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**ОПИС ТА АНАЛІЗ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ СИСТЕМИ ПРИВАТНОЇ  
ОСВІТИ 19-ГО СТОЛІТТЯ, ПРЕДСТАВЛЕНОЇ В РОМАНАХ  
«АГНЕС ГРЕЙ» ЕНН БРОНТЕ ТА «ДЖЕЙН ЕЙР» ШАРЛОТТИ  
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**DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE 19TH CENTURY ENGLISH  
PRIVATE EDUCATION SYSTEM AS REPRESENTED IN THE  
NOVELS „AGNES GREY” BY ANNE BRONTE AND „JANE EYRE” BY  
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## INTRODUCTION

Education is not only an important part of an individual's life, it is also an important issue for society and for the development of history. It is no wonder, then, that education as such is the basis of much research. Because of its great impact and the diversity of the phenomenon, it is important to research and provide as much information as possible on this subject.

This is what this work attempts to do, to present nineteenth century education through two novels, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte and *Agnes Grey* by Anne Bronte.

The analysis of these novels and their role in the history of the period has been addressed by several scholars, including Barker (1997), Bell (1996), Berg (1987), Demir, C. (2016), Seed & Wolff (1984), Winniffrth, & Chitham (1989), etc.

The object of my paper is the study of the educational system of Victorian Era.

The aim of the present work is to present private education in the 19th century in as many aspects as possible, and to obtain as much information as possible on the subject through the novels mentioned above.

The task of research is to increase our knowledge about education. To study this, theoretical research was made, such as literature review, description, analysis and generalization.

The thesis is made up of an introduction, two main parts, conclusion, reference list and resume.

The first part provides an overview of the nineteenth century, its defining moments, its literature, its education and its various aspects. The second part includes an analysis of the novels *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte and *Agnes Grey* by Anne Bronte in terms of their presentation and description of the nineteenth century education system.

The theoretical value of the work lies primarily in the information it provides about nineteenth-century educational models and methods and, once familiar with them, their potential use or avoidance.

After all, education and training are the foundation on which our society is built, so it can be extremely useful to look at the models used in the past, draw conclusions and use them to develop models for the future.



## I. 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY OVERVIEW

Great players are not only in sport but also in politics. But their playing field is diplomacy, the great power game, and the winner is the one who finds good allies and launches an attack when the opponent is not expecting it. It was such remarkable politicians who made European history in the 19th century.

One of the most outstanding figures of the era was Queen Victoria, the ruler of Great Britain. She was only 18 when she came to the throne and reigned until her death at the age of 82.

Although the island nation was a constitutional monarchy in which the king ruled but did not govern, Victoria was able to exert great pressure on the policies of governments.

The 19th century was called the century of Great Britain. It was a century of industrial revolution, political reform, and colonial expansion for the *British lion*. It was also thanks to the Queen's progressive spirit that freedoms were extended in England and the wealthier working classes were given the right to vote.

During this period, England was an economic and financial power, with a vast colonial empire and navy. In terms of foreign policy, the Empress's aim was to ensure that no great power on the continent had a leading role. The aim of British diplomacy was to maintain a balance.

In the midst of accelerating change, Queen Victoria's extremely long reign represented continuity and the preservation of national traditions, and the period has therefore gone down in history as the Victorian Era. (Steinbach, 2024)

The Victorian era was undoubtedly the heyday of the British Empire in many ways. But how did it get here? What were the processes that took place in the preceding years and decades, and how did the history of Europe and the British Empire evolve up to the century in question?

### 1.1. Reasons and antecedents

According to Paul W. Schroeder (1986), most scholars agree that Europe was more stable between 1815 and 1854 than during any comparable period in the entire 18th century and that the 19th century as a whole was more peaceful than the 18th century. There are several explanations to support this, and the key concept in all of them is war.

The generation that lived through the wars and conflicts between 1787 and 1815 was tired of fighting, of the fear of revolution, of the desire for peace, and all this was compounded by the system of conference diplomacy, the Concert of Europe (The geopolitical order in Europe from 1814 to 1914 is described in *The Concert of Europe*. During this time, the Great Powers tended to coordinate their actions to prevent conflicts and revolutions and to preserve the region's geographical and political status quo and other diplomatic instruments, the predominance of monarchical conservative ideology, and international cooperation to preserve the established social order. However, it should also be added that most historians do not agree that one or other of these factors would have had a greater influence on the development of later years, although they accept unspokenly, that the phenomenon can be adequately explained by some combination of these factors. The reasons comprise a direct or indirect rejection of any structural shift in world politics during this more peaceful and stable period (Schroeder, 1986).

It is not just that there have been virtually no wars in post-1815 European politics that is remarkable. It is more noteworthy that diplomacy has helped to solve issues and avert hazards during this time in international affairs.

It is, of course, also worth noting that the 19th century was the age of revolutions. Taking inspiration from the French Revolution of 1789, people across Europe challenged aristocratic ruling classes and fought for the development of civil and human rights, democracy and national independence. Nationalism arose as a revolutionary idea that promised individuals greater participation in democracy but was exclusive, envisioning a future of national boundaries populated by people of a similar ethnic background. Nonetheless, some forward-thinking Europeans envisioned an oneness of the continent that transcended national allegiances.

### **1.1.1 Philosophy of the 19th century**

The Romantic movement replaces Classicism, and can be interpreted as a period of the development of national consciousness. In addition to a disillusionment with realism, a strong attachment to nature, the predominance of emotion over reason, the search for the "self" and individualism characterise this period of undisputed importance in the history of culture.

The Romantic protagonist is often a misunderstood genius, or at least an extraordinary

exceptional personality with exceptional abilities. Artists begin to be preoccupied with the genius and a new artistic approach begins to prevail. In this sense, the creator the person of the creator, the genius, is more important than the than adherence to traditional formalities and rules.

But apart from the artists, why did the common bourgeoisie suddenly become so dear to the common man, so exalted by sheer human strength and manual labour? Why did it become the Romantic movement so popular? It is because, although the new achievements of technology seemed promising, after the big boom, it aroused popular distrust. The new the invention of new devices did not mean progress, knowledge and human reason for everyone the ability to create by human reason. And the movement was based on this approach is based on this approach. This is how the movement of romanticism and individualism, which is the thinking of manual work, spirit, emotions and self-determination, became important again (Calhoun, 1997).

Modernity, which sought unity and created difference in an unprecedented way, defined both by the slave trade and the ideal of post-Reformation tolerance, was from the outset an era of cross-purposes. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the proliferation of claims to belonging to a nation and the concomitant transformation of collective and individual identities. The idea of national identity was a crucial part of the democratic project in the struggle of the 'peoples' against the kings. It has also been a source of irredentism (a policy of advocating the restoration to a country of any territory formerly belonging to it), of secession and of fiercely anti-democratic campaigns to impose a unified vision of acceptable forms of behaviour among the members of the nation. Linked to the discourse on the nation, national identity and nationalism are a distinctively modern way of thinking about identities: their 'natural' origin, their 'categorical' distinction, their integrity. They are of older European origin, but they contributed to the emergence of a global discourse on national identity, sovereignty and legitimacy during the 19th and early 20th centuries. This discourse shapes not only the way we try to understand self-determination movements, but also the emergence of such movements themselves and the struggle over when they gain recognition Self-determination presupposes a self, a self that is not a dynasty or a state, not a separate, unintegrated population, but a people, an organised, meaningfully integrated collectivity (Calhoun, 1997).

At the end of the 19th century, the discourse of nationalism helped shape identities and movements not only in Europe, but throughout the world. At the same time, it influenced the definition of society as a fundamental unit of analysis in the social sciences. Bounded, separate, internally integrated societies (and cultures) were understood in terms of the model of nation-states, reflecting both nationalist rhetoric and institution-building in Europe and the colonies. Alongside

classes and individuals, nations were seen as agents and beneficiaries of potential progress. Progress was assessed by measuring the strength, freedom or material well-being of nations (Calhoun, 1997).

Even though nationalism combines politics and culture, many of its most well-known followers place the latter above the former. According to this perspective, nationalist cultural appeals serve as a vehicle for achieving statehood, which is a political goal.

### **1.1.1.1.Philosophy of historiography**

What is history, and how ought it to be recorded? It was asked again during the middle of the 18th century, and the responses contrasted with earlier ideas of history that spanned from chronicle to narrative.

What distinguishes this new type of history, Enlightenment historiography refers to the concept of history as being causally connected and linear, or through the explanation of the reasons for the progression and development of history across time. This last concept is viewed as a universal-historical development leading to a secular end to history. Because the past has tangible consequences on the present and because it serves as a quick bridge to the anticipated future, this historiography understands the past (Hartung & Pluder, 2015).

In the nineteenth century, this idea of history was altered. It is true that the growing historicism still holds onto the notion that history is a continuous process.

Yet, the historiographic emphasis on activity-based learning and didactics recedes in favour of a drive for objectivity and impartiality based on the evidence.

The general-universal element loses prominence in this historical view. Such historiography's primary concentration is on specific and, in the best case, scientifically verified historical data, a direction that, by the middle of the 19th century, virtually led to positivist practises. As a result of being liberated from the Enlightenment's universal historical claim, this propensity for the specific over the general results in a gradual—and unavoidably persistently Euro-centric—pluralization of history.

Historiography itself exhibits a knowledge of its own historicity and, as a result, of the relative nature of its own claims, which up until this point had been explained with the aim of objectivity and universality. A new meta-discourse is added to the already complex 19th century historiography as this development advances to the centre of reflective discourses at the end of the century, both in philosophy and within the context of historiography itself. (Hartung & Pluder, 2015)

The idea of broad philosophical historiography, which sees the history of philosophy as the philosophical viewpoints' historical development from works devoted to the concept of philosophy, was not yet understood in the 18th century. Though it is largely eclectic, philosophical historiography in those days is unquestionably an academic field. The initial idea behind a reflective historiography programme is that historiography needs its own independent methodology because philosophy's concept and history do not exist in a stable relationship and must instead forge their own connection and cohesiveness.

A lot of stress is put on the portrayal of historical relation and coherence as 19th-century history becomes more professionalised, becoming philologically accurate with Zeller and contextually aware with Windelband. The discussion of the coherence of the entire thus turns into a mere rhetorical flourish.

But what makes nineteenth-century historiography so crucial?

The cult of the detail has been associated in some way with the notion that individual action matters, that freedom of choice exists, and that the course of history is contingent and not predetermined by supra-individual structures and entities ever since the early nineteenth-century Romanticism, with its cult of the genius, influenced generations of historians. Consequently, just as the religions of the general and the supra-individual have been closely related, the cults of the individual and the detail have gone hand in hand throughout history (Berger & Lorenz, 2010).

Writing national histories was arguably the most important subject for German and British historiography in the nineteenth century, according to Epple (2010). Even if this assertion may be oversimplified, it is accurate generally speaking—at least when we focus just on academic historiography. Yet if we focused on so-called amateur history or the histories of academic outsiders, we would undoubtedly discover a more varied outcome. Examining the many national notions and looking for fabricated national traditions that were justified by such histories, despite the limits of this technique, is still highly promising. These queries typically follow examinations of the academic field of history's professionalisation.

The major goal of British historiography was to create a common heritage and thereby give historical nation-building legitimacy. But, the word "nation" also had a narrative (narratological) purpose, making it simpler for historians to pinpoint their specific subject. They were able to distinguish between events that appeared to have nothing to do with a nation's history and those that were important to it thanks to the concept of the nation. At that time, historians from Germany and Britain tended to infer the nation's current identity from its past.

Presently, it is well known that the development of national literature has a significant impact on how history is written. It still took a while for German historiography's literacy to develop. Although David Hume was extensively read throughout the European Enlightenment, Friedrich Schiller, Johann Gottfried Herder, and others did not introduce the new literary style into history until 50 years later, when Weimar's classical literature had a greater influence. During the "long nineteenth century," historiography in Germany achieved literacy (Epple, 2010).

## **1.2. Society of the 19th century**

England has had a variety of social and cultural systems for several centuries. People in England varied in terms of their socio-economic status from the Anglo-Saxon era to the present. It is evident that the social structure and class division in Victorian England originated in earlier eras. Because of this, it will be easier to comprehend England's hierarchical structure when compared to other eras of British history. This period of time is characterized by multiple improvements that make the Victorian era the most advanced in English history (Fletcher, 2002).

The Industrial Revolution in England resulted in one of the most significant historical transformations. This turn-over helped England become a world-class nation by fostering growth in trade and industry (Williams, 2004).

For the people of the Victorian era, it opened up a whole new universe and way of life. In the history of England, its people, and its women, it represents the most profound change in human life. Victorians seem to be the British who deal with a variety of issues that arise in British society. In actuality, England has seen several inventions in a variety of disciplines, including philosophy, science, and technology.

In fact, England has seen several inventions in a variety of disciplines, including philosophy, science, and technology. For instance, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway opened the world's first public railway line, connecting England's major cities. It was a time of prosperity and advancement, but it was also marked by destitution and anxiety

Following the 18th-century revolution, England became an increasingly industrialised and urbanised society. To work in industries, people began to move to the cities. Cities became more crowded as a result, and they have become unhealthy places to live due to factory pollution. Even

though the country's wealth had significantly changed, this shift had a catastrophic impact on those who did not come from noble families.

### **1.2.1 The Development of Feminism in the 19th century**

A critical theory and movement in literary analysis is known as feminist critique. Its roots can be found in the late eighteenth-century women's rights movement (Cuddon, 1998).

Over the course of its lengthy history, feminism has sought to challenge the assumptions of a patriarchal society in order to uphold the idea of gender equality. It became a significant force in shaping and deciding women's rights, emphasizing social, political, and economic change. It discovered its way to literature during the 1960s, a time when fresh perspectives on women writers and literature were becoming evident.

This was evident in the work of numerous feminists, like Virginia Woolf, whose novels have been examined from various angles by feminist critics. She was therefore concerned, like other feminists, about the cultural and economic disadvantages that women face in comparison to men. (Fuchs & Thompson, 2005)

Thus, it seeks to support women's identities and women's writing as a representation of women's experiences as they are portrayed in many forms of literature, particularly novels (Culler, 1997).

Feminism looks at how literature perpetuates women's economic, political, social, and psychological oppression as well as the patriarchal idea that women should be obedient to men in order to free women from male patriarchy. It questions conventional male assumptions about the nature of women and how they feel, act, think, and write, as well as masculine readings of literature (Cuddon, 1998).

It focuses on theme studies of women writers, that is, female writers and how their experiences are portrayed in literature. It also addressed the theory of women's roles in writing and language, emphasising language and examining the process of producing meaning.

As a result, it makes an effort to comprehend representation from the perspective of women and analyses women's writing techniques in light of their social environments. It aims to highlight the presence of women writers in literary works, giving prominence to female characters and ideas (Balogun, 2001).

### **1.2.1.1. Governess – the only career for women**

Despite the rise of feminism, two significant discussions raged during the nineteenth century about the difficulties confronting middle-class women. The first addressed the campaign for better, more structured, and higher education for women. Women sought to enhance their education by establishing their own schools, asking universities and colleges to enable females to take entrance examinations, and expanding their programs to include students of both genders. The second addressed the societal notion of womanhood. During this argument, governesses addressed the concerns of middle-class women working outside the home. Traditionally, women were expected to rely on their male family members, such as their father, brother, or spouse, to provide for them. As a result, women who labor outside the home endangered their social and familial standing.

However, when more women entered the workforce as governesses, there was a desire to elevate their vocation. These debates interlocked, and advances achieved in one frequently aided the battle of the other. Because of their responsibilities as educators and workers, Victorian governesses became prominent figures in the debate about ideal femininity. Governesses and those concerned about governess circumstances sought to professionalize their profession by supporting and participating in the push for greater female education and women's advancement in other fields of work. The rise of print media facilitated discussions among governesses and others about what constitutes a good classroom, how to run it, and the necessary education and subject matter. While print media offers the finest view into governesses' professionalization movements, organizations created to help governesses contribute to this awareness. (Hall, 1936)

Governesses, typically middle-class women, were required to labor to support themselves financially. These women's parents or other family members failed or were unable to provide a life for them. Because Victorians considered teaching as an appropriate position for women because it extended the women's domain, ladies theoretically kept their social status even after being recruited to work. In fact, most were hired based on their social standing. To teach their students, governesses needed an education as well. During the Victorian era, there was a greater desire for high-quality female education, including math and science. With this trend, governesses aimed to better their personal education in order to increase their employability in a competitive job market. (Hughes, 1993)

The position of governess appears to have been fitting because, while it was paid employment, it was done at home. The governess was doing something she could have done as a wife in better



circumstances. She shunned the modest and unladylike position of public employment.<sup>15</sup> According to the literature of the 1840s, there was a significant surge in the number of gentlewomen without financial assistance in the years after the Napoleonic Wars. Middle-class writers blamed the influx of troubled gentlewomen on "the accidents of commercial and professional life" that affected them.

According to twentieth-century historians' research, the number of single middle-class women in need of work was caused not only by the unstable business conditions of the time, but also by the emigration of single men from England to the colonies, the differential mortality rate that favored women, and the tendency for middle-class men to marry later.

However, the Victorians' notion that economic despair had caused these women's decline demonstrates that they were more concerned with social and economic uncertainties. The Victorian stereotype of the governess, which explained why a lady sought employment, was of a woman born and raised in comfort and gentility who, due to her father's death or financial ruin, was deprived of her family's support and was forced to earn her own living. (Peterson, 1980)

Furthermore the potential for higher social mobility through employment as a governess could be mentioned here. The literature of the time makes some suggestions that attempts at social climbing of this kind were, in fact, being made. In an 1859 *Edinburgh Review* article, Harriet Martineau mentioned the custom of "tradesmen and farmers who educate their daughters for governesses" as a means of improving their social status. The degree to which this occurred cannot be determined, but it is evident that the Victorian middle class did not want such mobility. (London, 1849)

The governesses, who were portrayed as evil or immoral characters in the era's novels, were humble women. For instance, Becky Sharp from Thackeray was the daughter of a poor artist and a French "opera-girl" who had falsely claimed French noble ancestry in order to obtain employment. In Wilkie Collins' *Armadale*, the evil Miss Gwilt was raised by a "quack" doctor and his spouse after being abandoned as an unknown child. As this essay will show later, the idea of true upward mobility was a pipe dream. Indeed, even in preserving genteel status, employment as a governess was of very limited service.

Here, it is necessary to say that, in the perspective of those who regarded themselves as judges of governesses, a girl from the "lower ranks" could be educated, but she would still be considered "ill-bred." On the other hand, a lady remained a lady despite her poverty. (Peterson, 1980)

The conclusion connects the professionalization of governesses to the women's employment movement, higher education demand, and shifting definitions of womanhood during Britain's industrialization. Governesses served a unique position in the nineteenth century since they not only received a basic education as a lady, but the most effective governesses also received a thorough and well-rounded educational experience. In addition, governessing was the first respectable wage-earning job for middle-class women. However, the great number of women claiming to be governesses underlined the need for women to find alternative career alternatives.

### **1.2.1.2 Governess – part of the family**

In the past, it was suggested that a lady should work from home since it kept her in the right setting; however, this kind of work actually made her incongruent status worse. The governess's position in a middle-class household was meant to give her a second home, but her presence there was proof that her own middle-class family had failed to give her the safety and support she required. The governess's unusual position was also shown by the way the household was organized. Since she was a lady, she was not a servant; rather, she was an employee and did not have the same standing as the wife and daughters of the home.

Her job objectives additionally exacerbated the inconsistency of her role. She was employed to educate the family's children, especially the young ladies, in order to set them up for leisurely gentility. However, she had received the same education, for the same reasons, and her work ended up being a prostitute of her training, the principles that guided it, and the intents of her family in delivering it. Her own upbringing was likewise subverted by her role as a status symbol of gentility from the middle class. She had been taught to be a "nosegay" to decorate her "papa's drawing room," and in her role as governess, she had sold herself to showcase the status of her employer. (Sewell, 1858)

There was a lot of variation in how the parents treated the governess inside a single household as well as between families. The mistress of the home could tell her to go to work in one breath and invite her to a social gathering in the next. When they entertained, some families — like the elder Ruskins — included the governess in their circle. Some insisted that she eat at the table with the kids unless it was more convenient for them to have her there. (Ruskin, 1949)

The children's behaviors often gave away and mirrored their parents' attitudes. Though more frequently there was disobedience, elitism, and occasionally physical abuse, there was also

tenderness and respect at times. The triangle between the governess, parents, and children — where the mischievous kids played off each other to avoid getting the discipline they were supposed to — was a recurring motif in governess-novels. The extent to which these "trials of the governess" were a real issue cannot be determined solely from novelists' descriptions, but the regularity with which books and articles addressed the issue of how a governess should be treated and urged parents to uphold her authority suggests that the Victorian era's domestic dramas had a solid basis in English social life. (London, 1856).

According to Ruskin, the incongruity of a female employee in the home elicited responses from servants just as much as from the children and parents. Although she was supposed to be served by the servants, the governess typically had little control over them. They would have punished her for any other behaviour, but they were angry with her for behaving like a woman. The problems within the family are further exacerbated by her interactions with the outside world. She no longer had the money or the time to spend with her pals from her carefree days, so she might anticipate losing contact with them.

The contradiction between the gentleman's behaviour toward women and governesses is especially striking in this instance. A governess and a gentleman could not engage in casual flirtation, easy civility, or attraction because she was not his social equal. Additionally, the manner in which gentlemen and their female domestics interacted did not fit the pattern, as the governor was not wholly an inferior (Marcus, 1969)

### **1.3. Education during the Victorian Era**

In alongside boosting national income, the new commerce has led to a dramatic growth in the size and power of the middle class.

Philosophers and intellectuals were fighting against intolerance, poor governance, historical injustices, and economic abuses at the same time. Political revolutions were sparked by their ideals, which placed a fresh focus on the value of the individual—the citizen rather than the subject—sometimes leading to good outcomes, but other times to failure. More significantly, though, they sought to ensure that no administration, no matter how reactionary, could ever again ignore the needs of the average citizenry for an extended period of time.

Ultimately, there was a broad psychological shift: people's confidence in their ability to use resources, control nature, and shape their own future was unprecedented, and this national confidence—embodied in nationalism—led all groups to fight for the right to govern themselves.

Each and every of these trends has an impact on educational advancement. The eventual acceptance of the idea that the state should be in charge of education is one of the most important outcomes. Early in the 19th century, the construction of public education systems was spurred by a combination of national aspiration and ideology in certain countries, such France and Germany. Others, like the United States and Great Britain, were more hesitant to allow the government to get involved in educational matters because they were enchanted with *laissez-faire*.

The prevailing belief that "free schools" should only be offered to impoverished children, if at all, had to be challenged by the school reformers in these nations, who also had to persuade the populace that general community taxes was the only practical means of funding education for all children.

In contrast to other European nations, England did not implement universal, compulsory schooling until the reform of 1870. All children aged 5 to 13 were required to attend school under the Elementary Education Act of 1870, also referred to as the Forster's Act (Gillard, 2011).

All children of the aristocratic and middle class had access to highly diversified English education till the end of the first part of the 19th century. In schools, students from lower social classes received extremely low levelled education.

Boys from upper social class, who were usually sent to prestigious secondary boarding schools with a lengthy history, like Winchester, Eton, or Rugby, received the best education. A significant issue facing English society up until the end of the second half of the 19th century was also the education of girls.

Even until the second part of the 1800s, females' education was not given much attention. During that era, the most well-known secondary schools were the Grammar Schools and the English Public Schools. These institutions were initially affiliated with universities and university colleges, which served as a means of hiring future educators and teachers. The English Grammar Schools have the oldest tradition, dating back to the Middle Ages. The church authorities founded them with the purpose of teaching Latin grammar. Such schools were later established by endowments from wealthy guilds and merchants. The knowledge of Latin was the only key to study humanities sciences, but also to pursue careers in clergy and court (Bellaigue, 2004).

Governesses and sympathizers justified professionalization by citing educational qualifications from lecture series and women's institutions. Women used the ideal woman paradigm to gain a foothold in higher education. They acknowledge that one of their specified tasks was to assist

educate the future generation of Britons, and they questioned how they could meet this objective without first obtaining an education.

Women, particularly governesses, used journals, books, and organizations designed for women to start building an information and debate network. During the nineteenth century, various ladies' journals and books were printed for governesses, schoolmistresses, and teachers. In Victorian England, literary communities were utilized by governesses, teachers, and parents to share educational techniques, establish professional associations, and discuss education reform. Several of these texts included anything from general advice given by other governesses, mothers, and even some males, to specific lessons, craft templates, and book lists to help children learn. (Bremner, 1897)

### **1.3.1. Children in education**

But it is not only the changes in social conditions that have brought about changes in education. Another important factor in the nineteenth century is that attitudes towards children are changing. This is one of the issues addressed in Elizabeth Dana Rescher (1999). According to her thesis the Enlightenment novel *Emile* maintains that a person's character is shaped by the experiences they had as a kid and in their second adolescence. Because of this, it contends, teaching necessitates a distinct philosophical perspective as well as greater mental and physical exertion than, the author claims, eighteenth-century European educators generally committed to their profession. (Rescher, 1999)

Although we now know that it was not Rousseau who first came up with the theory. Even Plato discussed the importance of children's education and upbringing for their integration into society.

The previously described nineteenth-century development aligned with the growing awareness of nineteenth-century youngsters compared to their Enlightenment forebears. Early in the nineteenth century, England had a huge increase in the population. Their presence became more apparent when England's towns and cities began to rapidly develop; residents were aware of the presence of others imposed upon them. Specifically, the employment of children in factories and the gathering of young beggars in popular thoroughfares brought lower-class youths into greater public view than they would have in a primarily rural community where they were isolated from adults and kept apart by cottage industry and agricultural work. (Patterson, 1971)

### 1.3.2. Children Literature

The final decades of the eighteenth century saw the emergence of children's new cultural awareness in middle-class households. In the past, children from all social groups led fulfilling lives, but their offspring would have ended up materially impoverished. However, nursery floors, bookshelves, storage boxes, and bed- and schoolrooms would increasingly be covered in items meant to entertain and teach, particularly in the homes of the wealthy. The current population rise among middle-class and upper-class children cannot fully explain the explosive growth in the children's goods sector.

Additionally, children's literature began to dominate more publishing houses' markets than before as authors took advantage of lucrative chances to target younger readers. Analyzing the changes in the tone and content of this literature is one way to track the development of the new, prevailing mindset toward children. Children's literature were stiff, didactic, and dominated by adult characters and their mores as the nineteenth century got underway. Later in the century, stories attempted to replicate and capture children's natural perceptual processes for understanding the world, adult characters lost some of their relevance, and tales became increasingly inventive and detailed. (Darton, 1914)

In the 19th century, writings recognized as classics or children's literature were "saved" from obscurity, even if their content was outdated or problematic. Shakespeare undergoes some of the most unusual transformations.

The performances and young readers benefit from *The Silence of the Lambs*, although the Dr. Moreau Bowdler's spin on classic stories like *Mrs. Midas' touch* deviates from their original meaning. By the 1870s, Sherwood's *The Fairchild Family*, originally published in 1847 and featuring a gruesome scene, had been sanitized and remarketed alongside more whimsical books, magazine pieces, and adventure stories suitable for young readers. (Drotner, 1988)

Poetry was in the forefront of registering new attitudes toward childhood in early nineteenth-century England, with prose literature following a few decades later. During the 1830s and early 1940s, mainstream novelists were not typically interested in children. In Gothic and Romantic fiction, as well as Newgate and silver-fork romances, boys and girls are often depicted as window-dressing, with little exploration of their personalities or interests. Novelists with an evangelical bent, or who understood their audience's evangelical inclinations, reflected the growing interest in children in English society.

Novels-with-a-purpose and religious novels from the 1840s served didactic and moral purposes. In them, writers for the first time began to flesh out young characters since they can be strategically deployed. Their little experience with life implied that they were unaware of the problematic methods of the world depicted in novels. As a result, they were ideally positioned to serve as the reader's empathetic entry point into the story, as the youngster, like the reader first discovering the foreign material. Fiction sometimes used children as a proxy for the reader, emphasizing the importance of learning or reinforcing certain teachings due to their lack of knowledge. In these lessons, the child serves as Beatrice to the reader's Dante, teaching proper ideas through their innocence. (Allan, 1993)

### **1.3.3. Teacher's education in the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

In England and Wales, teacher education had extremely volatile and contentious origins. The literature frequently used the metaphor of the pendulum to explain how the teaching profession developed in the 19th and 20th century. Education in schools, teacher training through internships, and teacher education based on a college or university education model were the methods used to decide dominance in different eras. The prevalent 19th-century approach presumed that teachers received their training in classrooms and through internships. In the 20th century, teachers were first instructed in colleges and universities. Its evolution mirrored all of the developments that had occurred in England over the previous 200 years and was closely tied to the evolution of the country's educational system.

At the very beginning of the 19th century, the initial ideas of formal teacher education were innovative. Even until that point, teachers had served the upper and middle classes and frequently held the position of clerk in addition to degrees from Oxford or Cambridge universities, also known as "Oxbridge." Teachers of students from lower socioeconomic strata, on the other hand, just needed to know how to count and read. Beginning in 1805, working-class children's elementary schools were established and were mostly run by religious organisations.

A circumstance like this made the demand for fresh teachers essential. At this point, a brief and fundamental type of teacher training was established, giving new teachers the chance to gain a practical understanding of how a monitoring system operates. Teacher training institutions emerged as a result of a formalised network of religious instruction for resident teachers in the 1820s, 1830s, and 1840s. Their goal was to satisfy the increasing need for certified educators.

The instruction was, however, limited and placed little emphasis on intellectual growth and academic readiness. (Robinson, 2006)

The Catholic Church made a unique contribution in this regard because its female members oversaw girls' schools that followed the same curriculum as the top boys' English schools. In addition, most of these congregations adopted an innovative approach to training future educators. These schools did, however, teach females from Catholic families in the vast majority, but they also accepted students from the poorest homes who practised other religions. These are a few documented instances where girls from Anglican households, who adhered to standards like a high degree of education and the favoured family education model, also attended these schools.

The growing disapproval of schools for implementing the monitoring system and inadequately training teachers for their professional duties served as justification for looking for an alternative method of staff education. David Stow founded his own teacher training college in Glasgow in 1824, and Kay-Shuttleworth suggested establishing a "regular" school or teacher training college under the Committee of Council's supervision in 1839. After the plan was turned down, Kay-Shuttleworth established his own private school in Battersea, which he later turned up to the National Society in 1843. (Gillard, 2011)

#### **1.4. English literature in the 19th century**

„The history of English literature is itself like a well-written novel or drama. Events build on one another, as each new wave of writers impacts both the overall body of work and the subsequent efforts of other writers. There are unexpected twists and turns, as the styles and subject matter of English literature have sometimes rebelled against existing conventions or simply moved in unprecedented directions. Finally, as with any good story, the pace of action in English literature has seemed to accelerate over time, with the most recent two centuries representing an era of prolific productivity and creativity.” – says Michael I. Levy (2011:9) who attempts to describe the history of English literature from the 19<sup>th</sup> century through the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Since Victorian literature uses a realism technique of depiction, it has become a valuable source for historical information and the way of life in 19th-century England. Victorians therefore investigated topics pertaining to their historical and social setting, such as industrialization, rural-urban living, and the status of women and children. The Victorian era is noted for being a time of



scientific advancement. The latter may be found in a lot of literary works where both male and female writers were interested in their job and status.

John Stuart Mill described self-consciousness as "the daemon of the men of genius of our time" in 1838. Literature from the early Post-Romantic era was inevitably introspective, and the time itself was just as prone to self-reflection as its individual artists.

The result of a keen awareness of change was this ongoing monitoring. After a protracted war (1793–1815) with France, Britain emerged as a superpower with the largest economy on earth. When American author Ralph Waldo Emerson visited England in 1847, he said of the English: "The present world is theirs. Day by day, they continue to make it (Levy, 2011).

The novel's rise as an all-conquering force in the literary marketplace during Queen Victoria's reign is credited with ushering in the modern period of English literature (1837–1901). Although the Victorian era has a reputation for being oppressively polite, the mid- to late 19th century was a turbulent moment in British history. When Great Britain was becoming into a major world power, domestic urban poverty was getting worse. Rapid and occasionally jarring change characterised Victoria's reign, which included the 1840s economic crises, the 1860s and 1880s political reforms, and rising demands for women's suffrage.

The emergence of Charles Dickens, one of, if not the greatest figures in English literature, has brought about major changes in the field of English literature. The beginning of his literary career can be placed roughly in the same time pot as the beginning of the Victorian era.

He would continue to captivate readers with a variety of works over the following four decades, including his first published book, the comedic *Pickwick Papers*; works with serious topics like *David Copperfield*, *Bleak House*, and *Hard Times*; and a masterwork from his latter years, *Great Expectations*.

The then-new practise of serialising novels, which meant they were published in weekly or monthly installments, contributed to Dickens' fame. This strategy suited Dickens' talent for building a vast collection of deftly drawn character studies. The most crucial factor that made Dickens popular in his day and distinguished him as an enduring and significant novelist was his ability to blend humour with an uncompromising look at some of life's challenges and injustices (Collins, 1995).

While Dickens is particularly notable, there were other notable novelists during this time. For instance, notable books by William Makepeace Thackeray, Elizabeth Gaskell, and Benjamin Disraeli were published in the late 1840s (who would later become prime minister). Charles

Kingsley, Anthony Trollope, and the Brontë sisters, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne, all wrote their debut books around this time.

It was somewhat like a torch had been passed. Poetry was at the centre of the literary scene a generation ago during the height of the Romantic poets. Now, in the middle of the 1800s, it appeared that prose fiction was where the best literary talents of the day were expressing themselves.

The Brontë sisters were originally poets, and their sensibilities are a representation of how the Romantic movement was translated into the book. The sisters were therefore able to portray a woman's perspective in a novel way that was both intellectually and emotionally groundbreaking thanks to this extended form. They had considerable success doing this. The best works by the Brontë sisters, like as Charlotte's *Jane Eyre* and Emily's *Wuthering Heights*, combine strong psychological components with exact location and dialect descriptions despite their Gothic setting (Levy, 2011).

Mary Ann Evans, who wrote under the pen name George Eliot, was a significant contributor to late Victorian fiction. Eliot borrows some of Jane Austen's observant wit in her later masterpiece *Middlemarch* and in earlier works like *The Mill on the Floss*. Eliot, however, uses her expertly produced fiction to examine the complex internal ethical and existential difficulties of her characters rather than dealing with the comparatively straightforward dilemmas of society and romance. The result is especially striking when this complex subject matter is set against vivid depictions of rural areas.

Although Eliot stands out, she was not the only one who produced exceptional work in the second half of the 1800s (Eliot, 1954).

This period's diversity of styles contributed to its depth; early science fiction works competed with realism as well as a return of Gothic and Romantic themes. These were the years when writers like Oscar Wilde, George Meredith, Robert Louis Stevenson, and H.G. Wells flourished.

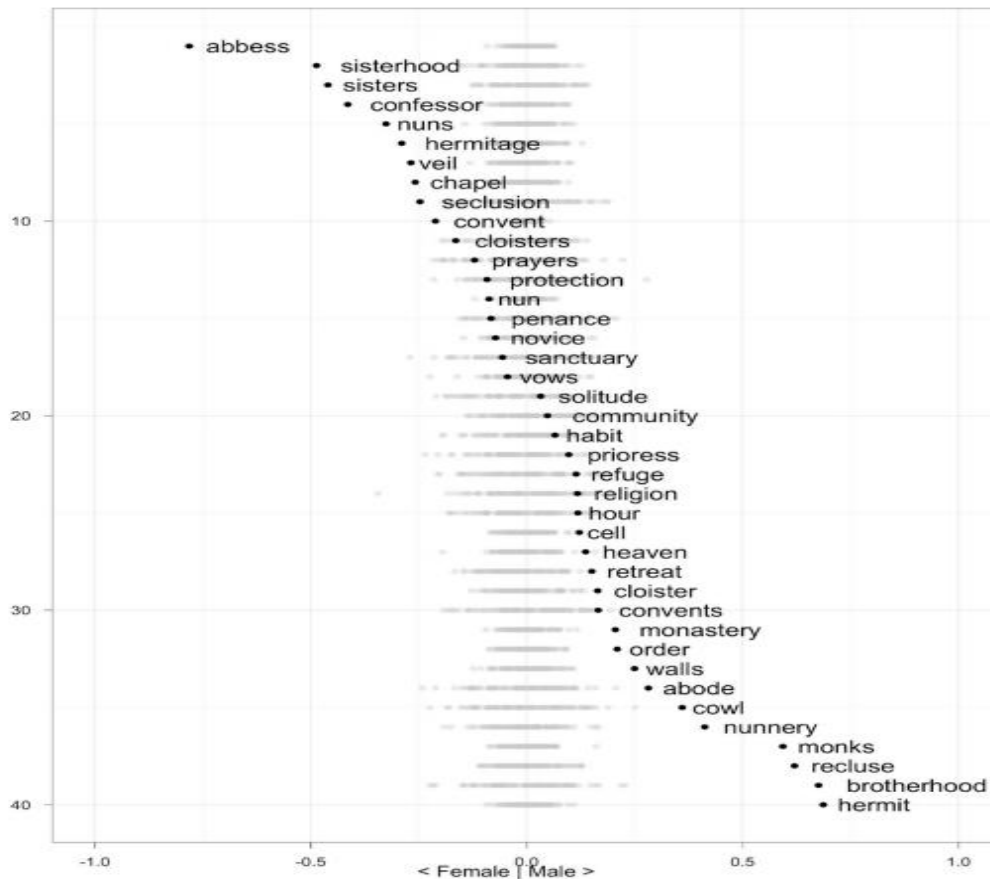
Thomas Hardy was one of the most prominent figures of the late 19th century. On a bigger scale, his pastoral settings symbolised simplicity and tranquilly that was being lost to the contemporary world. His writings dealt with terrible subjects that were deeply personal. With works like *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, and *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy contributed to the end of the century and the Victorian era with English prose fiction in its prime, despite any ambivalence he may have felt towards the passage of time (Millgate, 2023).

It is normal for feelings of a fresh start and a break from the past to accompany any century turn, but the transition from the 19th to the 20th brought about genuinely significant changes in society, politics, science, and technology.

#### **1.4.1. The themes of 19th century literature**

Typically, themes are thought to be present in novels. Also, it is believed that the author's cultural and historical background influenced the choice and relative prominence of the many subjects. However, why is this significant to us? We can better understand both the novels themselves and the larger literary-historical environment in which these works were released by comprehending the elements that affect an author's choice of themes.

According to Jocker (2013) the external factors like the author's nationality, the author's gender, and publishing date may all influence both the selection and expression of literary subjects in novels. In his study, he used statistical approaches by thematic modelling of 3,346 works of 19th-century fiction to find and extract hundreds of topics (themes) from a corpus of British, Irish, and American fiction written in the nineteenth century. He also evaluated how external factors may predict variations in the utilisation of themes and the specific word choices within themes using topics as a quantifiable, data-driven proxy for literary themes. Jocker measured these correlations using themes, and we can also assess the statistical significance of this evidence. These topics as a quantifiable, data-driven proxy for literary themes. Jocker measured these correlations using themes, and we can also assess the statistical significance of this evidence.



**Figure 1**

*Most common themes in literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> century*

*Source: Jocker & Mimno, 2013*

The results are presented in Figure 1.

One can identify ten words from the cluster (abbess, sisterhood, sisters, confessor, nuns, hermitage, veil, chapel, seclusion, convent) that are strongly related with works by female authors by starting at the top and reading downward. The final eleven words—monastery, order, walls, abode, cowl, nunnery, monks, recluse, brotherhood, and hermit—are far more typical of literature written by men. Less gendered words tend to be those that are closer to the centre, such as sanctuary, vows, and community. The frequency of the word affects the static-topic hypothesis' anticipated range's width. The range is most restricted for the most prevalent word, "convent." We can be certain that this difference is not the result of random chance even though the actual difference in word density for "convent" is not as great as it is for "brotherhood."

After the strongly gender-based representation, the Jocker and Mimno (2012) found "Convents and Monasteries" to be a more appropriate topic. With a few exceptions (e.g. "convents" in the male-dominated half and "confessional" in the female-dominated half), the words used by male and female authors within this theme are divided into word groups that are closely related to specific and highly distinct institutions, which are convents on the one hand, monasteries on the other; or sisterhood vs. brotherhood.

This word distribution data offers up new lines of inquiry and in-depth research in ways that are both illuminating and fascinating. After all, the gender norms of theme attention from the 19th century are what we are truly investigating here. Although while the standards presented here may be expected—men write about monks, while women write about nuns—it is nonetheless illuminating to assess how skewed the viewpoints actually are.

Many of the themes in this model seemed to be "gendered," it was noticed (i.e. used to greater or lesser extents by either male or female authors). A classification experiment was created to determine the extent to which the thematic proportions of any given text may be used to predict the author's gender in order to further investigate this observation (Jocker & Mimno, 2013).

## **1.5. The Brontë sisters**

In the annals of English literature, few names evoke as much reverence and fascination as the Brontë sisters—Charlotte, Emily, and Anne. Born into the parsonage of Haworth, Yorkshire, during the tumultuous early decades of the 19th century, these remarkable siblings emerged as literary titans whose works continue to exert profound influence on subsequent generations of readers and writers alike.

### **1.5.1. The birth of talents**

The fact that Patrick and Maria Brontë were well-educated, well-read, and raised during a period of profound change does not explain how or why their children became exceptional writers. Numerous families could have a comparable lineage without producing any noteworthy progeny, indicating the involvement of external factors. There have always been individuals with extraordinary skill throughout history, and racial and personal differences in ability will always

exist; these variations are a natural element of being human and are impacted by a variety of circumstances. Was that because of an inherited talent, early instruction, family influence, or any combination of those factors? (Green, 2008)

Around the end of the eighteenth century, there was a sudden and significant increase in scientific knowledge in Britain. This led to a series of events that brought a new, "modern" lifestyle and completely changed the way people worked, played, and thought. Born at this period, Patrick and Maria Brontë saw firsthand the changes that progressively permeated the entire nation and its populace. With a range of experiences and knowledge to inform and educate their children, their diverse backgrounds did not split them but rather strengthened them as a pair. (Ducket, 2020)

### **1.5.1.1. History of the Brontë family**

Following his appointment as incumbent of Haworth in 1820, Patrick Brontë and his six children — all of whom were born in Cornwall — arrived in the township.

While the Brontë family continued to reside in Haworth for the remainder of their lives, and the moor environment greatly impacted the works of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë, the family's history started in Ireland, where Patrick, the eldest of ten children, was born on March 17, 1777, in County Down.

Motivated by desire, Patrick put his lowly beginnings far behind and gained acceptance to St. John's College, Cambridge, where the more impressive sounding "Brontë" replaced his original family name of Brunty.

His perseverance and dedication, which had earned him a spot at Cambridge, saw him through other curricula, mostly in the North of England, before he reached Haworth. Patrick Brontë had published both poetry and fiction by this point, so his kids were used to seeing their name on books on the Parsonage shelves.

After Mrs. Brontë passed away from cancer on September 15, 1821, her single sister Elizabeth Branwell took over as the Parsonage's manager. Elizabeth had left her cozy Penzance home behind to live in a desolate northern hamlet.

The sisters' first trip outside of Haworth took place in 1824 when they enrolled in the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge, which is close to Kirkby Lonsdale. (Gaskell 1855)

### **1.5.1.2. Victorian Society and the Brontë Sisters**

The subjects of the Brontë sisters' works were influenced by their unique social situation. The Parsonage was one of the biggest residences in Haworth, yet it would have been seen as modest compared to the dwellings of clergymen in wealthier parts of Britain.

The class system had a far more rigid structure at the beginning of the nineteenth century than it is now. The Brontës' schooling elevated them socially above the majority of people in Haworth during the period before the 1870 Elementary schooling Act, when a sizable section of the populace was illiterate.

But the Brontës were not as well-off as the wealthy manufacturers and upper classes of Yorkshire; they were unable to maintain a carriage, travel far, or furnish their home.

The Brontë sisters had to make a living, and a lot of their writing was influenced by their experiences as governesses—a social outpost where they were neither related to anybody nor a servant.

A fuller appreciation of these three extraordinary women's works can be gained by touring the house where they resided for the most of their life. Doing so offers a fascinating look into the liberties and constraints of their era. (Winnifrith, 1984)

### **1.5.1.3. Schooling**

Education and schools have a significant role in both the Brontës' personal lives and literary works. becoming a successful student and teacher had helped Mr. Bronte advance from obscurity to the relative grandeur and financial security that came with becoming a clergyman in the nineteenth century. This was beyond the reach of his daughters, Branwell's interests did not go in that direction, and neither the Brontës' private instruction nor the schools they attended seemed to have prepared them for the outside world. However, we shouldn't be too hard on Mr. Brontë because, like many parents at the time, he was attempting to educate his kids on a tight budget at an era when quality education was scarce.

Education for girls has traditionally lagged significantly behind that of males. The educational reforms in England, whether in state-funded, church-sponsored, or misleadingly named public or independent schools, actually date to the second half of the 1800s. Although Thomas Arnold served as Rugby School's headmaster from 1829 to 1842, it took another ten years or so for

other schools to feel the impact of his teachings. The Cheltenham Ladies' College was created in 1853, and throughout the second half of the 1800s, educators such as Miss Buss and Miss Beale worked to progressively establish women's rights to an education on par with men's. (Harrison, 1948)

Although Miss Beale expressed some severe opinions about Cowan Bridge, it took some time for the pioneers' views to permeate the types of schools that the Brontes attended and taught in. In England, free public education was not mandated until 1870. (Chitham, 1986)

If the Brontës had been males, their suffering would have likely been far more severe. It appears that Branwell's attempt to attend a dilapidated grammar school in Oxenhope was unsuccessful, despite hazy tales to the contrary. Dickens' depictions of Mr. Squeers' and Mr. Creakle's establishments are not wildly exaggerated images of subpar schools; even the most well-known boys' schools of the era were rife with cruelty and ignorance. On the other hand, Cowan Bridge and Lowood in fiction both appear to have redeeming qualities, such as the existence of the nice Miss Temple, who is said to have an original, and other instructors who subsequently wrote warmly of Cowan Bridge. (Oram)

Though neither Anne nor Emily were content as students at Miss Wooler's school, and Charlotte struggled as a teacher, the institution appears to have been a nice one.

It's true that the Brontes attended school for a relatively short period of time. On 1st of July, 1824, Maria and Elizabeth Bronte arrived at Cowan Bridge. On 10th of August, 1824, Charlotte and Emily Brontë arrived. In 1825, Maria departed on 14th of February, Elizabeth on 31st of May, and Charlotte and Emily on 1st of June.

These dates, which come from the Cowan Bridge registration, imply that Mr. Brontë continued to have faith in the school until Maria's death on 6 of May at Horne.

The registers are fairly critical of the academic achievements of all four Brontes, and they assert severely that Maria's designated job was governess, not Elizabeth's. In contrast, Emily, who was very young when she went to Cowan Bridge, was said to read very prettily and work a little. Charlotte, who was highly admired for her cunning at Roe Head, was said to read tolerably, write indifferently, work neatly, and cipher a little. CIPHERING most likely referred to math, while labor may refer to embroidery. The reports point to strict if high standards, and the institution deserves credit for recording infectious diseases. (Wilks, 2013)



#### 1.5.1.4. Literary life

Numerous books have been written about the Brontë sisters. Numerous critical and biographical works have been written about them because of their novels' universal appeal to readers of all ages and the tragic sadness of their lives. It is hard to come up with something fresh to say about the Brontës, which may be one of the reasons that irrational hypotheses concerning their lives and works of fiction have become all too common. Our goal has been to dispel some of the myths that have circulated about the people who live in Haworth Parsonage.

It is still widely accepted that *Wuthering Heights* is a recreation of a desolate farmhouse near Haworth, that Lowood in *Jane Eyre* was the exact replica of Charlotte and Emily's first school at Cowan Bridge, that several inebriated characters in the novels are modelled after Branwell, and that Charlotte wrote the diary of her experiences at the school of Monsieur and Madame Heger in her Belgian novels in a shameless and artistic manner. There are parallels between some of the characters in the works and some of the characters in the lives of the Brontës; nevertheless, a parallel does not equate to an identity, nor should we look for real-life examples of every character written by Charlotte Brontë. Nothing original for Heathcliff will emerge from these pages. (Tillotson, 1953)

Despite being closely associated with the lives and backgrounds of their authors in Yorkshire, the Brontë books possess an enduring quality that has made them popular across several nations and cultures. We have discovered a shameful but understandable ignorance of the world the Brontës lived in and wrote about while teaching adult students as well as adolescents, not only from England but from all over the world. The term Victorian refers to a world of harsh, strange, fixed values that is sometimes nostalgically remembered by our peers and is typically used with contempt by our children. This world is thought to have extended well beyond Queen Victoria's reign (1837–1901) and to include any book published between 1800 and 1960. The number of fast shifts in attitudes that occurred even during Queen Victoria's reign is underappreciated, as is the frequency with which early Victorian writers such as the Brontës questioned widely held beliefs that they were occasionally unaware of. (Jay, 1979)

Perhaps it was the age in which they lived, perhaps it was their upbringing, but in general it can be said that the sisters' work has a strong emphasis on religion and education. Though the Brontës are modern in that they reject some of their cruelties, the progressive views toward

education and the unwillingness or incapacity of contemporary churchmen to condemn sin make the clergymen and teachers of the Brontë novels look quite strange. (Winnifirth & Chitham, 1989)

That the settings in the Brontë sisters' novels appear so depressing and that their writing is infused with such a melancholy aura is understandable.

They moved multiple times, and each time they did, they ended up in an area with a dark interior. Their homes were always perched above hills, making entry difficult. This place is reminiscent of the homes in their writings.

## **1.6. Charlotte Brontë**

Charlotte Brontë, the eldest of the famed Brontë sisters, stands as a towering figure in the realm of English literature, her name synonymous with literary brilliance and enduring influence. Renowned for her indomitable spirit, keen intellect, and captivating storytelling, Charlotte Brontë remains a luminous presence in the pantheon of literary giants. With her compelling characters, haunting landscapes, and unflinching exploration of human emotion, she emerges as a trailblazer of Victorian literature, whose narrative prowess and thematic depth continue to captivate readers worldwide. Through the timeless masterpiece "Jane Eyre," Charlotte Brontë embarks on a journey of self-discovery, resilience, and creative fervour, leaving an indelible mark on the tapestry of English letters.

### **1.6.1. Charlotte and her family**

Throughout her early years, Charlotte nurtured a desire of social emergence. Two months before she started her first job as a governess, in February and March of 1839, when she was about twenty-three years old, she penned a story about a teacher who lacks resources but has energy. The character known as Elizabeth Hastings, comes from a lonely moorland, much like Charlotte did when she lived in the West Yorkshire moor settlement of Haworth. She ends up in an artificial city. The new instructor receives praise right away for her "superior talent." Wearing "fastidious care and taste" but "plainer if possible than ever," her public restraint is a much-admired contrast to her personal skills. She soon makes a lot of friends and receives many of invitations.

This goal was dashed in May 1839 when Charlotte started working as a governess at Stonegappe, a sizable home in Yorkshire that sits atop a hill four miles from Skipton. Her employer quickly put her on her place.

She wrote to Emily the followings:

*'I said in my last letter that Mrs Sidgwick did not know me',  
'I now begin to find that she does not intend to know me... I used to think I  
should like to be in the stir of grand folks' society but I have had enough of it - it is dreary  
work to look on and listen.'*

(Gordon, 1995:2)

Their employers were blind to their mental gifts, unable to recognize anything that did not align with their own values. Later, two sisters, Diana and Mary Rivers, are forced to leave their Moor-House home to work as governesses in families 'by whose wealthy and haughty members they were regarded only as humble dependants, and who neither knew nor sought one of their innate excellences, and appreciated only their acquired accomplishments as they appreciated the skill of their cook, or the taste of their waiting woman,' in Charlotte Brontë's most well-known novel, *Jane Eyre*. Six years in the substantial homes of merchants and aristocracy had a deadening effect, as observed by Anne Brontë:

*'Never a new idea or stirring thought came to me from without; and such as  
rose within me were, for the most part, miserably crushed at once, or doomed to sicken  
and fade away, because they could not see the light. ... The gross vapours of earth were  
gathering around me, and closing in upon my inward heaven.'*

(Gordon, 1995:2)

Were the sisters to allow employers' glaring eyes to destroy the "inward heaven," or were they able to come up with plans to keep it intact? The modern definition of womanhood, which *Jane Eyre* flaunts in the airs of Lady Ingram and her daughter (possibly named after the Inghams who rejected Anne), has supplanted the shadow of Charlotte's existence. This shadow is

represented by the governess's dark attire, the shadow cast by her closed eyelids during writing, the title of "Currer Bell," and the unidentified name on her books.

Her father, Mr. Bronte, managed to learn very little about his daughters' writing and very little about their potential since he withdrew himself from meals and spent every year alone in his study. When Charlotte finally admitted decades later that she was the author of the wildly popular *Jane Eyre*, she didn't assume Edward would be interested. More than once a month, she should have known better than to bring up her writing.

In the life of Charlotte Bronte, an experiment is depicted where a woman, cut off from society along with her sisters, exploited their seclusion to delve into personal secrets. An intriguing forerunner to this experiment was one Mr. Bronte created in 1824 to bring out the personalities and skills of his kids. He called each of his children to him one by one and, covering their face in turn, welcomed replies to his inquiries in an attempt to test the theory that his kids could divulge more about themselves if they were hidden.

### **1.6.2. The first steps**

Under the pseudonyms Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne published a collection of poems together in May 1846 using their own funds. The sisters' gender was concealed while maintaining their initials under the pseudonyms; Charlotte was Currer Bell. "Currer" was the surname of Frances Mary Richardson Currer, who had supported their school (and maybe their father), and "Bell" was the middle name of Arthur Bell Nicholls, the curate of Haworth, to whom Charlotte eventually married. (Colin, 2004)

Regarding the choice of pen name, Charlotte wrote:

*Averse to personal publicity, we veiled our own names under those of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell; the ambiguous choice being dictated by a sort of conscientious scruple at assuming Christian names positively masculine, while we did not like to declare ourselves women, because – without at that time suspecting that our mode of writing and thinking was not what is called "feminine" – we had a vague impression that authoresses are liable to be looked on with prejudice; we had noticed how critics sometimes use for their chastisement the weapon of personality, and for their reward, a flattery, which is not true praise*

(Brontë, 2000:67)

The sisters started writing for publication and started their first books despite the fact that only two copies of the collection of poems were sold. They continued to use their pen name while submitting manuscripts to possible publishers.

Brontë was encouraged by an encouraging response from Smith, Elder & Co. of Cornhill, who showed interest in any longer works Currer Bell might desire to send, even though her initial manuscript, "The Professor," did not find a publisher. In response, Brontë completed and mailed a second manuscript in August 1847. *Jane Eyre* was released six weeks later. (Miller, 2002)

*Jane Eyre* earned positive reviews at first and saw rapid financial success. Sighs from the depths, or "suspiria de profundis!" as G. H. Lewes put it, were "an utterance from the depths of a struggling, suffering, much-enduring spirit" (Miller, 2002). Concomitant with the conjecture came a shift in the evaluation of Brontë's writing, with charges that the prose was "coarse", a determination that was easier to come to after it was assumed that Currer Bell was a female. Nevertheless, despite the novel's reputation as a "improper" work, *Jane Eyre's* sales remained high and might have even increased. (Fraser, 2008)

Brontë started writing the draft of *Shirley*, her second book, in 1848. The Brontë family lost three members in the span of eight months, thus it was only partially finished. Brontë thought that Branwell had died of tuberculosis, but in September 1848 he passed away from chronic bronchitis and marasmus, which had been made worse by excessive drinking. There's a chance Branwell was addicted to laudanum. Soon after his funeral, Emily was very ill and died in December 1848 from pulmonary tuberculosis. The same illness claimed Anne's life in May 1849. At this point, Brontë was incapable of writing. (Miller, 2002)

Brontë continued to write after Anne's death in order to cope with her grief. Her novel *Shirley*, which addresses themes of industrial discontent and women's roles in society, was released in October 1849. *Shirley* is written in the third person and lacks the emotional immediacy of her first book, *Jane Eyre*, which is written in the first person. Reviewers also thought *Shirley* to be less shocking. As the successor apparent to her late sister, Charlotte Brontë suppressed the publication of Anne's second book, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*.

## **1.7. Anne Brontë**

Anne Brontë, the youngest of the celebrated Brontë sisters, may have been overshadowed by the fame of her siblings, Charlotte and Emily, yet her literary contributions remain a testament to her talent and vision. Often described as the quietest and most introspective of the Brontës, Anne possessed a keen observational eye and a profound understanding of human nature. Through her groundbreaking novel "The Tenant of Wildfell Hall" and her poignant poetry, Anne explored themes of love, morality, and societal conventions with a rare blend of sensitivity and courage. In this introductory paragraph, we embark on a journey to uncover the lesser-known but equally remarkable legacy of Anne Brontë, a literary pioneer whose works continue to resonate with readers seeking profound insights into the human condition.

“Is Anne Brontë worthy of a study in her own right?” – asks the question Ada Harrison (1959: 11). Some might rightly question this, as Anne, as the youngest sister, could dwarf Charlotte and Emily, both in person and in character. Given the vast amount of work already done on the Brontës, the question seems unavoidable, yet framed another way, it becomes unnecessary. Does the author of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* and *Agnes Grey* merit a study unto herself?

Since Anne Brontë's writings have stood the test of the time, its author is naturally entitled to attention. However, when we first go out, our curiosity isn't as piqued as it should be since we kind of feel like we already know Anne very well. Anne has always been destined to be compared to her sisters, both personally and professionally. She never demands attention in this contrast, which means that we get to know her without really getting to know her. She is a character who is there but stays silent. (Harrison & Stanford, 1959)

### **1.7.1. Early life**

Anne was the youngest of the Brontë siblings. On the outskirts of Bradford, on Market Street, Thornton—now known as the Brontë Birthplace—she was born on January 17, 1820, in the parsonage. (Barker, 1995) That is where Anne was baptized on March 25, 1820. Subsequently, Patrick was named perpetual currite of Haworth, a tiny village seven miles (11 km) distant. The family moved into the five-room Haworth Parsonage in April of 1820.

Anne's mother, Maria, fell ill when she was just a year old. Maria Branwell passed away on September 15, 1821. Patrick attempted but was unable to remarry. Elizabeth Branwell (1776–1842), Maria's sister, lived in the parsonage for the most of her life while caring for Maria's children.

She fulfilled her duty by doing it. She was severe and demanded deference—not affection. She didn't show much care for the elder kids. Tradition has it that Anne was her favourite. (Fraser, 1988)

In Patrick's account of Charlotte's life, Elizabeth Gaskell described Anne as bright. When Patrick asked Anne when she was four years old what a child wanted most, Anne replied, "Age and experience." (Fraser, 1988)

Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte, and Emily were sent by Patrick to Crofton Hall in West Yorkshire during the summer of 1824. After that, they were transported to the Clergy Daughter's School located in Cowan Bridge, Lancashire. Maria Brontë passed away on May 6, 1825, and Elizabeth Brontë on June 15, 1825, both from tuberculosis. The family was so traumatized by the unanticipated deaths that Patrick could not bear to send them away once more. For the next five years, Elizabeth Branwell and Patrick mostly taught them at home. The kids leaned on one another for company and made no effort to interact with others outside of the parsonage. They turned the desolate moors of Haworth into a playground. Anne and Elizabeth, her aunt, were in the same room. Because of their intimate relationship, she might have shaped Anne's outlook on life and religion. (Gérin, 1976)

### **1.7.2. Anne, the governess**

At the age of 19, a year after graduating from high school, Anne was looking for work as a teacher. She needed to work because she was a poor clergyman's daughter. Her father had no personal income, and upon his passing, the parsonage would become the property of the church. For an educated but impoverished woman, her alternatives were limited to being a governess or teaching. At Blake Hall, which is close to Mirfield, Anne began serving as a governess for the Ingham family in April 1839. (Barker, 1995)

She was responsible for spoilt and unruly children.<sup>38</sup> Anne struggled mightily to keep them under control and had minimal success in teaching them. She was not permitted to discipline them, and when she voiced her displeasure with their actions, she was met with contempt and criticism for her lack of ability.

Anne was fired by the Inghams because they were not happy with their children's development. During Christmas in 1839, she went back home. Branwell was also at home with Emily and Charlotte, who had quit from their jobs. Because Anne's stay at Blake Hall was so horrific, she carefully portrayed the events in her book *Agnes Grey*. (Baker, 1995)

Anne was employed at Thorp Green Hall, a cozy country home close to York, from 1840 to 1845. She served as the Reverend Edmund Robinson's and his wife Lydia's governess here. In *Agnes Grey*, the residence was portrayed as Horton Lodge. Lydia (15), Elizabeth (13), Mary (12), and Edmund (8) were Anne's four students. At first, she experienced issues resembling those at Blake Hall. Anne missed her family and her house. She expressed her desire to leave her current situation and her dislike of it in a journal entry from 1841. Her soft-spoken, reserved demeanour did not assist. However, Anne never gave up and succeeded in her role, earning the respect of her bosses. The Robinson sisters, under her tutelage, grew to be lifelong friends. (Gérin, 1976)

Only five or six weeks of the year, at Christmas and in June, were spent with Anne's family. She spent the remainder of her time with the Robinsons. She went to Scarborough with the Robinsons every year for their holidays. Anne enjoyed spending about five weeks every summer in the seaside resort between 1840 and 1844. Her novels were set in several Scarborough places. Considering an interest in geology, at least in her novels or from personal experience, she had the opportunity to gather semi-precious stones, which she regarded something appropriate for men and women to be viewed as equals. (Japars et. al, 2022)

While Anne was still employed by the Robinsons, she and her sisters discussed opening a school. The parsonage was one of the locations that was considered, but the project was never completed. When her aunt passed away in early November 1842, Anne returned home while her sisters were in Brussels. For each of her nieces, Elizabeth Branwell left a legacy of £350, which would be worth £40,000 in 2021. (Clark, 2017)

Anne wrote her three-verse poem, *Lines Composed in a Wood on a Windy Day*, at the Long Plantation at Thorp Green in 1842. It was published in 1846 under the pen name Acton Bell. (Barker, 1995)

Anne went back to Thorp Green in January 1843 and got Branwell a job. Edmund was getting too old to be under Anne's care, therefore he was to be his instructor. Anne was the resident of the house; Branwell did not. Hard-fought fights, weighing intensely felt emotions with careful consideration, a sense of duty, and unwavering perseverance seem to have contributed to Anne's much-admired serenity. While all three Brontë sisters worked as governesses or teachers, Anne was the only one who overcame obstacles to succeed in her career, including managing her charges, getting support from her employers, and dealing with homesickness. (Alexander & Smith, 2003)



Following Anne's passing, Charlotte resolved problems with the initial Agnes Grey edition in order to make it available again, but she blocked the publishing of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Charlotte wrote in 1850 that:

*'Wildfell Hall it hardly appears to me desirable to preserve. The choice of subject in that work is a mistake, it was too little consonant with the character, tastes and ideas of the gentle, retiring inexperienced writer.'*

(Bakers, 1995:654)

Some critics rejected Anne as “a Brontë without genius” and others gave her less attention after that. (Lane, 1953)

However, her life and works have received more attention since the middle of the 20th century. The recognition of Anne Brontë as a significant literary figure has been facilitated by biographies by Winifred Gérin (1959), Elizabeth Langland (1989), and Edward Chitham (1991), as well as Juliet Barker's group biography, *The Brontës* (1995), and criticism by Inga-Stina Ewbank, Marianne Thormählen, Laura C Berry, Jan B Gordon, Mary Summers, and Juliet McMaster.

Through her literary works and her life's journey, she exemplified courage in confronting societal norms and advocating for individual autonomy. As we reflect on her profound contributions to literature and her enduring legacy, let us heed her call to embrace challenges, seek truth, and cultivate compassion. Anne Brontë's voice may have been overlooked in her time, but today, it resonates with timeless wisdom and unwavering resilience, inspiring us to confront injustice, pursue our passions, and strive for a more just and compassionate world.

In conclusion, the 19th century stands as a pivotal era marked by profound transformations in literature, education, and societal norms, with the Brontë sisters – Charlotte, Emily, and Anne – emerging as literary luminaries whose works continue to captivate and inspire readers worldwide.

The 19th century witnessed a dynamic literary landscape characterized by the rise of Romanticism, realism, and Gothic literature, reflecting the era's tumultuous social, political, and cultural currents. From the sweeping landscapes of the Yorkshire moors in Emily Brontë's “*Wuthering Heights*” to the intimate portrayals of Victorian domestic life in Charlotte Brontë's “*Jane Eyre*” and Anne Brontë's “*Agnes Grey*,” the Brontë sisters captured the complexities of human experience with unparalleled depth and insight.

Moreover, the Brontë sisters' novels offer compelling reflections on the education system of their time, shedding light on the challenges and inequalities faced by women and the working class within Victorian society. Through the experiences of their protagonists—Jane Eyre, Agnes Grey, and Catherine Earnshaw—the Brontës confront readers with the harsh realities of educational access and opportunity, while also celebrating the transformative power of knowledge and self-realization.

Furthermore, the Brontë sisters' enduring literary legacy extends beyond their individual works to encompass their collective impact on the literary canon and feminist discourse. Through their unflinching portrayals of female agency, resilience, and independence, the Brontës challenged conventional gender roles and societal expectations, paving the way for future generations of writers and activists to advocate for gender equality and social justice.

In essence, the Brontë sisters and their contemporaries represent the epitome of 19th-century literary excellence, offering readers timeless insights into the human condition and the complexities of Victorian society. Through their enduring works and their commitment to social and intellectual progress, the Brontë sisters continue to inspire and provoke readers, prompting meaningful reflection on the past, present, and future of literature, education, and society.

## **II. DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE 19TH CENTURY ENGLISH PRIVATE EDUCATION SYSTEM AS REPRESENTED IN THE NOVELS “AGNES GREY” BY ANNE BRONTË AND “JANE EYRE” BY CHARLOTTE BRONTË**

### **2.1. Jane Eyre**

Crises and advancements in Victorian-era British society were examined by authors such as Charlotte Brontë. The British built up their empire abroad, bringing income from their colonies. As a result of the Industrial Revolution at home, manufacturing emerged as the main driver of British economy. A new labouring class fought for pay, job security, and decent living and working circumstances as the middle class discovered profitable opportunities. Themes of the crisis-era changes that can be found in Jane Eyre include improved working conditions, political representation, and educational opportunities. For women, whose place in Victorian society was restricted, few of these reforms materialized right away. Jane discusses class, economics, and gender roles that impacted Victorian Britain as a whole as she works toward financial and personal freedom.

The novel is analysed below in relation to the theme of education. The quotations analysed are intended to illustrate some aspect of education, both institutional and private.

#### **2.1.1. Starting school**

Jane Eyre is not much loved in the Reed family. This is clear from the first pages of the novel. They are treated very differently by their own children. They are completely separated from each other, sleeping separately, eating separately, playing separately. How to free themselves from Jane and the responsibilities of raising her was certainly on their minds. You could say they saw her as an unpleasant problem that needed to be solved and eliminated as soon as possible.

The possibility of sending her to school certainly arose. Their own sons were already at school, but they did not want to be burdened with school costs for many years until Jane had finished her education. And they certainly did not want her to be treated in the same way as their beloved sons, to enjoy the same advantages as John Reed.

*Mrs. Reed surveyed me at times with a severe eye, but seldom addressed me: since my illness she had drawn a more marked line of separation than ever between me and her own children; appointing me a small closet to sleep in by myself, condemning me to take my meals alone, and pass all my time in the nursery, while my cousins were constantly in the drawing-room.*

*Not a hint, however, did she drop about sending me to school: still I felt an instinctive certainty that she would not long endure me under the same roof with her; for her glance, now more than ever, when turned on me, expressed an insuperable and rooted aversion.*

*(Chapter 4, p. 21)*

Mrs Reed found the solution. She has found a school that she believes is just right for children like Jane, who have no one to support or pay for their education. Jane Eyre lived fifty miles away from her aunt, Mrs. Reed, who resided in the north of England, at the Lowood Institution. The fictitious school was designed after Charlotte Bronte and her sisters' Cowan Bridge school in Lancashire.

In addition to finally getting rid of the girl, Mrs Reed gives her one last humiliation. She reminds the headmaster that Jane needs special attention from the teachers and that he must keep an eye on her because she is prone to cheating. This will give Jane a bad reputation in her future 'home', at least with the headmistress.

Aside from the story itself, we learn from a contemporary historical perspective how school enrolment was organised in the 19th century. Parents or legal representatives would write a letter to the head of the institution in question about their wish to apply for school.

*'Mr. Brocklehurst, I believe I intimated in the letter which I wrote to you three weeks ago, that this little girl has not quite the character and disposition I could wish: should you admit her into Lowood school, I should be glad if the superintendent and teachers were requested to keep a strict eye on her, and above all, to guard against her worst fault, a tendency to deceit. I mention this in your hearing, Jane, that you may not attempt to impose on Mr. Brocklehurst.'*

*(Chapter 4, p. 28)*

### 2.1.2. Description of school

This is the first scene where the possibility of Jane going to school is raised. Not that a child had much say in whether to go to school or not back in the 19th century. For the most part, the parents' social class and income determined whether they could afford to send their children to any kind of education, whether it was institutional education or the hiring of a governess.

It is also interesting to observe from this quote how the image of school and going to school lives in a child's mind. And although Jane had only second-hand information about what school was like, and this information was not very promising, she had in mind what she would learn and thus what her opportunities in life would be. Besides, she could say goodbye to the house she hated.

*'Would you like to go to school?'*

*Again I reflected: I scarcely knew what school was; Bessie sometimes spoke of it as a place where young ladies sat in the stocks, wore backboards, and were expected to be exceedingly genteel and precise: John Reed hated his school, and abused his master; but John Reed's tastes were no rule for mine, and if Bessie's accounts of school discipline (gathered from the young ladies of a family where she had lived before coming to Gateshead) were somewhat appalling, her details of certain accomplishments attained by these same young ladies were, I thought, equally attractive. She boasted of beautiful paintings of landscapes and flowers by them executed; of songs they could sing and pieces they could play, or purses they could net, of French books they could translate; till my spirit was moved to emulation as I listened. Besides, school would be complete change: it implied a long journey, an entire separation from Gateshead, an entrance into a new life.*

*'I should indeed like to go to school,' was the audible conclusion of my musings.*

*(Chapter 3, p. 19)*

After Mr. Brocklehurst assures Mrs. Reed that special care will be taken in raising the girl, the first description of the Lowood School, and more specifically the girls who attend it, is revealed. It turns out that this foundation school is a deeply religious one.

And the headmaster proudly describes how he has worked out how best to discourage secularism in the pupils. In addition to the restrained behaviour of the pupils, we are given a

description of their compulsory appearance, which is as puritanical as possible: combed hair, long, shapeless uniforms. They give the impression of children from a poor family.

However, we must not forget that this is a veiled social critique by Charlotte Brontë. For here, from the very beginning, she presents the hypocritical nature of the headmaster, who is infinitely concerned with the Puritanism of his pupils, their simple appearance, their God-centred life and their refusal of worldly pomp. In contrast, his daughter and his wife's appearance astonishes the girls, as if they had never seen the silk dresses they wore. This dichotomy recurs even later in the novel.

*'Your decisions are perfectly judicious, madam,' returned Mr. Brocklehurst. 'Humility is a Christian grace, and one peculiarly appropriate to the pupils of Lowood: I, therefore, direct that especial care shall be bestowed on its cultivation amongst them. I have studied how best to mortify in them the worldly sentiment of pride; and, only the other day, I had a pleasing proof of my success. My second daughter, Augusta, went with her mamma to visit the school, and on her return she exclaimed: "Oh, dear papa, how quiet and plain all the girls at Lowood look; with their hair combed behind their ears, and their long pinafores, and those little holland pockets outside their frocks—they are almost like poor people's children! and," said she, "they looked at my dress and mamma's, as if they had never seen a silk gown before."*

*(Chapter 4, pp. 28-29)*

Mrs. Reed is relieved to have found such a rigorous school, and together they continue to discuss how Christian duty is paramount in education, and Lowood is the perfect place to tame little Jane. Which is again an ironic manifestation, on the part of the headmaster, because of what has been said before, and on the part of Mrs Reed, because, although she talks about the importance of Christian duty and faith in education, she is about to abandon her primary Christian duty, the decent upbringing of her niece.

*'This is the state of things I quite approve.'* returned Mrs. Reed; *'had I sought all England over, I could scarcely have found a system more exactly fitting a child like Jane Eyre. Consistency, my dear Mr. Brocklehurst; I advocate consistency in all things.'*

*'Consistency, madam, is the first of Christian duties; and it has been observed in every arrangement connected with the establishment of Lowood: plain fare, simple attire, unsophisticated accommodations, hardy and active habits; such is the order of the day in the house and its inhabitants.'*

*'Quite right, sir. I may then depend upon this child being received as a pupil at Lowood, and there being trained in conformity to her position and prospects?'*

*'Madam, you may: she shall be placed in that nursery of chosen plants—and I trust she will show herself grateful for the inestimable privilege of her election.'*

*(Chapter 4, p. 29)*

The famous Lowood Institution did not bring complete satisfaction to Jane's life after all. For although she has been freed from Gateshead Hall, the school is still a terrible place for children.

Burnt porridge appears in Jane's life at two significant times. The first is at Lowood, where Jane arrives and is given burned porridge for breakfast along with the other girls. Mr. Brocklehurst becomes upset when Miss Temple gives the girls an extra meal during the day to make up for the terrible dish that no one can eat.

The second occurs when a woman and a little child caring for a pig give Jane a bowl of cold, hard, congealed porridge that the pig refused to eat when Jane was homeless and roaming around.

What does it represent, then? In other words, a degree of submission and humility that is unnatural for anyone to achieve. According to Mr. Brocklehurst, if the girls are handed inedible oatmeal, they should either go hungry and take advantage of the opportunity to "mortify the flesh" or eat it and be grateful anyway.

*Ravenous, and now very faint, I devoured a spoonful or two of my portion without thinking of its taste; but the first edge of hunger blunted, I perceived I had got in hand a nauseous mess: burnt porridge is almost as bad as rotten potatoes; famine itself soon sickens over it. The spoons were moved slowly: I saw each girl taste her food and try to swallow it; but in most cases the effort was soon relinquished. Breakfast was over, and none had breakfasted. Thanks being returned for what we had not got, and a second hymn chanted, the refectory was evacuated for the schoolroom. I was one of the last to go out, and in passing the tables, I saw one teacher take a basin of the porridge and taste it; she looked*

*at the others; all their countenances expressed dis-pleasure, and one of them, the stout one, whispered:—'Abominable stuff! How shameful!'*

*(Chapter 5, p. 41)*

What is the point of being an Institution? How is it different from any other school in England? And the answer is not only interesting for Jane, but also for the way in which the education system of the time was presented. For it becomes clear that this kind of charitable school or institution is for children who have no one. Orphans, or children from very poor families, who are brought up in what today would seem to be inhumane conditions, with no one to look after them, or even children whose families are happy to be able to provide at least this level of education for them.

*“Can you tell me what the writing on that stone over the door means? What is Lowood Institution ?”*

*“This house where you are come to live.”*

*'And why do they call it Institution? Is it in any way different from other schools?' 'It is partly a charity-school: you and I, and all the rest of us, are charity children.*

*(Chapter 5, pp. 45-46)*

The below lines only confirm the poor living conditions that characterised the institution. It also shows the hierarchy that has not yet been mentioned, the hierarchy that characterised the relationship between the pupils. Perhaps the development of this is not so surprising, the older ones having the upper hand in everything, as far as circumstances allowed. The opportunities provided by school did not really allow them to live in great luxury, so they enjoyed priority in ‘small things’ like enjoying the warmth of a fire.

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*How we longed for the light and heat of a blazing fire when we got back! But, to the little ones at least, this was denied: each hearth in the schoolroom was immediately surrounded by a double row of great girls, and behind them the younger children crouched in groups, wrapping their starved arms in their pinafores.*

*(Chapter 7, p. 58)*

*From this deficiency of nourishment resulted an abuse, which pressed hardly on the younger pupils: whenever the famished great girls had an opportunity, they would coax or menace the little ones out of their portion. Many a time I have shared between two claimants the precious morsel of brown bread distributed at tea-time; and after relinquishing to a third, half the contents of my mug of coffee, I have swallowed the remainder with an accompaniment of secret tears, forced from me by the exigency of hunger.*

*Sundays were dreary days in that wintry season. We had to walk two miles to Brocklebridge Church, where our patron officiated. We set out cold, we arrived at church colder: during the morning service we became almost paralysed. It was too far to return to dinner, and an allowance of cold meat and bread, in the same penurious proportion observed in our ordinary meals, was served round between the services.*

*At the close of the afternoon service we returned by an exposed and hilly road, where the bitter winter wind, blowing over a range of snowy summits to the north, almost flayed the skin from our faces.*

*(Chapter 7, p. 57)*

Food in *Jane Eyre* represents bounty, kindness, and sustenance; hunger, on the other hand, represents cruelty and malnourishment. Brontë reveals how people treat one another—who is charitable and who isn't—by using food and hunger. For example, the scarcity of food at Lowood exposes the brutality and religious hypocrisy of the institution. On the other side, Ms. Temple gives meals and is kind and giving. In the book, food also has a theological importance; bodily hunger is a metaphor for a deeper spiritual need.

Miss Temple receives a rebuke from Brocklehurst for overspending on the students' clothes and food. Then, in order to make them appear modest and uncomplicated, he insists that girls with

thick or wavy hair have it entirely chopped off. Brocklehurst enters with his two girls and his immaculately dressed wife.

However, it is evident that he has never skipped a meal and that neither of those choices represents a genuine chance for spiritual development but rather a harsh martyrdom. Later in the book, when Jane is made to accept the congealed porridge and express gratitude for it, we come to see that she has been reduced to the extremely low status that someone like Mr. Brocklehurst—or Mrs. Reed—wants her to have.

*Should any little accidental disappointment of the appetite occur, such as the spoiling of a meal, the under or the over dressing of a dish, the incident ought not to be neutralised by replacing with something more delicate the comfort lost, thus pampering the body and obviating the aim of this institution; it ought to be improved to the spiritual edification of the pupils, by encouraging them to evince fortitude under the temporary privation. A brief address on those occasions would not be mistimed, wherein a judicious instructor would take the opportunity of referring to the sufferings of the primitive Christians; to the torments of martyrs; to the exhortations of our blessed Lord himself, calling upon his disciples to take up their cross and follow him; to his warnings that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; to his divine consolations, "if ye suffer hunger or thirst for my sake, happy are ye." Oh, madam, when you put bread and cheese, instead of burnt porridge, into these children's mouths, you may indeed feed their vile bodies, but you little think how you starve their immortal souls!*

*(Chapter 7, p. 70)*

The chapter begins in the brilliant light of April, when everything turns verdant and bountiful, abounding in "wild primrose plants." As Jane and her new companion, Mary Ann Wilson, joyfully relish this opulent natural setting, Lowood School has become infamous due to a plague: Typhus is rapidly decimating half of the school's female student body. Jane creates a striking contrast between life and death by identifying Lowood as the progenitor of both May's genius and Typhus's deadliness. Pleasure and pain are inextricably linked.

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The Lowood pandemic highlights the hardship of poor women and brings up memories of Brontë's own sisters' deaths. Jane becomes aware of the paradoxes in life when she compares the death and the rebirth of spring. As spring is a season of change, Jane is changing from a young person.

*Semi-starvation and neglected colds had predisposed most of the pupils to receive infection: forty-five out of the eighty girls lay ill at one time. Classes were broken up, rules relaxed. The few who continued well were allowed almost unlimited license; because the medical attendant insisted on the necessity of frequent exercise to keep them in health: and had it been otherwise, no one had leisure to watch or restrain them. Miss Temple's whole attention was absorbed by the patients: she lived in the sick-room, never quitting it except to snatch a few hours' rest at night. The teachers were fully occupied with packing up and making other necessary preparations for the departure of those girls who were fortunate enough to have friends and relations able and willing to remove them from the seat of contagion. Many, already smitten, went home only to die: some died at the school, and were buried quietly and quickly, the nature of the malady forbidding delay.*

*(Chapter 9, p. 75)*

Due to the abuse of the school's youngsters, semi-starvation and neglected colds had predisposed most of the pupils to receive infection, making the students especially susceptible to the outbreak. We are informed that 45 out of the 80 girls lay ill at one point. Being extremely contagious, typhus is an excellent way to level the social playing field because it can affect any youngster. It highlights some of the weaknesses in a hierarchical social structure; Brontë tells us that some girls have friends and family who are ready and able to take them out of the centre of the outbreak. We assume that the less fortunate people are left to perish at school.

*While disease had thus become an inhabitant of Lowood, and death its frequent visitor; while there was gloom and fear within its walls; while its rooms and passages steamed*

*with hospital smells, the drug and the pastille striving vainly to overcome the effluvia of mortality, that bright May shone unclouded over the bold hills and beautiful woodland out of doors.*

*(Chapter 9, p. 75)*

Following the deaths of several students. The people, appalled, reacted strongly. This paragraph illustrates the prevalence of cholera, typhoid, typhus, and other similar illnesses in the Victorian era as well as the rise in public interest in treating and avoiding these scourges. England's population suffered greatly and frequently negatively as a result of the country's industrialization and urbanization. Even those who were wealthy did not always have good living conditions, sanitation, or hygiene; this was particularly true of the poor, who lived in tenements and slums, which served as ideal habitats for the spread of disease.

Even those who were wealthy did not always have good living conditions, sanitation, or hygiene; this was particularly true of the poor, who lived in tenements and slums, which served as ideal habitats for the spread of disease. The food that was available to the poor was tainted and their diets were unhealthy. Despite having a higher doctor population, hospitals spread infection and can make patients sicker. But the bar had been increased. It was widely believed that having a healthy body improved a person's ability to contribute to society. Society paid far more attention to the hygienic and health conditions in places like Lowood. More resources were allocated to healthcare, more men pursued medical education, and hospitals housed a larger patient population. Perhaps because universal health promotion was so desperately required, public interest in it rose overall.

*When the typhus fever had fulfilled its mission of devastation at Lowood, it gradually disappeared from thence; but not till its virulence and the number of its victims had drawn public attention on the school. Inquiry was made into the origin of the scourge, and by degrees various facts came out which excited public indignation in a high degree. The unhealthy nature of the site; the quantity and quality of the children's food; the brackish, fetid water used in its preparation; the pupils' wretched clothing and accommodation: all these things were discovered; and the discovery produced a result mortifying to Mr. Brocklehurst, but beneficial to the institution.*

*Several wealthy and benevolent individuals in the county subscribed largely for the erection of a more convenient building in a better situation; new regulations were made; improvements in diet and clothing introduced; the funds of the school were entrusted to the management of a committee. Mr. Brocklehurst, who, from his wealth and family connections, could not be overlooked, still retained the post of treasurer; but he was aided in the discharge of his duties by gentlemen of rather more enlarged and sympathising minds: his office of inspector, too, was shared by those who knew how to combine reason with strictness, comfort with economy, compassion with uprightness. The school, thus improved, became in time a truly useful and noble institution.*

*(Chapter 10, p. 81)*

### **2.1.3. Daily routine at the Institution**

As we have already seen in the analysis of the general conditions of the school, religiousness and education is the cornerstone of the whole Lowood Institution. With hindsight, we can see that many shortcomings were covered up by the Puritan way of life. The lines quoted above are also a good illustration of the school environment, but they also give us information about the life of the school.

Meals were followed by prayer, and then they proceeded in orderly succession to the other activities ordered for the time of day. In this case, they were preparing for the leap year. The girls slept in twin beds, as it turns out, and there was also a precedent of a pupil sharing a bed with a teacher for some reason. After the beds were occupied, the lights went out, marking the beginning of sleep for everyone.

The bell was another important aspect of boarding school life. When the bell rang, the girls had to line up and quietly (which did not always happen on its own, sometimes requiring teacher intervention) follow the teachers' instructions.

*The meal over, prayers were read by Miss Miller, and the classes filed off, two and two, upstairs. Overpowered by this time with weariness, I scarcely noticed what sort of a place the bedroom was; except that, like the schoolroom, I saw it was very long. To-night I was*

*to be Miss Miller's bedfellow; she helped me to undress: when laid down I glanced at the long rows of beds, each of which was quickly filled with two occupants; in ten minutes the single light was extinguished; amidst silence and complete darkness, I fell asleep.... Again the bell rang: all formed in file, two and two, and in that order descended the stairs and entered the cold and dimly-lit school-room: here prayers were read by Miss Miller; afterwards she called out:  
'Form classes!'*

*(Chapter 5, p. 40)*

Nine o'clock - the start of the lesson. Until then, before the lesson began, the children could play with anything, talk, or at least have something to do that would create the noise that the writer describes as a midwife's mess. But as soon as the clock strikes nine and the teacher appears in the middle of the room, he silences the whole class with a word. She creates discipline and gets all the girls to focus their attention on her as best they can.

*A clock in the schoolroom struck nine; Miss Miller left her circle, and standing in the middle of the room, cried: — 'Silence! To your seats!'  
Discipline prevailed: in five minutes the confused throng was resolved into order, and comparative silence quelled the Babel clamour of tongues.*

*(Chapter 5, p. 42)*

For more information on the order of teaching, see the above quote, teaching lasts for five hours, preceded by dinner. So before five o'clock in the evening, the last meal of the day has already taken place.

In the same scene, we learn how a "common" punishment, a shaming if you like, took place. Unfortunately, we do not find out what the crime was that triggered it, but we do learn that the girl is sent out of her history lesson. This could have been because she may not have behaved appropriately in the class or even because she was not adequately prepared in the course and failed the accountability test.

The girl's wrongdoing must have been shocking for Jane because she is a big girl. A girl who had presumably spent several years at Lowood Institute and had already learned a lot about manners,

house rules and learning requirements. It is a particular shame for a girl of her age to be punished in this way.

*After dinner, we immediately adjourned to the school-room: lessons recommenced, and were continued till five o'clock. The only marked event of the afternoon was, that I saw the girl with whom I had conversed in the verandah, dismissed in disgrace, by Miss Scatcherd, from a history class, and sent to stand in the middle of the large schoolroom. The punishment seemed to me in a high degree ignominious, especially for so great a girl—she looked thirteen or upwards. I expected she would show signs of great distress and shame; but to my surprise she neither wept nor blushed: composed, though grave, she stood, the central mark of all eyes.*

*(Chapter 5, p. 47)*

Another item on the daily schedule is the time spent in the playroom. After five o'clock, after dinner, the children could play, when they could relax a little after a day of rigour and discipline. At this time, even the school-room gives a completely different impression, a much nicer place for the children.

*The play-hour in the evening I thought the pleasantest fraction of the day at Lowood: the bit of bread, the draught of coffee swallowed at five o'clock had revived vitality, if it had not satisfied hunger; the long restraint of the day was slackened; the schoolroom felt warmer than in the morning—its fires being allowed to burn a little more brightly to supply, in some measure, the place of candles, not yet introduced; the ruddy gloaming, the licensed uproar, the confusion of many voices, gave one a welcome sense of liberty.*

*(Chapter 6, p. 51)*

At Lowood, Sunday afternoon could not have been better spent than attending worship, where they listened to a sermon by the head of their institution. They had to make this visit regardless of the season or the weather. But this was not the end of their Sunday practice of faith. In the afternoon they had to practise more Bible stories and even had a long sermon read to them by their teacher, during which, if anyone fell asleep sitting in the pew, they were punished by having to stand in the middle of the room.

*The Sunday evening was spent in repeating, by heart, the Church Catechism, and the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of St. Matthew; and in listening to a long sermon, read by Miss Miller, whose irrepressible yawns attested her weariness. A frequent interlude of these performances was the enactment of the part of Eutychus by some half dozen of little girls; who, overpowered with sleep, would fall down, if not out of the third loft, yet off the fourth form, and be taken up half dead. The remedy was, to thrust them forward into the centre of the schoolroom, and oblige them to stand there till the sermon was finished. Sometimes their feet failed them, and they sank together in a heap; they were then propped up with the monitors' high stools.*

*(Chapter 7, p. 58)*

Children in this situation, as mentioned earlier, often had no one. These children may have had no opportunity to leave school, either for the holidays or at other times, and no one waiting for them at home. Every pupil looks forward to the holidays, which mark the end of a school term, a quarter, a semester or the whole school year. Going home, resting from the stresses and strains of school, time spent with loved ones to make up for what they have endured at school.

But for those who have nothing to look forward to, it is much harder to bear. For these children, school is a monotonous routine.

*My vacations had all been spent at school: Mrs. Reed had never sent for me to Gateshead; neither she nor any of her family had ever been to visit me. I had had no communication by letter or message with the outer world: school-rules, school-duties, school-habits and notions, and voices, and faces, and phrases, and costumes, and preferences, and antipathies: such was what I knew of existence. And now I felt that it was not enough: I tired of the routine of eight years in one afternoon.*

*(Chapter 10, p. 84)*



#### 2.1.4. Teaching methods

As you can see, the lesson was completed by the classes in the same medium, even though everyone had a different lesson. Even for the younger students, they had to learn the lessons by heart, and as it turns out, they had to do a number of tasks, but each class had to spend the rest of the time doing manual work once they were done. Although this may seem like a kind of 'wind-down', it was also done with such discipline and order that even the youngest children could barely hear the lecture material from the lesson across the room.

*At first, being little accustomed to learn by heart, the lessons appeared to me both long and difficult: the frequent change from task to task, too, bewildered me; and I was glad, when, about three o'clock in the afternoon, Miss Smith put into my hands a border of muslin two yards long, together with needle, thimble, and sent me to sit in a quiet corner of the schoolroom, with directions to hem the same. At that hour most of the others were sewing likewise; but one class still stood round Miss Scatcherd's chair reading, and as all was quiet, the subject of their lessons could be heard, together with the manner in which each girl acquitted herself, and the animadversions or commendations of Miss Scatcherd on the performance. It was English history...*

*(Chapter 6, p. 49)*

Here we also find out how the English history lesson mentioned above took place. The lesson is read twice and then the teacher asks various questions in great detail. It is interesting to note that when there is a student who readily knows the answer to each question asked, one does not automatically expect to receive praise or any positive feedback from the teacher. In this case it is quite the opposite. The student is scolded for her dirty appearance. But what is perhaps even more interesting is that the girl takes the scolding in silence, not retaliating, even though, as the quote suggests, she would have a clue as to why she had not washed up in the morning.

*A chapter having been read through twice, the books were closed and the girls examined. The lesson had comprised part of the reign of Charles I., and there were sundry questions about tonnage and poundage, and ship-money, which most of them appeared unable to answer; still, every little difficulty was solved instantly when it reached Burns: her memory*

*seemed to have retained the substance of the whole lesson, and she was ready with answers on every point. I kept expecting that Miss Scatcherd would praise her attention; but, instead of that, she suddenly cried out:— 'You dirty, disagreeable girl! you have never cleaned your nails this morning!' Burns made no answer: I wondered at her silence. Why,' thought I, 'does she not explain that she could neither clean her nails nor wash her face, as the water was frozen?'*

*(Chapter 6, p. 50)*

But there are exceptions everywhere. Here we find the stark contrast between the former situation and the teacher's character. Two extremes of teaching methods are presented here. In this case, the teacher tries to look for the good and reward it, even where it is so difficult to find reasons for praise. Even if the pupil fails, he only gently reprimands and encourages.

*'Miss Temple is full of goodness: it pains her to be severe to any one, even the worst in the school; she sees my errors, and tells me of them gently; and, if I do anything worthy of praise, she gives me my meed liberally. One strong proof of my wretchedly defective nature is, that even her expostulations, so mild, so rational, have not influence to cure me of my faults; and even her praise, though I value it most highly, cannot stimulate me to continued care and foresight.'*

*(Chapter 6, p. 53)*

In the above lines, we learn about the pastor's method of education, which is nothing other than shaming and excommunication. The pastor directly warns teachers and students alike to be careful with the girl. He calls on them not to use only corporal punishment when they feel the need, and on the other students not to play with her, in short, to excommunicate her. What he has done is to make the child who is exposed to it afraid to make mistakes or do anything wrong, because he is immediately marginalised in the 'mini-society' that Lowood represents. In that closed system, everyone goes against him and is left all alone. And this is legitimised by the clergyman, once again in the guise of faith and religion.

*'My dear children,' pursued the black marble clergyman, with pathos, 'this is a sad, a melancholy occasion; for it becomes my duty to warn you, that this girl, who might be one*

*of God's own lambs, is a little castaway: not a member of the true flock, but evidently an interloper and an alien. You must be on your guard against her; you must shun her example: if necessary, avoid her company, exclude her from your sports, and shut her out from your converse. Teachers, you must watch her: keep your eyes on her movements, weigh well her words, scrutinise her actions, punish her body to save her soul: if, indeed, such salvation be possible, for (my tongue falters while I tell it) this girl, this child, the native of a Christian land, worse than many a little heathen who says its prayers to Brahma and kneels before Juggernaut—this girl is—a liar!*

(Chapter 7, p. 64)

Despite the questionable educational methods, the education is, according to the protagonist, very successful. This helped her to become a teacher and later a governess in her own school. This was a big step forward for her, since as we know from the first part, there were not many career opportunities for a young woman like Jane (or women in general) in the 19th century.

*During these eight years my life was uniform: but not unhappy, because it was not inactive. I had the means of an excellent education placed within my reach. A fondness for some of my studies, and a desire to excel in all, together with a great delight in pleasing my teachers, especially such as I loved, urged me on: I availed myself fully of the advantages offered me. In time I rose to be the first girl of the first class; then I was invested with the office of teacher; which I discharged with zeal for two years; but at the end of that time I altered.*

(Chapter 10, pp. 82-83)

### **2.1.5. Becoming a governess**

In the previous sections, we gained an insight into institutional education through the story of Jane Eyre, but now we move on to the characterisation of private governess education and its.

In the quote above, you can witness how a career as a nanny starts - with advertising. In this case, Jane was already off to a head start. She already had teaching experience through the Lowood Institution, and she had qualifications to show for it. It is also clear from the above passage that

when Jane decides to try her hand as a governess, she is barely eighteen herself. This suggests that it was not only older ladies who did this kind of work, but even very young girls. aspects.

*'A young lady accustomed to tuition' (had I not been a teacher two ears?) 'is desirous of meeting with a situation in a private family where the children are under fourteen' (I thought that as I was barely eighteen, it would not do to undertake the guidance of pupils nearer my own age). 'She is qualified to teach the usual branches of a good English education, together with French, Drawing, and Music'*

*(Chapter 10, p. 86)*

From the point of view of the family who are looking for a nanny for their child or children, it is obviously important to make sure of the qualifications of the lady they are about to employ and welcome into their home. This was done through various references that previous employers or the person's school could provide to the job applicant.

*If J. E., who advertised in the shire Herald of last Thursday, possesses the acquirements mentioned, and if she is in a position to give satisfactory references as to character and competency; a situation can be offered her where there is but one pupil—a little girl, under ten years of age—and where the salary is thirty pounds per annum. J. E. is requested to send references, name, address, and all particulars to the direction, "Mrs. Fairfax, Thornfield, near Millcote, shire." '*

*(Chapter 10, p. 87)*

#### **2.1.6. Teaching as a governess**

The next step for a governess, after finding a family willing to employ her, is actually to move in and start teaching. The above quotation gives a mostly broad picture of what a governess's 'workplace' and 'working conditions' looked like.

The school-room itself was located in a room designated by the family, in this case the library room. Books were available to the governess and the children as many as they needed. The literature

provided by the families was often richer than the literature list provided by each institution, especially in the case of the poorer institutions.

In addition to books, there were other tools to help governesses, tools that were part of the general education of the time: a piano for learning to sing and play instruments, a globe for learning geography and a easel for painting, which for girls was part of their education and general literacy.

*After breakfast Adèle and I withdrew to the library; which room, it appears, Mr. Rochester had directed should be used as the schoolroom. Most of the books were locked up behind glass doors; but there was one bookcase left open, containing everything that could be needed in the way of elementary works, and several volumes of light literature, poetry, biography, travels, a few romances, etc. I suppose he had considered that these were all the governess would require for her private perusal; and, indeed, they contented me amply for the present; compared with the scanty pickings I had now and then been able to glean at Lowood, they seemed to offer an abundant harvest of entertainment and information. In this room, too, there was a cabinet piano, quite new and of superior tone; also an easel for painting, and a pair of globes.*

*(Chapter 11, p. 103)*

Children in private education found it difficult to connect to any system. This is essentially understandable, since in their own homes they are not exposed to any of the systemic structures of an institution. There, as explained earlier, there is a strict daily routine and discipline every day, everything has its own time, place and order. To someone who is used to this order, the behaviour of the child in the above quote is certainly strange and totally unusual.

*I found my pupil sufficiently docile, though disinclined to apply: she had not been used to regular occupation of any kind. I felt it would be injudicious to confine her too much at first; so, when I had talked to her a great deal, and got her to learn a little, and when the morning had advanced to noon, I allowed her to return to her nurse. I then proposed to occupy myself till dinner-time in drawing some little sketches for her use.*

*(Chapter 11, p. 103)*

At the same time, there were families with children for whom learning, and knowledge acquisition were particularly important. In the lines above, we have an example of this in the second phase of Jane Eyre's career as a governess. We can also see here that families with several children also adopted only one governess. This meant that the governess's attention had to be divided between several children at the same time, especially if there was a large age difference between the children, who obviously had different learning abilities and needed different skills, also because of their age.

*There was nothing like them in these parts, nor ever had been; they had liked learning, all three, almost from the time they could speak; and they had always been 'of a mak' of their own.' Mr. St. John, when he grew up, would go to college and be a parson; and the girls, as soon as they left school, would seek places as governesses: for they had told her their father had some years ago lost a great deal of money by a man he had trusted turning bankrupt; and as he was now not rich enough to give them fortunes, they must provide for themselves.*

*(Chapter 29, p. 357)*

### **2.1.7. Setting up a school**

The fact that children born into poor families had almost no access to education has been pointed out in several places before, as the above lines prove. If a particular municipality has been fortunate enough to have a benefactor school it has also been primarily for boys. In this case, a school for girls was also about to be founded, all that was missing was a teacher. Even then, this proved a difficult task, as there were few people with the education and skills to teach themselves. And if the teacher candidate had these skills, not to mention experience as a governess, he was not necessarily relegated to the ranks of poor children who knew nothing, not even the basic rules of manners. Jane finally says yes to such a request, and we learn not only who the school's patron is, but also the financial circumstances under which a rural teacher could work.

*Morton, when I came to it two years ago, had no school: the children of the poor were excluded from every hope of progress. I established one for boys: I mean now to open a second school for girls. I have hired a building for the purpose, with a cottage of two*

*rooms attached to it for the mistress's house. Her salary will be thirty pounds a year; her house is already furnished, very simply, but sufficiently, by the kindness of a lady, Miss Oliver; the only daughter of the sole rich man in my parish—Mr. Oliver, the proprietor of a needle-factory and iron-foundry in the valley. The same lady pays for the education and clothing of an orphan from the workhouse; on condition that she shall aid the mistress in such menial offices connected with her own house and the school as her occupation of teaching will prevent her having time to discharge in person. Will you be this mistress?'*

*(Chapter 30, p. 369)*

The protagonist is confronted with the aforementioned career setbacks, with the squandering of the knowledge and experience she has acquired over the years. After all, apart from knitting, sewing, reading and writing, there is no need to teach the girls of Paraz, as these children, who are likely to follow their parents' example as adults, will not need any other skills such as music, painting, manners, history, geography, etc.

*'But you comprehend me?' he said, i t is a village school; your schoolars will be only poor girls—cottagers' children—at the best, farmers' daughters. Knitting, sewing, reading, writing, cyphering, will be all you will have to teach. What will you do with your accomplishments? What with the largest portion of your mind—sentiments—tastes?'*

*(Chapter 30, p 370)*

Compared to expectations, there is no great disappointment. The children in the villages are really rude and have almost no knowledge, and what they do know they have learned from their parents at home. However, it is important to note that, despite all this, some of them have a thirst for knowledge and are therefore at the level of a rich child in this respect.

*This morning, the village school opened. I had twenty scholars. But three of the number can read: none write or cypher. Several knit, and a few sew a little. They speak with the broadest accent of the district. At present they and I have a difficulty in understanding each other's language. Some of them are unmannered, rough, intractable, as well as ignorant; but others are docile, have a wish to learn, and evince a disposition that pleases me. I must not forget that these coarsely-clad little peasants are of flesh and blood as good*

*as the scions of gentlest genealogy; and that the germs of native excellence, refinement, intelligence, kind feeling, are as likely to exist in their hearts as in those of the best-born. My duty will be to develop these germs: surely I shall find some happiness in discharging that office. Much enjoyment I do not expect in the life opening before me: yet it will, doubtless, if I regulate my mind, and exert my powers as I ought, yield me enough to live on from day to day.*

*(Chapter 31, p. 374)*

Despite initial difficulties, as with rich children, the potential for progress and advancement is there for poor children. In the case of some girls, in addition to basic skills, they have learned history and geography and have been able to achieve success within their own capabilities.

It is also interesting to observe the attitude of parents. They turn to the teacher with love, expressing their kindness and affection in their own way. The respect for the teaching profession and the teacher was already evident in the 19th century, and was to be found not only in English society but almost throughout the world for many decades afterwards.

In conclusion, the 19th century was marked by a deep and abiding reverence for teachers, whose dedication to the pursuit of knowledge and enlightenment earned them the admiration and respect of society. In an age where education was cherished as the key to progress and enlightenment, teachers stood as pillars of wisdom, guiding their students on the path to intellectual and moral growth.

*I continued the labours of the village-school as actively and faithfully as I could. It was truly hard work at first. Some time elapsed before, with all my efforts, I could comprehend my scholars and their nature. Wholly untaught, with faculties quite torpid, they seemed to me hopelessly dull; and, at first sight, all dull alike: but I soon found I was mistaken. There was a difference amongst them as amongst the educated; and when I got to know them, and they me, this difference rapidly developed itself. Their amazement at me, my language, my rules, and ways, once subsided, I found some of these heavy-looking, gaping rustics wake up into sharp-witted girls enough. Many showed themselves obliging, and amiable too; and I discovered amongst them not a few examples of natural politeness and innate self-respect, as well as of excellent capacity, that won both my goodwill and my admiration. These soon took a pleasure in doing their work well; in keeping their persons*



*neat; in learning their tasks regularly; in acquiring quiet and orderly manners. The rapidity of their progress, in some instances, was even surprising; and an honest and happy pride I took in it: besides, I began personally to like some of the best girls; and they liked me. I had amongst my scholars several farmers' daughters: young women grown, almost. These could already read, write, and sew; and to them I taught the elements of grammar, geography, history, and the finer kinds of needlework. I found estimable characters amongst them—characters desirous of information, and disposed for improvement—with whom I passed many a pleasant evening hour in their own homes. Their parents then (the farmer and his wife) loaded me with attentions. There was an enjoyment in accepting their simple kindness, and in repaying it by a consideration—a scrupulous regard to their feelings—to which they were not, perhaps, at all times accustomed, and which both charmed and benefited them; because, while it elevated them in their own eyes, it made them emulous to merit the deferential treatment they received.*

*I felt I became a favourite in the neighbourhood. Whenever I went out, I heard on all sides cordial salutations, and was welcomed with friendly smiles. (Chapter 32, pp. 382-383)*

## **2.2. Agnes Grey**

Anne Brontë's life, though brief, was marked by a profound exploration of themes such as morality, gender dynamics, and the constraints of societal expectations. Despite being overshadowed by her more renowned siblings, Anne's voice echoes with a distinct clarity and depth, offering unique insights into Victorian society and the human condition. Through her novels, poetry, and letters, she fearlessly confronted the hypocrisies and injustices of her time, challenging prevailing norms with a keen sense of empathy and integrity. In an era where women's voices were often silenced or marginalized, Anne's work stands as a testament to the resilience and resilience of the human spirit.

"Agnes Grey," the debut novel by Anne Brontë, unfolds as a poignant narrative of a young woman's journey through the harsh realities of Victorian society. Published in 1847 under the pseudonym Acton Bell, the novel provides a candid portrayal of the challenges faced by governesses in a society governed by rigid class structures and social conventions. Through the eyes of its eponymous protagonist, "Agnes Grey" offers a nuanced exploration of themes such as class,

morality, and the quest for independence, resonating with readers through its timeless depiction of human struggle and resilience. As we delve into the pages of this seminal work, we are invited to accompany Agnes on her quest for self-discovery, navigating the complexities of love, duty, and the pursuit of personal fulfillment in a world fraught with obstacles and contradictions.

The novel is analysed from the perspective of this particular situation of governesses in society, the way this situation is experienced and the general perception of governesses in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 2.2.1. Education at home

In the context of the novel *Jane Eyre*, it has already been said that a girl who is educated in an institution and achieves good results can have a good career opportunity as a teacher or governess. The following quote shows what kind of education the children could have received, in addition to the education provided by the governess and the institution.

Agnes and her sister were educated at home by their parents. There were very few examples of that, very few poor families with parents who were educated enough to do that, but of course there were examples. And this is not just any quality education, as we read that they even learned Latin from their father. In addition, their mother taught them everything else - they never needed to go to school, their parents could teach them everything. But it also turns out that the downside of this was that they did not have much opportunity to socialise.

*Mary and I were brought up in the strictest seclusion. My mother, being at once highly accomplished, well informed, and fond of employment, took the whole charge of our education on herself, with the exception of Latin—which my father undertook to teach us—so that we never even went to school; and, as there was no society in the neighbourhood...*  
(Chapter 1, p. 8)

The protagonist has only positive experiences of learning, even though her parents sometimes treated her strictly. Therefore, the whole idea of learning and teaching is similar in her mind. She has an incredible longing for it. Though the question may arise here, does he just want to see the world, to know people, to break free from the before mentioned isolation? She sees the whole

outside world as hopeful, her imagined job as a governess as well, she can't imagine it being anything but good.

Or we can even assume here that it is precisely his isolation from the outside world that gives her this great confidence.

In any case, if we look at this situation as a career opportunity for a governess, it is indeed a good one. A young, determined lady with a wide range of knowledge, eager to pass on her knowledge and a love of children. She would also be able to support a family in difficulty with her earnings and start building her own independent life.

*How delightful it would be to be a governess! To go out into the world; to enter upon a new life; to act for myself; to exercise my unused faculties; to try my unknown powers; to earn my own maintenance, and something to comfort and help my father, mother, and sister, besides exonerating them from the provision of my food and clothing; to show papa what his little Agnes could do; to convince mamma and Mary that I was not quite the helpless, thoughtless being they supposed. And then, how charming to be entrusted with the care and education of children! Whatever others said, I felt I was fully competent to the task: the clear remembrance of my own thoughts in early childhood would be a surer guide than the instructions of the most mature adviser. I had but to turn from my little pupils to myself at their age, and I should know, at once, how to win their confidence and affections: how to waken the contrition of the erring; how to embolden the timid and console the afflicted;  
how to make Virtue practicable, Instruction desirable, and Religion lovely and comprehensible.*

*Delightful task! To teach the young idea how to shoot!  
To train the tender plants, and watch their buds unfolding day by day!*

*(Chapter 1, p. 16)*

### **2.2.2. Applying for a job as a governess**

Agnes got her first job as a governess through family connections. This was another way of finding a job, but the more common option is also found here, when a young girl wants to try her luck in education for the second time. He researches the newspaper advertisements and applies for

all of them, it is hard to convince his parents that one of them is right for her, but they find fault with all of them.

*Meantime, I searched, with great interest, the advertising columns of the newspapers, and wrote answers to every 'Wanted a Governess' that appeared at all eligible; but all my letters, as well as the replies, when I got any, were dutifully shown to my mother; and she, to my chagrin, made me reject the situations one after another: these were low people, these were too exacting in their demands, and these too niggardly in their remuneration.*

*(Chapter 6, p. 61)*

Having failed to find a suitable advertiser, he chose a third option. She placed an advertisement herself, just like Jane Eyre, detailing her skills that could make her attractive to families looking for a governess.

On her mother's advice, she is looking for families who belong to a higher social class, because they are more likely to be more educated and better at treating their employees. According to her, there are families of a higher social class who treat their foster carer as a member of the family. Although the mother adds that there are all kinds of people, it is possible for a "good" family to treat their employee badly and vice versa.

*At length, she advised me to put an advertisement, myself, in the paper, stating my qualifications, &c.*

*'Music, singing, drawing, French, Latin, and German,' said she, 'are no mean assemblage: many will be glad to have so much in one instructor; and this time, you shall try your fortune in a somewhat higher family in that of some genuine, thoroughbred gentleman; for such are far more likely to treat you with proper respect and consideration than those purse-proud tradespeople and arrogant upstarts. I have known several among the higher ranks who treated their governesses quite as one of the family; though some, I allow, are as insolent and exacting as any one else can be: for there are bad and good in all classes.'*

*(Chapter 6, p. 61)*

So we can conclude that for teachers, choosing their future jobs is a real gamble. Those who put their minds on becoming a governess could not have known in advance exactly what kind of

family they would end up in. Unfortunately, this only became clear when the governess moved in with the family and started work.

An important aspect of the job, beyond the family's reception and attitude, is the "quality" of the children you have to work with and teach.

Agnes's first job is an interesting experience in this respect. The mother of the children, the mistress of the house, tells the new governess that she does not have much knowledge of the children, as she herself could not teach them and they were too young to employ someone for them.

We also get a description of the children by their mother, which, especially for the little boy, shows a serious bias. This makes things difficult for Agnes later on, but there is no need to travel back in time several centuries, which is how it works today.

As far as the little girl is concerned, we also observe something interesting. In her case, it is not the positives that are listed, but rather the extra tasks that she has to do, which will be explained in more detail later.

*'You will find them not very far advanced in their attainments,' said she, 'for I have had so little time to attend to their education myself, and we have thought them too young for a governess till now; but I think they are clever children, and very apt to learn, especially the little boy; he is, I think, the flower of the flock—a generous, noble-spirited boy, one to be led, but not driven, and remarkable for always speaking the truth. He seems to scorn deception' (this was good news). 'His sister Mary Ann will require watching,' continued she, 'but she is a very good girl upon the whole; though I wish her to be kept out of the nursery as much as possible, as she is now almost six years old, and might acquire bad habits from the nurses. I have ordered her crib to be placed in your room, and if you will be so kind as to overlook her washing and dressing, and take charge of her clothes, she need have nothing further to do with the nursery maid.'*

*(Chapter 2, p. 22)*

### **2.2.3. The duties of a governess**

As mentioned earlier, in some cases governesses were given a wide variety of tasks by the family. This is also the case here. In the case of the protagonist, Agnes, we learnt from an earlier quotation that the family expected her to teach all the children, but in addition to this, they even moved their youngest daughter into her room. So Agnes was now responsible for other tasks around

the little girl beyond teaching. As the quote below shows, she was also responsible for washing and combing her hair.

On the first morning, the little girl says that she is not very good at these tasks, her nanny was much more skilful and experienced. This is not a coincidence, as these tasks are normally part of a governess's job.

When Agnes is received, the family mentions that they had not employed a nanny before because the children were too young. Knowing all this, we can conclude that the family tried to save money on the upbringing and education of the children by having only one employee at a time to take care of the children and that one employee to perform all the tasks related to the children. Because, as we will see later, they as parents do not care much about disciplining and educating the children, saying that this is the governess's job. However, they do expect results in the children's development.

*I rose next morning with a feeling of hopeful exhilaration, in spite of the disappointments already experienced; but I found the dressing of Mary Ann was no light matter, as her abundant hair was to be smeared with pomade, plaited in three long tails, and tied with bows of ribbon: a task my unaccustomed fingers found great difficulty in performing. She told me her nurse could do it in half the time, and, by keeping up a constant fidget of impatience, contrived to render me still longer. When all was done, we went into the schoolroom, where I met my other pupil, and chatted with the two till it was time to go down to breakfast. That meal being concluded, and a few civil words having been exchanged with Mrs. Bloomfield, we repaired to the schoolroom again, and commenced the business of the day.*

*(Chapter 3, p. 28)*

In addition to all this, there was also education. The governess taught the children both before and after lunch. Most of the day was like a normal governess's life: she spent the breaks between classes and the free time after class with the children in the garden, first trying to endear herself to them, and later trying to teach them moral lessons beyond the lexical.

In an environment like this family, it was difficult for the governess to teach and discipline. The children had a special relationship with their parents. Their behaviour towards them had a stake. If they were good, they were rewarded; if they were bad, they were punished by their father or

mother. They did not have the same with the governess, who had neither the power to give nor the power to take away. So there was nothing left but recognition - that was all the treasure she had to offer, or to withhold. This, in turn, did not motivate the children to take the educator seriously as their superior.

*In the afternoon we applied to lessons again: then went out again; then had tea in the schoolroom; then I dressed Mary Ann for dessert; and when she and her brother had gone down to the diningroom, I took the opportunity of beginning a letter to my dear friends at home: but the children came up before I had half completed it. At seven I had to put Mary Ann to bed; then I played with Tom till eight, when he, too, went; and I finished my letter and unpacked my clothes, which I had hitherto found no opportunity for doing, and, finally, went to bed myself.*

*But this is a very favourable specimen of a day's proceedings.*

*My task of instruction and surveillance, instead of becoming easier as my charges and I got better accustomed to each other, became more arduous as their characters unfolded. The name of governess, I soon found, was a mere mockery as applied to me: my pupils had no more notion of obedience than a wild, unbroken colt. The habitual fear of their father's peevish temper, and the dread of the punishments he was wont to inflict when irritated, kept them generally within bounds in his immediate presence. The girls, too, had some fear of their mother's anger; and the boy might occasionally be bribed to do as she bid him by the hope of reward; but I had no rewards to offer; and as for punishments, I was given to understand, the parents reserved that privilege to themselves; and yet they expected me to keep my pupils in order. Other children might be guided by the fear of anger and the desire of approbation; but neither the one nor the other had any effect upon these.*

*(Chapter 3, pp. 31-32)*

In addition to the children's disrespect, the governess also had to deal with the behaviour of the parents, in this case the father, Mr Bloomfield. Just as we have seen before that the mother has entrusted her with more than just childminding duties, now the father is calling her to account for something that would not normally be Agnes' responsibility. What is for dinner, i.e. exactly what kind of fish is on the plate, would be more the responsibility of a woman housekeeper than a governess. Yet she is still being called to account for it.

It certainly did not take much for the children, seeing this behaviour on the part of their parents, to behave in a similarly disrespectful and superior manner towards their new governess.

*'Fish.'*

*'What kind of fish?'*

*'I don't know.'*

*'YOU DON'T KNOW?' cried he, looking solemnly up from his plate, and suspending his knife and fork in astonishment.*

*'No. I told the cook to get some fish—I did not particularize what.'*

*'Well, that beats everything! A lady professes to keep house, and doesn't even know what fish is for dinner! professes to order fish, and doesn't specify what!'*

*'Perhaps, Mr. Bloomfield, you will order dinner yourself in future.'*

*(Chapter 3, p. 31)*

#### **2.2.4. Disciplining children**

In return for all these things, they could not be said to be at least good students or at least hard-working.

As their mother has already indicated, they were very backward in terms of learning – here we can refer back to the observation that the reason for this is that the family was not willing to take a governess for the older children, while the youngest children still absolutely needed a nanny, and the parents' skills were not sufficient for a better education.

It is interesting to note that it was not the children's abilities that determined their potential, as they were able to make progress in their education on the very first day. What made the work most difficult was the children's behaviour and their attitude towards their governess. From the very beginning, on the very first day, they show no inclination to listen to her or respect her.

This is shown by the fact that in their free time spent in the garden they did not show the slightest sign of obedience to their mistress. Indeed, they even expected her to entertain them. They refused to follow her around, so, if Agnes wanted to avoid appearing careless, she had to let them



roam free on their own, unaccompanied by an adult. This made her unable to submit to the children's will from the very beginning.

*I found my pupils very backward, indeed; but Tom, though averse to every species of mental exertion, was not without abilities. Mary Ann could scarcely read a word, and was so careless and inattentive that I could hardly get on with her at all. However, by dint of great labour and patience, I managed to get something done in the course of the morning, and then accompanied my young charge out into the garden and adjacent grounds, for a little recreation before dinner. There we got along tolerably together, except that I found they had no notion of going with me: I must go with them, wherever they chose to lead me. I must run, walk, or stand, exactly as it suited their fancy. This, I thought, was reversing the order of things; and I found it doubly disagreeable, as on this as well as subsequent occasions, they seemed to prefer the dirtiest places and the most dismal occupations. But there was no remedy; either I must follow them, or keep entirely apart from them, and thus appear neglectful of my charge.*

*(Chapter 3, pp. 28-29)*

The following lines also show the relationship between child and carer and the respect, or rather disrespect, that the child has for the adult. It is quite natural for the child to sometimes hit his brother and he gives reasons why he does so. Agnes has recently started working as a governess for the Bloomfield family, and she is spending her first evening with her students, Tom Bloomfield, age seven, and Mary Ann, his younger sister. Agnes has just been ordered outdoors to take a look at Tom's garden. Tom threatens to hit his sister Agnes as Mary Ann proposes that Agnes look at her garden as well. Startled, Agnes chastises Tom, telling her that she hopes he "never" strikes Mary Ann in front of her. There are two power hierarchies in the Bloomfield home that will hinder Agnes from succeeding as governess there, as revealed by Tom's casual answer that he needs to smack Mary Ann "to keep her in order" and his subsequent bossing around of Agnes.

Tom has a domineering attitude toward both his elder governess Agnes and his younger sister Mary Ann. He feels he has the right to dictate to both of them. Tom implicitly feels that because he is a man and they are women, he is entitled to this privilege. Agnes works as a governess for the Bloomfield family, and since Tom is the family heir, he could believe he has the right to boss her around.

*“Surely, Tom, you would not strike your sister! I hope I shall never see you do that.”*

*“You will sometimes: I’m obliged to do it now and then to keep her in order.”*

*“But it is not your business to keep her in order, you know, that is for—”*

*“Well, now go and put on your bonnet.”*

*(Chapter 2, pp. 24-25)*

Agnes notices some odd artifacts in the grass and inquires as to what they are from Tom Bloomfield, her new student. According to Tom, they are traps for birds, which he kills by torturing them. Tom disputes Agnes' outraged statement that it is wrong to torture defenseless animals, citing his father Mr. Bloomfield's childhood practice of torturing birds until they die.

According to Agnes Grey, parents and families are the primary sources from which children learn conduct and values. Wealthy parents attempt to shift the burden of teaching their kids academic subjects and morals to governesses, who are elegant social class ladies from a lower socioeconomic background. However, the governesses lack the power to impose their lessons since the parents view them as slaves rather than equals. Rich kids never truly learn from the governesses since they are taught to treat them with disdain. Agnes, the main character of the book, has both governess positions, where this complex interplay is evident.

*Papa knows how I treat them, and he never blames me for it: he says it is just what he used to do when he was a boy.*

*(Chapter 2, p. 26)*

Agnes is describing how the Bloomfield family's problematic distribution of power and accountability keeps her from properly instructing Tom, Mary Ann, and Fanny.

The head of the household, Mr. Bloomfield, continuously instills in the kids a “habitual fear of his peevish temper“ or a fear of his fury because he punishes them whenever he gets “irritated.“ Notably, this description suggests that Mr. Bloomfield punishes the kids based more on his mood than on their behavior, which inadvertently teaches the kids that the dominant family member has the authority to punish or mistreat the weaker members of the family as he pleases. Due to her gender, Mrs. Bloomfield is less powerful than her husband and has similar autocratic control over her female offspring. However, she is only able to influence her son, the male heir, by bribery.

The Bloomfields “reserve the privilege“ of disciplining their children for themselves; that is, while they use semi-arbitrary punishment to establish their own dominance and position in the home, they tacitly deny Agnes this “privilege“ because she works for a living. The status-conscious

Bloomfields do not want to upend the household's class hierarchy by granting Agnes privileges. Agnes is nevertheless given the duty of "keeping her pupils in order" by Mr. and Mrs. Bloomfield.

The dysfunctional dynamic between the Bloomfield parents' desire for authority without accountability and their insistence that Agnes accept responsibility without authority prevents any adult in the home from properly and consistently disciplining the Bloomfield children.

*The habitual fear of their father's peevish temper, and the dread of the punishments he was wont to inflict when irritated, kept them generally within bounds in his immediate presence. The girls, too, had some fear of their mother's anger; and the boy might occasionally be bribed to do as she bid him by the hope of reward: but I had no rewards to offer, and as for punishments, I was given to understand, the parents reserved that privilege for themselves; and yet they expected me to keep my pupils in order. This was Mr. Bloomfield. I was surprised that he should nominate his children Master and Miss Bloomfield; and still more so, that he should speak so uncivilly to me, their governess, and a perfect stranger to himself.*

*(Chapter 3, pp. 31-32)*

*"Miss Grey! Is it possible? What, in the devil's name, can you be thinking about?"*  
*"I can't get them in, sir," said I, turning round, and beholding Mr. Bloomfield, with his hair on end, and his pale blue eyes bolting from their sockets.*  
*"But I INSIST upon their being got in!" cried he, approaching nearer, and looking perfectly ferocious.*  
*"Then, sir, you must call them yourself, if you please, for they won't listen to me," I replied, stepping back.*  
*"Come in with you, you filthy brats; or I'll horsewhip you every one!" roared he; and the children instantly obeyed.*  
*"There, you see!—they come at the first word!"*  
*"Yes, when YOU speak."*  
*"And it's very strange, that when you've the care of 'em you've no better control over 'em than that!—Now, there they are—gone upstairs with their nasty snowy feet! Do go after 'em and see them made decent, for heaven's sake!"*

*(Chapter 4, p. 43)*

### 2.2.5. Result of the hard work

Unfortunately, Agnes' hard work as a governess proved to be in vain. According to the Bloomfield parents, the youngest daughter is becoming as bad as her two older siblings, who have also become worse since she started school. If they cannot judge the lexical knowledge itself, there is certainly a deterioration in their behaviour. Agnes is, of course, responsible for all this, since it was her job to educate the children - even though she had little means to do so, as has been explained above.

It is interesting that despite all the suffering she has endured as a governess, and the reproaches she has to endure from parents, she still wants to stay on, to continue working where, despite all her hard work, her life is being made miserable. This is mostly due to her desire to prove herself, as her family had already made it difficult for her to leave home to work as a governess.

*“What a naughty girl Fanny is getting!’ Mrs. Bloomfield would say to her spouse. “Don’t you observe, my dear, how she is altered since she entered the schoolroom? She will soon be as bad as the other two; and, I am sorry to say, they have quite deteriorated of late. “You may say that,’ was the answer. ‘I’ve been thinking that same myself. I thought when we got them a governess they’d improve; but, instead of that, they get worse and worse: I don’t know how it is with their learning, but their habits, I know, make no sort of improvement; they get rougher, and dirtier, and more unseemly every day. “I knew this was all pointed at me; and these, and all similar innuendoes, affected me far more deeply than any open accusations would have done; for against the latter I should have been roused to speak in my own defence: now I judged it my wisest plan to subdue every resentful impulse, suppress every sensitive shrinking, and go on perseveringly, doing my best; for, irksome as my situation was, I earnestly wished to retain it.*

*(Chapter 3, p. 37-38)*

Agnes was eventually dismissed from her first job. And in fact it turned out that it was her family's reaction she feared most. This is quite natural for a novice educator. She worries about how she will start again later if she failed in the first round. She fears she will not be taken seriously, seeing that she has failed so far.

But whether she would put herself to the test again is not a question. He is already thinking that the next family will be different. This time his fate will be for the better.

*Thus was I dismissed, and thus I sought my home. Alas! what would they think of me? unable, after all my boasting, to keep my place, even for a single year, as governess to three small children, whose mother was asserted by my own aunt to be a 'very nice woman.' Having been thus weighed in the balance and found wanting, I need not hope they would be willing to try me again.*

*The next family must be different, and any change must be for the better. I had been seasoned by adversity, and tutored by experience, and I longed to redeem my lost honour in the eyes of those whose opinion was more than that of all the world to me.*

*(Chapter 5, p. 57)*

In the end, the fate of our protagonist has indeed taken a turn for the better. Despite the negative treatment and all the effects of her first job, Agnes did not have only negative experiences. The second family he worked for was the Muray family, where he had a much more positive experience. Agnes is providing readers with an overview of the things she discovered about the Murray family in her first two years of serving as their governess. She specifically mentions Rosalie Murray, her oldest student, in her quote.

According to Agnes's description of Rosalie, a child's upbringing by her parents has just as much, if not more, of an impact on her conduct as "her disposition," or her innate personality. Agnes notes that Rosalie's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Murray, have allowed her to "tyrannise over nurses, governesses, and servants" from an early age, despite the fact that Agnes "really likes" Rosalie's natural nature. Put another way, Rosalie has been educated by her status-conscious family that she is entitled to treat lower-status individuals, including employees, with cruelty and disdain because of her socioeconomic standing.

Of course, it is ironic that Rosalie's parents have delegated her education to Agnes, a governess, a lower-status employee, teaching their daughter to belittle and order around. Thus, without meaning to, the Murray parents have already damaged Agnes's authority—the very person they trust to raise their daughter—and given Rosalie a poor early education.

*I really liked her—when she did not rouse my indignation, or ruffle my temper by too great a display of her faults. These, however, I would fain persuade myself, were rather the effect of her education than her disposition: she had never been perfectly taught the distinction between right and wrong; she had, like her brothers and sisters, been suffered, from infancy, to tyrannise over nurses, governesses, and servants. infancy, to tyrannize over nurses, governesses, and servants; she had not been taught to moderate her desires, to control her temper, or bridle her will, or to sacrifice her own pleasure for the good of others. Her temper being naturally good, she was never violent or morose, but from constant indulgence and habitual scorn of reason, she was often testy and capricious; her mind had never been cultivated: her intellect, at best, was somewhat shallow;”*

*(Chapter 7, pp. 72-73)*

#### **2.2.6. Results**

Overall, the novels "Agnes Grey" by Anne Brontë and "Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Brontë offer insightful depictions of the 19th-century English private education system, revealing both its merits and shortcomings. Through the experiences of their respective protagonists, Agnes Grey and Jane Eyre, the Brontë sisters illuminate the complex dynamics of power, class, and gender inherent within this educational framework. The above chapter uses the two novels mentioned to illustrate and analyse the diversity of education in the Victorian era.

Both novels underscore the significant role that private education played in shaping the lives and destinies of young women during the Victorian era. From the restrictive curriculum and oppressive disciplinary measures to the limited opportunities for intellectual and personal growth, Brontë vividly portrays the challenges faced by students within these institutions. Moreover, through the portrayal of unscrupulous school administrators and indifferent patrons, the novels shed light on the exploitative nature of certain educational establishments, where profit often took precedence over the well-being and education of students.

As already mentioned, the two novels under analysis present all forms of contemporary education, both negative and positive. A prime example of the analysis of institutional education is the Lowood Institute in Jane Eyre, which, with its squalid conditions, shows all the difficulties and

downsides of 19th century education. However, the potential positive possibilities of a school can be explored in both novels in the schools founded by the protagonists.

Another important aspect of education is private education by a governess. Both novels give us a broad picture of this too. The positive example here is primarily the work of Jane Eyre, while the negative aspects of governess work are mainly presented in Agnes Grey.

However, amidst the bleakness of their educational experiences, Agnes Grey and Jane Eyre emerge as resilient and determined individuals who refuse to be defined by their circumstances. Through their unwavering integrity, intelligence, and moral courage, they navigate the complexities of the private education system, ultimately emerging stronger and more self-assured.

## CONCLUSION

Education is a much researched field, and no wonder, as education is a crucial part of the development of humanity. This work examines all aspects of private education in the nineteenth century in Britain.

The first part of this work summarises previous studies on the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It examines the society, the literature and the education of the Victorian era with particular regard to the Brontë sisters. The second part provides a range of analysis and description of education in the mentioned era as represented in the novels of “Agnes Grey” by Anne Brontë and “Jane Eyre” by Charlotte Brontë.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century marked a period of significant transformation in education, characterized by the expansion of schooling opportunities, the emergence of new pedagogical approaches, and the challenges posed by social and economic inequalities. Throughout the century, education underwent notable changes influenced by various factors, including industrialization, urbanization, and evolving societal norms.

During this time, the education system in many Western countries evolved from a primarily religious and elite-focused model to a more secular and inclusive framework aimed at providing basic literacy and numeracy skills to a broader segment of the population. However, access to education remained uneven, with disparities persisting along lines of class, gender, and ethnicity.

For many children, especially those from working-class families, formal education was limited or non-existent, as they were often required to contribute to family incomes through labour from a young age. Moreover, girls faced additional barriers to education, as societal expectations often prioritized their domestic roles over intellectual pursuits.

Despite these challenges, the 19<sup>th</sup> century also witnessed significant strides in educational reform and advocacy, driven by progressive thinkers and social reformers. Initiatives such as the establishment of public schools, the expansion of teacher training programs, and the promotion of compulsory education laws aimed to democratize access to learning and improve educational outcomes for all.

Throughout the century, literature played a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of education, with authors such as Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, and the Brontë sisters offering vivid portrayals of the joys and struggles of schooling experiences. Their works shed light on the harsh



realities faced by students and teachers alike, while also highlighting the transformative power of knowledge and the pursuit of intellectual growth.

It is precisely for this reason that the works of the Brontë sisters have been selected for the purpose of analysing education. More specifically, the well-known novels of Charlotte and Anne Brontë, *Jane Eyre* and *Agnes Grey*, are one of the most central themes of the novels, as they deal with the problem of education and its representation.

Through the experiences of their respective heroines, *Jane Eyre* and *Agnes Grey*, Charlotte Brontë and Anne Brontë deliver stinging critiques of the school system of 19<sup>th</sup> century England in “*Jane Eyre*” and “*Agnes Grey*.”

In “*Jane Eyre*,” Charlotte Brontë exposes the harsh reality of Victorian schooling, particularly through Jane's formative experiences at the repressive Lowood Institution. The school's severe disciplinary measures, insufficient facilities, and apathetic administration emphasize the systemic injustices and inequalities that pervaded the educational scene of the period. Furthermore, Jane's battles to claim her identity and uphold her dignity in the repressive Lowood setting highlight the negative consequences of an educational system that values uniformity over originality and discipline over compassion.

Similarly, in “*Agnes Grey*,” Anne Brontë presents a scorching disapproval of the abuse of governesses inside the education system of 19<sup>th</sup> century England. Brontë draws attention to the marginalization and mistreatment that working-class women experienced when serving as governesses in affluent homes through the character of *Agnes Grey*. *Agnes*'s experiences demonstrate the tight class hierarchy of Victorian society, the lack of respect and gratitude for her cerebral and emotional labor, and the limited chances for personal and professional growth.

Both works emphasize the problematics of education in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including its inherent disparities, strict social structures, and stifling uniformity. Through their protagonists' quests for autonomy, dignity, and self-realization, the Brontë sisters force readers to address the ethical obligations of educators and the broader cultural attitudes towards education, gender, and class.

The work's practical significance is mostly found in using the knowledge it offers regarding educational models and practices from the nineteenth century. People in the education sector can consider using them or avoiding them once they are familiar with them.

In summary, “*Jane Eyre*” and “*Agnes Grey*” are timeless examples of how literature can shed light on the intricacies of the educational system and encourage critical discussion of its flaws. These novels serve as windows into the educational environment of 19<sup>th</sup> century England and provide

priceless insights on the struggles and victories faced by people attempting to achieve knowledge, self-realization, and dignity in an unfair and unequal society.

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## РЕЗЮМЕ

Освіта є дуже досліджуваною галуззю, і це не дивно, адже освіта є важливою частиною розвитку людства. У цій роботі розглядаються всі аспекти приватної освіти у дев'ятнадцятому столітті.

Перша частина цієї роботи підсумовує сучасні дослідження, присвячені 19-му століттю. У ній розглядається суспільство, література та виховання вікторіанської епохи з особливим акцентом на сестрах Бронте. Друга частина містить аналіз та опис освіти в зазначену епоху, представлений у романах «Агнес Грей» Енн Бронте та «Джейн Ейр» Шарлотти Бронте.

19 століття стало періодом значних трансформацій в освіті, що характеризувалися розширенням можливостей навчання, появою нових педагогічних підходів та викликами, пов'язаними з соціальною та економічною нерівністю. Протягом століття освіта зазнала значних змін під впливом різних чинників, зокрема індустріалізації, урбанізації та еволюції суспільних норм.

За цей період система освіти в багатьох західних країнах з моделі яка переважно була сконцентрована на релігійної і еліті перетворилася на більш світську і сприймаючи систему ціль якої надати можливість різними класам населення для здобуття базових навичок грамаеи і рахування.

Для багатьох дітей, особливо з родин робітничого класу, формальна освіта була обмеженою або взагалі відсутня, оскільки від них часто вимагали робити внесок у сімейний бюджет, працюючи з раннього віку. Більше того, дівчата стикалися з додатковими бар'єрами на шляху до освіти, оскільки суспільні очікування часто ставили на перше місце їхні домашні обов'язки, а не інтелектуальні пошуки.

Незважаючи на ці виклики, 19 століття також стало свідком значних успіхів у реформуванні та захисті освіти, які були досягнуті прогресивними мислителями та соціальними реформаторами. Такі ініціативи, як створення державних шкіл, розширення програм підготовки вчителів та просування законів про обов'язкову освіту, мали на меті демократизувати доступ до навчання та покращити освітні результати для всіх.

Протягом усього століття література відігравала вирішальну роль у формуванні суспільного сприйняття освіти, а такі автори, як Чарльз Діккенс, Джейн Остін і сестри Бронте, пропонували яскраві описи радощів і труднощів шкільного навчання. Їхні твори

проливають світло на суворі реалії, з якими стикаються як учні, так і вчителі, а також підкреслюють перетворюючу силу знань і прагнення до інтелектуального зростання.

Саме з цієї причини твори сестер Бронте були обрані для аналізу освіти. Зокрема, відомі романи Шарлотти та Енн Бронте «Джейн Ейр» та «Агнес Грей» є однією з центральних тем романів, оскільки в них розглядається проблема освіти та її репрезентації.

Через досвід своїх героїнь, Джейн Ейр та Агнес Грей, Шарлотта Бронте та Анна Бронте в «Джейн Ейр» та «Агнес Грей» піддають нищівній критиці шкільну систему Англії 19 століття.

У романі «Джейн Ейр» Шарлотта Бронте викриває сувору реальність вікторіанського шкільництва, зокрема, через досвід навчання Джейн у репресивному закладі Лоувуд. Суворі дисциплінарні заходи, недостатня матеріальна база та байдуже ставлення адміністрації підкреслюють системну несправедливість та нерівність, що пронизували тогочасну освітню сферу. Крім того, боротьба Джейн за утвердження своєї ідентичності та відстоювання власної гідності в репресивному середовищі Лоувуда висвітлює негативні наслідки освітньої системи, яка ставить одноманітність вище за оригінальність, а дисципліну - вище за співчуття.

Аналогічно, в «Агнес Грей» Енн Бронте висловлює палке несхвалення зловживань гувернанток у системі освіти Англії 19-го століття. Через образ Агнес Грей Бронте привертає увагу до маргіналізації та жорстокого поводження, яких зазнавали жінки з робітничого класу, працюючи гувернантками у заможних родинах. Досвід Агнес демонструє жорстку класову ієрархію вікторіанського суспільства, брак поваги та вдячності за її розумову та емоційну працю, а також обмежені можливості для особистого та професійного зростання.

Обидва твори підкреслюють проблематику освіти у 19 столітті, зокрема притаманну їй нерівність, жорсткі соціальні структури та задушливу одноманітність. Через прагнення своїх героїнь до автономії, гідності та самореалізації сестри Бронте змушують читачів замислитися над етичними обов'язками освітян та ширшим культурним ставленням до освіти, гендеру та класу.

Таким чином, «Джейн Ейр» та «Агнес Грей» є вічними прикладами того, як література може пролити світло на хитросплетіння освітньої системи та спонукати до критичного обговорення її недоліків. Ці романи слугують вікном в освітнє середовище Англії 19 століття і дають безцінну інформацію про боротьбу та перемоги, з якими стикаються люди, що

намагаються досягти знань, самореалізації та гідності в несправедливому та нерівному суспільстві.

# Звіт про перевірку схожості тексту Oxsico

Назва документа:

Varga Adrienn.docx

Ким подано:

Еніке Надь-Коложварі

Дата перевірки:

2024-05-22 16:54:47

Дата звіту:

2024-05-22 17:37:20

Ким перевірено:

I + U + DB + P + DOI

Кількість сторінок:

91

Кількість слів:

31509

<b>Схожість 15%</b>	Збіг: <b>34 джерела</b>	Вилучено: <b>0 джерела</b>
Інтернет: <b>26 джерела</b>	DOI: <b>0 джерела</b>	База даних: <b>0 джерела</b>
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