain pier

<sup>6</sup> Max Piccolimini and Thekla Wallenstein are the two young lovers in Schiller's trilogy of plays known as collectively as *Wallenstein* and completed in 1799.

<sup>7</sup> This is a reference to 'St. Stephen's Day', a poem in Keble's *The Christian Year* (1827).

<sup>8</sup> Walter Scott, *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819).

[?industrial], carts in motion, all to your heart's content. [Ref to German texts] are not original like Undine & Sintram,<sup>9</sup> but true Fouqué, all lofty chivalry, though the time is Charles V & the siege of Tunis, & there are [?Thanemen], w.<sup>h</sup> startled me at first, but [?Heimlich] the German hero is exactly one of his knights, rather Otto. like, & one of the heroines is a [two words in German] living in an oasis, & the whole defies all the *wirklichkeit* [reality] of Robertson & declining chivalry; I rejoice to say Aslauga's Ritter<sup>10</sup> yet remains unopened: Mama reading Klopstock, Ring, debates, & a pamphlet of L<sup>d</sup> Holland's. You w.<sup>d</sup> admire her. She likes the chivalry of the Ring but not its magic. I have mourned over the [illegible word] & thought of the Catholics; if they succeed, I will remember their good service to the [illegible word] & your idea of Ruggiero's<sup>11</sup>, which I hear from Papa, though not in those words. I am delighted with Sumner's Population, it was all new to me. Do not you like a bit of Joel on Bernini's grave in [?Klop's II<sup>th</sup> Germany]? Just at the end, after much weariness. I wish I had heard your (go to first page right-hand side) Roland & [?Captive] & many more things before your aunt, but the last night was well. spent. C.<sup>d</sup> you pay three bills for Mama in Regents S.<sup>t</sup> & [Hoth's] S.<sup>t</sup> all near you? If you can she will send [illegible but presumably an amount of money here]. I thought of you & others my own. Y.<sup>r</sup> own Minnie

(Cross-writing on first page) Mary said that you gave her a better account of Mr Ryder. My own dearest do not suspect yourself of [illegible word] of feeling about him.

(Written in address box) Mrs Tuckfield thinks [?the Ring] very innocent, like the Arabian Nights [wax seal here] says her Minnatrost?<sup>12</sup> Poor Baxter has lost [her] husband, & I suppose will return soon.

#### Letter 4: HRO, 9M55/F36/6 (12 March 1829)

##### Marianne in Brighton to Anne in London

##### (Transcribed from the beginning of the letter to the top of page 5 on the second sheet)

I have been walking about my dearest Annichen, shopping & visiting, & enjoying a light sea & splashing vessels in the intervals', & disenjoying dust & wind, & half enjoying a light sun with the oppressive feeling of spring warmth, & now I long to repose in a talk with you, as I used to in Regency Sq.<sup>re</sup> – if I c.<sup>d</sup> have one moment of that real talk now! & did we value it enough? I think we did; but I have a great deal to say, so I had better begin. I shall first consider the chapitre of our differences, in an amicable manner, for especially just now, feeling rather tried & very tender, I am in no quarrelling humour, so Coleridge shall rest till we meet, & then you shall find me the

<sup>9</sup> Baron de la Motte Fouqué, *Undine* (1811) and *Sintram and his Companions* (1811).

<sup>10</sup> Baron de la Motte Fouqué, *Aslauga's Knight* (1827).

<sup>11</sup> Ruggiero is a Medieval knight in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.

<sup>12</sup> Lady Minnatrost is an important female character in *The Magic Ring*.

most docile, at least, if not the most persuadable of hearers; in the meantime I marvel at L.<sup>y</sup> Beaumont's [German word here], whatever it may consist in, w.<sup>h</sup> brings M.<sup>rs</sup> Bourne to a patient & willing hearing of Christabelle<sup>13</sup>, remembering as I do, her unhappy looks with Manfred<sup>14</sup>; Dejection is the very thing I meant to tell you took my fancy, & I have a recollection of Joan<sup>15</sup> & occasional descriptions of scenery that were very descriptive, but I had a general impression it being affected & meaning to have great affect, & failing. Here for politics – I know you think me at the present moment perfectly insensible to all that is passing, but that is far from the case; only I am perfectly convinced that I cannot thoroughly understand the cause, & I think it is too serious for ladylike warmth w.<sup>h</sup> is innocent on less important matters, & perhaps a touch of my passive obedience makes me willing to be quietly governed, without much thought of my own: I understand perfectly the reasonableness of your thinking & knowing more, & your head suits it, & takes it in clearly, only I w.<sup>d</sup> not have you being warm either, or condemning other people, for really with the best intentions people may think both ways, & it is not a thing to cry out & sound about like a matter of taste; but do not forbear telling me anything there is to be said, Papa w.<sup>d</sup> like it, & I sh.<sup>d</sup> not object, & do not say M. A. is prejudiced & will not hear, & will not alter, & will not be like other people, & do not think it wrong if I rather try to keep fears & forebodings out of my heart, w.<sup>h</sup> w.<sup>d</sup> only make me uselessly uncomfortable, & do not come naturally enough to be unavoidable. Now I must thank you for your trouble about the habit, w.<sup>h</sup> is now on its way to town, & to give a farther proof of our growing old, you shall tell me how white morning gowns are made this year. I cannot think what peaceable subject I have to talk about, unless it is Mary, & you will like to hear all the progress of our acquaintance, w.<sup>h</sup> is most satisfactory; she grows very tender about parting, & assures me that I am a principal cause of her great regret at leaving Brighton, & it is one of the merits I have found in her, that her words never go beyond her meaning, at least as far as I can judge; there is great truth & clearness as far as her ideas go, & you w.<sup>d</sup> feel for her sort of envy at having L.<sup>y</sup> M[ordaunt] & Miss Waldegrave read & discuss Butler's Analogy<sup>16</sup>, whilst she did her everyday education, though she quite allows that she is too young for it. I suspect one great charm I find in our walks & talks is the right of saying as much about you, & talking in the plural as much as I please, & that profound respect she has for you encourages one in saying anything that we share; she owns she was a little afraid, a little even to the last, though she thinks now you are gone, she sh.<sup>d</sup> not be afraid at all.

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<sup>13</sup> This refers to Coleridge's long narrative poem *Christabel* (1816).

<sup>14</sup> This refers to Byron's *Manfred* (1816).

<sup>15</sup> Schiller's *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* (1801) based on the life of Joan of Arc.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph Butler, *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature* (1736).

**Letter 5: HRO, 9M55/F1/15 (n.d.) [June 1829]****Anne to Marianne (no address or postal markings)****(Transcribed in full)**

My dearest chick

I feel that you will want to hear from me to make amends for this, & I can fancy you thinking and talking as if it was all my fault. I could tell you philosophically that 2 days out of 2 months are nothing, that all the times we might have met & did not choose, very far surpass the hours of those 2 days or describe to you how quietly I say, you had better not go till Monday, & all that & talk about [illegible word] and waggons, as if my interests were not in the least mixed up. But this you would call unfeeling so like [illegible word], I will not say it. We have Tuesday still dearest, & we will make the best of it, & we will get together all we have to say against it, or rather you will, for my thoughts & occupations will furnish nothing interesting & it is well if I can regain a few Brighton ideas. I go on with every half hour marked out by some necessary thing which I do very carefully, a life which would suit Mary very well I think, but it would soon stupefy me, & though you w.<sup>d</sup> not think it, I have not Ideale enough about me to raise me above those dusty walks Channing talks about so I must take care how I walk in them, & I think a great deal of you, of German & of Keble will be necessary to my well doing, & our old maid scheme must conclude it now goodbye. I wonder if you have written to me.

Y.<sup>r</sup> own Annie

I must add a little bit to respect myself after putting things into a box which they cannot by any possibility fit. M.<sup>rs</sup> F. Dyson told me that M.<sup>rs</sup> Bird in addition to often [illegible word] now takes such a quantity of ether that nobody can stay in a room after she has been visiting, & it was smelt all over the ball at Stoneham. She enquired much about M.<sup>rs</sup> Dyson's carpet work, touching w.<sup>h</sup> I could give no satisfactory answer, never having seen it. She has taken up again her ottoman which was put by during her troubles, & does the flowers for amusement, & the ground while she teaches the children.

I read an end of a thing at [?Eastham] called les Suedois à Prague [the Swedish in Prague] do you know it? It is German, & about Wallenstein's nephew, but they had done then which before I had done my vol. so I do not know how it ended.

**Letter 6: HRO, 9M55/F8/8 [March] (1830)**

**Anne from 'Testwood' to Marianne in Bedford Square, Brighton**

**(Transcribed from the second paragraph on page 1 to where the letter is cut away)**

So you are disappointed - & I said too much, & I have reproachful feelings ab.<sup>t</sup> M.<sup>r</sup> Dyson's 5. 6. I read your sentences over & over again, & lamented that we should differ at all about it, & that I should not know exactly beforehand how you will like a thing. However L.<sup>y</sup> Mordaunt sides with you, or rather she goes farther /it is very fair of me to tell you so/ & therefore I will suppose that you are right & we are wrong. But the word controversy is too strong. It makes me think of particular people & books, violence & party spirit. I am told that Whately, from weak eyes, or some such reason, reads little, & comes out with his original opinions, perhaps without knowing how odd they will appear. If he had deigned to consult other books more, I dare say his would have been better, but I like to see the originalities. In fact I do not think easy books like Arnold quite enough always, but find the advantage of a little deep thinking & investigation, w.<sup>h</sup> besides giving a great interest clears up difficulties. And in this mood I have so enjoyed his S.<sup>t</sup> Paul; but one does not feel always the same. I have looked at the sentence in the introduction. I do not think it goes farther than Arnold in the 2.<sup>d</sup> Soul & Spirit, "There is indeed a more excellent way" etc. I think he means that no condition quite precludes people from such knowledge, & surely in the lowest classes you would find some such as the "Workhouse Boy", scattered about, though as yet they are few. Perhaps I have said too much, perhaps enough to make it clear, but I cannot bear that we should not think just alike, except upon Jacobitism, w.<sup>h</sup> has been a long allowed subject.

**Letter 7: 9M55/F10/16 (n. d.) [1832]**

**Anne to Marianne at 'New Grove', Petworth**

**(Transcribed from the fourth line up from the bottom of page 2 until the end of the letter)**

If for myself, without the ties of kindred or the gilding of high fancies, that will smooth it all for you, I feel that same future to be the most suitable, & that w.<sup>h</sup> I wish to wish for & am bringing my mind to, how much more for you. When one's happiness has not to be reflected to others, it becomes a thing of very small importance. Your fate has made me think, & Mamma too, & when she dwells on the comfort of y.<sup>r</sup> brothers, I know what she means. But I think I am made of harder & sterner stuff than you & c.<sup>d</sup> better stand alone. For their amusement it w.<sup>d</sup> be well that I sh.<sup>d</sup> marry – for nothing else, & I am well content to think that I have seen the last of real attentions & proposals. I am really so happy now in ev.<sup>ry</sup> thing that I can't bear the idea of a change. I wish I c.<sup>d</sup>

also get rid of all flirtiness, & the love of manoeuvring attentions - I believe that they are feelings that cling so closely as to be one of the chief parts of a Xtian's conquests. But why talk so of myself. I think M.<sup>rs</sup> S[argent]'s letter delightful, only inf. to Eliza's. Her caution is what even I have almost said, & fr. a person of so little romance or enthusiasm & upon startling & singular a confidence, quite natural! I am sorry to see we have no disclosures to hope for fr. her. It is clear she will only advise & talk of y.<sup>r</sup> feel.<sup>bs</sup>. And so dearest, your little bit of hope is gone. But it might have been, tho' she never knew it. Do you know what you said of y.<sup>r</sup> own death made me smile, not cry. Even as regards ones parents, death seen beforehand will seem like a strange uncertain accident, not a natural thing to look to, how much more where two lives are humanly speaking, of the same apparent prospect. Do not encourage the morbid feel that all this is sent to sicken you of a world where God has given you high duties to do, & to call you for it. How can you know that they are not rather to be the means to live here to [?more] purpose than others, more spiritually, more diligently, & blessing by your influence. Certainly it cannot be for noth.<sup>g</sup> that you have been so singularly dealt with, I sh.<sup>d</sup> say it can't be merely for yourself.

[More comforting words by Anne but very difficult to read]

Now you will ask ab.<sup>t</sup> me. It is such a descent fr. you to me. I do so feel that I must hover nearer to earth & less in light, but I believe we are not to fight ag.<sup>st</sup> our natural bent of mind, but take it as marking out our lives for us, mine upon earth, yours a little in the clouds. I have sometimes thought I was improved, my pleasures of a higher order, & a more constant looking to duty, & habit of making effort in every thing, & allowing no indulgence that can enervate me. & sometimes I fancy that to work on fr. right motives is enough, without any heights of meditation & communion – but this w.<sup>d</sup> be fallacious, & I must remember how Arnold says that doing good is not our chief business here, but fitting ourselves for heaven. I know that in look.<sup>g</sup> to another world in the love of serious employment, & in anything like medit.<sup>n</sup> I am miserably deficient, & I know too that because all trials & temptations sleep, my mind is clearer, & when they rise again I shall see as I have often done how little a way I have gained. One thing is certain, that it has been a time of almost unprecedented happiness, peace & nature & I now have done their part in clearing & sobering my mind, & there is that same feeling of positive enjoyment in my spirits, as in my strong health. How selfish to talk of the afflictions of others merely in the light of benefit to myself. I hope I have said nothing [illegible word] I did not mean it, & you will not think it if you remember [?hor.<sup>y</sup>] all has been with me lately. I am terribly [illegible word] to be satisfied with mys.<sup>f</sup> & put doings for feelings, & caught myself the other day in considering [next section difficult to read & make sense of & there are some quotations in German. The substance seems to be about the right use of time in connection with Sunday-school teaching]. I am in a very Mordaunty [ref to Mary Mordaunt] way of economising time, w.<sup>h</sup> is good for me, because it is a struggle.



Imagination slumbers sadly. I never see any body who can touch that [?string] or seem to have no vacant corner in my mind or time, for reading ab.<sup>t</sup> it. A [?lumination] of Nature has been excessive, but all for its own sake, the love of sky & wood & water & moonlight, complete with [letter continues cross written on the first page and is difficult to read but ends with] Then Eliza just that flap. I need not say the rest is secret, though you have got into a sad way of shewing every thing, you might as well be married. Her letters are quite beautiful. Whatever is lacking in my letters I will make up if I can here & now goodbye & God ever help you dear & favoured child – pray for my improvement.

Flap of letter to Elizabeth Dyson

My dear Eliza, to say an important thing at once. I must say something in return for your 2 other letters – they have delighted me, & I really do feel your kindness. I am glad to have your authority for so praising that dear child, though it would be wrong to one so belonging to, & like a part of oneself, but I will give myself up admiring & try to be the better for her, but I am so unlike her or you & her other comforter that the good gained must be all on my side & I can hope only to [?emulate] her. It is you I must thank for Miss Keble's letter – it is a great privilege indeed to have seen it, & it shall be well taken care of. I think the Burial<sup>1</sup> less perfect than the published one, first verse very beautiful, especially the beginning, & the "Relics of a frail love lost" [?the] other very good too, [?both betterment]. Marianne must be happy in his having pitied her, & thought for her. You who have the happiness of knowing him, can hardly tell how these little sayings are precious to the rest of us. I hope you admired her stoics. She presented herself in Avise, though she [?intended] not. Ever y.<sup>rs</sup> affect.<sup>y</sup> A.S.B.

## **Letter 8: 9M55/F11/27 (n.d.) [c. December 1833-January 1834] 2 sheets**

**Anne to Marianne from 'Testwood' to 'New Grove', Petworth**

**(Transcribed from the seventh line down on page 2 to the end of the top flap on page 4)**

I want to have my mind cleared about things, not but what your letters have been most delightful. I could not understand where & how all the people lived. How infinitely Graffham<sup>2</sup> seems to stretch, & it takes in you & all the lovers – how is it, & will the Mannings<sup>3</sup> be there till when? & when did they honeymoon? Next what are H. W.'s [Henry Wilberforce's] prospects, & where, & is he in orders yet, & what will be the name of his tract - Do you make out what side the Evangelical party take in general about these church matters? I heard they rather leant to the counter address to the Archbishop for alteration. I really am afraid of saying anything after Eliza's flaps. I

<sup>1</sup> Ref to a poem by Keble entitled 'Burial of the Dead'.

<sup>2</sup> Graffham together with neighbouring Woolavington was the Rev. John Sargent's family living.

<sup>3</sup> John Sargent's daughter, Caroline (1812-1837) married Rev. Henry Edward Manning (1808-1892) in 1833.

do not feel that I ought to have an opinion & I fear to quote others wrongly. I do not exactly understand how the tracts are suited to the times, seeing the run has been entirely ag.<sup>st</sup> ch. temporalities & bishops' votes, at least I had supposed so, no spiritual rights questioned, not the grounds of episcopacy called in question, though very likely forgotten. We can none of us make out why they fear Parl.<sup>t</sup> altering the liturgy, indeed the enemies of the ch. c.<sup>d</sup> not care for making improvements, they must mean seriously whether wisely or not. I like the tract on alterations very much, & quite feel with it, but many serious people do not – might not we concede them a few improvements, so that we are sure they are improvements.

Does not the introduction to the prayer book authorise this? The page at the back of Keble's [?Adherence] - seems the work of somebody in a great, unwise fuss – may we not more safely leave it in the bishops' hands, who have much more means of knowing the world. I think the tracts very instructive, & like their spirit usually. I cannot judge whether they will do good – I sh.<sup>d</sup> fear the raising any more topics of controversy & discussion -, of w.<sup>h</sup> there are enough in the world. The 7<sup>th</sup> tract I think confused, & cannot make out the "Episcopacy . an accident" – nor in what "apostolic vicars", without delegates, w.<sup>d</sup> differ from presbyters. When Keble says "the only ch. in the realm w.<sup>h</sup> has the Lord's body to give." etc. does he exclude Catholics, who trace the same succession, & whose ordination we acknowledge, or does he include them, and set them above Presbyterians? How do you define "The church of Christ" of which ours is a branch? Perhaps they w.<sup>d</sup> rather not define it! Why are we to say the ch. in England. Does it mean that it is diminished. R. Nelson is a very clever man, I suppose there are such poor men, or some who can understand it, but I cannot fancy them. Mr Ottley says you w.<sup>d</sup> only get ridicule by using the argument of the Ap. Success.<sup>n</sup> with the poor, & they w.<sup>d</sup> still say "Mr Stevens at the chapel, is as fine a man as you" & w.<sup>d</sup> ask how a hunting, quarrelling clergyman c.<sup>d</sup> be the successor of the Apostles, & you could not beat them out of this.

I liked the layman who is very clear. The Sunday lesson are the [illegible word] Keble, somewhat far-fetched, but very likely true. The selection of bishops by laymen rather puzzled me, as interfering with the succession, but I see they rest upon consecration, & I suppose in theory they might refuse to consecrate, though they never do, & Hooker approves of the King appointing, & doubtless it strengthens that tie of Ch. & State w.<sup>h</sup> the enemies are so trying to weaken. I suppose I always believed in the succession, & I hope one may hold it, without excluding from the church of Christ, & laying that strong [change or charge] of prescription on the whole Presbyterian clergy. Now I have said too much, but it is only for you & Liz. & I have only 2 questions to ask. 1. What do you do ab.<sup>t</sup> dissenting poor; lecture, or make a difference, or seem unconcerned. & 2.<sup>d</sup> Where did Timothy & Titus die? & how long were they at their post? Because it looks as after setting things in order they were to hurry to join St. Paul, & do their work elsewhere "Titus [?meets] [illegible]

word]. It is an experiment urged on the other side, but I do not much care about it. I will copy a sentence on this subject, but before the writer had seen the tracts

"I certainly cling much to Episcop.<sup>y</sup> but I doubt whether I c.<sup>d</sup> agree with the notions

"w.<sup>h</sup> are generally held by the lovers of this ancient form of Ch. government as to

"the [defice] of power over the conscience & the sinfulness of dissent. These ideas to

"my mind are often carried too far, almost sometimes so as in appearance to

"narrow the way of salvation. More of St. Paul's spirit, who rejoiced that in any

"way Christ should be preached, w.<sup>d</sup> not I think, endanger our National Ch. w.<sup>h</sup> cert.<sup>y</sup>

"to one who has had the blessing of being educ.<sup>d</sup> under it, does appear "the more excellent

"way." Perhaps it may be very right to make a stand, & Keble himself will do it I

"doubt not in the best spirit, the diff.<sup>y</sup> alw.<sup>s</sup>, is that when you have many contributors in any

"work, one gets hasty, another imprudent, a 3.<sup>d</sup> overbears & often the whole attempt gets into

"discredit so closely must evil always hang upon good in this world."

(Both sides of the bottom flap of this letter also appear to be written by Anne.)

## **Letter 9: HRO, 9M55/F12/1 (2 Jan 1834) 1 sheet**

**Anne to Marianne (no addresses)**

**(Transcribed in full)**

Dear Owl & Owlet – sit up in your high place, or some oratory, & mumble each other, & let me supply the lacking angle & codge with you. Dear owls how good you are to write me those delicious bits, how I love them - our stars have certainly decreed that we are not to know each other after the fashion of other people, that we are to write more words than we shall ever speak, so I will take the words written in those pretty characters thankfully. I send my cover, anticipated as it is, because it explaineth the mysterious garment, but I see it was owl, not owlet, that brought the accusation against me. Mamma has dared to say even in manif. what I was thinking of mooting, what a good thing it would be if > [Mary] ever read anything that was not Apostolical. I defended her to Mamma by saying how good it was to take on one subject at a time & study all that had a bearing upon it, thinking to myself, yes, one at a time, but all the year, & every day this is her subject. Well owl knows best, & the food agrees with the birdie. What sort of children does Mamma mean, even those that are angles write about with such indiscretion that I fear it will look very bad to our executors in our letters – & then saying chicks sometimes does not mend the matter much.

I wish I had made as good use of my colds as you, who never fuss to get out, or say it is just the most unlucky time, or lie idly on the sofa, or sit idly over the fire, or vex at the days going without

ones doing a bit more than in half a day, or feel angry as I did, because after I had nursed myself up for days against [?] & succeeded in being pretty well, I was only told not to go to Church for the first thing. I had unluckily not been right before my cold, & had Caldwell, & then he & Mamma pimble the two together & made out that I was very ill. But I know too well to mind them, & I will not take any more physic, saving that I take some iodine to help my feet not to swell, & being an old friend of ours, & a person of mystery & importance, the idea is rather sublime.

Now what have I to write about. Any more Knoxism? I know I am not fit to decide, & I know one ought to judge from Jebb's sermons, not his or K[nox]'s private opinions, but do they not incline to what might be called esoteric doctrines, & do not they require too much learning for understanding the Bible, & overlook the thought of the numbers who from the Bible alone have learnt the things necessary to Salvation? I think they had little knowledge of the poor. K[nox] had no opportunities, & J[ebb] had not the taste & fitness for knowing them.

One of my school girls, now ab<sup>t</sup>. 11 – always surprised me by her knowledge of Bible history & doctrine, & her correct definition & knowledge on many subjects, & I thought her father who was a carpenter had taught her or made her read many books – but I found they had only a Bible.

E[Lizabeth] makes my mouth water talking of National School – afraid of it – no – so that by subscription, or by situation like hers, I had a right to interfere – I am very particular about my rights of interfering with poor etc., but I love authority. I sometimes comfort myself with the faults & failures of the National system, when I think of our unprovided state here. I should like to have one not appreciated, & then I could alter the ways & books, though I think I want no books out of the society except if I could find them reading class books for older children on common subjects – not directly religious. There are 3 or 4 delightful for little children. Dame schools would be very nice where the dame is sensible & constantly overlooked, but the benefit is so limited. I think my beau ideal would be a clever dame, or rather girl, who would have no system but what I told her & a moderate no. of girls not taking places & then constantly teaching. I think Mrs Hewitt's was something of this sort but Marianne finds it difficult to keep in good training. The Savells are gone, & I have made over Sunday girls to Mrs Jennings, my infant schoolmistress, & am anxious to see next Sund[ay] if her room will hold them. Any change makes me hope for something better, but I believe I must go on as she arranges every thing, & hope the boys will find work when they leave Mrs J[ennings] & not go to the Chapel school.

**Letter 10: HRO, 9M55/F12/8 (May 1834)****Anne in Grosvenor Place, London, to Marianne****(2 sections only transcribed)**

(first para page 1) My dearest. The coach, or Charles's trunk, whichever conveys your schoolery, shall take this too. I think I have sent all your articles. I got the best pictures I could find at Nisbet's, not having been able to go into the city, but sh.<sup>d</sup> I meet with any better, or any good reading lessons on boards I will send them. I saw no good spelling lessons at Nisbet's, & therefore send you some out of those used at the Lancaster schools. The whole set is rather elaborate, & is the instrument by which such great proficiency is attained there – the monitors being trained to teach upon each board giving lessons on every word & texts on every Scripture one, the result of which is a wonderful correctness of language, & understanding of words & things. I do not see why all this is not transplantable into national schools, of course the system is beyond us, but you will find the [?easier] part of great use, & if you will ask questions upon each word after it has been well spelt in class, /each a letter, & then in chorus /, [?an] [?alumnus] will soon learn to do it & they will at least know a few things thoroughly, no matter if they are but chairs & tables. I have sent the maps on a sheet for travelling, of course you must paste that & the lessons on boards or on calico with rollers, or rather Baccy will paste them, for I am sure your pasting will cockle as bad as mine. You should keep the pictures for a treat to be shown only by you.

(para 3, page 2) Our history is that we came back from Westbrook Easter Monday [&] spent the following Friday at Kenwood. It was lovely, & the sitting on that terrace in the smell of hyacinths & & with all garden luxuries about, & all birds singing, was different from any thing I have done this spring. It turned very cold again when we came back, & Papa got a fresh cold, having had one more or less all the spring, & another fresh with a draught at Faraday's lecture on Saturday, & has been wretchedly uncomfortable with cough & [illegible words] & really driven to keep in the house, w.<sup>h</sup> he will seldom do. I believe it is the sort of influenza at present, but coughs are much harder to get rid of than the common feverish cold. We were obliged to go without him to the D.<sup>ss</sup> [Duchess] of Kent last night, but happily got escorted on our long walk to the carriage after an hour & ½ waiting – part of this was spent well enough sitting under the staircase seeing other people fie down it, & with a Danish ambassadress, whom I have taken an especial fancy to, since I met her at dinner, so pretty, fresh & natural a creature, so clinging to her 13 brothers & sisters, & to the post days, & so lonely here. Then there was a good scene in a tiny waiting room near the door full of impatient mortals, the more favoured sitting, the rest leaning against the wall, & under the indistinct fear that enough might pour in to stifle & shut up the farthest in – only at long intervals a carriage was announced or a voice called from the passage – Emily! Georgiana!

Victoria looked pretty enough I do not think there is any wondrous littleness, & as she is well proportioned enough, she has as good a right to be a little person as any body else. Her courtesy is quite beautiful – her poor knees never stopped, & the different gradations were amusing. B.<sup>p</sup> of London says she is clever & very well informed, a very good Latin scholar & fond of history – he was much pleased with her when he examined her 2 years ago, & he will again for her confirmation in July.

# Letter 11: HRO, 9M55/F42/4 (14 January 1839) 2 sheets

## Marianne to Mary from Niton, Isle of Wight

### (Transcribed in full)

The headaches shall not hinder my writing to you mine own pretty > [Mary], that it shall not. I am going to make a long scratch here. My head is full of things to say to you & I was very near light.<sup>g</sup> my lamp in the middle of the night bec. I c.<sup>d</sup> not sleep, but I went to sleep inst.<sup>d</sup>[.] I am obliged to dream schooleries, bec. my head is weak for some things & my leisure for dream.<sup>g</sup> is not small. ^ [Anne] says she w.<sup>d</sup> like to have an Av[ice] in humble life, & it seems a very triangular field for us to make one.<sup>1</sup> She sh.<sup>d</sup> be come f.<sup>rm</sup> serv. on the death of the lady whom she had alw.<sup>ys</sup> served w. a pension & a good many of her mistress's books & more of her knowledge, hav.<sup>g</sup> rather been her companion than her maid in read.<sup>g</sup> to her etc. – her health worn w. nurs.<sup>g</sup> & not equal to much exertion, but accus.<sup>d</sup> be useful in some way – of course a perfect Ch. woman, & most humble both as to her learn.<sup>g</sup> & her willingness to consort with her inferiors in knowledge. She is come to an old farmhouse where some of her relations live, in the village where her childh.<sup>d</sup> was spent; I cannot at all settle the family, except two girls of f.<sup>rm</sup> 10 to 14, one of whom I incline to name Kitty /how like ^ [Anne] & I settling our families in our own childh.<sup>d</sup>/ they are employed a good deal in dairy & house-work & do not go to school, & she teaches them. She is to have a little parlour to hersf. w. a bedroom adjoining, upstairs, the descript.<sup>n</sup> of w.<sup>h</sup> w. their [?putting] up, & the view of the Ch. & of the Ch. Yard where her nearest relations are buried, I sh.<sup>d</sup> like to take to my slave<sup>2</sup>, tho' I do not expect to describe them very well. I cannot describe the farmhouse & its inmates, it should be old & rambling. My notion is to begin on Adv.<sup>t</sup> Sunday, the heroine, /I sh.<sup>d</sup> call her Rachel I think/ or rather the teacher, has not been long there, is described in deep mourn.<sup>g</sup> for her mistress, delight.<sup>g</sup> most in her views of Ch. & Chry.<sup>s</sup>, but disposed to be cheerful & even merry on occas.<sup>n</sup>. The 2 girls come up look.<sup>g</sup> fresh & gay to call her down, as it is Ch. time. She may say Adv.<sup>t</sup> things that are expedient, & question them on the Collect, & in the ev.<sup>g</sup> she may give forth some

<sup>1</sup> HRO, 9M55/F42/4 (n.d.).

<sup>2</sup> Possibly referring to Elizabeth Dyson as Marianne does not start her friendship with Charlotte Yonge until 1843.

to the ideas of the C. Y. Adv.<sup>t</sup> w.<sup>h</sup> might profitably be put forth. The clergyman of the parish has St.<sup>s</sup> Day services, so all the St.<sup>s</sup> Days may come in time. The course of the C. Year will come in her instruction, & at the same time any scenes or incidents belong.<sup>g</sup> to the natural year, & incl.<sup>g</sup> anyth.<sup>g</sup> else we choose, historical,[illegible word], allegorical, & extracts f.<sup>rm</sup> any book. If such seemed bey.<sup>d</sup> her attainment one might account for them by her mistress hav.<sup>g</sup> provided such things & left them to her. The mistress might have been haunted by a School passion, ungratified thro' health or other hindrance, & have left her stories to Rachel /I can conceive such a woman/. I thought Ivo might come in as a story, the read.<sup>g</sup> of w.<sup>h</sup> was suggested by a walk to see skaters, & be told as a treat on Xmas Evenings, by w.<sup>h</sup> means any facts of ^'s [Anne's] might be told ab.<sup>t</sup> cold countries, & in summer she w.<sup>d</sup> have full scope for hot countries. This is on the supposition that if ^ [Anne] made anyth.<sup>g</sup> of the kind she w.<sup>d</sup> like to put in in here & there, as her leisure & fancy served - let her give it to me to read & I will copy it.

If you liked our Creed c.<sup>d</sup> come in as lectures. There now, think ab.<sup>t</sup> it, & send this with any suggest.<sup>s</sup> of y.<sup>r</sup> own to ^ [Anne] as soon as you conveniently can. I sh.<sup>d</sup> like to give her a Chrys. in the form of a Brother who died young bef. she went to serv. I feel I c.<sup>d</sup> only do bits here & there – my powers of schoolery seem.<sup>g</sup> to me very soon to find their limits, & to consist chiefly in repetitiveness or else borrowings – however borrowed I sh.<sup>d</sup> do little scruple. I have a sort of dim theory /I am not sure what ^ [Anne] would say to it/ that a plan concocted when one cannot sleep, & executed when one's head ached w.<sup>d</sup> have more chance of coming to some good – it alw.<sup>s</sup> seemed to me the chief reason for not expect.<sup>g</sup> any good to come of my schooleries that they were such mere amusement, whereas any real charity costs trouble tho' it may be a pleas. I do not know whether you will exactly understand this. Anyhow they worry me somet.<sup>s</sup> & I am somewhat tired of Ivo, & have persevered in try.<sup>g</sup> to amend him as ^ [Anne] wished, think.<sup>g</sup> it might be good practice to try to clean one's style etc. In the meantime I have got utterly out of conceit w. his first beginning, for [illegible word] I have made him sceptical the right way w.<sup>h</sup> a heathen w.<sup>d</sup> be. I suppose, to look thro' & bey.<sup>d</sup> & above what he had learned not to doubt, Viele Balder & the last [?Helger] & [illegible word]. But this might be [illegible word] & the story improves, by mak.<sup>g</sup> Ivo & Ver. to have met w. the missionary who was martyred, whilst they were children; they might have been taken fr.<sup>m</sup> their fathr's house to one of his enemies & being allowed to wander out, they had met this Xtian, who told them such things as suited their childhood. Ver. was afterwards taken away by the Xtians & Ivo taken home, but nev. c.<sup>d</sup> forget what he heard, & that staid in his mind struggled w. the national habits & youthful pursuits till he found hims. among the Xtians, either by going to seek Ver. or as bef. by being made prisoner. The first such as at the martyr's touch need not be very much altered, nor need he know whose it was.

I want to try to explain to you the idea I have ab.<sup>t</sup> teach.<sup>g</sup> w.<sup>h</sup> the Creed brings bef. me – that in writ.<sup>g</sup> for youth, as we do, one thing chiefly to be avoided is generalizing in a way to put their attention to sleep. I think one sh.<sup>d</sup> be practical by things brought home to them familiarly, & so rouse th.<sup>r</sup> attention. One sh.<sup>d</sup> enliven the lessons by simile, anecdote, etc, & then in other parts I w.<sup>d</sup> not shrink f.<sup>rm</sup> dry statements of doctrine, hard words so they were explained, & fine & think.<sup>g</sup> passages f.<sup>rm</sup> really good writers. I w.<sup>d</sup> not translate δ [Newman] very much, nor Jer[emiah] when he suited one, but be satisfied w. the drift being apparent & likely to be impressive. I think this w.<sup>d</sup> gain more attention & be of more use than keep.<sup>g</sup> to one level, w.<sup>h</sup> they might slumber over. Whether you understand & agree, you must tell me. – You & ^ [Anne] must restrict the confessions of our woman's pupils, w.<sup>h</sup> I will not hazard making too free. Also her lectures to them. I sh.<sup>d</sup> think they might have a married brother or sister w. children, giv.<sup>g</sup> her occasion to teach S. children.

I do not feel competent to answer ab.<sup>t</sup> the Infant School, I am fright.<sup>d</sup> enough of teach.<sup>g</sup> my tiny Sunday class at Dogmers[field], tho' I love them – but tell me the results of y.<sup>r</sup> cogitat. & discuss.

I have written my headache away for the present – my writ.<sup>g</sup> posture is [small drawing inserted] so whilst head is much above paper, I presume it cannot hurt eyes, & as they ache f.<sup>rm</sup> sympathy w. head, they get worse rather than better by total idleness, w.<sup>h</sup> aggravates a nervous headache – It is not ab.<sup>t</sup> actual headaches but rather headiness & odd sensations. I am going to try a cold hip bath ev.<sup>ry</sup> morning, to w.<sup>h</sup> I look forw.<sup>rd</sup> with such notions of pleas. as a water bird might feel – M.<sup>rs</sup> Bloxam says my pulse is better.

I hope your cold & biliousness did not last bey.<sup>d</sup> the Ball, tho' that did not cause them – tell me if you are quite well ag.<sup>n</sup> – M.<sup>r</sup> Fortesque & his Bride are like people in a book. My own dear, I must have many more things to say, tho' I seem to have said a good many you need not pity me, seeing I am very comfortable & very much spoilt with petting.

I have not yet said that I specially liked y.<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> Art[icle], & so does Owl. If she has a mind, she may scratch a bit. I told you she made her nice bits for Creed – I have pretty nearly written my own part afresh – & I feel as if in a few months time, I might wish to do the same again. I think it w.<sup>d</sup> be very triangular & nice to make the Dialogues as I have proposed, & anybody might help with bits. If Owl was good she would write some suggestions here.<sup>3</sup>

We like D.<sup>r</sup> Hook exceedingly, - I love him for what he says of old Reformers – I feel to care much now for them now that I think them persecuted, than I ever did when all the world praised them /expecting the passion for [illegible word] w.<sup>h</sup>. [?A]. Knox inspired/ their having been imperfect seems no reason for our being ungrateful. Also we greatly admire D.<sup>r</sup> Pusey. I cannot like M.<sup>r</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> HRO, 9M55/F42/4 (n.d.).



[?Pridelure], he quails & qualifies & reflects, till he seems to me to leave no impress.<sup>s</sup> – Owl complains of his twaddling.

We have not begun Eusebius hav.<sup>g</sup> had so many books to read aloud, you will not think that ungrateful – he & S.<sup>t</sup> Aug[ustine]<sup>'s</sup> Confess[ion]<sup>'s</sup> await our leisure. Tell me ab.<sup>t</sup> y.<sup>r</sup> pupils for Conf.

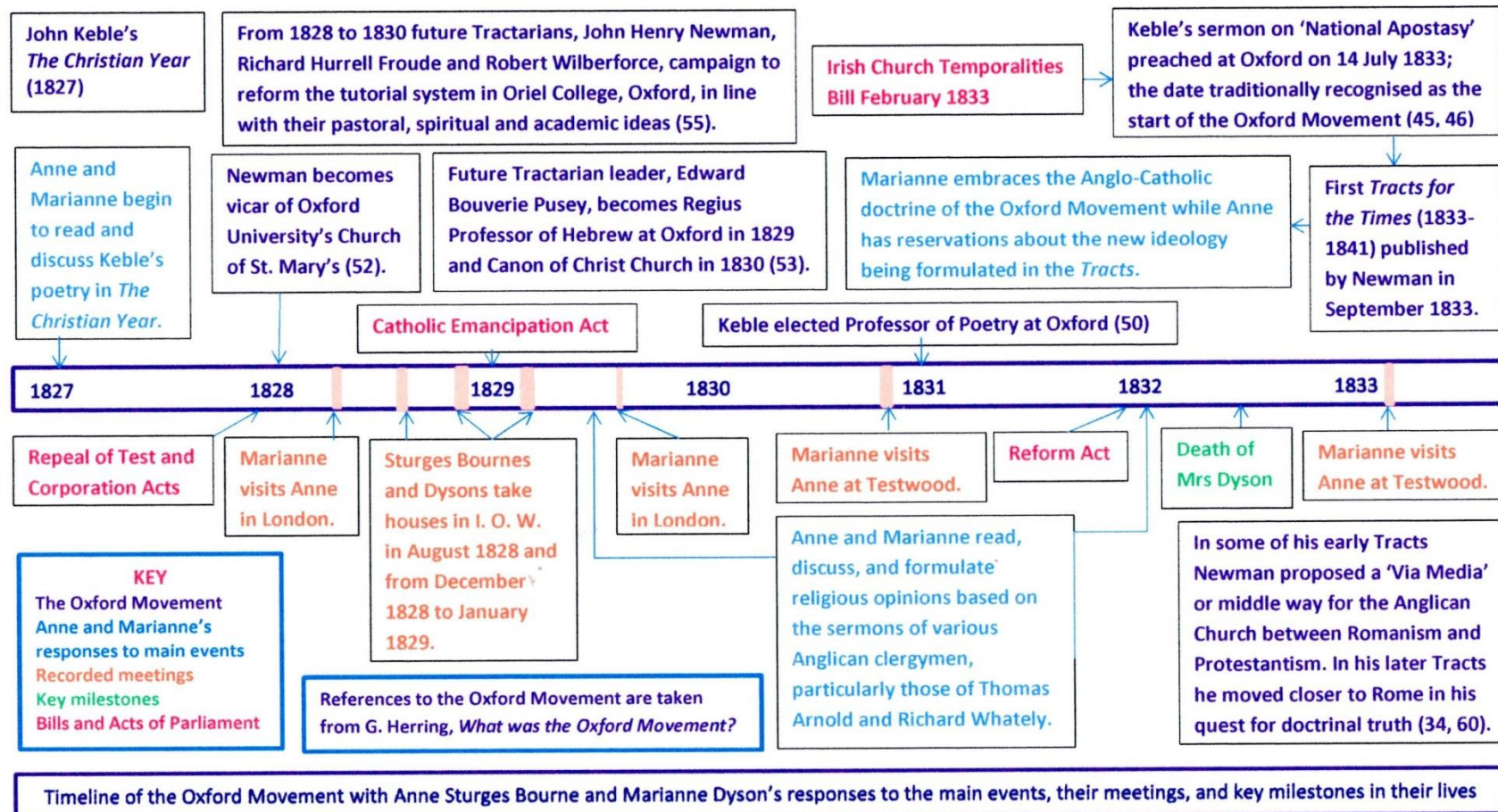
I sh.<sup>d</sup> think you were quite right to read Extracts as you talk of doing – that seemed to be Pulchella's [Mrs Keble] plan, & then she discussed ab.<sup>t</sup> them. I suppose they generally like being taught, & may not think the same things dry that we did. I have left scope for owl in cover. I wish you joy of y.<sup>r</sup> vigour ab.<sup>t</sup> the Martyr. ^ [Anne] told me they had left off the Penny Visitor, & so I did not get the last Vol, but I will get any one where y.<sup>r</sup> books appear.

Goodbye my own dear > [Mary], I do not say tender things but leave them to y.<sup>r</sup> angular family – y.<sup>r</sup> most faithful < [Marianne]

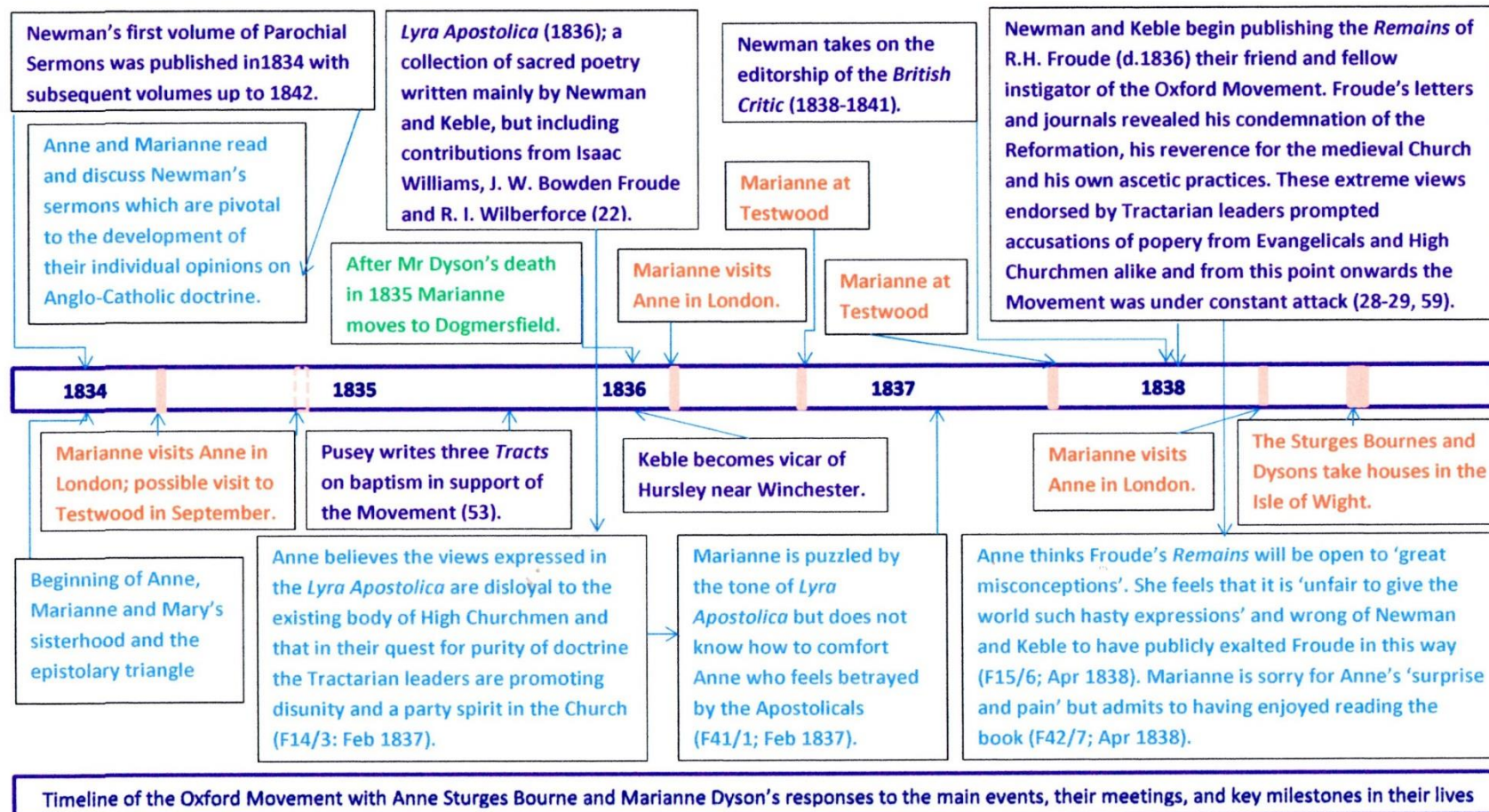


## **Appendix C: Timeline of the Oxford Movement, 1827–1845**



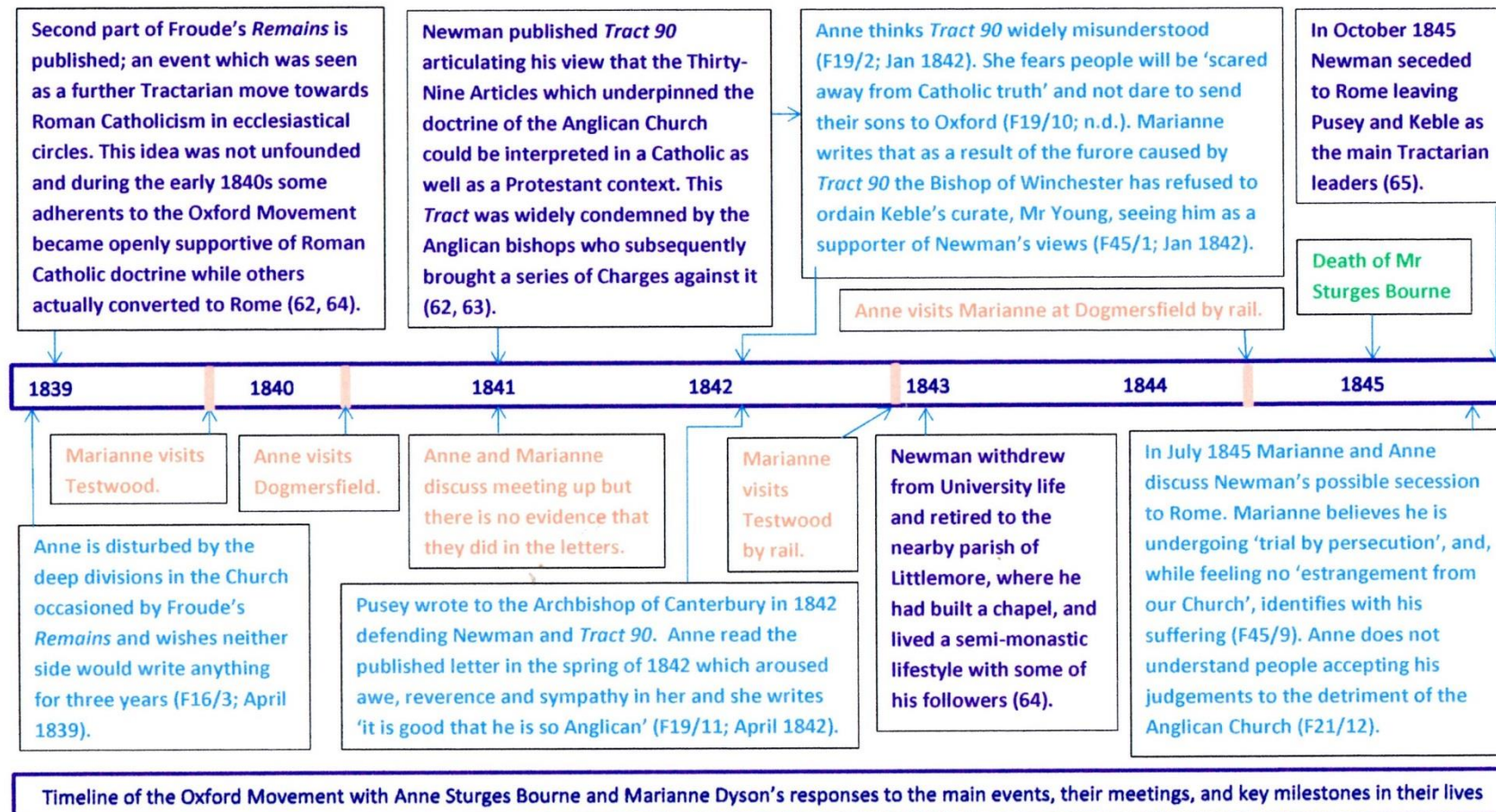














## **Appendix D: Mme de Sévigné's letters: English translations of selected extracts**



## Chapter 1

### 1.3: Imitating Sévigné: a display of polite letter-writing skills

#### Extract 1: Mme de Sévigné to Mme de Grignan, 12 July 1671

I have taken into my head to almost adore those gentlemen, the postillions who are incessantly carrying our letters backward and forward. There is not a day in the week, but they bring one either to you or to me; there is one every day, and every hour of the day, upon the road. Kind-hearted people, how obliging it is of them! What a charming invention is the post, and what a happy effect of Providence is the desire of gain! I sometimes think of writing to them to show my gratitude; and I believe I should have done it before, had I not remembered that chapter in Pascal, and been afraid that they might have perhaps thought proper to thank me for writing to them, as I thanked them for carrying my letters. Here is a fine digression for you.<sup>1</sup>

#### Extract 2: Mme de Sévigné to M. de Coulanges, 15 December 1670

I am going to send you something the most astonishing, the most surprising, the most marvellous, the most miraculous, the most magnificent, the most confounding, the most unheard of, the most singular, the most extraordinary, the most incredible, the most unseen, the greatest, the least, the rarest, the most common, the most public, the most private till today.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Letters of Madame de Sévigné*, The Library of Standard Letters comprising Selections from the Correspondence of Eminent Men and Women, ed. by Mrs Sarah Josepha Hale (New York: Mason Brothers, 1856), I, 61-62.

<sup>2</sup> *The Letters of Madame de Sévigné*, I, 368-69.



## **Appendix E: 'Die Ideale' by Friedrich von Schiller with an English Translation**





**‘DIE IDEALE’****Friedrich von Schiller**

So willst du treulos von mir scheiden  
 Mit deinen holden Phantasien,  
 Mit deinen Schmerzen, deinen Freuden,  
 Mit allen unerbittlich fliehn?  
 Kann nichts dich, Fliehende, verweilen,  
 O meines Lebens goldne Zeit?  
 Vergebens, deine Wellen eilen  
 Hinab ins Meer der Ewigkeit.

Erloschen sind die heitern Sonnen,  
 Die meiner Jugend Pfad erhellt;  
 Die Ideale sind zerronnen,  
 Die einst das trunkne Herz geschwellt;  
 Er ist dahin, der süße Glaube  
 An Wesen, die mein Traum gebar,  
 Der rauhen Wirklichkeit zum Raube,  
 Was einst so schön, so göttlich war.

Wie einst mit flehendem Verlangen  
 Pygmalion den Stein umschloß,  
 Bis in des Marmors kalten Wangen  
 Empfindung glühend sich ergoß,  
 So schlang ich mich mit Liebesarmen  
 Um die Natur, mit Jugendlust,  
 Bis sie zu athmen, zu erwarmen  
 Begann an meiner Dichterbrust,

Und, theilend meine Flammentriebe,  
 Die Stumme eine Sprache fand,  
 Mir wiedergab den Kuß der Liebe  
 Und meines Herzens Klang verstand;  
 Da lebte mir der Baum, die Rose,  
 Mir sang der Quellen Silberfall,  
 Es fühlte selbst das Seelenlose  
 Von meines Lebens Wiederhall.

Es dehnte mit allmächt’gem Streben  
 Die enge Brust ein kreisend All,  
 Herauszutreten in das Leben,  
 In That und Wort, in Bild und Schall.  
 Wie groß war diese Welt gestaltet,  
 So lang die Knospe sie noch barg;  
 Wie wenig, ach! hat sich entfaltet,  
 Dies Wenige, wie klein und karg!

Wie sprang, von kühnem Muth beflügelt,  
 Beglückt in seines Traumes Wahn,  
 Von keiner Sorge noch gezügelt,  
 Der Jüngling in des Lebens Bahn.  
 Bis an des Äthers bleichste Sterne  
 Erhob ihn der Entwürfe Flug;

Nichts war so hoch und nichts so ferne,  
 Wohin ihr Flügel ihn nicht trug.

Wie leicht war er dahin getragen,  
 Was war dem Glücklichen zu schwer!  
 Wie tanzte vor des Lebens Wagen  
 Die luftige Begleitung her!  
 Die Liebe mit dem süßen Lohne,  
 Das Glück mit seinem goldnen Kranz,  
 Der Ruhm mit seiner Sternenkrone,  
 Die Wahrheit in der Sonne Glanz!

Doch, ach! schon auf des Weges Mitte  
 Verloren die Begleiter sich,  
 Sie wandten treulos ihre Schritte,  
 Und einer nach dem andern wich.  
 Leichtfüßig war das Glück entflohen,  
 Des Wissens Durst blieb ungestillt,  
 Des Zweifels finstre Wetter zogen  
 Sich um der Wahrheit Sonnenbild.

Ich sah des Ruhmes heil’ge Kränze  
 Auf der gemeinen Stirn entweiht.  
 Ach, allzuschnell, nach kurzem Lenz  
 Entfloh die schöne Liebeszeit!  
 Und immer stiller ward’s und immer  
 Verlaßner auf dem rauhen Steg;  
 Kaum warf noch einen bleichen Schimmer  
 Die Hoffnung auf den finstern Weg.

Von all dem rauschenden Geleite  
 Wer harrete liebend bei mir aus?  
 Wer steht mir tröstend noch zur Seite  
 Und folgt mir bis zum finstern Haus?  
 Du, die du alle Wunden heilest,  
 Der Freundschaft leise, zarte Hand,  
 Des Lebens Bürden liebend theilest,  
 Du, die ich frühe suchte und fand.

Und du, die gern sich mir ihr gattet,  
 Wie sie, der Seele Sturm beschwört,  
 Beschäftigung, die nie ermattet,  
 Die langsam schafft, doch nie zerstört,  
 Die zu dem Bau der Ewigkeiten  
 Zwar Sandkorn nur für Sandkorn reicht,  
 Doch von der großen Schuld der Zeiten  
 Minuten, Tage, Jahre streicht.

‘Schillers Gedichte’, Schiller-Institut  
[http://www.schiller-  
 institut.de/seiten/friedrichschiller/gedicht2.htm#  
 ideale](http://www.schiller-institut.de/seiten/friedrichschiller/gedicht2.htm#ideale) [accessed 1 March 2017].



## 'The Ideals'

Friedrich von Schiller

And wilt thou, faithless one, then, leave me,  
With all thy magic phantasy, —  
With all the thoughts that joy or grieve me,  
Wilt thou with all forever fly?  
Can naught delay thine onward motion,  
Thou golden time of life's young dream?  
In vain! eternity's wide ocean  
Ceaselessly drowns thy rolling stream.

The glorious suns my youth enchanting  
Have set in never-ending night;  
Those blest ideals now are wanting  
That swelled my heart with mad delight.  
The offspring of my dream hath perished,  
My faith in being passed away;  
The godlike hopes that once I cherish  
Are now reality's sad prey.

As once Pygmalion, fondly yearning,  
Embraced the statue formed by him,  
Till the cold marble's cheeks were burning,  
And life diffused through every limb,  
So I, with youthful passion fired,  
My longing arms round Nature threw,  
Till, clinging to my breast inspired,  
She 'gan to breathe, to kindle too.

And all my fiery ardor proving,  
Though mute, her tale she soon could tell,  
Returned each kiss I gave her loving,  
The throbbings of my heart read well.  
Then living seemed each tree, each flower,  
Then sweetly sang the waterfall,  
And e'en the soulless in that hour  
Shared in the heavenly bliss of all.

For then a circling world was bursting  
My bosom's narrow prison-cell,  
To enter into being thirsting,  
In deed, word, shape, and sound as well.  
This world, how wondrous great I deemed it,  
Ere yet its blossoms could unfold!  
When open, oh, how little seemed it!  
That little, oh, how mean and cold!

How happy, winged by courage daring,  
The youth life's mazy path first pressed —  
No care his manly strength impairing,  
And in his dream's sweet vision blest!  
The dimmest star in air's dominion

Seemed not too distant for his flight;  
His young and ever-eager pinion  
Soared far beyond all mortal sight.

Thus joyously toward heaven ascending,  
Was aught for his bright hopes too far?  
The airy guides his steps attending,  
How danced they round life's radiant car!  
Soft love was there, her guerdon bearing,  
And fortune, with her crown of gold,  
And fame, her starry chaplet wearing,  
And truth, in majesty untold.

But while the goal was yet before them,  
The faithless guides began to stray;  
Impatience of their task came o'er them,  
Then one by one they dropped away.  
Light-footed Fortune first retreating,  
Then Wisdom's thirst remained unstilled,  
While heavy storms of doubt were beating  
Upon the path truth's radiance filled.

I saw Fame's sacred wreath adorning  
The brows of an unworthy crew;  
And, ah! how soon Love's happy morning,  
When spring had vanished, vanished too!  
More silent yet, and yet more weary,  
Became the desert path I trod;  
And even hope a glimmer dreary  
Scarce cast upon the gloomy road.

Of all that train, so bright with gladness,  
Oh, who is faithful to the end?  
Who now will seek to cheer my sadness,  
And to the grave my steps attend?  
Thou, Friendship, of all guides the fairest,  
Who gently healest every wound;  
Who all life's heavy burdens sharest,  
Thou, whom I early sought and found!

Employment too, thy loving neighbor,  
Who quells the bosom's rising storms;  
Who ne'er grows weary of her labor,  
And ne'er destroys, though slow she forms;  
Who, though but grains of sand she places  
To swell eternity sublime,  
Yet minutes, days, ay! years effaces  
From the dread reckoning kept by Time!

Friedrich von Schiller, 'The Ideals', in *The Poems of Schiller*, trans. by Edgar Alfred Bowring (New York: John B. Alden, 1883)  
<<https://archive.org/stream/poemsschiller00schi/gog#page/n110/mode/2up/search/the+ideals>>  
[accessed 1 December 2016], pp. 109-111.



## **Appendix F: Wordsworth's poems 'Anecdote for Fathers' and 'We are Seven'**



### **'Anecdote for Fathers Shewing How the Art of Lying May be Taught'**

I have a boy of five years old,  
His face is fair and fresh to see;  
His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,  
And dearly he loves me.

One morn we stroll'd on our dry walk,  
Our quiet house all full in view,  
And held such intermitted talk  
As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran;  
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore,  
My pleasant home, when spring began,  
A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear  
To think, and think, and think again;  
With so much happiness to spare,  
I could not feel a pain.

My boy was by my side, so slim  
And graceful in his rustic dress!  
And oftentimes I talked to him,  
In very idleness.

The young lambs ran a pretty race;  
The morning sun shone bright and warm;  
"Kilve," said I, "was a pleasant place,  
"And so is Liswyn farm.

"My little boy, which like you more,"  
I said and took him by the arm—  
"Our home by Kilve's delightful shore,  
"Or here at Liswyn farm?"

"And tell me, had you rather be,"  
I said and held him by the arm,  
"At Kilve's smooth shore by the green sea,  
"Or here at Liswyn farm?"

In careless mood he looked at me,  
While still I held him by the arm,  
And said, "At Kilve I'd rather be  
"Than here at Liswyn farm."

"Now, little Edward, say why so;  
My little Edward, tell me why;"  
"I cannot tell, I do not know,"  
"Why this is strange," said I.

"For, here are woods and green-hills warm;

"There surely must some reason be  
"Why you would change sweet Liswyn farm  
"For Kilve by the green sea."

At this, my boy, so fair and slim,  
Hung down his head, nor made reply;  
And five times did I say to him,  
"Why? Edward, tell me why?"

His head he raised—there was in sight,  
It caught his eye, he saw it plain—  
Upon the house-top, glittering bright,  
A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,  
And thus to me he made reply;  
"At Kilve there was no weather-cock,  
"And that's the reason why."

Oh dearest, dearest boy! my heart  
For better lore would seldom yearn,  
Could I but teach the hundredth part  
Of what from thee I learn.

### **'We Are Seven'**

A simple child, dear brother Jim,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage girl,  
She was eight years old, she said;  
Her hair was thick with many a curl  
That cluster'd round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,  
And she was wildly clad;  
Her eyes were fair, and very fair,  
—Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little maid,  
"How many may you be?"  
"How many? seven in all," she said,  
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they, I pray you tell?"  
She answered, "Seven are we,  
"And two of us at Conway dwell,  
"And two are gone to sea.

"Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
"My sister and my brother,

"And in the church-yard cottage, I  
"Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,  
"And two are gone to sea,  
"Yet you are seven; I pray you tell  
"Sweet Maid, how this may be?"

Then did the little Maid reply,  
"Seven boys and girls are we;  
"Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
"Beneath the church-yard tree."

"You run about, my little maid,  
"Your limbs they are alive;  
"If two are in the church-yard laid,  
"Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"  
The little Maid replied,  
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's  
door,  
"And they are side by side.

"My stockings there I often knit,  
"My 'kerchief there I hem;  
"And there upon the ground I sit—  
"I sit and sing to them.

"And often after sunset, Sir,  
"When it is light and fair,  
"I take my little porringer,  
"And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was little Jane;  
"In bed she moaning lay,  
"Till God released her of her pain,  
"And then she went away.

"So in the church-yard she was laid,  
"And all the summer dry,  
"Together round her grave we played,  
"My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with snow,  
"And I could run and slide,  
"My brother John was forced to go,  
"And he lies by her side."

"How many are you then," said I,  
"If they two are in Heaven?"  
The little Maiden did reply,  
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead!  
"Their spirits are in heaven!"  
'Twas throwing words away; for still  
The little Maid would have her will,  
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

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2017]



## **Appendix G: The Tractarian fiction of Marianne Dyson and Anne Sturges Bourne**



## 1: Synopses of *Ivo and Verena* and *Olive Lester*

### *Ivo and Verena, or the Snowdrop*

At the beginning of the story the young Ivo, and his twin-sister Verena, are wandering in the mountains when they come across a Christian missionary who tells them about the 'Great God who made heaven and earth' and explains the Prayer Book to them.<sup>1</sup> While they are talking heathen warriors attack and kill the Priest. Ivo is injured and left for dead and Verena, having been separated from Ivo in the fighting, gets lost. She is rescued by a group of passing Christian knights who take her to live in their castle where she serves one of their ladies. In the meantime, Ivo is rescued by his father's man-servant, Rolf, and taken back to their castle. Ivo and Verena's mother had died when they were born, but their father, Harold, is a great warrior, as are Ivo's brothers, Haco, Swergen, Hagen and Eric. After these events Ivo's mission in life becomes to know more about God and to find his sister again. His father refuses to let him go in search of Verena because of his youth; however, when Ivo proved his skill with the bow and arrow and took first prize at a feast, his father saw that he was ready and sent him off. In his travels Ivo came across the grave of the Christian missionary who had been buried by the Christian knights on an island. Inspired by the inscription on the cross: 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life', Ivo remembered how the missionary had prayed and began to ask God to help him in his quest to find Verena.<sup>2</sup> In the meantime, cared for by the Christian lady she served, Verena had become a Christian. She looked out one day and saw Ivo riding towards the castle. After their happy reunion the brother and sister returned to their father's castle and spoke to him and Ivo's brothers about the Christian faith. Angry at this attempt to change their religion the brothers drove Ivo away and he went to live by himself on the island where the Priest was buried. He spent his time in prayer and reading the Bible and the Prayer Book. He eventually built a small Chapel for his own use. The heathen tribesmen who had killed the missionary found him there, but Ivo's willingness to show them how to grow food from seeds to feed their families softened their hearts and they became desirous to know more of his faith. Ivo learns more about the Christian faith from a bishop at the castle where Verena was brought up and is baptised and confirmed into the Church and takes his first communion. The bishop continues as Ivo's spiritual advisor and eventually ordains Ivo as a deacon of the Church. Over time and with many adventures and hardships this process is repeated and Ivo becomes a priest and, finally, a bishop. Meanwhile, Verena has taught her father about the Anglo-Catholic faith and Ivo is able to baptise him just before his death. Only Ivo's brothers remain hostile towards him. However, one by one they too

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<sup>1</sup> *Ivo and Verena, or the Snowdrop* (London: James Burns, 1844), p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ivo and Verena*, p. 14.

convert to Christianity, all except for Haco and Hagen, the two eldest brothers. The story culminates with Ivo saving them both from being killed by a bear and then meeting his own death when he puts himself in the path of an arrow intended for Haco. His sacrifice melts their hard hearts and they also are baptised into the Christian faith. The sorrowful Verena lives out the rest of her life in prayer and in the service of the poor.

### ***Olive Lester: the Lamé Girl, a Tale***

Olive Lester is an orphan who lives in poverty with her old grandfather, Isaac Lester, her aunt, and other family members in a small and wild hamlet called Brokenford. Olive is about sixteen, shy, and walks with a stick due to an untreated fall when she was eleven years old. Having received some early schooling and religious teaching, she is the only one in her family who attends the new church recently built at Brokenford. Mr Morton is the clergyman in charge of the new church and he and Mrs Morton take an interest in Olive and introduce her to Mrs Payne, the local schoolmistress, who continues Olive's education in the evenings. Olive learns the Catechism and receives instruction on the Bible and Prayer Book from Mrs Payne and Mr Morton prepares her for confirmation and her first communion. Olive's example encourages other of the hamlet's residents to attend the church, including several girls of a similar age to her: all of whom have been influenced by Olive's integrity and steadfast church attendance. Subsequently, the girls are found places in service by Mrs Morton, which is what Olive also hopes for, but she worries that her lameness will prevent the possibility of this happening. After her grandfather's death, Olive, exhausted from nursing him, follows the advice of Mr Morton and goes to the workhouse to be provided for until she is stronger. While she is there she helps in the schoolroom with the younger children. One day Mr and Mrs Morton hear her teaching a lesson and are so impressed that they arrange for Olive to assist Mrs Payne with schooling the local children. Olive is set up with her own school-room in a cottage belonging to Mr and Mrs Perry, an elderly couple, where she has her own bedroom and is able to repay their kindness by reading to them. The story ends with a picture of Olive, who, in spite of her lameness, becomes a schoolmistress in her own right and fulfils her life-long dream of being useful and earning her own living.

## **2: Marianne and Mary's Creed**

While Mary's involvement with the epistolary triangle's fictional writing can only be surmised from Anne and Marianne's correspondence, there is some evidence that she and Marianne collaborated in writing a creed. In Marianne's one extant letter to Mary of January 1839 she refers to 'our Creed' which 'could come in as lectures' in *Cousin Rachel*. In religious terms a creed is a statement of faith, but the format taken by this one is not clear from the correspondence.

However, Marianne had written previously to Anne in November 1838: 'I want you to make a pretty picturesque descriptive bit such as you can make, in the style that your mountain tops and autumn leaves are, for the 1<sup>st</sup> Article of the Creed.'<sup>3</sup> Marianne's desire to exalt nature in the text shares an affinity with *The Christian Year* and Keble's use of picturesque imagery to anchor Biblical truth in the reality of God's creation. In December 1839 Marianne sends the creed to Anne who responds with the following comments: 'I should say it was a little long, only it is so good, I would not shorten it. I doubted altogether about making the Creed so practical having used myself to teach doctrine separately, but this may not be right.'<sup>4</sup> It is apparent from a later letter written by Marianne in 1842 that this creed contained some references or extracts from Newman's writing. Marianne writes excitedly to Anne that 'the first green volume of the Creed' went to Oriel College 'to be looked over by the Author of the chief part of it – one could hardly have published it without some leave asked'.<sup>5</sup> She informs Anne that Newman's answer, which was 'courteous to the greatest degree', was related to her by Henry Wilberforce who told her that 'he begs for time to look at it, not hesitating at all that it should be published'.<sup>6</sup> Marianne also apprises Anne that Newman 'asks Henry if it would be pertinent in him to present a copy of his new little book [possibly *Church of the Fathers* (1840)] to each of those "those ladies"', meaning, in this instance, Marianne and Mary.<sup>7</sup> This episode demonstrates the worth that Newman placed on both the religious integrity of the creed and the labour of these two Anglo-Catholic Churchwomen.

### 3: Stories which can be attributed to Marianne's authorship

***Ivo and Verena, or the Snowdrop* (1842)**

***Conversations with Cousin Rachel* (1844)** (previously published in four parts as separate tracts in 1842/43)

**'Heathens and Christians'** (a short story published in *Magazine for the Young* (1842))<sup>8</sup>

***Little Alice and her Sister* (1843)**<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> HRO, 9M55/F42/11 (13 November 1838).

<sup>4</sup> HRO, 9M55/F16/11 (28 December 1839).

<sup>5</sup> HRO, 9M55/F44/8 (1842).

<sup>6</sup> F44/8. I have been unable to find any publishing details about this creed.

<sup>7</sup> F44/8.

<sup>8</sup> Anne read Marianne's story about 'the Heathens in the Valley' to her Sunday girls in August 1839. HRO, 9M55/F16/7 (5 August 1839). *Heathens and Christians* is set in a beautiful and fertile valley and is almost certainly the same story. *Magazine for the Young* (London: Burns, 1842), pp. 133-139. Furthermore, after the story's publication in June 1842, Anne writes 'I am very glad to see your Valley, and Duck [Thomas Acland] approves of magazine who wrote the *Gypsies* [?]'. HRO, 9M55/F1915 (June 1842). *Gypsies* follows *Heathens and Christians* in the magazine.

#### 4: Stories/Articles which may have been written by Marianne

**'Morning'** a short meditation published in *Magazine for the Young* (August 1842)<sup>10</sup>

***Phoebe: or the Hospital*** serialized in *Magazine for the Young* (1844)<sup>11</sup>

#### 5: Stories which can be attributed to Anne's authorship

***Olive Lester: the Lane Girl, a Tale (1846)*** (previously serialized in *Magazine for the Young* (1842))

***Dorcas Green (1846)*** (previously serialized in *Magazine for the Young* (1842))

**'Lydia Morrison'** serialized in *Magazine for the Young* (1842)

#### 6: Stories which can be attributed to Marianne and Anne's authorship

**'Minor Cares'** serialized in *The Monthly Packet* from 1853 to 1858 with Marianne and Anne contributing from 1855 onwards

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<sup>9</sup> This story, published by Burns, is attributed to Mary Ann Dyson in the British Library catalogue <[http://explore.bl.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/search.do?dscnt=0&frbg=&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BLCO NTENT%29&tab=local\\_tab&dstmp=1481814002969&srt=rank&ct=search&mode=Basic&vl\(488279563UI0\)=any&dum=true&tb=t&indx=11&vl\(freeText0\)=mary%20ann%20dyson&vid=BLVU1&fn=search](http://explore.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?dscnt=0&frbg=&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BLCO NTENT%29&tab=local_tab&dstmp=1481814002969&srt=rank&ct=search&mode=Basic&vl(488279563UI0)=any&dum=true&tb=t&indx=11&vl(freeText0)=mary%20ann%20dyson&vid=BLVU1&fn=search)> [accessed 28 February 2017].

<sup>10</sup> *Magazine for the Young*, (August)(London: Burns, 1842), 190-191 (p. 190). See Anne's letter to Marianne of 28 December 1839: 'I have today been reading Emily some of your "Morning." ' HRO, 9M55/F16/11.

<sup>11</sup> Marianne's letter of 16 October 1838 (9M55/F42/9) talks of writing Phoebe dialogues. Anne's letter of 7 December 1839 (9M55/F16/9) mentions waiting 'for Phoebe till London' and her letter of 7 January 1840 (9M55/F17/1) suggests sending 'Phoebe' to the Education Magazine.

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