

It is clear that Christ's mind is to be ours, so that we may discern with him:

...let us try day by day to do what He would do—to speak as He would speak—to think as He would think—to desire what He desires;—to love what He loves and thus make our life one with Him, being in one continued act of love, from night till night, and from year to year ... (CC 8:88)

This is not mere imitation. What is required of us, she says elsewhere, is “*your co-operation*,” and she describes this co-operation as “that which is wanting in the passion of J.C.” (CC 8:96) It is a strong, clear statement. It is surely an echo of Paul speaking to the Colossians (1:24-29). He tells us he is

...happy to suffer ...and in my own body to do what I can to make up all that is still to be undergone by Christ for the sake of his body, the Church.

Just as the Son is sent among us to be “our hope of glory,” Paul here knows himself to be sent in Christ, the servant of the Good News. Similarly SHCJ incorporation into the life-giving passion of Christ can be thought of as the “heavenly fountain” of the Rule (art. 4), that which enables us to “bring others” into the relationship with the Father which it describes as the hidden life of Jesus. This bringing is ‘passion’ for us; it demands “every effort”, “labouring with all our strength”, running “with ardour”; in Paul’s words, “I struggle wearily on, helped only by His power driving me irresistibly”; and in Cornelia’s, “Love and suffer.” (CC 30:16)

This brings us back full circle to human and social conditions and the significance for us of the following articles. One cannot love or suffer in a vacuum. Circumstances have to be provided, upright and crossbar for our ‘passion.’ It was in living the conditions one with Christ in a particular age that Paul worked, Cornelia worked, that we work; they invite us into the joy of a share in redemptive death. So these two articles and others of a similar kind in following issues of SOURCE should help us to a felt experience of the conditions of the apostolate of Cornelia Connelly’s day. But they should also, thereby, lead us into a deeper penetration of the irresistible power at its heart, incorporation by daily dying into the joy of Christ, the Son who is sent.

THE YOUNG LADIES’ SCHOOL AT ST. LEONARD’S

● Sr. Radegunde Flaxman

Part 1: Other Girls’ Schools of the Day

The content of nineteenth century novels and the state of its schools might equally be said to reveal the quality of contemporary society. If we read *Nicholas Nickleby*, chapter XXVIII, which was written between 1838 and 1839, we are delighted and appalled by the mocking scene. The degree of frivolity and affectation, the cheapness and softness of mind wrapped in riches and rank, tell us a great deal of the society for which the most wealthy girls were prepared. This was how its women spent their leisure hours,—as seen through the magnifying glass of satire. We can see them more exactly at their most public and coveted hour in the diary of Charles Adams, the U.S.A. ambassador to Great Britain in 1861. At the end of an arduous London season, he writes: “The great object in life is social position,” and the occasion which has impressed itself most vividly on his observant mind was the picture of the young girls of the nobility in gowns of white being presented:

As each entered the room, she dropt her train and swept with a rustle of cloth and glitter of jewels between two curved rows of courtiers up to the throne. Most ...seemed very nervous, with rigid features and frightened eyes, but all made successful curtsies before the short, florid-faced monarch ...The younger girls kissed the hand that she extended to them, and then all curtsied along the row of the royal family—past Prince, Princess and Duke—generally gaining confidence and hauteur along the way, until with tossing locks and proud smiles they sallied around the rest of the circle past the diplomatic ladies and on out of the door.¹

This reminds us of Ruskin’s cry in *Sesame and Lilies*, only three years later, that:

...there is hardly a girls’ school in this Christian kingdom where the children’s courage and sincerity would be thought of half so much importance as their way of coming in at a door.²

Not all girls belonged to the rank which would be presented at Court, but the public image of the Young Lady was created by what the London Season demanded of those who were, and every school of any pretension had to offer a correspondingly ‘suitable’ programme. Hence the emphasis on accomplishments to the detriment of all else. Therefore a Mrs. Potter, for instance, begged to inform her friends in the *Scholastic Weekly Gazette* that she is removing her school to London for “the unequalled advantages

it affords for securing the first Professors in the Metropolis for every accomplishment," and she makes no mention of anything else the curriculum may offer.³ Since these necessary accomplishments, especially music and French (but not forgetting "painting on velvet and playing the tambourine" as a fictional gentleman is made to demand for his daughter),⁴ had generally to be acquired inside two years, inevitably academic study could claim but little attention. A reader of the *Athenaeum* ventures to protest:

...You cannot but be aware that young women and girls in the middle rank of life in England are almost ignored by society in so far as any public provision for their education is concerned... If a parent sends his daughter to boarding school, is there any medium between something enormously expensive offering luxuries which he does not covet, and something miserably low which offers only a few paltry and showy accomplishments instead of better instruction?⁵

He might also have protested about the moral tone of many schools. That the courage and sincerity of which Ruskin speaks were at a low ebb is recognised in *Fraser's*, which writes in 1845 of the "concealment and deception" which prevail "to a degree which the uninitiated would be slow to credit."⁶ Another author refers to boarding schools as "pernicious places" where there was "a confounding of right and wrong," and where "time passes away either in vain longing for home, or in a frivolous foolish trifling."⁷ Some would put this down to the fact that "...in our private schools... from the common day school up to the respectable academy... religious feeling is generally the least important of all branches of education."⁸ And with regard to health we are told by Kamm of one school where deportment was so important that:

...the girls were only permitted to remove their stays for an hour a week in order to wash, a practice which was said to give rise to no hardship at all, beyond an occasional fainting fit.⁹

One would like to suppose this exceptional, but *Fraser's* says with indignant clarity that

...in every house drooping girls are to be seen... with languid faces and often misshapen forms.¹⁰

One must allow to a journalist some hyperbole, but *Fraser's* was a respectable magazine, and there is no smoke without a fire. There were, of course, some very good schools (Mr. Fitch describes one in his report for the Schools Inquiry Commission);¹¹ but on the whole it would appear that intellectually, morally and physically, girls' boarding school education left much to be desired.

Many people agreed that something ought to be done, and yet felt it was a mistake to suppose that women were capable intellectually of a real and substantial course of study. Mrs. William Ellis in 1842 regretted the

...tendency in modern education to instil into the youthful mind the necessity of knowing, rather than the advantage of feeling.¹²

The young girl, she thinks, must accept the fact that she is inferior in mental power to men as she is in physical strength,¹³ and remember that her whole life is by nature one of feeling rather than of action.¹⁴ Consequently accomplishments are a beautiful necessity to the female character. No lady can hope to charm (that all-important good) without a taste for music, painting and poetry;¹⁵ and at the height of a rhapsodic page the author announces that "a woman without poetry is like landscape without sunshine."¹⁶

In an earlier chapter, however, before being thus swept away, Mrs. Ellis concedes that a woman is "too apt to hang her credulity upon her affections." This she calls "servility of mind" and says it is "occasioned by an absence of true knowledge,"¹⁷ which knowledge young ladies have little chance of obtaining she thinks, because school books provide nothing but abstracts and summaries intended merely for learning by heart. She does not say what she would substitute for this. Not mathematics, one might guess. A year or two earlier, the successful attempt to teach this subject to girls at a new Ladies' College in Edinburgh was mocked by a writer in the *Educational Magazine*:

...we read that *forty* young ladies had studied mathematics and were able to solve quadratic equations. Now, although music may be objectionable in some parts, and dancing in others, this is infinitely worse....¹⁸

Many of those who opposed this kind of improvement in girls' education did so, as did that writer, on the grounds that it was not necessary for the training of wives and mothers. To this, Mrs. Grey, speaking as late as 1871, said, hitting the nail on the head with angry accuracy: "They are *not* educated to be wives, but to *get husbands*."¹⁹ It was for this reason that schoolmistresses recognised that for their pupils' success

...everything they can do must be pinned to their shoulders, that the world may be advertised of their merits.²⁰

All this is summed up for us by *Punch* in an 1870 cartoon.²¹ It was entitled *Entomological Studies* and showed the transformation of the larva or caterpillar into the Imago or Perfect Insect. No. 3 is *The Girl or Period*

Butterfly. It shows on the right three attenuated, gawky schoolgirls, with long and worm-like pigtailed. They are the pictures of misery: one practising the piano, one eating dry bread, one studying *Télémaque*. On the left appears a fashionable young lady. Her gorgeous skirts are the butterfly wings, her piled-high hair its furry body, and she is in full flight.

We have considered so far, very briefly, the popular judgement on contemporary girls' education. The professional judgement, given in the Schools Inquiry Commission of 1864-69, amply confirms this picture and provides us with authentic and illuminating detail. This was the first time that girls' education had been thought sufficiently important to warrant survey. It was done under the wing of the Inquiry into boys' schools. When the Reports came out, Miss Beale, who had agitated that it should be attempted, seized the chance to flaunt the facts in the public eye and obtained permission to publish the sections on girls' schools separately, with a preface of her own.²² The commissioners were men of experience and penetration. Between them they visited several hundreds of schools, mostly residential at least in part, scattered throughout the country (in spite of bristling opposition from many lady principals who regarded the request as "inquisitorial"²³ and who closed their doors against inquiry); they listened to lessons, conducted examinations both written and oral, organized questionnaires; and they were finally content that their joint opinion of "the general deficiency in girls' education" should be summed up in the general report preceding their individual ones in the often-quoted statement:

...want of thoroughness and foundation; want of system; slovenliness and showy superficiality; inattention to rudiments; undue time given to accomplishments, and those not taught intelligently or in any scientific manner ...²⁴

We will now look more closely at their evidence.

The U.S.A. ambassador's opinion that the great object in English life was social position is reflected everywhere in these Reports. It appears, for instance, in what Mr. Fitch has to say about the classification of the schools.²⁵ They are described in advertisements by such distinguishing epithets as "exclusive," "genteel," "limited"—words calculated to satisfy the ambition of parents. They confine themselves to county families, or wholesale traders, or shopkeepers' daughters, etc., and Mr. Stanton remarks that it would be the ruin of a school if these distinctions were ever ignored.²⁶ The schools were all private, quite unprotected by any outside authority, and consequently at the mercy of parental demand. Mr. Bryce tells us that parents took interest only in accomplishments, and not at all

in basic subjects;²⁷ they paid no attention to the progress children made in the latter with the result that these were relegated to the last corner of the timetable. Lord Lingen, in his general summary, says that, on the whole, parents were indifferent to what education their daughters might be receiving, that generally it was assumed they were mentally less capable than boys and less in need of such cultivation, whereas accomplishments were essential in the marriage market. In fact, "more solid attainments" were felt to be "actually disadvantageous rather than the reverse."²⁸

It would appear that parents did not usually share the view of the commissioner who believed that it was "the more perfect intellectual refinement"²⁹ of which women are capable that could maintain the mental tone of a community, and that society was in need of cultivated wives and mothers with trained minds and a high conception of their family duties. The parent did indeed expect some kind of moral training to be inculcated. Perhaps this was the reason for which schools were nearly always spoken of, according to Mr. Stanton, as intended to be more a home than a school.³⁰ Both he and Mr. Fitch agree that it was generally felt that moral and intellectual training were somehow mutually exclusive, and Mr. Fitch speaks of this "convenient assumption" with marvellous restraint ("convenient", I take it, because the majority of governesses were quite simply unable to provide the intellectual alternative, but supposed themselves capable of the moral):

...I have been unable to learn (he says) that the schoolmistress has any better mode of forming the moral character of a girl than by withdrawing her mind from what is frivolous, and kindling her interest in serious and thoughtful study ...I cannot find that moral instruction *per se* comes to much when unaccompanied by good general teaching ...³¹

The Reports reveal clearly to what an extent the poverty of the schooling offered was due to the intellectual poverty of governesses. If, as one lady told Mr. Fitch, the aim was "to make the young people attractive in society: and if we can do that we are satisfied,"³² or as another said, "lady-like manners and deportment are far more important than learning,"³³ then there was no absolute need for teachers to be able to offer more. She whose bearing was a little polished, who could air a little French and play a little upon the instrument, might with justifiable hope put up a plate outside her front door announcing a Ladies' School. No law forbade this, and many ladies were in such need of a means of earning a living that this was their only respectable prospect. Mr. Fitch speaks of persons who

...become governesses on the strength of their correct and severe deportment, of their genteel connections, and of a certain pedantic precision in speech which is specially affected by those who possess scarcely any other qualification for a teacher's work³⁴

The deficiencies of such a teacher in fundamentals like arithmetic, grammar, geography, history—to say nothing of those more pretentious subjects which it was fashionable to offer, e.g., astronomy or heraldry—were supplied for by textbooks especially designed to meet this need. For instance we read in a review of Julia Corner's *History of Rome*:

...she adds to each chapter a series of questions upon its contents, intended to aid idle or stupid teachers³⁵

Not all teachers were idle or stupid, but a great many were ignorant. The Lancashire commissioner tells us:

...most teachers . . . know just so much history, and no more, as the text-book contains; all they can do therefore is see that their scholars have learnt its words³⁶

He also gives an account of a grammar lesson to which he had listened. The lesson was one long repetition from Murray's *English Grammar*, beginning on page one. The teacher merely asked the questions exactly as in the book, got back the answers exactly as in the book and then passed on. Here it is:

On my asking her to examine the class in grammar she began thus:

Q. What is English Grammar?

A. (by two or three girls) English Grammar is the art of speaking and writing the English Language correctly.

Q. How many parts has it?

A. Four: orthography, etymology, syntax and prosody.

Q. What is orthography?

Answers doubtful, suggesting that it has something to do with letters. Whereupon the mistress explains: Orthography is derived from two Greek words and means a writing about letters. What is etymology? and so forth without any idea of getting at the meaning of these long words, much less of explaining the rules that followed.³⁷

Mr. Hammond speaks of a governess who knew so little of the 'inside' of arithmetic that she could not correct a mistake, and others whose only method of explaining a rule was re-iteration and then imploring them "to think a little."³⁸ Miss Buss in her evidence to the commissioners does not hesitate to say that the trained teachers in the National schools, even

though they were "deficient in accomplishments" were much more competent to give "a good English education" than were the many uneducated governesses in the Ladies' Schools; she agreed that one of the great evils to be contended with among the latter was "the total want of knowledge how to teach or what books to use."³⁹

The books available, therefore, tried to do the teaching for the teachers. They were mostly catechisms, referred to by the commissioners as "miserable," or—more descriptively—as "a noxious brood." William Pinnock was a chief perpetrator. He produced a great many, each on a specific subject, price 9d and so popular that very often they ran into the 20th edition at least: dry little paperbacks intended for learning by rote. It would not be fair to condemn Pinnock as one who meant to make learning petty. On the contrary his aim was the optimistic reverse. Along with so many other Victorians he was caught up in a great wave of enthusiasm for the march of progress. As knowledge came surging in, he caught it in small gobbetts and then shared it round for the rising generation. He edited a weekly *Guide to Knowledge* for three years beginning in 1832, and its aim was "to assist the rising generation . . . render the acquirement of knowledge more easy and expeditious."⁴⁰ A passage from his essay on the *Advantages of Education* shows clearly the age's exuberant confidence that man was at last marching on:

Why should we wish to halt in the March, or stand still in the Way, every step of which has given us such proof of its being the Road to Happiness? . . . the Law of Nature suffers no rest, we must advance or recede; behind us is the Darkness, before us the Day on which the Sun of Science shines: let us seek its genial Ray, and prosper by its Influence.⁴¹

So the rising generation were set down to swallow, but rarely digest, all the little catechisms. These would march them on. The commissioners, however, with a different view, might be forgiven if they considered that the Darkness had not quite lifted twenty-five years later.

There were other catechisms equally popular among schoolmistresses, compendiums of general information. Of these *Mangnall's Questions* was the most famous. Two others much in use were *Eve's Questions* and *Brewer's Guide*; but all three were referred to by the commissioners, Mangnall at length, and with small respect.⁴² Each is a mixture of question and answer, the answers often being very long informative paragraphs. All alike are condemned because they encourage a fragmentary, incoherent and superficial knowledge, a tendency to "be content with names, lists and nomenclature,"⁴³ and especially an unawareness of

relative importance or significant order; for example, "Caesar's invasion of Britain slipping in between the deluge and the siege of Troy."⁴⁴

Mr. Fitch points out that "thoughtful governesses are aware that there is something small and petty" in this mode of teaching, and in an effort to provide something better (he is speaking here of science) engage a lecturer "who lightly skims over the surface of great subjects but who does not insist on detail of any kind"; and he goes on:

...I cannot express my sense of the uselessness...of a course of instruction which professes to explain heraldry, architecture or botany to young girls of 13 or 14 in 6 lectures.⁴⁵

On the whole it is the vitiating lack of intellectual demand made on the elder pupils which the commissioners seem most to regret:

Their course of instruction (one says) has nothing bracing or disciplinal about it. No part of it challenges the learner's close attention or calls upon her for the concentration of all her powers...⁴⁶

and another remarks that just when an intelligent young woman might begin on rational study and from it ultimately acquire judgement and insight, "her time and energies are frittered away upon a miscellaneous collection of facts."⁴⁷

The over-emphasis on memory work was partly a consequence of the inadequacy of the teachers. Teaching at its very worst could be almost exclusively task work. It could be reduced to pages set to be learnt, then listening to the repetition, and then more pages to be learnt. This could be done for a string of subjects, for most of the day. Even in good schools an enormous amount of mental energy was expended on learning by rote. One commissioner points out how different this was from the practice in boys' schools, where "memory is allowed a comparative rest as soon as the cultivation of their reason and judgement begins."⁴⁸ A consequence of this memory pressure is a proliferation of mnemonic systems, and a corresponding tendency among the older girls not to learn intelligently. A commissioner reports that it not only makes pupils attach undue importance to isolated facts, e.g., dates cut off from any knowledge of the event which they record; but also the learning apparatus is so cumbrous that often no meaning is left in the tortured words, and girls repeat verses without seeing at all what they refer to.⁴⁹

The producing of textbooks of this kind went on all through the mid-century. In an article on the subject we have a reference in 1840 to a system invented by a governess for her own school which she declares promoted "interest and delight" among her pupils.⁵⁰ An advertisement in 1854 shows how this might be true:

Five Hundred and Forty Dates and Facts in British History, rhythmically arranged for chanting and singing, with music attached.⁵¹

This is a very thorough way of combining business with pleasure, possibly a useful gimmick. But what of the following?

Hat and Towers said: May heaven bless De Clifford's bride, the choicest of its flowers.

Head and Dowers said: And may their home as pleasant be as amaranthine bowers.

Hair and Hand said: May Poulton's Lord and Lady be united heart and hand;

Brow and Wand said: May nought of sorrow cross his path, nor mar her fairy land.

Presumably this was thought to sharpen one's memory and increase one's love of poetry. It was called *The Nuptial Present*, and the author remarks modestly in his preface that it is his first attempt at poetry.⁵²

We might now consider what the Reports have to say about curriculum and the allocation of time to the various subjects. The Lancashire commissioner, Mr. Bryce, writes in detail. He begins:

It is the fashion for a girl to go through the form of learning two or three dozen subjects at once.⁵³

In a footnote he lists the miscellaneous subjects which are sprinkled over girls' timetables, and which prompted this piece of humor:

...chronology, mythology, Mangnalls' Questions, astronomy, botany, literature, biography, Greek roots, heraldry, and so forth.⁵⁴

After this he settles down to an analysis of exactly what is studied and for how long, and comes to the conclusion that music, being the only subject on the timetable every day, is the only one in which any substantial progress can be made. (Music in girls' schools makes him very angry: he speaks of its share of time as exorbitant and injurious to other subjects, and of pianos being tortured unremittingly all day).⁵⁵ Greek and Italian were non-existent, Latin and mathematics extremely rare; English literature, ancient history, physical geography and some branch of natural science made nominal appearances in most of the expensive schools; French and the pianoforte were taught nearly everywhere, German sometimes; and geography, English history and grammar in all schools but nearly always in catechism form. When he examined how much of a girl's time was spent on each, he concluded that accomplishments took up much more than a third of it, factually handled subjects a third, and those which involved healthy mental effort (arithmetic and language) only a quarter.

The disproportion of this picture is confirmed by Mr. Giffard. He inquired of a governess what subjects were taught in her school and received the following brisk answer:

Sixteen boarders. Ten morning pupils. *All* learn the French language and the pianoforte. *Seven* learn the German language. *Ten* drawing. *Two* the Italian language. *Two* singing. *All* dancing.⁵⁶

Did they learn nothing but accomplishments, or were only accomplishments worth mentioning?

Languages are generally referred to in the same breath as music, painting and dancing because the reason for studying them was the same, not for intellectual discipline or the acquirement of real culture but that the young ladies might shine in society. The commissioners have little good to say about the teaching of them: translation is vague, critical questions are unattempted, thoroughness and accuracy are woefully absent, vocabulary meagre, etc., e.g., an advanced student translated, "*L'hôtesse dormait dans un coin de la cuisine*" as "The hostess slept in a (blank) with her cousin."⁵⁷ Mr. Fearon goes to the root of the matter:

I found...the same want both of accuracy and intelligence in the rudimentary French grammar as in that of English grammar...It shows both a want of early and systematic mental discipline and a want of cultivation of the logical and reasoning faculties.⁵⁸

The stress on preparing for society, combined with the intellectual inadequacy of teachers and books, meant inevitably that examinations rarely featured in schools. This is regretted by the commissioners, on the ground that the girls have no incentive to work.⁵⁹ Miss Beale, in her evidence, describes her school's internal examination system as an essential and distinguishing feature.⁶⁰ It was unusual; and it would have been possible only in a well organised school, not under conditions such as Mr. Bryce describes in speaking of organization as he had seen it as he went round:

There is a certain number of classes, or of girls learning particular things; but there is neither any definite course of studies nor any grouping of classes so as to play into one another.⁶¹

This want of planned study, the want of stimulus, the narrowness of the instruction, the lack of thoroughness and intellectual stretch, the ignorance of many of the teachers and the dryness of the books; above all, the fact that, as Mr. Bryce puts it, the teaching generally was "for show and not for use, for seeming and not for being"⁶²—all these things make a lamentable picture. The commissioners with fairness and courtesy give due where it can be given, but the total impression remains in Mr. Fitch's words:

It is no exaggeration to say, that in the mass [of the schools] the intellectual aims are very low, and the attainments are still lower than the aims.⁶³

A brief account of an actual school will aptly conclude this paper. Frances Power Cobbe's autobiography was published in 1894. She gives a detailed, witty and revealing account of the school which she attended in 1836. This is an earlier date than the time of St. Leonard's but the school at 32 Brunswick Terrace, Brighton, so exactly deserves the strictures made by the Schools Inquiry Commission thirty years later that it seems justifiable to use it here as an example of the mid-century's education for girls.

The description is impressively factual. Brighton, we are told, was the seat of the most esteemed ladies' schools, more than a hundred of them, and that of Miss Runciman and Miss Roberts the most highly thought of and the most expensive. Frances came all the way from Dublin to attend it. She came for two years, to be 'finished', and it cost £1,000. It was therefore a school for the extremely wealthy and high-ranking, its pupils being "daughters of men of some standing, mostly country gentlemen, members of Parliament and offshoots of the peerage." It offered what the author describes as "the typical Higher Education of the period, carried out to the extreme of expenditure and high pressure." There were 25 pupils, age nine to nineteen, and "that which would make us admired in society was the *raison d'être* of each requirement."

The requirements, in order of importance, were: music, for all, at least piano and singing regardless of aptitude, two hours a day being spent in practice in addition to receiving lessons. Next came dancing, then drawing (not so popular), then modern languages, French, Italian and German which they did every day, English not being allowed to be spoken until after six in the evening. The study of English language, she tells us, came "a long way after"; a master taught them how to write themes. Apart from this their English subjects consisted of only

...one long awful lesson each week to be repeated to the school-mistress herself by a class, in history one week, in geography the week following.

And she gives an example:

Our first class I remember had once to commit to memory—heaven alone knows how—no less than thirteen pages of Woodhouselee's *Universal History*.

This was a very intelligent girl of about seventeen.

Last on the list came religious instruction. On Sundays pupils repeated the collect and the catechism, and went to church if it was fine. They also

had to repeat a text each day at morning prayers. They were once urged to fast on Ash Wednesday since it would be good for their souls *and their figures* (italics hers).

The same confusion of values revealed itself in the disciplinary system. All faults were punished in the same way: stooping, impertinence, inattention, untidiness, telling lies,—for all equally they were reprimanded in public at a formal weekly occasion; they were then made to sit in the corner for the rest of the evening,

...like naughty babies, with their faces to the wall, half of them being quite of marriageable age and all dressed as was *de rigueur* with us every day in full evening attire of silk or muslin, with gloves and kid slippers.

The conditions under which they lived and worked were just as warping. No time was allowed for recreation except a dismal parading of the esplanade when they had to repeat verbs to the foreign governess. The poles and dumb-bells of calisthenics provided further exercise, but there was "never a country scramble." As to lesson time, they had two schoolrooms in which they spent the entire day, reading aloud, reciting, writing themes and learning pages by heart to the accompaniment of piano practice around and above them continually.

She sums up what was fundamentally wrong not only with her school but also with girls' education generally. "Everything," she says, "was taught us in the inverse ratio of its true importance." She concludes by first suggesting that true education is "the instilling into the mind, not so much knowledge, as the desire for knowledge"; and then in order to show how with regard to herself her school had quite failed in this, she describes her thoughts on leaving: smug satisfaction at having attended the best school possible, assurance that she must therefore know everything, and the determination never to learn anything again, but spend the rest of her life reading novels and amusing herself.⁶⁴

When Cornelia Connelly came to England and wished to establish the Society in girls' education, these were the conditions against which she had to work. Her own ideals ran counter to them. She wrote to Bishop Grant that "...His glory and the good of souls...is the only worth of education." (D 36:28), a far cry from the picture at which we have been looking. So here, embedded in the situation, were the upright and crossbar of passion of which we spoke in the introduction to this paper. By challenging, rising above, using—to say nothing of being defeated by—the conditions of the day, in spite of personal cost, the whole Society then, as ever since, is incorporated effectively into Christ's mission. She asked each one of us in one version of the rule "...to be happy to toil and to die...exhausting all her potentialities." (Rule 1864, art. 2) Is this not an

alternative way of summoning us to make up "...that which is wanting in the passion of Jesus Christ"?

FOOTNOTES

1. N.B. Ferris, "An American Diplomat Confronts Victorian Society," *History Today*, August 1965, p. 555.
2. *Sesame and Lilies* by John Ruskin, "Of Queen's Gardens." Lecture delivered 1864.
3. *The Scholastic Weekley Gazette*, March 25, 1865, advertisement page.
4. *Correspondence Between a Mother and Her Daughter at School* by Mrs. Taylor and Jane Taylor, 1817, p. 55.
5. *The Athenaeum*, May 6, 1848.
6. *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, June 1845, p. 703: "An Inquiry into the State of Girls' Fashionable Schools".
7. *The Scholastic Quarterly Review*, April 1844, p. 240: "The Principles of Education Practically Considered" by M.A. Stodart.
8. *The Educational Magazine*, January 1835.
9. Josephine Kamm, *Hope Deferred*, 1965, p. 150.
10. *Fraser's*, June 1895, p. 706.
11. *Reports Issued by the Schools Inquiry Commission on the Education of Girls*, with extracts from the evidence and a preface by D. Beale, 1869 (referred to henceforward in this paper as S.I.C. Beale), p. 23, Mr. Fitch's report.
12. *Daughters of England* by Mrs. William Ellis, London, 1842, p. 160.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 161.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 129.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 162.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
18. *The Educational Magazine*, December 1835, p. 447.
19. From an Address to the Society of Arts, quoted in *The English Miss* by A.C. Percival, 1939, p. 77.
20. *Fraser's*, June 1845, p. 703.
21. *Punch*, March 19, 1870.
22. See above, note 11.
23. S.I.C. Beale. Mr. Stanton's report, p. 110, and Mr. Fitch's report, p. 22.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
35. Review in *The Critic*, February, 1847, No. 116, of "History of Rome" by Julia Corner, 1847.
36. S.I.C. Beale, p. 59.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 138-139.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 224.
40. *The Guide to Knowledge*, ed. W. Pinnock. Weekly periodical issued 1832. Collected in 2 vols. July 1832 to July 1835.
41. *Ibid.*, "The Advantages of Education", July 7, 1832.
42. S.I.C. Beale, pp. 37,54,143.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 143.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 143.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
50. *The London Scholastic Journal*, January 1, 1840: "Systems of Mnemomics", p. 122.
51. Advertisement in *The School and the Teacher*, April 1854.
52. *Memories for the Million* by William Hill, 1875 p. 27.
53. S.I.C. Beale, p. 52.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 103 and p. 6.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 200.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
64. *Autobiography of Frances Power Cobbe*, 1894, pp. 60-71.

THE POOR SCHOOLS IN PRESTON

● Sr. M. Andrew Armour, SHCJ

"Preston stands next, a corporate mayor town. The people are gay here, though not perhaps the richer for that; but it has, on that account, obtained the name of 'Proud Preston'."

Daniel Defoe's *Tour*

(Quoted in Hewitson's *History of Preston*)

In 1848 when Mother Connelly and her community were leaving their first home in Derby, two invitations were sent to them—one to go to the "beautiful schools and small convent in Preston," and one to go to St. Leonard's. According to a letter from Emily Bowles to Dr. Newman, both Bishop Wiseman and the chaplain, Dr. Asperti, preferred St. Leonard's, so it was decided that the nuns should go there. But Preston was not forgotten and Mother Connelly wrote at the end of 1852 to the Jesuit Provincial, Father Etheridge, whose priests had built the Preston schools, offering to send some nuns. The Provincial consulted Bishop Grant asking if he could recommend the Holy Child nuns for the work. The Bishop's reply must have been satisfactory for by the 7th February Father Walmsley, S.J., of St. Wilfrid's parish, Preston, was sending details of buildings, salaries, etc., to St. Leonard's, and on the 11th he wrote: "We shall be glad for your community to come at once. The sooner the better. We are quite ready to begin."

And so on the 15th February, 1853, five Holy Child nuns arrived in Preston to begin an apostolate which is still being carried on in the Preston schools today. Their leader was Mother Lucy Woolley, one of Mother Connelly's first companions, and as far as one can judge from the meagre records, the others were Sister Lucy Ignatia Payne, Sister Martha Wilkinson, "who was good at dentistry", Sister Francis Regis Sage, who was still a novice, and Sister Maria Cottam. The last four were in their early twenties. They were dressed as seculars for there was still anti-catholic feeling in England, and on their heads they wore light grey silk bonnets and veils. But these did not last long in the grimy atmosphere of the cotton mills and in 1854 they were exchanged for a large black poke bonnet with a long crêpe or gauze veil—a warm and comfortable though hideous headress which some of the nuns were loath to give up when full religious dress was introduced later on.

By 1853 Preston had become one of the large cotton towns of Lancashire. Eighty-seven mills, some large, some small, in and around the town, provided work for a large proportion of its 72,250 inhabitants.