

Encounters in the English Juvenile Periodical Press:  
The Reader-Responses of Boys and Girls, c. 1855-1900

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## ABSTRACT

This purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the role played by the English juvenile periodical press in the socialisation of boys and girls during the second half of the nineteenth century. Although scholars have long been familiar with the idea that juvenile periodicals were agents of socialisation, there has been little critical discussion about how readers responded to their magazines. Scholars usually attempt to discern the socialising messages that juvenile periodicals transmitted to young people by examining the texts rather than the response of the reader. The problem with this approach is that there is a danger of assuming that intended messages were absorbed without question by a passive readership. The relationship between reading and socialisation has thus been misunderstood and requires reassessment.

This dissertation not only broadens the scope of the field of periodical studies, but also the wider history of juvenile reading. The difficulty of locating historical evidence of reader response has frustrated researchers since the mid-twentieth century. Despite recent breakthroughs in the field of book history, the responses of young people have largely remained elusive because they were often ephemeral and have rarely been preserved in historical archives. This dissertation, however, demonstrates that a study of “encounters” in the juvenile periodical press can offer mediated glimpses into reader response. Developing the work of Laurel Brake and Julie Codell, it considers how boys and girls were invited to become active participants in periodical culture through correspondence columns, prize competitions, and club pages. In doing so, the thesis sheds important new light on the following research questions: how did readers respond to socialising messages about informal education and self-improvement; how did juvenile periodicals prepare boys and girls for employment; and how successful were the editors of juvenile periodicals in moulding their readers’ understanding of recreation from a young age?

This study of encounters in the juvenile periodical press complicates our understanding of socialisation in two ways. First, it challenges the assumption that young people were passive recipients of adult teaching. Rather, it suggests that socialisation should be understood as a dialogue between editors who were eager to mould the values and behaviours of the rising generation, and readers who consulted magazines for advice and entertainment. Although the editors of juvenile periodicals often had their own agendas, boys and girls were consumers whose needs and desires were influential in shaping the content of magazines. Second, a study of encounters reveals that while some readers conformed to editorial expectations, others resisted or ignored attempts at socialisation. Thus, this dissertation argues that the relationship between reading and socialisation was more complex than scholars have traditionally assumed.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

### Juvenile Periodicals

*AJM: Aunt Judy's Magazine*

*BOE: Boys of England*

*BOM: Boy's Own Magazine*

*BOP: Boy's Own Paper*

*GOP: Girl's Own Paper*

*GWY: Good Words for the Young*

*KW: Kind Words for Boys and Girls*

*LF: Little Folks*

*YE: Young England*

*YF: Young Folks*

### Club Pages

ASRU: Atalanta Scholarship and Reading Union

BOEFA: Boys of England Football Association

VRC: Victoria Reading Circle

### Publishers

NPC: Newsagents' Publishing Company

RTS: Religious Tract Society

SSU: Sunday School Union

### Organisations

CBP: College by Post

CSIC: Cambridge System of Instruction by Correspondence

CWEU: Christian Women's Education Union

EIO: Emigrants' Information Office

### General

*HIPPO: History in the Periodical Press Online*

*NCUKP: Nineteenth Century UK Periodicals*

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# INTRODUCTION

That ‘the youth of a nation are the trustees of posterity’ is an axiom universally admitted, but in rare instances only the occasion of any practical result. It is a truth as old as the human race, and as plain as that two and two make four; but we are for the most part content to acknowledge the truth without troubling ourselves about the responsibility involved. This is not how it should be; the upbringing generation is the hope of the world; it is ours to mould their characters, it is theirs to make the world what it is to be... Then surely it is a lofty, ay, and a holy office to talk to boys – to write for boys – to instruct and amuse the fathers of our future race.<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

The launch of Samuel Orchart Beeton’s *Boy’s Own Magazine* in January 1855 was a watershed moment for the juvenile periodical press in England. Although juvenile periodicals were in circulation as early as 1751, Beeton was the first publisher to cater specifically to boys transitioning into manhood.<sup>2</sup> Beeton’s belief that writers of “lads’ literature” had a social responsibility to instruct and amuse the “upspringing generation” responded to growing concerns about male youth and popular culture. As John Springhall and others have demonstrated, the nineteenth century witnessed a series of ‘moral panics’ surrounding the emergence of new forms of commercial entertainment.<sup>3</sup> In particular, there was concern that

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<sup>1</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 February 1867), p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> J. Grey, ‘The Lilliputian Magazine – A Pioneering Periodical?’, *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 2.2 (1970), pp. 107-115; W. Noblett, ‘John Newbery: Publisher Extraordinary’, *History Today*, 22.4 (1972), pp. 265-271; J. Dawson, ‘Trade and Plumb-Cake in Lilliput: The Origins of Juvenile Consumerism and Early English Children’s Periodicals’, *Children’s Literature in Education*, 29.4 (1998), pp. 175-198.

<sup>3</sup> J. Springhall, *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics: Penny Gaffs to Gangsta-Rap, 1830-1996* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998); E. Yeo, ‘The Boy is the Father of the Man’: Moral Panic Over Working-Class Youth, 1850 to the Present’, *Labour History Review*, 69.2 (2004), pp. 187-199. For further reading on the concept of ‘moral panics’, see: S. Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Routledge, 2002).

cheap and licentious publications, such as ‘penny bloods’ and ‘penny dreadfuls’, were corrupting the supposedly innocent and susceptible minds of boys. While the epigraph above speaks solely of boys, the late nineteenth century was also marked by growing concern about the deleterious effects that popular romance serials were alleged to have upon “the future wives and mothers” of the “great race”.<sup>4</sup> As the ‘moral panic’ surrounding juvenile literature escalated, respectable publishers responded by issuing boys’ papers which sought to morally improve their readers. For example, Edwin Brett’s *Boys of England* sought to “cultivate true manliness of mind and body”, whereas the Religious Tract Society’s *Boy’s Own Paper* aimed to supply “wholesome, elevated reading”.<sup>5</sup> Towards the end of the century, publishers also began to issue magazines for the improvement of girls. Two notable examples include the RTS’s *Girl’s Own Paper*, which was intended to train girls “for the responsibilities of womanhood and for a heavenly home”, and Hatchards’s *Atalanta*, which was designed to prepare “the English girl of the upper classes” for higher education and remunerative employment.<sup>6</sup>

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the role played by the English juvenile periodical press in the socialisation of boys and girls during the second half of the nineteenth century. Sociologists define the term ‘socialisation’ as “the process by which we learn to become members of society, both by internalising the norms and values of society, and also by learning to perform our social roles”.<sup>7</sup> Scholars in the field of periodical studies have long been familiar with the idea that magazines are agents of socialisation. Writing in the 1980s,

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<sup>4</sup> *Nineteenth Century Magazine* (1886), pp. 526.

<sup>5</sup> *Boys of England* (24 November 1866), p. 16; *Daily Gazette* (6 March 1879), p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Leisure Hour* (6 December 1879), p. 772; *Pall Mall Gazette* (12 November 1889), pp. 1-2.

<sup>7</sup> J. Scott and G. Marshall, *A Dictionary of Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), <https://www-oxfordreference-com.liverpool.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/acref/9780199533008.001.0001/acref-9780199533008-e-2182> [accessed 7 July 2019].

Marjory Lang proposed that nineteenth-century juvenile periodicals drew young people “into an ongoing cycle of indoctrination”.<sup>8</sup> To support this contention, Lang argues that serialised stories printed in juvenile periodicals “purveyed orthodox attitudes to children, the family, and society which were designed to explain and justify to the rising generation the beliefs and values that sustained the prevailing social order”.<sup>9</sup> Along similar lines, Jenny Holt observes that “periodicals written for adolescents by adults attempted to foster conservative norms of class and gender, as well as promoting educational obedience”.<sup>10</sup> A more recent iteration of this argument appears in Stephanie Olsen’s study of informal education and enculturation in Britain between 1880-1914. According to Olsen, the fictional stories and instructive articles which appeared in boys’ papers “contained many lessons that would be useful to boys in their future roles as husbands and fathers”.<sup>11</sup>

Although a considerable amount of scholarship has been published on the juvenile periodical press, this dissertation argues that the socialising function of magazines has been misunderstood because scholars have paid inadequate attention to reader response. The extent of this problem has recently been highlighted by Christopher Banham who observes that “the existing historiography of boys' weeklies has tended to neglect reader response...Indeed, few historians have examined the issue at all”.<sup>12</sup> Banham attributes the neglect of reader response to scholars focusing “too closely upon the literature itself, and not closely enough upon its

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<sup>8</sup> M. Lang, ‘Scenes from Small Worlds: The Child, The Family and Society in Selected Children’s Periodicals of the 1870s’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Leicester, 1980), p. 31.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. v.

<sup>10</sup> J. Holt, ‘The Textual Formations of Adolescence in Turn-of-the-Century Youth Periodicals: The Boy’s Own Paper and Eton College Ephemeral Magazines’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 35.1 (2002), p. 84.

<sup>11</sup> S. Olsen, *Juvenile Nation: Youth, Emotions and the Making of the Modern British Citizen, 1880-1914* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 11.

<sup>12</sup> C. Banham, ‘Boys of England and Edwin J. Brett, 1866-99’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Leeds, 2006), pp. 12-13.

effects”.<sup>13</sup> This argument builds on recent insights from the field of book history. For example, Jonathan Rose observes that many “critics repeatedly commit what might be called the receptive fallacy: they try to discern the messages a text transmits to an audience by examining the texts rather than the audience”.<sup>14</sup> Along similar lines, the late Stephen Colclough argued that it is important to consider how “readers were free to ignore or misread the protocols that authors and publishers hoped would direct them”.<sup>15</sup> Thus, studies of juvenile periodicals which neglect the response of the audience often assume the socialising messages that magazines wished to transmit to young people were absorbed without question by a passive readership.

The neglect of reader response in much of the existing scholarship on the juvenile periodical press means that it is worth reconsidering how socialising messages were received by boys and girls. Recent preliminary studies in this area have been strongly suggestive. For example, Troy Boone’s *Youth of Darkest England* has made a vital contribution to the long running ‘popular imperialism’ debate by highlighting the importance of studying reception. The editors of juvenile periodicals have traditionally been depicted as social imperialists who insidiously used their publications to inculcate patriotic and imperialistic sentiments into the minds of young readers.<sup>16</sup> As noted by Boone, however, young people may have filtered out the intended messages of social imperialists and reformers:

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>14</sup> J. Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (London: Yale University Press, 2002), p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> S. Colclough, *Consuming Texts: Readers and Reading Communities, 1695-1870* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 13.

<sup>16</sup> J. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 198-226; J. Bratton, ‘Of England, Home and Duty: The Image of England in Victorian and Edwardian Juvenile Fiction’, in J. MacKenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), pp. 73-93; P. Dunae, ‘New Grub Street for Boys’, in J. Richards (ed.), *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp. 1-11; R. MacDonald, ‘Reproducing the Middle-Class Boys: From Purity to Patriotism in the Boys’ Magazines, 1892-1914’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 24.3 (1989), pp. 519-39; J. Bristow, *Empire Boys:*

By assuming that social imperialists (and the texts they wrote) achieved their desired goal, the critic posits an equivalence between the intent of the author and the effect on the audience, flattens out the history of a text's reception, and fails to register any audience resistance to the author's intent.<sup>17</sup>

While Boone focuses solely on what the reception of magazines can contribute to long-running scholarly debates about 'popular imperialism', it leaves broader questions unanswered about the efficacy with which juvenile periodicals transmitted socialising messages to boys and girls. This dissertation picks up these issues, asking how did readers respond to socialising messages about informal education and self-improvement; how did juvenile periodicals prepare boys and girls for employment; and how successful were the editors of juvenile periodicals in moulding their readers' understanding of recreation from a young age? These research questions are significant not only because they are central to historiographical debates about education, work, and leisure in nineteenth-century Britain, but also because they have broader implications for the history of juvenile reading. Before going any further, it is therefore necessary to explain what is understood by the term 'juvenile' in the context of the nineteenth-century periodical market.

### Defining the Juvenile Reader

This dissertation focuses on periodicals which were marketed as being suitable for juvenile readers. It is, however, important to acknowledge that age-related terms such as 'juvenile' are notoriously imprecise social markers. As recent scholarship has begun to acknowledge, 'age'

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*Adventures in a Man's World* (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991), pp. 4-52; K. Castle, *Britannia's Children: Reading Colonialism Through Children's Books and Magazines* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

<sup>17</sup> T. Boone, *Youth of Darkest England: Working-Class Children at the Heart of Victorian Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 7. For a more recent iteration of this argument, see: M. Smith, *Empire in British Girls' Literature and Culture: Imperial Girls, 1880-1915* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 5.

is a complex category of historical analysis encompassing various socially constructed life stages, as well as differences based on gender, ethnicity, and social class. This explains why historians often disagree on the boundaries of childhood and adulthood.<sup>18</sup> As noted by Springhall, “imprecision about boundaries and definitions can, nonetheless, create confusion for the reader when the historian selects his own version of what was ‘real’ in the past”.<sup>19</sup> Thus, it is necessary for this thesis to situate the ‘juvenile’ reader within the context of nineteenth-century constructions of age.

Although historians often disagree about definitions and age boundaries, there is a consensus that the transition from childhood to adulthood became protracted and more complex as young people were increasingly subjected to the bureaucratic influence of the state. The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the introduction of formal elementary schooling,<sup>20</sup> the implementation of greater restrictions on specific forms of juvenile labour,<sup>21</sup> and changing attitudes towards the social welfare of young people.<sup>22</sup> Broadly speaking, these

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<sup>18</sup> For scholarly debates on the problems of defining age-related terms, see: L. Jordanova, ‘Children in History: Concepts of Nature and Society’, in G. Scarre (ed.), *Children, Parents and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 3-24; A. Davin, ‘What is a Child?’, in A. Fletcher and S. Hussey (eds), *Childhood in Question: Children, Parents and the State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 15-36; S. Mintz, ‘Reflections on Age as a Category of Historical Analysis’, *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*, 1.1 (2008), pp. 91-94; S. Sleight and S. Robinson, ‘Introduction: The World in Miniature’, in S. Sleight and S. Robinson (eds), *Children, Childhood and Youth in the British World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 1-23.

<sup>19</sup> J. Springhall, *Coming of Age: Adolescence in Britain, 1860-1960* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1986), p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> G. Frost, *Victorian Childhoods* (London: Praeger, 2009), pp. 34-54; P. Horn, ‘English Elementary Education and the Growth of the Imperial Ideal: 1880-1914’, in J. Mangan (ed.), *Benefits Bestowed?: Education and British Imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 39-55.

<sup>21</sup> E. Hopkins, *Childhood Transformed: Working-Class Children in Nineteenth-Century England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 23; *A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), pp. 121-144; C. Heywood, ‘Children’s Work in Countryside and City’, in P. Fass (ed.), *The Routledge History of Childhood in the Western World* (New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 125-141.

<sup>22</sup> H. Hendrick, *Child Welfare: England, 1872-1989* (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 36-75; L. Murdoch, *Imagined Orphans: Poor Families, Child Welfare, and Contested Citizenship in London* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2006).

changes were responsible for lengthening the period for which young people were deemed to be dependent upon adults and their institutions. As noted by Anna Davin, however, it is important to recognise that “the upper limit of childhood varied with context, and rose unevenly in the second half of the century”.<sup>23</sup> To illustrate this point, Davin highlights how children from working-class families often inhabited spaces typically reserved for middle-class adult life:

The overall pattern of change in these decades is clear. Ideologically, the view of childhood as a period of dependence and subordination gained ground across the classes, though its expected duration was still longest among the rich and shortest among the poor.<sup>24</sup>

Nonetheless, the general trend towards prolonging the transition between childhood and adulthood is significant because it opened a new stage in the life-cycle in which young people were treated differently from children but were not yet recognised as adults. From the perspective of the twenty-first century, this transitional stage of life is occupied by the ‘adolescent’ or ‘teenager’. These terms are, however, problematic because they are anachronistic when used in the context of the nineteenth century. Granville Stanley Hall, an American psychologist and educator, is often credited for the ‘invention’ of adolescence as a distinct stage of child development in 1904.<sup>25</sup> As Simon Sleight and Shirleene Robinson explain, this means that “until the close of the nineteenth century, social commentators lacked a psycho-sexual conceptualization of adolescence, with the category of ‘the teenager’ yet to

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<sup>23</sup> A. Davin, *Growing Up Poor; Home, School and Street in London, 1870-1914* (London: Rivers Oram Press, 1996), p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> P. Spacks, *The Adolescent Idea: Myths of Youth and the Adult Imagination* (London Faber, 1982), p. 228; J. Arnett, ‘G. Stanley Hall’s Adolescence: Brilliance and Nonsense’, *History of Psychology*, 9.3 (2006), pp. 186-197; S. Mintz, ‘Why the History of Childhood Matters’, *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*, 5.1 (2012), pp. 20-21.

be conjured”.<sup>26</sup> While nineteenth-century social commentators lacked Hall’s vocabulary, Springhall makes the astute observation that “‘youth’ was, in effect, the word usually employed before 1900 to denote how the years between childhood and adulthood were different from the years around them”.<sup>27</sup> The “discovery” of youth is often linked to the reforms of England’s public schools. The practice of families from the upper and middle classes sending their sons to boarding schools to prepare them for independent life opened a new transitional period in which they were separated from younger children and the world of adults.<sup>28</sup> The term was also used pejoratively by social commentators to refer to inner-city working-class boys who were identified as a social problem due to their autonomy and were a source of middle-class anxiety about street violence and delinquency.<sup>29</sup>

Although historians have long acknowledged the existence of youth as a distinctive life stage between childhood and adulthood, a major limitation of much of the early scholarship is that boys’ experiences of growing up were presented as normative. As noted by Melanie Tebbutt, “girls and young women were largely marginalised in the history of youth and youth studies until the 1970s and 1980s”.<sup>30</sup> In recent decades, a rapidly growing body of literature on the history of ‘girlhood’ has aimed to correct this historiographical deficit by investigating how girls’ experiences of growing up were shaped by nineteenth-century ideas about gender

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<sup>26</sup> Sleight and Robinson, ‘The World in Miniature’, p. 7.

<sup>27</sup> Springhall, *Coming of Age*, p. 7.

<sup>28</sup> J. Gillis, *Youth and History: Tradition and Change in European Age Relations, 1770-Present* (New York: Academic Press, 1974), p. 105; J. Holt, *Public School Literature, Civic Education and the Politics of Male Adolescence* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 15-58; C. Bossche, ‘Moving Out: Adolescence’, in H. Tucker (ed.), *A New Companion to Victorian Literature and Culture* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), pp. 84-85.

<sup>29</sup> H. Hendrick, *Images of Youth: Age, Class, and the Male Youth Problem, 1880-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) pp. 52-83, 120-154; M. Hilton, ‘Tabs, Fags’ and the Boy Labour Problem in Late Victorian and Edwardian England’, *Journal of Social History*, 28.3 (1995), pp. 587-607.

<sup>30</sup> M. Tebbutt, *Making Youth: A History of Youth in Modern Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2016), p. 5.



roles.<sup>31</sup> A key finding to emerge from this body of scholarship is that ‘girlhood’ was a more elastic category than ‘boyhood’ during the nineteenth century. This can be attributed to two factors. First, girls were perceived to need protection for longer than boys. Amendments to the law often focused on girls due to moral concerns about ‘fallen’ women. The Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885 raised the age of heterosexual consent for girls from thirteen to sixteen following William Thomas Stead’s investigations into child prostitution which were published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.<sup>32</sup> As noted by Victoria Bates, boys were to remain “protected under ‘indecent assault’ law and were implicitly protected up to the age of 14 in sodomy cases as the law considered them to be impotent, ‘passive’ participants in sexual acts before this age”. Along similar lines, the Prevention of Cruelty to, and Protection of, Children Act 1889 defined a child as being a boy under the age of fourteen years, or being a girl under the age of sixteen years.<sup>33</sup>

Second, a girl required her father’s permission to marry and dispose of her own property until she was twenty-one. Daughters were thought of as their father’s property until they were ‘given away’ to their husbands at a marriage ceremony. While middle-class boys were considered to have “come of age” when they crossed into the ‘adult’ worlds of university or

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<sup>31</sup> Sally Mitchell’s *The New Girl* is widely recognised as the landmark text in the field of girlhood studies. Mitchell proposed that the girlhood emerged as “a separate stage of existence with its own values and interests” between 1880 and 1915. Mitchell’s study has inspired researchers to investigate how girlhood was constructed and represented in conduct manuals, diet books, photographs, paintings, novels, and significantly, periodicals. For further reading, see: S. Mitchell, *The New Girl: Girls’ Culture in England, 1880-1915* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); S. Bilston, *The Awkward Age in Women’s Popular Fiction, 1850-1900: Girls and the Transition to Womanhood* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2004); Smith, *Imperial Girls*, pp. 60-83; B. Rodgers, *Adolescent Girlhood and Literary Culture at the Fin de Siècle: Daughters of Today* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

<sup>32</sup> D. Gorham, ‘The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon Re-Examined: Child Prostitution and the Idea of Childhood in Late-Victorian England’, *Victorian Studies*, 21.3 (1978), pp. 353-379; J. Weeks, *Sex, Politics, and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality Since 1800* (London: Longman, 1989), pp. 81-95; F. Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities: Medico-Moral Politics in England Since 1830* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), pp. 98-101.

<sup>33</sup> V. Bates, *Sexual Forensics in Victorian and Edwardian England: Age, Crime and Consent in the Courts* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 14.

work, their sisters were expected to stay at home and would often remain as ‘girls’ until they married. As noted by Sally Mitchell, “girlhood, in its archetypal form, is bounded on each side by home: by parental home on the one side, by marital home on the other. In the space between the two family homes...the new girl has degree of independence”.<sup>34</sup> Acknowledging the elasticity of girlhood is important because it explains why it is difficult to place an age limit on who was classified as a girl. Lynne Vallone and Claudia Nelson explicate this point nicely:

Depending not only upon her age but also upon her class, educational attainments, and marital or biological status, a ‘girl’ might be what Charlotte Yonge termed a ‘homme daughter’ in her early twenties, a wife and mother aged seventeen, or a self-supporting member of the workforce at twelve.<sup>35</sup>

Given that age-based categories (and indeed gender-based categories) are socially constructed and historically contingent, it is not surprising that historians often disagree on the cut-off point for defining the boundaries of childhood and adulthood. For the purposes of this study, we will be led primarily by the source material, both in terms of the intentions of periodical editors and in how the material was used by readers. Edward Salmon’s influential study of *Juvenile Literature as It Is* (1888) provides a convenient starting point for defining the juvenile reader. According to Salmon, the juvenile periodicals which will be examined in this dissertation were intended for boys and girls between the ages of ten to twenty. This observation is corroborated by the age-restrictions which the editors of juvenile periodicals placed on their competitions. For example, the following instruction was given to readers of the *Boy’s Own Magazine* who wished to participate in an essay writing competition in 1855:

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<sup>34</sup> Mitchell, *The New Girl*, p. 9.

<sup>35</sup> L. Vallone and C. Nelson, ‘Introduction’, in C. Nelson and L. Vallone (eds), *The Girl’s Own: Cultural Histories of the Anglo-American Girl, 1830-1915* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), p. 3.

“Being obliged to define ‘a boy’ in such a case, we set the age of sixteen as the boundary, only to be overstretched in a case of extraordinary excellence”.<sup>36</sup>

While regulating competitions required the editors of juvenile periodicals to define the ideal readerships of their magazines, it is important to recognise that age restrictions on reader participation were not static and often changed over time. There is evidence to suggest that editors adapted the content of their magazines to allow readers to continue participating in competitions as they grew older. For example, the editor of Cassell’s *Little Folks* informed participants in the “history wanting words” competition in 1871 to include their age on their submissions “as we don’t reckon little folks much above twelve”.<sup>37</sup> This restriction on reader participation was gradually relaxed and by the 1880s readers up to the age of seventeen were permitted to participate in certain competitions.<sup>38</sup> Along similar lines, it is sometimes possible to identify generational cohorts of readers who formed communal bonds and matured with their magazines. This point is nicely illustrated by *Young Folks*’s competitions which offered advice and encouragement to a generation of aspiring writers who were desirous of improving their literary abilities. As shall be discussed in Chapter Two, some of the competitors were in their early teens when the “Literary Festivals” commenced in 1877 and remained active members until 1885. This evidence of magazines accommodating the needs of ageing consumers explains why some of the ‘juvenile’ readers discussed in this dissertation were in their early twenties. Thus, having defined the juvenile reader, this dissertation will now consider the difficulties that historians have encountered when attempting to recover the reading experiences of young people.

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<sup>36</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 November 1885), p. 349.

<sup>37</sup> *Little Folks* (1871), p. 46.

<sup>38</sup> *Little Folks* (1 February 1882), p. 119.

## Historiographical Review: Toward A History of Juvenile Readers

The central argument of this dissertation is that it is impossible to understand the socialising function of nineteenth-century juvenile periodicals without considering how ‘improving’ messages were transmitted and received by boys and girls. As Simon Eliot suggests, however, this kind of scholarly investigation is challenging because the evidence for the history of reading is often fragmentary and reliant upon serendipitous discoveries:

You cannot simply take on a PhD student and ask him or her to ‘go out and study the history of reading’. Quite legitimately, your student would respond by saying ‘But where?’ ...The truth is that, although not exclusively so, the evidence for reading is obscure, hidden, scattered and fragmentary. Its discovery is often a matter of serendipity.<sup>39</sup>

The difficulty of locating historical evidence of readers’ responses to books and periodicals has frustrated researchers since the mid-twentieth century. The problem was first encountered by Richard Altick in *The English Common Reader*, whose seminal study of the social and cultural history of the nineteenth-century mass reading public remains an important touchstone for scholars in the field of Victorian print culture.<sup>40</sup> As noted in the foreword to the second edition, “Altick emphatically disclaimed any attempt to explore reading tastes or readers' responses, if only because the documents for such a study were mostly unknown to

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<sup>39</sup> S. Eliot, ‘The Reading Experience Database; or, What Are We to Do About the History of Reading?’, <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED/redback.htm> [accessed 7 July 2019].

<sup>40</sup> For further reading on the legacy of Richard Altick’s research, see: T. Gerrard, ‘Unearthing the English Common Reader: Working Class Reading Habits, England, 1850-1914’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Luton, 2004); J. Rose, ‘Altick’s Map: The New Historiography of the Common Reader’, in R. Crone, and S. Towheed, (eds), *The History of Reading, Volume 3: Methods, Strategies, Tactics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 15-26; E. Palmer and A. Buckland, ‘Introduction’, in E. Palmer and A. Buckland (eds), *A Return to the Common Reader* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 1-6.

scholars in 1957”.<sup>41</sup> The dearth of primary sources available to Altick and his contemporaries explains why the history of reading has traditionally relied upon statistical evidence derived from sources such as government reports on literacy rates, library catalogues and borrowing records, and publishers’ estimates of circulation figures.<sup>42</sup> Scholars in the field of periodical studies have often used these sources to stand as a proxy to the much more informal, incomplete, and anecdotal records of reader response. For example, Kirsten Drotner’s study of interwar girls’ papers proposes that magazines are “excellent seismographs” of readers’ taste as “an unwelcome change in characters or an unexpected development of events may immediately be registered by a sudden drop in circulation figures”.<sup>43</sup> This dissertation, however, argues that nineteenth-century circulation figures are an unreliable indicator of reader response for two reasons.

The first problem with circulation figures is that they are notoriously difficult to calculate for nineteenth-century periodicals. The editors of juvenile periodicals often boasted about large sales and the popularity of their magazines, yet it is often impossible to verify these claims because few archives have preserved valuable information relevant to the publishing histories of juvenile periodicals such as production ledgers, account books, and the minutes of editorial and business meetings. As noted by Graham Law, the scarcity of publishing information can be attributed to records being “frequently lost during removal, change of ownership, closure or negligence; they are often destroyed to save space and upkeep, or through lack of

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<sup>41</sup> R. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998).

<sup>42</sup> A. Ellegård, *The Readership of the Periodical Press in Mid-Victorian Britain* (Göteborg: Göteborg Universitet, 1957); R. Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of Working-Class Life with Special Reference to Publications and Entertainments* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957).

<sup>43</sup> K. Drotner, ‘Schoolgirls, Madcaps, and Air Aces: English Girls and Their Magazine Reading between the Wars’, *Feminist Studies*, 9.1 (1983), p. 34.

appreciation of their value”.<sup>44</sup> An excellent example of this point is how a fire at the RTS’s headquarters in Paternoster Row destroyed most of the organisation’s archives during the London Blitz.<sup>45</sup> Consequently, researchers are often reliant upon claims made by the editors of juvenile periodicals which may have been inflated for the purpose of “self-puffing”. As Joel Wiener explains in his study of nineteenth-century newspapers:

Until the 1890s, sales figures for newspapers were not audited or certified. Therefore, much of the conjecture about the readership of Victorian newspapers cannot be definitively resolved...Papers frequently made exaggerated claims about their circulation: understandably so, since the financial prizes were considerable – profitable advertising, perhaps even survival if a ‘bandwagon’ effect could be created.<sup>46</sup>

The second problem with publication and sales figures is that they are unable to tell us much about the informal circulation of juvenile periodicals, which is estimated to have remained high until around the turn of the twentieth century. There is a widespread assumption in the existing secondary literature on nineteenth-century boys’ papers that on average each copy was shared by at least two to three readers every week due to second-hand sales, swapping,

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<sup>44</sup> G. Law, ‘Archives’, in L. Brake and M. Demoor (eds), *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: The British Library, 2009), p. 23.

<sup>45</sup> Although large portions of the Religious Tract Society’s archives were destroyed, some publishing records have survived. During the 1970s, Patrick Dunae conducted research on the *Boy’s Own Paper* by accessing the “badly charred and crisp with age” records housed at the United Society for Christian Literature. This collection was later relocated to the Special Collections of the School of Oriental and Asian Studies Library, University of London. Regrettably, there are significant gaps in this collection and little original correspondence has survived. For further reading on this collection, see: P. Dunae, ‘Boy’s Own Paper: Origins and Editorial Policies’, *The Private Library*, 9.4 (1976), pp. 123-158; J. McAleer, *Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain, 1914-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 205-243; E. Penner, ‘Masculinity, Morality, and National Identity in the Boy’s Own Paper, 1879-1913’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, De Montfort University, 2016), pp. 15-16.

<sup>46</sup> J. Wiener, ‘Sources for the Study of Newspapers’, in L. Brake, A. Jones, and L. Madden (eds), *Investigating Victorian Journalism* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990), pp. 158-159.

and library lending.<sup>47</sup> This contention is supported by Jack Cox, the last editor of the *Boy's Own Paper* between 1946 and 1967, who observes that early numbers of the magazine were often “read and re-read, passed from hand to hand, loaned out and seized back, until it was grubby and falling apart”.<sup>48</sup> There were a variety of ways in which a juvenile periodical could be acquired, and the mode of acquisition is likely to have influenced the response of the reader. As Gretchen Galbraith has demonstrated in her study of Victorian childhood, adult relatives often bought magazine subscriptions as gifts, rewards for good behaviour, or to maintain familial ties with children living abroad.<sup>49</sup> As we shall see in Chapter One, juvenile periodicals were also distributed by religious organisations such as the Sunday School Union as rewards for good attendance and conduct, charitable work, or knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. The purpose of these rewards was not to please the recipients, but to bind them to the organisation that awarded the prize.<sup>50</sup> Publishers also attempted to extend the social reach of their magazines by donating copies to public libraries, youth clubs, and philanthropic institutions. Thus, while circulation figures can offer a general sense of which juvenile periodicals were influential, statistics provide a limited insight into modes of acquisition and consumption.

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<sup>47</sup> For further reading on the informal circulation of boys' papers, see: Dunae, 'New Grub Street for Boys', pp. 26-27; Boone, *Darkest England*, pp. 71-72; K. Carpenter, *Penny Dreadfuls and Comics: English Periodicals for Children from Victorian Times to Present Day* (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1983), p. 6; J. Springhall, 'Disseminating Impure Literature: The Penny Dreadful Publishing Business Since 1860', *Economic History Review*, 47.3 (1994), p. 575.

<sup>48</sup> J. Cox, *Take a Cold Tub, Sir! The Story of the Boy's Own Paper* (Guildford: Lutterworth Press, 1982), p. 22.

<sup>49</sup> G. Galbraith, *Reading Lives: Reconstructing Childhood Books and Schools in Britain, 1870-1920* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), p. 58.

<sup>50</sup> K. Reynolds, 'Rewarding Reads? Giving, Receiving and Resisting Evangelical Reward and Prize Books', in J. Briggs, D. Butts, and M. Grenby (eds), *Popular Children's Literature in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 189-207. For further reading on the practice of religious organisations rewarding children with books, see: D. Entwistle, 'Embossed Gilt and Moral Tales: Reward Books in English Sunday Schools', *Journal of Popular Culture*, 28.1 (1994), pp. 81-96; J. McColl, 'Imagining the Missionary Hero: Juvenile Missionary Biographies, c. 1870-1917' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Liverpool, 2017), pp. 84-87.

Since the 1970s, empirical studies have been complemented by more text focused and theoretically framed approaches to the history of reading. In particular, two related schools of thought have commanded a considerable amount of scholarly attention: German reception theory and Anglo-American reader-response criticism. Although there are important differences within and between these schools of thought, there is a broad consensus that text is not a container of a stable objective meaning and that readers are producers of meaning. These branches of literary theory have provided researchers with a range of concepts for understanding the process of reading. For example, scholars have employed Hans Robert Jauss's concept of "horizon of expectation" to understand the network of assumptions that predetermine how a text will be approached and understood by theoretical readers.<sup>51</sup> Along similar lines, narratological and structuralist studies have attempted to discern the response of the "implied" or "ideal" reader embedded in the text.<sup>52</sup>

Although these concepts can tell us about the target audience of a juvenile periodical and reveal editorial assumptions about what was considered to be appropriate for boys and girls, theoretical readers cannot be made to stand in as a substitute for evidence of historical readers' responses. As Penny Tinkler has argued in her study of girls' magazines published in

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<sup>51</sup> H. Jauss and E. Benzinger, 'Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory', *New Literary History*, 2.1 (1970), pp. 7-37; H. Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception: Theory and History of Literature* (Brighton: Harvester, 1982). For further reading on how historians have reformulated Hans Robert Jauss's concept to consider the social, economic, cultural, and legal issues that affect the reading experience, see: W. St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); K. Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazine, 1751-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 4-10; A. Lundin, 'Victorian Horizons: The Reception of Children's Books in England and America, 1880-1900', *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy*, 64.1 (1994), pp. 30-59.

<sup>52</sup> Wolfgang Iser defines the "implied reader" as "a textual structure anticipating the presence of a recipient without necessarily defining him". According to Iser, the author of the text employs a range of response-inviting structures in order to convey a preferred meaning to the intended audience. The "implied reader" then responds to the familiar linguistic, rhetorical, and narrative conventions of the text. In the field of book history, the term is often used interchangeably with Jonathan Culler's concept of the "ideal reader". For further reading on these concepts, see: W. Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974); W. Iser, *The Act of Reading, A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1980), J. Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), pp. 123-124.



England between 1920 and 1950, it would be wrong to assume that periodicals attracted the readers they ostensibly targeted because “the intended and actual readership of these papers was not always synonymous”.<sup>53</sup> Readers sometimes self-identified in ways which might not necessarily fit the ideal audiences imagined by the publishers of magazines and this has significant implications for understanding how socialising messages were received. Rose explicates this point nicely:

But can we so neatly match up text and audience? Boys’ weeklies were also read by girls. Many women never read romances, and most women read much else besides. Children often read books far above their presumed level of comprehension...The only workable method is to consult the readers themselves, and let them explain how they made sense of it all.<sup>54</sup>

Since the 1980s, scholars in the field of book history have developed new methodological approaches and identified sources which have allowed them to make inroads into the question of reader response.<sup>55</sup> For example, historians have demonstrated that it is possible to uncover the reading experiences of individuals from their autobiographies and diaries.<sup>56</sup> Other studies

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<sup>53</sup> P. Tinkler, *Constructing Girlhood: Popular Magazines for Girls Growing Up in England, 1920-1950* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1995), p. 45.

<sup>54</sup> Rose, *Intellectual Life*, p. 367.

<sup>55</sup> For historiographical overviews of the field of book history, see: L. Price, ‘Reading: The State of the Discipline’, *Book History*, 7.1 (2004), pp. 303-320; R. Darnton, ‘What is the History of Books? Revisited’, *Modern Intellectual History*, 4.3 (2007), pp. 495-508; B. Gunzenhauser, ‘Introduction’, in B. Gunzenhauser (ed.), *Reading in History: New Methodologies from the Anglo-American Tradition* (London: Pickering & Chatto 2010), pp. 1-9.

<sup>56</sup> For studies which make use of autobiographies, see: D. Vincent, *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Working Class Autobiography* (London: Europa, 1981), pp. 109-195; J. Rose, ‘Rereading the English Common Reader: A Preface to a History of Audiences’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 53.1 (1992), pp. 50-68; K. Flint, *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 187-198; Gerrard, ‘Unearthing the English Common Reader’, pp. 39-70. For studies which make use of dairies, see: J. Brewer, ‘Reconstructing the Reader: Prescriptions, Texts and Strategies in Anna Larpent’s Reading’, in J. Raven, H. Small and N. Tadmor (eds), *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 226-245; A. Baggerman, ‘The Cultural Universe of a Dutch Child: Otto Van Eck and His Literature’, *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 31.1 (1997), pp. 129-134; S. Colclough, ‘Recovering the Reader: Commonplace Book and Diaries as Sources of Reading Experience’, *Publishing History*, 44.1

have made ingenious use of sources which are less canonical in historical research such as prison records and marginalia.<sup>57</sup> For the most part, however, sources documenting young people's responses to books and periodicals have continued to elude historians. This can be attributed to the fact that young people's interactions with texts were often ephemeral and have rarely been preserved in historical archives. As Helen Rogers notes in her study of the reading experiences of five barely literate boys who were taught at Yarmouth Gaol in 1840, this explains why "we know little of the responses of working-class readers targeted by the Religious Tract Society and other evangelical publishers in their crusade to purify popular literature".<sup>58</sup> Along similar lines, Kathleen McDowell observes that "in most children's literature scholarship, the child reader remains a theorized entity, disconnected from the experiences of contemporary or historical children".<sup>59</sup>

Perhaps unsurprisingly, our understanding of juvenile reading experiences is often reliant upon adult memories. For example, Lang has studied fifty-three memoirs in an attempt to discover clues about the audience for mid-Victorian children's books and juvenile periodicals.<sup>60</sup> More recently, Banham's study of the *Boys of England* has made use of the Burnett Archive of Working Class Autobiographies and the personal reminiscences found in

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(1998), pp. 5-37; S. Colclough, 'Procuring Books and Consuming Texts: The Reading Experience of a Sheffield Apprentice, 1798', *Book History*, 3.1 (2000), pp. 21-44.

<sup>57</sup> For studies which make use of prison records, see: R. Crone, 'Reappraising Victorian Literacy Through Prison Records', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 15.1 (2010), pp. 3-37; J. Hartley, 'Reading in Gaol', in B. Gunzenhauser (ed.), *Reading in History: New Methodologies from the Anglo-American Tradition* (London: Pickering & Chatto 2010), pp. 87-102. For studies which make use of marginalia, see: H. Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); D. Allan, 'Some Methods and Problems in the History of Reading: Georgian England and the Scottish Enlightenment', *Journal of the Historical Society*, 3.1 (2003), pp. 105-113; M. Grenby, *The Child Reader, 1700-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 25; S. Lerer, 'Devotion and Defacement: Reading Children's Marginalia', *Representations*, 118.1 (2012), pp. 126-153; Reynolds, 'Rewarding Reads?', p. 205.

<sup>58</sup> H. Rogers, 'Oh What Beautiful Books! Captivated Reading in an Early Victorian Prison', *Victorian Studies*, 55.1 (2012), p. 57.

<sup>59</sup> K. McDowell, 'Toward a History of Children as Readers, 1890-1930', *Book History*, 12.1 (2009), p. 240.

<sup>60</sup> Lang, 'Scenes from Small Worlds', pp. 310-314.

twentieth century collector's journals such as *Vanity Fair* (1917-1927) and *Collector's Miscellany* (1928-1953).<sup>61</sup> These sources offer a useful starting point for understanding reader response, but they are not without their limitations. As noted by Jacqueline Bratton, while books and periodicals are sometimes mentioned in memoirs as being recalled from childhood reading, "memory is not necessarily reliable in matters of taste and feeling at a great remove of time and experience".<sup>62</sup> Archives of autobiographies are also often distorted in favour of the writings of male autodidacts whose reading habits are unlikely to have been representative of the population. As Emma Griffin has recently observed, "the greatest drawback in working with these records stems not from their inability to capture the lives of poor working men, but their failure to say much about the life experiences of women. Very, very few were written by women".<sup>63</sup> Thus, this dissertation does not make extensive use of autobiographies because they have limited utility for understanding how socialising messages were received by both boys and girls.

The limitations of personal reminiscences explain why scholars have also made excellent use of sources documenting adult perceptions of juvenile reading. These include, but are not limited to, nineteenth-century surveys of juvenile reading habits, essays by literary critics and social investigators, and reviews of juvenile periodicals in newspapers and magazines.<sup>64</sup> As

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<sup>61</sup> Banham, 'Boys of England', pp. 224-238. For further reading on the Burnett Archive of Working Class Autobiographies, see: J. Burnett, *The Autobiography of the Working Class: An Annotated, Critical Bibliography* (Brighton: Harvester, 1984).

<sup>62</sup> J. Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), p. 21. For further reading on the reliability of autobiographical memory, see: R. Gagnier, *Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Britain, 1832-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 43; J. Wallach, 'Building A Bridge of Words: The Literary Autobiography as Historical Source Material', *Biography*, 29.3 (2006), pp. 450-451.

<sup>63</sup> E. Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn: A People's History of the Industrial Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 7.

<sup>64</sup> M. Lang, 'Childhood's Champions: Mid-Victorian Children's Periodicals and the Critics', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 13.1 (1980), pp. 17-31.

we shall see in Chapter One, these sources are invaluable for understanding how the socialising messages that the juvenile periodical press aimed to transmit to boys and girls were steered by moral, religious, and commercial pressures. Unfortunately, these sources rarely offer an insight into the responses of young people. Taking this into consideration, the next section will explain how this dissertation attempts to overcome this methodological impasse by focusing on “encounters” in the juvenile periodical press.

### Methodology: Encounters in the Juvenile Periodical Press

Laurel Brake and Julie Codell’s *Encounters in the Victorian Press: Editors, Authors, Readers* provides an important critical touchstone for this dissertation. The contributors to this edited volume focus on a “unique characteristic of the Victorian periodical press - its development of encounters between and among readers, editors, and authors”.<sup>65</sup> An “encounter” in the press is defined as “any set of articles or letters to the editor in which the writer, whether journalist or reader, responds to a published article in a periodical”.<sup>66</sup> Although the essays in Brake and Codell’s volume focus on encounters in periodicals intended for an adult audience, this dissertation develops the concept to re-evaluate the role played by the juvenile periodical press in the socialisation of boys and girls. More specifically, it considers how the editors of magazines invited young people to become active participants in periodical culture through correspondence columns, prize competitions, and club pages. Beth Rodgers has recently highlighted some of the tantalising opportunities arising from these sources:

Those sections of the magazines which most starkly worked to foster a sense of community amongst readers have been judged as somehow supplementary to the main body of the magazine, alongside ephemeral advertisements...However, just as

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<sup>65</sup> L. Brake and J. Codell, ‘Encountering the Press’, in L. Brake and J. Codell (eds), *Encounters in the Victorian Press: Editors, Authors, Readers* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 1.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

advertisements are often now valued for their historical significance and insight into the consumer culture of the period, so too do these supplementary sections give us invaluable insight into the ways in which the contributions of real readers – be it through letters, competition entries, reports about their achievements, or records of their participation in reading clubs – interacted with, reflected, and sometimes challenged the wider aims and ideals of the commercial magazine.<sup>67</sup>

As Rodgers suggests, these sources have been severely neglected by scholars working on juvenile periodicals.<sup>68</sup> This can largely be attributed to the interpretive challenge of verifying the authenticity of reader contributions. For example, there has been a long running debate about whether the letters submitted to correspondence columns were genuine submissions or editorial fabrications. Although Altick proposed that correspondence columns can “provide an instructive panorama of the humble Victorian reader’s everyday perplexities”, he suspected that many of the queries which appeared in the *Family Herald* (1843-1940) and the *London Journal* (1845-1928) were “concocted in the editorial office”.<sup>69</sup> Contemporary insights into the publishing industry suggest that there is some credibility to this argument. In January 1887, Charles Dickens Jr. informed readers of *All the Year Round* (1859-1895) that

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<sup>67</sup> B. Rodgers, ‘Competing Girlhoods: Competition, Community, and Reader Contribution in The Girl’s Own Paper and The Girl’s Realm’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 45.3 (2012), p. 295.

<sup>68</sup> There are a few notable exceptions. For example, Wendy Forrester and Karl Sabbagh have published sections from the correspondence columns of the *Girl’s Own Paper* and *Boy’s Own Paper*. It is only within the last decade, however, that scholars have begun to examine these correspondence columns to acquire an insight into readers’ attitudes towards emigration, health, and gender. For further reading, see: W. Forrester, *Great-Grandmama’s Weekly: A Celebration of the Girl’s Own Paper, 1880-1901* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1980); K. Sabbagh, *Your Case Is Hopeless: Bracing Advice from the Boy’s Own Paper* (London: Hodder Murray, 2007); K. Moruzi, ‘The Freedom Suites Me: Encouraging Girls to Settle in the Colonies’, in T. Wagner (ed.), *Victorian Settler Narratives: Emigrants, Cosmopolitans and Returnees in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), pp. 177-191; C. Patton, ‘Not a Limitless Possession: Health Advice and Readers’ Agency in the Girl’s Own Paper, 1880-1890’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 45.2 (2012), pp. 111-133; S. Chen and K. Moruzi, ‘Children’s Voices in the Boy’s Own Paper and the Girl’s Own Paper, 1880-1900’, in K. Moruzi et al., *Children’s Voices from the Past: New Historical and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Cham: Springer Link, 2019), pp. 29-53.

<sup>69</sup> Altick, *Common Reader*, pp. 360-361.

“in some papers many ‘Answers to Correspondents’ are obviously written to fill up a certain amount of space”. He also claimed that it was common for editors to print fictitious responses “with the object of puffery”.<sup>70</sup> Taking these allegations into consideration, it is not surprising that researchers have traditionally approached reader contributions with scepticism.

Recent scholarship has offered a more optimistic assessment of the authenticity of correspondence columns and reader contributions. For example, Patricia Anderson proposes that the editors of four mass-market family magazines received “a good deal of genuine correspondence” between 1830 and 1860.<sup>71</sup> Anderson supports this argument by highlighting how the magazines were inundated with letters from readers who were frustrated not to have received a more timely acknowledgement. She also discusses how the editor of *Reynolds’s Miscellany* (1846-1869) was forced to offer an apology to correspondents for losing their mail in December 1849. According to Anderson, this evidence suggests that “the notices to correspondents were genuine replies to real letters”.<sup>72</sup> Along similar lines, Kristine Moruzi contends that the sheer volume and variety of letters that were submitted to girls’ magazines suggests that “many of the queries were undoubtedly genuine”.<sup>73</sup> She also argues that responding to girls’ queries helped to develop a sense of “brand loyalty” which was crucial for a product which needed to provide readers with a reason to return for the next issue.<sup>74</sup>

Correspondence columns not only incentivised readers looking for a response to their queries

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<sup>70</sup> *All the Year Round* (22 January 1887), pp. 11-12.

<sup>71</sup> Patricia Anderson’s study focuses on *The Penny Magazine* (1832-1845), *The London Journal* (1845-1906), *Reynolds’s Miscellany* (1846-1865), and *Cassell’s Illustrated Family Paper* (1853-1932). P. Anderson, ‘Factory Girl, Apprentice and Clerk: The Readership of Mass-Market Magazines, 1830-60’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 25.2 (1992), p. 64.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>73</sup> K. Moruzi, ‘Children’s Periodicals’, in A. King, A. Easley, and J. Morton (eds), *The Routledge Handbook to Nineteenth Century British Periodicals and Newspapers* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 304.

<sup>74</sup> K. Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood Through the Periodical Press, 1850-1915* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), p. 14.

to purchase forthcoming issues, but they also helped to sell back numbers, since editors often referred readers to responses given in previous issues. Thus, the commercial interests of juvenile periodicals were clearly being served by publishing responses to readers' queries.

As noted by Katheryn Shevelow, the scarcity of publishing information pertaining to correspondence columns in archival collections means that "the question of authenticity is impossible to resolve completely".<sup>75</sup> This dissertation, however, presents fresh evidence which strengthens the revisionist argument that juvenile periodicals received and published a fair amount of genuine correspondence. First, information about correspondence columns can sometimes be gleaned from the editors of juvenile periodicals – although as Shevelow cautions, "the often-heard editorial complaints about the unmanageable quantity of letters received could have served the purpose of advertising and self-inflation".<sup>76</sup> George Andrew Hutchison (1841-1913), the editor of the *Boy's Own Paper* between 1879 and 1912, informed his correspondents that the magazine received on average over five hundred letters a week, while the weight of such correspondence was depicted visually on at least two occasions (Figures 1-2).

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<sup>75</sup> K. Shevelow, *Women and Print Culture: The Construction of Femininity in the Early Periodical* (Routledge: London, 1989), p. 38.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

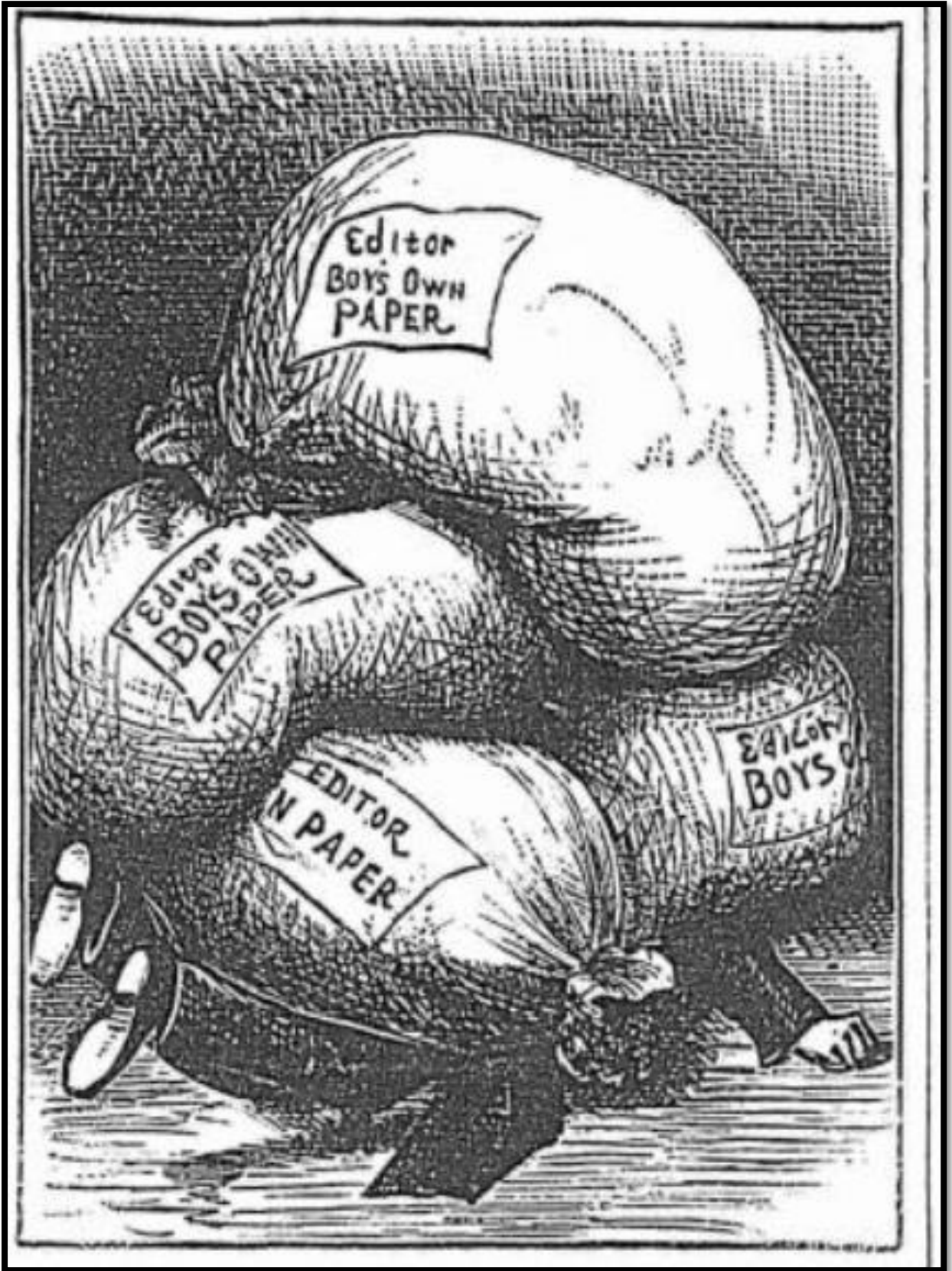


Figure 1. *Boy's Own Paper* (23 October 1880), p. 63.



# Correspondence.



Figure 2. *Boy's Own Paper* (8 January 1881), p. 48.

While the volume of correspondence in these illustrations was clearly being exaggerated for comedic effect, Hutchison gave an interview with the *Daily News* (1846-1912) which lends credibility to the argument that a large number of boys wrote to the *Boy's Own Paper* for guidance. The interview was conducted to commemorate the magazine's twentieth anniversary and covers a range of topics including the origins of the publication, the importance of charity, and the challenges of writing exciting yet wholesome stories for boys. Most significantly for our purposes, the interview provides an unusual degree of insight into the internal workings of the magazine's correspondence department, and is therefore worth reproducing in full. As we can see, the interviewer was struck by the "verily human" nature of the letters that were handed to him by the editor:

'By the bye, Mr. Hutchison, that same correspondence is a great feature of your paper is it not?'. 'I think,' he replied, 'that in some respects it is the most important feature. Boys of all ages, up to 40 years of age, curates, clerks, labourers, young officers in the Army and Navy, write to tell us of the troubles they cannot or will not confide even to their parents. Ah! What a story this cabinet could reveal,' continued the Editor, as he handed me a few letters, verily human documents they were, too, and asked me to glance over them. What tragedies, what despair, what a hopeless outlook upon life were here revealed. I remarked upon the extraordinary pessimistic nature of some of the documents. 'Yes, they are very terribly earnest sometimes. But it does them good to unburden their hearts to me, and often we can help them in the most pressing distress. Boys at school write to us, and we can often tell whether a school is going up or down. It is a delicate subject to touch upon, but we know better than most what the advent of an impure boy into a school really means. The moral question in our great public schools is the most serious question of the day, and we get curious glimpses into schoolboy-life almost every time we open the correspondence bag. I can assure

you that the nature of this correspondence is good, and we have, by its means, been enabled to help scores of young men'.<sup>77</sup>

While Hutchison here acknowledged that elite public school boys were his ideal reading audience, juvenile periodicals in practice reached much further down the social scale, and when correspondence columns are studied alongside competitions and club pages, there is sometimes enough information about a reader's name, age, and place of residence to identify them in population censuses and other biographical databases. The feasibility of this approach has recently been demonstrated by Rodgers who uses census records to offer an insight into the lives of three readers of the *Girl's Realm* (1892-1915).<sup>78</sup> This dissertation further develops Rodgers's methodology by taking advantage of the digital search tools offered by Gale's *19th Century UK Periodicals (NCUKP)*, a full-text database which features a selection of juvenile periodicals. The names and addresses of readers can be used as part of a keyword-based search. As can be seen in the appendices, this means that it is sometimes possible to build up a record of a reader's contributions to a specific magazine – something which is extremely difficult to do with archival copies. Keyword-based searching can also be used to trace an individual's reading experience across a range of juvenile titles. As discussed above, this method also enables us to trace generational cohorts of readers who formed communal bonds and matured with their magazines. Thus, census records and keyword-based searching can be used to corroborate that juvenile periodicals received genuine submissions from identifiable boys and girls, whilst also offering a revealing insight into the composition of a magazine's readership and the careers of specific readers.

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<sup>77</sup> *Daily News* (29 April 1899), p. 8.

<sup>78</sup> Rodgers, 'Competing Girlhoods', pp. 284-296.

A study of encounters in the juvenile periodical press is not without its interpretive challenges. This dissertation acknowledges that magazines may have imposed the illusion of unity on readers' responses which may well have been much more disparate than the editorial voice will allow. For example, correspondence columns were highly regulated spaces in the sense that editors exerted a considerable degree of control over the queries that were published in their magazines. As noted by Moruzi, certain letters – while not actually invented – may have been “strategically inserted” in correspondence columns to “garner attention and be provocative”.<sup>79</sup> It was also common for editors to print letters of praise from readers to serve as testimonials for their magazines. While these letters can offer glimpses into reader response, it is thus important to recognise that these glimpses were mediated through the dominant position of the editor.<sup>80</sup>

This hierarchical relationship between editors and readers also has significant implications for the use of competitions as evidence of reader response. Editors were in positions of authority to reward competitors who expressed the “correct opinions” in their essays.<sup>81</sup> While this means that competitions are a particularly valuable source for understanding how readers responded to socialising messages, it is important to acknowledge that magazines tended to publish only prize-winning essays from boys and girls who conformed to editorial agendas. Moreover, editors of juvenile periodicals were able to place restrictions on reader participation. Although some competitions and clubs were open to all readers, others were exclusively for young people of a certain age, gender, class, or nationality. These restrictions

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<sup>79</sup> Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, p. 14.

<sup>80</sup> For further reading on the challenge of how to interpret these “mediated glimpses”, see: B. Rodgers, ‘Researching the Relationship Between Two Periodicals: Representations of George Eliot in the Girl’s Own Paper and Atalanta’, in A. Easley, A. King, and J. Morton (eds), *Researching the Nineteenth-Century Periodical Press: Case Studies* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), p. 94.

<sup>81</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 July 1858), p. 224.

are useful because they can tell us about the intended recipients of socialising messages. It is, however, important to recognise that the insights which competitions and clubs offer into reader response may not be representative of a magazine's wider readership.

Despite these interpretive challenges, the limitations of the source material are far outweighed by the new insights they provide about the role played by the juvenile periodical press in the socialisation of boys and girls. This dissertation argues that a study of encounters complicates our understanding of the socialisation in two ways. First, it challenges the assumption that young people were passive recipients of adult teaching. Rather, it suggests that socialisation should be understood as a dialogue between editors who were eager to mould the values and behaviours of the rising generation, and readers who consulted magazines for advice and entertainment. Although the editors of juvenile periodicals often had their own agendas, this dissertation will demonstrate that boys and girls were active consumers whose needs and desires were influential in shaping the content of magazines. Second, a study of encounters will reveal that not all attempts at socialisation were successful. At first glance, the juvenile periodical press appears to have been an effective medium for inculcating desirable values and behaviours in the rising generation. Upon closer inspection of reader response, however, it will become apparent that young people were also capable of defying editorial expectations. Thus, this dissertation not only broadens the scope of the field of periodical studies, but also the wider history of juvenile reading by demonstrating that the relationship between the act of reading and socialisation was more complex than scholars have traditionally assumed.

### Scope, Sources, and Structure

Due to practical constraints, this dissertation cannot provide a comprehensive study of encounters in the hundreds of magazines churned out by the juvenile periodical press during

the nineteenth century.<sup>82</sup> As noted by Mary Ellis Gibson, “no life is long enough for a scholar to read the deluge of print that engulfed the Victorian young”.<sup>83</sup> With Gibson’s caveat in mind, this dissertation takes a necessarily selective approach. Eight juvenile periodicals will be examined, all of which were marketed as ‘improving’ magazines: *Atalanta*, *Boys of England (BOE)*, *Boy’s Own Magazine (BOM)*, *Boy’s Own Paper (BOP)*, *Girl’s Own Paper (GOP)*, *Kind Words for Boys and Girls (KW)*, *Little Folks (LF)*, and *Young Folks (YF)*.<sup>84</sup> The publishing histories of these magazines and their approaches to reader participation are discussed in greater detail in Chapter One. It is, however, worth noting here that three factors were considered when establishing the parameters for the selection of my primary sources: periodisation, access, and gender.

First, this dissertation focuses on juvenile periodicals which were launched in England between 1850 and 1890. As we shall see in Chapter One, the religious publishers who dominated the market during the early nineteenth century had little reason to facilitate reader participation. Consequently, there are few opportunities for a study of encounters in the juvenile periodical press before this period. The halfpenny magazines which flooded the market during the 1890s are also beyond the scope of this study but, as will be discussed in the conclusion of this thesis, offer opportunities for further research. Although these

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<sup>82</sup> Diana Dixon estimates that more than five hundred periodicals for young people were published in Britain between 1866 and 1914. The exact number is difficult to calculate, however, due to the ephemeral nature of juvenile periodicals, the frequency with which publishers changed the titles of their magazines, and the large number of magazines that ceased publication after a year. For further reading on the bibliographical problems arising from the study of juvenile periodicals, see: D. Dixon, ‘Victorian and Edwardian Periodicals for Children: Some Bibliographical Problems’, *Indexer*, 15.1 (1986), pp. 15-19; R. Kirkpatrick, *From the Penny Dreadful to the Halfpenny Dreadful: A Bibliographic History of the Boys’ Periodical in Britain, 1762-1950* (London: British Library, 2013), pp. 43-46.

<sup>83</sup> M. Gibson, ‘The Perils of Reading: Children’s Missionary Magazines and the Making of Victorian Imperialist Subjectivity’, in J. McGavran (ed.), *Time of Beauty, Time of Fear: The Romantic Legacy in the Literature of Childhood* (Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 2012), p. 109.

<sup>84</sup> As will be discussed in Chapter One, *Kind Words for Boys and Girls* was later rebranded as *Young England (YE)*.

magazines encouraged reader participation, they are omitted from this study because they appeared at a time of tremendous change for juvenile periodical publishing. The closing decade of the nineteenth century witnessed a shift away from individual entrepreneurs and private family businesses toward limited publishing companies and conglomerates. The reason for this shift was that many of the editors and publishers of ‘improving’ magazines had either died, retired, or been declared bankrupt. As Kelly Boyd explains, “the domination of the Victorian boys’ story paper by individual editor / publishers made their decline inevitable. None was blessed with a talented successor, but perhaps more importantly, by the 1890s a mass market for reading matter was in the offing”. Although Boyd observes that “the old style of publishing hung on for another decade”, she argues that “it was quickly superseded by a new class of publisher” as exemplified by Alfred Harmsworth, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Northcliffe (1865-1922).<sup>85</sup>

While the 1890s thereby represents a suitable end point for an investigation into reading encounters during a specific phase in the history of juvenile periodical publishing, practical issues of access and preservation mean that some titles which were available to nineteenth-century readers are not accessible to historians. Many collections of juvenile periodicals are reported to have been destroyed during the twentieth century. In 1934, Robert Arthur Hanson Goodyear (1877-1948), an author and playwright, recalled the circumstances in which he reluctantly parted with his “lovely runs” of boys’ papers for practical reasons:

Well, every spring cleaning time it was a battle with my sister for the retention of my precious bloods. She considered them so much lumber and wanted the cupboard space they occupied. Year after year, backed by my mother’s sympathy, I won the fight for

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<sup>85</sup> K. Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys’ Story Paper in Britain: A Cultural History, 1855-1940* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 34-35. For the argument that Alfred Harmsworth was also responsible for ushering in a new era of publishing for girls’ magazines, see: A. Webb, ‘Harmsworth’s Girls: Constructing Identity in the British Popular Press, 1898-1916’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2008).

them. Then we moved into a better house and my sister got me to part with my books. They were sacrificed on a large bonfire on the garden.<sup>86</sup>

Other collections were the inadvertent casualties of war. In October 1945, readers of *Collector's Miscellany* were informed that “old boy’s book collecting, in common with practically all peacetime pursuits, suffered partial eclipse during the war”.<sup>87</sup> As explained by John Medcraft, an early bibliographer of nineteenth-century boy’s magazines, the ephemeral nature of juvenile periodicals was detrimental to their survival:

Several large collections and innumerable smaller lots and odd items have been destroyed by enemy action while the very necessary demand for paper has been ever more destructive than in the previous war. One can picture the anguish of the returned soldier, sailor or airman upon finding that his wife or parents, in mistaken zeal, had cleared out his precious hoard of books.<sup>88</sup>

Where juvenile periodicals have survived in archival collections, there tends to be a primary source imbalance in the documentary record. As we shall see in Chapter One, publishers often defined their intended readerships in terms of ‘class’ and priced their magazines accordingly. Sixpence monthly editions of magazines which were primarily intended for juvenile readers from middle-class families often have a higher rate of preservation because they were more expensive and printed on higher quality paper than their penny weekly counterparts. These magazines were also more likely to have been collated into bound annuals and preserved for future reference.<sup>89</sup> By contrast, the ‘penny dreadfuls’ and ‘penny

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<sup>86</sup> *Collector's Miscellany* (1934), pp. 51-52.

<sup>87</sup> *Collector's Miscellany* (1945), p. 7.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>89</sup> For evidence of the Religious Tract Society encouraging readers to bind and preserve their magazines for future reference, see: *Girl's Own Paper* (12 March 1881), p. 384; *Girl's Own Paper* (26 March 1881), p. 416; *Boy's Own Paper* (15 January 1898), p. 250.



novelettes' which targeted a working-class readership were often thrown away rather than kept in archival collections because they were dismissed as "ephemeral matter produced to catch a market" with "insignificant literary merit".<sup>90</sup> Although many of the problems surrounding preservation are impossible to resolve, much more information on the juvenile periodical press has become available during the past thirty years. Today, researchers can access uninterrupted runs of some of the most influential titles in libraries and special archival collections. This dissertation makes extensive use of the Sydney Jones Library's Special Collections and Archives which houses more than 7000 pre-First World War children's books and juvenile periodicals. As discussed above, this dissertation also takes advantage the digital search tools made available through Gale's *NCUKP*, which draws upon repositories of juvenile periodicals held in the British Library and the National Library of Scotland. Acknowledging that archival sources and digital copies have different strengths and limitations, this dissertation has selected magazines which are readily accessible in both formats for the period under discussion.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> J. Townsend, *Written for Children: An Outline of English Language Children's Literature*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), p. xii. The Barry Ono Collection is a notable exception. This extraordinary archive of 700 books and magazines was bequeathed to the British Library by Frederick Valentine Harrison (1876-1941), a music-hall performer and avid collector of Victorian ephemera. As we shall see in Chapter One, the collection offers a fascinating insight into the 'penny dreadfuls' which triggered a moral panic about the reading practices of working-class boys. It is, however, important to acknowledge that this eclectic collection is far from comprehensive and there are significant gaps its coverage of penny serials for boys. Furthermore, the archive is unable to tell us much about the provision of magazines for working-class girls. For a catalogue of the collection, see: E. James and H. Smith, *Penny Dreadfuls and Boys' Adventures: The Barry Ono Collection of Victorian Popular Literature in the British Library* (London: British Library, 1998).

<sup>91</sup> For further reading on the opportunities and challenges arising from the digitisation of nineteenth-century periodicals, see: J. Mussell, *The Nineteenth-Century Press in the Digital Age* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); T. Hitchcock, 'Confronting the Digital, or How Academic History Writing Lost the Plot', *Cultural and Social History*, 10.1 (2013), pp. 9-23; P. Leary, 'Response: Search and Serendipity', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 48.2 (2015) pp. 267-273.

Third, this dissertation departs from the recent trend of studying boys' and girls' magazines in isolation to each other.<sup>92</sup> A comparative approach is advantageous because it can reveal commonalities and differences between genres which may not be immediately apparent. As we shall see, boys' and girls' magazines covered similar topics, including education, work, and leisure. Crucially, however, the socialising messages that magazines transmitted to readers were tailored towards the gender of the target audience. This dissertation also acknowledges the importance of examining "compound magazines" which were intended for both boys and girls.<sup>93</sup> This is significant because relatively little scholarly attention has been devoted to magazines such as *KW*, *LF*, and *YF*. The neglect of these magazines can be attributed to the propensity for studies of boys' and girls' papers to focus on gender-specific titles such as the *BOP* and *GOP*. This oversight is regrettable, because although the publishing practice of targeting readers according to their gender became increasingly common during the nineteenth century, compound magazines continued to occupy the leisure hours of many boys and girls. Thus, any study of the juvenile periodical press is incomplete without a discussion of both gender-specific and non-gendered titles.

In order to evaluate the role played the juvenile periodical press in the socialisation of boys and girls, this dissertation is divided into four chapters. Chapter One offers a long-overdue exploration of the relationship between the origins of the 'improving' juvenile periodical press and the emergence of reader participation. Adopting a chronological approach, the chapter demonstrates how the changing dynamics of the marketplace led the editors of

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<sup>92</sup> For studies which focus on boys' papers, see: C. Nelson, 'Mixed Messages: Authoring and Authority in British Boys' Magazines', *Lion and the Unicorn: A Critical Journal of Children's Literature*, 21.1 (1997), pp. 1-19; Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper*; Olsen, *Juvenile Nation*. For studies which focus on girls' magazines, see: Smith, *Empire in British Girls' Literature*; Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*; B. Rodgers, *Adolescent Girlhood and Literary Culture at the Fin de Siècle: Daughters of Today* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); E. Fox, 'Victorian Girls' Periodicals and the Challenge of Adolescent Autonomy', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 51.1 (2018), pp. 48-69.

<sup>93</sup> Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, p. 118.

juvenile periodicals to become gradually invested in opening up conversations with readers through correspondence columns, competitions, and club pages. The chapter argues that the emergence of reader participation around the mid-nineteenth century was a significant development because it transformed how socialising messages were transmitted and received by boys and girls.

The focus of this dissertation then shifts to a discussion of encounters in the juvenile periodical press. The remaining chapters follow a thematic approach and are structured around the research questions outlined above. Chapter Two explores how juvenile periodicals sought to facilitate informal learning and self-improvement through competitions and correspondence-based distance learning schemes. Chapter Three considers how magazines provided boys and girls with employment advice through informative articles and correspondence columns. Chapter Four examines how juvenile periodicals used competitions and clubs to disseminate the philosophy of ‘rational recreation’ and ‘gender-appropriate’ ideas about leisure to readers. Crucially, these chapters will demonstrate that the relationship between socialisation and reading is more complex than has traditionally been assumed, and it is thus necessary for scholars to pay greater attention to reader response. Finally, the conclusion discusses the implications of my findings and offers suggestions for future research. In the process, it is hoped that this dissertation will provide the necessary foundation for important work that is still yet to be done in the field of juvenile periodical studies and the history of reading.

CHAPTER ONE: THE ORIGINS OF THE ‘IMPROVING’ JUVENILE  
PERIODICAL PRESS AND THE EMERGENCE OF READER  
PARTICIPATION

It is impossible to overrate the importance of the influence of such a supply [of fiction] on the national character and culture. Mind, equally with body, will develop according to what it feeds on; and just as the strength or weakness of a man’s muscle depends on whether he leads a healthy or vicious life, so will the strength or weakness of his moral sense largely depend upon whether he reads in his youth that which is pure or that which is foul.<sup>1</sup>

Introduction

During the 1880s, an investigation into juvenile literature was conducted by Edward Salmon (1865-1955), a British educationalist and prominent literary critic. The object of Salmon’s writing was “to give all charged with the mental and moral welfare of the rising generation an idea of the books written for boys and girls”.<sup>2</sup> Salmon’s survey appeared at a time when there was growing interest in “the social and psychological implications of the juvenile reading experience”.<sup>3</sup> As Salmon suggests in the epigraph above, it was widely assumed that a person’s choice of reading material during their formative years had the potential to determine who they would become in adult life. The belief that the act of reading had a significant influence upon socialisation explains why Salmon and his contemporaries expressed concern about the suitability of the books and periodicals produced for boys and

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<sup>1</sup> *Fortnightly Review* (1886), p. 248.

<sup>2</sup> E. Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as it is* (London: Henry Drane, 1888), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> M. Lang, ‘Childhood’s Champions: Mid-Victorian Children’s Periodicals and the Critics’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 13.1 (1980), p. 18.

girls. In particular, the second half of the nineteenth century was marked by discussions about the effects that ‘penny dreadfuls’ and ‘penny novelettes’ had upon the susceptible minds of young readers. Salmon proposed that it was possible to counteract the “disastrous effects exercised by the ‘dreadful’ on the minds of our boys and girls” by supplying them with a wholesome alternative.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, he recommended that parents should ensure that their children were reading ‘improving’ magazines – including express endorsements for six of the eight periodicals discussed in this dissertation.<sup>5</sup>

Scholars have long been familiar with the idea of a ‘moral panic’ surrounding the provision of juvenile literature in nineteenth-century England. Since the publication of Ernest Turner’s *Boys Will Be Boys* in 1948, there has been a steady stream of studies documenting how ‘pernicious’ juvenile literature incurred the wrath of the respectable press, the courts, and literary critics.<sup>6</sup> This body of scholarship has been complemented by case studies of some of the ‘improving’ magazines which attempted to supplant the ‘penny dreadfuls’ and ‘penny novelettes’.<sup>7</sup> Despite decades of excellent research, the relationship between the origins of the

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<sup>4</sup> Salmon, *Juvenile Literature*, p. 189.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 184-202. The *Boy’s Own Magazine* had ceased publication in 1874, although the title was later revived by George Alfred Henty (1832-1902) under the name of *Beeton’s Boy’s Own Magazine* (1888-1890). As we shall see, Edwin Brett’s *Boys of England* occupied a more contentious space as an ‘improving’ magazine and was often bracketed with the ‘penny dreadfuls’.

<sup>6</sup> E. Turner, *Boys Will Be Boys: The Story of Sweeney Todd, Deadwood Dick, Sexton Blake, Billy Bunter, Dick Barton, et al.* (London: Michael Joseph, 1948); P. Dunae, ‘Penny Dreadfuls: Late Nineteenth-Century Boys’ Literature and Crime’, *Victorian Studies*, 22.2 (1979), pp. 133-150; J. Springhall, ‘A Life Story for the People? Edwin J. Brett and the London Low-Life Penny Dreadfuls of the 1860’, *Victorian Studies*, 33.2 (1990), pp. 223-246; J. Springhall, ‘Disseminating Impure Literature: The Penny Dreadful Publishing Business Since 1860’, *Economic History Review*, 47.3 (1994), pp. 567-584; J. Springhall, ‘Pernicious Reading? The Penny Dreadful as Scapegoat for Late-Victorian Juvenile Crime’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 27.4 (1994), pp. 326-349; M. Buckley, ‘Sensations of Celebrity: Jack Sheppard and the Mass Audience’, *Victorian Studies*, 44.3 (2002), pp. 423-463; L. Sanders, *Consuming Fantasies: Labor, Leisure, and the London Shopgirl, 1880-1920* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006); A. Vaninskaya, ‘Learning to Read Trash: Late-Victorian Schools and the Penny Dreadful’, in K. Halsey and W. Owens (eds), *The History of Reading Volume 2: Evidence from the British Isles, c. 1750-1950* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 67-83.

<sup>7</sup> C. Banham, ‘Boys of England and Edwin J. Brett, 1866-99’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Leeds, 2006); A. Webb, ‘Constructing the Gendered Body: Girls, Health, Beauty, Advice, and the Girls’ Best Friend, 1898-99’, *Women’s History Review*, 15.2 (2006), pp. 253-275; S. Drain, ‘Family Matters: Margaret Gatty and Aunt Judy’s Magazine’, *Publishing History*, 61.1 (2007), pp. 5-46; M. Vuohelainen, ‘Tales and Adventures: G.

‘improving’ juvenile periodical press and the emergence of reader participation remains largely unexplored. As discussed in the introductory chapter, a major deficit of the existing secondary literature is that few studies have considered how juvenile periodicals transmitted socialising messages to readers through correspondence columns, prize competitions, and club pages. Given that these sites of encounter form the core of my analysis in subsequent chapters, it is necessary to understand why reader participation became a regular feature of ‘improving’ magazines during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The chapter begins by providing an overview of the origins of the juvenile periodical market between 1751 and 1855. It is argued that reader participation was atypical during this period because the juvenile periodical market was dominated by religious publishers whose magazines were primarily designed to serve a didactic purpose in Sunday schools. Around the mid-nineteenth century, however, the tone and content of juvenile periodicals started to become much more varied as commercial publishers took advantage of increasingly favourable market conditions. As we shall see, the difficult task of balancing social responsibility and commercial remuneration was the fundamental issue at the heart of the juvenile periodical publishing industry during the second half of the nineteenth century. Soliciting readers’ opinions became increasingly important as respectable publishers sought to supplant the ‘penny dreadfuls’ (and later the ‘penny novelettes’) with ‘improving’ alternatives. The ‘moral panic’ engendered by the spread of pernicious literature first facilitated a change in commercial practices, before prompting the religious publishers who dominated the market during the first half of the century to reconsider the tone and content of

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A. Henty’s Union Jack and the Competitive World of Publishing for Boys in the 1880s’, *Journal of Popular Narrative Media*, 1.2 (2008), pp. 183-196; J. Dawson, ‘Not for Girls Alone but for Anyone Who Can Relish Really Good Literature: L. T. Meade, Atalanta, and the Family Literacy Magazine’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 46.4 (2013), pp. 475-498; E. Penner, ‘The Squire of Boyhood: G. A. Hutchison and the Boy’s Own Paper’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 47.4 (2014), pp. 631-647.

their magazines. Crucially, the changing dynamics of the marketplace led the editors of ‘improving’ magazines to become invested in opening up conversations with readers through correspondence columns, competitions, and club pages. In conclusion, this chapter argues that the emergence of reader participation was a significant development because it transformed how socialising messages were transmitted and received by boys and girls.

### The Origins of the Juvenile Periodical Market, 1751-1855

The origins of the juvenile periodical market in England can be traced back to the second half of the eighteenth century. John Newbery is often credited as the first publisher to experiment with the idea of producing a magazine specifically for children.<sup>8</sup> An enterprising London bookseller, Newbery acquired a reputation as a specialist in the publication of children’s books during the years 1744 to 1767.<sup>9</sup> The first two issues of Newbery’s *Lilliputian Magazine* appeared in 1751, with the third and final issue released in the following year.<sup>10</sup> The tone and content of the *Lilliputian Magazine* were informed by the Lockean idea that children should be instructed through play, amusement, and pictures.<sup>11</sup> This is reflected in the magazine’s broad range of material designed to entertain and instruct children including moral lessons, short narratives, fables, songs, hymns, riddles, epigrams, and engravings.

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<sup>8</sup> J. Grey, ‘The Lilliputian Magazine – A Pioneering Periodical?’, *Journal of Librarianship*, 2.2 (1970), pp. 107-115; J. Dawson, ‘Trade and Plumb-Cake in Lilliput: The Origins of Juvenile Consumerism and Early English Children’s Periodicals’, *Children’s Literature in Education*, 29.4 (1998), pp. 182-186; W. Noblett, ‘John Newbery: Publisher Extraordinary’, *History Today*, 22.4 (1972), pp. 269.

<sup>9</sup> F. Darton, *Children’s Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: British Library, 1998), pp. 120-139.

<sup>10</sup> *Lilliputian Magazine, or, The Young Gentleman and Lady’s Golden Library (1751-1752)*. For the history of the *Lilliputian Magazine*, see: J. Grey, ‘The Lilliputian Magazine – A Pioneering Periodical?’, *Journal of Librarianship*, 2.2 (1970), pp. 107-115; Dawson, ‘Origins of Juvenile Consumerism’, pp. 175-198.

<sup>11</sup> E. Segel, “‘As the Twig Is Bent...’: Gender and Childhood Reading”, in P. Schweickart and E. Flynn (eds), *Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 166; M. Grenby, ‘Delightful Instruction? Assessing Children’s Use of Educational Books in the Long Eighteenth Century’, in M. Hilton and J. Shefrin (eds), *Educating the Child in Enlightenment Britain: Beliefs, Cultures, Practices* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 181-198.

Although the *Lilliputian Magazine* ran for a mere three issues, Newbery's idea of a periodical expressly for children proved to be an enduring one and spawned several imitators. A total of twelve periodicals for children were published in England during the second half of the eighteenth century.<sup>12</sup> It is, however, important to recognise that at the turn of the nineteenth century the juvenile periodical market was still in its infant stage of development. Early juvenile periodicals often experienced short print runs, appeared at irregular intervals, and had limited readerships. As noted by Robert Kirkpatrick, the problem was due in part to the fact that juvenile periodicals "could only be afforded by the relatively affluent, and could only be appreciated by children who had learnt to read, which was by far from all children".<sup>13</sup> The publishers of juvenile periodicals were also reliant upon relatively primitive networks of distribution. The principal distribution routes for periodicals in the late eighteenth century were small-scale booksellers and itinerant street hawkers.<sup>14</sup> These distribution networks were inadequate for reaching an audience large enough to sustain a profitable juvenile periodical. Thus, high circulations and longevity were not characteristics of juvenile periodicals until they received moral endorsement and financial support from religious organisations in the early nineteenth century.

Recent estimates suggest that around fifty juvenile periodicals were launched between 1800 and 1840 of which the majority "were religious in content or background".<sup>15</sup> These magazines emerged within the context of what C. Stuart Hannabuss describes as "a religious

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<sup>12</sup> J. Dawson, 'The Origins of Nineteenth Century Juvenile Periodicals: The Young Gentleman's and Lady's Magazine (1799-1800) and Its Predecessors', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 29.3 (1996), pp. 216-241.

<sup>13</sup> R. Kirkpatrick, *From the Penny Dreadful to the Ha'penny Dreadfuller: A Bibliographic History of the Boys' Periodical in Britain, 1762-1950* (London: British Library, 2013), p. 47.

<sup>14</sup> M. Taunton, 'Distribution', in L. Brake and M. Demoor (eds), *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: The British Library, 2009), pp. 170-172.

<sup>15</sup> Kirkpatrick, *History of the Boys' Periodical*, pp. 61-62.



climate ripe for religious publishing on a large scale”.<sup>16</sup> During the closing decades of the eighteenth century, there was a “zealous campaign” to counteract the perceived “depraving influence” of cheap literature.<sup>17</sup> Hannah More (1745-1833), an English religious writer and philanthropist, oversaw the publication of more than a hundred cheap repository tracts between 1795 and 1798. These tracts were designed with the explicit aim of combating “vulgar and licentious publications...profane and indecent songs, and penny papers”.<sup>18</sup> Along similar lines, the Religious Tract Society was established in 1799 with the intention of supplanting the “feculent dregs” of the chapbook market by printing and distributing short pamphlets, books, and periodicals at home and abroad.<sup>19</sup> Although the primary audience of these publications were “poor people” and “multitudes of the lowest rabble”, religious tracts were also distributed amongst children in an attempt to inoculate them from the pernicious influence of cheap literature and guide them toward appropriate Christian behaviour.<sup>20</sup> These tracts were issued at frequent intervals and served as an important source of inspiration for religious publishers of juvenile periodicals in the early nineteenth century.

The growth in the publication of religious tracts coincided with the heyday of the Sunday school movement. The Sunday School Union was responsible for supporting the first sustained attempt at publishing a magazine for children. This ecumenical organisation was

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<sup>16</sup> C. Hannabuss, ‘Nineteenth-century Religious Periodicals for Children’, *British Journal of Religious Education*, 6.1, (1983), p. 21.

<sup>17</sup> K. Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazine, 1751-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), p. 22.

<sup>18</sup> S. Pedersen, ‘Hannah More Meets Simple Simon: Tracts, Chapbooks, and Popular Culture in Late Eighteenth-Century England’, *Journal of British Studies*, 25.1 (1986), p. 87. For further reading on Hannah More’s publishing career, see: A. Stott, *Hannah More: The First Victorian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 169-190.

<sup>19</sup> F. Milton, ‘Study of Children’s Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Birds and Animals in Britain, c. 1870-1914’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Newcastle University, 2008), pp. 122-123.

<sup>20</sup> M. Grenby, ‘Chapbooks, Children, and Children’s Literature’, *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, 8.3 (2007), pp. 289-290.

founded in 1803 with the aim of improving the standards of teaching in Sunday schools and promoting the opening of new schools. In addition to the publication of religious tracts and school textbooks for young people, the SSU launched the *Youth's Magazine, or Evangelical Miscellany* in 1805. The tone and content of the magazine represented a significant point of departure from Newbery's idea of the juvenile periodical as a source of both instruction and delight. The *Youth's Magazine* was designed strictly "to convey useful and interesting instruction to the rising generation".<sup>21</sup> The magazine attempted to inculcate Christian values through "biographical communications essays, obituaries of young people, extracts from scripture history, remarks on passages of scripture, anecdotes, poetry, or with instances of the beneficial effects of schools for religious instruction, &c".<sup>22</sup> The *Youth's Magazine* was endorsed by contemporary reviewers who recommended the periodical for use in Sunday schools and to parents seeking reading material to aid the moral and mental improvement of their children.<sup>23</sup> This support ensured that the magazine was able to run for sixty-two years before it was eventually incorporated into the *Bible Class Magazine* (1848-1874).

The SSU established the blueprint for the pious magazine that subsequent publishers would attempt to emulate. The *Youth's Magazine* signalled to religious publishers that the periodical press could be used to supply young people with devotional literature. The following extract from the *Monthly Repository* (1806-1838) offers a revealing insight into the state of juvenile periodical publishing in 1825:

In this day of printing and of making the press cheap, nothing scarcely surprise us [sic]; but we confess that we were scarcely prepared for an authentic statement that is

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<sup>21</sup> *Morning Post* (30 December 1815), p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> *Youth's Magazine, or Evangelical Miscellany* (1 September 1805) as cited in Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, p. 24.

<sup>23</sup> For positive reviews of the *Youth's Magazine*, see: *Western Times* (12 February 1853), p. 8; *Taunton Courier, and Western Advertiser* (9 February 1853), p. 4.

now before us of periodical publications for children. From this it appears that there are no less than fourteen of these published monthly. Four are sold at 4d. each; one at 3d; one at 2d; and eight at 1d. Twelve are in the hands of the parties calling themselves 'Evangelical'.<sup>24</sup>

This observation was made following a seminal year for juvenile periodical publishing in which three of the longest running magazines of the nineteenth century were launched: the RTS's *Child's Companion; or Sunday Scholar's Reward* (1824-1932), the Anglican *Children's Friend* (1824-1930), and the Wesleyan Methodist *Child's Magazine and Sunday Scholar's Companion* (1824-1845).<sup>25</sup> The longevity of these titles can be attributed to the fact that they were supported by organisations that were willing to prioritise the pious messages of the magazines over making a profit. This luxury was not afforded to the commercial publishers of juvenile periodicals who were not in a financial position to subsidise unprofitable ventures.<sup>26</sup> The publishers of religious magazines also benefited from having access to a captive audience through wide-reaching institutional distribution networks. Religious magazines were often purchased by adults in positions of authority and distributed for free to children through churches, Sunday schools, bible classes, temperance groups, and missionary meetings.<sup>27</sup> As noted by Claudia Nelson, religious magazines were regarded as

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<sup>24</sup> *Monthly Repository* (2 January 1825), p. 61.

<sup>25</sup> For further reading on the publishing histories of these magazines, see: C. Law, 'Child's Companion; or Sunday Scholar's Reward (1824-1932)', in L. Brake and M. Demoor (eds), *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: The British Library, 2009), p. 111; T. Doughty, 'Children's Friend (1824-1860; New Series 1861-1930)', in L. Brake and M. Demoor (eds), *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland*. London: The British Library, 2009, pp. 111-112; Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, p. 25.

<sup>26</sup> For a discussion of the reasons for the failure of commercial magazines such as W. Howden's *Boys' and Girls' Penny Magazine* (1833) and G. Cowie's *Girls' and Boys' Penny Magazine* (1833), see: Kirkpatrick, *History of the Boys' Periodical*, p. 61.

<sup>27</sup> For further reading on the important role that Sunday schools played in bringing the printed word to working-class children, see: Hannabuss, 'Religious Periodicals for Children', p. 21; T. Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780-1850*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 44.

suitable rewards to commemorate diligence or attendance in Sunday schools and benefited from “widespread cultural acceptance of Sabbatarian principles, which forbade light reading on Sundays but permitted the perusal of religious material”.<sup>28</sup>

While religious publishers were thereby in a position to dominate the juvenile periodical market, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed an upsurge in the number of periodicals produced for young people. Kirkpatrick estimates that at least one hundred juvenile periodicals were launched between 1850 and 1869.<sup>29</sup> Although magazines sponsored by religious and temperance organisations continued to flourish, market conditions started to become more favourable for commercial publishers.<sup>30</sup> The expansion of the juvenile periodical market was facilitated by a series of interrelated developments including changes in the demographic structure of society, advances in the legislative and technological framework in which periodicals were produced, and the creation of more efficient networks of distribution. The first change to consider is that the size of the British population more than doubled between 1841 and 1911.<sup>31</sup> It is estimated from 1861 Census that more than twenty per cent of the total population in England and Wales was aged between ten and nineteen. The total number of young people rises from four million to nine million when this statistic is adjusted to include children under the age of ten. As John Springhall has demonstrated, the youthful demographic structure of society helped to generate economies of

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<sup>28</sup> C. Nelson, ‘Journals and Periodicals’, in J. Zipes (ed.), *Oxford Encyclopedia of Children’s Literature* (Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 338.

<sup>29</sup> Kirkpatrick, *History of the Boys’ Periodical*, p. 62.

<sup>30</sup> J. Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children’s Fiction* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), pp. 63-101; A. McAllister, ‘Onward: How a Regional Temperance Magazine for Children Survived and Flourished in the Victorian Marketplace’, *Victorian Periodical Review*, 48.1 (2015), pp. 42-66.

<sup>31</sup> During this period, the population is estimated to have increased from 15,914,000 to 36,070,000. W. Smith, ‘Children’, in S. Mitchell (ed.), *Victorian Britain: An Encyclopedia* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 142-143.

scale and turned the publication of juvenile fiction into “a sound mid-Victorian commercial proposition”.<sup>32</sup>

The expansion of the juvenile periodical market was also facilitated by a combination of legislative reform and technological advances which reduced costs of production and made commercial magazines more affordable.<sup>33</sup> The mid-nineteenth-century publishing industry benefited from the gradual elimination of the so-called “taxes on knowledge” which had artificially inflated the price of newspapers and magazines in order to control the free flow of information.<sup>34</sup> Legislative reform was accompanied by the invention of new printing technologies. For example, Richard Hoe’s high-speed rotary press and web perfecting press were introduced to England by the London publisher, Edward Lloyd (1815-1890). As noted by Matthew Tildesley, these printing technologies caused the speed of printing to improve as the century progressed.<sup>35</sup> The invention of the linotype machine in the late 1880s enabled full lines of type to be cast and forged in what Kirsten Drotner describes as “the final link in fully mechanizing the printing process”.<sup>36</sup> These technological advances were crucial in not only reducing the costs of producing juvenile periodicals, but also making printing more efficient and enabling the publication of magazines on a mass scale.

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<sup>32</sup> J. Springhall, *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics: Penny Gaffs to Gangsta-Rap, 1830-1996* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), p. 45.

<sup>33</sup> The prices of juvenile periodicals steadily declined and became more affordable during the second half of the nineteenth century. During the 1850s the industry standard price of a commercially published juvenile periodical was sixpence per monthly issue. By the 1890s, it was possible to procure a magazine for as little as a halfpenny per weekly instalment.

<sup>34</sup> This was a contemporary term used to refer to the duties on advertisements, newspapers, and paper which were repealed respectively in 1853, 1855, and 1861. For further reading on the campaign against the “taxes on knowledge”, see: J. Wiener, *The War of the Unstamped: The Movement to Repeal the British Newspaper Tax, 1830-1836* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1969); M. Hewitt, *The Dawn of the Cheap Press in Victorian Britain: The End of the ‘Taxes on Knowledge’, 1849-1869* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

<sup>35</sup> In 1850, the fastest paper presses could produce 8,000 sheets each hour. By 1901, rotary presses could produce 52,000. M. Tildesley, ‘Paper’, in L. Brake and M. Demoor (eds), *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: The British Library, 2009), p. 479.

<sup>36</sup> Drotner, *English Children and their Magazines*, p. 124.

The growth of the periodical press was further supported by improvements in communication and transport which created more efficient and reliable networks of distribution. The construction of approximately six thousand miles of railway lines between 1830 and 1850 had a transformative effect upon the distribution of newspapers and magazines.<sup>37</sup> As observed by William St Clair, the arrival of the railways enabled printed texts “to reach remoter areas previously supplied by water and by animal power”.<sup>38</sup> The most significant development was the London North-Western line which linked the capital with the industrial centres of Birmingham and Manchester. This railway line provided publishers in London with greater access to concentrated pools of juvenile readers in England’s increasingly populated cities. These magazines were then distributed to readers through an ever-growing number of retail outlets. As noted by Drotner, the mid-nineteenth expansion in retail trades created a network of distributors including tobacconists, newsagents, sweetstalls, and stationers to which “adolescents swarmed on their way from school or work to get their Wednesday or Saturday weeklies”.<sup>39</sup> This point is nicely illustrated by the autobiography of Joseph Keating (1871-1934), a working-class boy born to Irish Catholic parents in the coalmining village of Mountain Ash in south Wales:

A wonderful story entitled ‘Ralpho, the young Swordsman of Warsaw’ in ‘Young Folks’ utterly fascinated me. When that finished, ‘The Young Men of Great Britain,’ had a story called ‘A Boy from the Country, or alone in London,’ which interested me to such an extent that I used to stand for hours outside Grier’s [a stationer] with my penny, waiting for the train to bring up the parcel of papers of Thursday evenings. I

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<sup>37</sup> Kirkpatrick, *History of the Boys’ Periodical*, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> W. St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 348.

<sup>39</sup> Drotner, *English Children and their Magazines*, p. 124.

could not always get a penny, and when deprived of a weekly instalment of my story I felt the craving of an opium eater for his drug.<sup>40</sup>

This extract suggests that the occasional possession of money enabled boys to enter retail outlets and make their own purchases. The expanding role of boys as consumers had significant ramifications for the tone and content of juvenile periodicals.<sup>41</sup> The publishers of religious juvenile periodicals in the early nineteenth century prescribed merely what they thought children ought to read. As noted by Diana Dixon, the editors of these magazines “had no need to court the reader’s approval since for a child to receive a periodical at all was a privilege. People at that time automatically assumed that the periodical existed to assume a didactic purpose”.<sup>42</sup> The situation began to change in the 1850s, however, as publishers started to view boys as a real and distinct market for the first time, rather than a group that was entirely dependent on the choices of parents and Sunday school teachers.<sup>43</sup> To survive and return a profit, the publishers of boys’ papers sought to meet the ever-changing needs and tastes of their audience. As we shall see in the section that follows, this explains why reader participation emerged as an important component of Samuel Orchart Beeton’s formula of “healthful and moral” entertainment.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> J. Keating, *My Struggle for Life*. (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton & Kent, 1916).

<sup>41</sup> For further reading on the expanding role of boys as consumers during the nineteenth century, see: L. Farr, ‘Paper Dreams and Romantic Projections: The Nineteenth-Century Toy Theatre, Boyhood and Aesthetic Play’, in D. Denisoff (ed.), *The Nineteenth-Century Child and Consumer Culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 49.

<sup>42</sup> D. Dixon, ‘From Instruction to Amusement: Attitudes of Authority in Children’s Periodicals Before 1914’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 19.2 (1986), p. 63.

<sup>43</sup> The publishers of juvenile periodicals did not envisage girls as a distinct market until the 1880s. The *Girl’s Own Paper* and *Atalanta* will be discussed later in this chapter, pp. 79-85.

<sup>44</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 January 1855), inside cover.

## Establishing the Blueprint: Reader Participation in the *Boy's Own Magazine*

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the tone and content of juvenile periodicals started to become much more varied as commercial publishers took advantage of increasingly favourable market conditions. The launch of Beeton's *Boy's Own Magazine* (1855-1874) was a watershed moment for the juvenile periodical press in England. Beeton's meteoric rise as a publisher began in the early 1850s when he took advantage of the lack of copyright agreement between Britain and the United States to publish the first British edition of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852.<sup>45</sup> Buoyed by the commercial success of this edition and by the partial repeal of the "taxes on knowledge", Beeton began to experiment with periodicals for emerging readerships including women and boys.<sup>46</sup> Beeton identified that there was a gap in the market for a magazine for boys who were no longer regarded as children, but not yet fully recognised as adults. While periodicals addressed to "young gentlemen" had been available as early as 1762, Beeton was able to boast that his paper was "the first Magazine for boys that was ever issued".<sup>47</sup>

As John Gillis and others have demonstrated, the 'discovery' of boyhood as a distinct transitional stage of life dovetailed with the mid-nineteenth century reforms of England's public schools. The boys who attended these schools were separated from younger children

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<sup>45</sup> This move was described by Samuel Orchard Beeton's biographer as "one of the outstanding coups in literary history". The success of the British edition was so large that Beeton undertook a voyage across the Atlantic to present the original authoress with a voluntary payment of £600. For a detailed discussion of Beeton's early publishing career, see: M. Hyde, *Mr. and Mrs. Beeton* (London: George Harrap, 1951), p. 33. For further reading on Beeton's appropriation of American authors, see: J. Petzold, 'Making it Fit: The Appropriation of Poe in *Boy's Own Magazine*', *Edgar Allan Poe Review*, 16.2 (2015), pp. 156-157.

<sup>46</sup> For a study which places Samuel Orchard Beeton's *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (1852-1877) within the broader context of the emergence of women's magazines, see: J. Auerbach, 'What They Read: Mid-Nineteenth Century English Women's Magazines and the Emergence of a Consumer Culture', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 30.2 (1997), pp. 121-140.

<sup>47</sup> L. James, 'Now Inhale Gas: The Interactive Readership in Two Victorian Boys' Periodicals, 1855-1870', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 42.1 (2009), p. 64.



and the world of adults.<sup>48</sup> As the following extract from the *BOM* suggests, Beeton was eager to capture the patronage of this emerging market:

A book was published last year, which we sincerely hope many of our boys will fortunate enough to reader, for it is a volume of sterling merit, and its tone is exactly suited to the noble youth of Great Britain...The title of the book we are thus praising is ‘Tom Brown’s School Days,’ and we are about to lay before our readers some of the ‘jolly’ doings, therein narrated, at Rugby school. We have, amongst the readers of the Boy’s Own Magazine, a goodly number of Eton, Harrow, Rugby, and Westminster boys; and all these, with other less favoured lads, will read with delight and satisfaction, we are sure, the following well-drawn sketches by one who, through arrived at man’s estate, has preserved in his breast the remembrance of the delights of his boyhood.<sup>49</sup>

As noted in the Introduction, Beeton believed that authors of “lads’ literature” had a social responsibility to instruct “the fathers of our future race”.<sup>50</sup> Accordingly, he promised prospective readers that the *BOM* would contain “matters of interest, amusement, and healthful and moral excitement, calculated at once to produce pleasure and convey instruction”.<sup>51</sup> Beeton was keen to emphasise, however, that readers would be provided with “stronger meat than the Goody-Two-Shoes style of composition” of the religious press.<sup>52</sup> In

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<sup>48</sup> J. Gillis, *Youth and History: Tradition and Change in European Age Relations, 1770-Present* (New York: Academic Press, 1974), p. 105; J. Holt, *Public School Literature, Civic Education and the Politics of Male Adolescence* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 15-58; C. Bossche, ‘Moving Out: Adolescence’, in H. Tucker (ed.), *A New Companion to Victorian Literature and Culture* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), pp. 84-85.

<sup>49</sup> *Boy's Own Magazine* (1 July 1858), p. 211.

<sup>50</sup> *Boy's Own Magazine* (1 February 1867), p. 113.

<sup>51</sup> *Boy's Own Magazine* (1 January 1855), inside cover.

<sup>52</sup> For a detailed discussion on the history of the ‘Goody-Two Shoes’ style of composition, see: J. Fergus, *Provincial Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 118-154.

contrast to the didactic tales which appeared in periodicals aimed at the Sunday school market, the *BOM* featured “tales of adventure” and “stories of heroism and courage”. These stories were intended not only to provide readers with entertainment, but also to “arouse feelings of ardent admiration for all that is good and noble”.<sup>53</sup> Practical tutorials and informative articles were also a regular feature of the *BOM*. As shall be discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters, articles on sport were designed to introduce boys to “the Games which enliven and strengthen the mental and physical powers”, while accounts of the “youthful days of celebrated individuals” were included to inculcate the masculine values of preservice and industriousness.<sup>54</sup> Crucially, these stories and articles were written by respected authors such as W. H. G. Kingston (1814-1880), Rev. John George Wood (1827-1889), and William Henry Davenport Adams (1828-1891). As Frank Jay explains in his history of boys’ magazines and journals (1919):

Mr. Beeton was the first man to make writing for boys a separate branch of the literary profession. He it was who originally persuaded men of education to write for boys’ magazines. Before this period, men of letters thought it beneath their dignity to write boys’ stories at all.<sup>55</sup>

The *BOM* was also innovative in the sense that it was the first sustained attempt by a juvenile periodical to encourage readers to interact directly with an editor through a correspondence column. Although John Marshall’s short-lived *Juvenile Magazine* (1788) briefly experimented with the idea of answering readers’ queries, correspondence columns were an

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<sup>53</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 January 1855), inside cover.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, inside cover.

<sup>55</sup> F. Jay, *Peeps into the Past: Being a History of Old-Time Periodicals, Journals and Books*, reproduced at <https://peepsintothepast.wordpress.com> [accessed 7 July 2019].

irregular feature of juvenile periodicals before the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>56</sup> This can be partly attributed to the prohibitive expense of correspondence prior to the introduction of the Uniform Penny Post in 1840. The average cost of a letter sent the distance of a hundred miles was about ninepence, and for longer distances some third or fourth more.<sup>57</sup> Rowland Hill's reform of the postal system made postal communication more affordable by introducing a uniform rate and a system of prepayment by stamps.<sup>58</sup> The postal service also benefited from the advent of the railway and the steamship which enabled a more speedy, regular, and reliable conveyance of letters not only within the United Kingdom, but also internationally. Thus, correspondence columns in juvenile periodicals became increasingly feasible as readers were able to receive a response to their queries in a timelier manner.

Correspondence columns were also atypical in juvenile periodicals during the first half of the nineteenth century because the market was dominated by religious publishers. The editors of these periodicals had little reason to engage in correspondence because their magazines were intended to serve a didactic purpose in Sunday schools. The expanding role of boys as consumers, however, provided commercial publishers with an incentive to solicit a more personal relationship with their readers by answering their letters and accommodating some of their requests. The sequential nature of the periodical format allowed Beeton to receive feedback from readers and adapt the content of the *BOM* to reflect changes in juvenile preference. While Beeton often had his own ideas about what was best for boys to read, he recognised the commercial benefits of allowing correspondents to play a role in shaping the

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<sup>56</sup> Readers of the *Juvenile Magazine* were invited to submit their queries to a "Female Adviser". An editorial address from the first issue of the magazine reveals that the purpose of the correspondence column was to provide prescriptive advice to children in need of assistance. Although the *Juvenile Magazine* established the blueprint for using correspondence columns to offer guidance to young people, its efforts were short-lived as the magazine ceased publication after a year. For further reading on the publishing history of the *Juvenile Magazine*, see: Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>57</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (29 November 1879), pp. 131-134.

<sup>58</sup> M. Daunton, *Royal Mail: The Post Office Since 1840* (Dover: Athlone Press, 1985), pp. 1-35.

content of the *BOM*. An excellent example is how Beeton deferred to his subscribers' wishes by publishing a paper on "How to Make a Velocipede".<sup>59</sup> Thus, the *BOM* represented a shift away from the unidirectional, didactic approach which characterised religious magazines toward a more interactive form of moral entertainment.

Beeton not only encouraged reader participation through the *BOM*'s correspondence column, but also by inviting boys to take part in competitions. The *BOM*'s competitions served two functions. First, prizes were offered to boys who proved their merit in the magazine's monthly essay writing competitions. The role that these competitions played in facilitating self-improvement is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two. It is worth noting here, however, that Beeton hoped these trials of intellectual and literary ability would improve his readers' faculties of expression and stimulate an interest in subjects such as English literature, history, and geography.<sup>60</sup> The second function of the *BOM*'s competitions was strictly commercial. At the beginning of each new volume, Beeton promoted the *BOM* by providing readers with opportunities to win prizes supplied by the magazine's advertisers. For example, a periodical prospectus from 1864 reveals that the *BOM* offered 1,110 prizes including watches, chemical chests, pencil cases, and knives.<sup>61</sup> The annual distribution of prizes was a

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<sup>59</sup> *Boy's Own Magazine* (1864), pp. 254-260.

<sup>60</sup> The *Boy's Own Magazine* was not the only magazine published by Beeton to feature competitions. The *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* also sought to "stimulate [readers] to such exertions as Prizes will aid in substantial improvement and so awaken tastes the Magazine is especially intended to gratify". For further reading on competitions in the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, see: M. Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own?: Domesticity and Desire in the Woman's Magazine, 1800-1914* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 62-66; M. Diamond, 'Maria Rye and The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 30.1 (1997), pp. 5-16; S. Walton, 'Spinning the Webs: Education and Distance Learning Through Charlotte Yonge's Monthly Packet', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 49.2 (2016), p. 286.

<sup>61</sup> *Prospectus for Boy's Own Magazine* (1864).

novel marketing technique used to boost the circulation of the paper and encourage brand loyalty.<sup>62</sup> The prize system worked as follows:

Each purchaser of the magazine is presented with a cheque, which he sends to the editor; the cheques are then balloted for, and he of course stands a chance with all the rest, of securing an elegant present.<sup>63</sup>

Readers were able to improve their chance of winning a prize by collecting additional cheques with each monthly purchase of the magazine. The desire to acquire more cheques provided readers with an incentive to purchase their own copies of the magazine. This point is significant considering that the informal circulation of newspapers and magazines was high throughout the nineteenth century with a single copy of a periodical often passing through the hands of multiple readers. As noted by Nancy Brooker Spain (1917-1964), the great niece of Samuel and Isabella Beeton, the annual distribution of prizes “proved to be a successful method of gaining subscribers and Sam never launched a new magazine without employing it”.<sup>64</sup> Thus, the *BOM* established the blueprint for reader participation in the juvenile periodical press that subsequent publishers would follow.

Although Beeton demonstrated that there was commercial demand for a boys’ paper, the circulation of the *BOM* was restricted primarily to boys who had access to education, leisure time, and, most importantly, money. In January 1863, the price of the *BOM* was increased from twopence to sixpence a month – a decision which Beeton acknowledged “would prevent a great number of Boys buying the Magazine”.<sup>65</sup> The *BOM*’s shift to an “enlarged and

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<sup>62</sup> Samuel Orchart Beeton also used this strategy to increase the circulation of his women’s magazines. For further reading on promotions in the *Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine*, see: M. Beetham and K. Boardman, *Victorian Women’s Magazines: An Anthology* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), pp. 190-195.

<sup>63</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 July 1855), p. 224.

<sup>64</sup> N. Spain, *Mrs Beeton and Her Husband* (London: Collins, 1948), p. 87.

<sup>65</sup> *Prospectus for Boy’s Monthly Magazine* (1864).

improved” format was accompanied by the launch of a more affordable alternative. According to Albert John Allingham (1844-1921), a contemporary publisher of boys’ magazines writing under the pseudonym ‘Ralph Rollington’, Beeton’s *Boy’s Penny Magazine* (1863-1866) was a pioneering attempt to provide “those whose means were limited” with a periodical literature of their own.<sup>66</sup> The magazine was short-lived, however, and ceased publication after Beeton was declared bankrupt in 1866.<sup>67</sup> Nonetheless, Beeton’s idea of a penny paper for boys became a commercial reality in the late 1860s due to the efforts of a rising generation of publishers. As we shall see in the discussion that follows, this “new era of boys’ papers” was ushered in by Edwin Brett (1828-1895), although the dawn of cheap literature was thought to come with risks to the moral integrity of young readers.<sup>68</sup>

#### The ‘Penny Dreadfuls’ and a “New Class of Periodicals for Boys”

In the mid-1870s, an investigation “to ascertain the kind of reading which is most in favour” in South East Lancashire was conducted by John Howard Nodal (1831-1909), an English journalist and writer on dialect.<sup>69</sup> As the President of the Manchester Literary Club from 1873 to 1879, he explained that the investigation was conducted on the premise that “a man’s

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<sup>66</sup> R. Rollington, *A Brief History of Boys’ Journals with Interesting Facts about the Writers of Boys’ Stories* (Leicester: H. Simpson, 1913), p. 21.

<sup>67</sup> The decline in Samuel Orchard Beeton’s financial fortunes can be attributed to the overexpansion of his business in 1860 and the fallout from the financial panic of 1866. The collapse of Overend and Gurney had a direct impact upon Beeton who had major investments with the bank. Beeton’s business was subsequently forced into liquidation and the valuable copyrights of Beeton’s name and titles were sold to rival publishing firm Ward, Lock and Tyler. The *Boy’s Own Magazine* ceased publication in 1874. For further reading on the impact of the financial crisis, see: H. Cox and S. Mowatt, *Revolutions from Grub Street: A History of Magazine Publishing in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 12-13; P. Barnes, ‘A Victorian Financial Crisis: The Scandalous Implications of the Case of Overend Gurney’, in J. Rowbotham and K. Stevenson (eds), *Criminal Conversations: Victorian Crimes, Social Panic and Moral Outrage* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2005), pp. 55-69.

<sup>68</sup> Rollington, *History of Boys’ Journals*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>69</sup> J. Nodal, ‘Newspapers and Periodicals: Their Circulation in Manchester’, in J. Nodal (ed.), *Papers of the Manchester Literary Club, Volume II, With a Report of the Proceedings of the Society for the Session 1875-6* (Manchester: A. Ireland & Co., 1876), p. 33.

mental tastes, and often his character, may be gauged by the books he reads from choice in his leisure hours”.<sup>70</sup> The investigation concluded that the market for boys’ papers was being driven in two different directions. The first development was the spread of “pernicious” juvenile literature.<sup>71</sup> Nodal was alarmed to discover that boys were reading serials such as *Black Bess*, *Captain Tom Drake*, and *Blueskin the Black Highwayman*. The content of these publications, which were pejoratively labelled by their critics as ‘penny dreadfuls’, differed markedly from Beeton’s formula of healthful and moral entertainment. They shared more in common with the sensational and often lurid ‘penny bloods’ which were issued by Edward Lloyd (1815-1890) and George William MacArthur Reynolds (1814-1879) between 1830 and 1860.<sup>72</sup> As Patrick Dunae has demonstrated, the ‘penny dreadfuls’ were alleged to have encouraged anti-social attitudes and criminal behaviour in the young – especially working-class boys – at a time when there was a growing preoccupation with juvenile delinquency.<sup>73</sup>

While Nodal was alarmed by the spread of pernicious literature, he was heartened to discover that the ‘penny dreadfuls’ were being rivalled by the emergence of “a new class of periodicals for boys” which offered healthy tales of “daring and popular adventure”.<sup>74</sup>

According to Nodal, the most popular of these magazines was the *Boys of England* (1866-1899), followed by *Young Men of Great Britain* (1868-1889), *Sons of Britannia* (1870-1877),

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>72</sup> P. Haining, *The Penny Dreadful, or, Strange, Horrid and Sensational Tales!* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1975), p. 17; S. Hackenberg, ‘Vampires and Resurrection Men: The Perils and Pleasures of the Embodied Past in 1840s Sensational Fiction’, *Victorian Studies*, 52.1 (2009), pp. 63-75; R. Crone, *Violent Victorians: Popular Entertainment in Nineteenth-Century London* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), pp. 160-208.

<sup>73</sup> Dunae, ‘Boys’ Literature and Crime’, pp. 133-150. For further reading on juvenile crime in the nineteenth-century England, see: H. Shore, *Artful Dodgers: Youth and Crime in Early Nineteenth-Century London* (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 1999); J. Duckworth, *Fagin’s Children: Criminal Children in Victorian England* (London: Hambledon and London, 2002); P. Horn, *Juvenile Delinquency, 1700-2000* (Stroud: Amberley, 2010); B. Godfrey et al., *Young Criminal Lives: Life Courses and Life Chances from 1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

<sup>74</sup> Nodal, ‘Newspapers and Periodicals’, p. 36.

and *Young Briton* (1869-1877). These papers were issued by two rival publishers, Brett and the Emmett brothers, who began to issue magazines for working-class boys during the mid-1860s. Nodal commended these publishers for supplying boys with a “class of reading of an adventurous and exciting character, free from the injurious features of the existing Highwayman fictions, but still ministering usefully to a natural and not necessarily depraved or harmful taste”.<sup>75</sup> He was seemingly unaware, however, that both publishers had connections to the ‘penny dreadfuls’ which he condemned.

Before becoming a publisher of boys’ papers in his own right, Brett was employed by the Newsagents’ Publishing Company (NPC). Founded in April 1862, the NPC acquired notoriety for disseminating impure literature from 147 Fleet Street.<sup>76</sup> While Brett’s exact role at the NPC remains unclear, he is known to have issued three magazines for boys under the firm’s imprint.<sup>77</sup> *The Boy’s Companion and British Traveller* (1865) and the *Boy’s Own Reader and Companion* (1866) were unsuccessful experiments which ceased publication after runs of less than a year. Brett’s fortunes began to change following the launch of the *BOE* in 1866. Although this sixteen-page weekly was initially available through the NPC, Brett left the company in 1869 and began issuing the magazine from “The Boys of England Office” at 173 Fleet Street. Although Christopher Banham observes that Brett’s reasons for leaving the NPC are a matter for speculation, the most plausible explanation is that he departed to

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>76</sup> These included, but were not limited to, *The Boy Brigand, or, the Dark King of the Mountains* (1865-66), *The Skeleton Horseman, or, the Shadow of Death* (1865-66), and *The Wild Boys of London, or, the Children of Night* (1866). For further reading on the history of the Newsagents’ Publishing Company, see: Springhall, ‘Disseminating Impure Literature’, pp. 572-578; Springhall, ‘A Life Story for the People?’, pp. 223-246.

<sup>77</sup> As noted by Christopher Banham and Elizabeth Stearns, information about Edwin Brett’s life and career is “patchy and competing accounts exists”. Although Brett was among the most prolific and successful Victorian publishers, he did not leave an autobiography, nor did he keep publishing records. C. Banham and E. Stearns, *The Skeleton Crew, or, Wildfire Ned* (Brighton: Victorian Secrets, 2015), pp. 17-19.



reinvent himself as a respectable publisher.<sup>78</sup> The reputation of the NPC was irrevocably damaged by a series of high-profile court cases in which their publications were accused of having incited crime.<sup>79</sup> The controversy seems to have alerted Brett to the importance of appealing to the influential secondary audiences who were stakeholders in the reading practices of boys – the press, literary critics, parents, and the courts. This explains why Brett marketed the *BOE* as a source of “fun and instruction” and reassured parents that the magazine would feature “wholesome” stories rather than literature of the “highway trash” variety.<sup>80</sup>

While Brett offered reassurances that he was “studiously anxious to keep up the high tone of morality that has so eminently distinguished it [The *BOE*] from its commencement”, the content of the magazine was calculated to appeal to the needs and interests of boys.<sup>81</sup> This point is nicely illustrated by the *BOE*’s first editorial address. Prospective readers were informed that the magazine would feature “interesting papers on history and science”, instructive tutorials on home pastimes, and amusing articles “on all matters belonging to your manly out-door sports and games”.<sup>82</sup> Brett also promised that the *BOE* would “enthral” readers with “wild and wonderful, but healthy fiction”.<sup>83</sup> The commercial success of the *BOE* is often attributed to the popularity of Bracebridge Hemyng’s adventures of Jack Harkaway which are purported to have caused the circulation of the magazine to rise from 150,000 to

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<sup>78</sup> Banham, ‘Boys of England’, p. 28.

<sup>79</sup> Kirkpatrick, *History of the Boys’ Periodical*, p. 33. For a discussion of how reprints of *The Wild Boys of London* (originally issued by the Newsagents’ Publishing Company in 1866) were perceived to have influenced youth gang activity in London during the early 1880s, see: H. Shore, *London’s Criminal Underworlds, c. 1720 - c. 1930: A Social and Cultural History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 148-149.

<sup>80</sup> *Boys of England* (29 June 1867), p. 96.

<sup>81</sup> *Boys of England* (31 July 1868), p. 175.

<sup>82</sup> *Boys of England* (24 November 1866), p. 16.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

250,000 copies a week.<sup>84</sup> The following extract from the autobiography of Thomas Okey (1852-1935), a basket-maker who spent much of his formative years in the East End of London, lends credibility to this argument:

Nor did the ‘Boys of England’ proffer a much healthier pabulum to the hunger of the young barbarian for extra-lawful adventure. I can even today visualise the number I read with the lovely alliterate title of its opening story, ‘Alone in the Pirates’ Lair’ – and the front page illustration – Jack Harkaway, sitting before the pirate on the island, open-eyed, drinking the recital of his hazardous deeds.<sup>85</sup>

Although scholars have long acknowledged that serialised fiction helped to drive sales of the *BOE*, Brett’s business acumen and flair for promotion were also integral to the success of the magazine. For example, Brett was one of the first publishers to offer inducements to juvenile readers in the form of free gifts such as engravings, models, and toy theatres. Brett also recognised the benefits of encouraging reader participation. The *BOE* featured a regular correspondence column which enabled the editor to receive feedback from readers and offer guidance on how to navigate the transition from boyhood into manhood. This was later supplemented by the *BOE*’s “Many Sports of Britain Past and Present” column which invited members of the “Boys of England Football Association” (an initiative which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four) to share updates on the results of organised football matches with other readers. Furthermore, Brett attempted to secure long-term subscribers by emulating the prize cheque system popularised by Beeton’s magazines. The *BOE*’s grand

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<sup>84</sup> K. Chez, ‘Samuel Bracebridge Hemyng (1841-1901)’, in L. Brake and M. Demoor (eds), *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: The British Library, 2009), p. 279; L. James, ‘Tom Brown’s Imperialist Sons’, *Victorian Studies*, 17.1 (1973), pp. 92-96.

<sup>85</sup> T. Okey, *A Basketful of Memories: An Autobiographical Sketch* (London: Dent and Sons, 1930), p. 20.

prize distribution was more extravagant, however, with the prizes far eclipsing those offered by the *BOM*.<sup>86</sup>

The fervour that accompanied the *BOE* indicated to commercial publishers that there was a voracious demand amongst working-class boys for weekly penny papers. According to Rollington, “the boys were so eager to obtain it [the *BOE*] that other publishers seized the opportunity of producing journals got up on similar lines”.<sup>87</sup> The most significant challenge to the pre-eminence of the *BOE* came from William Emmett and his brother George.

Although there is little evidence to substantiate the contemporary folklore that Brett and the Emmetts traded insults across Fleet Street, Rollington confirms that “the rivalry between the two houses was exceptionally keen”.<sup>88</sup> A year after Brett founded the *BOE*, the Emmetts made their first entry into the market for boys’ magazines with the *Young Englishman’s Journal* (1867-1870). According to Rollington, the paper “became very popular with boys” and was considered to be a serious rival to the *BOE*.<sup>89</sup> This should not come as a surprise considering that the content and appearance of the two papers were almost indistinguishable. The close resemblance of the magazines confused readers to the extent that Brett was required to inform his correspondents on numerous occasions that he had no connection with the *Young Englishman’s Journal* which he dismissed as being “conducted by a party of unprincipled, uneducated men, in whom no dependence can be placed”.<sup>90</sup> This comment ignited the rivalry between the two publishing firms as the correspondence columns of their respective publications were transformed into vehicles for exchanging insults.<sup>91</sup> As

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<sup>86</sup> For a detailed discussion of the grand prize distribution, see Banham, ‘Boys of England’, pp. 183-188.

<sup>87</sup> Rollington, *History of Boys’ Journals*, p. 28.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29; Kirkpatrick, *History of the Boys’ Periodical*, p. 159.

<sup>89</sup> Rollington, *History of Boys’ Journals*, p. 67.

<sup>90</sup> *Boys of England* (27 April 1867), p. 368.

<sup>91</sup> Banham, ‘Boys of England’, pp. 49-59.

Kirkpatrick and others have demonstrated, this rivalry escalated into a fiercely contested circulation war.<sup>92</sup>

Despite the close resemblance of the magazines issued by Brett and the Emmetts, the two publishers experienced contrasting fortunes in the long term. Brett maintained an active publishing record until his death in 1895 and issued a total of twenty-three papers for boys during his lifetime. The Emmetts were unable to emulate the longevity of Brett's career and their publishing company was taken over by a rival publisher when it encountered financial difficulties in the 1870s.<sup>93</sup> Again, the absence of publishing records means that the reason for the Emmetts' demise is a matter of speculation. There is, however, evidence to suggest that they were less successful than Brett in emphasising the wholesome credentials of their magazines. This is not to say that the Emmetts were oblivious to the influential secondary audiences of boys' papers. For example, the preface to the first volume of the *Young Englishman's Journal* reassured parents and literary critics that the magazine was established with the "simple aim" of providing boys with an "instructive and interesting" paper. The magazine was also marketed as featuring "purely-written Tales" which were intended to "stand in marked contrast to the pernicious and trash Literature which... added an unwholesome interest to the records of felonious criminality".<sup>94</sup> Along similar lines, the *Sons of Britannia* declared a moral crusade against the 'penny dreadfuls':

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<sup>92</sup> The popularity of the *Boys of England* provided Brett with a platform to launch *Young Men of Great Britain* in January 1868. The Emmett brothers responded by issuing the first number of the *Young Gentlemen of Britain* on 24 October 1868. The launch of Brett's *Boys of the World* in 1869 prompted the Emmett brothers to retaliate with *Young Briton* and *Sons of Britannia*. The circulation war reached a crescendo on 11 March 1872 when Brett and the Emmett brothers launched *Rovers of the Sea* and *The Rover's Log* on the same day. For further reading on the circulation war, see: Kirkpatrick, *History of the Boys' Periodical*, pp. 7-8; Drotner, *English Children and their Magazines*, pp. 73-76.

<sup>93</sup> For further details of Charles Fox's takeover of Hogarth House, see: Kirkpatrick, *History of the Boys' Periodical*, p. 173.

<sup>94</sup> *Young Englishman's Journal* (1867), preface.

Whose pen first staggered this PERNICIOUS HIGHWAYMAN LITERATURE of the present century? GEORGE EMMETT'S. When was the First Blow dealt? In the year 1867, when George Emmett wrote the famous Tale, THE BOYS OF BIRCHAM SCHOOL!<sup>95</sup>

As Kirkpatrick has recently revealed, this commitment to providing boys with wholesome literature was somewhat disingenuous as the Emmetts continued to issue and advertise the type of reading material that was condemned by the *Young Englishman's Journal* and *Sons of Britannia*.<sup>96</sup> The façade of respectability began to crumble as several of their magazines were accused of inciting juvenile crime. For example, the Emmetts issued the following statement in response to the trial of Alfred Saunders in 1876:

We have been attacked by the Press and in the police-courts, and why? – because a youth who had plundered his father happened to have one of our journals in his pocket...Did it ever strike you, or any of those people who are continually crying down light literature, that the love of dress and jewellery has ruined more young men, and demoralised more women, than all the journals and penny dreadfuls put together?<sup>97</sup>

Brett was more effective than his rivals at appealing to the influential secondary audiences of juvenile periodicals without alienating his readers. This is evident from the court case of John Madden in 1870. The *Clerkenwell News* reported that the fourteen-year-old boy was charged

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<sup>95</sup> *Sons of Britannia* (3 March 1877) p. 32.

<sup>96</sup> The Emmetts acquired the Temple Publishing Company around the mid-1860s and began issuing penny-part serials in direct competition to the Newsagents' Publishing Company. For John Medcraft's reflections on the Temple Publishing Company, see: *Collector's Miscellany* (1938), pp. 49-51.

<sup>97</sup> *Sons of Britannia* (16 February 1876), p. 64. For a more detailed discussion of the case of Alfred Saunders, see: Banham, 'Boys of England', p. 269.

with breaking into a local newsagent and stealing money from the premises.<sup>98</sup> During the detective-sergeant's investigation of Madden's bedroom it was discovered that the boy had a collection of upwards of fifty cheap publications of the 'penny dreadful' variety, amongst which were the *Skeleton Horseman*, *Wild Boys of London*, and *Black Bess, or the Knight of the Road*. The boy's mother was asked whether she had ever seen magazines in her son's bedroom that were similar to those discovered by the detective-sergeant. The mother responded: "I have, but I always burnt them when I saw them. I only permitted him to take in 'The Boys of England,' thinking that was not so bad as the rest".<sup>99</sup> As Kirkpatrick has demonstrated, Brett also offered a more robust defence of his magazines when they were vilified in court cases. On two separate occasions, he wrote to the magistrates who bracketed the *BOE* with the 'penny dreadfuls'. In both instances, Brett was successful in exonerating his name and the reputation of the magazine.<sup>100</sup>

The rivalry between Brett and the Emmetts is significant because it reveals the importance of finding a balance between social responsibility and commercial remuneration. On the one hand, magazines which contained too many commercial elements or sensational stories were condemned by the influential secondary audiences who were stakeholders in the reading practices of boys. On the other hand, publishers recognised that boys were consumers who would no longer tolerate didactic magazines laden with 'goody-goodism'. As we shall see in the next section of this chapter, striking this balance became increasingly important as the juvenile periodical market came under even greater scrutiny following the passage of the Elementary Education Act in 1870. While publishers were eager to emphasise the wholesome credentials of their magazines to parents and literary critics, they were cautious not to alienate

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<sup>98</sup> *Clerkenwell News* (12 September 1870), p. 3.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>100</sup> Kirkpatrick, *History of the Boys' Periodical*, pp. 127-128.

juvenile readers who turned to juvenile periodicals for entertainment. Crucially, soliciting readers' opinions became increasingly important as reputable publishers sought to supplant the 'penny dreadfuls' (and later the 'penny novelettes') with 'improving' alternatives.

#### The Response of the 'Improving' Juvenile Periodical Press: Commercial Magazines

The juvenile periodical market became increasingly competitive between 1870 and 1900. According to recent estimates, approximately two hundred magazines for young people were launched during this period.<sup>101</sup> The extent to which this increase in the number of juvenile periodicals can be attributed to advances in the provision of education is subject to historiographical debate. The Elementary Education Act 1870 is often cited as a defining moment in the history of the juvenile periodical market. The act empowered local School Boards to fund and administer schools if voluntary provision or church provision of elementary education was inadequate. Patrick Dunae argues that this led to "an unprecedented growth" in the number of juvenile periodicals as publishers responded to the demands of an increasingly literate population.<sup>102</sup> This claim is disputed by Drotner who contends that the immediate effects of the 1870 Act have been exaggerated and created "no sudden increase of juvenile readers".<sup>103</sup> Rather, she places greater emphasis on subsequent advances in the history of education and literacy such as the Elementary Education Act 1880 (which made school attendance compulsory for children in England and Wales to the age of ten) and the subsequent Act in 1891 (which abolished fees and made elementary education free).

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<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>102</sup> Dunae, 'Boys' Literature and Crime', p. 136.

<sup>103</sup> Drotner, *English Children and their Magazines*, p. 96.

The main weakness with both explanations is that they propagate the Whiggish myth that the years before 1870 were a ‘dark age’ for working-class readers. As Philip Gardner and others have demonstrated, many working-class children were already receiving a rudimentary education through an eclectic mix of schools.<sup>104</sup> For example, Thomas Laqueur estimates that three-quarters of working-class children were attending Sunday schools by 1851, receiving instruction from teachers drawn largely from their own community.<sup>105</sup> Along similar lines, Emma Griffin observes that the ubiquity of dame schools in working-class autobiographies suggests that the prospect of basic literacy was possible even for the children of very poor families.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, Laura Mair has recently demonstrated how the ragged school movement filled an important need within communities, teaching reading and writing to those children excluded from existing institutions by their poverty.<sup>107</sup> These studies strengthen Springhall’s claim that “Forster’s 1870 Education Act and its successors did not create the mass juvenile reading public, rather they filled gaps and levelled up the degree of reading attainment already achieved”.<sup>108</sup>

Although the Education Acts may not have opened the floodgates of literacy as historians have traditionally assumed, this dissertation argues that the reforms still had a significant influence upon the juvenile periodical market. In the years following the 1870 Act, the

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<sup>104</sup> P. Gardner, *The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England: The People’s Education* (London: Croom Helm, 1984).

<sup>105</sup> Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability*, p. 49. For further reading on the role that Sunday schools played in working-class culture, see: D. Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 65-70; K. Snell, ‘The Sunday-school Movement in England and Wales: Child Labour, Denominational Control and Working-Class Culture’, *Past and Present*, 164.1 (1999), pp. 122-168; J. Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (London: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 102-105.

<sup>106</sup> E. Griffin, *Liberty’s Dawn: A People’s History of the Industrial Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 6.

<sup>107</sup> L. Mair, ‘A Transcript of Their Mind? Ragged School Literacy in the Mid-Nineteenth Century’, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 24.1 (2019), pp. 18-32.

<sup>108</sup> Springhall, *Popular Culture and Moral Panics*, p. 46.



reading habits of young people and the provision of juvenile literature came under greater scrutiny. There was growing concern that while the Board Schools were teaching more children how to read and write, they were not providing appropriate guidance about what young people should do with those skills – not least, guidance on what to read. This point is nicely explicated by James Greenwood (1832-1929), a social investigator and journalist, whose essay on the “Penny Awfuls” appeared in *St. Pauls Magazine* in 1873:

To teach a girl or boy how to read is not a very difficult task; the trouble is to guide them to a wholesome and profitable exercise of the acquirement. This, doubtless, would be hard enough were our population of juveniles left to follow the dictates of their docile or rebellious natures; but this they are not suffered to do. At the very outset, as soon indeed as they have mastered words of two and three syllables, and by skipping the hard words are able somehow to stumble through a page in reading fashion, the enemy is at hand to enlist them in his service. And never a poor recruit so dazzled and bewildered by the willy sergeant whose business it is to angle for and hook men to serve as soldiers as is the foolish lad who is best by the host of candidates of the Penny Awful tribe for his patronage.<sup>109</sup>

There was little consensus amongst contemporary critics about the solution to this problem. Greenwood argued in favour of empowering the London School Board “to root up and for ever banish from the paths of its pupils those dangerous weeds of literature that crop up in such rank luxuriance on every side to tempt them”.<sup>110</sup> Pressure groups such as the Society for the Suppression of Vice called for censorship and prosecutions under the Obscene Publications Act 1857.<sup>111</sup> By the 1870s, however, the idea of supplanting the ‘penny

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<sup>109</sup> *St. Paul's Magazine* (February 1873), p. 161.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>111</sup> Kirkpatrick, *History of the Boys' Periodical*, p. 141.

dreadfuls' by providing an 'improving' alternative was gaining traction. Thus, Anthony Thorold (1825-1895), the Bishop of Rochester, offered the following suggestion on how to combat the "corrupting influence of the pernicious periodicals for boys":

To publicly to [sic] denounce it might be to advertise it more widely, and to play into the enemy's hand. To forbid the children to purchase it would be to give an order we have no sort of power to get obeyed, and to put into their heads what it is our great object to keep out. To deplore it and do nothing is but the silly whimpering of a feeble and dishonest sentimentalism. St. Paul's method is the only reasonable one. 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good'.<sup>112</sup>

Although several magazines with an 'improving' function were launched by commercial publishers during the closing decades of the nineteenth century, many of them failed to achieve a circulation that was large enough to return a profit, let alone supplant the 'penny dreadfuls'. The publishing history of *Aunt Judy's Magazine* (1866–85) is an excellent illustration of this point. The magazine was founded by Margaret Gatty (1809-1873), a children's author and writer on marine biology, with the intention of assisting "the education and moral training of the young".<sup>113</sup> Despite being bestowed with accolades from literary critics, *AJM* was not a commercial success and only managed to return a profit in one year before the publisher George Bell (1814-1890) decided to cut his losses in 1881.<sup>114</sup> Barbara

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<sup>112</sup> *Prospectus for Union Jack* (1879).

<sup>113</sup> *Prospectus for Aunt Judy's Magazine* (1871).

<sup>114</sup> The magazine was fondly remembered by a generation of authors and critics of children's literature. For example, Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) reflected in his autobiography about how his parents purchased him several "priceless volumes" during his childhood in the early 1870s. A similar account is provided by William Leonard Courtney (1850-1928) who recalled that *Aunt Judy's Magazine* was "a much happier effort" than the didactic tales written for the Sunday school market in which "the powder was too obviously mixed with the jam to deceive the least imaginative child". R. Kipling, 'Something of Myself', in T. Pinney (ed.), *Something of Myself and Other Autobiographical Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 6; *Daily Telegraph* (6 October 1915), p. 4.

Onslow attributes the magazine's small circulation to "its high cultural standards",<sup>115</sup> although the poor commercial performance of the magazine can also be accredited to its high cost of a sixpence per monthly instalment. This assessment of the magazine's shortcomings is corroborated by Edward Bell (1844-1926) in a memoir of his father. He confirms that while *AJM* was "received with great enthusiasm and regularly supported by some thousands of Mrs. Gatty's readers", the magazine's appeal was confined to "rather a select class and it never gained the wider popularity which can only be obtained by consulting the taste of various social levels".<sup>116</sup>

Alexander Strahan's *Good Words for the Young* (1868-1877) succumbed to a similar fate. Strahan was a vociferous critic of the 'penny dreadfuls' and sought to stem the tide of the "flood of bad literature" for young people by issuing a wholesome alternative.<sup>117</sup> Dunae observes that critics were primarily concerned about the impact that 'penny dreadfuls' had on working-class children because they were assumed to be susceptible to their influence.<sup>118</sup> The purpose of Strahan's sixpence monthly, however, was to help the middle classes inoculate their children against sensational fiction rather than to supplant the 'penny dreadfuls'. Strahan conceded that he was not of the opinion "that good literature for the young could possibly except in very rare cases, make any sort of successful appeal to the sons and daughters of parents who read *The Police News* and *The London Clipper*".<sup>119</sup> The most "alarming and dispiriting part of the case" for Strahan was "the gradual spread, upwards in what is called the

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<sup>115</sup> B. Onslow, 'Girls' Magazines', in L. Brake and M. Demoor (eds), *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: The British Library, 2009), p. 249.

<sup>116</sup> E. Bell, *George Bell, Publisher: A Brief Memoir* (London: Chiswick Press, 1924), p. 54.

<sup>117</sup> *Contemporary Review* (1875), p. 991.

<sup>118</sup> Dunae, 'Boys' Literature and Crime', p. 135.

<sup>119</sup> *Contemporary Review* (1875), p. 991.

social scale, of this sort of trash”.<sup>120</sup> This admission supports Springhall’s argument that much of the ‘moral panic’ amongst middle-class parents about cheap literature “seems to have derived from anxiety that their own sons and daughters were as much at risk from contamination by ‘pernicious’ reading as the children of the urban poor were”.<sup>121</sup> Despite *GWY*’s high literary and artistic quality, the magazine’s prohibitive price and narrow commercial appeal prevented it from achieving a financially sustainable circulation.<sup>122</sup> Furthermore, the magazine’s didactic tone began to appear outdated at a time when reader participation was emerging as a regular feature of the improving juvenile periodical press. The publishing histories of *AJM* and *GWY* lend further credibility to the argument that the editors of juvenile periodicals needed to strike a balance between social responsibility and commercial remuneration. Although these magazines successfully appealed to parents and literary critics, this support was not enough to sustain a profitable circulation. These sixpence monthlies not only struggled to compete with the affordability of the ‘penny dreadfuls’, but they were soon undercut by respectable publishers who were able to offer ‘improving’ magazines at a competitive price. For example, Cassell & Co’s *Little Folks* (1871-1933) was launched as a “pleasant and instructive companion” which hoped that its readers would not only be “amused but improved”.<sup>123</sup> Although the ‘improving’ tone of *LF* was similar to its sixpence rivals, Cassell & Co’s experience of “providing cheap and good literature for the masses” ensured that the cost of the magazine was kept to a penny per weekly instalment.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 986.

<sup>121</sup> J. Springhall, ‘Disreputable Adolescent Reading: Low-life, Women-in-peril and School Sport Penny Dreadfuls from the 1860s to the 1890s’, in M. Huggins and J. Mangan (eds), *Disreputable Pleasures: Less Virtuous Victorians at Play* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), p. 105.

<sup>122</sup> For further reading on how *Good Words for the Young* attempted to establish its ‘improving’ credentials by paying a premium for the signature of celebrated authors of children’s fiction and names high in the history of English book illustration, see: Darton, *Children’s Books in England*, p. 271.

<sup>123</sup> S. Nowell-Smith, *The House of Cassell, 1848-1958* (London: Cassell, 1958), p. 125.

<sup>124</sup> *Hull Packet and East Riding Times* (28 March 1873), p. 3.

As noted by Marjory Lang, *LF* was cheaper to produce because it contained a lower percentage of original fiction and benefited from Cassell's extensive back-catalogue of wood engravings and electrotypes.<sup>125</sup> The cost of producing *LF* was further reduced by dedicating a significant proportion of the magazine's pages to contributions from young readers. As can be seen in the following extract, *LF* adopted a friendly editorial tone and actively encouraged readers to contribute to the magazine:

As briefly announced in the December number of Little Folks, I intend to establish a new Department in our Magazine, called The Little Folks Post Office; and it is one which I think will be popular with you all. Its object is to afford a means whereby the Readers of Little Folks can tell their fellow-readers of some of their doings, and of some of the many interesting events which happen in their daily lives. Young though you are, yet I know – from the little letters you so often send – that there are numerous matters concerning yourselves of which other Girls and Boys would be delighted to be told; and so I invite you to take your pens and see what you can think of to write about.<sup>126</sup>

*LF*'s approach to reader participation was more than a mere cost-saving measure – it was integral to the 'improving' ethos of the magazine. This point is nicely illustrated by the "Little Folks Humane Society" which was founded in January 1882 for the purpose of inculcating kindness to animals. In order to become a member of the organisation, readers were required to sign a written pledge, attested by a parent, teacher, or other responsible person, promising "to be kind to every living creature that is useful and not harmful to

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<sup>125</sup> Lang, 'Childhood's Champions', p. 26.

<sup>126</sup> *Little Folks* (1 January 1888), p. 68.

man”.<sup>127</sup> The scheme was an immediate success with over half a million members enrolled by December 1884.<sup>128</sup> The society regularly offered essay writing and poetry competitions which were designed to facilitate self-improvement and encourage members to reflect on issues such as the morality of making pets of undomesticated animals.<sup>129</sup> As we shall see in Chapter Four, this ‘improving’ impulse also extended to *LF*’s hobby competitions which sought to occupy readers’ leisure hours profitably in an entertaining way whilst also serving a philanthropic function.

The main commercial rival to *LF* was James Henderson’s *Young Folks* (1871-1897) which was launched as a juvenile companion paper to the *Weekly Budget*. *YF* was founded as an ‘improving’ alternative to “the low, slangy, highway-man, pirate-style of literature [which] has a most pernicious effect upon young people”.<sup>130</sup> Henderson attempted to undercut the ‘penny dreadfuls’ by launching the magazine as an eight page halfpenny weekly for “boys and girls of all ages”. Christina Margaret Bashford observes that Henderson had a keen eye on developments in the market and strived to stay ahead of the competition by regularly revising the magazine’s title, content, and appearance. The most significant change came in 1873 when the magazine doubled in price and size.<sup>131</sup> Although the format of *YF* underwent

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<sup>127</sup> *Little Folks* (1 January 1882), p. 49. For further reading on how the periodical press encouraged young people to become involved in campaigns for the welfare of animals, see: F. Milton, ‘Newspaper Rivalry in Newcastle Upon Tyne, 1876-1919: Dicky Birds and Golden Circles’, *Northern History*, 46.2 (2009), pp. 277-291; Milton, ‘Taking the Pledge’, pp. 119-212.

<sup>128</sup> *Little Folks* (1 December 1884), p. 372.

<sup>129</sup> *Little Folks* (1883), p. 58.

<sup>130</sup> *Young Folks* (12 July 1873), p. 295.

<sup>131</sup> C. Bashford, ‘Our Young Folks (1871-1897)’, in L. Brake and M. Demoor (eds), *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: The British Library, 2009), pp. 473-474.

several changes during its twenty-six-year run, the purpose of the magazine remained the same: “To Inform, To Instruct, To Amuse”.<sup>132</sup>

In the existing secondary literature, *YF* is perhaps best known for serialising Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, and *The Black Arrow*.<sup>133</sup> While these adventure stories were a major selling point for the magazine, it is important not to underestimate the significance of reader participation. For example, the “Literary Olympic” was founded in January 1885 to offer advice and encouragement to boys and girls who were desirous of improving their literary abilities. As we shall see in Chapter Two, this feature was fondly remembered by a generation of British authors and led to the formation of a reading community which extended beyond the pages of the magazine. Along similar lines, Chapter Three will consider how the magazine’s “Letter-Box” page was inundated with queries from correspondents seeking careers advice. Thus, by the 1870s, the editors of ‘improving’ magazines issued by commercial publishers were interacting with readers in a myriad of ways.

### The Response of the ‘Improving’ Juvenile Periodical Press: Religious Magazines

The changing dynamics of the marketplace – the advent of the ‘penny dreadfuls’ and then the response of the commercially published ‘improving’ magazines designed to supplant them – had a profound impact on the religious publishers who dominated the market during the first half of the nineteenth century. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the first generation of religious juvenile periodicals assumed a didactic purpose and offered few opportunities for reader participation or feedback. As the century progressed, however, religious publishers

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<sup>132</sup> *Young Folks* (2 January 1871), p. 1.

<sup>133</sup> J. Pierce, ‘The Belle Lettrist and the People’s Publisher; or, The Context of *Treasure Island*’s First-Form Publication’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 31.4 (1998), pp. 356–68; T. Boone, *Youth of Darkest England: Working-Class Children at the Heart of Victorian Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 72–83.

came to recognise that it was necessary to appropriate aspects of their secular rivals in order to remain competitive and retain their influence over the rising generation. Crucially, the editors of these magazines sought to engage more directly with readers through correspondence columns, prize competitions, and club pages.

This change in publishing practices is nicely illustrated by the launch of the SSU's *Kind Words for Boys and Girls* (1866-1937).<sup>134</sup> As noted by William Henry Watson, the secretary of the SSU, the tone and content of *KW* was a significant point of departure from the overtly religious and pedagogical emphasis of their previous juvenile titles. Watson explained that the magazine was envisaged as a way of reaching "that very numerous class of the young, who are unhappily indisposed for religious instruction, and who gratify their tastes for reading by the purchase of weekly publications, which are more calculated to injure than improve their minds". *KW* was not marketed as a religious publication, although Watson reassured anxious parents and Sunday school teachers that the magazine was "conducted on Christian principles". According to Watson, this was a strategic move calculated to "attract the attention of those who will have something to read calculated to excite their imaginations".<sup>135</sup>

Watson's insight into the publishing history of *KW* lends credibility to Nelson's argument that publishers in the late Victorian era began to envisage "the child consumer as a powerful agent requiring cajoling rather than homilies. An excessively authoritarian text, like an

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<sup>134</sup> *Kind Word for Boys and Girls* underwent a remarkable transformation over the course of its seventy-one-year lifespan and was subject to several changes in format and title. The most significant change came in January 1880 when the magazine was enlarged in size and rebranded as *Young England: Kind Words for Boys and Girls*. Although the magazine was initially marketed as suitable for young people of both sexes, by the turn of the twentieth century the paper had been repackaged as *Young England: An Illustrated Magazine for Boys Throughout the English-Speaking World*.

<sup>135</sup> W. Watson, *The Sunday School Union: Its History and Work* (London: Sunday School Union, 1869), p. 66.



excessively authoritarian parent, would prove counterproductive”.<sup>136</sup> This was understood by Benjamin Clarke (1836-1893), the first editor of *KW*, who assured readers that the magazine would “do very little preaching” and avoid being “dull or gloomy”.<sup>137</sup> *KW* sought a friendlier and more intimate relationship with its readers than SSU’s earlier publications. An excellent example of this point is how the “Our Young Authors’ Page” attempted to foster a sense of community by dedicating space to the publication of readers’ contributions and prize-winning essays. Clarke was eager to stress, however, that *KW*’s competitions were “so unlike the miserable lotteries advertised by some, and are so much more varied in their character”.<sup>138</sup> This was a move calculated to reassure the SSU’s traditional audiences – religious families and Sunday school teachers – as to the wholesome credentials of the magazine. Although Clarke acknowledged that “it would be much easier to give prizes as some magazines do, merely as the result of holding a prize ticket”, he argued that this prize system was inappropriate for boys and girls as it “may serve to foster a taste for lotteries or raffles”. While he conceded that the prizes offered by *KW* were “not so many nor so attractive as those offered by some magazines”, he believed that merit-based competitions would provide the winners with a greater sense of satisfaction.<sup>139</sup> As we shall see in Chapter Two, there is evidence to suggest that the readers who participated in *KW*’s competitions concurred with this sentiment and appreciated the magazine for providing them with a stimulus for self-improvement.

Reader participation was also an important aspect of the SSU’s distribution strategy. In September 1883, Clarke asked readers for their cooperation “to make Young England known

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<sup>136</sup> C. Nelson, ‘Mixed Messages: Authoring and Authority in British Boys’ Magazines’, *Lion and the Unicorn: A Critical Journal of Children’s Literature*, 21.1 (1997), p. 14.

<sup>137</sup> *Kind Words* (1 January 1872), p. 18; *Young England* (1894), p. 573

<sup>138</sup> *Kind Words* (1 January 1871), p. 30.

<sup>139</sup> *Kind Words* (17 June 1869), p. 187.

in districts and neighbourhoods where a more general mode of advertising would possibly have failed”.<sup>140</sup> The editor established a “gratuitous circulation fund” and encouraged readers to donate money so that the magazine could be distributed for free “to children’s hospitals, workhouses, infirmaries, and to the alleys and courts of large cities and towns”.<sup>141</sup> Readers who were willing to assist in extending the circulation of the magazine could also become “pioneers” by requesting for periodical prospectuses to be sent to them post-free. These prospectuses would then be distributed by the pioneers in their local district. By September 1883, the magazine had enlisted the help of over 355 pioneers and the editor frequently received letters attesting to the success of the scheme in reaching the poor and disadvantaged, with copies circulating at The Asylum for Fatherless Children in Reedham, the Crossley Orphanage in Halifax, and the Orphan Working School in Haverstock Hill.<sup>142</sup>

The SSU’s commitment to supplying boys and girls with “instructing and at the same time healthy literature” won plaudits from literary critics.<sup>143</sup> For example, a reviewer for the *Blackpool Times* commended *KW* for attempting to “drive out of the field the ‘penny dreadful,’ which does so much to corrupt a certain class of youths”.<sup>144</sup> Nonetheless, the ‘moral panic’ surrounding the cheap and pernicious literature escalated throughout the 1870s. In 1878, an address on the dangers of “pernicious, impure, and sensational works for the young” was delivered to the RTS by Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Shaftesbury (1801-1885). Echoing Strahan’s criticism of the ‘penny dreadfuls’, he expressed concern that pernicious penny fiction was “creeping not only into the houses of the poor, neglected and

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<sup>140</sup> *Young England* (1 September 1883), p. 570.

<sup>141</sup> *Kind Words* (16 January 1868), p. 24; *Kind Words* (1 January 1871), p. 30.

<sup>142</sup> *Young England* (1 September 1883), p. 570.

<sup>143</sup> *Kind Words* (8 December 1870), p. 392.

<sup>144</sup> *Young England* (1 March 1885), p. 107.

untaught, but into the largest mansions; penetrating into religious families and astounding careful parents by its frightful issues”.<sup>145</sup> This alarmed the RTS which, as we have already seen, boasted a long-standing tradition of combatting the “depraving influence” of cheap literature. In continuation with this tradition, the RTS launched the *Boy’s Own Paper* (1879-1967) with the explicit aim of providing “healthy boy literature to counteract the vastly increasing circulation of illustrated and other papers and tales of a bad tendency”.<sup>146</sup>

Elizabeth Penner has recently demonstrated how the appointment of George Andrew Hutchison to design a specimen paper initiated a series of protracted debates within the RTS about how to make the magazine respectable without alienating boys.<sup>147</sup> The difficulty for Hutchison was finding a balance between the evangelical tone demanded by society members whilst also being of a kind that would appeal to “boys and not their grandmothers”.<sup>148</sup> In an interview for the *Daily News* in 1899, Hutchison explained that when the *BOP* was envisaged in the late 1870s, “we aimed at a magazine which would not be overladen with goody-goodism on the one hand, or which would not put forward ‘the scallywag’ as the hero to be looked up to and imitated”.<sup>149</sup> Hutchison was adamant that exciting fiction was necessary in order for the magazine to compete with the ‘penny dreadfuls’ and make the religious content more palatable. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, he also recognised the value of soliciting readers’ opinions, responding to their queries, and using competitions to transmit ‘improving’ socialising messages to boys.

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<sup>145</sup> E. Hodder, *The Life and Work of the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury*, vol. 3 (London: Cassell, 1886), p. 469.

<sup>146</sup> P. Dunae, ‘Boy’s Own Paper: Origins and Editorial Policies’, *Private Library*, 9.4 (1976), p. 127.

<sup>147</sup> Penner, ‘The Squire of Boyhood’, pp. 631-647.

<sup>148</sup> *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* (12 February 1913), p. 8.

<sup>149</sup> *Daily News* (29 April 1899), p. 8.

While Hutchison acknowledged that boys were consumers who wanted to be entertained, he lamented that “many of the committee desired a glorified tract”.<sup>150</sup> Although Hutchison’s prototypes were rejected by the society members, he refused to succumb to their pressure to include sermons in the *BOP*. A compromise was eventually reached as reluctant committee members were persuaded to accept the specimen paper with the reassurance that James Macaulay (1817-1902), who had previous experience of producing two successful family papers for the RTS, would preside over the magazine. As noted by Penner, this appointment was merely “a tactical move aimed at reassuring members that the core objectives of the RTS would be upheld”, with Hutchison operating as the *de facto* editor of the *BOP* until he was officially appointed to the position in 1897.<sup>151</sup> Even at the RTS, then, the desire to exercise social responsibility competed with the need to appeal to readers in a competitive commercial marketplace.

The *BOP* was launched at the competitive price of one penny per weekly instalment while simultaneously being available as a sixpence monthly. According to Jack Cox, the RTS had its eye on two different markets. The weekly issue was intended for “schoolboys, office boys, apprentices and cadets”, whereas middle-class families were encouraged to subscribe “in more dignified style” to the monthly edition. While the weekly issues were often “read and re-read, passed from hand to hand, loaned out and seized back, until it was grubby and falling apart”, monthly subscribers were advised to preserve their copies for “leisurely re-reading and later reference.”<sup>152</sup> The *BOP*’s bifurcated price structure meant that Hutchison was responsible for producing a paper that would appeal to boys from different walks of life. This explains the magazine’s ostensibly inclusive approach to reader participation. For example,

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<sup>150</sup> *Barrier Miner* (8 May 1912), p. 3.

<sup>151</sup> Penner, ‘The Squire of Boyhood’, p. 633.

<sup>152</sup> J. Cox, *Take a Cold Tub, Sir! The Story of the Boy’s Own Paper* (Guildford: Lutterworth Press, 1982), p. 22.

the *BOP* regularly offered prizes to readers who proved their merit in the magazine's literary, artistic, and mechanical competitions. According to Hutchison, this diverse range of competitions was calculated to appeal not only to "boys with leisure and opportunities", but also "boys who rarely have a shilling to spare".<sup>153</sup>

At first glance, Hutchison appears to have succeeded in producing a paper that appealed to boys from different walks of life. In August 1879, he announced with pleasure that "all classes and social conditions were represented among the competitors" for the *BOP*'s "Kindness to Animals" essay writing contest.<sup>154</sup> The competition received submissions not only from boys attending public and private schools, but also from less fortunate readers in workhouses, orphanages, and on-board training-ships. Upon closer inspection, however, there is evidence to suggest that the tone and content of the *BOP* became more socially exclusive as the century progressed. Penner makes an astute observation that "while the *Boy's Own Paper* appeared to make efforts to include lower-class boys, its reliance on the regular subscriptions of middle-class readers as a means of financial support increasingly widened the gap between the intended juvenile boy reader and what appears to be a middle-class family readership".<sup>155</sup> As we shall see in Chapter Three, this is evident from the *BOP*'s articles on employment in the 1890s which were primarily addressed to public school boys. Along similar lines, Chapter Four will demonstrate that many of the *BOP*'s prize winners were highly educated and came from wealthy families.

The conventional wisdom that the *BOP* was the most popular boys' paper of the nineteenth century is further undermined by Joseph McAleer's examination of the minutes of the RTS's

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<sup>153</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (27 October 1883), p. 62.

<sup>154</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (30 August 1879), p. 528.

<sup>155</sup> E. Penner, 'Masculinity, Morality, and National Identity in the Boy's Own Paper, 1879-1913' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, De Montfort University, 2016), p. 59.

Finance Sub-Committee which reveals that the circulation of the magazine declined by almost five per cent in 1888.<sup>156</sup> The *BOP* became increasingly reliant upon the financial support of the RTS as its formal circulation continued to decline until after the First World War. Although the *BOP* found it difficult to compete with Alfred Harmsworth's halfpenny magazines which flooded the juvenile periodical market in the 1890s, the RTS concluded that the magazine was worth supporting because they believed it was making an important contribution to the moral welfare of boys.<sup>157</sup> The RTS's support not only meant that Hutchison was able to prioritise the 'improving' ethos of the *BOP* over the pursuit of profit, but as we shall see in the section that follows, also led to the creation of a companion paper for girls.

#### The Dawn of Girls' Magazines: *Girl's Own Paper* and *Atalanta*

Following the enthusiastic critical response to the launch of the *BOP*, members of the RTS turned their attention to designing a companion paper for girls. The *Girl's Own Paper* was established in 1880 and ran under various titles until its eventual demise in 1956.<sup>158</sup>

According to Charles Peters (1855-1907), the editor of the *GOP* between 1880 and 1907, the RTS perceived that there was "a real want of a paper which girls could truly call their own".<sup>159</sup> Prior to the launch of the *GOP*, girls were not envisaged as a distinct audience. If a girl wanted to read a juvenile periodical, there was little choice other than to turn to "compound magazines" which were intended for young people of both sexes. This may

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<sup>156</sup> J. McAleer, *Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain, 1914-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 217.

<sup>157</sup> For a comparative study of the *Boy's Own Paper* and Alfred Harmsworth's magazines, see: S. Olsen, 'Raising Fathers, Raising Boys: Informal Education and Enculturation in Britain, 1880-1914' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, McGill University, 2008), pp. 57-71.

<sup>158</sup> The magazine underwent a significant change following the appointment of Emily Flora Klickmann (1867-1958) as editor in 1908. The name of the magazine was changed to the *Girl's Own Paper and Woman's Magazine* (1908-1927), before being rebranded as the *Woman's Magazine and Girl's Own Paper* (1927-1930).

<sup>159</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (25 February 1899), pp. 345-346.

explain why some girls read boys' papers for entertainment. For example, Salmon's study of "What Girl's Read" uncovered that "The Boy's Own Paper is studied by thousands of girls. The explanation is that they can get in boys' books what they cannot get in the majority of their own – a stirring plot and lively movement".<sup>160</sup> This observation is corroborated by the *BOP*'s correspondence column. In April 1879, the editor of the *BOP* gave the following response to a correspondent named "Alice":

The Boy's Own Paper is as much a favourite with girls as with boys, and there is nothing in its pages to prevent its being used in girls' schools in any grade of life, from the humblest parish school to the highest boarding school.<sup>161</sup>

Girls were initially welcomed by the editor of the *BOP* and were even permitted to participate in some of the competitions in early numbers of the magazine. The RTS concluded, however, that girls needed a 'gender-appropriate' magazine that would "help to train them in moral and domestic virtues, and prepare them for the responsibilities of womanhood and for a heavenly home".<sup>162</sup> Although periodicals addressed to "young ladies" had been available as early as 1838, the *GOP* was the first magazine to specifically cater to the needs of girls. As noted by Margaret Beetham and Kay Boardman, the *GOP* represented the beginning of "a second generation of magazines for young women, now re-defined as girls and appealing not just to a slightly younger age group but also a time of life, girlhood, not envisaged a generation earlier".<sup>163</sup> Along similar lines, Sally Mitchell observes that the dawn of girls' magazines

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<sup>160</sup> *Nineteenth Century Magazine* (1886), pp. 524.

<sup>161</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (26 April 1879), p. 240.

<sup>162</sup> *Leisure Hour* (6 December 1879), p. 772.

<sup>163</sup> Beetham and Boardman, *Victorian Women's Magazines*, p. 71. As a caveat, it is important to acknowledge that periodicals for women were not a nineteenth-century publishing phenomenon. Notable eighteenth-century precursors include the *Female Spectator* (1744-1746) and the *Lady's Magazine* (1770-1847). It was not until the nineteenth century, however, that publishers began to issue magazines specifically for young women such as the *Young Ladies' Magazine of Theology, History and General Knowledge* (1838), Charlotte Yonge's *Monthly*

dovetailed with the emergence of girlhood as “a separate stage of existence with its own values and interests” between 1880 and 1915.<sup>164</sup> As we shall see in subsequent chapters, this period was marked by changing attitudes towards women’s education, employment, and leisure. While these changes opened new opportunities for girls, they were also perceived as a threat to the middle-class feminine ideals of motherhood and domesticity. According to Samuel Gosnell Green (1822-1905), a Baptist minister who became editorial secretary of the RTS in 1881, an important function of the *GOP* was to provide readers with guidance on how to navigate properly the transition from girlhood into womanhood:

The period of girlhood is short and perilous. While the young man is still at college, a girl is frequently a wife and a mother. A young man of eighteen or twenty is very youthful compared with a girl of the same age. Between her schooldays and the serious commencement of her responsibilities, what can influence a girl for the better so much as a wise, Christian magazine?<sup>165</sup>

The launch of the *GOP* was also significant because it occurred at a time when the question of what constituted appropriate reading for girls was becoming particularly acute. Historians have traditionally assumed that the influence of penny fiction on girls was a minor concern for contemporary critics when contrasted with the ‘moral panic’ that arose from boys reading ‘penny dreadfuls’. In recent decades, however, scholars have identified that the reading habits of girls were also a major source of anxiety for middle-class critics in late-Victorian society. As Kate Flint argues in her seminal study *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914*, there were “two

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*Packet* (1851-1899), Samuel Orchart Beeton’s *Young Englishwoman* (1864-1877), and Edward Harrison’s *Young Ladies’ Journal* (1864-1920).

<sup>164</sup> S. Mitchell, *The New Girl: Girls’ Culture in England, 1880-1915* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 1.

<sup>165</sup> S. Green, *The Story of the Religious Tract Society for One Hundred Years* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1899), p. 128.



major possibilities for the cultural representation of women and reading during the period. Either the woman is improved and educated through access to approved knowledge...or reading of the forbidden leads to her downfall".<sup>166</sup> A similar tension can be detected in cultural representations of girls' reading practices. According to Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901), a novelist and religious writer, modern girls were "for the most part indiscriminate devourers of fiction".<sup>167</sup> As noted by Kimberley Reynolds, indiscriminate reading was perceived as problematic because it "meant that girls were likely to read fiction intended for a variety of different and frequently inappropriate audiences".<sup>168</sup> While Yonge was alarmed by this prospect, she contended that the reading habits of impressionable girls could still be refined by supplying them with "good magazines" such as the *GOP*.<sup>169</sup>

Yonge was not the only critic of juvenile literature to condemn the pernicious influence of 'penny novelettes' and popular romance fiction. In 1888, Salmon lamented that many books and periodicals for girls had "lapsed into the penny dreadful, composed of impossible love stories, of jealousies, murders and suicides".<sup>170</sup> He cautioned that although "the influence of these blood-and-murder concoctions among girls is not so apparent to the public eye as the influence of the burglar and bushranging fiction among boys, it must not be supposed that the influence is less real". While the 'penny dreadfuls' were perceived to turn boys toward violence and crime, Salmon warned that the injury 'penny novelettes' caused to girls was "more invidious and subtle". According to Salmon, girls who perused penny fictions acquired

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<sup>166</sup> K. Flint, *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 18. For further reading on the anxiety surrounding women's reading during the nineteenth century, see: L. Pykett, *The Improper Feminine: The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing* (London: Routledge, 1992); J. Pearson, *Women's Reading in Britain, 1750-1835: A Dangerous Recreation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>167</sup> C. Yonge, *What Books to Lend and What to Give* (London: National Society's Depository, 1887), p. 10.

<sup>168</sup> K. Reynolds, *Girls Only? Gender and Popular Children's Fiction in Britain, 1880-1910* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), p. 93.

<sup>169</sup> Yonge, *What Books to Lend*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>170</sup> Salmon, *Juvenile Literature*, p. 115.

“distorted views of life, and the bad influence of these works on themselves is handed down throughout the family”.<sup>171</sup> As can be seen in Figure 3, girls who perused penny fictions were often satirised as self-absorbed and negligent of their household duties. Although Salmon believed the threat posed by the ‘penny novelettes’ was serious, he concurred with Yonge that girls’ reading habits could still be refined by supplying them with an ‘improving’ alternative. Again, the *GOP* was recommended for its wholesome fiction and “interesting articles on all kinds of household matters”.<sup>172</sup>



Figure 3. *Judy: The Conservative Comic* (26 December 1894), p. 308.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 197-198.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

The RTS attempted to supplant the ‘penny novelettes’ by providing girls with a magazine that would serve as a “Counsellor, Playmate, Guardian, Instructor, Companion, and Friend”.<sup>173</sup> Although this intimate tone was prevalent throughout the *GOP*, it was most noticeable in the sections of the magazine which encouraged reader participation. For example, the editor was brought into regular contact with his readers through the competition page. As shall be explored in subsequent chapters, the competitions were designed not only to provide readers with amusement, but also to test their “ingenuity, taste, accomplishments, skill, and perseverance”.<sup>174</sup> Along similar lines, the ‘Answers to Correspondents’ column sought to offer “counsel and advice to any anxious and troubled soul needing it”.<sup>175</sup> As a caveat, it is worth observing that the *GOP* strongly objected to the idea of correspondents writing to “an absolute stranger” for advice on matters such as courtship and matrimony. This point is significant because it reveals that the RTS was cautious not to encroach on the parental “divine prerogative to teach, counsel, and rule their children”.<sup>176</sup> Despite this concern, Peters maintained that it was a privilege to offer guidance to readers on subjects relating to education, domestic economy, employment, and recreation.<sup>177</sup>

The *GOP* was the most profitable magazine issued by the RTS and is estimated to have outsold the *BOP* on a consistent basis.<sup>178</sup> Enterprising publishers attempted to capitalise upon the success of the *GOP* by issuing their own magazines for girls. For example, *Atalanta* was launched as a sixpence monthly by Hatchards in 1887. The target audience of *Atalanta* differed markedly from that of the *GOP*. While the RTS marketed their magazine as being

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<sup>173</sup> *Leisure Hour* (6 December 1879), p. 772.

<sup>174</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (25 February 1899), p. 345.

<sup>175</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (7 August 1880), p. 512.

<sup>176</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (11 October 1884), pp. 22-23.

<sup>177</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (7 August 1880), p. 512.

<sup>178</sup> McAleer, *Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain*, pp. 210-211.

suitable “for girls of all classes”, *Atalanta* carved out a niche as a high-class literary magazine for girls merging into womanhood.<sup>179</sup> Under the editorship of L. T. Meade (1844-1914), a prolific writer of girls’ stories, the defining characteristic of the magazine was a strong emphasis on facilitating self-improvement and promoting the higher education of women.<sup>180</sup> This point is nicely illustrated by the ‘Atalanta Scholarship and Reading Union’ (a distance learning scheme which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two) which invited readers to participate in a systematic course of literary study at home. Along similar lines, the ‘Atalanta Debating Club’ encouraged independent thinking by inviting readers to exchange their opinions on topics such as the impact of women’s higher education on home life and the political rights of women. These initiatives won plaudits from the press for “offering not only substantial prizes, but what is infinitely more valuable, stimulus to good work, to high thinking, and to all-round improvement”.<sup>181</sup> Thus, by the 1890s, reader participation was also established as a regular feature of girls’ magazines and envisaged as a way of moulding the values and behaviours of the next generation of women.

### Conclusion

This chapter has provided a long-overdue exploration of the relationship between the ‘improving’ juvenile periodical press and the emergence of reader participation. It argues that the emergence of reader participation was a significant development which transformed how socialising messages were transmitted and received by boys and girls. During the early nineteenth century, the juvenile periodical market was dominated by religious publishers

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<sup>179</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (2 October 1880), p. 15.

<sup>180</sup> For further reading on how *Atalanta* promoted the higher education of women, see: K. Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood Through the Periodical Press, 1850-1915* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 115-137; J. Dawson, ‘Write a Little Bit Every Day: L. T. Meade, Self-Representation, and the Professional Woman Writer’, *Victorian Review*, 35.1 (2009), pp. 132-152; Dawson, ‘L. T. Meade, *Atalanta*, and the Family Literacy Magazine’, pp. 475-498.

<sup>181</sup> *Sevenoaks Chronicle and Kentish Advertiser* (30 September 1887), p. 7.

whose interactions with readers were often didactic and unidirectional. As the century progressed, however, soliciting readers' opinions became increasingly important for commercial and moral reasons. Although the editors of juvenile periodicals often had their own agendas, boys and girls came to be regarded as consumers whose needs and desires were influential in shaping the content of magazines. Crucially, the changing dynamics of the marketplace led the editors of juvenile periodicals to become invested in opening up conversations with readers through correspondence columns, competitions, and club pages. As we shall see in the chapters that follow, these sites of encounter in the juvenile periodical press are worth studying because they can offer mediated glimpses into how readers responded to socialising messages about education, employment, and leisure.

## CHAPTER TWO: EDUCATION

They [competitions] are intended to fill up some of your leisure, both with interest and profit to yourselves. The information which you may gain, the facility of expression which they may cause you to acquire, and the habits of thought and application which they may engender, will be invaluable to you, and will one day be more appreciated, when you can be no longer addressed as our readers. As we have said before, it is this consideration that induces us to announce these competitions, and it is this consideration that serves to brighten the heavy labour induced in adjudicating upon them.<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

The relationship between the growth of the English juvenile periodical press and changes in educational opportunities for boys and girls has been explored in a variety of ways. As discussed in Chapter One, historians have debated the extent to which the Education Act 1870 facilitated the expansion of the juvenile periodical press. Other studies have examined how girls' magazines assiduously spread information about the higher education of women.<sup>2</sup> A considerable amount of scholarly attention has also been devoted to the literary, social, and cultural significance of the school story genre.<sup>3</sup> This chapter, however, explores the role that

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<sup>1</sup> *Kind Words* (1 October 1871), pp. 317-318.

<sup>2</sup> S. Mitchell, *The New Girl: Girls' Culture in England, 1880-1915* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 45-73; K. Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood Through the Periodical Press, 1850-1915* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 115-137; K. Moruzi, 'Higher Education and Home Duties: The Morality of Self-Interest in the Periodical Press, 1880-1910', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 50.4 (2017), pp. 686-702.

<sup>3</sup> For further reading on public school stories in nineteenth-century boys' papers, see: L. James, 'Tom Brown's Imperialist Sons', *Victorian Studies*, 17.1 (1973), pp. 89-99; J. Richards, *Happiest Days: The Public School in English Fiction* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 103-119; J. Springhall, 'Boys of Birchem School: The Penny Dreadful Origins of the English School Story', *History of Education*, 20.2 (1991), pp. 77-94; R. Kirkpatrick and M. Taylor, *Victorian School Stories in Books and Periodicals* (Oxford: Privately Published, 2001); J. Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (London: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 321-335. For further reading on public school stories in nineteenth-century girls' magazines, see: M. Cadogan and P. Craig, *You're a Brick Angela: A New Look at Girls' Fiction from 1839 to 1975* (London: Victor

juvenile periodicals played in the education of boys and girls away from the formal environment of the school, college, or university. According to Hugh Cunningham, the proportion of children aged five to fourteen who attended school in England and Wales rose from twenty-four per cent in 1870 to forty-eight per cent in 1880.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that informal education remained important because even after the onset of the much-vaunted new culture brought in by the education acts, most young people were still permanently removed from formal educational environments at the young age of twelve by the turn of the twentieth century. Thus, informal sources of education often played a more significant role in the socialisation process than formal schooling.

This chapter contributes to an emerging body of scholarship which aims to understand how nineteenth-century periodicals served as “a kind of quasi- or supplementary schoolroom, offering both practical and moral instruction to readers on every topic imaginable”.<sup>5</sup>

Although scholars building on the pioneering work of Marjory Lang have considered how juvenile periodicals introduced boys and girls to subjects which were not part of the formal school curriculum, there has been little consideration of how readers responded to informal learning opportunities and socialising messages about self-improvement.<sup>6</sup> This chapter sets

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Gollancz, 1975); Mitchell, *The New Girl*, pp. 74-102; M. Smith, *Empire in British Girls' Literature and Culture: Imperial Girls, 1880-1915* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 60-83; B. Rodgers, *Adolescent Girlhood and Literary Culture at the Fin de Siècle: Daughters of Today* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 79-133.

<sup>4</sup> H. Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500* (Harlow: Longman, 1995), p. 157.

<sup>5</sup> J. Schroeder, 'Victorian Education and the Periodical Press', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 50.4 (2017), p. 680.

<sup>6</sup> M. Lang, 'Scenes from Small Worlds: The Child, The Family and Society in Selected Children's Periodicals of the 1870s' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Leicester, 1980), p. 74. For further reading on the popular dissemination of science in nineteenth-century juvenile periodicals, see: D. Dixon, 'Children's Magazines and Science in the Nineteenth Century', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 34.3 (2001), pp. 228-238; R. Noakes, 'The Boy's Own Paper and the Late-Victorian Juvenile Magazine', in G. Cantor et al., *Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical: Reading the Magazine of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 151-171; J. Topham, 'Periodicals and the Making of Reading Audiences for Science in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Youth's Magazine, 1828-37', in G. Cantor et al., *Culture and Science in Nineteenth Century Media* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 57-69; C. Banham, 'Natural History in the Periodical

out to address this gap in the secondary literature by focusing on two sites of encounter in the juvenile periodical press. As the editor of *Young England* suggests in the epigraph above, ‘improving’ magazines attempted to assist the informal education of young people by encouraging reader participation in competitions. Accordingly, this chapter begins by considering how juvenile periodicals offered competitions as means of nurturing literary talent and stimulating young people to efforts of self-improvement. The second section will demonstrate how competitions were also used to disseminate historical knowledge and ‘gender-appropriate’ values to boys and girls. More specifically, this section investigates how juvenile periodicals supplied readers with biographical sketches and competitions which were calculated not only to improve their historical knowledge, but also encourage them to emulate the lives of ‘great men’ and ‘eminent women’. The focus of this chapter then shifts to a discussion about how ‘improving’ magazines encouraged readers to participate in correspondence-based distance learning schemes which were designed to assist young people who were desirous of continuing their studies at home. As we shall see throughout this chapter, there is evidence to suggest that the boys and girls who participated in competitions and distance learning schemes regarded juvenile periodicals as valuable channels of informal education.

### Literary Competitions and Self-Improvement

Laurie Langbauer has recently argued that a “juvenile tradition” of young writers flourished in Britain between 1750 and 1835. While Langbauer identifies that schools and universities were the primary “training grounds for such writing”, she proposes that “prize competitions within newspapers and periodicals provided another platform for soliciting and advancing

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Literature of Victorian Working Class Boys’, *Childhood in the Past*, 2.1 (2009), pp. 132-150; J. Petzold, ‘The End Was Not Ignoble? Bird-Nesting Between Cruelty, Manliness, and Science Education in British Children’s Periodicals, 1850-1900’, in J. McGavran (ed.), *Time of Beauty, Time of Fear: The Romantic Legacy in the Literature of Childhood* (Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 2012), pp. 128-150.



juvenile compositions at this time”.<sup>7</sup> Langbauer supports this contention by discussing how Richard Phillips’s *Monthly Preceptor, or Juvenile Museum of Knowledge and Entertainment* (1800-1803) was advertised as featuring the “Prize Productions of Young Students; and a monthly distribution of prizes, value fifteen guineas and upwards”.<sup>8</sup> Although the competitions were a short-lived affair, they were fondly remembered by William Axon (1846-1913), a librarian and antiquary, who recalled in 1901 that “the prizes were a distinct success”:

In the dingy volumes of ‘The Juvenile Library’ we have ‘enshrined and embalmed’ the early efforts of Leigh Hunt, Thomas De Quincey, Thomas Love Peacock, William Johnson Fox, George Ormerod, the Cheshire historian, and Henry Kirke White. Amongst the prize-winners whose literary efforts were not printed were N. W. Senior, and Sir Edward Parry, the Arctic explorer.<sup>9</sup>

While Langbauer’s study makes a valuable contribution to the history of juvenile writing, it is important to remember that competitions were atypical in juvenile periodicals during the first half of the nineteenth century. As discussed in Chapter One, the religious publishers who dominated the juvenile periodical market during this period had little reason to encourage reader participation because their magazines were often designed to serve a didactic purpose in Sunday schools. The situation began to change around the 1850s, however, as Samuel Orchart Beeton invited readers of the *Boy’s Own Magazine* to participate in the magazine’s

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<sup>7</sup> L. Langbauer, *The Juvenile Tradition: Young Writers and Prolepsis, 1750–1835* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 60-61. For further reading on how essay writing competitions in newspapers and magazines were influenced by the practice of schools and universities offering prizes, see: E. Simpson, ‘Minstrelsy Goes to Market: Prize Poems, Minstrel Contests, and Romantic Poetry’, *ELH*, 71.3 (2004), pp. 691-718.

<sup>8</sup> Langbauer, *Juvenile Tradition*, pp. 59-61. For further reading on the publishing history of the *Monthly Preceptor*, see: A. Rauch, ‘Preparing the Rising Generation: Romanticism and Richard Phillips’s *Juvenile Library, 1800–1803*’, *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 15.1 (1991), pp. 3-27.

<sup>9</sup> *Library* (1901), p. 68. The monthly issues of the *Monthly Preceptor* appeared under the title of the *Juvenile Library*.

monthly essay writing competitions on topics such as sport, history, and zoology. According to Beeton, the purpose of these trials of intellectual and literary ability was to cultivate boys into men by improving their faculties of expression. He explained that the competitions were calculated to help “our English youth to grow up rugged and independent thinkers, and capable of giving a plain, unvarnished account of what they practically know”. Readers were informed that this was an invaluable skill to learn: “with it, a man stands a chance of rising to the highest post in the land; without it, he stands no chance of making any great way in the world.”<sup>10</sup>

The extent to which competitors were actuated by the pure motive of self-improvement is difficult to determine. As discussed in the Introduction, the history of reading is often fragmentary and reliant upon serendipitous discoveries. An extension of this problem is that there are few sources documenting why readers participated in competitions. Fortunately, correspondence columns can sometimes offer an insight into motivations of competitors. For example, the following letter from “W. H. B” appeared in the *BOM*’s correspondence column in June 1867:

Being now engaged in business, I have not the time to devote to study that I used to have, and so fear that I must forego the pleasure of again competing for the Boy’s Own Prizes. This I very much regret, for the connection with your Magazine have been the means of introducing me to many of the principal Essayists, and you will perhaps be pleased to hear that we have formed amongst ourselves a Literary Society for the mutual improvement of its members in the art of literary composition.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 February 1862), p. 84.

<sup>11</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 June 1867).

While it is possible that this letter of gratitude was strategically inserted by the editor to serve as an endorsement for the magazine, “W. H. B” was not the only reader to claim that participating in the *BOM*’s essay competitions was a valuable experience. William Thomas Stead (1849-1912), the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* between 1883 and 1889, recalls in his “personal and spiritual reminiscences” how essay writing competitions were an important source of informal education during his formative boyhood years.<sup>12</sup> After leaving school at the age of thirteen in 1863, Stead was apprenticed as office-boy in a merchant’s counting house on Quayside, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Earning threepence per week in pocket money, Stead was able to afford the *BOM* and participate in its competitions. According to Stead, the essay writing competitions were a major part of the magazine’s appeal:

Like most other youths in those days I was in the habit of competing for the modest prize offered for essays in the *Boy’s Own Magazine*, which was then published by S. O. Beeton. I wrote several, always under the name of W. T. Silcoates.<sup>13</sup>

Searching for this pseudonym in Gale’s *NCUKP* helps in this instance to confirm Stead’s recollection. The search results reveal that Stead participated in competitions on the villains of Shakespeare, the Moors of Spain, the philosophy of the ferule, and the right use of money.<sup>14</sup> His solitary success came at the age of seventeen in a competition on the life of Oliver Cromwell.<sup>15</sup> Stead recalled that in compiling the essay he “took a great deal more pains than in writing any book I have since published...and I certainly enjoyed much more keenly that first triumph than any successes achieved in later years”.<sup>16</sup> This effort did not go

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<sup>12</sup> E. Stead, *My Father, Personal & Spiritual Reminiscences* (London: William Heinemann, 1913).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>14</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1865-1866).

<sup>15</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 July 1867).

<sup>16</sup> Stead, *Personal & Spiritual Reminiscences*, p. 26.

unacknowledged by the editor who remarked that “the writer has evidently entered heart and soul into the production of a glowing picture of his hero”.<sup>17</sup> Beeton was also impressed by the range and specialisation of Stead’s reading with the prize-winning essay referencing works such as Thomas Carlyle’s *Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (1845), Clarendon’s *History of the Rebellion* (1702-1704), and Samuel Butler’s *Hudibras* (1684).<sup>18</sup> For his efforts, Stead was awarded a prize of one guinea, to be taken out in books published by the proprietor of the *BOM*. In the following extract, Stead fondly recalls the process of claiming his prize:

I remember, as if it were yesterday, carefully going through the little catalogue making up my guinea’s worth, and after selecting books valued at twenty shillings I chose the Poetical Works of James Russell Lowell to make up the guinea. That little volume, with its green paper cover, lies before me now, thumbed almost to pieces, underscored and marked in the margin throughout, and inside there is written: ‘To W. T. Silcoates, with Mr. Beeton’s best wishes.’ It was one of Beeton’s Companion Poets and bore on its cover ‘Books of Worth.’ With the exception of the little copy of Thomas à Kempis which General Gordon gave to me as he was starting for Khartoum, it is the most precious of all my books. It has been with me everywhere. In Russia, in Ireland, in Rome, in Prison, it has been a constant companion.<sup>19</sup>

The *BOM* was not the only juvenile periodical to receive letters from readers who regarded competitions as a stimulus for self-improvement. For example, *Young Folks* often received amateur contributions from “young persons who are actuated by the keenest ambition to obtain some position, however humble, in the great roll of literary characters”. According to

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<sup>17</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 July 1867).

<sup>18</sup> For further reading on the reception of Oliver Cromwell in Victorian Britain, see: B. Worden, *Roundhead Reputations: The English Civil Wars and the Passions of Posterity: The English Civil War and the Passions of Posterity* (London: Allen Lane, 2001), pp. 243-295.

<sup>19</sup> Stead, *Personal & Spiritual Reminiscences*, pp. 26-27.

the editor, many of these contributions were from boys and girls who were “born in a position of life which makes it almost impossible for them to secure the great advantages which a long-continued and thorough education confers on more fortunate people”. The editor acknowledged that “the task before such a young person, entering upon the business of self-improvement and self-elevation thus poorly equipped and furnished for the attainment of his object is a difficult one” and he sought to provide these boys and girls with opportunities to showcase their literary abilities.<sup>20</sup> In October 1877, the editor remarked that the volume of submissions “shows that there is a great deal of talent amongst the young people who read our journal, and that this talent only wants an opportunity to display itself”.<sup>21</sup> To satisfy the demands of these readers, he announced that a forthcoming issue would host a “literary festival” devoted to their amateur productions. This is significant because it challenges the assumption that young people were passive recipients of adult teaching. Rather, it suggests that readers of *YF* were active consumers whose needs and desires were influential in shaping the content of the magazine.

The “Young Folks Literary Festival” invited readers to compete against each other for the honour of seeing their work in print. The editor believed that this would not only afford readers “a great deal of pleasure but also a great deal of self improvement”. The first literary festival, which was held in November 1877, reproduced the works of twelve contributors and spanned across three pages of the magazine. Although the editor believed that the literary festival was a distinct success, he was eager to receive feedback from readers of the magazine. In particular, the editor wanted “to know how the readers who do not write, the great deal of our Young Folk, have enjoyed this treat”. If their feedback was positive, he promised that the magazine would “hold another literary *conversazione* before very many

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<sup>20</sup> *Young Folks* (8 June 1878), p. 397.

<sup>21</sup> *Young Folks* (20 October 1877), pp. 253-254.

weeks have elapsed”.<sup>22</sup> This remark further strengthens the argument made in Chapter One that the difficult task of balancing social responsibility and commercial remuneration was the fundamental issue at the heart of the juvenile periodical publishing industry during the second half of the nineteenth century. While the editor was eager to assist readers in their efforts towards self-improvement, the commercial pressures of operating in a competitive market meant that the magazine needed to appeal to as broad an audience as possible. Thus, the literary festivals ran intermittently for three years as the editor sought to ascertain whether there was sufficient demand to turn them into a regular feature of the magazine.

In January 1880, the editor observed that the demand for a “Literary Reunion” was “very general, and, as it is our constant desire to comply with every very general demand, we felt that we could not refuse”.<sup>23</sup> The readers of *YF* were invited to compete for certificates of merit rather than monetary prizes. The editor explained that his experience of writing for a now discontinued publication had taught him not to hold out “inducements to literary competition to persons who might strive to excel from any motive less pure and less elevated than those we have named”.<sup>24</sup> Readers were informed that “those who are not actuated by the pure motives of self-improvement or self-assertion need not compete”.<sup>25</sup> The editor had initially intended to provide every competitor whose work was published in the magazine with constructive criticism on the merits and demerits of their compositions. Although this

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<sup>22</sup> *Young Folks* (10 November 1877), p. 301.

<sup>23</sup> *Young Folks* (3 January 1880), pp. 61-62.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61. The most likely candidate for this unspecified discontinued publication is James Henderson’s *Prize Paper*, a juvenile periodical for the “youth of both sexes” which offered substantial prizes, given in money or books, for amateur efforts in literature and art. This short-lived publication was launched in March 1879 and was pronounced “dead” just five months later. The publishing history of this magazine is unclear as copies have not been preserved in archival collections. However, the magazine was frequently mentioned in *Young Folks*’s editorial columns. For references to *Prize Paper*, see: *Young Folks* (1 March 1879), p. 141; *Young Folks* (24 May 1879), p. 333; *Young Folks* (9 August 1879).

<sup>25</sup> *Young Folks* (3 January 1880), p. 62.

idea was met with an enthusiastic response from readers who participated in the competitions, it was prematurely abandoned in the midsummer due to concerns about the amount of space being taken up in the magazine. The editor clarified that he felt that readers who did not participate in the competitions had reason to complain of the great prominence given to the few who did, and “though such complaints have not reached us, we resolved that we would not give so much occasion for these at any other time”.<sup>26</sup>

In January 1885, the literary festivals were revived as the magazine was rebranded and doubled in size to a sixteen-page format.<sup>27</sup> Appearing under a new guise of the “Literary Olympic”, the festivals ran without interruption for four years. In 1887, William Sharp (1855-1905) was appointed as the literary editor of the magazine after Eric Robertson (1857-1926) stepped down to fill the vacant chair of Literature and Logic at the University of Lahore. An overview of the “Literary Olympic” is provided in a memoir of Sharp’s life compiled by his wife, Elizabeth Amelia Sharp:

‘The Literary Olympic’ was a portion of the paper devoted to the efforts in prose and verse of the Young Folk who wished to exercise their budding literary talents. Their papers were examined, criticised; a few of the most meritorious were printed, prefaced by an article of criticism and instruction written by their Editor and critic. The work itself was congenial; and the interest was heightened by the fact that it put us into touch with the youth of all classes, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, in town and country, alike. Several of the popular novelists and essayists of to-day received the chief early training in the ‘Olympic.’ Many were the confidential personal letters to the unknown editor, who was imagined by one or two young aspirants to be white-

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<sup>26</sup> *Young Folks* (7 August 1880), p. 54.

<sup>27</sup> *Young Folks* (13 December 1884), p. 192.

haired and venerable. This work, moreover, could be done at home, by us both; and it brought a reliable income, a condition of security hitherto unknown to us, which proved an excellent tonic to the delicate Editor.<sup>28</sup>

There is evidence to support Sharp's claim that the "Literary Olympic" served as a training ground for young amateurs budding out into dignified authors. There are several instances of authors attributing their literary success to the competitions in *YF*. For example, Arthur Bennett (1862-1931), a Warrington-born poet, recalled in *The Music of My Heart* (1889) that "it was in 'Young Folks' that my own earliest literary aspirations met with sympathy".<sup>29</sup> William Edward Cule (1870-1944), a Cardiff-born journalist and author of children's stories, made a similar claim when he was asked to provide an account of his literary career in November 1900. According to Cule, the "Literary Olympic" provided an outlet for his passion for writing and opened up journalism as an alternative career path to the commercial work that his parents intended him for.<sup>30</sup>

Sharp's observation that the "Literary Olympic" brought herself and her husband into contact with aspiring young writers from England, Scotland, and Ireland is also supported by a supplement that was given away with the Christmas number of the magazine in 1885. As can be seen in Figure 4, the supplement featured the portraits of the forty most distinguished contributors to the "Literary Olympic and Tournament".<sup>31</sup> The portraits, which were supplied by readers of the magazine, were arranged "with a view of producing the best pictorial effect", rather than arranging the forty competitors in order of literary merit.<sup>32</sup> For this reason,

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<sup>28</sup> E. Sharp, *William Sharp (Fiona Macleod): A Memoir* (New York: Duffield, 1910), pp. 127-128.

<sup>29</sup> A. Bennett, *The Music of My Heart* (Manchester: Palmer & Howe, 1889), p. 141.

<sup>30</sup> *Chambers's Journal* (17 November 1900), p. 810.

<sup>31</sup> The "Riddle Tournament" was a page where readers were invited to submit original riddles for other members to solve. There was a significant amount of overlap between the two departments.

<sup>32</sup> *Young Folks* (26 December 1885), p. 415.



the eight girls who formed a core part of the group were placed in the centre of the supplement. Although the readers represented in the supplement were aged between sixteen and twenty-four, many of them had grown up with the magazine and contributed amateur literary productions from a young age. For example, Fred Wallis (whose portrait is the first to appear in the supplement) was fourteen when he submitted his first essay to the magazine in February 1880. After the editor highlighted the faults with Wallis's essay, he informed the young contributor that "study and practice are the means of improvement".<sup>33</sup> Wallis followed this advice and regularly contributed to the magazine until he turned twenty-one in 1887.<sup>34</sup>

The editor encouraged the readers represented in the supplement to preserve their copies of the magazine so that one day they may return to it and reflect on their youthful literary exertions.<sup>35</sup> Almost thirty-five years later, Edward Blair's "Recollections of an Old Olympian" was published in Frank Jay's history of nineteenth-century magazines.<sup>36</sup> Blair explained that he had preserved his weekly numbers of *YF* in bound volumes and turned to the supplement (in which his portrait appears on the third row) to offer his reflections on the names that once comprised "the cadet company of the 'Y.F.P.' Battalion". Blair organised members of the "Literary Olympic" by gender, listing first "a very few of the ladies", whilst stressing "there were many more equally as gifted". First to be named was Mabel A. Clinton, "whose charming little stories of child life were favourite with all of us". He lauded Marion Taylor (1862-1949) as "The Queen of the Tournament...for her excellent poetical gifts", noting that she later married a fellow member "of the most brilliant of the little circle" (Arthur St John Adcock [1864-1930], who would later become a novelist and freelance

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<sup>33</sup> *Young Folks* (28 February 1880), p. 189.

<sup>34</sup> *Young Folks* (5 February 1887), p. 94.

<sup>35</sup> *Young Folks* (26 December 1885), p. 415.

<sup>36</sup> Edward Blair to Frank Jay, 22 July 1920, *Peeps into the Past: Being a History of Old-Time Periodicals, Journals and Books*, reproduced at <https://peepsintothepast.wordpress.com> [accessed 7 July 2019].

writer) and that their daughter (Marion St John Adcock Webb [1880-1930], a noted children's novelist and poet) was now "wielding a pen in a manner even more charming than our undisputed Queen". Marie Connor Leighton (1866-1941) "startled the world with detective stories", while Ailsa Craig (1869-1947) "contributed some pretty pen pictures, as might be expected from one so artistically connected".<sup>37</sup> Blair then turned his attention to "the gentlemen" who participated in the "Literary Olympic" in an even greater number:

Mr. Coulson took himself very seriously in those days, judging by some excellent verses of his I have just been reading. Mr. Adcock and Mr. Coulson often ran in harness together, and an excellent couple they made. I wonder if now they are at the summit of the ladder they ever look back upon those days? There was also David Gow. Personally, Mr. Gow was my favourite, though I have never come across any of his work since those days. He always charmed me, and, looking over his verses since then I have seen no reason for changing that feeling. There were many more I could mention. Mr. Arthur E. Waite, whose charming little compilation, 'Elfin Music,' Canterbury Poet series, is a pleasant memory to me. He also wrote a book of verse, 'Israfel,' which was very highly spoken of, but I never managed to get hold of it. Then there was 'Erne S. Leigh,' J. Webber Baker, who died very young. J. Archer Bellchambers, Juan C. Drenor, and Maryweather, who wrote 'The Angels' Dream,' with a haunting melody in it reminiscent of Edgar Allan Poe.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Alisa Craig was the daughter of Edward William Godwin (1833-1886), an English architect-designer, and Dame Alice Ellen Terry (1847-1928), who was famous for being the leading Shakespearean actress in Britain. M. Booth, "Terry, Dame Ellen Alice (1847-1928)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Available at <https://www.oxforddnb.com/> [Accessed: 22 July 2019].

<sup>38</sup> Edward Blair to Frank Jay, 22 July 1920, *Peeps into the Past: Being a History of Old-Time Periodicals, Journals and Books*, reproduced at <https://peepsintothepast.wordpress.com> [accessed 7 July 2019].

YOUNG FOLKS PAPER—PORTRAIT SUPPLEMENT—CHRISTMAS NUMBER, 1885.

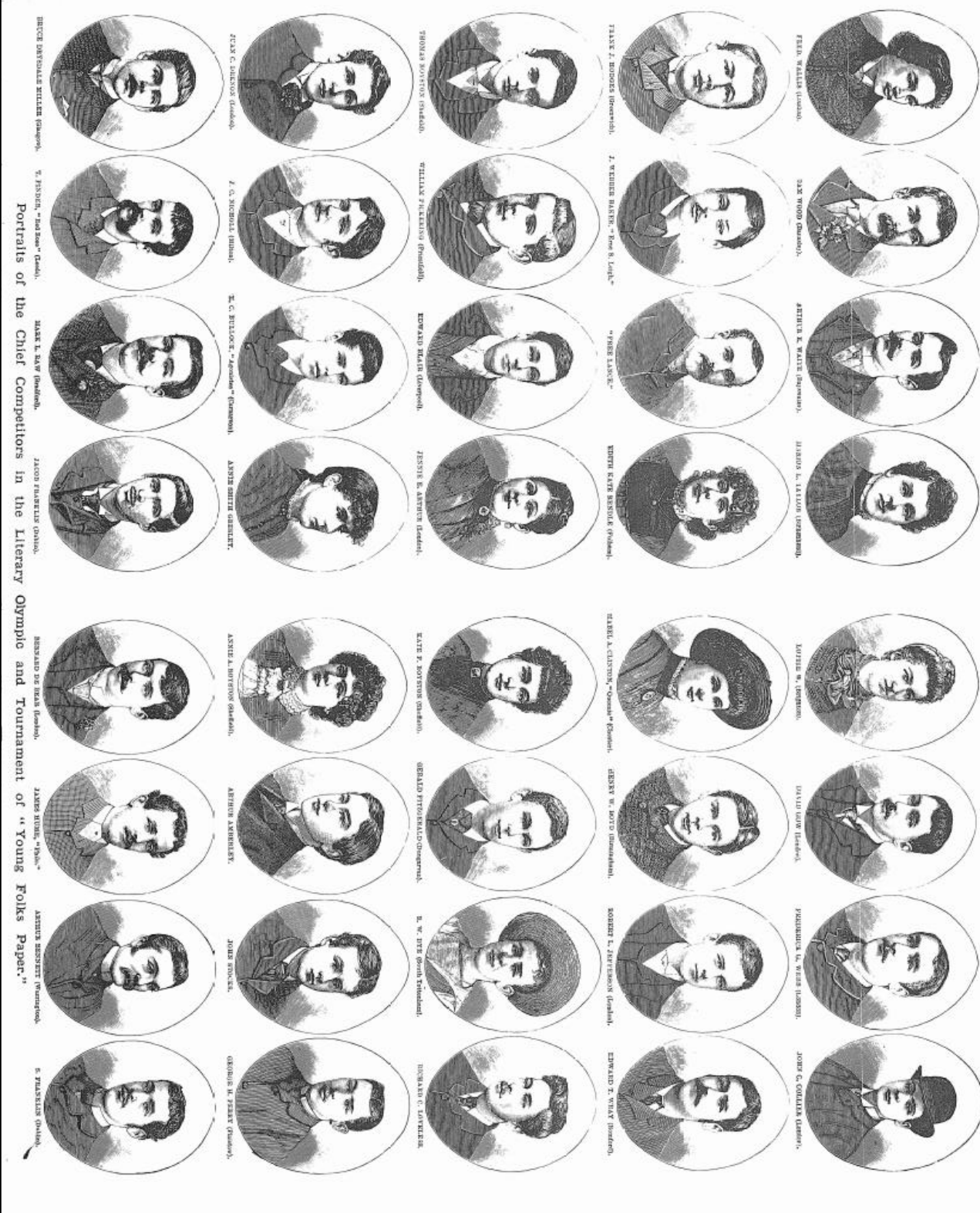


Figure 4. *Young Folks* (1885), p. 448.

The existing secondary literature on the history of nineteenth-century print culture has often considered how magazines functioned as “imagined communities” in the Andersonian sense, connecting thousands of readers who were unlikely ever to encounter each other directly.<sup>39</sup> There is, however, compelling evidence to argue that the “Literary Olympic” was a reading community which extended physically beyond the pages of the magazine. According to Bennett, some members “had gradually the good fortune to become personally intimate” and a series of picnics were arranged to facilitate the “interchange of opinions on congenial topics”.<sup>40</sup> The first of these picnics, which took place in London on a Bank Holiday in 1886, was described by the aforementioned Fred Coulson in a letter to the editor of *YF*.<sup>41</sup> The picnic was attended by a mixed-sex group of the London-based members. Upon hearing about this outing, the editor was puzzled “to conjecture how the friends mentioned in this picnic have found each other out”. The editor explained that various considerations had been made to prevent the magazine “becoming the direct medium of introduction between one correspondent and another”. Nonetheless, the editor was delighted to hear that “Fred Coulson and his party seem to be on the best of terms all round, and we congratulate the Richmond pilgrims on the success of their Bank Holiday outing”.<sup>42</sup>

While the editor had intended for the magazine to be a “vehicle for the conveyance of thought” rather than a “medium for personal introductions”, he informed readers that “it is a source of deep satisfaction to us to know that so many pleasant friendships have been formed

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<sup>39</sup> B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), p. 6. For further reading on how the concept of “imagined communities” has been used in field of periodical studies, see: C. Kitch, ‘Theory and Methods of Analysis: Models for Understanding Magazines’, in D. Abrahamson, M. Prior-Miller, and Bill Emmott (eds), *The Routledge Handbook to Magazine Research: The Future of the Magazine Form* (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 12; Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, p. 13.

<sup>40</sup> Bennett, *Music of My Heart*, p. 141.

<sup>41</sup> *Young Folks* (22 May 1886), p. 333.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 333.

through the instrumentality of our journal”.<sup>43</sup> In a few instances, as we have seen in the case of Marion Taylor noted above, these friendships led to marriage proposals.<sup>44</sup> For example, the 1891 England Census reveals that Edith Rendle (1866-1930), who was employed as a journalist, married David Gow (1866-1939), who was working as a shorthand writer.<sup>45</sup> Thus, while the “Literary Olympic” was designed to showcase the literary talents of young people and inculcate self-improvement, the scheme also played an important role in developing a sense of community amongst its readers as they worked towards writing careers beyond the pages of the magazine.

The essay writing competitions in *Kind Words for Boys and Girls* lend further credibility to the argument that juvenile periodicals were appreciated by young people who sought opportunities to develop their literary talents. As noted in Chapter One, the “Our Young Authors’ Page” asked readers to submit their original stories, poems, and essays for adjudication in competitions. As the editor explained to readers in January 1887, the ostensible aim of these competitions was to facilitate self-improvement:

During the past year our popular Prize Competitions have given occupation, not to say recreation, to a large circle of readers of both sexes, in whom a spirit of friendly rivalry has produced results mutually beneficial. The fact of trying to excel has made the fingers more nimble or skilful, and the thinking powers more clear and vigorous; and the competitions, of a literary character especially, have done much to widen and improve the faculties of self-expression. Certain instances which we could name of

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<sup>43</sup> *Young Folks* (24 July 1886), p.64.

<sup>44</sup> Marion Taylor married Arthur St. John Adcock (1864-1930) in September 1887. England and Wales Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, volume 8a, p. 679. Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

<sup>45</sup> 1891 England Census, PRO: RG12/137, folio 154, p. 35. Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

young amateurs budding out into dignified authors, in the course of a few years, have come under our notice – living tokens of the value of these monthly prize tournaments.<sup>46</sup>

There is evidence to support the editor's claim that *KW*'s competitions helped young amateurs get their first step on the literary ladder. For example, Nora Christina Ann Usher regularly participated in the competitions between September 1878 and August 1881.<sup>47</sup> Born in Chatham in 1861, she was the daughter of Charles Loftus Tottenham Usher (1830-1904), a retired Royal Marine captain, and Nora Elizabeth Lofthouse (1840-1925).<sup>48</sup> After getting her start in *KW*'s "Our Young Authors' Page", Usher went on to establish herself as a writer on the subject of employment opportunities for women, before becoming an author of moral tales for children during the inter-war period.<sup>49</sup> *KW*'s competitions also played a formative role in the literary career of Mary Ann Kernahan. Born in Cornwall in 1856, she was the daughter of Dr. James Kernahan (1825-1912), a retired congregational minister, and Comfort Plewman (1829-1875).<sup>50</sup> Several of Kernahan's prize-winning poems and verses were published in *KW* between January 1871 and March 1875.<sup>51</sup> Kernahan later secured

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<sup>46</sup> *Young England* (1 January 1887), p. 47.

<sup>47</sup> *Kind Words* (1 September 1878), p. 286; *Kind Words* (1 October 1879), p. 318; *Young England* (24 January 1880), p. 63; *Young England* (8 May 1880), p. 304; *Young England* (January 1881), p. 46; *Young England* (21 May 1881), p. 463; *Young England* (6 August 1881), p. 631.

<sup>48</sup> 1861 England Census, PRO: RG9/483, folio 121, p. 2. Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

<sup>49</sup> Nora Usher contributed several articles to the *Girl's Own Paper* during the 1890s. For her articles on "How to Secure a Situation", "How to Keep a Situation", "Inklings From an Invalid", and "Inklings to Invalids", see: *Girl's Own Paper* (30 July 1892), p. 703; *Girl's Own Paper* (12 November 1892), p. 104; *Girl's Own Paper* (23 February 1895), p. 331; *Girl's Own Paper* (16 December 1889), p. 167. For the critical reception to Usher's moral tales for children published during the inter-war period, see: *Aberdeen Press and Journal* (5 September 1931), p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> 1871 England Census, PRO: RG10/1379, folio 38, p. 68. Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

<sup>51</sup> *Kind Words* (1 January 1871), p. 23; *Kind Words* (1 September 1871), p. 288; *Kind Words* (1 November 1871), p. 352; *Kind Words* (1 March 1875), p. 84.

employment as a contributor to *The Osborne, A Monthly Illustrated Magazine of Fact and Fiction*, before authoring the critically acclaimed *Nothing but Nonsense* in 1898.<sup>52</sup>

While the above examples support Siân Pooley's argument that competitions appealed primarily to "literary-minded teenaged writers from wealthy families", there is evidence to suggest that literary contests reached further down the social scale than traditionally assumed.<sup>53</sup> As discussed in Chapter One, the SSU's gratuitous circulation fund and pioneer scheme ensured that *KW* was accessible to disadvantaged boys and girls. As the editor explained to readers who participated in the handwriting competition for 1868, the magazine regularly received submissions from readers who were the beneficiaries of this scheme:

Many of our readers will have observed with interest that prizes have been won by pupils at the Crossley Orphan Home, Halifax, and the Fatherless Asylum at Reedham. There were many competitors from the former, most of whom wrote exceedingly well, but only one from the latter institution. We are not surprised at his success, for we have on other occasions expressed our admiration of the writing of the pupils at Reedham. We sincerely hope that the valuable education the dear children are receiving at both institutions will greatly help them in their pathway through life.<sup>54</sup>

In January 1878, the editor of *KW* announced a new "prize medal of honour" had been instituted with the view of "adding increased interest to our competitions, and of holding out some additional encouragement to our competitors".<sup>55</sup> Whilst the editor was "obliged to award prizes absolutely to the best productions", he recognised that "some of the

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<sup>52</sup> *Children's Friend* (January 1896), p. 186.

<sup>53</sup> S. Pooley, 'Children's Writing and the Popular Press in England 1876–1914', *History Workshop Journal*, 80.1 (2015), p. 82.

<sup>54</sup> *Kind Words* (4 June 1868), p. 184.

<sup>55</sup> *Kind Words* (1 January 1878), p. 34.

unsuccessful ones are, by reason of age, or other circumstances, entitled to more credit for their efforts". The editor explained that he often received compositions from boys and girls who were competing at a considerable disadvantage to other readers: "The writer has been a cripple for years, or is paralyzed, or is deaf and dumb, and urges this as a reason for not doing better; but still does his best, not expecting the prize".<sup>56</sup> The prize medal of honour was envisaged as a way of giving "encouragement for all to do their best". The bronze medal was awarded to competitors who obtained "two first prizes" or received "the mark of honourable commendation six times" in a year.<sup>57</sup> This prize system not only rewarded merit and persistence, but also served the commercial interests of the magazine by providing readers with a reason to return to the magazine each month to participate in the competitions. This method of forming a loyal core of readers was successful as fifty-five competitors received a bronze medal for their efforts in the contests offered in 1878.<sup>58</sup>

There is evidence to suggest that some readers appreciated *KW*'s prize system for providing them with a stimulus for self-improvement. For example, the editor published the following letter of gratitude from a correspondent writing under the signature of "One Bronze Medal of Honour" in July 1881:

Without entering into any mere word praise of the Medal, yet judging my appreciation of it to be the best thanks I can render, I must say it exceeds my expectations, and I shall, so long as I am spared, rank it among the greatest of my youth memories – worthy of the donor, the pride of the recipient. A mark of thankfulness will be the increased watchfulness to discern opportunities of gaining new subscribers to *Young*

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<sup>56</sup> *Kind Words* (17 June 1869), p. 187.

<sup>57</sup> The number of honourable mentions required to receive a medal was increased to nine in 1880. *Young England* (7 February 1880), p. 96.

<sup>58</sup> *Kind Words* (1 January 1879), p. 29.



*England* and recommending its competitions. This I have done in the past, when for some years *Kind Words* was my favourite, though I never myself entered the competitive lists. Hoping the receipt of my Medal may spur me on the further efforts, thanking you for so kindly offering it, and with best wishes for the success of *Young England* and its Editor.<sup>59</sup>

While it is possible that this letter was carefully selected by the editor to serve as a testimonial for the magazine, the personal reminiscences of Eleanor Archer lend further credibility to the argument that *KW*'s competitions were appreciated as a stimulus for self-improvement. Archer was a regular reader of *KW* from 1879 to 1885. She was the daughter of Joseph Archer (b.1825), a farm manager from Warton, Tamworth, and Susannah de Tedney Collins (1825-1888), a schoolteacher of Priors Marston.<sup>60</sup> Born in 1861, Archer was a lifelong resident of Warwick until her death in 1960. An insight into her life is provided by an interview which appeared in the *Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser* in 1944.<sup>61</sup> Throughout the interview, Archer discusses how informal channels of learning played a significant role in her education. Archer lived a "rather isolated existence at Harbury Fields" during her girlhood years. She explains that her mother "was her secondary school" at a time when educational opportunities for girls were limited. Archer's "thirst for knowledge" inspired her to join the College by Post, a correspondence-based distance learning scheme which will be discussed in section three of this chapter. It is worth noting here, however, that Archer appreciated *KW*'s literary competitions for providing her with opportunities for self-improvement:

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<sup>59</sup> *Young England* (30 July 1881), p. 264.

<sup>60</sup> 1881 England Census. PRO: RG11/3114, folio 78, p. 20. Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

<sup>61</sup> *Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser* (29 December 1944), p. 1.

The demands made upon her by home duties prevented miss Archer from following a course of education at Hestneld College that some more fortunate girls entered upon at this period; but, looking back, she acknowledges the help she received from ‘Kind Words’ and ‘Young England,’ which as early as 1878 printed contributions from her pen. This periodical ran literary competitions and Miss Archer has one issue which announces that Cosmo Gordon Lang [the Archbishop of Canterbury, 1928-1942] was awarded second prize for a poetical account of a wedding. We wonder what Lord Lang would give for this to-day? ‘Did you win any prizes?’ we asked. ‘Yes,’ was the reply, ‘and some of the competitors remained my friends throughout their lives’.<sup>62</sup>

Once again, the mass digitisation of nineteenth-century periodicals allows us to verify independently Archer’s recollections. Searching for Archer’s name in Gale’s *NCUKP* confirms that she participated in twenty-seven competitions offered by *KW* when she was between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three.<sup>63</sup> Archer was often successful in these competitions and received several honourable mentions, certificates, and prizes. Widening the search parameters reveals that Archer was also a regular reader of the *Girl’s Own Paper* and entered competitions on “My Christian Name”,<sup>64</sup> English writing and composition,<sup>65</sup> and plain needlework.<sup>66</sup> Archer benefited from participating in literary competitions in two ways. First, the competitions provided Archer with opportunities to develop her literary talent. On six separate occasions, her prize-winning essays, poems, and short stories were deemed

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<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup> Eleanor Archer’s name first appears in the “Original Proverb” competition for 1878. Archer appears to have stopped participating in the competitions after receiving an honourable mention for her submission to the “Critical Review of a Volume of Young England” contest in 1884. *Kind Words* (1 January 1879), p. 26; *Young England* (1 January 1885), p. 47.

<sup>64</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (8 October 1881), p. 29.

<sup>65</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (30 June 1883), p. 623; *Girl’s Own Paper* (30 June 1883), p. 623; *Girl’s Own Paper* (19 January 1884), pp. 254-255;

<sup>66</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (13 May 1882), p. 524.

suitable enough to be published in the “Our Young Author’s Page”.<sup>67</sup> According to Archer, this publishing experience was invaluable as it prepared her for when her family fell on hard times. Following the Greenway Bank failure in 1887, which was a financial loss for her father, Archer applied for several jobs in order “to help the family finances”.<sup>68</sup> On 29 October 1892, Archer was appointed as assistant overseer and collector of poor rates for Barford, a position which she held until 1924.<sup>69</sup> Archer also pursued a career in journalism her talent was recognised when she became the first woman to be elected into the Birmingham and Midland Countries District of the Institute of Journalists in 1893.<sup>70</sup>

Participating in competitions not only provided Archer with a platform to develop her literary talent, but also helped her to acquire books as prizes. In 1893, Archer was the subject of an interview for the *Woman’s Herald: A Liberal Paper for Women* (1888-1893). The interviewer was interested in learning about the prejudices that Archer faced as a woman engaged in a traditionally male form of employment. Upon arriving at Archer’s residence, the interviewer observed that “books formed by no means a small portion of the furniture”. Archer’s explanation as to how she acquired her reading material is revealing because it suggests that competitions provided young people with opportunities to acquire books that would otherwise be beyond their reach:

‘You know,’ remarked Miss Archer, ‘I haven’t been born with a silver spoon in my mouth like some people. All I possess I have had to work for, and the last few years far harder than has been well for me. My books have not come easily, and therefore I

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<sup>67</sup> *Young England* (1 June 1883), p. 430; *Young England* (1 December 1883), pp. 127-129; *Young England* (1 June 1884), pp. 405-407; *Young England* (1 October 1884), p. 603; *Young England* (1 November 1884), p. 663; *Young England* (1 August 1885), pp. 375-376.

<sup>68</sup> *Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser* (29 December 1944), p. 1.

<sup>69</sup> *Englishwoman’s Review* (15 January 1893), p. 34.

<sup>70</sup> *Leamington Spa Courier* (7 January 1893), p. 7.

value them above all my earthly possessions. I care little for dress or jewellery. You admire the bindings of my books? To tell the truth, the majority of them were won by me as prizes in magazine competitions, so you must not expect me to be one of those opposed to the stimulus that a little healthy competition can give'.<sup>71</sup>

The evidence presented in this section suggests that some of the readers who participated in competitions regarded juvenile periodicals as valuable channels of informal education. These readers appreciated competitions not only as a stimulus for self-improvement, but also for helping them develop their literary talent or acquire books as prizes. These were not, however, the only ways in which competitions contributed to the informal education of boys and girls. As we shall see in the section that follows, competitions also provided readers with opportunities to improve their historical knowledge by learning about the lives of 'great men' and 'eminent women' who were deemed worthy of emulation.

### Biographical Competitions and the Diffusion of Historical Knowledge

The argument that juvenile periodicals provided boys and girls with opportunities to acquire information on subjects that were not part of the formal school curriculum can be traced back to the nineteenth century. In 1888, Edward Salmon observed that stories played a crucial role in the informal education of boys:

The truth is that boys especially gain most of their information apart from what they are taught at school from the stories that they read; and this fact lends a new responsibility to the fiction which is produced for them. Probably half the boys who

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<sup>71</sup> *Woman's Herald* (18 February 1893), p. 8.

do interest themselves in historical, scientific, or naturalistic subjects have acquired the taste from stories in which these subjects were touched on.<sup>72</sup>

Salmon's observation is supported by Lang's study of juvenile periodicals which argues that "it was through the media of informal education, the books and stories boys and girls chose to read in their leisure time, that children received their most influential and abiding impressions about the world".<sup>73</sup> Along similar lines, Andrew Thompson proposes that boys and girls "turned to papers and magazines partly for excitement and entertainment, partly to gain the 'geographical and historical literacy' that the school system frequently failed to provide".<sup>74</sup> Thompson attributes this to the system of 'payment by results', a method of accountability associated with English and Welsh elementary education between 1862 and 1898, which had "a constricting effect on both the school curriculum and teacher initiative" by placing a "premium on the so-called '3Rs' and religious knowledge".<sup>75</sup> While schools were permitted to provide up to two 'class' and 'special' subjects, taught to pupils in standards IV to VI, Thompson estimates that "only a fifth of elementary schools taught history in 1889, while three-quarters taught geography".<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> E. Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as it is* (London: Drane, 1888), p. 203.

<sup>73</sup> Lang, 'Scenes from Small Worlds', p. 22.

<sup>74</sup> A. Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2005), p. 102.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114-115. For further reading on the system of 'payment by results', see: B. Rapple, 'Payment by Results (1862-1897): Ensuring a Good Return of Governmental Expenditure', *Journal of Educational Thought*, 25.3 (1991), pp. 183-201; H. Midgley, 'Payment by Results in Nineteenth-Century British Education: A Study of How Priorities Change', *Journal of Policy History*, 28.4 (2016), pp. 680-706.

<sup>76</sup> Thompson, *Empire Strikes Back*, p. 115. For a discussion on informal historical education before 1840, see: M. Towsey, *Reading History in Britain and America, c.1750 - c.1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 25-67. For further reading on the teaching of history in late-Victorian and Edwardian educational culture, see: P. Yeandle, *Citizenship, Nation, Empire: The Politics of History Teaching in England, 1870-1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Despite recent scholarly interest in the relationship between juvenile periodicals and informal education, there has been little consideration of the role that competitions played in the diffusion of historical knowledge to boys and girls. The neglect of competitions as primary sources in the history of informal education is reflected in the contents of two databases which aim to assist researchers who are interested in exploring how the past was mediated to different audiences in nineteenth-century periodicals. The first of these databases is Leslie Howsam's *History in the Periodical Press Online (HIPPO)*.<sup>77</sup> *HIPPO* is an expanded database and online reference work containing accounts, reviews, and analyses of history published in the periodical press. The work includes 2721 records, distributed among nineteen periodicals ranging in date from 1809 and 1916. *HIPPO* contains 334 entries spanning across three juvenile periodicals: *Boy's Own Magazine* (seventeen entries), *Boy's Own Paper* (254 entries), *Girl's Own Paper* (sixty-three entries). These entries provide a useful summary of how the past was mediated to boys and girls through informative articles. There are, however, only three references to competitions. Along similar lines, competitions are absent from the University of Freiburg's *Popular History in Victorian Magazines Database*.<sup>78</sup>

While neither of these databases are presented as a representative array of materials or claim to be comprehensive, by overlooking competitions scholars are not only ignoring sources which can enhance our understanding of how readers engaged with the study of biography,

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<sup>77</sup> L. Howsam, 'Mediated Histories: How Did Victorian Periodicals Parse the Past?', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 50.4 (2017), pp. 802-824.

<sup>78</sup> This database was the result of a project which was led by Barbara Korte on popular presentations of history in Victorian magazines. The database, which presents the results of a content analysis of sample volumes of five magazines from different sectors of the periodicals market for the period 1860 to 1870, lists fictional and factual pieces which take a significant interest in history. The database identifies a variety of genres of historical writing including essays, life writing, poetry, fiction, and historiography. Although the database returns 186 entries for the *Boy's Own Magazine*, there are regrettably no references to the magazine's historical competitions. For further information about the database, see: <https://phvm.uni-freiburg.de/index.php?site=intro> [Accessed 7 July 2019].

but also the role played by juvenile periodicals in the socialisation of boys and girls. To demonstrate this point, this section investigates how biographical competitions attempted to reinforce the ‘improving’ messages and ‘gender-appropriate’ values that were transmitted to readers through articles on the lives of ‘great men’ and ‘eminent women’. In the process, this section will demonstrate how competitions can offer mediated glimpses into how readers responded to the study of biography.

Around the mid-nineteenth century, historical culture began to exhibit an increasingly ‘popular’ orientation and was addressed to emerging readerships such as young people and women.<sup>79</sup> For example, the first volume of the *BOM* featured a series of profusely illustrated biographical sketches on the lives of “Poor Boys Who Have Become Great Men”, leading with articles on Captain James Cook (1728-1779), Cardinal Thomas Wolsey (1473-1530), and the Scottish inventor James Watt (1736-1819).<sup>80</sup> These articles were intended not only to provide readers with entertainment, but also to improve their character. Beeton contended that accounts of the “youthful days of celebrated individuals” were valuable because they taught readers about “how the industrious and persevering character of boyhood of the lad ripened into the full-blown activity and greatness of manhood”.<sup>81</sup> As noted by Juliette Atkinson, “faith in the power of biographies to prompt emulation in its readers” was typical of the period.<sup>82</sup> For example, Samuel Smiles’s *Self-Help* (1856) proposed that the “biographies of great, but especially of good men, are nevertheless most instructive and

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<sup>79</sup> L. Howsam et al., ‘Perspective: What the Victorians Learned: Perspectives on Nineteenth-Century Schoolbooks’, *Journal of Victorian Culture* 12.2 (2007), pp. 262-285; L. Howsam, ‘Growing Up with History in the Victorian Periodical Press’, in B. Korte and S. Paletschek (eds), *Popular History Now and Then: International Perspectives* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2012), pp. 55-71.

<sup>80</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 July 1855), pp. 193-196; *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 March 1855), pp. 65-68; *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 August 1855), pp. 255-229.

<sup>81</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 January 1855), inside cover.

<sup>82</sup> J. Atkinson, *Victorian Biography Reconsidered: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Hidden Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 47-48.

useful, as helps, guides, and incentives to others”.<sup>83</sup> John Timbs arrived at a similar conclusion in his survey of “School-days of Eminent Men” in 1858:

To our admiration of true greatness naturally succeeds some curiosity as to the means by which such distinction has been attained. The subject of “the School-days of Eminent Persons”, therefore, promises an abundance of striking incident, in the early buddings of genius, and formation of character, through which may be gained glimpses of the hidden thoughts and secret springs by which master-minds have moved the world.<sup>84</sup>

The assumption that the heroic attributes of ‘great men’ could be traced back to their formative years was pervasive in boys’ papers during the second half of the nineteenth century. For example, the first volume of the *Boys of England* provided readers with advice on “How to Become Great Men”. This series of biographical sketches was intended chiefly to introduce boys to “great men who have risen from humble stations in life” such as Thomas Cochrane (1775-1860), Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-1859), and Robert Blake (1598-1657).<sup>85</sup> Readers were “asked to imitate them as far as possible” so that they too may one day become “celebrated men”.<sup>86</sup> The biographical sketches which appeared in the *BOP* served a similar purpose. As discussed in Chapter One, the appointment of George Andrew Hutchison to design a specimen paper initiated a series of protracted debates within the RTS about how to make the magazine respectable without alienating boys. Hutchison proposed that “lads will stand manly religious teaching, especially in the concrete form of noble lives, but hate being

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<sup>83</sup> S. Smiles, *Self-Help: With Illustrations of Conduct and Perseverance*, revised ed. (London: John Murray, 1876), p. 6.

<sup>84</sup> J. Timbs, *School-days of Eminent Men* (London: Kent & Co, 1858), p. iii.

<sup>85</sup> *Boys of England* (8 June 1867), p. 44; *Boys of England* (15 June 1867), p. 60; *Boys of England* (30 November 1867), pp. 28-31; *Boys of England* (28 December 1867), p. 92.

<sup>86</sup> *Boys of England* (19 October 1867), p. 351.



preached at”.<sup>87</sup> For this reason, early volumes of the *BOP* featured articles on “Some Boys Who Became Famous” and “Boys Who Have Risen”.<sup>88</sup> Through these articles, the magazine sought to teach boys about the lives of ‘great men’ who overcame adversity through their ingenuity, perseverance, and religious devotion:

Some of the noblest biographies are those of men who have risen from the ranks. We believe we are right in our opinion that the lives of all great and good men are not only worthy of the attention of Our Boys, but secure it. What others have done in the way of conquering difficulties we may do also. Their industry and patience and integrity may be ours if we will; and it may be truly said that no reader of these pages who sets before him a high standard of life and thought can ever be a failure if he acts up to his convictions.<sup>89</sup>

Atkinson observes that “religion played a significant role in extending the range of possible heroes” as some clergymen and Christian writers were uneasy with “the association of hero-worship with fame, fortune, and earthly concerns”.<sup>90</sup> This explains why the *BOP* elevated missionaries and martyrs, such as John Eliot (1604-1690), John Williams (1796-1839), and John Patteson (1827-1871), to the pantheon of heroes.<sup>91</sup> As Julie McColl has recently demonstrated in her study of 152 missionary biographies, religious publishers often appropriated “the standard adventure story format, which relied upon a predictable and familiar narrative trajectory, marked by specific kinds of behaviour and experience” in an attempt to “entertain and inspire working-class readership”. According to McColl, “the

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<sup>87</sup> *Daily News* (29 April 1899), p. 8.

<sup>88</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (20 September 1879), p. 571; *Boy's Own Paper* (1 July 1882), p. 643.

<sup>89</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (16 October 1880), p. 45.

<sup>90</sup> Atkinson, *Victorian Biography Reconsidered*, pp. 50-51.

<sup>91</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (14 June 1884), p. 590; *Boy's Own Paper* (14 May 1887), pp. 518-520.

biographies not only created a positive image of the missionary within the empire but also endorsed ideas of self-help, duty, obedience and conformity, messages which had traditionally been the preserve of middle-class children's reading".<sup>92</sup> These messages were particularly prominent in the SSU's publications. For example, William James Wintle's series on the "Schooldays of Notable Men", which appeared in *YE* in 1898, celebrated the "earnest religious character" of Charles Kingsley (1819-1875), the 'muscular Christianity' of George Augustus Selwyn (1809-1878), and the nineteenth-century natural historian Francis Trevelyan Buckland's "character of a kindly Christian gentleman".<sup>93</sup> Thus, biographical sketches of 'great men' were envisaged not only as a way of improving boys' historical knowledge, but also their character and behaviour.

While boys were encouraged to emulate the lives of 'great men', girls were expected to identify with a different range of characteristics. This is nicely illustrated by the biographical sketches of 'eminent women' which appeared in the *GOP*.<sup>94</sup> For example, A. M. Harley's article on the life of Caroline Herschel (1750-1848) not only focused on the scientific achievements that led her to be named as an honorary member of the Royal Astronomical Society, but also emphasised the "sisterly devotion" that she showed to her brother Sir William Herschel (1738-1822).<sup>95</sup> Girls were taught about the importance of self-denial

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<sup>92</sup> J. McColl, 'Imagining the Missionary Hero: Juvenile Missionary Biographies, c. 1870-1917' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Liverpool, 2017), pp. 14-15. For further reading on nineteenth-century juvenile missionary biographies, see: A. Kearney, 'The Missionary Hero in Children's Literature', *Children's Literature in Education*, 14.2 (1983), pp. 104-112; J. Rowbotham, 'Soldiers of Christ? Images of Female Missionaries in Late Nineteenth-Century Britain: Issues of Heroism and Martyrdom', *Gender & History*, 12.1 (2000), pp. 82-106.

<sup>93</sup> *Young England* (1898), pp. 33, 198-199, 353-355.

<sup>94</sup> There was growing interest in the lives of 'eminent women' during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. For example, Emma Anne Paterson's *Women's Union Journal* (1876-1890) published a series of "Sketches of Eminent Women" between 1878 and 1880. Almost a decade later, Millicent Garrett Fawcett's "Some Eminent Women of Our Times" appeared in *The Mothers' Companion* (1887-1896) before being published as a book in 1889.

<sup>95</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (15 September 1888), pp. 814-815; *Girl's Own Paper* (22 September 1888), pp. 820-821.

through Rose Bourdillon's article on "Some Memorials of Hannah More". Bourdillon explained that More was a "gifted woman" who "having moved conspicuously in the best and most intellectual London society during the middle of the last century, gave up her life henceforth to bettering the condition, physical and moral, of the people in the villages round about Wrington".<sup>96</sup> As noted by Howsam, "comparatively recent history was important to educators for reasons of citizenship".<sup>97</sup> This explains why Syliva Thorne's article on "Female Heroism" encouraged "English girls" to "feel proud" when reflecting on the "noble work" of Grace Darling (1815-1842), Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), and Sarah Martin (1791-1843).<sup>98</sup> Along similar lines, a series on "Gentlewomen Who Devote Their Lives to the Poor" celebrated the philanthropy of Louisa Caroline Baring, Lady Ashburton (1827-1903), Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845), and Baroness Angela Burdett-Coutts, 1<sup>st</sup> Baroness Burdett-Coutts (1814-1906).<sup>99</sup> Thus, while girls were still expected to be conversant with national history (and therefore patriotic), the *GOP* presented the past in a way which encouraged girls to emulate the feminine virtues of devotion, self-denial, and benevolence.

While biographical sketches in juvenile periodicals can offer a revealing insight into the 'gender-appropriate' values that adult writers hoped to inculcate in boys and girls, the paucity of records documenting the reading experiences of young people means that it is often difficult to ascertain how readers responded to the lives of 'great men' and 'eminent women'.<sup>100</sup> In this sense, competitions are a valuable source because they can offer mediated

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<sup>96</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (4 January 1896), pp. 220-221.

<sup>97</sup> Howsam, 'Growing Up with History', p. 61.

<sup>98</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (17 January 1880), pp. 43-45.

<sup>99</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (5 February 1898), pp. 291-292; *Girl's Own Paper* (25 June 1898), pp. 614-615; *Girl's Own Paper* (6 August 1898), pp. 708-709.

<sup>100</sup> For a discussion on the difficulties of measuring the reception of missionary biographies, see: McColl, 'Imagining the Missionary Hero', pp. 13-14, 32-33.

glimpses into how readers engaged with the study of biography. For example, the editor of *KW* invited readers to submit essays on their favourite pursuits for a competition in 1870.<sup>101</sup> A prize was awarded to Jessie Moncrieff, a sixteen-year-old girl from Edinburgh, for her essay on the benefits of reading biographies.<sup>102</sup> While we do not know for sure that all juvenile readers responded to biographical sketches in the prescribed way, Moncrieff shows that some young people understood that they were expected to emulate the lives of heroic men and women. The central argument of Moncrieff's essay was that "biography shows personifications of abstract virtues" such as charity, patience, temperance, or mercy. According to Moncrieff, "the mind cannot grasp abstractions" unless they are presented to it "as embodied in some human character". Moncrieff explained that she appreciated biographies because they give examples of such virtues and present readers with "worthy models for imitation":

Most people have some model which they try to follow. Little children copy their elder sisters; and these elder sisters too often follow some foolish companion. How much better would it be if young girls tried to mould their characters into some resemblance to the saintly women of Holy Writ, such as the charitable Dorcas, the dutiful Ruth, or the holy Virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.<sup>103</sup>

Although we do not know how representative Moncreiff is of other readers, her response does help to explain the sheer popularity of biographical competitions in the juvenile periodical press. For example, in 1883 the *GOP* announced the details of a competition which was advertised as an opportunity for girls to learn about "the lives of the great and good

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<sup>101</sup> *Kind Words* (7 April 1870), p. 112.

<sup>102</sup> *Kind Words* (15 September 1870), pp. 295-296.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 295.

women who have adorned the history of the world”.<sup>104</sup> Readers were provided with a list denoting the names of “One Hundred Famous Women of the Christian Era”.<sup>105</sup> The list predominantly consisted of women who were venerated as saints, monarchs and princesses, authors of religious tracts and treatises, celebrities in the fields of art and literature, and supporters of women’s education – skewed heavily towards English history, in keeping with the character of English national identity. Competitors were instructed to create a biographical table for these women “showing their country, the date of their birth, the date of their death, and the leading incidents of their lives”. Girls were encouraged to participate in the competition not only to gain a place on the magazine’s list of honour, but so they may become acquainted with “the career of many who hold distinguished positions in the history of the world”.<sup>106</sup> Thus, the aim of the competition was to help girls improve their historical knowledge and provide them with Christian role models to emulate.

The fervent response to the competition was “a source of much satisfaction” for the RTS.<sup>107</sup> According to the Charles Peters, it was “a competition which for numbers and enthusiasm has never been equalled” in the *GOP*.<sup>108</sup> While there is insufficient evidence to substantiate the editor’s claims that public libraries had “long lists of girls waiting their turn for the loan of biographical dictionaries” or that booksellers “noticed a marked increase in the sale of new and secondhand works dealing with the subject”, the interest in the competition was indeed remarkable for the period.<sup>109</sup> The excitement surrounding the contest was captured in an

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<sup>104</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (7 June 1884) p. 569.

<sup>105</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (6 October 1883), p. 4.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>107</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (7 June 1884). p. 569.

<sup>108</sup> *Sunlight: Being the Extra Summer Number of the Girl’s Own Paper* (1884), p. 52.

<sup>109</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (7 June 1884). p. 569.

illustration which depicts a girl pensively waiting for the result of the competition while several clerks sort through the deluge of submissions that occupied their office (Figure 5).

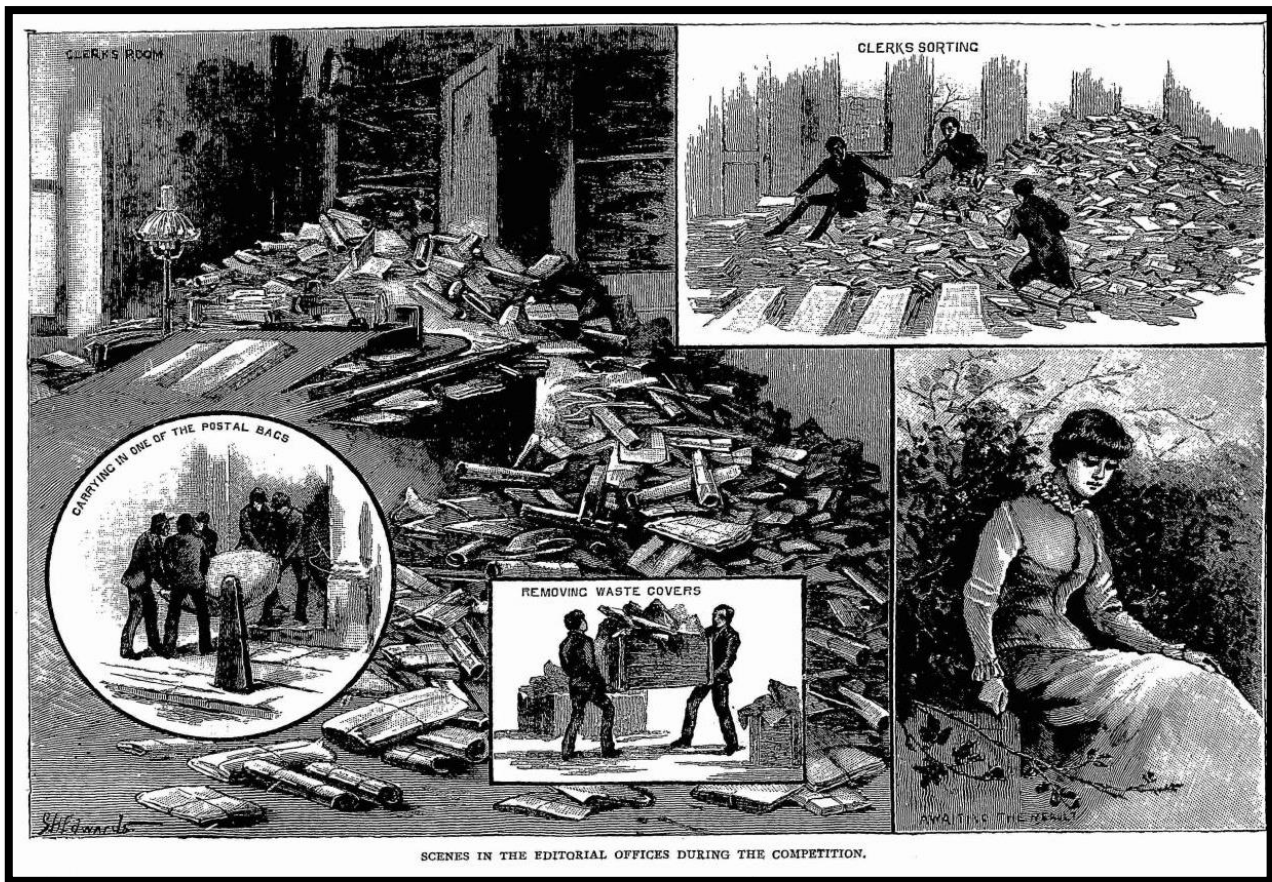


Figure 5. *Girl's Own Paper* (7 June 1884), p. 568.

Although the illustrator has clearly taken a degree of artistic licence, the volume of submissions was indeed “fair evidence of vitality on the part of the subscribers to *The Girl's Own Paper*”.<sup>110</sup> The competition elicited responses from 4,956 readers making it the most popular contest discussed in this dissertation. The popularity of the competition is also evident from the unusual amount of attention that it received from the provincial press. There are several cases of newspapers celebrating the accomplishments of local girls who were

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 569.

awarded prizes and certificates. For example, the *Wrexham Advertiser and North Wales News* congratulated fourteen-year old Lillie Bushby (the daughter of Thomas Bushby [1840-1913], manager of a brick and fire clay works in Denbighshire) for receiving a second-class certificate.<sup>111</sup> Along similar lines, the *Grantham Journal* reported on the local success of thirteen-year old Emily Mary Bristow (the daughter of Alfred Bristow [1839-1921], a draper from Oakham) who earned a first-class certificate.<sup>112</sup> The *Essex Standard* listed the names of ten successful competitors from Colchester and Bury St. Edmonds,<sup>113</sup> whereas the *Star* (Saint Peter Port, Guernsey) congratulated eight girls from the Channel Islands for having “gained such as commendable position” in a contest that received submissions “from every part of the world”.<sup>114</sup> As noted by the editor, the competition received a large volume of submissions from foreign readers – a reflection of the global reach of RTS’s distribution networks:

They came from all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, from Sweden, France, Germany, Italy, Hungary Greece, Portugal, Gibraltar, Malta, Madeira, the Cape Verde Islands, Turkey in Asia, India, China, Cape Colony, Natal, Canada, Jamaica, Antigua, Paraguay, Uruguay, Chili, all the colonies of Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, and, no doubt, many other quarters of the globe which have escaped our notice.<sup>115</sup>

The adjudication of the competition reveals that girls were assessed on their “patience, research, industry, and neatness”. There appears to have been considerable differences in readers’ levels of literacy as several of the competitors were criticised for their “considerable power of misspelling” and “eccentric use of capital letters”. With regards to historical

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<sup>111</sup> *Wrexham Advertiser and North Wales News* (13 June 1884), p. 8; 1881 Wales Census, PRO: RG11/5513, folio 129, p. 16. Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

<sup>112</sup> *Grantham Journal* (5 July 1884), p. 2.

<sup>113</sup> *Essex Standard* (28 June 1884), p. 5.

<sup>114</sup> *Star* (5 June 1884), p. 2.

<sup>115</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (7 June 1884) p. 569.

accuracy, some of the biographical tables are purported to have contained “remarkable errors”. One competitor claimed that St. Cecilia was the “daughter of William the Conqueror”, whereas another referred to education reformer Sarah Trimmer as “a famous actress”. The adjudicator was also disappointed that the information given in some of the biographical tables was “exceedingly meagre”. Instead of seizing the leading feature of a life, many of the competitors were content to give minor details. Furthermore, a few of the ‘famous’ women proved to be stumbling blocks and were made conspicuous by their absence. According to the editor, the most frequently passed over were Margaret Cavendish (1621-1673), Anne Clifford (1590-1676), Sophie Ristaud Cottin (1770-1807), Elizabeth Hastings (1682-1739), Charlotte Lennox (1730-1804), Carolina Nairne (1766-1845), Claude of France (1547-1575), and Matilda of Tuscany (1046-1115).<sup>116</sup>

While the editor’s remarks cast doubt on whether the competition achieved its goal of acquainting girls with the lives of famous women of the Christian era, it is worth considering how the *GOP* responded to the needs of readers who struggled in the contest. A complete biographical table, compiled from the submissions of the thirteen prize winners, was published in *Sunlight: Being the Extra Summer Number of the Girl’s Own Paper* in 1884.<sup>117</sup> The editor anticipated that the table would “prove interesting and instructive to the nearly five thousand girls who tried for prizes or certificates”.<sup>118</sup> By providing unsuccessful competitors with a point of reference, the editor hoped to correct readers’ misconceptions and fill in the gaps in their historical knowledge. The table not only featured descriptions of each of the women’s contributions to national and religious history, but also an assessment of their character. This is significant because it reveals that the successful competitors were rewarded

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<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 570.

<sup>117</sup> *Sunlight: Being the Extra Summer Number of the Girl’s Own Paper* (1884), pp. 52-56.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.



for identifying the importance of the feminine virtues of devotion, self-denial, and benevolence. Thus, the competition appears to have achieved some success in reinforcing the idea that biographical studies encouraged girls to emulate the lives of ‘eminent women’.

While Moncrieff’s prize-winning essay and the results of the *GOP* competition offer mediated glimpses into the responses of readers who engaged with the study of biography in the prescribed way, there is evidence to suggest that young people were also capable of deviating from adult expectations. This point is perhaps best illustrated by *Little Folks*’s “Queen’s Jubilee Competition” which invited readers to submit “a list of the Twenty most Eminent Men and Women who have lived during the Queen’s Reign, and for what each is distinguished”.<sup>119</sup> Along similar lines to the *GOP* competition, the contest was calculated not only to inspire the study of biography, but also to acquaint readers with role models worthy of emulation. The main difference between the two competitions is that rather than providing readers of *LF* with a pre-approved list of names, the editor asked boys and girls for their own judgement.<sup>120</sup> The editor explained that the names in the various lists would be counted and collated in a table (reproduced in Table 1), with the first prize being awarded to the competitor whose list corresponded most closely to the final result.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> *Little Folks* (1887), p. 53.

<sup>120</sup> This type of competition was popular in the juvenile periodical press during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Beth Rodgers has recently compared how two high-profile competitions in the *Girl’s Own Paper* and the *Girl’s Realm* asked readers to become “judges of female heroism and, by consequence, determine the prevailing conception of womanhood within each magazine”. B. Rodgers, ‘Competing Girlhoods: Competition, Community, and Reader Contribution in The Girl’s Own Paper and The Girl’s Realm’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 45.3 (2012), pp. 277-300.

<sup>121</sup> *Little Folks* (1887), p. 47.

Table 1. The results of *Little Folks's* "Queen's Jubilee Competition" (1887)

List of Eminent Men and Women	Number of Votes
W. E. Gladstone	221
Lord Beaconsfield	220
Lord Tennyson	217
Duke of Wellington	201
General Gordon	198
Florence Nightingale	197
Charles Dickens	188
David Livingstone	173
Robert Peel	144
George Stephenson	135
Lord Macaulay	130
Lord Wolseley	106
William Wordsworth	103
Lord Palmerston	100
Henry Havelock	98
George Eliot	85
W. M. Thackeray	79
Colin Campbell	76
Rowland Hill	74
Grace Darling	70

At first glance, Table 1 appears to suggest that competitors conformed to editorial expectations by voting for the names of 'great men' and 'eminent women' who had previously appeared in the magazine. For example, *LF* had already featured articles on George Stephenson's perseverance, Florence Nightingale's kindness, and Grace Darling's

heroism.<sup>122</sup> As noted by the editor, however, the votes cast “give no indication of the *large number of the Competitors*, for an astounding degree of support has been accorded to out-of-the-way names”.<sup>123</sup> Several of the competitors appear to have misunderstood the rules of the competition and voted for men who died before the reign of Queen Victoria, including William Pitt (1759-1806), James Watt (1736-1819), and Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790). In these instances, the editor lamented that “hero-worship of the very strongest type led to the waste of voting power”. The editor was also frustrated that many competitors simply voted for their favourite contributors to *LF*. While the editor attributed this to readers thinking that flattery would improve their chances of winning a prize, he was puzzled to find an explanation for some of the more peculiar votes that were cast: “Mrs. Weldon, ‘General’ Booth, Mrs. Girling, Frost the Chartist, and James Carey the ‘Invincible’ have each a vote – why, it would be hard to say”.<sup>124</sup> These examples suggest that when left to their own devices, boys and girls were capable of defying adult expectations by voting for unexpected role models.

Moving from peculiar inclusions to notable omissions, the editor expressed his disappointment that “the Children of the Empire have a very poor opinion of the Fine Arts and Music, and Science”. The competitors dismissed Charles Darwin (1809-1882) and David Brewster (1781-1868) with a paltry vote each, John Tyndall (1820-1893) received two votes, Richard Owen (1804-1892) scored four, Thomas Huxley (1825-1895) obtained six, and Michael Faraday (1791-1867), who fared slightly better than his contemporaries, was nonetheless fifty-two votes short from making the top twenty list with eighteen. Along similar lines, the editor was disheartened to find that boys and girls considered John Ruskin

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<sup>122</sup> *Little Folks* (1876), p. 53; *Little Folks* (1881), pp. 350-351; *Little Folks* (1871), pp. 316-318.

<sup>123</sup> *Little Folks* (1887), p. 40.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

“to be a greatly overrated man” with only nineteen voting for him. The competition was ultimately a source of disappointment for the editor who declared that the final list was “not the best possible”.<sup>125</sup> Thus, while competitions had the potential to reinforce the ‘improving’ messages and ‘gender-appropriate’ values which were transmitted to readers through biographical sketches on the lives of ‘great men’ and ‘eminent women’, it is important to acknowledge that readers were also capable of deviating from editorial expectations.

The evidence presented thus far suggests that competitions not only provided readers with opportunities to develop their literary talents, but also their historical knowledge.

Competitions were not, however, the only form of reader participation which encouraged self-improvement. As we shall see in the final section of this chapter, competitions were complemented by correspondence-based distance learning schemes which sought to provide readers with a systematic course of home study.

### Distance Learning Schemes

One of the most significant current discussions in the field of Victorian periodical studies is the role played by newspapers and magazines in the growth of education networks outside the realm of formal education. For example, Janice Schroeder has recently argued that steadily rising print literacy rates and the “formidable voluntarism” of Victorian culture led to greater opportunities for people “to instruct and learn from each other via mutual-improvement clubs, amateur societies, lecture series, circulating libraries, and, of course, the newspaper and periodical press”.<sup>126</sup> Along similar lines, Lauren Weiss has demonstrated how three extant magazines produced by the Wellpark Free Church Young Men’s Literary Society in Glasgow provided members with a chance to practice and develop their style, penmanship,

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<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>126</sup> Schroeder, ‘Victorian Education and the Periodical Press’, pp. 679-80.

and literary skills in writing essays and poetry.<sup>127</sup> While these studies have enhanced our understanding about how informal education networks for adults used magazines to facilitate self-improvement, further research is required on the relationship between the juvenile periodical press and the spread of correspondence-based learning during the second half of the nineteenth century. With the notable exception of Susan Walton's study of Charlotte Yonge's "Spider's Essay Club", there has been little scholarly discussion about how juvenile periodicals promoted distance learning schemes to assist boys and girls who were desirous of continuing their studies at home once their formal education had ended.<sup>128</sup> This section advances our understanding of this issue by considering the commonalities and differences between three magazines: the *GOP*'s endorsement of the "College by Post", Atalanta's "Scholarship and Reading Union", and *YE*'s "Victoria Reading Circle".

In June 1900, an essay on the topic of "Girls as Students" appeared in the *GOP*.<sup>129</sup> The author of the article was Martha Louisa Lily Watson (1849-1932), a Somerset-born author who began writing for the *GOP* after her father, the Baptist minister Samuel Gosnell Green, became editorial secretary of the RTS in 1881. Watson's article reflected on changing attitudes towards women's education during the nineteenth century. While Watson acknowledged that "the onward progress of women's education is not to everybody's taste", she predicted that "the thirst for knowledge will grow and will demand satisfaction". To illustrate this point, Watson asked her readers to turn their attention to the *GOP*'s "Answers to Correspondents" column:

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<sup>127</sup> L. Weiss, 'The Manuscript Magazines of the Wellpark Free Church Young Men's Literary Society', in P. Rooney and A. Gasperini (eds), *Media and Print Culture Consumption in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Victorian Reading Experience* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 53-73.

<sup>128</sup> S. Walton, 'Spinning the Webs: Education and Distance Learning Through Charlotte Yonge's Monthly Packet', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 49.2 (2016), pp. 278-304.

<sup>129</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (30 June 1900), pp. 619-620.

We need look no further than the correspondence columns of the *Girl's Own Paper* for an illustration of the fascination of a student life, and the desire among girls of all classes for opportunities of education. We have constant inquiries as to the mode of entering Girton or Newnham, the possibility of a University degree, the way to qualify for one and another examination. Even those whose letters tell of only a Board School training plead for help. 'My scanty school-days are past; I am ignorant; what can I do *to know*?' The cry is often pitiful, conjoined as it is with the tale of long hours of work for daily bread.<sup>130</sup>

There is evidence to support Watson's observation that girls consulted the *GOP's* correspondence column for guidance on how to improve their education. In August 1880, the editor printed a response to seven correspondents who all wrote to him seeking advice on how to continue their studies. According to the editor, the correspondents had "just left school, as a rule" and "all write to us begging us to assist them in laying out a course of study at home".<sup>131</sup> Although the letters were not published in their original format, the "mediated glimpses" offered by the editor reveal that the correspondents were concerned that their formal education had left them "badly informed on many subjects".<sup>132</sup> For example, a reader

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<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 619.

<sup>131</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (28 August 1880), p. 560.

<sup>132</sup> During the nineteenth century, a correspondence column typically consisted of the editor's response and the correspondent's signature or pseudonym. The publication of readers' letters in their entirety with the intention of encouraging an exchange of views was uncommon until the popularisation of the "Letters to the Editor" format in the early twentieth century. As noted by Harry Cocks and Matthew Rubery, this means that correspondence columns can be difficult to interpret because they "usually present only one half of the conversation". For further reading on correspondence columns and nineteenth-century publishing conventions, see: H. Cocks and M. Rubery, 'Margins of Print: Ephemera, Print Culture and Lost Histories of the Newspaper', *Media History*, 18.1 (2012), p. 4; L. Warren, 'Women in Conference: Reading the Correspondence Columns in *Woman* 1890–1910', in L. Brake, B. Bell, and D. Finkelstein (eds), *Nineteenth-Century Media and the Construction of Identities* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 127; B. Rodgers, 'Researching the Relationship Between Two Periodicals: Representations of George Eliot in the *Girl's Own Paper* and *Atalanta*', in A. Easley, A. King, and J. Morton (eds), *Researching the Nineteenth-Century Periodical Press: Case Studies* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), p. 94.

who signed her letter as “Muriel” was embarrassed to admit to the editor that she “knows hardly anything”.<sup>133</sup> The second half of the nineteenth century was marked by growing awareness of the poor quality of girls’ secondary education. The issue was brought to public attention by the Taunton Commission of 1864-68, which investigated endowed and proprietary schools in England and Wales:

It cannot be denied that the picture brought before us of the state of Middle Class Female Education is, on the whole, unfavourable. The general deficiency in girls' education is stated with the utmost confidence, and with entire agreement, with whatever difference of words, by many witnesses of authority. 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.<sup>134</sup>

Although the Endowed Schools Act 1869 led to the formation of eighty-six endowed schools for girls by 1897, university education was still available only to middle- and upper-class girls.<sup>135</sup> The *GOP*'s correspondence column indicates that there was a deeply felt need for a structured program of reading and learning that could be pursued at home without interfering with domestic responsibilities. The editor was eager to assist his readers in their efforts

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<sup>133</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (28 August 1880), p. 560.

<sup>134</sup> *Taunton Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission* (London: HM Stationary Office, 1868), pp. 548-549. For further reading on the findings and implications of the Taunton Commission, see: D. Allsobrook, *Schools for the Shires: The Reform of Middle-Class Education in Victorian England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986); G. Walford, 'Girls' Private Schooling: Past and Present', in G. Walford (ed.), *The Private Schooling of Girls: Past and Present* (London: Woburn Press, 1993), pp. 9-32; G. Sutherland, 'Education', in F. Thomson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750–1950. Volume 3: Social Agencies and Institutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 119-169.

<sup>135</sup> For further reading on the history of the higher education of women, see: M. Bradbrook, *That Infidel Place: A Short History of Girton College, 1869-1969* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1969); J. Pedersen, 'The Reform of Women's Secondary and Higher Education: Institutional Change and Social Values in Mid and Late Victorian England', *History of Education Quarterly*, 19.1 (1979), pp. 61-91; J. Burstyn, *Victorian Education and Ideal of Womanhood* (London: Croom Helm, 1980).

towards self-improvement, but he conceded that it is “a difficult matter to lay out such a course” due to the amount of preparation that would be required.<sup>136</sup> Rather than providing the correspondents with a systematic course of home study, the editor proposed “the best way of helping our readers to do it for themselves” was to purchase Joseph Angus’s *The Handbook of English Literature* (1865), a five-shilling book that was conveniently published by the RTS. The editor suggested that by carefully reading this book, the correspondents would be able to choose for themselves the best writers on the subjects of literature, history, poetry, languages, theology, and philosophy. Unsurprisingly, the RTS was eager to remind correspondents not to neglect the study of the Bible, “which affords the highest and best culture of all”.<sup>137</sup>

Despite the editor’s attempt to provide his correspondents with ideas for home study, girls continued to write to the *GOP*’s correspondence column seeking assistance. In particular, the paper was inundated with letters from girls seeking information about the Cambridge System of Instruction by Correspondence.<sup>138</sup> The CSIC was the coalescence of two developments: the movement for the higher education of women and the reform of the postal service. The CSIC was established in the early 1870s as a means of assisting women who were desirous of passing the examinations which had recently been opened to them by the University of Cambridge.<sup>139</sup> According to Annette Peile (1835-1920), a member of Newnham Council, the

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<sup>136</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (28 August 1880), p. 560.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 560.

<sup>138</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (26 June 1880), p. 416; *Girl’s Own Paper* (23 October 1880), p. 63; *Girl’s Own Paper* (6 November 1880), p. 96; *Girl’s Own Paper* (13 November 1880), p. 112.

<sup>139</sup> The Cambridge System of Instruction by Correspondence was not the first correspondence-based distance learning scheme. Alan Tait argues that Isaac Pitman’s shorthand course delivered by correspondence in 1844 was a watershed moment for distance learning in England. The next crucial step was the University of London’s decision to open up a range of programmes for external study in 1858. Parallel developments were taking place in the United States of America and Germany at a similar period, facilitated also by postal systems and the railway. For further reading, see: A. Tait, ‘Reflections on Student Support in Open and Distance Learning’, *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 4.1 (2003), pp. 1-9.



CSIC was arranged “to bring women who live in remote districts into connexion with the present movement in favour of a higher education”.<sup>140</sup> The reform of the postal service, which was outlined in Chapter One, made it feasible to provide instruction to people who lived further afield from centres of learning. The benefit of instruction by correspondence was explained in *Temple Bar: A London Magazine for Town and Country Readers* in November 1872:

There are many people entirely separated by geographical position, by necessities of time, and by many other causes from all centres of instruction, and yet this large class urgently needs this instruction, and has moreover given ample evidence of an earnest desire to profit by it. Time and distance and supposed to be virtually annihilated as far as regards intercommunication of ideas by the introduction of the post; hence great results are look for by means of this agent in uniting master and pupil; in bringing together seeker and giver of information.<sup>141</sup>

Instruction was given to students through the medium of the post by teachers who volunteered their time. The student was sent a plan of study at the start of the term. The work of the term was divided into lessons. At specific intervals, questions on the prescribed lessons were forwarded to pupils, who were required to send answers to the examiners within a specified time. These papers were carefully examined and returned to the pupils with comments along with the next set of questions. Although many of the students who benefited from the CSIC were preparing for the Higher Local Examination, most of the classes were also open to students not preparing for any examination, but desirous of pursuing a definitive course of home study. This was endorsed by Emily Anne Eliza Shirreff (1814-1897), the

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<sup>140</sup> *Journal of the Women's Education Union* (15 January 1873), p. 18.

<sup>141</sup> *Temple Bar: A London Magazine for Town and Country Readers* (November 1872), p. 519.

founder of the National Union for the Improvement of the Education of Women of all Classes, who identified that there were two benefits of informal education for girls who had finished their formal schooling, but were not fortunate enough to attend college. First, she hoped that the CSIC would help to prevent “those who have learnt but little from losing that little, to put them in the way of increasing their store and fitting themselves for better employments than women have been able to undertake hitherto”. Shirreff also commended the CSIC for helping “to secure the too large classes of girls, whom no necessary labour awaits after school-days are over, from wasting in idleness and frivolity some of the best years of their life”.<sup>142</sup>

The girls who wrote to the editor of the *GOP* were curious to learn whether correspondence classes of this type were suited to their needs. The magazine responded to the demands of its readers by publishing two articles on the subject in 1881. This lends further credibility to the argument that readers were not the passive recipients of socialising messages, but rather they were active consumers whose needs and desires played a significant role in shaping the content of magazines. The first article was written by James Mason, a regular contributor to the *GOP*, who acknowledged that readers had many questions concerning correspondence classes. While Mason believed that correspondence classes were of “the utmost value from many points of view”, the article focused predominantly on the practicality and desirability of this system of teaching. He explained that instruction by correspondence was suited to the needs of girls who, from want of means, were unable to avail themselves of good teaching at classes held at universities and colleges. Mason also recommended correspondence classes to girls of delicate health who wished to continue their studies but were confined to their homes, as well as to those who lived in secluded country districts with few facilities for further

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<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 521-522.

education. The article concluded by reminding readers that “self-improvement...is the great object which correspondence teaching chiefly aims at; let us use it as a stepping-stone to obtain that which is *best*”.<sup>143</sup>

In the months following the appearance of Mason’s article, the correspondence department of the *GOP* was besieged with letters from readers requesting the names and addresses of the persons responsible for organising correspondence classes.<sup>144</sup> A second article on instruction by correspondence, entitled “Help for Study at Home”, was consequently published in June 1881.<sup>145</sup> The author of the article, Frederic Edward Weatherly (1848-1929), was eager to help girls who were desirous of self-improvement but had little practical means of continuing their education. Weatherly was a member of the Christian Women’s Education Union (CWEU) and suggested that these girls would benefit from joining the students’ branch of the organisation. The students’ branch had been founded earlier in the year by Mary Petrie (1858-1935), John Stuart Mill Scholar in Philosophy at University College London.<sup>146</sup> Petrie was a prominent advocate of women’s education and informal learning. She believed that “there is much education work that must be done unprofessionally” to help the multitude of girls who “long for knowledge which they have no opportunity from acquiring from professional teachers”.<sup>147</sup> Weatherly informed his readers that the aim of the students’ branch

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<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 275.

<sup>144</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (21 May 1881), p. 543; *Girl’s Own Paper* (4 June 1881), p. 575; *Girl’s Own Paper* (11 June 1881), p. 591; *Girl’s Own Paper* (9 July 1881), p. 655; *Girl’s Own Paper* (20 August 1881), p. 751; *Girl’s Own Paper* (15 October 1881), p. 47; *Girl’s Own Paper* (3 December 1881), p. 159.

<sup>145</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (18 June 1881), p. 599.

<sup>146</sup> P. Gordon and D. Doughan, *Dictionary of British Women’s Organisations, 1825-1960* (London: Woburn Press, 2001), p. 37.

<sup>147</sup> M. Petrie, ‘The Duty of Sharing Our Educational Advantages with Others’, in *Women Workers: Papers Read at a Conference Convened by the Liverpool Ladies’ Union of Workers Among Women and Girls* (Liverpool: G. Walmsley, 1892), p. 75.

was “to assist by means of correspondence those whose schoolroom days are over, and who are anxious to carry on their studies”.<sup>148</sup>

The students’ branch of the CWEU was intended “for girls of sixteen and upwards”.<sup>149</sup>

Members were permitted to select one or more of the following subjects for instruction by correspondence: English language, English literature, Greek, Latin, French, German, history, physical geography, and mathematics.<sup>150</sup> Students were expected to work at least six hours a week. Instruction was provided for free on the condition that members also devoted half an hour each day to Bible Study.<sup>151</sup> In this regard, Petrie had two aims: to “bring Christian influence to bear upon the higher education of women, and to raise the intellectual standard of education avowedly religious”.<sup>152</sup> While Petrie conceded that some girls agreed to devote time to studying the Bible “merely because it is the condition of receiving gratuitous instruction in other subjects”, she hoped that they would “soon find that to know the Bible alright is to love it above all other books”.<sup>153</sup>

Between 1882 and 1886, the editor of the *GOP* advised over twenty correspondents to write to the CWEU for information on how to become a member of the students’ branch.<sup>154</sup> The correspondence column indicates that some girls followed this advice and became members.

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<sup>148</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (18 June 1881), p. 599.

<sup>149</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (30 January 1897), p. 287.

<sup>150</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (18 June 1881), p. 599.

<sup>151</sup> Gordon and Doughan, *British Women’s Organisations*, p. 37.

<sup>152</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (12 March 1887), p. 372.

<sup>153</sup> M. Petrie, *Clews to Holy Writ, or, The Chronological Scripture Cycle: A Scheme for Studying the Whole Bible in its Historical Order During Three Years* (New York: American Tract Society, 1893), p. viii.

<sup>154</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (8 July 1882), p. 654; *Girl’s Own Paper* (19 August 1882), p. 750; *Girl’s Own Paper* (23 September 1882), p. 830; *Girl’s Own Paper* (2 December 1882), p. 144; *Girl’s Own Paper* (9 December 1882), p. 159; *Girl’s Own Paper* (5 May 1883), p. 494; *Girl’s Own Paper* 14 July 1883), p. 655; *Girl’s Own Paper* (14 November 1885), p. 112; *Girl’s Own Paper* (21 November 1885), p. 127; *Girl’s Own Paper* (24 April 1886), p. 480

For example, the editor printed the following response to a letter from “Cressida” in April 1883: “We are much gratified by hearing that our paper has been the means of making you a member of the Christian Women’s Education Union”.<sup>155</sup> Petrie confirms that the *GOP* played a pivotal role in encouraging girls to join the students’ branch of the CWEU. In a paper on “The Duty of Sharing Our Educational Advantages With Others”, Petrie recalled that the students’ branch “did not begin with a theory, or a large scheme on paper”, but with a request made by Lucy Caroline Cavendish (1841-1925), the founder of the CWEU.<sup>156</sup> Cavendish alerted Petrie to a letter from a country girl who asked for aid and advice in her studies, saying, “Will you as a young student help this young student?”.<sup>157</sup> Petrie revealed that the number of girls who wrote to her seeking assistance grew considerably following the publication of Weatherly’s article in the *GOP*:

Two or three girls thus began to correspond with me informally, and my work with them was mentioned in 1881, in the ‘Girls’ Own Paper.’ I was immediately inundated with letters from all parts of the country, asking for this proffered aid.<sup>158</sup>

On the 12 March 1887, Petrie wrote an article for the *GOP* announcing her intention to enlarge the students’ branch of the CWEU, now appearing under the more familiar designation of the “College by Post”.<sup>159</sup> The aims of the scheme remained the same: “to encourage cultivation of the intellect and love of knowledge for its own sake among girls who are no longer receiving regular instruction at home or at school” and “to encourage among a still larger circle of girls and women systematic study of the Bible”. Petrie

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<sup>155</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (7 April 1883), p. 432.

<sup>156</sup> Petrie, ‘The Duty of Sharing’, pp. 75-76.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 75-6

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>159</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (12 March 1887), p. 372.

explained, however, that changes were necessary because the scheme had grown beyond her initial expectations. While Petrie's initial intention had been to help "three or four girls in an informal way", she was surprised that the students' branch of the CWEU had "since grown into an organisation of which we little dreamed". Accordingly, Petrie turned to her colleagues for assistance. By 1887, the students' branch is estimated to have assisted nearly 1,100 girls with instruction by correspondence being provided by sixty-five teachers from University and Westfield Colleges (London), Girton and Newnham Colleges (Cambridge), Lady Margaret and Somerville Halls (Oxford), and Cheltenham College.<sup>160</sup>

Changes were also required because the correspondence classes did not completely meet the needs of students. Petrie often received letters from girls who regretted that they could not join the classes as members because their time commitments prevented them from being able to study for six hours a week.<sup>161</sup> To remedy this problem, Petrie invited "girls whose home duties are so numerous that they could not set apart the time for secular study" to join the CBP as "associates".<sup>162</sup> Members and associates were both expected to belong to a Scripture class and give half an hour every day to the regular study of the Bible. These Scripture classes were divided into four categories and grouped "the books of the Bible according to the periods which produced them".<sup>163</sup> The number of classes available to members was also enlarged to include arithmetic, Church history, Christian evidences, political economy, and botany.

Four months after details of the CBP appeared in the *GOP*, Petrie returned to the magazine to inform readers that she felt it was necessary to close the membership list and limit the number

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 372.

<sup>161</sup> Petrie, 'The Duty of Sharing', p. 76.

<sup>162</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (3 January 1891), p. 213.

<sup>163</sup> Petrie, 'The Duty of Sharing', p. 76.

of new students admitted for each term to one hundred.<sup>164</sup> Petrie explained that she had received hundreds of applications to become members since her article appeared in the magazine. Wishing to disappoint as few of her correspondents as possible, Petrie discussed how she had “laid aside many pressing engagements in order to deal with their letters”. Although Petrie had secured fresh help, she concluded that this level of expansion was unsustainable. To reduce the burden placed on her colleagues who volunteered their time, Petrie also announced that the CBP would no longer be able to admit members who had only received a rudimentary education.<sup>165</sup>

The CBP is estimated to have provided instruction by correspondence to almost 4,000 girls by 1893.<sup>166</sup> The volume of queries about the CBP which appeared in the *GOP* suggests that many girls were eager to take advantage of the new distance learning opportunities enabled by the advent of correspondence-based learning. The enthusiastic response to *Atalanta*'s “Scholarship and Reading Union” lends further credibility to this argument. Along similar lines to the CBP, the ASRU was envisioned as a way of promoting home study for girls. While the CBP covered a broad range of subjects, L. T. Meade explained that the purpose of the ASRU was to provide girls with “the best training in the best literature and art, not only of to-day but of all time”.<sup>167</sup> This difference in emphasis can be attributed to *Atalanta*'s reputation as a high class literary magazine for girls. During the first three years of the scheme, the ASRU featured articles from respected contributors on “English Men and Women of Letters of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century”. These included, but were not limited to, articles written by Richard Garnett about Samuel Coleridge, Thomas Hughes on Charles Kingsley,

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<sup>164</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (23 July 1887), p. 687.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 687.

<sup>166</sup> Gordon and Doughan, *British Women's Organisations*, p. 37.

<sup>167</sup> *Pall Mall Gazette* (12 November 1889), pp. 1-2.

and Anne Thackeray on Jane Austen. The fourth course of study was dedicated to the life and works of William Shakespeare, whilst the fifth focused on “The Victorian Era. First Half, 1837-65”.<sup>168</sup> Although the ASRU continued after *Atalanta* merged with Alexander Balfour Symington’s *Victorian Magazine* (1891-1892), there was a subtle shift away from guiding the reading practices of girls towards providing lessons in writing, style, and composition.<sup>169</sup> To reflect this shift in emphasis, the name of the scheme was changed to the “Atalanta Scholarship, Reading Union and School of Fiction”.<sup>170</sup>

The ASRU facilitated informal learning and self-improvement in two ways. First, members were invited to submit a 500-word essay in response to one or more of the monthly “Scholarship Competition Questions”. These questions typically focused on the works of a specific author. For example, readers were provided with an overview of the works of Walter Scott in October 1887.<sup>171</sup> Members who wished to participate in the monthly competition were then asked to write an essay discussing the plot of *Guy Mannering* (1815) or explaining what they believed was Scott’s ideal of a prose romance.<sup>172</sup> The essay competitions provided girls with opportunities to hone their writing skills. Members who paid a fee of five shillings per annum would also have their essays returned with comments.<sup>173</sup> Second, members were supplied with a series of “Search Passages in English Literature”. This task required members to identify the author of a quotation and state the work in which it occurs. This was usually followed by a question relating to a specific passage. The “Search Passages in English

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<sup>168</sup> *Atalanta* (1 October 1890), pp. 50-54; *Atalanta* (1 October 1891), pp. 53-57.

<sup>169</sup> For a discussion of how Alexander Balfour Symington attempted to broaden the commercial appeal of *Atalanta* by focusing less on education and devoting more space to fashion, see: Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, p. 115.

<sup>170</sup> *Atalanta* (1 October 1892), pp. 59-63.

<sup>171</sup> *Atalanta* (1 October 1887), pp. 50-54.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>173</sup> Mitchell, *The New Girl*, p. 13.



Literature” for November 1887 asked readers to explain how the “beauty” of a passage from Shakespeare’s *King Lear* (1606) was “enriched by the nature of the context”.<sup>174</sup> Readers were also occasionally tasked with identifying a missing word from a selected passage. Thus, the ASRU’s competitions not only promoted scholarship, but also systematic and reflective reading.

At the end of each course of study, the subscribers whose names had most frequently obtained a place in the magazine’s “Honour List” were invited to participate in the annual “Scholarship Competition”. In the early volumes of the magazine, competitors were required to write an essay reflecting on what they had learned throughout the year.<sup>175</sup> For example, girls who participated in the first course of study were asked to write an essay on Francis Bacon’s contention that “studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability”.<sup>176</sup> The competition was open to members whose names were mentioned five or more times in the magazine’s “Honour List”. This restriction on participation was to ensure that only the most talented members of the ASRU were eligible to compete for the lucrative annual prizes. During the first year of the scheme, the writer of the best essay was awarded a scholarship of the value of £30 per annum, which was tenable for three years. The competitor who came second received a prize of £15, while third place was given books to the value of £5.<sup>177</sup> The prize-winning essay also received the honour of being published in the magazine.<sup>178</sup>

The decision to place a restriction on who was eligible to participate in the ASRU’s competitions also served the commercial interests of the magazine. In order to take part in the

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<sup>174</sup> *Atalanta* (1 November 1887), pp. 110-111.

<sup>175</sup> Later volumes required members to write an original story of 4,000 words.

<sup>176</sup> *Atalanta* (1 November 1888), p. 124.

<sup>177</sup> *Atalanta* (1 September 1888), p. 712.

<sup>178</sup> *Atalanta* (1 March 1889), pp. 419-422.

monthly competitions, girls were required to submit their entries with a coupon which could only be acquired through a supplement that was given away with magazine. This meant that members of the ASRU who were desirous of participating in the annual scholarship competition needed to purchase the magazine on a regular basis. The coupon system appears to have achieved its aim of developing a core of loyal readers as 126 members were invited to participate in the first annual scholarship competition.<sup>179</sup> Although Sally Mitchell argues that “*Atalanta* was carried by public libraries and was therefore available to working and lower-middle-class girls”, the coupon system would have prevented many of these girls from participating in the competitions.<sup>180</sup> As Meade explained in an interview for the *Pall Mall Gazette* in November 1889, these girls were not the ASRU’s target audience:

Well, as perhaps you know, we go in for a species of Reading Union in the magazine of which I am editress, *Atalanta*, a magazine specially for girls... You should see our post-bag when a competition is going on. I do not think you would doubt then that the English girl of the upper classes really is bracing herself up mentally as well as physically. And this, I hold, does them as much good as reading for examinations which are often ridiculously wide of the mark.<sup>181</sup>

Meade’s claim that the ASRU was appreciated by the “English girl of the upper classes” can be corroborated by analysing the names and addresses of the prize winners which were printed in the magazine. As can be seen in Appendix A, the girls who benefited most from the ASRU were the daughters of the gentry and the educated middle classes. For example, the winner of the *Atalanta* Scholarship Competition for 1893-94 was Edith Caroline Farmiloe (1870-1921), the granddaughter of Henry Brooke Parnell, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Congleton (1776-

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<sup>179</sup> *Atalanta* (1 November 1888), p. 124.

<sup>180</sup> Mitchell, *The New Girl*, p. 11.

<sup>181</sup> *Pall Mall Gazette* (12 November 1889), pp. 1-2.

1842).<sup>182</sup> Along similar lines, Marcia Alice Rice (1868-1958) was awarded a scholarship of £10 for coming joint first in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1891-92.<sup>183</sup> She was a descendant of Lord Francis Napier (1702–1773), and attended St Hugh’s College, Oxford, between 1893 and 1898. Rice was not the only member of the ASRU to attend the University of Oxford. Hilda Diana Oakeley (1868-1950) and Adelaide Wynne-Wilson (1871-1948) both found success in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition before entering Somerville College. Thus, the ASRU appears to have achieved its aim of assisting the informal education of studious girls from wealthy families.

Appendix A also shows that while many of these girls were in their early twenties when they found success in the annual scholarship competition, several had experience of participating in literary competitions offered by other juvenile periodicals. For example, Farmiloe competed in *YE*’s competitions between the ages of twelve and eighteen. In April 1884, she was awarded a prize of books to the value of 7s. 6d. for her story about an evening party.<sup>184</sup> Farmiloe also received certificates for an account of a school treat, a story of schoolgirl life, and an essay on “My Idea of What a Girl of Fifteen Should Be”.<sup>185</sup> Along similar lines, Edith Helena Polehampton (1870-1941) participated in *LF*’s competitions before becoming a regular member of the ASRU. Polehampton’s name appeared in the magazine’s “List of Honour” for her poems on the topics of “The Fidelity of a Dog to Its Master” and “The Birds’ Appeal for Crumbs”.<sup>186</sup> She received a further two honourable mentions for her submissions

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<sup>182</sup> *Atalanta* (1895), p. 334.

<sup>183</sup> *Atalanta* (1893), p. 385.

<sup>184</sup> *Young England* (1 April 1884), p. 335.

<sup>185</sup> *Young England* (1 December 1883), p. 142; *Young England* (1 September 1888), p. 414; *Young England* (1 January 1884), p. 191.

<sup>186</sup> *Little Folks* (1 April 1882), p. 247; *Little Folks* (1 December 1882), p. 383.

to the “Picture Wanting Words” competitions in 1884.<sup>187</sup> This evidence is significant because it further strengthens the argument made in section one of this chapter that literary competitions should be regarded as important channels of informal education.

While the CBP and ASRU were intended to assist the informal education of girls, it is important to recognise that not all distance learning schemes targeted a gender-specific audience. For example, Benjamin Clarke was a self-confessed admirer of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle of America and sought to establish a similar scheme in connexion with the SSU.<sup>188</sup> As the editor of *YE*, Clarke invited boys and girls to become members of “The Victoria Reading Circle” which was founded in January 1887 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria.<sup>189</sup> Reflecting the SSU’s long-standing tradition of promoting the moral and intellectual improvement of the working classes, the VRC was a more socially inclusive scheme than the ASRU. According to J. L. Nye, the secretary of the VRC, the purpose of the organisation was “to unite in a great concerted movement for self-culture all intelligent young people in securing at home some of the advantages of a college, so far as reading and study are concerned, without interference with other duties”.<sup>190</sup> Although the Elementary Education Act 1880 stipulated that attendance at school was compulsory for children between the ages of five and ten, Clarke lamented that

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<sup>187</sup> *Little Folks* (1 May 1884), p. 316; *Little Folks* (1 June 1884), p. 376

<sup>188</sup> The Chautauqua movement was founded in 1874 by John Heyl Vincent (1832-1920), a Methodist clergyman, and Lewis Miller (1829-1899), an Ohio businessman. Their original intention had been to open a summer camp at Chautauqua Lake in New York’s Allegheny mountains to train Sunday School teachers. The rapid growth of the movement led to the establishment of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle of America in 1878. According to Vincent, the aims of the organisation were twofold: “to promote habits of reading and study in nature, art, science, and in secular and sacred literature” and “to encourage individual study, to open the college world to persons unable to attend higher institution of learning”. For further reading on the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle and as its impact on the thinking of British educationalists, see: J. Vincent, *The Chautauqua Movement* (Boston: Chautauqua Press, 1886); J. Nelson, ‘The Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle in Rural Midwestern Towns, 1878-1900’, *Agricultural History*, 70.4 (1996), pp. 653-671; R. Snape, ‘The National Home Reading Union 1889-1930’, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 7.1 (2002), pp. 86-110.

<sup>189</sup> *Young England* (1 January 1887), p. 34.

<sup>190</sup> *Worcestershire Chronicle* (24 September 1892), p. 2.

boys and girls who wanted to continue their studies beyond the school leaving age were underserved by the formal education system:

Much has been spoken and written within the last few years of the means which are to be adopted to continue the education of those whose school days are over, but who do not, for that reason, look on their education as finished. There is a continually increasing number of young men and women of this class, and our educational system at present is such that they must either remain in ignorance, and so lose their greatest chance of rational enjoyment of life, or rely on their own unaided gropings after knowledge.<sup>191</sup>

The VRC was also envisioned as a way of counteracting the growing ‘moral panic’ surrounding the effects of pernicious literature upon the character and behaviour of young people. As discussed in Chapter One, while the Board Schools were praised for teaching boys and girls how to read in a technical sense, they were often criticised for not providing enough guidance on what to read. The VRC sought to offer a solution to this problem by ensuring that the reading of persons above the age of fourteen was “regular and systematic, healthful and enjoyable”, rather than “dull and wearisome, or aimless and frivolous”.<sup>192</sup> A full course of study was designed to extend over four years. Members were required to pay a fee of sixpence in stamps per annum. In return, they received a membership card and a list of books for the session. Members were expected to secure at least half-an-hour daily “for quiet and thoughtful reading of the selected books”.<sup>193</sup> Each member who read twelve books in a year was awarded an illuminated certificate. Members who completed four annual courses of prescribed study were also entitled to receive a diploma. In contrast to the ASRU’s objective

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<sup>191</sup> *Young England* (1 January 1885) p. 44.

<sup>192</sup> *Young England* (1 January 1887), pp. 34-35.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

of directing educated girls towards “the best books”, the VRC’s course of reading for 1887 centred on the theme of “small books on great subjects”.<sup>194</sup> The prescribed books covered a broad range of subjects, including English literature, history, biography, poetry and drama, science, travels, and essays.<sup>195</sup> A strong emphasis was also placed on religious and biblical studies to satisfy “the wants of the younger members of Christian families and congregations, and the senior scholars in Sunday-schools”.<sup>196</sup> Certain books were marked with an asterisk as necessary, while others were optional. This system was designed to provide members with some flexibility to choose the books that they deemed best suited to their taste and requirements, while also guaranteeing that a core curriculum would be followed by everyone.

According to Clarke, efforts were made to ensure that the required books were available at “prices within the reach of young persons in general” and were of an accessible nature to prevent beginners from becoming discouraged.<sup>197</sup> This explains why the VRC prescribed books such as Rev. Stopford Brooke’s *Primer of English Literature* (1s.), John Richard Green’s *Readings on English History* (1s. 6d.), and John A. Bower’s *The Science of Common Things* (1s. 6d.). The total cost of purchasing the fifteen required books for the first course of study was 18s. 6d. This figure rises to £1 15s. when also accounting for the eighteen optional books. Although this level of expenditure on books would have been beyond the means of many boys and girls, the VRC encouraged members to join local “circlets” as a way of sharing expenses with other readers. As Nye explained to prospective members:

Twelve persons forming a local branch need only buy one book each, which, when read by its owner, can be loaned to the other members of the circle. Thus, for the cost

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<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35; *Atalanta* (1 October 1887), p. 50.

<sup>195</sup> *Young England* (1 February 1887), p. 94.

<sup>196</sup> *Young England* (1 January 1887), p. 35.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

of one book, members of a local branch may have the privilege of reading 12 books.<sup>198</sup>

The VRC was viewed by its organisers as “a pronounced success”.<sup>199</sup> By October 1891, upwards of 4,470 members are purported to have benefited from the scheme.<sup>200</sup> The absence of membership lists means that analysis of the VRC is reliant upon the mediated glimpses provided by the editor of *YE*.<sup>201</sup> Clarke claims to have received letters from “persons of all ranks and classes” who applied for admission to the VRC. While some members are purported to have had “ample leisure and resources”, others had “limited time and still more limited advantages”.<sup>202</sup> According to Clarke, the latter appreciated the VRC because they were “less hampered by arbitrary rules and restrictions than in the smaller kind of reading societies, and where the fees are almost nominal”.<sup>203</sup> In March 1887, the editor printed three letters from members of the VRC. While these letters may have been strategically inserted to promote the commercial interests of the magazine, if they are genuine, they lend further credibility to the argument that some readers regarded juvenile periodicals as valuable channels of informal learning. The first letter, from an unsigned correspondent, suggests that the VRC’s courses of systematic reading were appreciated for providing young people with a stimulus for self-improvement:

I may say I am very glad indeed to see such a thing started, and I am sure many readers of *Young England* will agree with me. I have but very little time at my

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<sup>198</sup> *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* (9 October 1891), p. 2.

<sup>199</sup> *Young England* (1 September 1887), p. 422.

<sup>200</sup> *Young England* (1 October 1891), p. 478.

<sup>201</sup> *Young England* (1 January 1887), pp. 34-35; *Young England* (1 February 1887), p. 94.

<sup>202</sup> *Young England* (1 February 1888), p. 71

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

disposal, and shall be compelled to do this reading in the few minutes I get at breakfast, dinner, and tea and in odd moments I have to spare; but I have resolved to give up all other reading, such as stories and magazines, &c., with the exception of Young England, to be able to do it.<sup>204</sup>

The second letter suggests that the scheme satisfied the needs of young people seeking guidance on what to read after their formal education had ended. The correspondent explained that she had left school four years ago, but was “very glad to have a guide in my reading such as this Circle will probably afford”.<sup>205</sup> The third letter, from “a young man”, reveals that the VRC was also appreciated by older persons whose educational opportunities had been limited:

Having seen the January number of Young England, I am very much taken with it, and hope my age (25) will not exclude me from it. For I am desirous of reading to gain information, and the Circle seems adapted to my taste and means. Hitherto my education has been very limited, as I began work in a coal mine at twelve years old, and have been at work ever since; but by attending evening classes I have pushed along till I am, and have been for some time, junior clerk at a colliery office, and I hope still to advance.<sup>206</sup>

### Conclusion

This chapter has proposed a stronger relationship between the juvenile periodical press and informal education than hitherto acknowledged. As discussed in the introduction of this chapter, the main limitation of the existing secondary literature is that there has been little

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<sup>204</sup> *Young England* (1 March 1887), p. 138.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.



consideration of how readers responded to socialising messages about informal education and self-improvement. This chapter has addressed this historiographical deficit by demonstrating how a study of encounters in the juvenile periodical press can offer a valuable insight into reader response. Throughout this chapter, we have considered how the editors of juvenile periodicals attempted to facilitate informal learning and self-improvement through competitions and correspondence-based distance learning schemes. While many of these initiatives were led by the editors of magazines, some were driven by reader demand. This is significant because it challenges the assumption that readers were passive consumers of print. Rather, it suggests that socialisation should be understood as a dialogue between editors who were eager to mould the values of the rising generation, and readers who consulted magazines for advice on how to improve their education.

The evidence presented in this chapter also suggests that readers who participated in competitions and distance learning schemes were receptive to socialising messages about self-improvement. This appears to hold true for both boys and girls, and quite far down the social scale as we have just seen in the case of the ambitious “young man” who began his life as a coalminer and hoped to improve himself and his situation through education directed by the VRC. It is worth remembering, however, that a study of encounters can only offer mediated glimpses into reader response as there was a tendency for juvenile periodicals to publish the opinions of boys and girls who conformed to editorial agendas. Although personal reminiscences confirm that magazines sometimes made a lasting impression upon juvenile readers, it is important to recognise that the number of readers who participated in competitions and distance learning schemes was far outweighed by the silent majority. This is significant because it raises the possibility that readers may have ignored or resisted socialising messages. The next chapter lends credibility to this argument by demonstrating

how correspondents who wrote to juvenile periodicals for advice about employment were frequently admonished for the sin of inattention.

## CHAPTER THREE: EMPLOYMENT

No week passes during which we are not asked for directions by following which employment may be secured. But we do not possess any recipe directing how to gain a situation without fail. If we had anything so desirable, we should hasten to benefit a great many of whom we know to be sorely in need of employment and unable to obtain it.<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

A considerable amount of scholarship has been written on the history of the juvenile labour market. The topic has elicited some passionate debates about the extent to which child labour was an exploitative practice in industrial Britain.<sup>2</sup> Other studies have disputed whether campaigns by social reformers and the increasing regulation of specific forms of child labour were effective in removing children from the workplace during the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Historians have also considered whether the Education Act 1870 was responsible for facilitating what Harry Hendrick describes as a “transition from wage earning

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<sup>1</sup> *Young Folks* (3 February 1883), p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> For the traditionalist interpretation that industrialisation was a driver for relentless child exploitation, see: E. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), pp. 331-349; C. Nardinelli, ‘Were Children Exploited During the Industrial Revolution?’, *Research in Economic History*, 11.2 (1988), pp. 243-276; C. Nardinelli, *Child Labor and the Industrial Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 74-96; C. Tuttle, *Hard at Work in Factories and Mines: The Economics of Child Labor During the British Industrial Revolution* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999). For the revisionist interpretation that protective measures rooted out the worst excesses of child exploitation, see: P. Kirby, *Child Labour in Britain, 1750-1870* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 124-150; K. Honeyman, *Child Workers in England, 1780-1820: Parish Apprentices and the Making of the Early Industrial Labour Force* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007); J. Humphries, *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); N. Manen, ‘Agency and Reform: The Regulation of Chimney Sweep Apprentices, 1770-1840’, in N. Goose and K. Honeyman (eds), *Childhood and Child Labour in Industrial England: Diversity and Agency, 1750-1914*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 79-114.

<sup>3</sup> The conventional wisdom that a series of Acts of Parliament were responsible for causing a decline in child employment has lost support in recent decades. For an overview of this historiographical debate, see: P. Kirby, ‘Victorian Social Investigation and the Children’s Employment Commission, 1840-1842’, in N. Goose and K. Honeyman (eds), *Childhood and Child Labour in Industrial England: Diversity and Agency, 1750-1914*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 135-155.

and home-helping to school work in the late Victorian period”.<sup>4</sup> While these studies have made significant contributions to our knowledge of changing attitudes towards child labour, John Springhall observes that “there can be no authoritative interpretation of the history of adolescence in British society without some attempt to consider the role of the young worker in the economy”.<sup>5</sup> Although patterns of early employment experience were modified by the introduction of stricter regulations on child labour and the spread of compulsory elementary education, work continued to define the lives of many boys and girls during the late nineteenth century. As noted by Kelly Boyd, the readers of juvenile periodicals “would have been at a crossroads of their lives; they would have taken their first steps in the adult world of work, but were not necessarily fixed in their career path”.<sup>6</sup> In order to understand the role played by juvenile periodicals in the socialisation of boys and girls, it is therefore necessary to consider how magazines sought to prepare the rising generation for employment.

Over the last few decades, juvenile periodicals have been identified as useful primary sources for investigating attitudes towards employment. Christopher Banham’s study of the *Boys of England* has demonstrated how the magazine provided working-class boys with an insight into “respectable” professions and trades that were suitable for them to follow upon leaving school.<sup>7</sup> Along similar lines, Sally Mitchell has inspired researchers to examine girls’

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<sup>4</sup> H. Hendrick, *Children, Childhood and English Society, 1880-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 8. For the argument that the development of compulsory education was the defining factor in restricting children’s ability to work, see: A. Fyfe, *Child Labour* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989); M. Weiner, *The Child and the State in India: Child Labour and Education Policy in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). For the revisionist interpretation that the spread of elementary education led to a significant restructuring of child employment, rather than its end or abolition, see: M. Lavalette, ‘The Changing Form of Child Labour circa 1880-1918: The Growth of Out of School Work’, in M. Lavalette (ed.), *A Thing of the Past? Child Labour in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), pp. 118-138.

<sup>5</sup> J. Springhall, *Coming of Age: Adolescence in Britain, 1860-1960* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1986), p. 65.

<sup>6</sup> K. Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys’ Story Paper in Britain: A Cultural History, 1855-1940* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> C. Banham, ‘Boys of England and Edwin J. Brett, 1866-99’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Leeds, 2006), pp. 167-171.

magazines alongside employment handbooks and career novels to explore how the idea of paid work affected the culture of girlhood.<sup>8</sup> Despite this recent interest in the relationship between juvenile periodicals and the market for employment advice, discussion has not yet extended to the question of how far correspondence columns brought editors into regular contact with young people who were desirous of securing employment. This oversight is regrettable because correspondence columns can offer mediated glimpses into readers' career aspirations and their responses to informative articles on employment. A possible explanation for this historiographical deficit is that correspondence columns are often difficult to interrogate when studying archival copies of magazines due to the frequency with which they appeared, and the sheer volume of information not pertaining to employment contained therein. This chapter attempts to overcome this methodological impasse by taking advantage of the digital search tools offered by Gale's *19th Century UK Periodicals*. As we shall see, keyword-based searching can sometimes be used to generate a manageable sample of queries about employment from which it is possible to identify broader trends.

This chapter explores the commonalities and differences between three juvenile periodicals which regularly provided boys and girls with information about employment through articles and correspondence columns. It begins with a discussion of *Young Folks*'s "What Shall I Be?" series, before offering a comparison with the *Boy's Own Paper*'s series of the same name. It is argued that while both magazines provided boys with information on similar types of employment, the careers advice offered to readers was tailored to the needs of different audiences. *YF* provided guidance to readers who possessed neither means nor influence,

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<sup>8</sup> S. Mitchell, 'Girl's Culture: At Work', in C. Nelson and L. Vallone (eds), *The Girl's Own: Cultural Histories of the Anglo-American Girl, 1830-1915* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), pp. 243-258; K. Moruzi and M. Smith, "'Learning What Real Work...Means": Ambivalent Attitudes Towards Employment in the Girl's Own Paper', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 43.4 (2010), pp. 429-445; B. Rodgers, *Adolescent Girlhood and Literary Culture at the Fin de Siècle: Daughters of Today* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 181-189.

whereas the *BOP*'s articles were intended for public school boys. The focus of this chapter will then shift to consider why the idea of girls working through choice rather than economic necessity was controversial in late Victorian society. More specifically, the section investigates why the *Girl's Own Paper* sent readers mixed messages about the propriety of middle-class girls participating in remunerative employment. While this chapter thereby seeks to intervene in scholarly debates about the relationship between juvenile periodicals and the nineteenth-century labour market, it also sets out to advance the history of reading. As we shall see, while juvenile periodicals contained a wealth of information about employment opportunities, there is evidence to suggest that readers may have been less attentive to socialising messages than historians have traditionally assumed.

#### Employment Advice in *Young Folks*

On 11 December 1886, a series on employment opportunities for boys commenced in James Henderson's *YF*.<sup>9</sup> The author of the series was Alfred Harmsworth, who was a regular contributor to *YF* before he established a reputation as a publisher of juvenile periodicals in his own right. The purpose of the series, which Frank Jay recalls was the beginning of "one of the most important" in the magazine's entire run, was to help boys answer the question "What Shall I Be?".<sup>10</sup> According to Harmsworth, boys were often unable to answer this question for themselves because they were ill-informed about employment opportunities:

Sooner or later every youth is called upon to assist in the solution of the parental problem of 'What shall we do with our son?' Influence and family connection have less to do with the question than formerly, and in most instances a boy has to make his way in the world by his own efforts. The easy manner in which this matter is

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<sup>9</sup> *Young Folks* (11 December 1886), p. 372.

<sup>10</sup> F. Jay, *Peeps into the Past: Being a History of Old-Time Periodicals, Journals and Books*, reproduced at <https://peepsintothepast.wordpress.com> [accessed 7 July 2019].

frequently settled is remarkable. Boys with no mechanical bent whatever, are made engineers and carpenters. Those whose thoughts are upon machines or tools become clerks or shop-assistants. Youths who are ‘cut out,’ as the saying is, for the Civil Service are sent to the Bar, and born accountants are transformed into third-rate architects.<sup>11</sup>

Harmsworth attributed this “misapplication of talent” to a “lack of knowledge of the many openings that exist, even in these competitive times, in many businesses and professions”. He also lamented that many boys were put to some means of earning a living which had come under the immediate notice of their parents without considering their son’s suitability for the work. Harmsworth’s concerns were typical of a period when the “boy labour problem” had become hotly debated due to a ‘moral panic’ caused by casual labour, excessive occupational mobility, and the temporary employment of boys in “blind-alley” jobs with few opportunities for advancement.<sup>12</sup> As noted by Hendrick, there were several objections to “the popular means of choosing and finding the first full-time job” as complaints about “ignorant and greedy parents” and “thoughtless youth” were commonplace in late Victorian and early Edwardian society. Although boys could receive advice about employment opportunities through schools, philanthropic agencies, and youth groups, Hendrick demonstrates how these organisations were often inefficient and only reached a small minority of young people.<sup>13</sup> By contrast, juvenile periodicals such as *YF* were assumed to have a far greater reach and were

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<sup>11</sup> *Young Folks* (11 December 1886), p. 372.

<sup>12</sup> For further reading on the ‘boy labour problem’, see: M. Childs, ‘Boy Labour in Late Victorian and Edwardian England and the Remaking of the Working Class’, *Journal of Social History*, 23.4 (1990), pp. 783-802; H. Hendrick, *Images of Youth: Age, Class, and the Male Youth Problem, 1880-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) pp. 52-83, 120-154; M. Hilton, ‘Tabs, Fags’ and the Boy Labour Problem in Late Victorian and Edwardian England’, *Journal of Social History*, 28.3 (1995), pp. 587-607.

<sup>13</sup> Hendrick, *Images of Youth*, p. 53.

identified as a way of “materially assist[ing] those who are still debating as to what they shall do for a living”.<sup>14</sup>

Harmsworth employed three different strategies to help boys answer the question “What Shall I Be?”. First, he supplied readers with practical information on a diverse range of occupations. Running for just over a year, the series featured articles on acting, the Army and Navy, clerical work, emigration, journalism, music, painting, and science. Harmsworth’s careers advice was primarily intended for boys from lower-middle-class families who were eager to improve their social standing. For example, Harmsworth dedicated nine chapters of his series to opportunities in the Civil Service and clerkships for boys. These chapters were explicitly addressed to “young men of the middle classes” who possessed “neither means nor influence”.<sup>15</sup> This was in stark contrast to the *Boys of England*’s articles on employment which as Banham observes “frequently addressed youngsters destined for traditional working class vocations”.<sup>16</sup> Harmsworth’s series largely ignored typical working-class professions and trades. When the series eventually offered advice to “mechanically-minded boys” on occupations such as carpentry and lathe-work, Harmsworth encouraged readers to better themselves vocationally:

Young fellows are too prone to say to themselves, ‘I shall spend my life at the lathe, or the forge, or at the head of those doing this kind of work, and I have no necessity, therefore, for book learning. It will only unsettle me, and place me above my station.’ Sometimes this is a genuine sentiment. More often, we fear, it is born of idleness, or unwillingness to do that which is distasteful. Our fathers had not the wealth of technical literature that we have, and competition was not so severe as it was; for this

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<sup>14</sup> *Young Folks* (11 December 1886), p. 372.

<sup>15</sup> *Young Folks* (22 January 1887), p. 54.

<sup>16</sup> Banham, ‘Boys of England’, p. 170.



reason, that they were content to work on like machines, and without knowing the scientific whys and wherefores of what they did. But, nowadays, every mechanical pursuit requires a certain amount of mental cultivation, and the young man who neglects opportunities of gaining this is seriously marring his prospects of progress.<sup>17</sup>

This brings us nicely to the second aim of Harmsworth's series: to explain how self-improvement could help boys enhance their job prospects. As we have already seen in Chapter Two, *YF* placed a strong emphasis on the importance of informal education and self-improvement. Harmsworth's careers advice was consistent with the editorial tone of the magazine. In January 1887, Harmsworth observed that "it is very probable that many of those who peruse these articles, and who endeavour to obtain assistance from them, have in a great measure to educate themselves". According to Harmsworth, however, one of the most common arguments offered by boys to those who advocated informal education was "it is no good my learning any of these things, because in my work they would never be useful to me". To demonstrate why this way of thinking was a "fatal error", Harmsworth discussed the benefits of devoting at least two hours of the day to self-improvement. For example, boys were encouraged to read handbooks on subjects such as book-keeping and shorthand. While Harmsworth conceded that a knowledge of book-keeping solely derived from a handbook would probably not be suitable to any particular office or business, he proposed that the boy who engages in self-improvement could "very easily adapt his knowledge or acquirements to any shop or establishment where book-keeping is required". Along similar lines, Harmsworth explained that while shorthand was no longer considered to be a "valuable accomplishment" because clerks were greatly in excess of the demand, a knowledge of this method of writing was still useful for boys to acquire.<sup>18</sup> Thus, Harmsworth's series sought to reinforce

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<sup>17</sup> *Young Folks* (5 March 1887), p. 147.

<sup>18</sup> *Young Folks* (15 January 1887), p. 43.

socialising messages about the importance of self-improvement which appeared elsewhere in the magazine.

Harmsworth's series also sought to inculcate self-improvement by providing boys with an insight into the lives of successful industrialists and entrepreneurs. As discussed in Chapter Two, juvenile periodicals often supplied readers with biographical sketches which were calculated not only to improve their historical knowledge, but also encourage boys to emulate the lives of 'great men'. Harmsworth echoed this sentiment by proposing that the "secret to success" could be found by following the examples of "self-made men" who rose through the ranks to obtain wealth and social standing.<sup>19</sup> For example, Harmsworth believed that boys would be inspired by the ingenuity and perseverance of Josiah Wedgwood (1730-1795), an English potter and entrepreneur who is credited with the commercialisation of the potteries.<sup>20</sup> Readers were informed that Wedgwood overcame adversity in his early life to become a master potter by the age of twenty-nine. Born the youngest of thirteen children, he was initially apprenticed as a "thrower" before contracting smallpox at the age of eleven. This affliction severely limited the mobility of his right leg, which was eventually amputated to relieve the pain and left him unable to operate the foot pedal of a traditional potter's wheel. Despite his physical impairment, Wedgwood was determined to become a master potter and found success by experimenting with clay, silica, and glazes. The life of Josiah Mason (1795-1881), an English pen manufacturer and philanthropist, served a similar purpose. Harmsworth argued that Mason's industriousness and commitment to self-improvement during his boyhood was the main reason why he achieved success in later life as the largest pen-maker

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<sup>19</sup> *Young Folks* 18 December 1886), p. 388.

<sup>20</sup> N. McKendrick, 'Josiah Wedgwood and the Commercialization of the Potteries', in N. McKendrick, J. Brewer, and J. Plumb (eds), *The Birth of Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Europa, 1982), pp. 100-145.

in the trade.<sup>21</sup> According to Harmsworth, the lives of Wedgwood and Mason demonstrated that social mobility was possible in Britain for hard-working boys:

It is said that every boy born in America has an equal chance with the rest of American youth for the Presidency. In Great Britain either a peer's son or the son of a peasant may become anything from pauper to Prime Minister. Influence will help the lord, but the peasant, if he has will and talent, can sight against all influence.<sup>22</sup>

Harmsworth's self-professed "practical sermonizing" on the lives of "self-made men" was typical of the period.<sup>23</sup> As noted by François Crouzet, during the nineteenth century it was widely believed that Britain's industrialists were mostly self-made men who were born "in humble circumstances", yet achieved success through their "hard work, thrift, mechanical ingenuity and character".<sup>24</sup> Crouzet's research undermines the "myth of the self-made man" by demonstrating how the large majority of industrialists were small landowners, substantial farmers, or merchants.<sup>25</sup> Crouzet also acknowledges that some of the most prominent industrialists were women and immigrants. In light of this evidence, Crouzet argues that "while a number of self-made industrialists rose from poverty to great wealth...such successes were atypical and exceptional".<sup>26</sup> While this is a compelling argument as to empirical realities, it is important to recognise that the "myth of the self-made man" served an important purpose in late Victorian society when there was growing concern about Britain's perceived economic slowdown and the rapidly growing economies of the United States and

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<sup>21</sup> *Young Folks* 18 December 1886), p. 388.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 388.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 388.

<sup>24</sup> F. Crouzet, *The First Industrialists: The Problem of Origins* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 51.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37-49.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

Germany.<sup>27</sup> According to Harmsworth, boys who emulated the industriousness and perseverance of “self-made men” could improve their chances of securing employment despite the economic downturn. Readers were informed that “it is only those of a weak heart who refuse to attempt success on the strength of the assertion that the day of the self-made is over; that competition is too keen; and that this is a ‘played-out’ country”.<sup>28</sup>

The third aim of Harmsworth’s series was to challenge misconceptions that boys had about employment. Harmsworth complained that a significant number of boys were attracted to professions which had an “artificial glamour of refinement or romance”.<sup>29</sup> For example, he observed that “every one wants to know how men become authors, actors, and artists, and many, alas! hold erroneous impressions of the pecuniary results of either of these branches of art”.<sup>30</sup> As we have already seen in Chapter Two, some of the readers of *YF* were aspiring writers who were enticed by the prospect of literary fame. While Eric Robertson and William Sharp actively encouraged readers to develop their writing skills by becoming members of the “Literary Olympic”, Harmsworth clarified that the purpose of his series was “to put this question of ‘What Shall I Be?’ as plainly and faithfully as possible”.<sup>31</sup> After discussing the difficulties of securing a regular appointment as a writer, Harmsworth advised his readers not to give up regular employment in order to pursue such an uncertain career. Along similar lines, boys who aspired to join the Royal Navy or the Merchant Service were asked to “just consider a few facts” before making their decision.<sup>32</sup> According to Harmsworth, “about three-

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<sup>27</sup> K. Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazine, 1751-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 119-121.

<sup>28</sup> *Young Folks*, (18 December 1886) p. 388.

<sup>29</sup> *Young Folks*, (11 December 1886) p. 372.

<sup>30</sup> *Young Folks*, (18 December 1886) p. 388.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 389.

<sup>32</sup> *Young Folks* (14 May 1887), p. 307.

quarters of those who go to sea are utterly weary of the life at the end of the first voyage, and many would willingly go home in any capacity after a week of it". To reinforce this point, Harmsworth offered anecdotal evidence of seamen complaining about homesickness, "loathsome" voyages, and the "cruelty" displayed by masters of ships towards younger crew members. Furthermore, readers were reminded that even "after years of toil and hardship, it is probable that one will not be able to obtain the captaincy of a vessel, owing to the terrible competition".

Challenging misconceptions about employment was also a recurring theme in the seven chapters of Harmsworth's series which focused on the question of "Where to Emigrate?".<sup>33</sup> During the late nineteenth century, emigration was often touted as the panacea to the social problems of overpopulation, unemployment, and poverty in Britain.<sup>34</sup> According to Harmsworth, however, boys who were thinking about emigrating to the colonies to improve their chances of finding work were often ill-informed about the settlements they intended to move to and thus unprepared for the hardships they would face upon disembarking. In particular, Harmsworth observed that there were many popular errors about passages to the colonies, the amount of capital and luggage to take, and the climate.<sup>35</sup> Harmsworth determined that the best way he could assist intending emigrants was to provide them with practical information about working life in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, Ceylon, Cyprus, the West Indies, Cape Colony, Natal, and British settlements on the west coast of

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<sup>33</sup> *Young Folks* (26 March 1887), pp. 195-196.

<sup>34</sup> William Booth (1829-1912), a Methodist preacher and founder of the Salvation Army, incorporated emigration and colonisation into his three-stage plan to save what he called the "submerged tenth" of Britain's population. For further reading, see: W. Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (London: Salvation Army, 1890); E. Daniel, 'Solving an Empire Problem: The Salvation Army and British Juvenile Migration to Australia', *History of Education Review*, 36.1 (2007), pp. 33-48; G. Baker, 'Eugenics and Migration: A Case Study of Salvation Army Literature about Canada and Britain, c.1890-1921', *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History*, 31.1 (2014), pp. 77-98.

<sup>35</sup> *Young Folks* (26 March 1887), p. 195.

Africa.<sup>36</sup> Although Harmsworth acknowledged that emigration presented opportunities for hardworking boys who through no fault of their own were unable to find work in Britain, he advised readers to only consider emigrating as a last resort. Harmsworth clarified that restlessness was not a good reason for emigration:

Emigration is one of those things which should not be undertaken lightly. Too many of our young men leave Great Britain because they happen to be for the moment unsettled, or because their work is distasteful to them. They get notions that they are made for our-door life, and complain of the tyranny of the desk and other nonsense of that description.<sup>37</sup>

This advice was primarily aimed at boys employed as clerks and shop-assistants who dreamed about earning a living in the colonies. Harmsworth observed that while “any number of decently-educated young fellows are to be found at the employment agencies at all Canadian and Australian towns...nearly every one of these belongs to the born-loafer class which clings to the fringes of every set of society”.<sup>38</sup> Thus, boys who had already managed to secure regular employment were strongly advised not to emigrate.

Readers who found Harmsworth’s series to be inadequate to their needs were advised to send him a letter addressed to the “Young Folks Paper Office”.<sup>39</sup> While it is unclear whether Harmsworth replied to these letters himself, several responses were given to readers’ queries through the magazine’s “Letter-Box” page which appeared on a near weekly basis between January 1871 and December 1889.<sup>40</sup> According to Gale’s *NCUKP*, the magazine printed

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<sup>36</sup> *Young Folks* (16 April 1887), pp. 243-244; *Young Folks* (30 April 1887), p. 275.

<sup>37</sup> *Young Folks* (2 April 1887), p. 211.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>39</sup> *Young Folks* (18 December 1886), p. 388.

<sup>40</sup> *Young Folks* (19 February 1887), p. 128.

replies to 130 queries about “employment” during this period. Although forty-two of these queries are irrelevant to our current investigation, we are still left with a manageable sample of eighty-eight queries from which it is possible to identify broader trends.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the frequency with which the magazine responded to boys’ queries about specific kinds of “employment” is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The frequency with which *Young Folks* responded to boys’ queries about specific kinds of “employment” (January 1871 - December 1889)

<b>Employment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Civil Service	33
Emigration	19
Work at Sea	14
Engineering	4
Apprenticeships	3
Art	2
Colliery	2
Literary	2
Other: Acting (1), Actuary (1), Army (1), Barrister (1), Book Binding (1), Draughtsman (1), Engraving (1), Fireman (1), Lithography (1)	9

Before analysing this table, it is important to remember that correspondence columns were highly regulated spaces. As noted in the Introduction, the editors of juvenile periodicals exerted a considerable degree of control over the letters that were published in their magazines. Although the absence of archived collections of manuscripts means that it is

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<sup>41</sup> The keyword-based search returns twenty irrelevant results because the term “employment” was sometimes used in contexts that were not specific to work. As we shall see in Chapter Four, correspondents often turned to juvenile periodicals for advice on the employment of evening leisure. Seven results from female correspondents have also been excluded from the sample because the editor received letters from girls about employment too infrequently to sustain a useful comparative analysis here. As we shall see later in this chapter, it was more common for girls to direct their queries about employment to gender-specific magazines such as the *GOP*. Furthermore, there are fifteen instances in which the type of employment is not specified.

impossible to know exactly how much correspondence went unpublished, an insight into the vetting process for *YF*'s "Letter-Box" page can be gleaned from some of the editor's responses to correspondents. For example, the editor tended to ignore questions which he believed were not relevant to the interests of the wider readership of the magazine. This point is illustrated in the editor's response to a letter from a correspondent signed as "Civil Service (Worcester)" in March 1882:

We have pleasure in answering questions when we have reason to think the answers may be useful to several readers. Now, we are not at all satisfied that a description of the uniform of Customs officer would be at all interesting. A few words on the means to be used to obtain employment in the Indian Civil Service may, however, be useful, and we shall, therefore, answer that question.<sup>42</sup>

This serves as an important reminder that correspondence columns can only offer mediated glimpses into the employment concerns of readers. By printing responses to letters which were perceived to be of interest to the wider readership of the magazine, the editor may have distorted the career aspirations and employment anxieties of his correspondents. The information presented in Table 2 thus needs to be interpreted with caution.

As James Mussell and others have warned, keyword-based searching also has a propensity to decontextualise the contents of magazines by isolating articles from their wider documentary context.<sup>43</sup> This explains why Table 2 features a couple of peculiar results which are worth discussing. For example, the table suggests that few boys wrote to the editor of *YF* for advice on how to secure literary employment. As we have already seen in Chapter Two, however,

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<sup>42</sup> *Young Folks* (11 March 1882), p. 79.

<sup>43</sup> J. Mussell, 'Digitization', in A. King, A. Easley, and J. Morton (eds), *The Routledge Handbook to Nineteenth Century British Periodicals and Newspapers* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 24-25; S. Towheed, 'Reading in the Digital Archive', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 15.1 (2010), pp. 139-143; T. Hitchcock, 'Confronting the Digital, or How Academic History Writing Lost the Plot', *Cultural and Social History*, 10.1 (2013), pp. 14-15.



this is misleading because questions about how to find work as an author or journalist were frequently addressed to the “Literary Olympic”. Along similar lines, the table underestimates the number of boys who aspired to join the Army. In part, this is an issue of terminology as correspondents were more likely to ask how to “enlist” in the Army than seek advice about “employment”.<sup>44</sup> The frequency with which questions about the Army appeared in *YF* was also influenced by a change in editorial policy between March and August 1885.<sup>45</sup>

Correspondents were informed that “questions relating to Law, Medicine, Politics, Trade, the Army, the Navy, and subjects of abstract speculation generally, cannot be entertained”.

Letters containing such questions were passed on to the editor of the *Weekly Budget* (1861-1913), a newspaper which was also published by Henderson, so that they could be “answered by persons properly qualified to deal with the several subjects”. This decision was calculated to ensure that the “Letter-Box” page only dealt with matters “connected with the moral and intellectual advancement of the young”.<sup>46</sup>

Despite the methodological problems and interpretive challenges associated with keyword-based searching, the information in Table 2 still provides a useful starting point for identifying broader trends in the “Letter-Box” page. For example, the table suggests that a significant proportion of queries about employment were about how to enter the Civil Service. Analysis of the sample and further searches within the “Letter-Box” page indicate that these requests focused on two aspects of the Civil Service in particular. The editor often received letters from boys who were anxious to learn whether their handwriting was suitable

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<sup>44</sup> For evidence of correspondents asking how to enlist in Army, see: *Young Folks* (28 August 1880), p. 79; *Young Folks* (4 December 1880), p. 191; *Young Folks* (9 October 1880), p. 127; *Young Folks* (30 April 1881), p. 143; *Young Folks* (28 May 1881), p. 175; *Young Folks* (28 January 1882), p. 31; *Young Folks* (17 January 1885), p. 79

<sup>45</sup> *Young Folks* (22 August 1885), p. 128.

<sup>46</sup> *Young Folks* (21 March 1885), p. 223.

to secure a position as either a Boy Copyist or Boy Clerk.<sup>47</sup> The responses to these letters indicate that there were significant variations in literacy amongst readers of the magazine. For instance, “A Would-Be Clerk” from Dawley was advised that his handwriting was “first-rate, and fit for any office”.<sup>48</sup> By contrast, a correspondent signed as “Progenitor” was informed that his handwriting was “scarcely definite enough for the Civil Service” because there was too much variety in the formation of his letters. In keeping with the ‘improving’ tone of the magazine, the correspondent was advised not to be discouraged and that practice could help improve his style.<sup>49</sup>

Correspondents also wrote to *YF* for advice about how to prepare for Civil Service examinations in arithmetic, orthography, handwriting, copying manuscript, English composition, and geography. The editor was initially willing to provide correspondents with the information that they requested. For example, in February 1887 a correspondent signed as “What Shall I Be?” was advised to write to the Birkbeck Institution, Chancery-lane, London, for a prospectus of the Civil Service classes.<sup>50</sup> There is, however, evidence to suggest that the editor became frustrated when correspondents repeatedly asked him the same question. The following response was given to “A. M.” from Lambeth in May 1889:

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<sup>47</sup> As Roger Kelsall explains, “boy writers and men writers were taken on for mechanical clerical work, the former being recruited between 14 and 18 and discharged on reaching the age of 19, the latter having a minimum recruitment age of 18 and little security of tenure. The Playfair Commission recommended in 1875 that this type of work should continue to be done by people recruited in this way, though their names should be changed to Boy Copyists and Men Copyists. Above them, however, was to be a Lower Division, comprising Boy Clerks and Men Clerks; the Boy Clerks were to be recruited between 15 and 17 by a more difficult examination than that of the Boy Copyists, though they, too, were to be discharged at 19 unless they had succeeded before then in a limited competition for Men Clerkships”. R. Kelsall, *Higher Civil Servants in Britain: From 1870 to the Present Day* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955), pp. 20-21.

<sup>48</sup> *Young Folks* (18 July 1874), p. 55.

<sup>49</sup> *Young Folks* (18 July 1885), p. 48.

<sup>50</sup> *Young Folks* (19 February 1887), p. 128.

We have frequently replied to the questions you put to us... There is no preliminary examination, but no candidate is eligible who does not satisfy the Civil Service Commissioners of his competency in arithmetic, orthography, and handwriting.<sup>51</sup>

The editor was also bemused when correspondents asked him questions about clerical work which had already been answered in Harmsworth's series. In October 1888, the editor explained to a correspondent signed as "Railway Clerk" that "to answer all your questions would take up a column or so of our space. In addition to which, full information was given on some of the subjects you inquire about in the articles 'What Shall I Be?'".<sup>52</sup> As we shall see, the repetition of queries about employment was a recurring source of irritation for the editor, and thus raises questions about whether readers of *YF* actually followed Harmsworth's advice.

A second trend which can be identified in Table 2 is that correspondents were eager to learn whether emigrating could help improve their employment prospects. These queries again suggest that readers were often guilty of overlooking or ignoring information disseminated through Harmsworth's "What Shall I Be?" series. For example, *YF* received a letter from a correspondent signed as "A. J. (Pem)" almost six months after the conclusion of Harmsworth's chapters on "Where to Emigrate?". The correspondent explained that he was a "country lad" who after having "been out of work this good bit" had determined that it was necessary to emigrate to Australia to find suitable employment. Although Harmsworth had previously explained that emigrants were required to find work for themselves upon landing, the correspondent retained "a vague notion" that it was the responsibility of the Australian Government to find him employment. The correspondent was admonished for this

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<sup>51</sup> *Young Folks* (29 December 1888), p. 432.

<sup>52</sup> *Young Folks* (13 October 1888), p. 240.

misconception and was advised “the sooner you disabuse your mind of this idea the better”.<sup>53</sup>

A similar response was given to “J. C. Hadley” in March 1887:

You must not expect that in emigrating you will enter upon a land flowing with milk and honey. Though the locality be changed, the conditions to success are very much the same in one land as another. We say this because you ask, ‘Do they’ (meaning the Government, we presume) ‘find me employment?’ Do not put any confidence in a Government finding you employment. It has its duties to perform, but amongst them is not that of finding employment.<sup>54</sup>

The “Letter-Box” also received letters from readers who appear to have been unaware of Harmsworth’s advice that restlessness was not a good reason for emigrating. For example, *YF* received a letter from a correspondent signed as “Lancelot Rudel” in April 1887. The correspondent was eager to learn whether he could improve his employment prospects by emigrating to America or Australia. While the correspondent was informed that “Australia is decidedly the better place of the two just now for the artisan”, he was ultimately advised that “if you are in employment...do not give it up for either place”. The correspondent was also instructed that if he required further information about emigration, he should consult Harmsworth’s advice which appeared in previous issues of the magazine.<sup>55</sup>

A third trend which can be identified in Table 2 is that many of the boys who wrote to *YF* for careers advice aspired to earn a living at sea. As we have already seen, the frequency with which this question appeared was slightly distorted as questions about the Royal Navy were not permitted in the “Letter-Box” between March and August 1885. Nonetheless, *YF* still

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<sup>53</sup> *Young Folks* (5 November 1887), p. 304.

<sup>54</sup> *Young Folks* (5 March 1887), p. 160.

<sup>55</sup> *Young Folks* (9 April 1887), p. 240.

received a considerable amount of correspondence from boys requesting practical information about how to enter specific roles services, with the search-term ‘Navy’ appearing in the “Letter-Box” no less than 127 times, the ‘Merchant Service’ some thirty-five times, and ‘Midshipman’ on twenty-two occasions. While the editor was eager to provide correspondents with the practical information that they desired, there is further evidence to suggest that some correspondents were oblivious to advice which had already appeared in Harmsworth’s “What Shall I Be” series. For example, the following letter from “Briny (Nunhead)” appeared in the “Letter-Box” in September 1887:

I would esteem it a great favour if you would let me know through the columns of ‘Our Letter-Box’ if you think there is any chance of me getting into the Royal Navy, and how to go about it. Do you know of any preparations by which one can make cloth (i.e., clothes) thoroughly waterproof?<sup>56</sup>

Although the editor was willing to answer the correspondent’s second query, he explained that “we have often given answers to your first question. You will find a full description of the necessary qualifications in ‘What Shall I Be?’ No. 848 of *Young Folks Paper*”.<sup>57</sup> As we have already seen in Chapter One, the editors of juvenile periodicals were tasked with finding a balance between social responsibility and commercial remuneration. Repeating advice to correspondents was undesirable from a commercial standpoint not only because it meant occupying space at the expense of other topics, but also because it disincentivised readers from procuring back numbers of the magazine. This explains why the editor refused to answer the correspondent’s first request and reminded readers that back numbers of the magazine could be purchased from the publisher at the price of three halfpence per issue.

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<sup>56</sup> *Young Folks* (17 September 1887), p. 192.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 192.

It is worth taking a moment to consider why so many readers were seemingly unaware that their queries about employment had already been answered. While there may be validity to the editor's argument that these correspondents were simply inattentive readers, there are more practical explanations as to why some readers were unable to follow Harmsworth's advice. The "What Shall I Be?" series appeared on a weekly basis without interruption between 11 December 1886 and 28 January 1888. This meant that readers would have to have purchased fifty-nine consecutive issues in order to follow the series in its entirety. Readers who purchased the magazine through commercial outlets would have been set back 4s. 12d., while those who acquired the magazine directly from the publisher were charged 7s. 4½d. This may have been beyond the means of readers who could only afford to purchase the magazine on an irregular basis and would explain why correspondents repeatedly asked the same questions. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that back numbers of the magazine were not always readily available. In June 1879, the editor received a letter from "Admetus and lanthe" who was unable to find a local retailer who sold the magazine. Although the correspondent was advised to write to the publisher to procure back numbers, the editor explained that "we are aware that his stock is far from being perfect, as many numbers were completely sold out in a few days".<sup>58</sup> Whatever the reason for this apparent breakdown in the transmission of socialising messages about employment, however, a similar trend can also be detected in the *BOP*'s correspondence column.

#### Employment Advice in the *Boy's Own Paper*

In November 1896, a multi-authored series entitled "What Shall I Be?" commenced in the *BOP*. Despite sharing the same title as Harmsworth's series, *YF* and the *BOP* catered to the needs of different audiences and this is reflected in the advice that they offered to their

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<sup>58</sup> *Young Folks* (14 June 1879), p. 382.

readers. While the careers advice in *YF* was primarily intended for boys from lower-middle-class families, the articles in the *BOP*'s series were addressed to public school boys. This difference in readership is evident from the *BOP*'s article on student life at RNEC Keyham, a specialist establishment that was opened in Plymouth in 1880 for the training of Royal Navy engineers:

‘What shall I be?’ is a question often asked himself by the nineteenth-century public school boy, and one which is by no means easily answered. Few feel that they have any peculiar bent in life; and so many enter a profession with little knowledge of the special abilities most needed for it, that, should any reader after pursuing these lines feel that he would enjoy the five years’ training required to learn the requirements of engineering, I should feel that they had not been written in vain.<sup>59</sup>

This extract not only provides an insight into the “implied reader” of the series, but also lends credibility to Elizabeth Penner’s argument that the target audience of the *BOP* became more socially exclusive over time.<sup>60</sup> As discussed in Chapter One, the RTS initially had its eye on two different markets and this was reflected in their publishing strategy: the penny weekly issues were intended for office boys and apprentices, whereas the sixpence monthly edition was advertised as suitable for family reading. Although the RTS persisted with this publishing strategy and continued to market the *BOP* as having strong cross-class appeal, the magazine’s articles on employment rarely addressed the lives of working-class boys. A notable exception is the *BOP*'s series on “Half-Hours with Hard Workers” which appeared in 1886.<sup>61</sup> This seven-part series discussed the working conditions of policemen, firemen,

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<sup>59</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (21 October 1899), pp. 47-48.

<sup>60</sup> E. Penner, ‘Masculinity, Morality, and National Identity in the Boy’s Own Paper, 1879-1913’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, De Montfort University, 2016), p. 59.

<sup>61</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (7 August 1886), p. 718.

conductors and drivers, cabmen, railway servants, river workers, and scavengers. The purpose of these articles, however, was not to offer careers advice to working-class boys. As the introduction of the article on the work of scavengers suggests, the series was intended to provide middle-class readers with an insight into the lives of the working classes:

There is an old saying that ‘one half of the world do not know how the other half live,’ and, like many other ancient saws, this is remarkably true. How little is generally known, for instance, about the subjects of this sketch, and their fellow-labourers in the sewers and with dust-carts. We see a number of men scraping the mud from the road, or sweeping it along the gutter, and if we think about them at all the majority of us imagine that they are the inhabitants of the workhouse.<sup>62</sup>

There is evidence to suggest that some readers of the *BOP* recognised the inconsistency between the RTS’s inclusive advertising pitch and the more socially exclusive content of the magazine. This tension was acknowledged in “A New Year’s Letter to Working Lads” which appeared in the magazine in 1899. The author of the letter was William Gordon Stables (1840-1910), a former Royal Navy doctor and regular contributor of medical advice to the RTS’s magazines. According to Stables, the *BOP* had acquired a stigma as being a magazine which catered to the needs of “school ‘chaps’ and young Eton ‘toffs’”, rather than “real working-bees of boys”. Stables reassured readers that he had “all classes, high and low, in my mind while I give advice” and explained that the rules of good health were predicated on universal principles which transcended class distinctions.<sup>63</sup> The articles on employment, however, may have reinforced perceptions that the magazine was intended for the public school audience. These articles often presupposed a certain level of education, affluence, and

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<sup>62</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (25 September 1886), p. 823.

<sup>63</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (7 January 1899), p. 231.



professional connections which would have been beyond the means of readers who could only afford to purchase the penny weekly edition. For example, Thomas Fielden Uttley (1858-1928), a solicitor and author who had a reputation for coaching public school boys for legal examinations, offered practical advice to readers on how to become incorporated accountants, factory inspectors, pharmaceutical chemists, solicitors, and barristers.<sup>64</sup> Even more explicitly, an article on the superintendence of landed property advised readers who wished to qualify for the post of a private land agent that they would “find a good education is a great aid to advancement, and preference is often given to old Public School boys and Varsity men”.<sup>65</sup>

Many of the contributors to the *BOP*'s “What Shall I Be?” series focused on employment opportunities in the colonies, but here too the advice proffered was intended for public school boys rather than working-class readers. These articles appeared at a time when there was growing concern that public school boys who wished to emigrate were not adequately prepared for life in the colonies and the leading role they were expected to take up in the management of the British Empire.<sup>66</sup> For example, W. A. G. Brunton informed readers of the *BOP* that “in nine cases out of ten the boy fails to succeed, really through no fault of his own, but because of not knowing before arriving in the country what he should have to undertake”.<sup>67</sup> J. C. Burnaby-Lake made a similar observation in his article on “Practical Advice to Intending Colonists”. He observed that “as a rule the boy who has made up his mind to emigrate has really no idea what sort of life he is going to lead in the far-away colony

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<sup>64</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (11 September 1897), p. 798; *Boy's Own Paper* (25 September 1897), p. 822; *Boy's Own Paper* (22 January 1898), pp. 269-270; *Boy's Own Paper* (5 March 1898), pp. 366-367; *Boy's Own Paper* (12 March 1898), p. 383.

<sup>65</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (10 September 1898), pp. 797-798.

<sup>66</sup> P. Dunae, *Gentlemen Emigrants: From the British Public Schools to the Canadian Frontier* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1981), pp. 192-214.

<sup>67</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (4 June 1898), pp. 574-575.

which has been settled upon for his future home”. Burnaby-Lake lamented how boys often acquired information on the subject from “highly coloured accounts of ranching in the West, or of wheat-growing on the prairie, which have been put forward by men largely interested in the sale of land, and who take these means of attracting settlers to the country”.<sup>68</sup>

The spread of misinformation explains why the *BOP*'s contributors were eager to provide intending emigrants with factual accounts of life in the colonies. For example, Brunton offered an insight into “Jackeroo Life” in Australia, ranching in Canada’s Northwest Territories, and tea-planting in India and Ceylon.<sup>69</sup> In a similar fashion, H. Christie Thomson provided readers with information on how to join the Canadian North-West Mounted Police, drawing on his own career as a former member of the force.<sup>70</sup> The *BOP* also featured a “chat” with Donald Alexander Smith, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Strathcona (1820-1914), on the subject of “Where Should Our Boys Emigrate?”.<sup>71</sup> As the High Commissioner for Canada (1896-1914), Strathcona was well-equipped to answer this question.<sup>72</sup> The magazine’s “special correspondent” asked Strathcona to explain “what were the class of young men that were wanted to people the Dominion”.<sup>73</sup> Strathcona commended emigration “to the very many people in the United Kingdom and elsewhere who in their present surroundings have little prospect of permanently improving their position financially or socially”. Unsurprisingly, Strathcona contended that Canada “offers the best opportunities for advancement” and the “prospect of an honourable career”. Strathcona did not, however, regard emigration as

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<sup>68</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (6 May 1898), p. 510.

<sup>69</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (4 June 1898), pp. 574-575; *Boy's Own Paper* (11 June 1898), pp. 590-591; *Boy's Own Paper* (2 July 1898), p. 638;

<sup>70</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (2 January 1897), pp. 221-222.

<sup>71</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (11 February 1900), pp. 312-314.

<sup>72</sup> For further reading on Strathcona’s appointment as the High Commissioner for Canada, see: D. McDonald, *Lord Strathcona: A Biography of Donald Alexander Smith* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2002), p. 403.

<sup>73</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (11 February 1900), pp. 312.

suitable for everyone. Strathcona was vehemently opposed to the emigration of “ne’er-dowells” and “those who lack any sense of the duties of citizenship”. Rather, he hoped that “the best of our public schoolboys” would emigrate to the colonies to “take their part in building up and developing the resources of these countries”.<sup>74</sup>

Along similar lines to *YF*’s “Letter-Box”, boys frequently wrote to editor of the *BOP* for advice on how to improve their employment prospects. There is, however, evidence to suggest that the *BOP* was initially reluctant to respond to readers’ queries about work. This point is illustrated by the editor’s response to “G.F. and many Others” in the second volume of the magazine:

Let us say once and for all that such questions as ‘What do you think of my writing?’ ‘Is it good enough for an office?’ ‘What would you recommend me to be?’ ‘How can I obtain a clerkship?’ ‘How can I earn a few shillings in my spare time?’ etc, etc, will not be answered in our columns...If X.Y.Z. wishes for a situation in an office, and wonders whether his writing is sufficiently good for the post, let him put the matter to the practical test. The main point for the would-be clerk is not what *we* think of his writing, but what the firm think which he aspires to serve.<sup>75</sup>

The editor explained that many letters had to go unanswered due to the limitations of space. As Siân Pooley observes, however, “practical explanations might conceal moral or intellectual judgements”.<sup>76</sup> The editors of juvenile periodicals often prohibited topics which they regarded as controversial or inappropriate for young people. In the early numbers of the *BOP*, for instance, the editor received several letters from apprentices who complained about

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<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 312-314.

<sup>75</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (21 February 1880), p. 336.

<sup>76</sup> S. Pooley, ‘Children’s Writing and the Popular Press in England 1876–1914’, *History Workshop Journal*, 80.1 (2015), p. 81.

how they were treated by their masters with regards to payment, overtime, and holidays.<sup>77</sup>

The editor was cautious not to become embroiled in conflicts between apprentices and their masters and refused to comment on “the legality or advisability of such petty matters”.<sup>78</sup>

Despite the *BOP*'s initial intransigence, the number of boys who wrote to the magazine for careers advice was too large to ignore. The editor eventually relented to the demands of his readers and questions about employment were a staple feature of the *BOP*'s correspondence column by the turn of the twentieth century. This point is significant because it challenges the assumption that young people were the passive recipients of adult teaching. Rather, it suggests once again that readers of the *BOP* were active consumers whose needs and desires were influential in shaping the content of the magazine.

Such was the sheer scale of this U-turn in editorial policy that it proved impossible to use keyword searching to generate a sample of correspondents' queries about employment in the manner achieved for *YF* above. It is, however, possible to use Stuart Hannabuss's exploratory study of the *BOP*'s correspondence column for 1894-5 as a starting point for a more impressionistic analysis of broader trends in the magazine.<sup>79</sup> For example, Hannabuss observes that “the Navy drew many readers, and questions poured in on entrance qualifications – how much does it cost to join the Navy, how old do you have to be, what promotion prospects are there, how much does one have to know about navigation before

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<sup>77</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (27 September 1879), p. 588; *Boy's Own Paper* (25 October 1879), p. 64; *Boy's Own Paper* (31 January 1880), p. 288.

<sup>78</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (17 September 1881), p. 823.

<sup>79</sup> Although Stuart Hannabuss identified the value of studying correspondence columns, his research was severely hindered by the difficulty of accessing uninterrupted runs of juvenile periodicals at the time when he was writing. Hannabuss lamented that “not only do runs of periodicals exist in few places, but they cost all too much at auction and in the catalogues of the secondhand and antiquarian trade”. This explains why Hannabuss's study was restricted to a single volume of the *Boy's Own Paper*. S. Hannabuss, ‘Information Clinic: The Correspondence Column of the *Boy's Own Paper* in 1894-5’, *Library Review*, 26.4 (1977), pp. 279-285.

joining”.<sup>80</sup> This observation is corroborated by Stables’s remark about the volume of letters that the *BOP* received from boys who aspired to earn a living by going out to sea:

At some period of his early life the average British boy develops an inclination to go to sea. There is no mistake about that. The queries received almost every day of the week by our editor alone point to the fact. Questions about entering the navy are almost as numerous as those about feeding guinea-pigs, and that is saying a good deal.<sup>81</sup>

Although Stables was trying at humour, he was far from exaggerating the amount of space that questions about the Royal Navy and the Merchant Service occupied in the *BOP*’s correspondence column. For example, a third of the questions which appeared in the correspondence column for 8 May 1880 were about how to earn a living at sea.<sup>82</sup> On several occasions, the editor of the *BOP* expressed his frustration with readers for repeatedly asking the same questions about the navy. A correspondent signed as “F.G.N.P.” was begrudgingly informed that “we have answered your question as to midshipmen in the Navy many times”.<sup>83</sup> Attempting to prevent further queries, the editor announced that “papers are being prepared, giving information as to all the studies and all the requisites for entering the navy and other professions and employments”.<sup>84</sup> Again, this lends credibility to the argument that young people were able to influence the content of their magazines.

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 283.

<sup>81</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (9 November 1889), p. 90.

<sup>82</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (8 May 1880), p. 512.

<sup>83</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (24 January 1880), p. 272.

<sup>84</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (9 August 1879), p. 480.

On 14 February 1880, the first article in a twelve-part series appeared under the title of “A Life on the Ocean Wave”.<sup>85</sup> The author of the series, who signed as “A Late Naval Officer”, observed that while earning a living at sea was the ambition of numberless readers, many boys were not suited for the life of a seaman. To help readers make an informed decision before going out to sea, the author promised to offer them a “plain and unvarnished account of what they will have to go through if they choose a seaman’s career; its pains and pleasures, dangers and delights, sours and sweets; in fact, to give both sides of the picture”. The series not only provided readers with description of life in the Royal Navy and Mercantile Marine, but also practical information such as directions how to get to sea, cost of outfits, premiums, scale of pay, and examinations.

While the editor of the *BOP* demonstrated a willingness to respond to the needs of readers, he became frustrated when correspondents continued to request information about how to earn a living at sea. Searching for the terms “Correspondence” and “Ocean Wave” together in Gale’s *NCUKP* returns fourteen results for the *BOP* between 20 March 1880 and 8 January 1881. During this period, an exasperated editor informed at least twenty-five correspondents that he would not respond to their queries because the information they requested had already appeared in “A Life on the Ocean Wave”. As can be seen in the following response to “Derf, H.G. (Stockport), H. L. (Suffolk), and Others”, some readers were seemingly unaware that their queries had already been answered:

We cannot waste our space by continually repeating these particulars. You will find every information respecting entering the Royal Navy in ‘Life on the Ocean Wave,’ which commenced in No. 57, Boy’s Own Paper.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (14 February 1880), pp. 307-310; *Boy’s Own Paper* (22 May 1880), pp. 533-534.

<sup>86</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (18 September 1880), p. 815.

According to Hannabuss's investigation, the *BOP*'s correspondence column was also inundated with queries from boys who aspired to enter the Civil Service.<sup>87</sup> This observation can be corroborated by searching for "Correspondence" and "Civil Service" together in Gale's *NCUKP*, which returns 155 results between 26 April 1879 and 29 December 1900. Along similar lines to *YF*'s "Letter-Box" page, the *BOP*'s correspondents often wrote to the editor for appraisals of their handwriting, advice on how to prepare for examinations, and information on where to acquire employment guides to the Civil Service. There was, however, a significant difference between the magazines with regards to the advice offered to correspondents. While *YF*'s correspondents were informed that the "the Civil Service offers much constant and honourable employment to steady young men",<sup>88</sup> the editor of the *BOP* often expressed concern about the number of boys seeking to enter the Civil Service as clerks. This point is nicely illustrated by his response to "T.Z. and Others" in November 1881:

Judging from the inquires we receive we should imagine that in a few years there will be hundreds of candidates for every Civil Service appointment, and under such circumstances the future of the clerks is not so promising as people think.<sup>89</sup>

The editor's pessimistic outlook was typical of a period in which there was a rapid growth in clerical numbers. Michael Heller estimates that the number of male clerks residing in London rose from 58,278 in 1881 to 82,027 in 1911. This figure increases from 80,109 to 126,395 when it is expanded to include civil servants, bank and insurance clerks, and railway clerks.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Hannabuss, 'Information Clinic', p. 283.

<sup>88</sup> *Young Folks* (25 September 1880), p. 111.

<sup>89</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (19 November 1881), p. 128.

<sup>90</sup> M. Heller, 'London Clerical Workers 1880-1914: The Search for Stability' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 2003), p. 5.

The *BOP*'s correspondence column lends credibility to Gregory Anderson's argument that the rapid growth in clerical numbers led to concerns about an oversupply supply of labour and the depreciation of wages.<sup>91</sup> For example, in April 1879 the editor of the *BOP* informed a correspondent signed as "Clerk" that improvements in the provision of elementary education and the spread of literacy had led to an over-supply of labour in the clerical market. To support this argument, the editor referred to a "remarkable statement" made in the House of Commons by William Gladstone almost six years earlier on the pay of Civil Service workers. According to Gladstone, 4,000 qualified clerks were seeking employment in London, and were unable to obtain it.<sup>92</sup> The editor of the *BOP* anticipated that securing a position as a clerk would become increasingly difficult and advised his correspondent to consider other employment opportunities:

The truth is that multitudes of boys and lads aspire to be 'clerks' under false notions of respectability, who could find ready and well-remunerated employment in many departments of skilled labour. There is always demand for such labour at home and abroad; and in the colonies a skilled mechanic is as much respected and vastly more useful than most clerks. We are afraid that the increase of education may have the tendency to multiply the number of lads seeking to live by their pens instead of by more remunerative tools.<sup>93</sup>

As noted by Heller, the expansion of elementary education was perceived to have had a negative impact on upper-middle-class clerical workers by "diluting their relatively scarce literary and numerical skills and opening their work up to a much wider pool of people".<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> G. Anderson, *Victorian Clerks* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976), pp. 52-73.

<sup>92</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (26 April 1879), p. 240.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>94</sup> Heller, 'London Clerical Workers', p. 20.



There was also growing concern that clerical work was becoming deskilled due to the increasing application of new mechanical devices in the office such as adding machines, filing systems, and typewriters. For example, in July 1891 the editor of the *BOP* informed a correspondent that “the bulk of Civil Service labour is clerk’s work of the most mechanical description – such work as in the near future will be done wholesale by merely turning a handle”.<sup>95</sup> This concern about the deskilling of clerical work explains why correspondents were advised that “special training for special trades” was necessary to prevent “genteel starvation”.<sup>96</sup> In October 1888, one “Furrier” was advised that “it is always better to learn a trade, and look forward to being a master, than to begin as a clerk, and look forward to be merely an ill-paid book-keeping machine all your life”.<sup>97</sup> A similar response was given to “Giant Raft” in November 1881:

‘As a general rule, the man with special knowledge is the man who gets on’. The future of the modern clerk, as a clerk and nothing more, seems to us very gloomy. There is a phantom gentility after which some people strive which is the cause of a vast deal of misery. Better be a prosperous mechanic than a needy clerk.<sup>98</sup>

The value of special knowledge was also a recurring theme in the *BOP*’s correspondence on emigration. Searching for the terms “Correspondence” and “Emigr\*” together in Gale’s *NCUKP* returns ninety-seven results for the *BOP* between 13 December 1879 and 8 December 1900. This sample reveals that the *BOP* regarded emigration as suitable for those who had received specialist training or acquired a skilled trade. For example, the editor advised public school boys who aspired to emigrate to write to Robert Johnson (b.1837), the

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<sup>95</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (11 July 1891), p. 656.

<sup>96</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (22 January 1881), p. 280; *Boy's Own Paper* (13 August 1887), p. 736.

<sup>97</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (20 October 1888), p. 48.

<sup>98</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (12 November 1881), p. 112.

resident director of the Colonial College and Training Farm at Hollesley Bay, Suffolk.<sup>99</sup> Founded in 1887, the purpose of the college was “to provide young fellows from the Public Schools who intend to emigrate with an education in the arts of agriculture and stock-raising”.<sup>100</sup> As noted by James Mangan, tuition was expensive with annual fees starting at £175, with additional fees being charged for equipment and extra-curricular activities.<sup>101</sup> This explains why less affluent correspondents were advised to consider seriously whether they had the necessary finances and skills to earn a living abroad. In April 1879, a “Clerk” was advised to reconsider emigrating because “in the colonies a skilled mechanic is much more respected and vastly more useful than most clerks”.<sup>102</sup> A “Tailor” from Liverpool was counselled that he would have to emigrate “in some other capacity” because the editor had “never met with a tailor who worked his passage out”.<sup>103</sup> Along similar lines, one “H. Halford” was informed that the market for unskilled labour in New Zealand was “unfortunately much overstocked” and was thus advised that “there is no use in your emigrating unless you can land with a little money in your pocket, and are willing to accept the first situation that offers”.<sup>104</sup>

The *BOP*'s correspondence column also reveals that many aspiring emigrants had misconceptions about employment opportunities. On several occasions, the editor corrected correspondents who erroneously believed that they were eligible to apply for assisted

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<sup>99</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (26 March 1892), p. 416; *Boy's Own Paper* (2 March 1895), p. 352; *Boy's Own Paper* (19 February 1898), p. 336.

<sup>100</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (17 November 1900), p. 111. For further reading on the history of the Colonial College and Training Farm, see: Dunae, *Gentlemen Emigrants*, pp. 192-214.

<sup>101</sup> J. Mangan, *Benefits Bestowed?: Education and British Imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), p. 200.

<sup>102</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (26 April 1879), p. 240.

<sup>103</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (17 March 1883), p. 400.

<sup>104</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (23 January 1886), p. 272.

passages and land warrants.<sup>105</sup> Other correspondents were advised not to emigrate until they had learned enough to make an informed decision. For example, in August 1883 the editor instructed a correspondent intending to emigrate to Australia to “get a few books on the colony, and look on them as part of your outfit”.<sup>106</sup> According to the editor, it was better for the correspondent to spend five shillings to discover whether he had made a mistake in his choice than to spend weeks in idleness upon reaching his destination. A similar response was given to one “E. Holmes” in March 1884:

You had far better stay at home until you have learnt more about the United States. The idea of buying a farm, and making a living by ‘going out shooting,’ is merely a boyish dream, and we do not think any part of America would be suitable ‘for that sort of thing.’ If you think of emigrating, study the country you are going to, and fit yourself as well as you can for your new position.<sup>107</sup>

As the century progressed, the *BOP*’s correspondence column began to offer less thorough responses to queries about emigration. This can be attributed to a change in editorial policy. In October 1888, the editor explained he no longer believed that it was necessary to respond to readers’ queries about emigration due to the establishment of the Emigrants’ Information Office.<sup>108</sup> As noted by Stephen Constantine, the EIO was founded in 1886 under the supervision of the Colonial Office in response to growing concerns about intending emigrants being “grossly misled about opportunities overseas by persuasive emigration agents and

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<sup>105</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (21 May 1887), p. 544; *Boy’s Own Paper* 2 July 1887), p. 640; *Boy’s Own Paper* (15 June 1895), p. 592.

<sup>106</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (18 August 1883), p. 752.

<sup>107</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (8 March 1884), p. 368).

<sup>108</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (13 October 1888), p. 31.

passage brokers”.<sup>109</sup> The EIO sought to counteract this problem by supplying the public with trustworthy and up-to-date information about emigration to the British Colonies. In 1891, the EIO published a twelve-part series of handbooks covering life in the colonies, professional employment, and emigration statutes. The EIO also established a working relationship with Britain’s public libraries to distribute circulars and disseminate information to intending emigrants.<sup>110</sup> Despite this public information campaign, many of the *BOP*’s correspondents appear to have been unaware of the EIO’s existence. Between 15 January 1887 and 24 March 1900, the editor informed no fewer than forty-two correspondents that their queries about emigration would be better served by writing to the EIO. Although the editor explained to these intending correspondents that “it is a mere waste of time to take your turn in a magazine”,<sup>111</sup> the fact that boys continued to write to the *BOP* for advice suggests that readers frequently ignored the editorial guidelines which governed the magazine’s correspondence column.

This chapter has thus far considered the commonalities and differences between the employment advice offered to boys by *YF* and the *BOP*. Both magazines were eager to help boys answer the question “What Shall I Be?”, and their correspondence columns were inundated with queries about employment opportunities in the Civil Service, earning a living at sea, and emigration. The main point of divergence between the magazines is that the careers advice they offered to boys was tailored to the needs of different audiences. *YF* provided guidance to readers who possessed neither means nor influence, whereas the *BOP*’s

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<sup>109</sup> S. Constantine, ‘Introduction: Empire Migration and Imperial Harmony’, in S. Constantine (ed.), *Emigrants and Empire: British Settlement in the Dominions Between the Wars* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 3.

<sup>110</sup> K. Whittaker, ‘British Public Libraries and the Emigrants’ Information Office, 1886-1918’, *Library History*, 8.2 (1988), pp. 29-34.

<sup>111</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (22 December 1888), p. 190.

articles were primarily intended for public school boys. Despite this difference, both magazines presented choosing a vocation as an important coming of age milestone for boys. As we shall see in the section that follows, this was in contrast to the *GOP*'s articles on employment which sent readers mixed messages about whether girls should work through choice rather than economic necessity.

### Employment Advice in the *Girl's Own Paper*

Under the editorship of Charles Peters, the *GOP* regularly featured practical information about employment opportunities for girls. In the magazine's fifth issue, the editor announced that "it is intended to insert in our pages from time to time detailed articles on special subjects connected with 'Earning One's Living'".<sup>112</sup> The first of these articles was written by Sophia Caulfield (1824-1911), a regular contributor to the *GOP* who frequently wrote about the topics of religion, needlework, and employment. According to Caulfield, her aim was to provide girls with ideas on "fruitful fields for honest labour" so that they "could spend a useful life, earn a livelihood, or add to the pecuniary means you possess".<sup>113</sup> The article began by offering advice to girls living in London who were desirous of seeking employment away from the "dingy city". Caulfield recommended that these girls should join the recently formed Ladies' Association for the Promotion of Horticulture, Food Industries, and other Country Pursuits.<sup>114</sup> The focus of the article then turned to address girls who had "duties and ties at home". Caulfield advised that there were "charming and varied employments" for

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<sup>112</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (31 January 1880), p. 76.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 74-76.

<sup>114</sup> The society was set up by Isabel Jane Thorne (1834-1910), a campaigner for the medical education of women, with a view to establishing a college for ladies to gain practical and scientific training in horticulture, arboriculture, poultry-raising, dairy work, beekeeping, and other minor food industries. For further reading on the late-Victorian and Edwardian movement to promote women's advancement in farming and gardening, see: D. Opitz, 'Back to the Land: Lady Warwick and the Movement for Women's Collegiate Agricultural Education', *Agricultural History Review*, 62.1 (2014), pp. 119-145.

“industrious fingers” such as sculpting and engraving, designing patterns, dressmaking, flower-making, and china-painting. The remainder of the article concentrated on new opportunities for women in the professions of pharmacy, nursing, and teaching. While Caulfield acknowledged that her survey was “an imperfect sketch of these far-differing fields of women’s work”, she hoped that her advice would inspire her readers to “make good use of your head and hands, either for your own support, or for the good and comfort of others”.<sup>115</sup>

Although the RTS marketed the *GOP* as being suitable “for girls of all classes”, many of the occupations discussed in Caulfield’s article presupposed a certain level of education or affluence.<sup>116</sup> For instance, Caulfield explained that the dispensing of medicine was an appropriate occupation for women. Girls with an interest in this profession were advised to attend the lectures of the Pharmaceutical Society, which charged fees amounting to £4 4s., or the South London School of Pharmacy which offered lectures and a laboratory course for £15 a year.<sup>117</sup> This suggests that the “implied reader” of Caulfield’s article was the educated girl who regularly purchased the sixpence monthly volume of the magazine, rather than the less affluent reader who could only afford to buy the penny weekly numbers. This claim is corroborated by Caulfield’s four-part series on “New Employments for Girls” which was designed “to suggest employments for women quite suitable for those belonging to a social position above the middle classes of society”.<sup>118</sup>

A further insight into the “implied reader” of *GOP*’s articles on employment can be gleaned from an unsigned series on “Work for All” which commenced in October 1883. While this title initially appears to suggest that the content will be inclusive, the author explained that

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<sup>115</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (31 January 1880), p. 76.

<sup>116</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (2 October 1880), p. 15.

<sup>117</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (31 January 1880), p. 75.

<sup>118</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (10 October 1891), p. 20.

the purpose of the series was to offer advice to girls “in the middle class of English society” on how to pursue careers in teaching, medicine, art, and music.<sup>119</sup> It is only in the final article in the series that space was found to “say a word to the largest class of our girls, who...have the power of self-maintenance so completely in their hands”:

We mean our household servants, the girls who dress our food, clean our houses, go on our errands, and minister to us in the thousand ways which our present complex mode of life renders almost necessary. These girls come to us for the most part from the poor and overcrowded homes; they have had little experience of dwellings in which there has been even free space to breathe, much less the opportunity of growing familiar with orderly and easy life. Is it not rather a marvel that they are often good, honest, and kind than that they are sometimes heedless, flippant, and unteachable?<sup>120</sup>

The ‘othering’ of the working girl in this extract was prevalent throughout the *GOP*. As noted by Kristine Moruzi and Michelle Smith, “while the *GOP*’s purpose was to instruct readers presumed by the *RTS* to most need its guidance, working- and lower-middle-class girls, its articles paradoxically often exclude particular kinds of working girls in their address”.<sup>121</sup>

For example, Emma Brewer penned a three-part series for the *GOP* on the “extreme hardships” faced by the flower-girls of London.<sup>122</sup> Rather than addressing these girls as part of the *GOP*’s readership, the purpose of the article – rather like that of the *BOP* on the urban working classes, discussed above – was to provide middle-class readers with a vicarious insight into life on the streets of London which were portrayed as “places of great temptation

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<sup>119</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (13 October 1883), p. 25.

<sup>120</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (19 July 1884), p. 663.

<sup>121</sup> Moruzi and Smith, ‘Ambivalent Attitudes Towards Employment in the *Girl’s Own Paper*’, p. 430.

<sup>122</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (31 October 1891), pp. 78-79; *Girl’s Own Paper* (12 December 1891), pp. 166-169; *Girl’s Own Paper* (30 January 1892), pp. 283-285.

for girls” who come from “miserable homes”.<sup>123</sup> The article adopted an investigative tone which was typical of the period when social commentators were discovering the plight of “Outcast London”.<sup>124</sup> After discussing how these girls were often enticed by the evils of drink, Brewer commended the efforts of John Alfred Groom (1845-1919), an engraver and philanthropist from Clerkenwell, who set up the “Watercress and Flower Girls’ Christian Mission” in 1866. The purpose of this initiative was to help poor and disabled girls earn a living on the streets of Islington.<sup>125</sup> In 1890, Groom opened a home for disabled and orphaned girls at Clacton-on-Sea, which also served as a holiday resort for the London flower girls. Brewer visited the home to provide middle-class readers with a first-hand account of the institution. Crucially, she discussed how philanthropy had transformed the lives of the flower girls:

How much we should like you who have seen them in the streets of London, to look at them now, bearing, we allow, the marks of their early sufferings in their faces, but oh! so very happy. Everything about them is clean, healthy, and pleasant.<sup>126</sup>

Brewer was not the only *GOP* contributor to provide middle-class girls with an insight into the lives of working-class girls. For example, a two-part series on “The Cinderellas of the National Household” focused on the hardships faced by the “jute girls” and “match-makers” of the East End.<sup>127</sup> Moving beyond the capital city, a multi-part series on “Girls’ Work and

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<sup>123</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (31 October 1891), p. 79.

<sup>124</sup> The term “Outcast London” is derived from Rev. Andrew Mearns’s inquiry into the condition of the abject poor in 1883. For further reading on social investigations into “Outcast London” during the late nineteenth century, see: G. Jones, *Outcast London: A Study in Relationship Between Classes in Victorian Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971); E. Ross, *Love and Toil: Motherhood in Outcast London, 1870-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 11-26.

<sup>125</sup> K. Huneault, ‘Flower-Girls and Fictions: Selling on the Streets’, *Canadian Art Review*, 23.1 (1996), pp. 52-70.

<sup>126</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (30 January 1892), p. 285.

<sup>127</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (7 December 1895), pp. 147-149; *Girl’s Own Paper* (11 July 1896), pp. 649-651. For further reading on the work of London’s match girls in Victorian culture, see: W. Fishman, *East End 1888: Life*



Workshops” informed readers about working conditions in Lancashire’s cotton mills and Nottinghamshire’s lace factories.<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, an unsigned series on “Girls Who Work in the Fields” encouraged girls who lived in towns to spare a thought for the lives of their poorer sisters, who depend upon the hard work of field labour as the only means of subsistence.<sup>129</sup> Thus, articles on employment in the *GOP* were rarely addressed to working girls. Rather, the working girl was deployed as an emotive device to stir feelings of sympathy and inspire philanthropy amongst middle-class readers of the magazine towards their “toiling sisters”.<sup>130</sup>

While there was widespread recognition that girls from the labouring classes were required to work for subsistence, the idea of middle-class girls participating in remunerative employment was more divisive. Some of the contributors to the *GOP* were alarmed by the prospect of girls prioritising employment outside of the home over the traditional work of motherhood and wifehood. This point is nicely illustrated by an unsigned article entitled “The Missed Mission” which appeared in the *GOP* in December 1894. The article attempted to reinforce the traditional feminine ideal of the ‘angel in the house’ by reminding girls that “the wife and mother are the highest products of the universe” and “the higher the civilization the more devoted is the woman to home and maternity”. According to the author, girls who engaged in remunerative employment were a threat to this feminine ideal of motherhood and maternity for two reasons. First, employment was portrayed as defeminising because it was alleged to

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*in a London Borough Among the Labouring Poor* (Philadelphia: Temple University press, 1988), pp. 284-302; L. Raw, *Striking a Light: The Bryant and May Matchwomen and their Place in History* (London: Continuum International, 2009), pp. 69-86; S. Koven, *The Match Girl and the Heiress* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 77-134.

<sup>128</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (15 October 1881), pp. 45-46; *Girl’s Own Paper* (12 November 1881), pp. 99-100; *Girl’s Own Paper* (14 January 1892), pp. 246-247; *Girl’s Own Paper* (23 September 1882), pp. 819-820.

<sup>129</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (7 October 1893), pp. 8-10; *Girl’s Own Paper* (18 November 1893), pp. 97-100; *Girl’s Own Paper* (21 September 1895), pp. 801-802; *Girl’s Own Paper* (28 September 1895), pp. 817-819.

<sup>130</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (22 June 1895), p. 596. For a discussion of how the “Little Woman” was an emotive figure for middle-class readers, arousing admiration, indignation, and pity, see: A. Davin, *Growing Up Poor: Home, School and Street in London, 1870-1914* (London: Rivers Oram Press, 1996), p. 161.

remove “the contrasts that form the attraction of the gentler sex” and thus renders women less marriageable. Second, the article criticised girls who were trained for employment beyond the domestic sphere yet were ignorant of the principles of household management and the laws of health. The author lamented that “the missed mission” was a knowledge and practice of personal and domestic hygiene, or the “science of prevention”. Readers were informed that “it is impossible for men to know too much of the laws of health, but it is dangerous for women to know too little”.<sup>131</sup> This argument was based on the ideology of ‘separate spheres’: the notion that “men were to be active in the world as citizens and entrepreneurs; women were to be dependent, as wives and mothers”.<sup>132</sup> As the author explained:

They [women] are the ones, after all, who live in our houses in which the menkind often are but visitors; they are the ones who manage the children, and the servants, and the housekeeping, and the schooling, the man being in all things the paymaster.<sup>133</sup>

A similar argument was made by Edward Hardy (1849-1920), the author of the self-help classic *How to Be Happy Though Married* (1886), whose article on “The Importance of Women’s Work” appeared in the *GOP* in September 1885. According to Hardy, women’s work conducted in the privacy of the home should not be undervalued or regarded as less important than the more public work of men. Readers were asked to consider whether there is “any work done by man so useful as that which is done by a good mother?”. While Hardy conceded that the work of the Prime Minister “is no doubt very great”, he proposed that the “best mother of England, whoever she is, serves her country even more”. To support this contention, he explained that “one good mother is worth a hundred schoolmasters” because

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<sup>131</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (15 December 1894), pp. 172-173.

<sup>132</sup> L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London: Hutchinson, 1987), p. 450.

<sup>133</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (15 December 1894), p. 172.

“she influences far more than does the father the action and conduct of the child”.<sup>134</sup> This point was reinforced through a follow-up article on “Professional Men’s Wives”, in which Hardy proposed that girls should be content with exercising an indirect influence upon the world as wives and mothers.<sup>135</sup>

While Hardy believed that it was necessary to prepare girls for their future domestic roles, other contributors to the *GOP* acknowledged that an increasing number of girls from middle-class families were being compelled to earn their own maintenance. For example, Caulfield’s article on “Some Types of Girlhood, or, Our Juvenile Spinsters” observed that “a large percentage of our girls have had to be trained to be self-supporting”. According to Caulfield, this was due to the advance of women’s education, the failure of securities, the non-payment of rents, and the enormous increase of the population.<sup>136</sup> Along similar lines, the author of “Work for All” argued that middle-class girls should be prepared to support themselves due to a gender imbalance in the demographic structure of society.<sup>137</sup> This argument was typical of a period in which there was growing awareness about the ‘problem’ of “surplus women”. As Judith Worsnop summarises, the debate “was concerned with surplus women being middle-class and unmarried and with how they should sustain life: as dependents of men or as independent in their own right”.<sup>138</sup> Social commentators frequently highlighted how independent living was difficult as there were few respectable choices of remunerative

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<sup>134</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (12 September 1885), pp. 797-798.

<sup>135</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (12 July 1890), p. 646.

<sup>136</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (4 October 1890), pp. 4-5. For further reading on representations of spinsterhood in girls’ papers and women’s magazines, see: Rodgers, *Adolescent Girlhood* pp. 38-48; E. Liggins, ‘The Life of a Bachelor Girl in the Big City: Selling the Single Lifestyle to Readers of *Woman* and the Young Women in the 1890s’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 40.3 (2007), pp. 216-238.

<sup>137</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (13 October 1883), p. 25.

<sup>138</sup> J. Worsnop, ‘A Reevaluation of the Problem of Surplus Women in 19th-Century England: The Case of the 1851 Census’, *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 13.1 (1990), p. 21.

employment open to middle-class women.<sup>139</sup> Although some middle-class women were able to find employment as governesses and seamstresses, these positions were often oversubscribed and underpaid.<sup>140</sup> By the turn of the twentieth century, however, quite a dramatic change had taken place. As Mitchell and others have demonstrated, middle-class women were now working as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, teachers, librarians, civil servants, clerks and shorthand typists, journalists, hairdressers, and shop assistants.<sup>141</sup>

Although the *GOP* sent readers mixed messages about the propriety of middle-class women's work, there is evidence to suggest that readers were eager to learn about new employment and training opportunities. In February 1897, Martha Louisa Lily Watson observed that "from our correspondence columns it is easy to see how frequently 'our girls' are longing for new departures, new training, new careers in life. But in many cases they have no idea how to set about attaining their object".<sup>142</sup> Although this suggests that the *GOP*'s correspondence column functioned as a site of encounter where readers could ask the editor for careers advice, questions about employment were often met with short and generic responses in early volumes of the magazine. This can be attributed to two factors. First, correspondents who wanted to learn about new training opportunities for girls were often redirected to external organisations. For example, in 1882 a correspondent signed as "Certie" was advised to write

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<sup>139</sup> This problem was discussed in essays by Harriet Martineau (1859), William Rathbone Greg (1862), Frances Power Cobbe (1862), and Jessie Boucherett (1869). For further reading on the "superfluous women" debate, see: M. Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920* (London: Virago, 1985), pp. 1-10; A. Anderson, 'The Social Problem of Spinsters in Mid-Victorian Britain', *Journal of Family History*, 9.4 (1984), pp. 377-393; K. Levitan, 'Redundancy, the Surplus Woman Problem, and the British Census, 1851-1861', *Women's History Review*, 17.3 (2008), pp. 359-376.

<sup>140</sup> L. Holcombe, *Victorian Ladies at Work: Middle-class Working Women in England and Wales, 1850-1914* (Hamden: David & Charles, 1973) pp. 7-10.

<sup>141</sup> Mitchell, 'Girl's Culture: At Work', pp. 243-258; E. Jordan, *The Women's Movement and Women's Employment in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 1999); G. Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 53-126.

<sup>142</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (27 February 1897), p. 340.

a letter giving a full account of her capabilities to the secretary of the Society for Promoting the Employment of Women.<sup>143</sup> Second, correspondents were often informed that the information they desired was already available in the aforementioned articles on “Earning One’s Living” and “Work for All”. Along similar lines to its male counterpart, the *GOP* had a policy of refusing to repeat information to correspondents. As the following response makes clear, editors admonishing readers for the sin of inattention was not a gender-specific phenomenon:

J. G. M. should apply for printed particulars to the Civil Service Commissioners in Cannon-row, S. W. We have answered your question so often, we think you cannot read our paper. See ‘Work for All,’ which series of articles is now coming out.<sup>144</sup>

Although early volumes of the *GOP* thus offer a limited insight into correspondents’ career aspirations, girls continued to write to the magazine for information about employment and training opportunities. This demand for advice eventually led to the creation of the “Girls’ Employments” column in 1896. According to Gale’s *NCUKP*, the column appeared sixty times between 3 October 1896 and 15 September 1900. During this period, the editor printed responses to 302 queries about employment. Although thirty-three of these queries are irrelevant to our current investigation, we are still left with a manageable sample of 269 queries.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (9 September 1882), p. 978. The Society for Promoting the Employment of Women was founded in 1859 by Jessie Boucherett (1825-1905), an English campaigner who sought to encourage “superfluous” women towards economic independence through work. For further reading, see: M. Tusan, ‘Not the Ordinary Victorian Charity: The Society for Promoting the Employment of Women Archive’, *History Workshop Journal*, 49.1 (2000), pp. 220-230; E. Jordan and A. Bridger, ‘An Unexpected Recruit to Feminism: Jessie Boucherett’s Feminist Life and the Importance of Being Wealthy’, *Women’s History Review*, 15.3 (2006), pp. 385-412

<sup>144</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (7 June 1884), p. 575.

<sup>145</sup> There are thirty-one instances in which there is simply not enough information to determine the type of employment that the correspondent was interested in learning about. The editor also refused to answer two questions pertaining to employment opportunities for boys.

Table 3. The frequency with which the *Girl's Own Paper* responded to girls' queries about specific kinds of "employment" (October 1896 – September 1900)

<b>Employment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Clerical Work	47
Nursing	46
Teaching	32
Dressmaking and Dress-cutting	15
Art and Design	15
Domestic Service	14
Emigration	11
Stewardess	11
Cookery	7
Gardening, Dairy-Work, and Horticulture	7
Missionary Work	6
Needlework	5
Writing and Journalism	5
Laundry Work	4
Dispensing and Pharmacy	3
Factory Inspectorship	3
Librarianship	3
Music	3
Travelling Companion	3
Waitress	3
Other: Acting (1), Addressing Envelopes (1), Asylum Attendant (1), Clay Modelling (1), Deaconesses (1), Dollmaking (1), Going into Business (1), Hairdressing (1), Indexing (1), Lacemaking (1), Learning Foreign Languages (1), Lip-reading (1), Masseuse (1), Millinery (1), Poultry Farming (1), Shop-Assistant (1), Stenographer (1), Students' Homes (1), Table Decoration (1), Taking Boarders (1), Veterinary Surgeon (1), Weaving (1), Wood-Carving (1), Working for Charity (1).	24

There are a few peculiar results in Table 3 which are worth discussing before analysing the sample. For example, the table underestimates the number of correspondents who were interested in learning about artistic and literary lines of employment. Again, this can be attributed to the limitations of keyword searching and the problem of decontextualisation. Queries about art, music, and literature frequently appeared in the correspondence column under a separate subheading of “Study and Studio”. While many of these queries were from readers who sought advice about how to profitably occupy their leisure hours, others were eager to learn whether they could earn money through their paintings, compositions, and stories. Along similar lines, questions about whether it was possible to earn a living through needlework often appeared under the subheading of “Work”. As we shall see in Chapter Four, a more leisured interest in needlework is also evident from the number of readers who participated in competitions which invited girls to submit specimens of plain needlework, crochet, and embroidery.

Despite the limitations of keyword searching, the information presented in Table 3 still provides a useful starting point for identifying broader trends in the *GOP*. For example, the table suggests that many of the correspondents aspired to clerical work. This is not necessarily surprising given that the number of female clerical workers expanded during late nineteenth century. As Gregory Anderson has demonstrated, women were recruited into office work at a proportionally faster rate than men, increasing their share of the commercial and civil service workforces by up to twenty-five per cent or more between 1881 and 1911. In absolute terms, the number of women employed as commercial clerks rose from 7,444 to 146,133 and from 4,657 to 27,129 in the Civil Service. According to Anderson, this expansion was facilitated by the gradual mechanisation of office work which presented new

opportunities for middle-class women.<sup>146</sup> The *GOP*'s correspondence column lends credibility to this argument as the magazine often received queries about where girls could receive training as telegraphists and telephonists.<sup>147</sup> Other correspondents were eager to learn whether their education was sufficient to secure a position as a civil servant in the Post Office. The following letter from "Etruria" was typical of the queries which appeared in the "Girls' Employments" column:

How can I enter the General Post Office as a lady-clerk? What kind of education ought I to have? Should I have to learn shorthand and typewriting? I am good at figures and can learn quickly. My age is nineteen, and I am five feet six inches in height.<sup>148</sup>

The correspondent was informed that she was eligible to compete for a Post Office clerkship until the age of twenty. Along similar lines to its male counterpart, however, the *GOP* expressed concern about the precarious nature of clerical work. Although the *GOP* regarded office work as a feminine and respectable source of employment for middle-class women, "Etruria" was advised that the Post Office had recently implemented a series of changes which were designed to raise educational standards and reduce salaries.<sup>149</sup> First, the examination was made more difficult as candidates were now expected to have knowledge of a "modern language" (French or German), in addition to the traditional subjects of orthography, writing from dictation, composition, handwriting, geography, and arithmetic.

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<sup>146</sup> G. Anderson, *White Blouse Revolution: Female Office Workers Since 1870* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 4-8. For a discussion of how the mechanisation of office work also led to the emergence of popular "techno-romances" which portrayed telegraphists and typists as figures of "disturbing sexual agency", see: K. Mullin, *Working Girls: Fiction, Sexuality, and Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 42-52.

<sup>147</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (26 August 1899), p. 767; *Girl's Own Paper* (19 February 1898), p. 335.

<sup>148</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (29 May 1897), p. 559.

<sup>149</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (15 May 1880), pp. 309-310; *Girl's Own Paper* (21 July 1883), p. 663; *Girl's Own Paper* (27 September 1884), p. 823.



Second, the introduction of a new examination for “girl clerks” (who were advised to enter between the ages of sixteen and eighteen) was calculated to supply the Post Office with “cheap girl-labour” while saving on the salaries of “women clerks”. According to the editor, “this simultaneous raising of the standard and lowering of the age and salary may be taken as a sign that women clerks are too numerous for their own welfare”.<sup>150</sup> Etruria was also warned that a clerk’s admission to the Post Office was conditional as every girl was placed on a period of medical probation for two years. As noted by the editor, it was not uncommon for girls to find themselves turned adrift at the end of the probationary period because their health had fallen short of the high standard of vigour demanded. Accordingly, the *GOP* advised correspondents with health conditions to reconsider their career aspirations. This point is nicely illustrated by the editor’s response to “Les Yeux” in October 1897:

Your short-sightedness might not actually hinder you in the discharge of your duties as a Post Office clerk; but, with the high medical standard now enforced, we think you would run a considerable risk in selecting a Civil Service career. There is, as we have pointed out before, the painful possibility of being thrown out of employment at the end of a two years’ engagement.<sup>151</sup>

As can be seen in Table 3 questions about clerical work were rivalled by queries about nursing. Again, this is not surprising given that there was a substantial change in both the numbers and the age group of the women in nursing between 1851 and 1891. As Ellen Jordan has demonstrated, “the occupation was converted from one filled largely by elderly widows without training to one for young, educated, unmarried women”.<sup>152</sup> According to Jordan, the growth in the number of young women entering the nursing profession coincided with the

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<sup>150</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (29 May 1897), p. 559.

<sup>151</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (16 October 1897), p. 47.

<sup>152</sup> Jordan, *The Women’s Movement*, p. 123.

large increase in the provision of hospital accommodation during the 1880s. She also acknowledges how “the Nightingale effect” allowed hospital nursing to acquire an aura of femininity and gentility.<sup>153</sup> As noted in Chapter Two, the *GOP* portrayed Florence Nightingale’s heroism as worthy of emulation. The magazine’s articles on employment, however, expressed concern about girls acquiring misconceptions about the reality of nursing. For example, the *GOP*’s article on “Hospital Work and Hospital Workers” observed that “any woman who enters upon it with her head full of romantic notions will find them rudely dispelled in a very short time”. Readers were informed that “the calling of a nurse involves plenty of hard uphill work and drudgery, and many disappointments too”.<sup>154</sup> Along similar lines, an article on the “Unvarnished Side of Hospital Nursing” lamented that girls were attracted to the profession for a “strange variety” of reasons:

Some from conscientious motives desire to devote their lives to good works; others take to nursing because they must gain a livelihood, and they think it sounds better to be a nurse than a companion, shopwoman, or servant. Some take to it because they think to wear a uniform and be called a sister lends a romance to their lives; and some giddy, thoughtless ones appear to have become nurses for the sake of amusement. It is needless to say these last two do not have quite as easy a time as they expect; but the amount of harm they do to nursing work is incalculable.<sup>155</sup>

The *GOP*’s criticism of thoughtless girls who wished to become nurses extended to the magazine’s correspondence column. Although the editor was glad to provide correspondents with information about training opportunities for nurses, some girls were advised to reconsider their career options. For example, in August 1898 the editor responded to a

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<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>154</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (6 October 1883), p. 10.

<sup>155</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (15 September 1888), p. 808.

correspondent writing under the pseudonym of “Care” who wrote to the magazine for advice about hospital nursing. Although the correspondent was informed that hospital nursing was “a fine and a satisfying career”, she was cautioned that “it should only be followed by one who believes she has a love of it that will outweigh all sense of the toilsomeness and frequent disagreeableness of the duties”.<sup>156</sup> The editor gave an even sterner warning to “Embryo” in May 1897:

Your remark that ‘you hope to be a hospital nurse when you are older, your mother is very delicate, but home-nursing lacks so much of the interest which hospital nursing affords,’ is almost too selfish for us to believe it was meant in earnest. We have unfortunately, however, met your counterpart in real life.<sup>157</sup>

The editor clarified the *GOP*’s attitude towards employment by explaining that “we sympathise with the modern tendencies in the way of fuller development of women’s work”. The correspondent was reminded, however, “that duty comes first, and that the fifth commandment is not yet superseded”. The exchange concluded with the editor advising the correspondent to adopt a less selfish view of life.<sup>158</sup> Thus, while the *GOP*’s correspondence column sought to provide readers with careers advice, it also reinforced the notion that the ideal girl should prioritise her domestic responsibilities over her personal desire for remunerative employment.

### Conclusion

This chapter has advanced scholarly understanding of the relationship between the English juvenile periodical press and the market for careers advice during the second half of the

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<sup>156</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (13 August 1898), p. 736.

<sup>157</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (29 May 1897), p. 559.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 599.

nineteenth century. By comparing the commonalities and differences between three magazines, this chapter has identified that socialising messages about employment were transmitted to readers in two ways. First, magazines featured articles which were designed to help boys make informed decisions about their fledgling careers or alert girls to the expanding opportunities for women's employment. Second, correspondence columns enabled readers to write to the editors of juvenile periodicals for careers advice. While the informative articles offer a revealing insight into how editorial agendas were shaped by attitudes towards class and gender, the correspondence columns serve as an important reminder that readers often had their own career aspirations and anxieties. This is significant because it challenges the assumption that young people were the passive recipients of adult teaching. Rather, it suggests that socialisation should be understood as a dialogue between editors who were eager to prepare the rising generation for the world of work, and readers who actively consulted magazines for careers advice.

At first glance, the number of readers who wrote to the editors of magazines for advice appears to indicate that the juvenile periodical press was an effective medium for supplying boys and girls with information about employment opportunities. As we have seen throughout this chapter, however, some readers were seemingly unaware that their queries had been answered in previous numbers. Although these correspondents were often depicted by the editors of juvenile periodicals as being inattentive, it is possible that they were simply irregular readers who were unable to keep up to date with magazines for practical reasons. This raises questions about whether a serialised format was the best way of transmitting socialising messages to the rising generation. Furthermore, it lends credibility to the argument that the relationship between the act of reading and socialisation was more complex than scholars have traditionally assumed. As we shall see in the chapter that follows, this argument

is further strengthened by evidence which suggests that socialising messages about leisure may not have reached their intended audience.

## CHAPTER FOUR: LEISURE

The right occupation of leisure hours we consider to be of great importance. Our very existence as a magazine, now entering on its ninth year, attests this fact; and the prominence we give to competitions above any other magazine published shows that we are anxious to do something in this direction.<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

The second half of the nineteenth century is often regarded by historians as the period marking “the emergence of a recognizably modern leisure” in England.<sup>2</sup> Although revisionist research has identified that there were significant elements of continuity and adaptation in the formation of leisure with the persistence of many pre-industrial traditions, there remains widespread agreement that “change and modernity predominated” between 1850 and 1914.<sup>3</sup> One of the most important discussions in the field of nineteenth-century leisure studies is how the twin forces of industrialisation and urbanisation restructured how different groups in society experienced leisure. The first generation of scholarship focused predominantly on the leisure pursuits of men.<sup>4</sup> Since the 1980s, there has also been a concerted effort to recover the

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<sup>1</sup> *Kind Words* (1 January 1874), p. 25

<sup>2</sup> P. Bailey, ‘Leisure, Culture and the Historian: Reviewing the First Generation of Leisure Historiography in Britain’, *Leisure Studies*, 8.2 (1989), p. 108.

<sup>3</sup> P. Bailey, ‘Leisure: Merrie to Modern’, in M. Hewitt (ed.), *The Victorian World* (London: Routledge, 2012), p. 619. For further reading on the continuity thesis, see: H. Cunningham, ‘Leisure and Culture’, in F. Thomson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750–1950. Volume 2: People and Their Environment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 279-339; P. Borsay, *A History of Leisure: The British Experience Since 1500* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 9-11; A. Metcalfe, *Leisure and Recreation in a Victorian Mining Community: The Social Economy of Leisure in North-East England, 1820-1914* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 67-90; P. Horn, *Pleasures and Pastimes in Victorian Britain* (Stroud: Amberly, 2012), pp. 71-95.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion on the “gender blindness” of early studies of leisure in Britain, see: Bailey, ‘Leisure Historiography in Britain’, p. 117-118.

leisure experiences of women.<sup>5</sup> In recent decades, however, scholarship has begun to consider how changes in the formation of leisure were influential in the making of new sets of relationship between adults and young people. A key argument to emerge from the existing secondary literature is that the expansion of commercial leisure engendered anxiety amongst sections of the middle classes about the susceptibility of young and impressionable minds to the corrupting influence of “sinful” or “disreputable” pleasures.<sup>6</sup> As John Springhall emphasises, the “incorrect choices of adolescent recreation were seen as the source of all subsequent delinquent behaviour in the individual”. The correct choice of leisure, conversely, was believed to have the potential to produce the next generation of responsible citizens, reliable workers, and defenders of the British Empire.<sup>7</sup>

The belief that leisure played an important role in the socialisation of boys and girls explains why young people were identified as a specialist market for inculcating values through recreation which would transfer into adulthood during the second half of the nineteenth century. A burgeoning body of scholarship on organised youth movements has demonstrated how groups such as the Boys’ Brigade and the Girls’ Friendly Society sought to provide the rising generation with a code of living.<sup>8</sup> Along similar lines, historians have considered how

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<sup>5</sup> E. Roberts, *A Woman's Place: An Oral History of Working-Class Women, 1890-1940* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), pp. 39-80; L. Stanley, ‘Historical Sources for Studying Work and Leisure in Women’s Lives’, in E. Wimbush and M. Talbot (eds), *Relative Freedoms Women and Leisure* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1988), pp. 18-32; E. Green et al., *Women’s Leisure, What Leisure?* (London: Palgrave, 1990), pp. 38-56; C. Parratt, ‘Little Means or Time: Working-Class Women and Leisure in Late Victorian and Edwardian England’, *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 15.2 (1998), pp. 22-53.

<sup>6</sup> J. Heeley, ‘Leisure and Moral Reform’, *Leisure Studies*, 5.1(1986), p. 62; M. Huggins and J. Mangan, ‘Prologue: All Mere Complexities’ in M. Huggins and J. Mangan (eds), *Disreputable Pleasures: Less Virtuous Victorians at Play* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), pp. xv-xvii.

<sup>7</sup> J. Springhall, *Coming of Age: Adolescence in Britain, 1860-1960* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1986), p. 153.

<sup>8</sup> For further reading on youth organisations for boys, see: J. Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society: British Youth Movements 1883-1940* (London: Croon Helm, 1977); M. Blanch, ‘Imperialism, Nationalism and Organized Youth’, in J. Clarke, C. Critcher and R. Johnson (eds), *Working-Class Culture: Studies in History and Theory* (London: Hutchinson, 1979) pp. 103-120; H. Hendrick, *Images of Youth: Age, Class, and the Male Youth Problem, 1880-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 158-181. For further reading on youth organisations for girls, see: B. Harrison, ‘For Church, Queen and Family: The Girls’ Friendly Society

sporting proselytisers “endowed physical recreation with a battery of serious purposes” which were responsible for transforming sport into “a device thought essential for the continued success of Anglo-Saxon civilisation”.<sup>9</sup> The voluminous academic literature has, however, largely ignored how juvenile periodicals attempted to mould their readers’ understanding of recreation from a young age.<sup>10</sup> As the editor of *KW* suggests in the epigraph above, this oversight is significant because publishers of ‘improving’ magazines regarded leisure as a matter of “great importance”. Tellingly, the editor highlights the prominence that the magazine gave to competitions which were designed to occupy readers’ leisure hours profitably. Thus, there is a tantalising opportunity for a study of encounters which investigates how readers responded to socialising messages about leisure.

The chapter begins by comparing how the editors of the *Boy’s Own Paper* and *Young England* responded to the ‘problem’ of male youth leisure. After discussing how these magazines offered essay writing competitions which were designed to mould their readers’ understanding of recreation, the focus of the chapter will then shift to explore fin de siècle anxieties about working girls’ leisure in the *Girl’s Own Paper*. The third section investigates how juvenile periodicals attempted to occupy the leisure hours of readers by providing them

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1874-1920’, *Past & Present*, 61.1 (1973), pp. 107-138; I. Dove, ‘Sisterhood or Surveillance? The Development of Working Girls’ Clubs in London 1880–1939’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Greenwich, 1996); C. Parratt, *More Than Mere Amusement: Working-Class Women’s Leisure in England, 1750-1914* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2001), pp. 149-187; C. Dyhouse, *Girls Growing Up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 104-114. For a discussion of young people’s involvement in temperance organisations, see: A. McAllister, ‘Picturing the Demon Drink: How Children Were Shown Temperance Principles in the Band of Hope’, *Visual Resources*, 28.4 (2012), pp. 309-323.

<sup>9</sup> N. Tranter, *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain, 1750-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 2. For further reading on how young people were targeted by sporting proselytisers, see: R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 135-148; A. Warren, ‘Sport, Youth and Gender in Britain, 1880-1940’, in C. Binfield and J. Stevenson (eds), *Sport, Culture and Politics* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 48-71.

<sup>10</sup> A notable exception is Louis James’s comparative study of the *Boy’s Own Magazine* and the *Boys’ Journal* which discusses how readers were encouraged to follow tutorials on science and physical recreation: L. James, ‘Now Inhale Gas: The Interactive Readership in Two Victorian Boys’ Periodicals, 1855-1870’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 42.1 (2009), pp. 64-80.



with ideas about hobbies and indoor pastimes, whereas the fourth focuses on sport and physical recreation. These sections not only consider how juvenile periodicals supplied boys and girls with ‘gender-appropriate’ ideas about recreation, but crucially they also demonstrate how readers were provided with opportunities to put what they had learned into practice through competitions and club pages. This chapter concludes that while these initiatives undoubtedly occupied the leisure hours of many boys and girls, the extent to which socialising messages about recreation were received by the intended audience is open to debate.

### The ‘Problem’ of Male Youth Leisure

The leisure pursuits of boys were identified as a specific social ‘problem’ during the nineteenth century. As Harry Hendrick and others have demonstrated, inner-city working-class boys were a particular cause for concern due to their supposed precocious independence, access to commercial urban leisure, and highly visible presence in overcrowded streets. Without adult supervision, these boys were perceived to spend their leisure time aimlessly loitering in the streets or engaging in disreputable activities such as drinking, smoking, and gambling.<sup>11</sup> John Heeley observes that “one important set of responses to this situation was to result in numerous aspects of popular working-class culture coming under much greater public scrutiny and control”.<sup>12</sup> Reform lobbies such as the Society for the Suppression of Vice (1802-1885) and the National Vigilance Association

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<sup>11</sup> Hendrick, *Images of Youth*, pp. 121-154; E. Hopkins, *Childhood Transformed: Working-Class Children in Nineteenth-Century England* (Manchester: Manchester University press, 1994), pp. 291-311; B. Beaven, *Leisure Citizenship and Working-Class Men in Britain, 1850-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 88-124; E. Yeo, ‘The Boy is the Father of the Man’: Moral Panic Over Working-Class Youth, 1850 to the Present’, *Labour History Review*, 69.2 (2004), pp. 187-199.

<sup>12</sup> Heeley, ‘Leisure and Moral Reform’, p. 61. For further reading on the history of leisure and theories of social control, see: P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978); F. Thompson, ‘Social Control in Victorian Britain’, *Economic History Review*, 34.2 (1981), pp. 189-208.

(1885-1953) campaigned against the traditional pleasures of drink, blood sport, and ‘obscene’ literature, as well as emerging forms of commercial entertainment such as the music hall.<sup>13</sup> By contrast, advocates of ‘rational recreation’ proposed that the most effective way of counteracting these disreputable pleasures was not through abolition or suppression, but by providing wholesome counterattractions such as youth clubs, libraries, and sporting facilities.<sup>14</sup> These ‘rational recreation’ schemes were underpinned by the philosophy that the leisure pursuits of boys could be “supervised so as to foster good habits and counter anti-social ones”.<sup>15</sup>

As we have already seen in Chapter One, the philosophy of ‘rational recreation’ had a significant influence upon the juvenile periodical market as respectable publishers sought to supplant the ‘penny dreadfuls’ with ‘improving’ alternatives. This may explain why articles on the ‘problem’ of male youth leisure and the importance of ‘rational recreation’ were common in the juvenile periodical press during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. For example, in 1886 the *BOP* featured an article on the leisure pursuits of working-class boys in London. The article began by observing that “there thousands of lads engaged daily in the City who leave their employment about seven o’clock in the evening, and are not expected at their homes or lodgings until ten, or even later”. The author lamented that for these boys “leisure times are in many cases a curse rather than a blessing”. The article expressed concern about boys wandering the streets or spending their time in “doubtful places of entertainment” where they would be “exposed to all the dangers and temptations of

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<sup>13</sup> M. Roberts, *Making English Morals: Voluntary Association and Moral Reform in England, 1787-1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> Bailey, *Leisure and Class*, pp. 47-48, 162-164; J. Lowerson, *Time to Spare in Victorian England* (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1977), pp. 67-69; R. Vorspan, ‘Rational Recreation and the Law: The Transformation of Popular Urban Leisure in Victorian England’, *McGill Law Journal*, 45.4 (2000), pp. 891-973.

<sup>15</sup> Heeley, ‘Leisure and Moral Reform’, p. 57.

a great city at their most critical age”. Rather than criticise this behaviour, the author bemoaned that there was a lack of leisure facilities for boys who had few resources.<sup>16</sup>

This explains why the RTS endorsed ‘rational recreation’ schemes such as the opening of the new Working Lads’ Institute in Whitechapel in October 1885.<sup>17</sup> The purpose of the institute was to provide working boys in London with a place where they could meet during the evening for instruction and amusement. The *BOP* provided readers with an overview of the facilities which were available to members. The institute featured a gymnasium where weekly lessons were given gratuitously by a professor of the German Gymnastic Society, classrooms where boys could receive instruction, and a reading room and library to which the RTS donated batches of ‘respectable’ books and magazines.<sup>18</sup> The institute also housed several dormitories which let out beds to boys who had no other lodgings. According to the *BOP*, the dormitories formed “one of the most pleasant features of the scheme, for a great want of this huge city is some home at which lads coming up to start work can be comfortably housed at a reasonable rate”. After providing readers with an overview of these facilities, the article concluded by endorsing a speech by Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (1841-1910), which was delivered during the opening ceremony of the new institute. The speech is worth repeating at length because it reveals that advocates of ‘rational recreation’ believed that the condition of working-class boys could be improved by guiding them toward respectable pastimes:

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Princess has just declared this building open and I wish only to add, in her name as well as in my own, the very sincere pleasure and

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<sup>16</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (9 January 1886), p. 236.

<sup>17</sup> The original institute was founded in 1878 by Henry Hill, a city merchant and philanthropist, before moving to new premises at 137 Whitechapel Road.

<sup>18</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (9 January 1886), pp. 236-237.

satisfaction it gives us to take part in this ceremony to-day. You have just heard a most able report from Mr. Hill, which gives us all a clear account of the objects of this institution. All I can say is, that I cannot conceive any institution more useful and more necessary than the one which we open to-day. In this large and ever-increasing metropolis it is our duty, if we can, to do all in our power to render the status of the labouring and working classes of the town in a good state, and if possible, even in their most useful years, to do all we can to render them useful members of society, so that when they grow up they may have received a good, virtuous and practical education, and will not fall into the dangers and vicissitudes which will tempt them when they come to mature years. It was said by Mr. Hill that the working lads of this institute would in ten years become working men. That they should have some home to go to during their leisure hours, and that they should have useful recreation and perhaps learn profitable work besides, must be of the greatest importance and the greatest value. Most sincerely do we hope that this institution will flourish and be imitated through the length and breadth of the land.<sup>19</sup>

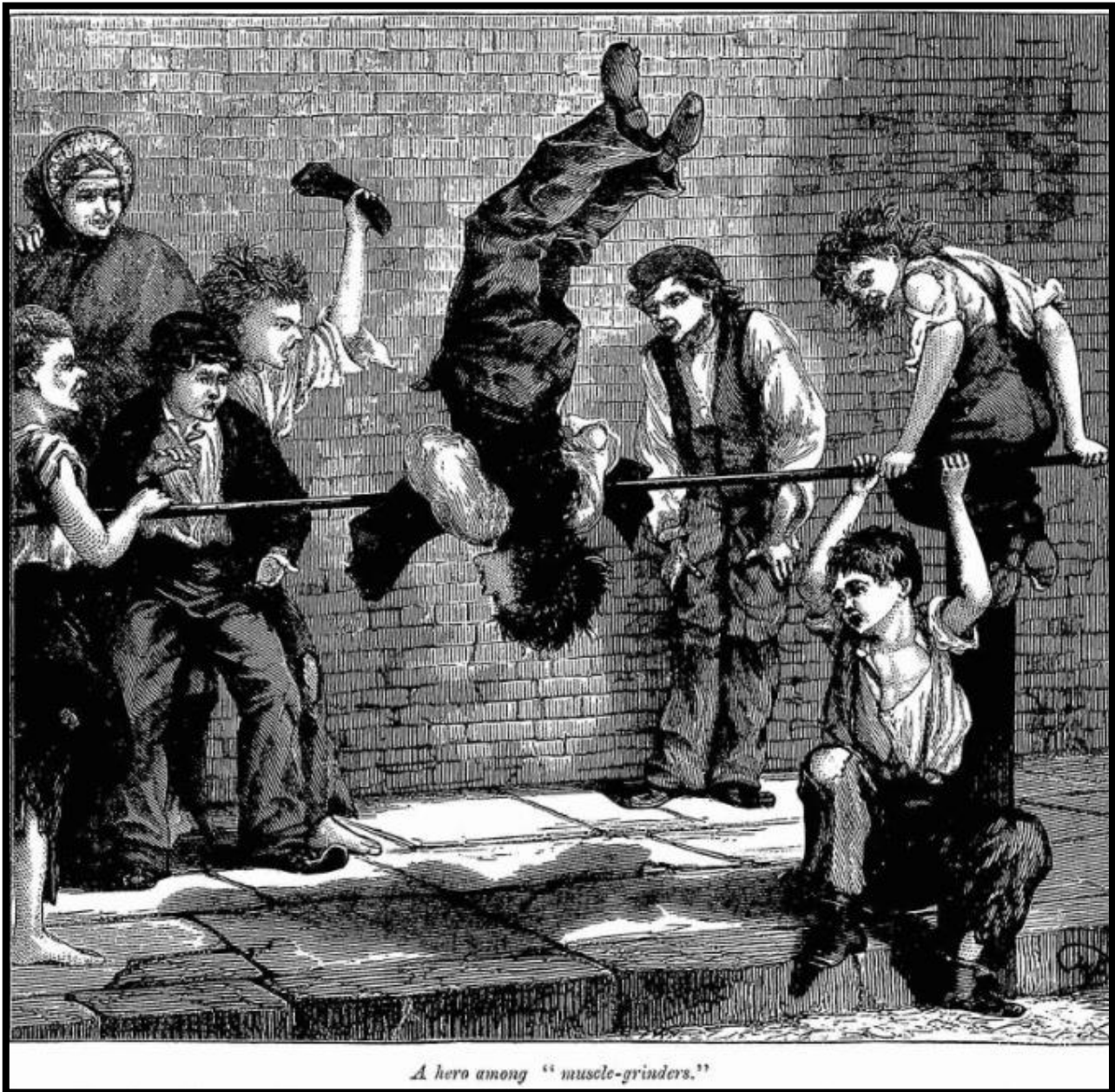
The RTS was not the only publisher of juvenile periodicals to express concern about the leisure pursuits of boys who would grow up to be the next generation of working men. The SSU was also troubled by the prospect of urban youths spending their leisure time hanging around in the streets. This point is nicely illustrated by the lead article which appeared in *YE* on 27 August 1881. The purpose of the article was to highlight “the limited opportunities of recreation of our poor street boys, city arabs, dwellers in close courts and in densely populated neighbourhoods, where there is no room for the outlet of boyhood”.<sup>20</sup> The article

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238

<sup>20</sup> *Young England* (27 August 1881), pp. 673-674.

was accompanied by a front-page illustration which depicted a group of boys in ragged clothing playing in a street (Figure 6).



*A hero among "muscle-grinders."*

Figure 6. *Young England* (27 August 1881), p. 673.

Readers of *YE* were asked to consider why these boys were spending their leisure time getting pleasure “from a bar that certainly was not put up with any such intention”. The article proposed that while this desecration of public property would be frowned upon by government authorities as “an abuse and a destruction of that which ratepayers’ money had supplied”, it was necessary to respond to the plight of these boys with “kindly sympathy”. After explaining that Christian communities have a responsibility for the provision of their less fortunate brothers, readers were asked to consider whether they were in a position to do something to brighten or improve the lives of these “unfortunate lads” who “by their neglected appearance, plead for sympathy and help from those who are better off”. The article concluded by suggesting that it may be possible to redirect the energies of working-class boys who played in the streets toward more ‘rational’ sources of recreation such as evening or Sunday school classes.<sup>21</sup>

While the RTS and SSU used their magazines to highlight solutions to the ‘problem’ of male youth leisure, it is also worth considering how they sought to mould their readers’ understanding of recreation from a young age. For example, the *BOP* featured an article by William Gordon Stables on “Recreation: From a Health Point of View” in November 1892. Writing from the perspective of a former medical doctor in the Royal Navy, Stables informed his readers that it was necessary for them to participate in healthful recreation because “the wheel of life cannot always run along in the same groove without getting worn out, and rest and change become now and then imperative”. Stables was keen to emphasise, however, that “rest and change are not, strictly speaking, recreation”. According to Stables, it was imperative that boys had “a clear notion of what the word ‘recreation’ means”. Stables explained that the etymology of the word is “derived from *re*, again, and *creare*, to create = to

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 674.

re-create, to make anew, to reform". This definition is significant because it reinforces the idea that recreation has a specific purpose. Readers were informed the "main objective of recreation is to rest that region of the brain which is fagged out with work, and to exercise other regions". Activities which did not serve this purpose were not considered to be a form of recreation. Stables lamented that boys who worked "in factories, at mills, behind counters, in banks, or otherwise at the dreary desk and ledger" tended to "spend the evening loafing about and smoking, or even doing worse". Stables concluded that these boys were not receiving the benefits of recreation and suggested that they ought to join a young men's institute, gymnasium, or swimming club.<sup>22</sup>

The SSU was also eager to mould the next generation of men's understanding of recreation from a young age. For example, an unsigned article entitled "All Work and No Play" appeared in *Kind Words for Boys and Girls* in June 1868. Along similar lines to Stables's advice to readers of the *BOP*, the purpose of the article was to teach readers that recreation had a specific purpose: "to renew, to restore, to remake the powers of the mind, by bodily exercise and amusement". To illustrate this point, the article offered a list of 'great men' who have devoted regular portions of their time to recreation. As we have already seen in Chapter Two, the assumption that boys could be inspired to emulate the heroic attributes of 'great men' was pervasive in juvenile periodicals during the second half of the nineteenth century. Similarly, it was hoped that readers would make better use of their leisure time after learning about Cardinal Richelieu's love of gymnastics, Robert Arnauld d'Andilly's passion for gardening, or how seventeenth-century philosopher Samuel Clarke took regular breaks from studying metaphysics to "indulge in a variety of evolutions over tables, and chairs". It is worth noting that the article objected to leisure pursuits of Tycho Brahe (1675-1729), a Dutch

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<sup>22</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (12 November 1892), p. 106-107

astronomer, who amused himself by polishing glasses and making mathematical instruments in his spare time. Readers were informed that “this was hardly the right recreation for him; it was too much like his studies, and he would have done better to have joined in some game, and thus given another current to his thoughts”. The article also made an important distinction between “innocent amusement” and “foolish or sinful indulgences”. To reinforce this distinction, the article concluded with a word of caution from David Thomas (1813-1894), an English preacher and publisher: “Amusements to virtue are like breezes of air to the flame – gentle ones will fan it, but strong ones will put it out”.<sup>23</sup>

These articles reveal that the RTS and SSU were deeply concerned by the ‘problem’ of male youth leisure and were eager to mould their readers’ understanding of recreation from a young age. It is, however, important to consider how readers responded to socialising messages about recreation. Although the articles do not appear to have left an impression in the magazines’ correspondence columns, essay writing competitions suggest that some readers responded positively to messages about recreation. For example, in August 1879 the editor of the *BOP* announced that a prize of one guinea would be awarded for the best essay on recreation.<sup>24</sup> A special prize of an annual admission pass for the Royal Polytechnic was also offered for the best essay from a competitor residing in London or the neighbouring suburbs.<sup>25</sup> The competition guidelines reveal that the purpose of the contest was to test whether readers understood the true meaning of recreation:

At this season of the year the subject of Recreation will be brought, we trust, in the most enjoyable and practical of all ways before the attention of our readers, now numbering, at the smallest estimate, considerable more than a quarter of a million

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<sup>23</sup> *Kind Words* (25 June 1868), pp. 206-207.

<sup>24</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (30 August 1879), p. 528.

<sup>25</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (3 January 1880), p. 224.



weekly. It is by no means a bad subject, either, to engage one's serious thoughts; for not only is recreation often grievously misunderstood as to its nature and object, but much that passes for recreation nowadays, even in circles that assume to be well-informed, is but a poor miserable travesty of the genuine article.<sup>26</sup>

According to the editor, the number of readers who participated in the contest was “rather beyond the average”.<sup>27</sup> The editor also expressed that he was generally satisfied with the quality of their productions. This is reflected in the fact that eighty-six certificates of merit were awarded to competitors of which nearly forty per cent received a first-class mark. The adjudication of the contest reveals that successful competitors were required to conform to the *BOP*'s sanctioned definition of recreation: to recreate the mind and body for work. Competitors who consulted dictionaries when writing their essays were praised for the clearness of their definitions of recreation. They were also commended for their display of “discrimination in dealing with the theme” and their ability to distinguish between recreation and frivolous amusement. Other competitors demonstrated that they understood the meaning of recreation by providing examples of “the pursuits of notable men”. This lends further credibility to the argument in Chapter Two that some readers responded in the prescribed way to biographical sketches of ‘great men’. The games of cricket and football also received a fair share of attention, with several of the essayists referring to Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857).<sup>28</sup> As we shall see later in this chapter, this would have pleased the editor who believed that the athletic games played in public schools were effective tools of character building.

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<sup>26</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (30 August 1879), p. 528.

<sup>27</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (10 January 1880), p. 240.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

At first glance, the competition appears to have achieved its aim of moulding readers' understanding of recreation. The editor hoped the recreations of the competitors would be "enhanced in value, as the result of their thoughtful mediation upon the subject".<sup>29</sup> Upon closer inspection, however, it becomes apparent that the competition appealed to a certain class of boys. As can be seen in Appendix B, the prizes and certificates of merit were primarily awarded to educated boys from wealthy families. For example, the winner of the general competition was John Fitzgerald Studdert Redmayne (b.1860), a student in law at Oxford University.<sup>30</sup> Along similar lines, the second prize in the special competition was awarded to Herbert Alfred Raynes (1863-1933), a seventeen-year old boy from Plumstead, Kent.<sup>31</sup> As the son of Alfred T. Raynes (1832-1905), a municipal clerk for the Woolwich Local Board of Health, the competitor was privately educated at St. Paul's School, London.<sup>32</sup> A year after participating in the competition, Raynes matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford.<sup>33</sup> Upon graduating from university, Raynes became a clergyman for the Church of England.<sup>34</sup> The leisure pursuits of these boys are unlikely to have aroused the same amount of scrutiny as their working-class counterparts. Thus, the competition lends further credibility to the argument that the *BOP*'s social reach was largely restricted to educated boys from the middle classes.

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>31</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (3 January 1880), p. 224.

<sup>32</sup> 1881 England Census. PRO: RG11/750, folio 40, p. 22. Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

<sup>33</sup> J. Foster, *Oxford Men and Their Colleges, 1880-1892* (Oxford: James Parker & Co., 1893). Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

<sup>34</sup> 1901 England Census. PRO: RG13/3172, folio 6, p. 3. Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

A remarkably similar competition appeared in *YE* in January 1888. Here too, however, the results of the competition raise questions about the extent to which juvenile periodicals were successful in moulding working-class boys' understanding of recreation. The editor announced that a prize of £1 10s. would be awarded for the best original article on recreation by competitors under twenty-one, with a separate prize for competitors under seventeen. The competition was part of a broader initiative which invited readers to design "a magazine entirely contributed by themselves".<sup>35</sup> The editor explained that the best essay on recreation would serve as the leading article of the *Young England's Journal*. Prizes were also awarded for the best original tales of adventure, stories of schoolboy and schoolgirl life, essays on heroes and heroines from history, ballads, puzzles, and illustrations. Although this promotion initially gives the impression that the *Young Englander's Journal* was solely a collaborative effort between readers, the editor was ultimately responsible for determining which contributions were worthy of publication. Crucially, this meant that competitors whose essays were compatible with *YE*'s philosophy of 'rational recreation' had a greater probability of having their work published.

Taking this into consideration, it is not surprising that the prize for the senior division of the competition was awarded to Henry Lowry (1869-1906), a nineteen-year-old student from Cornwall.<sup>36</sup> The 1881 England Census reveals that the competitor was the son of Thomas Shaw Lowry (1840-1903), a bank manager in Camborne.<sup>37</sup> Henry was educated at Queen's College, Taunton, before attending Oxford University (non-collegiate).<sup>38</sup> After graduating

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<sup>35</sup> *Young England* (1 January 1888), p. 48.

<sup>36</sup> *Young England* (1 September 1888), p. 414.

<sup>37</sup> 1881 England Census. PRO: 11/2334, folio 44, p. 36. Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

<sup>38</sup> J. Foster, *Oxford Men and Their Colleges, 1880-1892* (Oxford: James Parker & Co., 1893). Available at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

with honours in chemistry in 1891, he pursued a career in journalism and wrote for several periodicals including the *National Observer*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, and *Daily Express*.<sup>39</sup> Along similar lines to the *BOP*'s prize winners, Lowry's leisure habits are unlikely to have alarmed advocates of 'rational recreation' whose primary concern was to guide working-class boys toward 'improving' forms of leisure. Rather, Lowry's prize-winning essay reveals that he supported the foundation of recreational grounds and free libraries because these leisure facilities had the potential to "ameliorate the mental and physical condition of workers, and so render their labour more productive and the nation more prosperous".<sup>40</sup>

Although the evidence presented in this section suggests that competitions were an ineffective way of moulding working-class readers' understanding of recreation, it is important to acknowledge that there are cases of magazines achieving a degree of success. As we shall see in the section that follows, the *GOP*'s "Daily Round" competition invited working-class girls to discuss not only how they earned a living, but also their leisure hours.

### Anxieties about Recreation for Girls

Although a considerable amount of scholarly attention has been devoted to the 'problem' of male youth leisure in nineteenth-century England, historians have traditionally assumed that the recreational pursuits of girls were a relatively minor concern. According to Penny Tinkler, this can be attributed to the visibility of working-class boys in urban areas and the masculine connotations of delinquent youth.<sup>41</sup> Along similar lines, Ruth Robbins observes that "the separate-spheres debates of the nineteenth century, which argued for women's

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<sup>39</sup> T. Henderson, "Lowry, Henry Dawson (1869–1906), Journalist and Novelist", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Available at <https://www.oxforddnb.com/> [Accessed: 22 July 2019].

<sup>40</sup> *Young England* (1 September 1888), pp. 416-417.

<sup>41</sup> P. Tinkler, 'Sexuality and Citizenship: The State and Girls' Leisure Provision in England, 1939-45', *Women's History Review*, 4.2 (1995), p. 193.

activities as primarily private and domestic and which permitted only men a role in the outside world, hid much female activity from public gaze and from the public records”.<sup>42</sup>

Recent studies, however, have identified a range of primary sources which challenge the conventional assumption that “it was male leisure which generated the most concern”.<sup>43</sup> For example, Hilary Marland’s study of health and girlhood in Britain between 1874 and 1920 has revealed that the recreational pursuits of girls engendered anxiety in books, advice manuals, and magazines.<sup>44</sup> This section develops Marland’s findings by exploring how recreation occupied a contested cultural space in the *GOP*. Crucially, it advances the discussion by considering how the magazine’s competitions reinforced the middle-class philosophy of ‘rational recreation’.

Articles on the necessity and advantage of recreation were a regular feature of the *GOP* during Charles Peters’s editorship of the magazine. For example, Lady Hamilton contributed a series of papers offering “Advice to Girls Who Are Entering Life’s Battle” between October 1899 and August 1900. The articles covered a range of topics including health, work, and significantly, recreation. As discussed in Chapter Three, attitudes towards women’s work underwent a significant change during the second half of the nineteenth century. The opening of new employment opportunities in turn facilitated a change in attitudes towards women’s leisure. For example, Hamilton informed readers that “in the present life of pressure in work” it was imperative for women to partake in recreation due to “its physical value and its mental value”. Echoing the advice given to boys in the magazines discussed above, Hamilton

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<sup>42</sup> R. Robins, ‘A Women’s Work is Never Done? Women and Leisure in the Nineteenth Century and Beyond’, <https://www.routledgehistoricalresources.com/feminism/essays/a-womans-work-is-never-done-women-and-leisure-in-the-nineteenth-century-and-beyond> [Accessed 22 July 2019].

<sup>43</sup> Beaven, *Leisure, Citizenship and Working-Class Men in Britain*, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup> H. Marland, *Health and Girlhood: Health and Girlhood in Britain, 1874-1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

explained that the purpose of recreation was “literally to re-create, to be born anew, to be inspired afresh, to be reinvigorated”. While Hamilton celebrated that “we of this generation may on the whole be said to have fallen on good times from the point of view of recreation”, she cautioned that “liberty, however, does not spell licence, and the condition that permits a choice of careers or callings to women opens up an infinite choice of means of recreation”. Significantly, readers were warned that “there are certain things we do in the name of recreation that may depress rather than raise the spirits”.<sup>45</sup> Although Hamilton does not elucidate further, her concern about recreation was typical of a period in which there was growing anxiety about working-class girls spending their leisure time at disreputable venues such as dance halls and public-houses.<sup>46</sup> In an attempt to guide girls towards ‘rational’ forms of recreation, Hamilton advised her readers to spend their leisure time taking advantage of the opportunities for self-improvement offered by concert halls, lecture-rooms, and physical culture classes.

While Hamilton emphasised the value of ‘rational’ recreation, other contributors to the *GOP* raised concerns about whether certain forms of leisure were ‘gender-appropriate’. For example, Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson’s article “On Recreations for Girls” typified growing concerns about social degeneration, motherhood, and masculine girls.<sup>47</sup> Writing from the perspective of a physician and Fellow of the Royal Society, Richardson suggested that girls should participate in “recreative pleasures and exercises” as “matters of necessity”.

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<sup>45</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (4 August 1900), pp. 698-699.

<sup>46</sup> C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London. Final Volume: Notes on Social Influences and Conclusion* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1903), pp. 59-68; D. Höher, ‘The Composition of Music Hall Audiences 1850-1900’, in P. Bailey (ed.), *Music Hall: The Business of Pleasure* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1986), pp. 73-92.

<sup>47</sup> For further reading on the relationship between ‘social Darwinism’ and constructions of girlhood during the late nineteenth-century, see: C. Dyhouse, ‘Social Darwinistic Ideas and the Development of Women’s Education in England, 1800-1920’, *History of Education*, 5.1 (1976), pp. 41-58; A. Davin, ‘Imperialism and Motherhood’, *History Workshop Journal*, 5.1 (1978), pp. 9-65; Marland, *Health and Girlhood*, pp. 15-41.

As a caveat, however, Richardson cautioned that “every attempt to pass in recreation beyond a certain bound of natural womanly duties, is to pass into a sphere with which such duties are utterly incompatible”.<sup>48</sup> In accordance with the doctrine of ‘separate spheres’, Richardson explained that boys and girls were destined to fulfil different roles in society as adults, and this should be reflected in their choice of recreation:

One of the great dangers at the present time is that women, in their anxiety to compete in various recreative exercises, are given to forget the fact that, *nolens volens*, they are born to do what men can never do; if the race is to progress they must someday become mothers, that they must undertake special maternal duties, and that for home to be home they must, within the sphere of home, display domestic talents, and do domestic work which comes excessively under their control.<sup>49</sup>

Although Richardson believed that recreation when taken in moderation had the potential to improve the health of the future mothers of the nation and the British Empire, he feared that overzealous participation would masculinise girls, making them less likely to marry or unable to bear children. Richardson warned that while some recreations “add extra development of beauty to the body”, others were “opposed to natural law” and “deform rather than beautify”. In particular, Richardson objected to recreative activities which required girls to demonstrate “extreme physical strength” because he believed that this would result in “a state of body and mind which could not be in harmony with those gentler traits, attributes, and affection belonging to the birth and care of the young and feeble”. As we shall see in section four of this chapter, encouraging girls’ participation in sport and physical recreation was contentious for this reason. Readers were also advised not to participate in disreputable recreative pursuits

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<sup>48</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (2 June 1894), pp. 545-547.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 546.

which could negatively influence their impressionable offspring. Richardson concluded that the most suitable recreations for girls were those which were in accordance “with the more refined spirit of the woman” and “do not vulgarise” or “unfit her for the instruction and training of children”.<sup>50</sup>

The *GOP*'s articles lend credibility to Marland's argument that while recreation was widely regarded as a way of improving the health of girls, it also had the potential to put at risk their vulnerable bodies and minds as well as their role as future mothers.<sup>51</sup> To advance the discussion, however, it is necessary to consider how readers responded to socialising messages about 'rational recreation'. Again, essay writing contests are useful in this regard because they can offer mediated glimpses into how competitors spent their leisure time. In October 1895, the *GOP* announced the details of an essay writing competition “for all girls who work with their hands”.<sup>52</sup> The competition invited readers who earned a living as milliners, dressmakers, domestic servants, or as workers in factories and industry to provide a “graphic and truthful” account of their “daily round”. The competition appears to have excited the interests of readers with the editor announcing his pleasure to have received 480 submissions.<sup>53</sup> A follow-up competition was swiftly announced in May 1896, in which a further 390 papers were submitted for adjudication.<sup>54</sup> Although Kirstine Moruzi and Michelle Smith have discussed these contests within the context of the *GOP*'s attitudes towards employment, it is worth considering what they can tell us about recreation.<sup>55</sup> As observed by

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 545-547.

<sup>51</sup> Marland, *Health and Girlhood*, pp. 189-196.

<sup>52</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (26 October 1895), p. 63.

<sup>53</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (21 March 1896), p. 388.

<sup>54</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (23 May 1896), p. 535; *Girl's Own Paper* (31 October 1896), p. 75.

<sup>55</sup> K. Moruzi and M. Smith, ““Learning What Real Work...Means”: Ambivalent Attitudes Towards Employment in the *Girl's Own Paper*”, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 43.4 (2010), pp. 439-441.



the editor, many of the competitors were eager to write about how they spent their small amount of leisure time:

We should naturally think that the twelve or fourteen hours of compulsory daily toil would be quite enough and even more than enough to satisfy these girls, but if you could read all their papers you would find their evenings as busy as their days. After their evening meal some go off to an evening class and teach dress making to poor girls, others to various polytechnics to study languages, science or music.<sup>56</sup>

At first glance, the purpose of the competition appears to have been to provide working girls with a platform to discuss their work and leisure habits. Upon closer inspection, however, it becomes evident that the editor had an ulterior motive. By devoting space to the publication of prize-winning essays and anecdotes from working girls, the editor hoped to provide the *GOP*'s predominantly middle-class readership with an insight into "how 'the other half' of the girl-world lives, moves and has its being".<sup>57</sup> As we have already seen in Chapter Three, the othering of the working girl was prevalent throughout the magazine's articles on employment which were designed to stir feelings of empathy and goodwill amongst middle-class readers towards their toiling sisters. Along similar lines, the editor hoped that accounts of working girls' daily rounds would evoke "sympathy" and "reverence" for the "brave girls who, in spite of many difficulties and temptations, lead good, honest, unselfish lives".<sup>58</sup> An excellent example of this point is how the editor published an extract from the paper of a draper's assistant to highlight the plight of working girls in London:

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<sup>56</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (31 October 1896), p. 75.

<sup>57</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (26 October 1895), p. 63.

<sup>58</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (13 November 1897), p. 102.

The evenings are the saddest part of business life because there are so many temptations that beset a girl who is obliged to live away from home. It is imperative for the sake of a girl's health that she should go out in the fresh air, but sometimes she would give anything to be able to close her eyes and ears and not see the things which happen in the West End streets.<sup>59</sup>

The *GOP* also featured extracts from the daily rounds of working girls who spent their leisure time in ways which were compatible with the middle-class philosophy of 'rational recreation'. The purpose of these extracts was to provide readers with examples of working girls who improved their condition by participating in respectable and morally uplifting leisure activities. Although the issue of editorial selectivity raises questions about how representative these competitors were of the magazine's wider readership, the extracts are still worth examining because they reveal that some working girls dedicated their leisure time to self-improvement. For example, many of the daily rounds discussed the importance of attending evening classes after work. A paper from a twenty-year-old dressmaker described how during the winter evenings she attended a "Technical and Art School" through which she developed an interest in science and elementary botany. The competitor also informed the editor that she was reliant upon her own resources because she was partially deaf, and this in turn had influenced her choice of recreation. She explained that "I have learned to love books and make them my companions".<sup>60</sup> A similar account was given by a mill hand who claimed to spend her evenings at a mechanics' institute where she became acquainted with the works of Sir Robert Ball (1840-1913) and Henry Malden (1800-1876).<sup>61</sup> Another competitor offers

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<sup>59</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (9 January 1897), p. 235.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

an insight into how she was able to acquire the *GOP* at a discounted price by attending a night school:

I am in a lace factory; I leave work at half-past five and at six o'clock I have to go to night-school for one hour four nights a week because I am under seventeen; this is the rule of our factory. The girls who attend can obtain the *Girl's Own Paper* for threepence through the school-mistress, the firm we work for paying the remainder.<sup>62</sup>

The editor also published extracts from the daily rounds of readers who spent their evenings at the youth branches of religious organisations. For example, a compositor described how once a fortnight she attended meetings of the Young Women's Christian Endeavour.<sup>63</sup> Other competitors discussed their attendance at Sunday schools, either as students or teachers. A milliner-dressmaker explained that "Sunday is the happiest day of the week for me and is fully occupied". Besides teaching in a Sunday school, she also assisted in the musical part of her Church's service. The competitor clarified that she enjoyed spending her spare time in this way because books and music were her main companions.<sup>64</sup> Along similar lines, a weaver informed the editor that "my favourite evening recreations are music and reading". The competitor not only taught in a Sunday school, but was also a member of a chapel choir where she spent one evening a week at rehearsal.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, a paper from a dressmaker

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<sup>62</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (16 May 1896), p. 518.

<sup>63</sup> The Christian Endeavour movement began in the United States during the early 1880s. The first society was founded by Francis Clark (1851-1927), the minister at Williston Congregational Church (Portland, Maine), as a meeting for young people within his church to help them grow in faith and be trained for Christ's service. In August 1881, Clark published an article in the *Congregationalist* entitled "How One Church Cares for Its Young People". The article was reprinted in British newspapers which led to similar societies being founded in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. For further reading, see: T. Hall, *American Religious Leaders* (United States: Facts on File, 2003), pp. 69-70.

<sup>64</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (9 January 1897), p. 236.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 236.

reveals that for working girls who attended Sunday school there was considerable overlap between the worlds of education, work, and leisure:

I work with my sister; we make dresses for the wives and daughters of the tradesmen in our neighbourhood, for factory girls and servants...In the winter we have a sewing class for about thirty girls of the Sunday School; we cut and fit the garments at home and the girls make them in the class which we open and close with a short prayer and my sister tells them stories while they work.<sup>66</sup>

The importance of hobbies and indoor pastimes was also a recurring theme in many of the competitors' submissions. For example, a factory girl informed the editor that "when I am short of work I indulge my taste for reading. I read the best magazines, the best novels and Samuel Smiles' work". She also discussed how dressmaking and sewing took up a great deal of her leisure time.<sup>67</sup> A second factory girl explained that after assisting with the housework, she was free to spend two or three hours reading or writing.<sup>68</sup> Other competitors claim to have derived enjoyment from the traditional "female accomplishments" of needlework, music, and painting. As one competitor observed, "most factory girls are able to do something well beside the work they earn their living with. Some are good cooks, some like dressmaking, others singing, piano or violin-playing, reading and fancy needlework".<sup>69</sup> As we shall see in the section that follows, this would have pleased the editor of the *GOP* who regarded these activities as 'rational' and 'gender-appropriate' forms of recreation. Accordingly, the focus of this chapter will now shift to consider how juvenile periodicals also

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>67</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (16 May 1896), p. 518.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 518.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 518.

encouraged boys and girls to participate in practical competitions which provided them with opportunities to test their skills at different hobbies and indoor pastimes.

### Hobbies and Indoor Pastimes

During the second half of the nineteenth century, juvenile periodicals regularly featured practical tutorials on hobbies and indoor pastimes. These tutorials were designed to serve two functions. First, they sought to provide readers with ideas about leisure activities which could be enjoyed in a family supervised setting. As John Lowerson observes, the home was regarded as “the essential locus for morally safe recreation” because the family unit was seen as “the prime agent for moral stability”.<sup>70</sup> This explains why the *BOP*’s tutorials often appeared under titles such as “Evenings at Home”, “Openings at Home”, and “Home Employments and Amusements”.<sup>71</sup> According to Stables, who was responsible for writing many of these papers, the RTS’s intention was to endorse the desirability of boys having a “healthful hobby” which would not only “occupy the evening hours very delightfully”, but also “pass away time that would otherwise hang heavily on a lad’s hands and minds”.<sup>72</sup> As Stables explained to his readers:

The Evil One never comes anywhere near a lad if so engaged. The Evil One hates work as he hates holy water. He may just look in at the door once in a way; but if he hears the sound of plane or saw, ‘Oh,’ he says, ‘you’re busy, are you? Well, it doesn’t matter much, I can call later on.’ No, unhappily, it doesn’t matter much; he has only

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<sup>70</sup> J. Lowerson, ‘Leisure and Sport’, [https://www.gale.com/binaries/content/assets/gale-us-en/primary-sources/intl-gps/intl-gps-essays/full-ghn-contextual-essays/ghn\\_essay\\_19ukp\\_part1\\_lowerson1\\_website.pdf](https://www.gale.com/binaries/content/assets/gale-us-en/primary-sources/intl-gps/intl-gps-essays/full-ghn-contextual-essays/ghn_essay_19ukp_part1_lowerson1_website.pdf) [Accessed 22 July 2019].

<sup>71</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (18 January 1879), p. 16; *Boy’s Own Paper* (1 February 1879), p. 48; *Boy’s Own Paper* (8 March 1879), p. 127.

<sup>72</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (12 November 1892), p. 106.

to go to the corner of the street, and he'll find plenty of idle 'loons' ready for anything.<sup>73</sup>

The second function of tutorials was to prepare boys and girls for the different gender roles which they were expected to fulfil as adults. Around the second half of the nineteenth century, there was an emerging belief that boys and girls should have different hobbies and indoor pastimes. Samuel Orchart Beeton was an early advocate of this view. As we have already seen in Chapter One, juvenile periodicals aimed at the Sunday School market were intended for the improvement of youth of both sexes. According to Beeton, however, these periodicals were “entirely useless, if not distasteful” for boys because they predominantly focused on the “feminine accomplishments” of knitting, netting, crochet, and embroidery.<sup>74</sup> Beeton sought to address this problem by supplying boys with ‘gender-appropriate’ ideas about hobbies. The first volume of the *Boy's Own Magazine* featured a “Sports and Pastimes” column which offered practical guidelines on hobbies such as “How to Take Impressions of Leaves or Plants” and “Simple Means of Producing Electricity”.<sup>75</sup> While these tutorials were envisaged as a way of occupying readers’ leisure hours, it was also hoped that they would facilitate an interest in hobbies which may lead to future careers in the fields of natural history and science. In this sense, the articles were consistent with the *BOM*’s philosophy of facilitating informal education and self-improvement which was discussed in Chapter Two. The idea that boys and girls should have separate hobbies became more strictly demarcated in the juvenile periodical press as the century progressed. An excellent example of this point is how the editor of *Little Folks* attempted to define the preferences of readers in gendered terms. Boys were expected to follow the advice outlined in *LF*’s “The Amateur Workshop”

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>74</sup> *Boy's Own Magazine* (1 January 1855), inside cover.

<sup>75</sup> *Boy's Own Magazine* (1856), pp. 222, 285-287.

series to learn how to construct articles such as rabbit-hutches, reading and music stands, and shelves for displaying geological specimens. These tutorials were designed not only to provide readers with advice on how to hone their practical skills, but also to complement and facilitate the uptake of other hobbies such as pet keeping, reading, music, and natural history.<sup>76</sup> By contrast, girls were instructed to read the series on “Pretty Work for Little Fingers” to learn about needlework.<sup>77</sup> As the following extract suggests, this attempt to encourage boys and girls to identify with different reading material was indicative of a broader trend in the magazine:

In our new volume our boy readers may look out for Stories of Adventure, Stories of School, Stories of the Boyhood, Schooldays, and after-life of Famous Men, and Practical Papers on Carpentry and other amusements for wet days and dark autumn and winter evenings; whilst our little girl readers will find – in addition to Stories of all kinds, Anecdotes of our Pets, Amusing and Instructive Papers, Games and Puzzles – we have arranged for a series of Interesting Papers on Fancy Work of every description, full of information, and profusely illustrated.<sup>78</sup>

The RTS’s magazines adopted a similar approach to tutorials on hobbies and indoor pastimes. While the *BOP* encouraged readers to take up hobbies such as metalwork and woodwork,<sup>79</sup> readers of the *GOP* were supplied with practical lessons in the traditional domestic

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<sup>76</sup> *Little Folks* (1 August 1883), p. 113.

<sup>77</sup> *Little Folks* (1 February 1877), pp. 74-75.

<sup>78</sup> *Little Folks* (1876), p. 415.

<sup>79</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (28 November 1891), pp. 139-141; *Boy’s Own Paper* (24 March 1883), pp. 405-406; *Boy’s Own Paper* (9 January 1886), p. 233.

“accomplishments” of needlework,<sup>80</sup> music,<sup>81</sup> and painting.<sup>82</sup> Although certain hobbies were considered to be appropriate for both boys and girls, the benefits of participating were often explained in gendered terms. For example, the *BOP* presented the hobby of collecting coins and postage stamps as a profitable recreation not only because there is “pleasure in procuring and arranging them”, but also because a good album provides “an interesting book for inspection and study”.<sup>83</sup> By contrast, the *GOP* framed collecting as an appropriate hobby for girls because it taught them about the importance of order and arrangement which were regarded as essential skills for effective household management.<sup>84</sup> Readers were also informed that collections could be a “relief” during evening parties by lightening “the tax on the conversational powers of the host”.<sup>85</sup> As Sophia Caulfield explained in her series on “Collections, Hobbies, and Fads”, natural history collections were regarded as useful not only because they give guests something interesting to look at, but also because they enabled the host to tell stories “for the entertainment of those who inspect their cabinets”.<sup>86</sup>

While informative articles can reveal editorial assumptions about which hobbies and indoor pastimes were regarded as appropriate for boys and girls, they are unable to tell us how far readers engaged with the tutorials which appeared in juvenile periodicals. Again, studying competitions can contribute to our understanding of the role played by juvenile periodicals in

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<sup>80</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (28 February 1880), pp. 139-41; *Girl's Own Paper* (15 May 1880), pp. 314-316.

<sup>81</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (10 April 1880), pp. 232-234; *Girl's Own Paper* (22 May 1880), pp. 328-330; *Girl's Own Paper* (24 June 1882), pp. 617-619; *Girl's Own Paper* (7 January 1888), pp. 228-229.

<sup>82</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (29 May 1880), pp. 340-343; *Girl's Own Paper* (4 November 1882), pp. 66-72; *Girl's Own Paper* (31 March 1883), pp. 401-403; *Girl's Own Paper* (2 June 1883), pp. 545-547.

<sup>83</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (15 February 1879), p. 77; *Boy's Own Paper* (31 December 1887), p. 223; *Boy's own Paper* (26 January 1889), p. 267.

<sup>84</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (28 January 1893), pp. 283-284.

<sup>85</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (15 October 1892), p. 41.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.



the socialisation of boys and girls. For example, in January 1862 the *BOM* featured a tutorial on “How to Model a Small Steam Engine”.<sup>87</sup> The editor received several reports of a conflicting nature as to the practicality of constructing the model. In an attempt to “set all doubts to rest”, the editor announced that a prize would be awarded to the boy who sent him the best model of a steam engine. The editor hoped that the competition would excite the interests of boys who had a “mechanical and engineering turn of mind”.<sup>88</sup> In this regard, the competition appears to have been a success as the magazine’s correspondence column was inundated with letters from boys who informed the editor that they intended to participate. Readers also wrote to the editor for advice about where they could purchase the necessary materials to construct the model.<sup>89</sup> In December 1862, Beeton announced that the prize had been awarded to Walter Collingwood from Barnsbury, London.<sup>90</sup> Collingwood’s submission was accompanied by a letter to the editor. The following extract suggests that Collingwood appreciated the competition not only because it occupied his leisure hours, but also for facilitating self-improvement:

Dear Sir, – I forward for your inspection a Model Steam-Engine, entirely of my own construction, made on the same principles as the one described in the Boy’s Own Magazine; that is to say, it is, I flatter myself, an improvement on it, Bergh’s containing only the principle of the steam engine, while mine is like some in actual use. I should like you to understand that this is entirely of my own make, and what I have learned from books. I have, as you may see, had the advantage of access to a lathe belonging to a friend of mine; but, when I began this engine, I had never ever

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<sup>87</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 January 1862), pp. 14-19; *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 March 1862), pp. 122-123.

<sup>88</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 May 1862), p. 210.

<sup>89</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 September 1862), p. 377.

<sup>90</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 December 1862), p. 544.

seen one. It was also made in my leisure, after seven every evening, on my return from business at the lawyer's.<sup>91</sup>

Beeton was not the only publisher to provide readers with an opportunity to put what they had learned from tutorials into practice. For example, *LF* regularly offered competitions to test whether boys and girls had profited from the magazine's lessons in design and needlework. In 1875, the editor of *LF* publicised the first in a series of competitions which would run annually for more than thirty years. The editor announced that the girl who sent him the neatest and nicest suit of dolls' clothes would be rewarded with a handsome guinea book, and that lower tier prizes would be distributed to the two runners-up. Equivalent prizes were awarded to the boys who submitted the best model boats, the merits of which were judged by "an experienced naval officer".<sup>92</sup> The purpose of this competition was not only to occupy readers' leisure hours, but also to encourage young people toward philanthropy. As the editor explained to his readers, the dolls' clothes and model boats submitted for competition were to be distributed to various hospitals for sick children as offerings to the young inmates from their more fortunate little brothers and sisters.<sup>93</sup>

At the end of the competition period, the editor took "great pleasure" in announcing that nearly 500 sets of dolls' clothes, most of them accompanied by dolls, had been submitted by readers of the magazine. Readers were informed that their response had exceeded the editor's expectations and that "in appreciation of the industry and generosity displayed by our little folks, the number of prizes has been increased from Three (as originally announced) to

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<sup>91</sup> *Boy's Own Magazine* (1 December 1862), p. 544.

<sup>92</sup> *Little Folks* (1875), p. 415.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 415. The submissions were distributed to hospitals in Belfast, Birmingham, Bradford, Brighton, Bristol, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leicester, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Norwich, Sheffield, and York. For a list of hospitals, see: *Little Folks* (1878), p. 191.

Twenty-five”.<sup>94</sup> The editor also arranged for a public exhibition to be held at Alexandra Palace during the Christmas holidays to showcase the dolls before they were distributed to the hospitals. Following the success of the exhibition, a second event was held at Crystal Palace on 22 January 1877 to showcase the work of 445 competitors who submitted nearly a thousand articles for the benefit of the Orphan Working School at Haverstock Hill and the Alexandra Orphanage at Hornsey Rise.<sup>95</sup>

By 1878, *LF*'s competitions had greatly expanded with prizes being awarded to readers who submitted the best rag dolls and animals, dolls in costume, dolls' houses, scrap albums, illuminated texts, artificial flowers, and patchwork quilts for children's cots.<sup>96</sup> Although these competitions were open to both boys and girls, there is evidence to suggest that gender had a significant influence upon reader participation. As can be seen in Appendix C, girls accounted for over eighty per cent of the prize winners and honourable mentions for the competitions in 1878. This is significant because it suggests that readers conformed to editorial expectations about 'gender-appropriate' hobbies. While girls were more likely to submit dolls and clothing, boys tended to favour competitions which allowed them to try their hand at illuminating and woodwork. Appendix C also shows that many of the competitors were from well-to-do families and thus were able to participate regularly in the magazine's contests. For example, the winner of the "Rag Dolls Competition" was Edith Constance Bashford (1864-1951), the daughter of Charles Brome Bashford (1840-1902), Lieutenant Colonel of the Royal Elthorne Light Infantry.<sup>97</sup> Bashford participated in several competitions and received the "Little Folks Medal of Honour" for her submission to the "Picture Wanting

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<sup>94</sup> *Little Folks* (1875), p. i.

<sup>95</sup> *Little Folks* (1 March 1877), p. 188.

<sup>96</sup> *Little Folks* (1 April 1877), p. 251; *Little Folks* (1878), p. 252.

<sup>97</sup> *Little Folks* (1879), p. 62.

Words” competition in 1879.<sup>98</sup> Along similar lines, several prizes were awarded to Emily Louisa Heathcote (1862-1880) and Evelyn May Heathcote (1866-1957) for their participation in *LF*’s competitions between 1876 and 1878. The sisters were the daughters of John Moyer Heathcote (1834-1912), a barrister and professional tennis player, and Louisa Cecilia MacLeod (1812-1895), the daughter of a Scottish clan chief.

The gendered nature of reader participation in hobby competitions is also evident in the RTS’s magazines. For example, the *BOP* regularly held competitions to test whether readers had benefited from the magazine’s lessons in fretwork, carving, and illumination, while the *GOP* invited readers to submit specimens of plain needlework, crochet, and embroidery for adjudication. Along similar lines to *LF*’s competitions, the RTS announced that the best articles would be distributed to hospitals, workhouses, and Christian missionaries.<sup>99</sup> Again, there is evidence to suggest that girls participated in these competitions in far greater numbers than boys. The *GOP*’s competitions consistently attracted a large number of submissions from readers between the ages of eight and twenty-three.<sup>100</sup> The volume of submissions to the needlework competition for 1881 is nicely illustrated in Figure 7 which depicts a scene from the “Girl’s Own Exhibition” that took place at the RTS’s headquarters in London. This exhibition received a fair amount of press coverage. For example, the *Ladies’ Gazette of Fashion* observed that the exhibition proved “an agreeable surprise to the crowds that visited the large rooms devoted to it at the office of the Religious Tract Society”.<sup>101</sup> Along similar lines, the *Lady’s Pictorial* concluded that “the several specimens of

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<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 376.

<sup>99</sup> *Boy’s Own Paper* (27 October 1883), p. 63; *Girl’s Own Paper* (25 September 1880), p. 611.

<sup>100</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (10 July 1880), p. 466; *Girl’s Own Paper* (18 July 1881), p. 603; *Girl’s Own Paper* (16 February 1884), pp. 316-317; *Girl’s Own Paper* (26 May 1894), p. 535.

<sup>101</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (25 June 1881), p. 616.

needlework of every description exhibited” demonstrated that the *GOP*’s readers “have not failed to profit by the editorial lessons”.<sup>102</sup>



Figure 7. *Girl's Own Paper* (25 June 1881), p. 617.

<sup>102</sup> *Girl's Own Paper*, 7 May 1881.

While the *GOP*'s needlework competitions were commended for being a "medium of much charity",<sup>103</sup> the *BOP*'s fretwork and carving contests are reported to have attracted "practically no competition".<sup>104</sup> This was a source of disappointment for the editor who claimed to have arranged the competitions in response to popular demand. In January 1880, he explained that "very many of our readers have written to thank us for considering their needs and circumstances in giving, side by side with our essay, poetical, drawing, and writing subjects, mechanical competitions, and not a few have suggested fretwork as a matter that interests many, and that they would like to compete in".<sup>105</sup> Deferring to his correspondents' wishes, the editor announced that a prize of a guinea would be awarded for the best fretwork bookslide, with an equivalent prize for the finest wall-bracket carved in relief.

Although the editor was eager to accommodate the needs of his readers, the competition failed to elicit the response that he had anticipated. In September 1880, readers were informed that the submissions for the fretwork competition had been "interesting though limited" with only four bookslides being deemed worthy of commendation.<sup>106</sup> The editor was also disheartened to report that only two boys had participated in the carving competition. There are several possible reasons for this underwhelming response. One explanation is that is that boys were less likely to participate in competitions with a charitable function due to the gendered nature of nineteenth-century philanthropy. For example, Moruzi has recently argued that young people were active contributors to charitable causes in the nineteenth century, and juvenile periodicals were often the vehicle through which they were encouraged to make sustained contributions. Moruzi supports this argument by discussing how *Aunt*

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<sup>103</sup> E. Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as it is* (London: Drane, 1888), p. 195.

<sup>104</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (8 August 1885), p. 720; *Boy's Own Paper* (22 August 1891), p. 751; *Boy's Own Paper* (11 April 1896), p. 447; *Boy's Own Paper* (17 September 1898), p. 815.

<sup>105</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (31 January 1880), p. 288.

<sup>106</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (18 September 1880), p. 816.

*Judy's Magazine* invited readers to raise funds for a cot at the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children. Although this charitable appeal requested the cooperation of both boys and girls, the "Cot Subscription List" reveals that the magazine predominantly received donations from female readers.<sup>107</sup> This explanation is unconvincing, however, as there is evidence of boys contributing to fundraising projects such as "The Boy's Own Lifeboat Fund" (1881-1882) and "The Boy's Own Gordon Memorial Fund" (1885-1889).<sup>108</sup>

There are more practical explanations as to the *BOP's* hobby competitions received fewer submissions. For example, it was inconvenient for readers to send large and fragile items such as bookshelves and sculptures to the RTS's headquarters in London for adjudication. In September 1880, the editor regretfully informed a competitor that his wall-bracket had been damaged in transit.<sup>109</sup> Readers may also have been deterred from participating in competitions which required access to specific tools and materials. The disappointing response to the *BOP's* taxidermy competitions lend credibility to this argument. In October 1883, the magazine offered two prizes for the best preserved and mounted specimen of natural history based on Charles Waterton's method of taxidermy.<sup>110</sup> Competitors were expected to follow the instructions laid out in a tutorial by Rev. John George Wood (1827-1889), a natural historian and microscopist.<sup>111</sup> The tutorial instructed boys to procure a cake of white wax, half a pound of corrosive sublimate, and a quart of methylated spirits of wine.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> K. Moruzi, 'Donations Need Not Be Large to Be Acceptable: Children, Charity, and the Great Ormond Street Hospital in Aunt Judy's Magazine, 1868-1885', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 50.1 (2017), pp. 190-213.

<sup>108</sup> E. Penner, 'Masculinity, Morality, and National Identity in the Boy's Own Paper, 1879-1913' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, De Montfort University, 2016), pp. 22-23, 138-141.

<sup>109</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (18 September 1880), p. 816.

<sup>110</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (27 October 1883), p. 64.

<sup>111</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (21 July 1883), p. 687.

<sup>112</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (11 August 1883), p. 735.

Although the editor insisted that the *BOP*'s competitions were designed "to afford all classes a fair chance", it was unreasonable to assume that this contest was within the means of boys who only had enough money to purchase the penny weekly issues of the magazine.<sup>113</sup> The editor also conceded that "the admitted difficulty of Waterton method" had discouraged many boys from participating.<sup>114</sup> Thus, there appears to have been a disconnect between the editor's expectations of the "implied reader" and the capabilities of the actual audience.

The evidence presented thus far raises questions whether competitions were an effective way of moulding readers' understanding of recreation. Although the editors of juvenile periodicals were most concerned about the leisure pursuits of the urban working classes, the main beneficiaries of competitions were readers from well-to-do families. As we shall see in the final section of this chapter, initiatives such as the "Boys of England Football Association" were more successful in engaging the interests of working-class boys. Crucially, however, club pages also provided readers with opportunities to resist attempts at socialisation through sport and physical recreation.

### Sport and Physical Recreation

While juvenile periodicals supplied readers with information about hobbies and indoor pastimes during the winter months, these activities tended to take a backseat to articles on sport and physical recreation in the summer season. Here too, however, the advantages of recreation were often differentiated by gender. Boys were encouraged to participate in organised team games as a way of building their character and improving their health, whereas girls' magazines debated the propriety of sporting activities and physical exercise for girls. The former is perhaps best illustrated by the *BOM*'s articles on "the Games which

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<sup>113</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (27 October 1883), p. 63.

<sup>114</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (7 June 1884), p. 575.



enliven and strengthen the mental and physical powers”.<sup>115</sup> As discussed in Chapter One, Beeton identified that there was an emerging market for reading material suitable for public school boys. Accordingly, in 1865 he announced that the *BOM* would be commencing “a correspondence with the hallowed and traditional places where the flower of British youth is educated and trained”. Beeton explained that this would enable him to provide readers with first-hand accounts of the athletic games played in “the great public schools of England”. Beeton’s claim that “the training obtained in the playgrounds and meadows of these institutions is so exceedingly valuable” was typical of the educational ideology that argued that sports build character.<sup>116</sup> Just a year earlier, the role that games played in the formation of character had been identified by the Clarendon Commission, which was established to investigate the condition of England’s public schools:

The bodily training which gives health and activity to the frame is imparted at English schools, not by the gymnastic exercises which are employed for that end on the Continent...but by athletic games, which whilst they serve this purpose well, serve other purposes besides. Pursued as a recreation and voluntarily they are pursued with an eagerness which boyhood throws into its amusements; and they implant the habit, which does not cease with boyhood, of seeking recreation in hardy and vigorous exercise. The cricket and football fields, however, are not merely places of exercise and amusement; they help to form some of the most valuable social qualities and manly virtues, and they hold, like the classroom and the boarding-house, a distinct and important place in public-school education.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1 January 1855), inside cover.

<sup>116</sup> *Boy’s Own Magazine* (1865), p. 447.

<sup>117</sup> *Report of Her Majesty’s Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Revenues and Management of Certain Colleges and Schools, and the Studies Pursued and Instruction Given Therein: Volume I* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1864), pp. 40-41.

As James Mangan and others have demonstrated, England's public schools were responsible for implementing "a new era of games regimentation" between 1850 and 1900.<sup>118</sup> These games were envisioned as a way of preparing boys drawn from the aristocracy and the wealthy middle classes for the positions of command and influence they would eventually assume as members of the British ruling class. Educationalists proposed that boys' participation in sport could contribute to the development of "Muscular Christianity", as characterised by a belief in the importance of athleticism, manliness, and religion.<sup>119</sup> In keeping with this philosophy, the *BOM*'s articles on "The Characteristic Games of English Public Schools" sought to mould the character of the rising generation by encouraging boys to participate in team games such as association football, rugby, and cricket.<sup>120</sup> According to Beeton, these games were appropriate for boys not only because they promoted the masculine values of camaraderie, fair play, and bravery, but also the Christian virtues of selflessness, duty, and honour.

Accounts of the games played in England's public schools were established as a regular feature of juvenile periodicals by the turn of the twentieth century. For example, the *BOP* secured contributions from Talbot Baines Reed (1852-1893), a vociferous critic of the 'penny

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<sup>118</sup> J. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: The Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 86; N. Vance, 'The Ideal of Manliness', in B. Simon and I. Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School: Studies in the Development of an Educational Institution* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1975), pp. 115-128; T. Chandler, 'Emergent Athleticism: Games in Two English Public Schools, 1800-60', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 5.3 (1988), pp. 312-30; T. Chandler, 'Games at Oxbridge and the Public Schools, 1830-80: The Diffusion of an Innovation', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 8.2 (1991), pp. 171-204; G. Dishon, 'Games of Character: Team Sports, Games, and Character Development in Victorian Public Schools, 1850-1900', *Paedagogica Historica*, 53.4 (2017), pp. 364-380.

<sup>119</sup> D. Allen, 'Young England: Muscular Christianity and the Politics of the Body in Tom Brown's Schooldays', in D. Hall (ed.), *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 114-132.

<sup>120</sup> *Boy's Own Magazine* (1865), pp. 447-448; *Boy's Own Magazine* (1870), pp. 289-294, 371-376, 495-501, 585-591, 684-690.

dreadfuls', who supplied boys with wholesome public school stories.<sup>121</sup> Jeffrey Richards observes that stories such as "My First Football Match" fused Reed's personal experience at the City of London School with the boarding school tradition popularised by *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) and *Eric, or, Little by Little* (1858).<sup>122</sup> Reed's stories were complemented by informative articles such as Somerville Gibney's "Public School Football and How to Play It" and a multi-authored series on "Our Great Public Schools".<sup>123</sup> Along similar lines, *YE's* "Our Monthly Athletic Page" provided readers with "interesting notes on the various athletic items of the month in connection with our Public Schools, together with portraits of some of the leaders in the Boys' World of Sport".<sup>124</sup> Even the *Boys of England*, which was primarily intended for working-class boys, sought to extend the 'improving' ethos of the public school game system to less fortunate readers through serials such as "The Schooldays of Jack at Eton: or, The Adventures of Two College Chums".<sup>125</sup>

Although fictional and informative accounts of the games played in England's public schools continued to promote the idea that sports mould character, as the century progressed juvenile periodicals increasingly emphasised the importance of maintaining Britain's national and imperial strength. This point is nicely illustrated by an unsigned article on "Physical Culture" which appeared in *Young Folks* in June 1885. The purpose of the article was to encourage readers to participate in sport at a time when there were growing concerns about social

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<sup>121</sup> For Talbot Baines Reed's criticism of the 'penny dreadfuls', see: *Leeds Mercury* (16 August 1884), p. 1.

<sup>122</sup> J. Richards, *Happiest Days: The Public School in English Fiction* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 103-119.

<sup>123</sup> For Somerville Gibney's article, see: *Boy's Own Paper* (3 October 1891), p. 15. For the commencement of the series on "Our Great Public Schools", see: *Boy's Own Paper* (3 October 1885), pp. 13-14.

<sup>124</sup> *Young England* (1900), p. 39.

<sup>125</sup> *Boys of England* (25 November 1881), p. 129. For a detailed discussion of the importance of the magazine's public school stories, see: C. Banham, 'Boys of England and Edwin J. Brett, 1866-99' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Leeds, 2006), pp. 102-132.

degeneracy and the physical condition of the next generation of men.<sup>126</sup> The author lamented that too many boys were spending the summer months engaged in sedentary studies or pursuits. Embracing the mantra of *mens sana in corpore sano*, readers were reminded that “perfect intellect is impossible without the necessary support of a healthy physique”. To reinforce this message, the author appealed to Britain’s national sporting heritage. Readers were informed that “every British boy has a tradition to keep up” and that “the inhabitants of no nation of earth so surely hold the honour of physical prowess as the inhabitants of our own islands”. As discussed in Chapter Two, boys were expected to emulate the characters of ‘great men’. This explains why the article featured anecdotes about how Walter Scott overcame his “lameness” to walk thirty miles a day without fatigue, Lord Byron swam across the Hellespont, and William Gladstone strengthened his arms and lungs by felling trees. Readers were also encouraged to participate in sports such as football, cricket, boating, swimming, tennis, gardening, and gymnastics. According to the author, these physical recreations were “lessons in the art of power which it is the duty of every English boy to learn”.<sup>127</sup>

Concerns about the physical condition of the rising generation were brought into sharper focus during the Second Boer War (1899-1902). As Richard Soloway and Geoffrey Searle have demonstrated, reports about the high rejection of volunteers raised concerns that Britain’s urban working classes were unfit for military service and facilitated a debate about national efficiency.<sup>128</sup> This anxiety is evident in the *BOP*’s article on “Boys and Recreation”

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<sup>126</sup> T. Jordan, *The Degeneracy Crisis and Victorian Youth* (New York: State of New York University Press, 1993); B. Luckin, ‘Revisiting the Idea of Degeneration in Urban Britain, 1830-1900’, *Urban History*, 33.2 (2006), pp. 234-52.

<sup>127</sup> *Young Folks* (13 June 1885), p. 411.

<sup>128</sup> R. Soloway, ‘Counting the Degenerates: The Statistics of Race Deterioration in Edwardian England’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 17.1 (1982), pp. 137-64; G. Searle, ‘National Efficiency and the Lessons of the War’, in D. Omissi and A. Thompson (eds), *Impact of the South African War* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), pp. 194-211.

published in May 1900. The author of the paper was George Harris, 4<sup>th</sup> Baron Harris (1851-1932), an amateur cricketer and colonial administrator. Almost three months before the publication of the article, Harris had been appointed as the Assistant Adjutant-General for the Imperial Yeomanry, a volunteer mounted force of the British Army which was created to serve in the Second Boer War.<sup>129</sup> Although the Imperial Yeomanry primarily recruited from the rural middle class, Harris's article focused on the benefits of physical recreation for boys residing in urban areas. Harris explained to readers that the volunteer corps was "a magnificent thing" because it provided young men with "experience and discipline", while at the same time instilling them with a "feeling that they are giving some service to their country".<sup>130</sup> He observed, however, that not enough was being done to promote the uptake of outdoor athletic games which would improve their physical condition:

I glory in the idea of the young people of those immense populations that live in our crowded cities being able to get out into God's air and God's sunshine, and to take some healthy active exercise which will improve their physique and increase their strength and make them healthier.<sup>131</sup>

Harris then proceeded to identify three ways in which sports and physical recreation could improve the condition of boys. First, Harris argued that athletic games were a form rational recreation and thus had the potential to tempt young people away from "the many degrading temptations which a great city affords". Second, the article reinforced the idea that sport could be used as a medium for building character. Harris explained that this philosophy had been "instilled into me at the dear old school, Eton College". As a self-professed supporter of

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<sup>129</sup> G. Hay, *The Yeomanry Cavalry and Military Identities in Rural Britain, 1815–1914* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), p. 181.

<sup>130</sup> *Boy's Own Paper* (26 May 1900), pp. 238-239.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 539.

“all that makes for manly religion”, Harris endorsed team games which promoted the virtues of patience, honesty, and self-denial. Third, Harris supported the uptake of activities which would prepare boys for joining “our great volunteer army”. In particular, he highlighted how games which promoted hand-eye coordination would help boys to become good shots, and how the exercise of limbs and lungs would make them better at marching.<sup>132</sup> Thus, by the turn of the twentieth century sporting articles for boys not only sought to build character, but also aimed to improve the health of the nation.

Although these articles can offer an insight into the values and behaviours that sporting proselytisers hoped to inculcate in boys, it is worth considering how far juvenile periodicals succeeded in inspiring readers to participate in sports. The “Boys of England Football Association”, which emerged from and was managed within the pages of *BOE*, provides a useful case study in this regard. In September 1893, Edwin Brett explained to readers that he was an avid supporter of organised football (both association and rugby variants) because it promoted the “manly” values of “patience, endurance, and obedience”.<sup>133</sup> In an attempt to inculcate these values, Brett invited “lads under 18 years of age, in any part of the United Kingdom” to apply as candidates to promote football clubs in their district bearing the title of the BOEFA. As an incentive to become a promoter, the editor announced that “a first-class football” would be sent to successful applicants for the use of the team. The various teams of the BOEFA were expected to play competitive matches during the football season, and a “splendid silver medal, richly-decorated and inscribed” was to be awarded to the team captain for the first victory against any “properly organised club”.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 538.

<sup>133</sup> *Boys of England* (8 September 1893), p. 239.

<sup>134</sup> *Boys of England* (22 September 1893), p. 271.

Seven months after the formation of the BOEFA, Brett announced that he was “more than satisfied” with the impact of the campaign.<sup>135</sup> He boasted that the BOEFA had recruited “upwards of two thousand sturdy young fellows”.<sup>136</sup> This figure is impossible to verify because the magazine only published the names and addresses of the BOEFA’s promoters. These partial membership lists are still useful, however, because they reveal that sixty-one teams were registered by April 1894.<sup>137</sup> This was particularly impressive considering that only thirty-one clubs participated in the English Football League season for 1893-94, with the majority of teams concentrated in the north west and the midlands. As can be seen in Appendix D, the geographical distribution of the BOEFA’s teams were more diverse. Although the *BOE* was published in London, the magazine reached the industrial towns of the north, old cathedral towns like Norwich, Durham, and Salop, as well as towns in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland.

Appendix D also reveals that many of the BOEFA’s promoters earned a living through manual labour and it was common for boys to take on their father’s occupation. For example, Frederick Fowler (1878-1895), the promoter for the Weymouth team, was apprenticed by his father as a cabinet maker. Along similar lines, William Walton (1882-1962) followed in his father’s footsteps as a coalminer in Durham. A few of the BOEFA’s promoters were employed in clerical positions. Richard Sellers Milsom (1879-1922), the promoter of the Wakefield team, was working as an errand boy by the age of thirteen, while Charles Lidbury (1880-1978) was employed as a banker’s clerk in Middlewich by the age of twenty. This evidence is significant because it corroborates Banham’s observation that the *BOE*’s

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<sup>135</sup> *Boys of England* (4 May 1894), p. 365.

<sup>136</sup> *Boys of England* (27 April 1894), pp. 348-349.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 348-9.

readership was “comprised mainly of boys from the ‘respectable’ working classes”.<sup>138</sup> Thus, the composition of the BOEFA disrupts the conventional wisdom that “the children who were most susceptible to the approaches of organised youth were those who, by the definition of the organisers, needed the movements least”.<sup>139</sup>

During the course of the football season, the teams tallied a record of 446 games played with a win ratio of seventy-one per cent. Members of the association were commended by the editor for their “splendid record of good temper, fair play, and gentlemanly feeling”.<sup>140</sup> The magazine also featured three “splendidly-engraved portraits” of the successful teams from Birmingham, Launceston, and Rotherham.<sup>141</sup> According to Brett, these portraits revealed that “our players are not children, but sturdy and muscular young fellows, averaging in age from fifteen to eighteen”.<sup>142</sup> While this suggests that the BOEFA achieved its goal of encouraging working-class boys to form organised football teams, the impact of the scheme appears to have been diluted by non-cooperation. Promoters were required to submit a match report for each fixture by Wednesday morning so that the results could be published in the magazine and shared with other members. While many teams followed this instruction, the editor became frustrated with the number of promoters who were not fulfilling this duty:

What we complain of, and very justly too, is that some of the promoters, accepted and appointed by us, *send us nothing at all*. Now this will not do! The rules we laid down, which are simply enough in all conscience, *must* be observed. As we do not think

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<sup>138</sup> Banham, ‘Boys of England’, p. ix.

<sup>139</sup> Blanch, ‘Organized Youth’, p. 105.

<sup>140</sup> *Boys of England* (4 May 1894), p. 365.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 364; *Boys of England* (20 April 1894), p. 335; *Boys of England* (27 April 1894), p. 348.

<sup>142</sup> *Boys of England* (4 May 1894), p. 365.



anything of the trouble and expense of sending presents to our friends, surely they might write to us at least once a week.<sup>143</sup>

There is evidence to suggest that some teams were unable to maintain regular contact with the editor for practical reasons. For example, the editor received the following letter from a football referee on behalf of the Preston team:

Dear Sir, The Lads of the Preston Boys of England Football Association Team (No. 19.), played a football match, and after hard play, finished up by three goals to three. The lads asked me to tell you that they cannot put the results in the paper, because it is so inconvenient to go to the post office, as it is two miles away. Yours truly, J. Johnson (Referee).<sup>144</sup>

Although Brett encouraged other members to make a similar effort, the issue of non-cooperation was a problem which plagued the BOEFA. Following the conclusion of the football season in March 1894, the magazine published “The Record, Triumphant in Every Respect, of the Boys of England Football Association”.<sup>145</sup> Although the magazine received reports from forty-one teams, the celebration was overshadowed by a non-cooperation rate of twenty-three per cent. An incensed Brett complained that “several promoters have not, in spite of our instructions, sent in any kind of record, *and the defaulters are requested to return Footballs or Medals at once to our office*”.<sup>146</sup> This admonition is significant because it suggests that some readers may have joined the BOEFA purely to receive the benefits of being a member without being committed to the wider communal obligations implicit in

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<sup>143</sup> *Boys of England* (15 December 1893), p. 46.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>145</sup> *Boys of England* (27 April 1894), p. 348.

<sup>146</sup> *Boys of England* (4 May 1894), p. 364.

membership. Thus, while the BOEFA appears to have achieved some success in encouraging working-class boys to participate in organised football matches, evidence of readers refusing to follow the editor's instructions would seem to indicate a failure of socialisation with regards to teaching the value of responsibility.

While juvenile periodicals actively encouraged boys to participate in athletic games, there is evidence to suggest that sport and physical recreation occupied a more contested space in girls' magazines. An excellent example is how the *GOP* sent readers mixed messages about the propriety of physical recreation. As can be seen from the front cover of the *GOP*'s first issue (Figure 8), sport was crucial to the magazine's idealisation of girlhood from the outset. Although the illustration depicts three girls engaged in the hobbies of needlework, reading, and painting, the drawing also features a racquet, croquet set, and sheath of arrows. The juxtaposition of these pieces of sporting equipment alongside more traditional 'female accomplishments' signalled the *GOP*'s tacit support of games such as lawn tennis and croquet as suitable recreations for middle-class girls.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> As noted by Kristine Moruzi, "the types of sport that girls in the *GOP* were encouraged to pursue, from lawn tennis to skating and golfing, would have been available only to girls with sufficient income to purchase the necessary equipment and to access the required sporting arenas. Most working-class girls lacked the time and the resources to engage in these activities". K. Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood Through the Periodical Press, 1850-1915* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), p. 110.



P.P. London

# THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

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LENNEX BANKS, Author of the "Manchester Man," &c.—57, 73.

Figure 8. Girl's Own Paper (3 January 1880), p. 1.

The *GOP*'s legitimisation of these activities as appropriately feminine was important as earlier in the century restrictive modes of dress and models of body image had prohibited women's involvement in sport. As noted by Marland, ideas of female weakness based on biological vulnerability meant that girls had been dissuaded by medical professionals from taking part in physical exercise.<sup>148</sup> Along similar lines, Sally Mitchell observes that girls were discouraged from participating in sport because men were presumed to prefer pale, frail, and helpless women.<sup>149</sup> By the closing decades of the nineteenth century, however, changing attitudes towards health and beauty meant that this model of girlhood was beginning to be superseded by the ideal of "the healthy girl".<sup>150</sup> As the *GOP* explained to readers in October 1894:

The ideal woman of that period is as far removed from the ideal woman of to-day as genius is from mere ability, or Jane Austen's heroines from those of Thomas Hardy. The young lady with sloping shoulders, gazelle-like eyes, and unchanging amiability would find no place in the present world of women. A course of gymnastics would be ordered as an antidote to her tendency to faint at critical and uncritical moments, and her frequent weeping would rouse irritation rather than sympathy amongst her friends; should she return to the 'Book of Beauty', she would find her place usurped by a type, distinct; with characteristics utterly unlike her own. In place of her rounded, irresolute chin, she would find a chin, firm and resolved; her mouth with its drooping lips would be displaced by one as beautiful, but indicative of self-control and energy; her

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<sup>148</sup> Marland, *Health and Girlhood*, p. 15.

<sup>149</sup> S. Mitchell, *The New Girl: Girls' Culture in England, 1880-1915* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 106.

<sup>150</sup> For further reading on the *Girl's Own Paper's* ideal of the "healthy girl", see: Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, pp. 83-114; A. Enever, 'How the Modern Girl Attains Strength and Grace: The Girl's Own Paper, Sport and the Discipline of the Female Body, 1914-1956', *Women's History Review*, 24.5 (2015), pp. 662-680.

expression, inane and colourless, would be overshadowed by one of intelligence and character. And the new type is as perfect in beauty as the old. But where was only weakness there is now strength and purpose.<sup>151</sup>

This ideal of the “healthy girl” was reinforced through the content of the magazine. As early as 1884, the *GOP* featured articles emphasising that physical recreation was necessary to improve the health of the “future wives and mothers of England”.<sup>152</sup> Articles on the benefits of gymnastics and callisthenics appeared alongside tutorials on how to play lawn tennis, croquet, and golf.<sup>153</sup> While many of these papers were written by members of the RTS, the *GOP* also secured contributions from prominent names in the world of women’s sport. For example, readers were introduced to the “splendid” game of hockey by E. M. Robson, the Honorary Secretary of the All England Women’s Hockey Association from 1896 to 1902.<sup>154</sup> The *GOP* also featured a contribution from Helen Margaret Pillans (1870-1937), a professional lawn tennis player from Kent who participated in several tournaments with her sister, Kate Madeline Pillans (1869-1965).<sup>155</sup> The RTS’s endorsement of girls’ participation in sport and physical recreation is further evident from the publication of *The Girl’s Own Outdoor Book* in 1889. As the editor explained, this compilation of articles from the first nine

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<sup>151</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (27 October 1894), p. 51.

<sup>152</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (17 May 1884), pp. 516-518; *Girl’s Own Paper* (11 November 1899), pp. 86-87; *Girl’s Own Paper* (7 April 1900), pp. 422-423.

<sup>153</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (7 October 1882), pp. 8-11; *Girl’s Own Paper* (14 October 1882), pp. 25-28; *Girl’s Own Paper* (14 April 1894), pp. 433-435; *Girl’s Own Paper* (15 July 1899), pp. 664-667; *Girl’s Own Paper* (1 February 1890), pp. 273-274.

<sup>154</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (18 November 1899), pp. 104-107

<sup>155</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (17 February 1900), pp. 305-308.

years of the *GOP*'s run was designed to combat the “pernicious practice” of English girls spending too much time indoors.<sup>156</sup>

At first glance, then, the *GOP* appears to have been an enthusiastic supporter of girls' participation in sport and physical recreation. Upon closer inspection, however, it becomes clear that some forms of physical activity were disputed on medical, social, or moral grounds. Moruzi observes that while the *GOP* expanded the feminine ideal to include health, there was an anxiety about the defeminising potential of physical recreation.<sup>157</sup> As discussed earlier in this chapter, activities which required girls to demonstrate extreme physical strength were seen as harmful to the development of natural beauty and feminine attributes. This explains why the *GOP*'s endorsement of girls' participation in sport and physical recreation came with two important caveats: modification and moderation.

The necessity of modification is best illustrated by the *GOP*'s article on golf which was published in February 1890. The article explained that golf was an appropriate recreation for girls because it was less physically demanding than the “more masculine sports of cricket and football”. Readers were informed that golf was a healthy exercise because participants benefit from the advantages of open air. The *GOP* also endorsed golf because of its role in “developing control of temper and general judgement in deciding the best method of overcoming various obstacles and ‘hazards’”, a lesson “which might well be applied to the ups and downs of life generally, with beneficial effect”. Crucially, however, the *GOP* encouraged girls to participate in a modified game of golf which was restricted to the putting green. Readers were instructed that it was inappropriate for girls to emulate the “more energetic play of men, with their longer links and herculean ‘driving,’ which requires greater

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<sup>156</sup> C. Peters, *The Girl's Own Outdoor Book, Containing Practical Help to Girls on Matters Relating to Outdoor Occupation and Recreation* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1889), p. 5.

<sup>157</sup> Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, p. 102.

strength of muscle than is expected of the ‘weaker sex’”. Rather, readers were advised to focus on putting because this “delicate” part of the game would improve their health whilst not compromising their feminine attributes.<sup>158</sup>

The importance of taking physical recreation in moderation was a recurring theme throughout the *GOP*, although it was perhaps most prominent in articles on cycling.<sup>159</sup> The relationship between cycling and the emergence of the “New Girl” or “New Woman” in the late nineteenth century has been well documented in the existing secondary literature.<sup>160</sup> Mitchell claims that cycling received the *GOP*’s “stamp of approval” as a healthy and ‘gender-appropriate’ recreation for girls.<sup>161</sup> Moruzi similarly argues that the magazine “enthusiastically supported” cycling because of “its weaker associations with masculine activity”.<sup>162</sup> There is, however, evidence to suggest that cycling occupied a more contested space in the *GOP* than has been traditionally assumed. For example, while Richardson acknowledged that “cycling is unquestionably good exercise for women”, he expressed concern about unequal muscular development. In order to prevent an imbalanced physique and lower limb deformity, readers were advised not to cycle over twenty miles per day.<sup>163</sup> Along similar lines, Stables warned “that our mutual friend the bike may be either a friend or a foe. It can kill as well as cure”. Although Stables endorsed cycling in moderation “as a most healthful exercise”, he was keen to emphasise the dangers of overzealous riding. Readers

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<sup>158</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (1 February 1890), pp. 273-274. For an overview of changing attitudes towards women’s participation in golf in England and Scotland from 1860 to 1914, see: McCrone, *Playing the Game*, pp. 166-177.

<sup>159</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (4 October 1890) pp. 4-5; *Girl’s Own Paper* (18 February 1899), p. 326.

<sup>160</sup> D. Rubinstein, ‘Cycling in the 1890s’, *Victorian Studies*, 21.1 (1977), pp. 47-71; K. McCrone, *Playing the Game: Sport and the Physical Emancipation of English Women, 1870-1914* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1988), pp. 177-185, 238-242.

<sup>161</sup> Mitchell, *The New Girl*, pp. 110-111.

<sup>162</sup> Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood*, p. 112.

<sup>163</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (2 June 1894), pp. 546-547.

were informed that “spurting or going at a great pace is not for the fair sex. By doing so even once you may hurt yourself so that you will repent of it all your life”.<sup>164</sup> Stables objected to the practice of spurting on medical grounds, citing evidence that overriding could lead to the development of a disease known as “the bicycle heart”.<sup>165</sup> Readers were also warned that spurting would ruin their beauty and complexion by enlarging the size of their facial muscles:

They get the bicycle face. I see it every day in my wanderings. The face that gazes upon me for a moment as it goes gliding past on the silent wheel is flushed, but it has also a look of pain, discomfort, and irritation – a suffering face, with pursed lips and lowered brows. And it is one, too, from which all beauty has fled. If ladies will not take advice in this matter from medical cyclists like myself, in course of time the features of the fair sex of this country will be far indeed from pleasant to behold.<sup>166</sup>

There is evidence to suggest that some readers were concerned by the *GOP*'s warnings about the dangers of cycling. During the closing decade of the nineteenth century, the *GOP*'s “Answers to Correspondents” column was inundated with letters from readers about cycling. While some correspondents sought advice about how to acquire a bicycle,<sup>167</sup> most of the queries tellingly appeared under the “Medical” subheading.<sup>168</sup> For example, in January 1897 an “Anxious Cyclist” was informed that “cycling is not bad for the back unless carried to

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<sup>164</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (4 March 1899), p. 364.

<sup>165</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (15 August 1896), p. 723.

<sup>166</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (1 December 1898), p. 11. The term “bicycle face” was coined by Dr. A. Shadwell in a controversial article on “The Hidden Dangers of Cycling” which appeared in *National Review* in 1897. For further reading on how the bicycle's rapid increase in popularity amongst women “triggered a vigorous exchange about its dangers and potential benefits in medical journals, the cycling press and lay periodicals”, see: Marland, *Health and Girlhood*, pp. 105-118.

<sup>167</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (3 April 1897), p. 431; *Girl's Own Paper* (24 April 1897), p. 479; *Girl's Own Paper* (4 September 1897); *Girl's Own Paper* (19 March 1898), p. 399.

<sup>168</sup> For a detailed discussion of the *Girl's Own Paper*'s “Medical” column, see: C. Patton, ‘Not a Limitless Possession: Health Advice and Readers' Agency in the *Girl's Own Paper*, 1880-1890’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 45.2 (2012), pp. 111-133.



excess. You had much better see a medical man and have your back examined at once”.<sup>169</sup>

Along similar lines, a correspondent signed as “Perplexed” who complained about flushing of the hands was warned against her excessive participation in gymnastics and cycling.<sup>170</sup> A

“Girl Cyclist” was advised that “there is no objection to any girl cycling in moderation, but it is very harmful to over-fatigue yourself”,<sup>171</sup> while one “Flossie” was informed that “cycling cannot produce enlarged pores, unless you perspire very much while cycling”.<sup>172</sup>

Furthermore, an “Old Brightonian” was advised to reduce the distances that she was cycling in response to her complaints about breathlessness, tiredness, and leg pain. The correspondent was also counselled to modify her behaviour to be more feminine. She was instructed that while male companions may become impatient with girls who cannot ride at their speed, it was imperative that “each girl must meet such unfair treatment with a distinct refusal to overtax her strength”.<sup>173</sup> Thus, the *GOP*’s correspondence column reinforced the message that physical recreation was only appropriate for girls if it was taken in moderation and served the purposes of improving their health.

The *GOP* was not the only girls’ magazine to feature articles on sport and physical recreation. For example, *Atalanta*’s articles on student life at Oxford and Cambridge discussed, among other topics, the outdoor games played by women at university.<sup>174</sup> These articles were complemented by a series of papers on “The World of Fashion” which provided readers with

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<sup>169</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (23 January 1897) p. 272.

<sup>170</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (26 March 1898), p. 413.

<sup>171</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (6 August 1898), p. 719.

<sup>172</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (16 July 1898), p. 672.

<sup>173</sup> *Girl’s Own Paper* (19 March 1898), p. 399.

<sup>174</sup> *Atalanta* (1 April 1890), pp. 421-423; *Atalanta* (1 April 1892), pp. 410-416; *Atalanta* (1 October 1896), pp. 43-48.

advice on appropriate sporting attire for girls.<sup>175</sup> *Atalanta* also featured papers on the health benefits of physical recreation. Along similar lines to the *GOP*, these papers often emphasised the importance of modification and moderation. For example, *Atalanta*'s article on "Golf as a Pastime for Girls" claimed that "golf, when played in moderation, is a pastime equally fit for woman as man" because it requires "no particular exhibition of agility or strength". Girls were advised, however, to play on modified courses which were shorter and thus more suitable for "gentler followers of this purely scientific game".<sup>176</sup>

An important difference between the *GOP* and *Atalanta* is that while the former responded to readers' queries about health, the later sought to facilitate discussion about the propriety of girls' participation in physical recreation. This point is nicely illustrated by the "Atalanta Debating Club" which was established in 1894.<sup>177</sup> As noted in Chapter One, the purpose of this scheme was to encourage independent thinking by inviting readers to exchange their opinions on topics such as the impact of women's higher education on home life and the political rights of women. Relevant to the current discussion, however, members were asked to consider whether cycling was a legitimate pastime for women.<sup>178</sup> In February 1897, the editor published four readers' responses to this question, with space devoted to both sides of the debate. The deliberate juxtaposition of opposing viewpoints was calculated to be provocative, thus raising inevitable questions about how representative the opinions of these girls was of the magazine's wider readership – but even so, their mediated views remain

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<sup>175</sup> *Atalanta* (1 March 1898), pp. 363-364; *Atalanta* (1 May 1898), pp. 475-476; *Atalanta* (1 August 1898), pp. 641-642.

<sup>176</sup> *Atalanta* (1 September 1891), p. 792.

<sup>177</sup> *Atalanta* (1894), p. 788.

<sup>178</sup> *Atalanta* (1 December 1896), p. 208.

useful for showing how certain readers engaged with *Atalanta*'s views on sporting moderation.

The strongest endorsement of cycling as a legitimate pastime for women came from one "Delia Glyn", who argued that the recreation was "a great adjunct in the physical development of women, and an improvement of their general health". Approaching the debate from a medical point of view, Glyn observed that "cycling is considered an immense advantage, which will tend to the hardihood of our race, and, perchance, the longevity of future generations". Glyn proposed that cycling had the potential to produce women who were healthy, vigorous, and intellectual. She then contrasted her vision of the modern woman with the ideal girl of the past to which she objected:

The coming of age will not produce women feeble in body and mind, unable to support, only able to lean; pretty and amiable, but without any definite opinions on anything save their own need of love and shelter; absorbed in trifles, incapable of conversation on the affairs of the great world, which goes on its stupendous course while they sit playing with toys safely fenced out of harm's way; the women of whom Amelia, in 'Vanity Fair,' and Rosamond, in 'Middlemarch,' are varying types.<sup>179</sup>

A similar argument was made by "Annie Cockram", who proposed that cycling was a legitimate pastime for women when practised in moderation. Citing evidence from the *British Medical Journal*, Cockram argued that "the judicious use of the bicycle, so far from being injurious, is extremely beneficial". Cockram described cycling as a liberating experience which had the potential to emancipate girls from "the fret of daily duties". She conceded,

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<sup>179</sup> *Atalanta* (1 February 1897), p. 319.

however, that the benefits of cycling were contingent upon the “common sense” of its votaries:

The blessing of cycling is only conditional. The safe motto is moderation. Those who exceed this boundary will pay dearly for it. In every legitimate pastime there are danger-signals. These are too evident in repetition. Let the stern mentor pass her decree upon those who have not conformed to the unwritten code...The craze for the wheel has demolished many feminine idols.<sup>180</sup>

While Cockram emphasised the importance of moderation, the more ardent opponents of cycling argued that it was necessary for girls to modify their behaviour when partaking in physical recreation. For example, “Sissie Hunter” contended that cycling was not a legitimate pastime for women because it was “ungraceful and altogether unladylike”. She lamented that the advent of cycling had caused girls to lose their “refinement”, an ideal which she regarded as a “cherished possession”. Hunter was dismayed by cyclists who were seen in public acting in ways which were “scarcely compatible with their dignity”. In particular, she objected to cyclists “tearing along crowded streets, or flying at a breakneck speed down steep hills in the country”.<sup>181</sup> Along similar lines, “Annie Mary Brunlees” – a regular contributor to the debating club – observed that “cycling is ungraceful. In some places it is made positively vulgar, showing a want of womanly refinement, never to be tolerated”.<sup>182</sup> Although Brunlees acknowledged that cycling was a form of healthy exercise, she was critical of the “the awkward young woman, with skirts above her ankles, who recounts adventures and

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<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 319.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 319.

<sup>182</sup> For Annie Mary Brunlees’s response to the question “is vanity detrimental to one’s success in life?”, see: *Atalanta* (1 May 1896), p. 540. For her opinion on whether the faculty of endurance is stronger in women than in men, see: *Atalanta* (1 June 1896), p. 605. For her view on whether character is affected by climate, see: *Atalanta* (1 November 1897), p. 111.

misfortunes on her ‘bike,’ and drinks tea standing, as though always starting on a journey”. In order to make cycling a more ‘gender-appropriate’ recreation for women, she called on cyclists to become more graceful and less careless with regards to dress.<sup>183</sup> Thus, the debating club appears to have not only achieved its aim of facilitating discussion about the propriety of girls’ participation in physical recreation, but also reinforced the magazine’s message about the importance of modification and moderation.

### Conclusion

This chapter has made an important contribution to a body of scholarship which aims to understand the relationship between leisure and the socialisation of young people. As noted in the introduction, the existing secondary literature has primarily focused on the role played by youth organisations and sporting proselytisers in guiding boys and girls towards ‘rational’ forms of recreation. This chapter, however, has advanced the discussion by demonstrating how the English juvenile periodical press sought to mould readers’ understanding of recreation in a myriad of ways. It has discussed how informative articles on the benefits and dangers of recreation were complemented not only by tutorials on hobbies and indoor pastimes, but also columns on sport and physical recreation. While these sources can offer a valuable insight into how editorial agendas were shaped by attitudes towards gender, they are unable to tell us much about reader response when studied in isolation. Accordingly, this chapter has also considered how magazines provided readers with opportunities to put what they had learned into practice through competitions and club pages.

This chapter concludes that while competitions and clubs undoubtedly occupied the leisure hours of many boys and girls, the extent to which socialising messages about recreation were received by the intended audience is open to debate. Although the leisure habits of working-

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<sup>183</sup> *Atalanta* (1 February 1897), p. 319.

class boys and girls evoked the most concern, this chapter has demonstrated that it was primarily middle-class readers who participated in hobby competitions and essay writing contests on recreation. A notable exception is the *GOP*'s "Daily Round" competition which was restricted to "girls who work with their hands". Even here, however, it is important to recognise that the competition can only offer mediated glimpses into reader response as extracts from essays were strategically inserted to support the magazine's agenda. While some competitions appear to have excited the interests of readers, others were a source of disappointment and received few submissions – with competitions aimed at boys proving markedly less successful than those aimed at girls. Along similar lines, there is evidence to suggest that club pages achieved mixed results, with the BOEFA quickly securing a following of impressive geographical range and social depth while at the same time showing that the socialising priorities of editors were not always appreciated by promoters more enthusiastic about playing football than about contributing to the magazine's wider reading community. This serves as an important reminder that not all attempts at socialisation were successful and strengthens the argument that readers were capable of defying editorial expectations. Thus, this chapter further demonstrates the necessity of studying reader response when assessing the role played by the English juvenile periodical press in the socialisation of boys and girls during the second half of the nineteenth century.

## CONCLUSION

A valuable feature of our paper has been the Answers to Correspondents, which have appeared with such regularity, and been read with such pleasure, even since its commencement. The magnitude of this department, and its ceaseless flow of incoming letters, would surprise anyone admitted behind the scenes for the first time. In these answers, innumerable items of information have been given, countless criticisms have been given, countless criticisms have been ventured on, and an attempt has been made to solve the great many of the problems and difficulties that enter into the thoughts and lives of our readers.<sup>1</sup>

On 25 February 1899, the Religious Tract Society published the thousandth weekly issue of the *Girl's Own Paper*. To commemorate the occasion, the editor offered his reflections on the history of the magazine. The article not only provides a revealing insight into the RTS's motivation for publishing the *GOP*, but significantly it highlights three ways in which readers interacted with the editor of the magazine. As illustrated in the quotation above, the first site of encounter in the *GOP* was the "Answers to Correspondents" column. This feature not only provided readers with opportunities to voice their opinions on the content of the magazine, but crucially it also allowed specific individuals to solicit and receive advice on how to navigate the transition from girlhood into womanhood. Second, the editor was brought into regular contact with his readers through the competition page. According to the editor, the *GOP*'s competitions were designed to test the "ingenuity, taste, accomplishments, skill, and perseverance of our readers". The editor also recalled that the competitions "occasionally roused a remarkable degree of enthusiasm" which resulted in large amounts of money and many certificates of merit being distributed to the prize winners. Third, the editor reflected on

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<sup>1</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (25 February 1899), p. 345.

how the *GOP* had served as a rallying point for uniting readers who were influenced “in the direction of true charity”. Readers of the *GOP* were praised not only for establishing a working girl’s home in London, but also for making periodical grants of warm clothing for the poor and sending dolls in great numbers to brighten the dull hours of sick children in hospitals.<sup>2</sup>

As we have seen throughout this dissertation, the *GOP* was not the only magazine to invite young people to become active participants in periodical culture. Correspondence columns, competitions, and club pages were regular features of the eight juvenile periodicals which formed the core of this study. These sources have, for the most part, been relegated to the margins of any serious scholarly study of juvenile periodicals – usually dismissed either as curious blind alleys or (still worse) as fictional inventions of the editorial team designed to puff the magazine and give an elevated sense of its reach and success. This dissertation has argued to the contrary, presenting fresh evidence that juvenile periodicals received and published a fair amount of genuine correspondence from readers who can be identified in population censuses and other biographical databases. As outlined in the appendices, it is sometimes possible to use these sources to identify and trace generational cohorts of readers who formed communal bonds and matured with their magazines. Furthermore, this dissertation has proposed that these sites of encounter are worth studying because they can offer mediated glimpses into reader response which re-evaluate our understanding of socialisation in two ways.

First, the evidence presented in this dissertation challenges the assumption that socialisation was a unidirectional process. Rather, it proposes that the relationship between the act of reading and socialisation should be understood as a dialogue between editors who were eager

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 345-346.



to mould the values and behaviours of the rising generation, and readers who consulted magazines for advice and entertainment. As discussed in Chapter One, the emergence of reader participation as a regular feature of juvenile periodicals was a significant development because it transformed how socialising messages were transmitted and received by boys and girls. The changing dynamics of the marketplace – together with the wider cultural, social and political landscape within which publishing for young people operated – led the editors of ‘improving’ magazines to become invested in opening up conversations with readers through correspondence columns, competitions, and club pages. As explored in subsequent chapters, these sites of encounter not only allowed editors to respond to feedback, but also enabled readers to write to magazines for guidance on matters relating to education, employment, and leisure, sometimes opening up important new editorial possibilities for publishers looking to secure their share of a fiercely competitive – and frequently contested – marketplace. Thus, while editors often had their own agendas, it is important to recognise that boys and girls were active consumers whose needs and desires were influential in shaping the content of their magazines.

Second, this dissertation has argued that not all attempts at socialisation were successful. At first glance, the juvenile periodical press appears to have been an effective medium for inculcating desirable values and behaviours in the rising generation. Chapter Two presented evidence which suggests that readers who participated in competitions and correspondence-based distance learning schemes appreciated juvenile periodicals for providing them with a stimulus for self-improvement and a way of acquiring books as prizes. Chapter Three revealed that correspondence columns were inundated with queries from boys and girls who consulted magazines for careers advice, while Chapter Four demonstrated how competitions and clubs sought to occupy the leisure hours of young people in ‘rational’ and ‘gender-appropriate’ ways. Upon closer inspection of reader response, however, it is apparent that the

relationship between the act of reading and socialisation was more complex than scholars have traditionally assumed. As discussed in Chapter Two, competitions indicate that while some readers responded to the study of biography in the prescribed way, others defied editorial expectations by expressing their admiration for unexpected role models. There is also evidence to suggest that socialising messages may not have reached their intended audience. As we have seen in Chapter Three, many of the correspondents who wrote to magazines for careers advice were seemingly unaware that their queries had already been answered. Although these correspondents were often depicted by the editors of juvenile periodicals as being inattentive, it is possible that they were simply irregular readers who were unable to keep up to date with magazines for practical reasons. Along similar lines, Chapter Four demonstrated that while the editors of juvenile periodicals often expressed concern about the leisure pursuits of the urban working-classes, the main beneficiaries of competitions were readers from well-to-do families. This evidence is significant because it challenges the assumption that young people were passive recipients of adult teaching. By focusing on sites of encounter in juvenile periodical press, we have thus come to a clearer understanding of how boys and girls responded to socialising messages about education, employment, and leisure.

The remainder of this concluding chapter will highlight how these revelations in turn pose further questions that lie beyond the scope of this dissertation. This study has focused on encounters in eight juvenile periodicals which were launched in England between 1850 and 1890. As discussed in the Introduction, this end date was chosen because the closing decade of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of a new phase in the history of juvenile periodical publishing. The halfpenny magazines which flooded the market during the 1890s have already received a fair amount of attention in the existing secondary literature. For example, scholars have debated whether Alfred Harmsworth “killed the ‘penny dreadful’ by

the simple process of producing the ha'penny dreadfuler".<sup>3</sup> Along similar lines, Lise Sanders and Alisa Webb have considered how Harmsworth sought to supplant the 'penny novelettes' by supplying working-class girls with ostensibly 'improving' alternatives such as the *Girls' Friend* (1898-1931), *Girls' Reader* (1908-1915), *Girls' Home* (1910-1915), and *Our Girls* (1915-1918).<sup>4</sup> Based on the research provided here, however, it will be necessary for scholars to pay closer attention to the importance of reader response when assessing the role that Harmsworth's magazine played in the socialisation of boys and girls.

Researchers will also need to consider whether the closing decade of the nineteenth century witnessed a decisive shift away from merit-based competitions towards games of chance. In October 1889, Harmsworth's *Answers to Correspondents* (1888-1955) announced the details of a competition which offered "A Pound a Week for Life!" to the person who came closest to guessing the amount of gold in the Bank of England on a specified date. The competition received over 700,000 entries and was credited by a contemporary newspaper for inaugurating "a period of popular excitement unquestionably without precedent in journalistic history".<sup>5</sup> Harmsworth appears to have adopted a similar tactic to promote the *Halfpenny Marvel* (1893-1922), which provided boys with an opportunity to win £500 for predicting the

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<sup>3</sup> This claim can be traced back to a quote from A. A. Milne (1882-1956) which appeared in Ernest Turner's study of boys' papers: E. Turner, *Boys Will Be Boys: The Story of Sweeney Todd, Deadwood Dick, Sexton Blake, Billy Bunter, Dick Barton, et al.* (London: Michael Joseph, 1948), p. 115. For scholars who support Milne's claim, see: D. Dixon, 'Victorian and Edwardian Periodicals for Children: Some Bibliographical Problems', *Indexer*, 15.1 (1986), p. 15; C. Nelson, 'Mixed Messages: Authoring and Authority in British Boys' Magazines', *Lion and the Unicorn: A Critical Journal of Children's Literature*, 21.1 (1997), p. 5. For the revisionist argument that Harmsworth was genuinely committed to the "improving message" of his magazines, see: S. Olsen, 'Raising Fathers, Raising Boys: Informal Education and Enculturation in Britain, 1880-1914' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, McGill University, 2008), p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> L. Sanders, *Consuming Fantasies: Labor, Leisure, and the London Shopgirl, 1880-1920* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006), pp. 158-169; A. Webb, 'Constructing the Gendered Body: Girls, Health, Beauty, Advice, and the Girls' Best Friend, 1898-99', *Women's History Review*, 15.2 (2006), pp. 253-275; A. Webb, 'Harmsworth's Girls: Constructing Identity in the British Popular Press, 1898-1916' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> R. Pound and G. Harmsworth, *Northcliffe* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1960), p. 107.

number of babies born during a ten week period.<sup>6</sup> Although these preliminary findings suggest that Harmsworth's competitions served a commercial purpose rather than an 'improving' function, more research needs to be undertaken on reader participation for the period beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Future studies on the juvenile periodical press will also need to consider how socialising messages were received by foreign readers. Although this dissertation has focused on magazines which were launched in England, there is evidence to suggest that juvenile periodicals were part of a wider British and transnational print culture. As we have seen in Chapter Four, schemes such as the Boys of England Football Association appealed not only to readers in England, but also Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. Along similar lines, Chapter Two discussed how the *GOP*'s "One Hundred Famous Women of the Christian Era" competition received submissions from readers on a global scale. A natural progression of this work is to analyse the myriad of ways in which readers beyond England were invited to become active participants in periodical culture. A useful starting point may be to consider how the "Little Folks Post Office" (Figure 9) was established in 1888 to accommodate the needs of readers "who dwell in foreign lands, especially from those in far-off and remote regions".<sup>7</sup> Alternatively, researchers may reflect on how the *GOP*'s "International Correspondence" column facilitated encounters between readers by inviting English girls to exchange letters with their foreign counterparts for the purpose of mutual self-improvement.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, several questions remain unanswered at present about whether special

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<sup>6</sup> *Halfpenny Marvel*, (22 April 1899), p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Little Folks* (1 January 1888), p. 68.

<sup>8</sup> *Girl's Own Paper* (2 October 1897), p. 15.

competitions for foreign and colonial readers reinforced a sense of communal belonging or segregated readers according to their nationality and geographical location.<sup>9</sup>



Figure 9. *Little Folks* (1 January 1888), p. 68.

The findings of this dissertation may be further developed by conducting a transatlantic study of encounters in nineteenth-century juvenile periodicals. Since the publication of R. Gordon Kelly's *Children's Periodicals of the United States* in 1984, researchers have identified magazines as valuable primary sources for investigating nineteenth-century constructions of American childhood.<sup>10</sup> Other scholars have considered the role of periodicals in the socialisation and civic mobilisation of American youth.<sup>11</sup> Here too, there is a growing interest

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<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of the *Girl's Own Paper's* competitions for foreign readers, see: B. Rodgers, 'Competing Girlhoods: Competition, Community, and Reader Contribution in The Girl's Own Paper and The Girl's Realm', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 45.3 (2012), pp. 280-283.

<sup>10</sup> G. Kelly, *Children's Periodicals of the United States* (Greenwood Press: Connecticut, 1984); L. Cohoon, 'Necessary Badness: Reconstructing Post-Bellum Boyhood Citizenships in Our Young Folks and The Story of a Bad Boy', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 29.1 (2004), pp. 5-31; M. Cassidy, 'Concerning Printed Poison: Nineteenth-Century American Adults' Ambivalence about Children's Interactions with Cheap Fiction', *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*, 8.2 (2015), pp. 211-228; P. Ringel, *Commercializing Childhood: Children's Magazines, Urban Gentility, and the Ideal of the American Child, 1823-1918* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015).

<sup>11</sup> C. O'Leary, *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 150-171; R. Ellis, *To the Flag: The Unlikely History of the Pledge of Allegiance* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), pp. 5-9, 224-229, 236-244; L. Cohoon, *Serialized Citizenships: Periodicals, Books, and American Boys, 1840-1911* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006); P. Keirle, 'Youth Periodicals, Patriotism, and the

in reader participation. For example, Michelle Phillips has recently highlighted the importance of “child-adult mediation” in *St. Nicholas Magazine*, an illustrated periodical for boys and girls which was launched by Scribner's in 1873. She argues that Mary Mapes Dodge (1831-1905), the editor of the magazine until her death, attempted to foster a sense of community and connection among readers and contributors through features such as “The Letter-Box” page.<sup>12</sup> This study has been complemented by Anna Redcay’s analysis of the “St. Nicholas League”, a monthly feature begun at the turn of the twentieth century in which subscribers could participate in competitions in prose, verse, drawing, photography, and puzzle making.<sup>13</sup> Along similar lines, Sara Lindey has considered how late nineteenth-century boys’ papers provided readers with opportunities to enter the literary marketplace by devoting space to showcasing their writing abilities.<sup>14</sup> Thus, this dissertation has laid the foundation for a comparative study of encounters in English and American juvenile periodicals which may reveal cultural similarities and differences.

While all this potential work lies in the future, this dissertation set out to reassess the role played by the English juvenile periodical press in the socialisation of boys and girls during the second half of the nineteenth century. It concludes that the process of socialisation has been misunderstood because the existing secondary literature has largely neglected the importance of reader response. The responses of young people have often eluded scholars because they were often ephemeral and have rarely been preserved in historical archives. This

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Textual Mechanics of Civic Mobilization’, *American Periodicals: A Journal of History & Criticism*, 22.1 (2012), pp. 29-50.

<sup>12</sup> M. Phillips, ‘Along the Paragraphic Wires: Child–Adult Mediation in *St. Nicholas Magazine*’, *Children’s Literature*, 37.1 (2009), pp. 84-113.

<sup>13</sup> A. Redcay, ‘Live to Learn and Learn to Live: The *St. Nicholas League* and the Vocation of Childhood’, *Children’s Literature*, 39.1 (2011), pp. 58-84.

<sup>14</sup> S. Lindey, ‘Boys Write Back: Self-Education and Periodical Authorship in Late-Nineteenth-Century Story Papers’, *American Periodicals*, 21.1 (2011), pp. 72-88.

dissertation, however, has shown that mediated glimpses into reader response can be gleaned from correspondence columns, competitions, and club pages. In demonstrating the historical value of these hitherto largely neglected sources, it is hoped that this dissertation has not only broadened the field of periodical studies, but also the wider history of juvenile reading.

## APPENDICES

The following appendices contain information about the readers of four juvenile periodicals who participated in correspondence columns, competitions, and clubs. As discussed in the Introduction, these sources often printed readers' personal details and can thus be used to corroborate that magazines received genuine submissions from boys and girls. The appendices have made extensive use of genealogy resources such as *Ancestry Library Edition* and *Find My Past*, through which I have accessed census records, birth and death certificates, marriage indexes, trade and local directories, and information about Oxford and Cambridge University alumni. These sources were useful not only for identifying readers, but also for acquiring an insight into the social and geographic reach of the English juvenile periodical press during the second half of the nineteenth century. The appendices have also consulted biographical entries on the lives of notable readers who appear in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, the *Oxford Companion to Edwardian Fiction*, and the *Dictionary of Victorian Painters*.

The information presented in the appendices is uneven for methodological reasons. As can be seen in Appendix A and Appendix C, it is sometimes possible to use readers' personal details as part of a keyword search to trace their contributions to a specific magazine or across a range of juvenile titles. Regrettably, this approach is not always viable as some magazines only printed partial information about readers' names, ages, and addresses. This methodological problem is perhaps most evident in the case of the Boys of England Football Association (Appendix D) where it has proven impossible to identify some readers in population records and other biographical databases. Nonetheless, the appendices still provide a closer insight into the readerships of juvenile periodicals than scholars have traditionally thought to be possible.



Appendix A: List of Prize Winners for *Atalanta's* Annual Scholarship Competitions (1887-1894)

Name	Address	Parents	Record of Reader Participation	Additional Information
Brackenbury, Mabel Anna (1866-1943).	19 Pembridge Square, London.	Father: Henry Brackenbury (1830-1907). A retired Major Royal Bodyguard. Mother: Anna Galliard Bowles (1843-1922).	<p>Brackenbury was a member of the ASRU between 1889 and 1891. As the runner-up in the <i>Atalanta</i> Scholarship Competition for 1887-88, Brackenbury was awarded a prize of £15.</p> <p>Before becoming a member of the ASRU, Brackenbury competed in <i>Little Folks's</i> competitions between the ages of eleven and fifteen. In 1878, she was announced as the winner of the "Natural History Wanting Words" competition. Brackenbury was awarded a five-shilling book for the colouring competition in 1881, and received an honourable mention for the follow-up competition in 1882. Brackenbury became a member of the "Little Folks Humane Society" in March 1882.</p> <p>Brackenbury also competed in <i>AJM's</i> "Competition Studies in English Literature" in 1885.</p>	In 1896, Brackenbury married Hugh Latter (1868-1947), a schoolmaster from Hampshire.
Brett, Maude Mary (b.1871).	3 Bradford Place, Penarth, Wales.	Father: George Henry Brett (1844-1908). A district auditor for the local government board. Mother: Emily Katie Dallas (1847-1918).	Brett was a member of the ASRU between 1889 and 1893. She was awarded a prize of £5 for coming joint second in the <i>Atalanta</i> Scholarship Competition for 1891-92.	

Cameron, Clementina Sarah Jessie (b.1870).	Lonsdale Terrace, Edinburgh.	Father: Robert Macintyre Cameron (1835-1885). A stationer and publisher from Edinburgh. Mother: Clementina McIntyre (b.1835). Recorded as an annuitant in the 1891 Scotland Census.	Cameron was a member of the ASRU between 1888 and 1893. As the runner-up in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1888-89, Cameron was awarded a prize of £15.  Before becoming a member of the ASRU, Cameron was a reader of the <i>Girl's Own Paper</i> . In June 1884, Cameron received a second-class certificate in the "A Hundred Famous Women" competition.  Cameron was also a reader of the Monthly Packet. In December 1895, her submission to the "Proverb Story" competition was highly commended.	According to the 1901 Scotland Census, Cameron was working as an elementary school teacher in Edinburgh by the age of thirty.
Clayton, Blanche Georgina (1865-1952).	5 St. Mary's Vale, Chatham.	Father: Sir Edward Gilbert Clayton (1842-1917). A Major in the Royal Engineers, who was later appointed as Secretary to the Prison Commissioners between 1895 and 1908. Mother: Georgina Elizabeth Sykes (1843-1931).	Clayton was awarded £10 for coming joint second in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1889-90.  Before becoming a member of the ASRU, Clayton participated in the <i>Girl's Own Paper's</i> competitions between the ages of fifteen and twenty-three. She was awarded a third-class certificate in the "My Christian Name" competition, a first-class certificate for her reflections on the subject of adversity, and a second-class certificate for an essay on "My Favourite Heroine from Shakespeare".	Clayton was born in Roorkee, Bengal, India.  In 1893, Clayton married Rev. William Francis Sorsbie (1862-1944), rector at Swainswick, Bath, Somerset between 1927 and 1934.  Blanche was the elder sister of Grace Louisa Clayton (1868-1952), who became a member of the ASRU in 1890.

Courtney, Etta (1872-1943).	Boxmoor, Hertfordshire.	Father: John Florence Courtney (1843-1921). A banker's clerk from Hertfordshire. Mother: Eliza Ann Eley (1850-1873).	<p>In March 1888, Courtney's submission to <i>Atalanta's</i> "Original Christmas Story" competition received a commendation. Courtney was a member of the ASRU between 1889 and 1895. As the runner-up in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1893-94, she was awarded a prize of £10. In October 1896, Courtney's short story "Osmunda" was published in <i>Atalanta</i>. Almost a year later, Courtney's "River Mists" appeared in the magazine. This was followed by the publication of "Betwixt the Greater and the Lesser" in April 1898. Courtney's short stories were subsequently published in volume form. In July 1898, the editor of <i>Atalanta</i> observed that "Miss Courtney now forms one of a little band of young writers that is likely to leave no small mark on the literature of the coming generation".</p> <p>Before becoming a member of the ASRU, Courtney was a reader of <i>Little Folks</i>. In February 1888, she was awarded a half guinea book for coming second in the "Illustrated Story Competition".</p>	In 1904, Courtney married Walter Henry Elwes (1874-1961), a solicitor from London.
Cunliffe, Susan Harriet (1867-1954).	66 The Drive, West Brighton.	Father: Edward Cunliffe (1832-1905). A banker from London. Mother: Elizabeth Susanna Ann Tabor (1843-1874).	Cunliffe was a member of the ASRU between 1887 and 1892. As the winner of the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1890-91, Cunliffe was awarded a scholarship of £20 for two years. Her prize-winning essay on "Is	According to the 1911 Wales Census, Susan was a Religious Sister of Mercy and headmistress at St John Baptist High School, Newport, Monmouthshire, Wales.

			<p>Shakespeare a Moralist?" was published in <i>Atalanta</i> in March 1892.</p> <p>Before becoming a member of the ASRU, Cunliffe participated in <i>Little Folks's</i> competitions between the ages of ten and thirteen. In 1878, Cunliffe received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Single Baby Dolls" competition. Two years later, Cunliffe was awarded a prize for the needlework competition.</p>	<p>Susan was the elder sister of Elizabeth Marion Shrubsole Cunliffe (1871-1926), who was a member of the ASRU between 1888 and 1890.</p>
Dunn, Emily Blanche (1870-1905).	Kelfield Lodge, York.	Father: Jonathan Dunn (1834-1892). Recorded in the 1881 England Census as a farmer of 530 acres employing six labourers, six farm servants, and seventeen women and boys. Mother: Charlotte Stables (1840-1922).	<p>As the winner of the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1892-93, Dunn was awarded a scholarship of £20 for two years.</p>	<p>In October 1893, Dunn was announced as the winner of a writing competition for <i>Wings</i>, a women's temperance magazine. Before serialising Dunn's prize-winning "A Scent of White Violets", the editor provided readers with some biographical information. Dunn was introduced to readers as "the youngest of a family of six, all of whom inherit literary and artistic tastes from a double line of ancestors belonging to the class of 'gentleman farmers' who have tilled their own lands in the three Ridings of Yorkshire for many generations". After receiving home tuition under a governess, Dunn studied at York High</p>

				School, and subsequently with Misses Newstead, Boston Spa. Writing under the <i>nom de plume</i> of Dennis Rea, Dunn established a reputation as an author of moral literature.
Farmiloe, Edith Caroline (1870-1921).	4 Cockspur Street, London.	Father: Arthur Parnell (1840-1914). Colonel of the Royal Engineers. The son of Henry Brooke Parnell, 1 <sup>st</sup> Baron Congleton (1776-1842), a Whig politician. Mother: Mary Anna Dunn (1846-1920).	As the winner of the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1893-94, Farmiloe was awarded a scholarship of £20 for two years.  Before becoming a member of the ASRU, Farmiloe competed in <i>Young England's</i> competitions between the ages of twelve and eighteen. In December 1883, she was awarded a certificate for her "Account of a School Treat". A year later, Farmiloe received an honourable mention in the "My Idea of What a Girl of Fifteen Should Be" competition and a prize for a story about "My First Evening Party". Farmiloe was also awarded a certificate for her story of schoolgirl life in 1888.	Farmiloe acquired a reputation for her clever and humorous drawings of children. As the wife of Rev. William Thomas Farmiloe (1864-1946), Edith wrote about and illustrated the lives of children in her husband's parishes in Soho and South Hackney between 1895 and 1909.  Farmiloe was the younger sister of Winifred Mary Parnell (1870-1942), who was a member of the ASRU between 1888 and 1893. Winifred was also a regular participant in <i>Young England's</i> competitions between 1883 and 1888.
Macnamara, Rachel Swete (1876-1947).	66 South Mall, Cork, Ireland.	Father: Francis Elias Macnamara (1839-1913). Manager of the Munster and Leinster Bank. Mother: Rachel Georgina Harris (b.1845).	Macnamara was awarded a prize of £5 for coming joint second in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1892-93. Several of her poems and short stories were published in <i>Atalanta</i> between 1895 and 1898.	The competitor's name is erroneously printed as Rachel Livete Macnamara in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1892-93.

				Macnamara established a reputation as an author of fiction. Her most notable works include <i>Trance</i> (1908), <i>The Sibyl of Venice</i> (1908), <i>Seed of Fire</i> (1910), <i>Spinners in Silence</i> (1911), <i>The Fringe of the Desert</i> (1913), and <i>The Awakening</i> (1914).
Mayne, Ethel Colburn (1865-1941).	The Retreat, Salthill, Galway.	Father: Charles Edward Bolton Mayne. (1840-1927). Entered the Royal Irish Constabulary in 1858, and later became a Resident Magistrate in Cork. Mother: Charlotte Emily Henrietta (1839-1902). Daughter of Captain William Sweetman of the 16th Lancers.	Mayne was a member of the ASRU between 1888 and 1892. She was awarded books to the value of £5 for coming joint third in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1887-88.	Writing under the <i>nom de plume</i> of Frances E. Huntley, Mayne established a reputation as a novelist, short-story writer, biographer, literary critic, journalist, and translator.
Meyrick, Gladys Ethel (1867-1954).	Blickling Rectory, Aylsham.	Father: Frederick Meyrick (1827-1906). A Church of England clergyman and author. In 1850, Frederick became tutor, dean, and bursar of Trinity College, and was select preacher for the University of Oxford for 1855-6, 1865-6, and 1875-6. Mother: Marion Susanna Danvers (1837-1916).	Participated in <i>Atalanta's</i> competitions between 1887 and 1890. In November 1887, Meyrick was awarded first prize for her essay on the proverb "Every Dog has his Day". As the winner of the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1888-89, Meyrick was awarded a scholarship of £30 for three years. Her prize-winning essay was published in <i>Atalanta</i> in March 1890.	In 1900, Meyrick married Edwin George Wood (1855-1935), Vicar of St. Stephens Vicarage, Shepherds Bush, London.

Meyrick, Mabel Winifred (1869-1950).	Blickling Rectory, Aylsham.	See above.	As the runner-up for the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1890-91, Meyrick was awarded a prize of £10.	In 1894, Meyrick married John Leonard Micklethwaite (1870-1950), an engineer from Yorkshire.
Oakeley, Hilda Diana (1868-1950).	97 Warwick Road, Earl's Court, London.	Father: Sir Henry Evelyn Oakeley, (1834-1916). The Chief Inspector of Training Colleges between 1885 and 1899. Mother: Caroline Howley Turner Belli, (1839-1925). The daughter of William Hallows Belli of the Bengal Civil Service.	Oakeley was a member of the ASRU between 1888 and 1891. As the winner of the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1889-90, Oakeley was awarded a scholarship of £20 for two years. Her prize-winning essay on "The Classical and Romantic Schools of Poetry" was published in <i>Atalanta</i> in March 1891.	Oakeley attended Ellerslie Ladies' College, a private school in Manchester, which prepared her for the higher local examinations. At the age of twenty-seven, she entered Somerville College, Oxford, where she emerged with a first in 1898.  In 1899, Oakeley accepted the post of head of Canada's first residential women's college, the newly founded Royal Victoria College at McGill University. Upon returning to England in 1905, she was appointed as a lecturer in philosophy at Manchester University, before eventually taking up the post of Warden of King's College for Women, University of London.
Oram, Blanche (1866-1950)	Onchan House, Alexandra Road, Southport.	Father: Henry Oram (1835-1887). A woollen manufacture from Lancashire. Mother: Esther Allanson (1839-1914).	Oram was awarded books to the value of £5 for coming joint third in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1887-1888.	Oram appears to have come from a wealthy family, with her household employing five servants in 1881.

			<p>Before becoming a member of the ASRU, Oram participated in <i>Young England's</i> competitions for 1880. Her submissions to the “Our Original Fables” competition and the “Christmas Story” contest received honourable mentions.</p> <p>Oram was also a reader of <i>Aunt Judy's Magazine</i>, donating 2s 6d. to the “Cots at the Hospital for Sick Children” campaign in 1885. A further 10s. was donated by her sisters, Jessie, Katie, Edith and Margaret.</p>	<p>In 1890, Oram won a scholarship offered by the <i>Review of Reviews</i> (1890-1936) for would-be women journalists under the age of twenty-seven.</p> <p>Writing under the <i>nom de plume</i> of Roma White, Oram later established a reputation as a poet, novelist, and writer of fairy tales for children. Some of Oram's stories and poems were published in juvenile periodicals including <i>Young England</i>, <i>Little Folks</i>, and the <i>Monthly Packet</i>.</p> <p>In 1897, Oram married Charles James Winder (1848-1933), a cotton spinner from Bolton.</p>
Polehampton, Edith Helena (1870-1941).	70 Rua do Triumpho, Oporto, Portugal.	Father: Thomas Stedman Polehampton, (1828-1904). The Vicar of St Bartholomew the Less, London. Mother: Emily Eliza Thomson. (1836-1871)	<p>Polehampton was a member of the ASRU between 1889 and 1891. She was awarded books to the value of £5 for coming third in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1888-1889. A year later, Polehampton was awarded £10 for coming joint second in the competition for 1889-90.</p> <p>Before becoming a member of the ASRU, Polehampton competed in <i>Little Folks's</i> competitions between the ages of twelve and fifteen. Polehampton's name appeared in the</p>	<p>Polehampton was born in Ross, Herefordshire, but appears to have moved to Portugal shortly after the death of her mother in 1871. According to the 1901 England Census, Polehampton returned to England to live with her brother Rev. Edward Henry Polehampton (1867-1938), a Church of England clergyman residing in Little Ellingham, Norfolk.</p>



			<p>magazine's "List of Honour" for her poems on the topics of "The Fidelity of a Dog to Its Master" and "The Birds' Appeal for Crumbs". She received a further two honourable mentions for her submissions to the "Picture Wanting Words" competitions in 1884.</p>	<p>Edith was the niece of Henry Stedman Polehampton (1824-1857), chaplain to the garrison of Lucknow. Henry died of cholera after being injured by gunfire during the siege of Lucknow.</p>
<p>Rice, Marcia Alice (1868-1958).</p>	<p>Donavourd, Crieff, Scotland.</p>	<p>Father: Cecil Rice (1831-1917). Lieutenant-Colonel of the Seaforth Highlanders. Mother: Frances Anne Napier (1848-1884). A descendent of Francis Napier, 6<sup>th</sup> Lord Napier (1702-1773).</p>	<p>Rice's submission for the "Original Christmas Story" competition for 1888 was disqualified because received too late. However, Rice was later awarded a scholarship of £10 for coming joint first in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1891-92.</p>	<p>At the age of twenty-five, Rice entered St Hugh's College, Oxford, where she emerged with a first in English in 1898. Rice was later awarded an MA by the University of Dublin in 1906.</p> <p>In 1900, Rice was appointed headmistress of St Anne's School, Abbots Bromley. Rice was responsible for overseeing the merger of the school with St Mary's in 1921. After retiring to Oxford in 1931, Rice became a pioneer of oral history.</p>
<p>Roberts, May (b.1874).</p>	<p>Tenlands, Gomersal, near Leeds.</p>	<p>Father: William Roberts (1825-1877). A paper merchant from Yorkshire. Mother: Nancy Barrett (1831-1912).</p>	<p>Roberts was awarded a prize of £5 for coming joint second in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1891-92.</p>	<p>In 1897, Roberts married Alfred Edward Lewis (b.1874), a compositor from Yorkshire.</p>

<p>Smith, Winifred Percy (1874-1972).</p>	<p>Berton Hatch, Near Woking, Surrey.</p>	<p>Father: Percy Guillemard Llenllyn Smith (1838-1893). Major-General in the Royal Engineers. Mother: Jane Eliza Georgina Bailey (b.1845).</p>	<p>Smith was awarded a prize of £5 for coming joint second in Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1892-93.</p>	<p>In 1900, Smith married George Lanctot Pares (1866-1936), the manager of a brewery in Gravesend. Pares was educated at Harrow, before matriculating at Pembroke College, Cambridge, in October 1883.</p> <p>Winifred was the younger sister of Millicent Percy Smith (1870-1946), who became a member of the ASRU in 1891.</p>
<p>Wilson, Florence Mary (1864-1934).</p>	<p>17 Blomfield Road, Paddington, London.</p>	<p>Father: William Frederick Antonio Wilson (1832-1906). William was educated at the University of Oxford between 1853 and 1858, before entering the Civil Service (The Admiralty). Mother: Louisa Jane Wallis (1831-1894). According to the 1891 England Census, Louisa was a scholar.</p>	<p>As the winner of the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1887-88, Wilson was awarded a scholarship of £30 for three years. Her prize-winning essay was published in <i>Atalanta</i> in March 1889.</p>	<p>In 1893, Wilson married Clement Valentine Parsons (1864-1940), a leather merchant from Worcestershire.</p> <p>According to the 1901 England Census, Wilson later found employment as a writer and author.</p> <p>Florence was the elder sister of Kate Evelyn Wilson (1869-1943), who was awarded a half-guinea book and a “Little Folks Medal of Honour” for her prize-winning essay on “Christmas and its Associations” in 1884. She also received an honourable mention in Little Folk’s “Scrap Book Competition” in 1886.</p>

<p>Wynne-Wilson, Adelaide (1871-1948).</p>	<p>The Rectory, Hanborough, Oxford.</p>	<p>Father: William Wynne-Wilson (1836-1906). The rector of Hanborough from 1891 to 1906. Mother: Mary Anne Alexander (1839-1919).</p>	<p>Wynne-Wilson was a member of the ASRU between 1890 and 1893. She was awarded a scholarship of £10 for coming joint first in the Atalanta Scholarship Competition for 1891-92.</p>	<p>Wynne-Wilson was educated at Lansdowne School in Weymouth, before attending Somerville College, Oxford.</p> <p>In 1901, Wynne-Wilson married Henry Pemberton Plumptre (1871-1952), a Church of England clergyman.</p> <p>Adelaide and Henry emigrated to Canada in 1901. Upon arriving in Toronto, Adelaide accepted a position at Havergal College, an Anglican school for girls. While living in Canada, Adelaide became involved in a range of causes including the YMCA, the Girl Guides of Canada, the Canadian Council of Women, and the Red Cross. In 1918, she was appointed by the federal government to be chair of the Woman's War Council. In 1931 she was made Canada's delegate to the League of Nations in Geneva. She was also the Canadian delegate to the International Red Cross meeting held in Tokyo in 1934. In 1943, Adelaide was appointed as CBE.</p>
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Appendix B: List of Prize Winners and Honourable Mentions for the *Boy's Own Paper's* Recreation Competition (1879)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
Black, William John (1863-1926).	Edgware Road, London.	Father: John T. Black (1831-1904). An insurance agent Mother: Elizabeth Phoebe Fuller (1824-1925).	According to the 1881 England Census, Black was employed as a publisher's assistant.
Bond, Barnabas Mayston (1861-1934).	London.	Father: Barnabas Bond (1802-1873). Recorded in the 1871 England Census as a farmer of 556 acres in Norfolk. Mother: Rebecca Ann Patten (1827-1887). Recorded in the 1881 Census as earning income from property.	According to the 1881 England Census, Bond was a medical student. By 1891, he was employed as a general practitioner.
Corley, Charles Bridges (1863-1888).	Barnsbury, London.	Father is unidentifiable. Mother: Eliza Ann Carr (1838-1919), a dressmaker.	According to the 1881 England Census, Corley was a solicitor's general clerk.
Goudge, Samuel Alfred (b.1863).	Clerkenwell, London.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Halle, Augustus (1863-1925)	Lambeth, London.	Father: Hughes Radford Phillips Fraser Halle (1809-1886). A schoolmaster. Mother: Susan Elizabeth Hall (1825-1908).	According to the 1881 England Census, Halle was an assistant schoolmaster. By 1901, he was employed in the Civil Service as a clerk at the South Western Magistrates' Court in Battersea.
Le Cren, A. B. (b.1867).	Holloway, London.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Hamber, Lancelot Cecil Bray (1881-1926).	15 Crouch Hill, London.	Father: Frederick Marsh Hamber (1830-1873). A solicitor. Mother: Frances Jane Sarah Peacock (b.1833).	According to the 1881 England Census, Hamber was a corporal in the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment). By 1902, Hamber was the Captain of the East Lancashire Regiment.

Mulhern, Walter Roderick (b.1861).	Bow, London	Father: Patrick Mulhern (1831-1910). An examining officer for the Civil Service (customs). Mother: Maria Louisa Atkinson (1833-1914)	According to the 1881 England Census, Mulhern was employed in the Civil Service as a writer of customs.
Osborne, George Levitt (1867-1884).	Methven Villa, Grange-over-Sands, Cranforth.	Father: William T. Osborne (b.1826). A schoolmaster. Mother: Hannah Osborne (1837-1884). The principal of a ladies' school.	According to the 1881 England Census, Osborne was a scholar.
Painter, Edward James (b.1863).	Kentish Town, London.	Father: George Painter (1817-1888). A night watchman. Mother: Jemima Diggins (1821-1899).	According to the 1881 England Census, Painter was employed as a brewer's clerk.
Raynes, Herbert Alfred (1863-1933).	Plumstead, Kent, London.	Father: Alfred T. Raynes (1832-1905). A municipal clerk for the Woolwich Local Board of Health. Mother: Julia Purkis (1839-1917).	Raynes was privately educated at St. Paul's School, London. In October 1881, Raynes matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford. Upon graduating from university, Raynes became a clergyman for the Church of England.
Redmayne, John Fitzgerald Studdert (b.1860).	Woodside, Gateshead-on-Tyne.	Father: John Marriner Redmayne (1831-1903). An alkali manufacturer (employing 593 men and 109 boys in 1881), and later Mayor of Gateshead. Mother: Jane Anne Fitzgerald Studdert (1831-1919).	In February 1879, Redmayne matriculated at Merton College, Oxford. According to the 1881 England Census, Redmayne was a student in law.

Appendix C: List of Prize Winners and Honourable Mentions for *Little Folk's* Competitions (1878)

Name	Address	Parents	Record of Reader Participation	Additional Information
Barnes, Agnes C. (b.1864).	3 St. Alban's Terrace, Hammersmith, London.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	Barnes was awarded books equivalent to the value of half-a-guinea for coming joint third in the "Dolls' Houses" competition for 1878.	
Bartholomew, Leonard Chaplin (1872-1932).	Grosvenor House, Walthamstow, London.	Father: Charles Augustus Bartholomew (1837-1882). A cabinet manufacturer in London. Mother: Alice Mary Chaplin (1841-1922).	Bartholomew received an honourable mention for his submission to the "Scrap Books" competition for 1878. He also became a member of the "Little Folks Humane Society" in August 1883.	
Bashford, Edith Constance (1864-1951).	Cophorne House, Worth, Sussex.	Father: Charles Brome Bashford (1840-1902). Lieutenant Colonel of the Royal Elthorne Light Infantry. Mother: Anne Argentine Fryer (1841-1915).	<p>As the winner of the "Rag Dolls" competition, Bashford was awarded books equivalent to the value of two guineas. Bashford's "Special Prize Verse" was published in the magazine in 1878. A year later, Bashford received a "Little Folks Medal of Honour" for her submission to the "Picture Wanting Words" competition.</p> <p>Bashford was also a reader of <i>The Children's Treasury and Advocate of the Homeless and Destitute</i>. In May 1879, she was awarded a certificate for her essay on "The Life and Work of Wycliffe, the Early English Reformer".</p>	The competitor's name was erroneously printed in the "Rag Dolls" competition as Ethel C. Bashford.

Berthon, Alexine Sara Tinne (1865-1935).	13 Southcombe, Paignton, South Devon.	Father: Charles Harrison Berthon (1815-1895). A retired Captain in the Indian Navy. Mother: Anna Tinne (1835-1921).	Berthon received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Groups of Dolls" competition for 1878.	In 1886, Berthon married Elphinstone John Thorpe (1861-1930), a diamond broker from London.
Bertrand, Helen (b.1866).	Alexandria, Egypt.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	As the winner of the "Dolls in Single Costume" competition, Bertrand was awarded books equivalent to the value of two guineas. Three years later, Bertrand received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Scrap Albums" competition.	
Bonner, Violet Annie (1865-1947).	2 Church Walk, Oxford.	Father: Arthur Thompson Bonner (1829-1868). A chaplain in Staffordshire. Mother: Anne Maria Coldwell (1831-1913). A boarding housekeeper in Oxford.	Bonner was awarded an extra prize for her submission to the "Dolls' Houses" competition for 1878. A year earlier, Bonner received a prize for coming joint third in the "Illuminated Texts" competition. Bonner's poems "The Scornful Monkey" and "Mrs. Mouse's Party" were also published in the magazine in 1877.	According to the 1901 England Census, Bonner was working as the assistant secretary for the Association for the Higher Education of Women at the age of thirty-seven.
Brendon, Mamie (b.1864).	Grove Hill, Camberwell, London.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	Brendon was awarded books equivalent to the value of one guinea for coming second in the "Illuminated Texts" competition for 1878.	

Burfield, Alice Maud (1865-1946).	Wye, Kent.	Father: Thomas Burfield (1820-1870). Mother: Mary Wilson (1832-1900).	As the winner of the “Dolls’ Houses” competition for 1878, Burfield was awarded books equivalent to the value of two guineas. She was also awarded a prize for coming third in the “Specimens of Lace, or other Fancy Work” competition for 1876.	According to the 1891 England Census, Burfield was working as a servant at the National Hospital for Paralyzed or Epileptic at the age of twenty-five. By 1911, Burfield was working as a nurse.
Cadman-Jones, Florence Evelyn (1862-1942).	40 Craven Hill Gardens, Hyde Park, London.	Father: Henry Cadman-Jones (1819-1902). A barrister in London. Mother: Eliza Money (1838-1909).	Cadman-Jones received an honourable mention for her submission to the “Groups of Dolls” competition for 1878. A year earlier, she received a prize for coming first in the “Models in Cardboard of Cork” competition. Cadman-Jones was also awarded the extra prize for the “Groups of Dolls” competition in 1879. In 1880, Cadman-Jones’s “Historical Mental Scene” puzzle was published in the magazine.	
Carter, Emily Nora (1871-1943).	Douglas House, Tollington Place, Tollington Park, London.	Father: Felix Carter (1843-1893). A solicitor from London. Mother: Rosa Maria Noyes (1845-1948).	The editor of <i>Little Folks</i> awarded an extra prize for Carter’s submission to the “Dolls in Single Costume” competition for 1878.	In 1902, Carter married Alfred Hugh Bell (1871-1944), a physician and surgeon in London.
Clarke, Susan (b.1864).	Shanklin College, Isle of Wight.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	Clarke received an honourable mention for her submission to the “Scrap Books” competition for 1878. A year later, she was awarded a prize for coming second in the “Plain Needlework” competition.	



Cleave, Mary (1865-1938).	Brandon House, Buckhurst Hill, Essex.	Father: John Jones Cleave (1822- 1902). A barrister from Kensington. Mother: Matilda Henrietta Cleave (1835-1914).	Cleave received an honourable mention in the “Rag Dolls” competition for 1878. She also submitted a query to the “Questions and Answers” column about how to illuminate texts in 1879.	
Copeman, Constance Gertrude (1864-1953).	8 Blomfield Terrace, Harrow Road, London.	Father: Charles Richard Copeman (1837-1895). solicitor in Liverpool. Mother: Jane Beggs (b.1846).	As the winner of the “Rag Animals” competition, Copeman was awarded books equivalent to the value of two guineas. In 1879, she was awarded first prize in the “Picture Wanting Words” competition. Copeman also received prizes for participating in the magazine’s painting competitions.  Copeman was also a reader of the <i>Girl’s Own Paper</i> . In October 1881, she was awarded a first-class certificate in the magazine’s painting competition.	Copeman attended the Liverpool School of Art between 1891 and 1900. She was elected as an associate member of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers in 1897.
Copland, Alice Annie Broom (1864-1931).	Hillcote, Buckhurst Hill, Essex.	Father: Patrick Copland, (1832-1916). A merchant from Surrey. Mother: Louisa Charlotte Forbes (1836-1902).	Copland was awarded books equivalent to the value of one guinea for coming second in the “Rag Animals” competition for 1878.	In 1897, Copland married William Ritchie Hodge (1866-1898), Reverend of St James’ School, Calcutta, India. She was the elder sister of Evelyn Mary Copland (1869-1960), who became a member of Little Folk’s Humane Society in July 1882

Dryden, Janette P. (b.1866).	St. Paul's Vicarage, Tiverton.	Father: Thomas Jones Dryden (b.1816). Recorded in the 1871 England Census as a "Paymaster Royal Navy Retired". Mother: Eliza Dryden (b.1830).	Dryden received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Scrap Books" competition for 1878.	
Eardley-Wilmot, Ethel Dormer (1863-1891).	3 Church Terrace, Lee, Kent.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	Eardley-Wilmot received an honourable mention in the "Scrap Books" competition for 1878. A year earlier, she received an honourable mention for the "Single Dolls in Costume" competition.	On 29 August 1891, the <i>Jackson's Oxford Journal</i> (1753-1928) reported the death of Sister Ethel Dormer of All Saints, the youngest daughter of the late Charles Octavius Eardley-Wilmot (1824-1886). My research has been unable to verify this relationship.
Ebsworth, Rosa (b.1861).	Warley Lodge, Upper Tulse Hill, Brixton, London.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	Ebsworth received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Groups of Dolls" competition for 1878.	
Fox, Lucy Helen (1863-1948).	Granville Place, Alfred Hill, Bristol.	Father: Thomas Barker Fox (1834-1916). A shipowner from Wiltshire. Mother: Jane Freeman Bush (1839-1915).	Fox received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Groups of Dolls" competition for 1878. A year earlier, she received a prize for coming second in the "Patchwork Quilts for Children's Cots competition". Fox's double acrostic puzzle was also published in the magazine in March 1877.	

Fox, Mary Augusta (1861-1945).	Granville Place, Alfred Hill, Bristol.	See above.	Fox received two honourable mentions for her submissions to the “Groups of Dolls” competitions for 1877 and 1878. Fox’s scripture acrostic puzzle was also published in the magazine in February 1877.	In 1892, Fox married Edward John Burt (1860-1938), a coal merchant in Gloucester.
Fitch, Alice Mary (1862-1865).	Cromer, Norfolk.	Father: Frederic Fitch (1818-1897). The Vicar of Cromer. Mother: Mary Colson (1821-1863).	Fitch received an honourable mention in the “Dolls in Single Costume” competition for 1878. She was also awarded a “Little Folk’s Medal of Honour” for the publication of her prize-winning essay on “Descriptions of Scenes in the Bible Lands” in 1875. Two years later, she received a prize for coming joint second in the “Patchwork Quilts for Children’s Cots” competition.	In 1887, Fitch married Henry Lawrence Cubitt (1858-1919), a bank manager in Norfolk.
Hall, Henrietta M. (b.1862).	2 Brunswick Terrace, Brixton Hill, London.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	Hall was awarded books equivalent to the value of £2 for coming joint third in the “Groups of Dolls” competition for 1878.	
Hamer, Maggie (1864-1930).	Ladywell, Dartmouth Park Road, London.	Father: John Hamer (1837-1906). An editor in London. Mother: Sarah Sharp Heaton (1839-1927). A novelist from Yorkshire.	Hamer received an honourable mention in the “Dolls in Single Costume” competition for 1878.	Hamer’s family had several connections with Cassell and Company, the publisher of <i>Little Folks</i> . Her father was Cassell's Publishing Manager from 1867 to 1900, while many of her mother’s works were published through the company. Hamer was the brother of Sam Field Hamer (1869-1941), who joined Cassell’s staff in 1886, before becoming the editor of <i>Little</i>

				<p><i>Folks</i> from 1895 to 1907. Maggie followed in her family's footsteps by working for Cassell and Company. At the age of twenty, she joined <i>Little Folk's</i> staff as a writer, a position which she held for over sixteen years. Writing under the pseudonym of Maggie Browne, she contributed several stories and articles to the magazine. She also published <i>Two Old Ladies</i>, <i>Two Foolish Fairies</i> and <i>a Tom Cat</i> under Cassell's imprint in 1897.</p>
Hayward, Grace Godfrey (b.1865).	The Parade, Trowbridge, Wiltshire.	Father: William Honey Hayward (1835-1911). A dentist and chemist. Mother: Mary Ann Floyd (b.1841).	<p>Hayward received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Illuminated Texts" competition for 1878.</p> <p>Hayward was also a reader of <i>The Children's Treasury</i>. In 1877, she was awarded first prize for her essay on "The Boys of the Bible". A year later, Hayward received a prize for coming first in the "Celebrated Queens of the Bible" competition. She also came seventeenth in the "Prize Answers to the Scripture Questions of 1878" competition.</p>	

<p>Heathcote, Emily Louisa (1862-1880).</p>	<p>24 Brunswick Square, Brighton.</p>	<p>Father: John Moyer Heathcote (1834-1912). A barrister and professional tennis player. The eldest son of John Heathcote of Conington Castle, and Emily Colbourne (the daughter of Nicholas Colborne, 1st Baron Colborne). Mother: Louisa Cecilia MacLeod (1839-1910). The daughter of Norman MacLeod, the 25<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan MacLeod (1825-1895).</p>	<p>Heathcote received an honourable mention for her submission to the “Groups of Dolls” competition for 1878. She also received a prize for coming third in the “Scrap Albums” competition for 1876, with a further prize awarded for coming second in the “Groups of Dolls” competition for 1877.</p>	
<p>Heathcote, Evelyn May (1866-1957).</p>	<p>24 Brunswick Square, Brighton.</p>	<p>See above.</p>	<p>Heathcote was awarded books equivalent to the value of one guinea for coming second in the “Scrap Books” competition for 1878. Heathcote also received an honourable mention for her submission to the “Scrap Albums” competition for 1876, with a further a prize awarded for coming joint third in the “Single Baby Dolls” competition for 1877.</p>	

Hughes, Susan Gladwyn (1867-1957).	Ystrad, Denbighshire.	Father: Hugh Robert Hughes (1835-1911). A farmer of 354 acres employing twenty men in Denbighshire. Mother: Susan Marian Townshend (1840-1895).	Hughes was awarded books equivalent to the value of half-a-guinea for coming third in the "Scrap Books" competition for 1878.	
Johnson, E. M. (b.1867).	Buxton Villa, Boston, Lincolnshire.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	Johnson was awarded books equivalent to the value of one guinea for coming joint second in the "Dolls in Single Costume" competition for 1878.	On 23 February 1878, the <i>Bucks Herald</i> (1832-Present) published the names and addresses of persons whom were invested in The London and County Banking Company. The list reveals that Rev. Edwin Johnson lived at Buxton Villa, Boston, Lincolnshire. Kelly's Directory of Lincolnshire for 1876 reveals that Rev. Edwin Johnson was the minister of the Congregational Chapel, Red Lion Street, Boston, Lincolnshire. My research has been unable to establish the relationship between Rev. Edwin Johnson, E. M. Johnson, and G. E. Johnson (see below).
Johnson, G. E. (b.1869).	Buxton Villa, Boston, Lincolnshire.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	G. E. Johnson was awarded books equivalent to the value of one guinea for coming joint second in the "Dolls in Single Costume" competition for 1878.	See above.

Leslie, Millicent Ellen (b.1865).	29 Clifton Road, Brighton.	Father: George Leslie (1811-1887). Recorded in the 1881 England Census as earning a living from "House Property". Mother: Florence Goter (b.1835).	Leslie was awarded books equivalent to the value of £5 for coming joint first in the "Groups of Dolls" competition for 1878. Leslie also received a prize for coming joint second in the "Single Baby Dolls" competition for 1877.	In 1888, Leslie married Fred Hart (b.1865), a mason and sculptor from Brighton.
Letts, Ella (1872-1958).	St. Ann's Vicarage, Stamford Hill, London.	Father: John Davis Letts (1826-1902). The Vicar of St. Ann. Mother: Almeria Rose Towne (1828-1886).	Letts received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Groups of Dolls" competition for 1878. A year later, Letts received a prize for coming second in the "Knitted Articles" competition.	In 1896, Letts married Alfred Aylett Moore (1863-1933), a chartered accountant in London.
Letts, Francis Talfourd (1864-1904).	St. Ann's Vicarage, Stamford Hill, London.	See above.	Letts received an honourable mention for his submission to the "Groups of Dolls" competition for 1878.	The 1881 England Census records that Letts was a medical student at the age 17.
Letts, Hilda Mary (1865-1951).	St. Ann's Vicarage, Stamford Hill, London.	See above.	As the winner of the "Scrap Books" competition for 1878, Letts was awarded books equivalent to the value of two guineas. Hilda also received first prize for the "Scrap Books" competition for 1876. A year later, Lett's submission to the "Patchworks Quilts for Children's Cots" competition received an honourable mention.	
Lucy, Gertrude Alice (1865-1906).	Farnham, Surrey.	Father: Arthur Emery Lucy (1832-1870). A bookseller in Surrey. Mother: Amelia Lewis Hazell (1838-1910). A newsagent proprietor.	Lucy received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Illuminated Texts" competition for 1878.	

Mann, Harrington (1864-1937).	Queenslea Battlefield, Langside, Glasgow.	Father: John Mann (1827-1910). A chartered accountant in Cathcart, Scotland. Mother: Mary Newton Harrington (1834-1919). A novelist from Scotland.	As the winner of the “Illuminated Texts” competition for 1878, Mann was awarded books equivalent to the value of two guineas. He also received a prize for winning the same competition in 1877. Three years later, Mann received an extra prize for the “Black and White Painting Books” competition.	Mann established a reputation as a portrait artist and decorative painter. After studying at the Glasgow School of Art, he attended the Slade School of Fine Art in London. Mann also briefly studied at the Académie Julian in Paris.
Mercer, Gertrude Elizabeth (1863-1906).	The North Warren, Gainsborough.	Father: Fletcher Mercer (1834-1927). A seeds merchant. Mother: Mary Mercer (1844-1892).	Mercer was awarded books equivalent to the value of £3 for coming joint second in the “Groups of Dolls” competition for 1878. Mercer also submitted an acrostic puzzle which was published in the magazine in 1879.	In 1885, Mercer married Frederick William Strong (1863-1900), an Oxford educated Clerk in Holy Orders.
Miall, Ada (1865-1953).	9 Cathcart Hill, Upper Holloway, London.	Father: Charles Septimus Miall (1823-1909). Editor of the <i>Nonconformist</i> . Mother: Catherine Mary Williams (1824-1901).	Miall received an honourable mention in the “Dolls in Single Costume” competition for 1878.	Miall was educated at North London Collegiate School. She matriculated at the University of London in June 1883.
Parry, Amy Isabel (b.1868).	St. John’s Grove, Woodhouse Moor, Leeds.	Father: Frederick Parry (1826-1886). A tea seller in Leeds. Mother: Martha Mew (1834-1910).	Parry received an honourable mention in the “Dolls in Single Costume” competition for 1878.	



Peele, Alice Jane (b.1865).	Broad Street, Ludlow, Salop.	Father: Richard De Courcy Peele (1818-1884). A retired surgeon in the Indian Army. Mother: Frances Jane Horley (1834-1907).	Peele was awarded books equivalent to the value of half-a-guinea for coming joint third in the “Dolls’ Houses” competition for 1878.	
Petrie, Irene Eleanora Verita (1864-1898).	14 Hanover Terrace, Ladbroke Square, London.	Father: Martin Petrie (1823-1892). Achieved the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the British Army. Mother: Eleanor Grant Macdowall (1826-1866).	Petrie was awarded books equivalent to the value of half-a-guinea for coming third in the “Illuminated Texts” competition for 1878. A year later, Petrie received a prize for coming first in the “Natural History Wanting Words” competition for 1879.	
Pickles, Leonard William (b.1867).	40 San Domingo Grove, Everton, Liverpool.	Father: Joseph Samuel Pickles (b.1835). The Vicar of Wooler. Mother: Ursula Catterall Brown (1842-1888).	Pickles received an honourable mention for his submission to the “Dolls’ Houses” competition for 1878.	
Railton, Florence Adelaide (b.1863).	Jersey House, Withington, Manchester.	Father: William Railton (1839-1898). A general merchant in Manchester. Mother: Adelaide Francis Bayley (1838-1927).	<p>Railton was awarded books equivalent to the value of £5 for coming joint first in the “Groups of Dolls” competition for 1878. She was also awarded books worth one guinea for coming second in the wool work competition for 1876, and an equivalent prize for coming second in the “Single Dolls Dressed as Brides” contest for 1877.</p> <p>Railton was also a reader of the <i>Girl’s Own Paper</i>. She was awarded a prize of one guinea for coming second in the “Crochet Shawl” competition for 1881.</p>	

Robinson, Nellie May Sarah (1865-1926).	Waterbeach Mills, near Cambridge.	Father: Henry Robinson (1838-1869). Committed suicide in Massachusetts. Mother: Mary Ann Holly Youngman (1842-1906).	Robinson was awarded books equivalent to the value of half-a-guinea for coming third in the "Rag Dolls" competition for 1878.	Before 1891, Robinson married Alfred James Barnham (1864-1955), an accountant from London.
Saunders, Fanny Maria (1862-1882)	16 Belitha Villas, Barnsbury Park, London.	Father: George Thomas Saunders (1819-1902). A coal merchant in London. Mother: Maria Lawless (b.1829).	Saunders received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Groups of Dolls" competition for 1878.	
Simpson, Clara (1863-1949).	22 Cedars Park, Clapham Common, London.	Father: Henry Simpson (b.1825). A solicitor in London. Mother: Maria Theresa Francis (1825-1916).	Simpson was awarded books equivalent to the value of £3 for coming joint second in the "Groups of Dolls" competition for 1878. She was also awarded an extra prize for the "Single Baby Dolls" competition for 1877.	
Simpson, Mary Ann (1865-1935).	35 Highgate, Kendal.	Father: Thomas Simpson (b.1822). A tailor and draper. Mother: Mary Ann Proctor (1825-1911).	Simpson received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Illuminated Texts" competition for 1878.	
Slater, Maria (b.1862).	4 Stanhope Terrace, Hyde Park Gardens.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	Slater was awarded books equivalent to the value of £2 for coming joint third in the "Groups of Dolls" competition for 1878.  Slater was also a reader of the <i>Girl's Own Paper</i> and was awarded a second-class certificate in the "My Christian Name" competition for 1881.	

Spurway, Kitty (1865-1945).	The Rectory, Heathfield, Taunton.	Father: Edward Bryant Spurway (1825-1907). The rector of Heathfield. Mother: Harriet Mary Popham (1835-1905).	Spurway received an honourable mention in <i>Little Folks's</i> "Dolls in Single Costume" competition for 1878.	
Stead, Ella Marion (1866-1956).	The Knoll, Baildon, near Leeds.	Father: Charles Stead (1823-1902). A Justice of the Peace and stuff manufacturer. Mother: Mary Ann Wade (1825-1905).	Stead received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Illuminated Texts" competition for 1878.	In 1896, Stead married Robert Atkin Fraser (1867-1959), a wool merchant from Lancashire.
Tanner, May (b.1863).	Hillside, Cotham, Bristol.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	Tanner received an honourable mention for her submission to the "Scrap Books" competition for 1878. A year earlier, she received an honourable mention for the "Picture Wanting Words" competition. Tanner also contributed to the "Questions and Answers" column. In 1879, she wrote to the column seeking assistance in forming her stamp collection. In 1883, Tanner responded to a question from a correspondent signed as "A. M. W." who wrote to the column for advice on how to knit a doll's muff.	
Tarry, Alfred Edward (1864-1921).	31 Rivers Street, Bath.	Father: Samuel Tarry, (1828-1895). A tailor and draper in Somerset. Mother: Anna Maria Shearman (1834-1896).	Tarry received an honourable mention for his submission to the "Illuminated Texts" competition for 1878.	According to the 1881 England Census, Tarry was working as a clerk in a drapery at the age of seventeen. By 1891, Tarry was employed as a journalist and author.

Teding van Berkhout, Charlotte Frédérique (1866-1951).	Buitenzorg, Java.	Father: Willem Hendrik Jonkheer Teding van Berkhout (1830-1917). Mother: Johanna Petronella van der Wijck (1837-1921).	Teding van Berkhout was awarded books equivalent to the value of half-a-guinea for coming third in the “Dolls in Single Costume” competition for 1878.	
Warwick, Kate (1864-1930).	5 Castle Gate, Newark-on-Trent	Father: George Warwick (1837-1909). A baker from Newark. Mother: Catherine Elston (1833-1921).	Warwick was awarded books equivalent to the value of one guinea for coming second in the “Rag Dolls” competition for 1878. Warwick also received an honourable mention for her submission to “Illuminated Texts” competition for 1877.	According to the 1881 England Census, Warwick was employed as a pupil teacher at the age of seventeen. In 1889, she married William Stephenson (1862-1942), an agricultural engineer from Newark.
Walrond, Theodora Charlotte (1865-1953).	Springfield Taplow, Maidenhead.	Father: Theodore Walrond, (1824-1887). A Civil Service Commissioner. Mother: Louisa Henrietta Grenfell (1825-1911).	Walrond received an honourable mention for her submission to the “Illuminated Texts” competition for 1878. Walrond’s acrostic puzzle was also published in the magazine in 1877.	
Wright, Frank Staunton Silas (1865- 1915).	Sutherland House, Hammersmith, London.	Father: Thomas Parker Wright (1827-1888). Recorded in the 1881 England Census as “Lt Col Active Service”. Mother: Mary Macauley Hamilton (1826-1874).	Wright was awarded books equivalent to the value of one guinea for coming joint second in the “Dolls’ Houses” competition for 1878.	Wright died on service as a member of the King’s Africa Rifles.

Young, Frank Edwin (b.1864).	93 Brown Street, Salisbury.	Father: Herbert Isaac Young (1836-1892). An accountant in Wiltshire. Mother: Patience Ann Simmonds (b.1838).	Young was awarded books equivalent to the value of one guinea for coming joint second in the "Dolls' Houses" competition for 1878.	According to the 1881 Wales Census, Young was working as a hosier in Cardiff at the age of seventeen.
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Appendix D: List of Promoters for the “Boys of England Football Association” (1893-1894)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
Allen, John (b.1875).	Blue Bell Row, Burntwood.	Father: John Allen (1851-1926). A coalminer. Mother: Isabella Herrington (1861-1912).	According to the 1891 England Census, Allen had taken on his father’s occupation as a coalminer by the age of sixteen.
Arnold, William (Date of birth and death are unknown).	17 Rosedale Terrace, Cheneys Road, Leytonstone, London.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Bacon, Arthur (1878-1962).	83 Lancaster Road, Great Yarmouth.	Father: George Bacon (1844-1898). A blacksmith. Mother: Ellen Martha Morris (1846-1924).	According to the 1901 England Census, Bacon was working as a pastry cook at the age of thirty-two.
Banks, Joseph (Date of birth and death are unknown).	39 Wood Street, Willenhall, Staffordshire.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Bell, Joseph Herbert (1877-1954).	32 Howe Street, Carlisle.	Father: Walter Bell (b.1864). A railway engine driver. Mother; Mary Armstrong (b.1855).	According to the 1891 England Census, Bell was working as a railway engine cleaner at the age of fifteen.
Brown, John Allison (b.1879).	7 Stanhope Street, South Shields.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	According to the 1891 England Census, Brown was working as a grocer’s errand boy at the age of twelve. By 1901, Brown was employed as a grocer’s assistant. The 1911 England Census reveals that Brown later found occupation at sea.
Burns, John (b.1881).	40 Bradford Street, Hill Fields, Coventry.	Father: John Burns (b.1857). A cycle fitter. Mother: Sarah Burns (b.1857).	
Coleman, Robert (1879-1947).	31 Spring Garden Lane, Sunderland.	Father: Robert Coleman (1855-1891). A mason’s labourer. Mother: Maria Kelly (1858-1911).	According to the 1901 England Census, Coleman was working as a general labourer at the age of twenty-four.
Connell, Harry J (Date of birth and death are unknown).	Church Street, Athlone, Ireland.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	

Connell, John Alexander (1877-1956).	110 William Street, Hampstead Road, London.	Father: John Alexander Connell (1845-1876). A shipwright and carpenter. Mother: Catherine McNeil Connell (1845-1925), a mechanist.	According to the 1911 England Census, Connell was working as at the Post Office as a sorter at the age of thirty-three.
Cooper, Fred (1879-1934).	Sykes Street, Westgate, Cleckheaton.	Father: William Cooper (b.1855). A leather cutter. Mother: Eleanor Jane Riley (1847-1933).	According to the 1901 England Census, Cooper was a "Boot Worker" at the age of twenty-two. By 1911, Cooper was employed as an assistant cashier.
Davidson, James (Date of birth and death are unknown).	29 Leonard's Court, Gateshead-on-Tyne.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Donaldson, Christopher (1878-1950).	Milesmark, Dunfermline, Scotland.	Father: Adam Donaldson (b.1849). A colliery overman. Mother: Cecilia Storrar (b.1851).	According to the 1891 Scotland Census, Donaldson had taken on his father's occupation as a coalminer by the age of thirteen.
Donechey, Frank (Date of birth and death are unknown).	43 Larch Street, Dundee, Scotland.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Dudley, Henry (1878-1956).	45 St. Edmund's Street, Northampton.	Father: Henry Dudley (b.1845). A coachman. Mother: Mary Ann Thomas (b.1845).	According to the 1901 England Census, at the age of twenty-five Dudley was employed as servant at 138 Duffield Bank, Derbyshire. By 1911, Dudley was working as a valet in Toxteth, Liverpool.
Elliot, Thomas Edward (1877-1946).	1 Alma Terrace, High Street, Chatham.	Father: John Thomas Elliot (1858-1898). A dataller who died in a coal mining accident in Leicester. Mother: Rosina William (1856-1919).	According to the 1901 England Census, Elliot was working as a bricklayer's labourer in Chatham at the age of twenty-three.
Fenley, Albert (b.1879).	20 Mornington Crescent, New Cross, London.	Father: Albert James Fenley (b.1850). A railway guard. Mother: Annie Fenley (b.1851).	
Fowler, Frederick (1878-1895).	Terrace Cottage, Little George Street, Weymouth.	Father: Robert Henry Fowler (1849-1911). A cabinet maker. Mother: Eliza Hatton (b.1849).	According to the 1891 England Census, Fowler had taken on his father's occupation as a cabinet maker's apprentice by the age of fourteen.

Gerrard, Frederick (1878-1954).	97 Rupert Street, South Heigham, Norwich.	Father: Godfrey Gerrard (1849-1889). A porter to a printer. Mother: Ann Lydia Stebbing (b.1846).	According to the 1891 England Census, Gerrard was working as a plumber at the age of twenty-three.
Green, James (Date of birth and death are unknown).	26 Marsh Street, Middlesbrough.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Hamilton, J. H. (Date of birth and death are unknown).	11 Spring Terrace, Lower Spring Street, Grimsby.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Harding, P. H. (Date of birth and death are unknown).	17 <sup>th</sup> Lancers, No. 16, Qrs. Nm., Fulwood Barracks, Preston.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Hirst, John (1877-1943).	High Street, Masbrough, Rotherham.	Father: William Hirst (1844-1891). A woollen loom turner. Mother: Frances Hirst (1850-1928).	According to the 1891 England Census, Hirst had taken on his father's occupation as a woollen loom weaver by the age of fourteen. By 1911, Hirst was employed as a woollen loom turner.
Holly, Edward (Date of birth and death are unknown).	38 Chapel Street, Carrick-on-Suir, Ireland.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Jackson, Walter (1878-1937).	8 Cleveland Street, Gainsborough.	Father: John Jackson (b.1840). An engineers' storekeeper. Mother: Letitia Jackson (1841-1900).	According to the 1901 England Census, Jackson was working as an engine fitter at the age of twenty-three.
Jones, Robert (b.1879).	36 Coldmore Road, Walsall.	Father: William Jones (b.1848). A coalminer. Mother: Mary Ann Roynon (b.1851).	According to the 1891 England Census, Jones was apprenticed to a tailor by the age of thirteen. By 1901, Jones was employed as a tailor fitter.
Jones, William Bertram (1878-1951).	253 Netherfield Road, North Liverpool.	Father: William Jones (b.1831). A marine engineer. Mother: Sarah Walter (1856-1902).	According to the 1891 England Census, Jones was working as a solicitor's office boy in Liverpool at the age of twelve.
Lauri, E. (Date of birth and death are unknown).	1 Lovell Street, Leeds.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Lee, John (Date of birth and death are unknown).	97 Springfield Road, Bridgetown, Glasgow, Scotland.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	



Leybourne, W. (Date of birth and death are unknown).	2 Orten Court, Tynemouth, Northumberland.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Lidbury, Charles (1880-1978).	Schoolhouse, Middlewich.	Father: Frank Albert Lidbury (b.1853). A schoolmaster.  Mother: Emily Fay Harding (1849-1928).	According to the 1901 England Census, Lidbury was working as a banker's clerk at the age of twenty.
McDonald, Duncan (b.1880).	86 Dumbiedykes Road, Edinburgh, Scotland.	Father: John MacDonald (b.1852). A lithographic printer. Mother: Marion Morrison (b.1858).	
Milsom, Richard Sellers (1879-1922).	39 Bishopgate, Wakefield.	Father: James Milsom, (1840-1881). A bricklayer. Mother: Mary Jane Petch (1842-1907), remarried to James Bedford in 1885.	According to the 1891 England Census, Milsom was working as an errand boy at the age of thirteen. By 1901, Milsom was employed as a blacksmith.
Moody, Jonah Henry (1881-1979).	9 Upper Railway Street, Braintree, Essex.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	According to the 1901 England Census, Moody was working at an ironmongers by the age of twenty.
Newton, John R. (1875-1933).	38 Duckworth Street, Blackburn.	Father: John Newton (1842-1909). A fish dealer. Mother: Alice Adcroft (1838-1897).	According to the 1891 Census, Newton was working as a wine spirit bottler at the age of sixteen.
Patterson, James (Date of birth and death are unknown).	23 Powerscourt Street, Belfast.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Peake, Herbert Charles Foley (1875-1926).	Church Street, Launceston, Cornwall.	Father: Charles Edwin Peake, (1843-1895). A tailor. Mother: Mary Ann Rundle (1847-1923).	According to the 1891 England Census, Peake was working as a solicitor's clerk at the age of sixteen. By 1911, Peake was employed as an accountant in Cornwall.
Philips, Howard (1878-1965).	Rock Cottage, Cheapside, Worksop.	Father: Williams Phillips (1834-1935). A grocer and asphalter. Mother: Frances Smith (1834-1901).	According to the 1911 England Census, Phillips was working as a blacksmith in Worksop at the age of thirty-four.

Pitcher, Thomas William (1877-1922).	2 Box Hedge Road, Banbury.	Father: Joseph Pitcher (1854-1921). A general labourer. Mother: Ann Pitcher (1851-1917).	According to the Royal Navy Registers of Seamen's Services, Pitcher served between 21 April 1895 and twenty-one February 1912.
Price, A. (Date of birth and death are unknown).	4 Middle Oxford Street, Beancroft Road, Castleford.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Poules, Robert (1879-1959).	29 Bonville Street, Sheffield.	Father: Robert Poules (1842-1914). A scissor cutler. Mother is unidentifiable.	According to the U.S. Naturalization Record Indexes (1791-1992), Poules emigrated to Boston, Massachusetts in 1894. On 2 October 1902, Poules was naturalised as a U.S. citizen. Poules found employment in America as a stableman.
Raby, Thomas Ambrose (1874-1950).	57 Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	According to the 1891 England Census, Raby was working as a servant at the age of seventeen.
Regan, W. (Date of birth and death are unknown).	37 Norfolk Street, Batley.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Richardson, John (1878-1942).	10 Millbank Terrace, Coatham, Redcar.	Father: William Richardson (1842-1920). A cordwainer. Mother: Jane Sheldon (b.1842).	According to the 1901 England Census, Richardson was a storekeeper at the age of twenty-two.
Sellwood, Albert Henry (b.1876)	2 East View, East Fields, Newbury.	Father: Charles Sellwood (1846-1940). A joiner. Mother: Ellen Whale (1849-1904).	According to the 1901 England Census, Sellwood had taken on his father's occupation as a joiner by the age of twenty-five.
Sherlock, Thomas (1877-1960).	16 Rowland Street. Lower Broughton, Manchester.	Father: James R. Sherlock (1853-1909). A print compositor. Mother: Annie Burns (1855-1936).	According to the 1891 England Census, Sherlock had taken on his father's occupation as a print compositor by the age of fifteen. By 1901, Sherlock was working in a linotype office.
Skiffington, P. (1874-1920).	63 Arthur Street, Barrow-in-Furness.	Father: James Skiffington (b.1841). A shipyard labourer. Mother: Ann Skiffington (b.1853).	According to the 1901 England Census, Skiffington had taken on his father's occupation as a shipyard labourer at the age of twenty-seven.

Smith, James Bolton (1875-1945).	32 Parliament Street, Ramsey, Isle of Man.	Father: James Bolton Smith (1846-1888). A railway engine driver. Mother: Elizabeth Brew (b.1846).	According to the 1901 Isle of Man Census, Smith was working as a grocer's assistant at the age of twenty-five.
Stopp, George (1879-1952).	Kine Croft, Wallingford.	Father: Harry Stopp (1858-1898). A brewer's labourer. Mother: Eliza Ann Newin (b.1859).	According to the 1901 England Census, Stopp was working as a print compositor at the age of twenty-two.
Sumsion, George (b.1876).	54 Park Street, Yeovil.	Father: George Sumsion (1845-1910). A glover. Mother: Louisa Patten (1851-1938).	According to the 1891 England Census, Sumsion had taken on his father's occupation as a glover by the age fifteen. Sumsion later emigrated to Gloversville, New York.
Taylor, G. E. (Date of birth and death are unknown).	12 Parkinson Street, Park Lane, Bradford.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Tysall, William (1876-1943).	7 Melbourne Place, Rea Street, South Birmingham.	Father: Frederick Tysall (1852-1914). A sewing machine fitter. Mother: Hannah Taylor (1852-1940).	According to the 1891 England Census, Tysall was working as a brass polisher at the age of fifteen. By 1901, Tysall was employed as a brass finisher.
Upton, Thomas H. (1876-1947).	14 Chapel Street, Stonehouse, Plymouth.	Father: Richard Upton (1846-1934). A dockyard worker. Mother: Melinda Ann Williams (1845-1929).	According to the 1901 Enland Census, Upton had taken on his father's occupation as a dockyard labourer in Plymouth by the age of twenty-five.
Walton, William (1882-1962).	Single Row, 30 Sherburn Hill, Durham.	Father: Edward Harry Walton (1852-1922). A colliery joiner. Mother: Jane Ann Banks (1856-1933).	According to the 1901 England Census, Walton had taken on his father's occupation as a coalminer by the age of eighteen.
Ward, George (Date of birth and death are unknown).	426 Woodgate, Loughborough, Leicestershire.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Ward, William Albert (1878-1931).	27 New Street, Wellington, Salop.	Father: William Ward (b.1851). A watch finisher. Mother: Sarah Ann Hartshorn (1855-1911).	

Watson, Walter (1877-1955).	98 Marlborough Avenue, Pasture Road, Goole.	Father: Joseph Watson (1852-1936). A sea mariner. Mother: Ann Hodgson (b.1852).	According to the 1901 England Census, Watson was working as a shipper for a steam ship at the age of twenty-three.
Wilks, Thomas Raybould (b.1879).	92 Walsall Street, West Bromwich.	Father: William Wilks, (1855-1933). A grocer's assistant. Mother: Sarah Ann Raybould (1858-1916).	
Williams, John (Date of birth and death are unknown).	3 Field Place, Rotherham.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Wood, H (Date of birth and death are unknown).	The Training Stables, Swinton.	Father and mother are unidentifiable.	
Wood, John M. (1878-1963).	2 William Street, East Hartlepool	Father: George Wood (b.1856). A house painter. Mother: Jane Bell (b.1854).	According to the 1901 England Census, Wood was working as a marine engineer at the age of twenty-three.

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