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Representations of Femininity, Domesticity, Sexuality, Work and Independence in Mid-Victorian Women's Magazines

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ABSTRACT

This study explores representations of femininity, domesticity, sexuality, work and independence in mid-Victorian women's periodicals. Through close readings of a whole range of publications produced for and by women between 1845 and 1880 the study aims to explore the relationship between text and culture, and to consider the relevance of class as an important determinant of social knowledge and value. Starting from a discussion of methodological and theoretical concerns the study moves on to look at representations of the sign *woman* in popular, fashion, drawing-room and evangelical magazines. A final chapter explores the way in which a woman-centred discourse is developed in feminist journals and considers the significance of class as a marker of respectability. The wider concern of the study is with debates about the relationship between gender and class, the women's magazine as a popular signifying practice, and the highly mediated relationship between text and culture.

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INTRODUCTION

> Look at our literature now, and it is all periodical together. The whole day is one meal, one physical, moral, and intellectual feast; the public goes to bed with a periodical in her hand, and falls asleep with it beneath her pillow.
> (*Eliza Cook's Journal* 1849, 82)

It is the aim of this thesis to study a selection of periodicals for women published between 1845 and 1880, both to explore them as particularly immediate texts, and to assess their impact as sites where cultural values and meanings are negotiated and constructed. The metaphor of the gendered public in the epigraph is pertinent, not only because it refers literally to the preponderance of female readers, but also more significantly I would argue, because it metonymically places the trajectory of the periodical at the site of woman and looks to her potential role of consumer. The years between 1845 and 1880 are interesting for a number of reasons: there is the rise of the mass market and the proliferation of periodicals onto that market; it is at a time when radicalism is on the demise and the middle-class begin to consolidate a position of prominence; it is between these dates that the early organised feminist movement begins to emerge and the 'woman question' assumes national significance.

I approached this area of research with a store of the usual intellectual baggage that an academic is expected to have acquired

as a pre-requisite for post-graduate study. In my case, the baggage consisted of a background in the period and an interest in feminist literary theory and popular cultural forms. Thus, I had defined the genre and the specific period in which I wanted to work; but in the early stages I had no concrete ideas about how I was going to tackle the project in terms of issues, except that I was committed to looking at gender. Once the empirical research had begun, I was astonished by the number of periodicals for women and by the paucity of critical material on them.[1] My feelings were mixed: had I stumbled upon a veritable gold-mine, or had I become one in a line of academics who had found something which was fascinating in an antiquarian sense, but which was lacking in enough weight to be theorised? Gradually, as I developed my own theoretical awareness in line with the primary research, I became more and more confident that what I was doing was not only legitimate but also that it made a contribution to the study of the period, the genre, and most importantly to an understanding of the historical and cultural construction of the sign, woman. After this revelation I narrowed the focus to concentrate primarily on what I understood as women's periodicals.[2]

As the opening epigraph indicates, many periodicals had a significant female readership, although in the case of popular family magazines such as *Eliza Cook's Journal*, the target readership was from both genders. But I wanted to look at those magazines aimed specifically at women, usually with 'lady' or 'woman' in their titles, which I soon found to be a reliable marker of gender

interest.[3] What emerged from extensive readings of these texts was a preoccupation with representations of such concepts as femininity, domesticity, sexuality, work and independence. Furthermore, they all demonstrated that class was often as much a concern as gender. I wanted to explore, in line with parallel research in other genres, not only how these concepts were represented, but more importantly how they were constructed through the text, through not only its generic constitution but also through its ideological and material position. As the research progressed, I became further convinced that the twin issues of class and gender were of prime importance, and even of anxiety for Victorians, and that analysis of these texts would make an important contribution to an understanding of the complexity of the issues surrounding class and gender identity in the mid-Victorian period.

Of course, much recent work by literary critics and historians has concentrated on these issues using the novel, poetry, the diary, autobiography, letters, statistics and public records. Jane Rendall (1985, 206) comments on the reasons why historians have not used imaginative literature such as fiction, or prescriptive material such as conduct books, as descriptions of women's worlds. These texts have been rejected as a means to the reconstruction of this world in favour of letters and diaries, and Rendall believes that fiction and conduct books have not been used, as they can be seen as too mediated and less documentary than letters and diaries. Certainly the questions of ideology and agency for instance, which are what seem to be central to Rendall's observation, are difficult

and at times vexed ones; but Rendall's point is a fair one and the argument about the relevance of citing non-documentary literature as a means of understanding a culture at any given time does need to be clarified. Rendall engages with these issues as a historian and writing as a cultural critic I feel that my task is very similar. It is my aim therefore to recognise the common ground and contribute to the rise of cultural studies as an inter-disciplinary subject which offers the necessary tools to deal with magazines as complex texts.

A number of related issues emerge when one considers the study of the periodical. Traditionally popular periodicals have not been considered either as literature or as historical evidence, and as such have been devalued, but with the emergence of cultural studies they have become the subject of enquiry. In *Literary into Cultural Studies* (1991) Antony Easthope puts the challenge that if cultural studies is in pursuit of a viable discourse of knowledge then it must be prepared to look at any form of signifying practice.[4] Even under these terms however, one still needs to differentiate between types of periodical. As a genre they are as diverse and heterogeneous as any cultural and literary form could possibly be, and distinctions do need to be made in my period of study between high literary journals such as *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* or *The Athenaeum*, and women's magazines such as *The Ladies' Treasury* and *The Lady's Own Paper*, which are part of a popular discourse and are thus situated in culture and by culture in a different way. But as I will argue later in the introduction, magazines are also interesting

because they are often a complex amalgamation of the literary and the non-literary, and of the visual image and the printed word.

I aim to demonstrate that the study of periodicals is both a legitimate and useful way to understand culture, and particularly the cultural and textual formation of meaning. The importance of the periodical in the Victorian period cannot be over-emphasized: this is after all the early period of the rise of mass publishing and the mass market. The focus which I make on gender is particularly important when one considers that the signifier woman represents at this time, epistemological crisis, and its manifestation in contemporary contexts such as the periodical reveals much about the cultural and textual production of meaning.[5] Indeed, it is worth exploring the possibility that the anxiety surrounding the textual representation of woman is related to the material conditions of production, and the preoccupation with the regulation of the female body in women's magazines may be related to the move to consumer capitalism.[6] In this introduction then I will describe the emergence of the Victorian women's magazine; detail the rise of the mass market which makes the proliferation in periodical publishing possible; place women's magazines in the wider context of the Victorian periodical press; discuss the generic properties of the periodical and its role in Victorian culture as both a commodity and a site of cultural negotiation and meaning; and finally explain the methodological and theoretical considerations underpinning my project.

Mid-Victorian Women's Magazines

The Ladies' Mercury was published by John Dunton in 1693, and it became the first in a long line of magazines produced specifically for women. According to Cynthia White (1970) the demise of the three leading Georgian magazines *The Lady's Magazine*, *The Lady's Monthly Museum* and *La Belle Assemblee* in 1847, marks the advent of the Victorian women's magazine which differed from its eighteenth-century predecessor in that it omitted material on politics and intellectual affairs, and was thus more restricted and myopic in approach. Ros Ballaster (1991) concurs with this and cites *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* as a significant publication, both because of the year of its launch, 1852, and because of its editor Samuel Beeton, who was reputedly the first editor of what has become known as the modern women's magazine. The production of women's magazines as an industry did not really emerge until the 1880s, but between 1845 and 1880 a huge and unprecedented number of periodicals for women appeared.[7] The period then is one of transition, it marks the important shift towards the modern women's magazine, and concomitantly an important discursive moment in the representation of woman which is synonymous with the move to consumer capitalism.

Studies of women's magazines have begun to proliferate in the academy in the last twenty years and historical surveys have tended to be either sociological or cultural in approach. In the process of my own research I have had the benefit of both historical and bibliographical surveys and have found them to be both a help and a

hindrance. They are either too sweeping to be of any detailed use, or in the case of bibliographical studies often, if understandably, inaccurate.[8] My contribution to this field of study does not aim at completeness but it does aim at representativeness and I take inspiration from the methodology of Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978). The discourse of women's magazines, like the discourse of Orientalism has a thick fabric, and I will describe the fabric at certain moments, moments chosen for their textual and historical significance. Ballaster too, in *Women's Worlds* (1991), focuses on two Victorian women's magazines, *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Queen*, in order to represent the cheap middle-class monthly and the rather more expensive ladies' magazine. Whilst I must acknowledge my debt to this study, particularly in the theoretical sections, I would like to develop and widen the issues of discussion, both in terms of conceptual debate and empirical examples.

It is useful to categorise the types of magazines available for women, but it is imperative to remember that categories are often useful only as a starting point, especially when dealing with recently 'excavated' material. Thereafter they must be treated with caution and not be allowed to become barriers to complex arguments about overlap and even contradiction. As a starting point then the types I will cover are: popular women's magazines; magazines for young women; fashion magazines; drawing-room magazines; evangelical magazines and feminist journals. Any example from each category may demonstrate some of the features of those from other categories, and

even within each there are often other factors which have to be taken into consideration. For instance, price is not necessarily a marker of conservatism, *Blackwood's Lady's Magazine* and *The Ladies' Cabinet* were both shilling monthlies but *The Ladies' Cabinet* was, as I shall go on to argue in chapter one, a rather liberal publication. Bibliographers often make a distinction between women's newspapers and women's magazines, thus Eugenia Palmegiano (1976) separates *The Queen* and *The Lady's Own Paper* from publications such as *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Ladies' Treasury*. *The Queen* and *The Lady's Own Paper*, apart from their size which is folio are, according to my definition, women's magazines and not newspapers.[3]

Popular women's magazines are categorised by a typical mixture of general interest articles, fiction, poetry, music, fashion, needlework, illustrations and readers' letters. Representative examples include *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine, The Lady's Own Paper* and *The Ladies* . Magazines for young women were almost the same as popular magazines but were marketed significantly to what was becoming seen as a separate group of consumers; they are *The Young Englishwoman* and its competitor *The Young Ladies' Journal*. Fashion magazines were publications which were almost wholly devoted to fashion articles and lavish coloured fashion plates and they often included a short piece of lightweight fiction. They were expensive and beautifully presented; examples include *Le Follet, The London and Paris Ladies' Magazine* and *The Ladies' Gazette*. Drawing-room magazines were quite expensive publications which had exquisite hand-coloured plates and no column in the middle, and include *The*

Bouquet From Marylebone Gardens, Blackwood's Lady's Magazine and *Mrs. Ellis' Morning Call.* Evangelical magazines were cheap improving publications aimed at working-class women, they were often illustrated and include *The British Workwoman, The British Mother's Magazine* and *The Mother's Friend.* There were also religious publications aimed at middle-class women, particularly clergymen's wives, such as *The Vineyard* and *Woman's Work in the Great Harvest Field.* Feminist journals were, as their title suggests, dedicated to the slow move towards female emancipation and supported divorce, property, educational and suffrage reform. These journals tended not to be popular or mass produced, were quite expensive and were rarely illustrated; examples include *The Englishwoman's Journal, Woman's World* and *Woman.*

The Rise of the Mass Market for Reading

The magazines have now been designated under working headings, but it still remains to contextualise them in terms of their place in the mass market and their relationship to other types of periodical. It is the aim of this section therefore to consider the conditions which make possible the rise of the mass market, of which women's magazines are a key feature, and to present some description of other types of periodical available to the newly emergent mass readership of the Victorian period.

The growth of the mass market from the mid-nineteenth century can be attributed to a number of factors, including improvements in technology, urbanisation, the growth in population and literacy and changing patterns of leisure. At the beginning of the nineteenth-century the printing press had barely changed since its invention nearly three hundred and fifty years before, but by 1814 the Koenig steam press was being used for the production of *The Times* (Cranfield 1978, 175). Technological advances were important in terms of sheer output and the advent of the Foudrinier paper machine and the Cowper and Applegarth cylinder press created a revolution in printing (Lee 1976, 55). By 1835 the steam presses of the new and popular *Penny Magazine* were turning out a thousand sheets an hour, and by the 1840s the invention of ink blocking on cloth made the production of cheap books a worthwhile enterprise (Leavis 1932, 159). There was also a tremendous growth in paper production in the first half of the century. This was a result of the improved processing of rags (at this time most paper was made from rags) which were imported from Germany, and French developments in paper-making machines (Lee 1976, 57). Although the period from 1863-1860 saw rags in short supply there was enough competition inside the industry to enable prices to be kept relatively low. A ream of paper was down from fifty shillings in 1845 to forty shillings in 1855; but the repeal of the Paper Duties in 1861 had little effect in reducing prices further as there was a continued shortage of rags partly due to the cotton famine (Williams 1981). By the 1880s however, the situation had become

resolved by the use of wood pulp which was to become an important factor in the proliferation of cheap newspapers and magazines at the end of the century (Lee 1976, 57).

Railways and paddle steamers made the transportation of goods and travel generally easier and faster. Although the railway did not improve upon the collection of news it did facilitate distribution (Lee 1976, 59); but it was the electric telegraph which was in regular use by 1847 that made a substantial difference to the collection of news (Williams 1981, 194). Improvements in technology and communication were not the only advances, population too was growing and having an effect on the development of British culture. In 1851 the total population of the United Kingdom was 27 million, fifty per cent of whom were described as urban.[10] In the first half of the century London alone had seen an increase in population of a hundred per cent from the years between 1801 and 1841; it went from a million in 1801 to two million in 1841 (Fraser 1981). It is clear that such a massive explosion in numbers emigrating to the capital had a dramatic effect on the increase in urbanisation and industrialisation. In a geographical sense also, London must have expanded so much that a great deal of the surrounding countryside simply disappeared.

Literacy also played an important role in the development of a mass market for literature. Although it is difficult to be absolutely certain about literacy levels in this period it is known that in the years 1851, 1873 and 1893, 62 per cent, 78 per cent and 90 per

cent of people were able to sign the marriage register (Fraser 1981).[11] Of course this is only an indication of reading skills, but it is generally thought that most urban working people could in fact read, and reading was more commonly taught than writing (Cranfield 1978, 176).

The nature of work and leisure patterns was also changing. Cottage industries had been all but wiped out by the 1850s, making way for an urban workforce whose time was clearly marked by the division between work and leisure (Bailey 1978). The fourteen hour workday was commonplace and the Saturday half-holiday was not generally recognised until the 1860s (Cranfield 1978); nevertheless the working-class found time for leisure even if it meant taking unofficial, unpaid, time off (James 1982). As I will describe later, cheap reading material was available to the working-class, and by mid-century factors such as lack of sufficient leisure time, surplus income and adequate levels of literacy which had previously legislated against working-class inclusion in the reading public, were no longer taking effect. So, the new members of the reading public had some surplus income to spare, but this was of course limited; the new mass market had to depend upon cheap reading material for its existence. In the mid-forties the invention of ink-blocking on cloth made books become cheap, which added to their popularity (Leavis 1932). This period very much belonged to W.H. Smith in terms of ownership of the popular market in book publishing. Smith's had begun in 1792 by distributing newspapers, magazines and periodicals, and in 1848 they secured the right to

sell books and newspapers at railway stations. By 1855 they had become the largest wholesale newsagency in England and Wales, and in 1858 they began their famous library which became a major competitor to Mudie's Circulating Library due to the national network of railway bookstalls and the launch of the subsequently ubiquitous 'yellow backs' (Leavis 1932, 159). Yellow backs were cheap reprints of books priced between one and two shillings which served the needs of the newly emergent middle-class travelling public (Fraser 1981, 75). In Scotland John Menzie's were the equivalent of W.H. Smith; they began operations in Edinburgh in the 1830s and in 1857 they linked up with the Scottish Central Railway by taking bookstalls to various parts of the country. Newspapers also enjoyed the profits to be gleaned from an emergent mass market and especially the fast increasing urban populace. The daily press was transformed by the removal of the last of the newspaper taxes, and in 1853 the Advertisement Tax disappeared too. By the end of the 1840s, the total circulation of London daily newspapers was 60,000 and it was 270,000 for the Sunday newspapers (Cranfield 1978, 165).

So, improvements in technology, the growth in population, urbanisation, the increase in literacy and changing patterns of leisure contributed to the evolution of a new culture, a mass urban culture that produced new consumer needs. In turn the newly emergent consumer need stimulated the growth in the mass market for consumption.[12] The new urban culture not only produced a literate working-class but also a middle-class consumer who had some

disposable income and a middle-class lifestyle to maintain. It is from within this particular context that the women's magazine grew, and it is significant that the majority of them were addressed to a female middle-class consumer. The Great Exhibition of 1851 was an important symbolic moment for England; as Thomas Richards (1990) notes, capitalism was consolidating its hold both economically and semiotically and the era of the spectacle had begun. It meant the beginning of significant change in forms of commercial activity and inaugerated a shift in the concerns of industry from the satisfaction of need to the invention of desire (Bowlby 1985). The commodity became the focal point of all representation, the magazine as a commodity also sold other commodities through the advertisements, and as I shall argue in chapter one issues of selling and desire were more prevalent in some publications than others.

The Periodical Press

I have described the conditions which made possible the rise of the mass market for reading in the mid-nineteenth century; the reading public then had two additional, relatively new groups, the mercantile middle-class and the industrial working-class. The number of periodicals published between 1824 and 1900 has been estimated at around 12,500 and a substantial number of these fall

within the period in question (Wolff 1971). The history of newspaper publishing and production has been very well documented, but the history of periodicals has been rather more erratic and general surveys tend to have some difficulty in dealing with the diverse material.[13] Indeed in *The Edinburgh Review* Thomas Carlyle commented on the fact that every religious sect had a newspaper of their own.[14] It would be impossible to locate women's magazines without putting them into context and to do this means presenting an overview of the major types of periodical available in the period concerned. I want to look first at the types of periodicals aimed at upper middle-class and middle-class readerships before I go on to look at the new types of periodicals aimed at the newly emergent commercial and artisan readerships. Through this section I aim to demonstrate the diversity of reading material available and to suggest the diversity of ideological positioning available from within these texts.

Reading for the upper middle-class was covered by expensive quarterlies such as *The Edinburgh Review* (1802-1929) and *The Quarterly Review* (1809-1967). From the beginning of the period in question these were very expensive, ranging from two shillings and sixpence to three shillings.[15] Thus content (they were aimed at those with a strong classical background) and price immediately delineated the type of readership for these journals (Mitchell 1981, 90). In the 1860s however a new set of monthlies emerged such as *Macmillan's Magazine* (1859-1907) and *The Cornhill Magazine* (1860-1975), which were cheaper at a shilling. This was due to the

fall in the price of paper but of course also meant that larger circulations were a real possibility. These monthlies were aimed at a middle-class readership who lacked the income to purchase the expensive quarterlies, and they also catered for the public's demand for serialised fiction. *Macmillan's Magazine* and *The Cornhill Magazine* were rivals; *Macmillan's Magazine* published Alfred Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Charles Kingsley and Mrs Humphrey Ward; whilst *The Cornhill Magazine* under the editorships of William Thackeray and then Leslie Stephen, managed to secure work from Anthony Trollope, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell, Wilkie Collins and part of Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*. By the end of the 1860s *Macmillan's Magazine*, and *The Cornhill Magazine* were selling around 20 000 copies an issue (Mitchell 1981, 90).[16]

Other popular monthlies edited by well-known authors were *Belgravia* (1866-1899) and *The Argosy* (1865-1887), which were edited by the popular sensation novelists Mrs. Braddon and Mrs. Henry Wood. Two monthlies which stayed at the more expensive price of two shillings and sixpence were *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (1817-1980) and *Fraser's Magazine* (1830-1882). *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* was originally founded as a competitor to the Whiggish *Edinburgh Review*, and was known affectionately as 'Maga' to regular subscribers. *Fraser's Magazine* was a competitor which prided itself in its non-partisan character because its editor was not a publisher, as in the case of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and many other periodicals during this period. Another conservative publication was *The Saturday Review* (1855-1938), an influential

weekly which became known as an organ of opinion for the upper middle-classes, or to those aspiring to that status. Both *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and *The Saturday Review* are important periodicals because they had enormous influence; and for the purpose of comparison they are important because they represent high literary journalism as opposed to the more popular approach of many women's magazines.

The origins of the cheap illustrated Victorian magazine can be found in *The Penny Magazine* and its rival *The Saturday Magazine*.[17] *The Penny Magazine* (1832-1845) was published by The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (S.D.U.K.) and was edited by Charles Knight. As the title indicated, it was very cheap at a penny, attractively illustrated and at the end of its first year was selling 200,000 copies a week (De Mare 1989, 74).[18] A competitor to *The Penny Magazine* was *The Saturday Magazine* (1834-1844) published by The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) which had, not surprisingly, a strong Christian message. These are the significant titles of the early thirties which, along with *Chamber's Journal* (1832-1938), are emblematic of what Brian Maidment (1992, 19) sees as the three motives underpinning cheap publishing, the denominational, the ideological and the entrepreneurial. As the century progressed and more periodicals emerged it becomes more and more difficult to categorise periodicals with such ease, particularly when details of editors and circulations for instance, are not available. These early penny magazines aimed to be informative and to help the reader who was

seeking self-improvement, and they combined a wide spectrum of topics ranging from educational information, biography, poetry, scientific knowledge, history and art. It has been suggested that they did not in fact appeal to the working-class, but Patricia Anderson (1992, 67) argues against what she calls the cliché that members of the working-class did not read *The Penny Magazine* by calling attention to the correspondence and commentaries, which she claims would have appealed to the working-class.

The penny weeklies of the fifties and sixties moved away from the concern with serious education to a rather more frivolous approach, although they did not abandon moral instruction altogether (Anderson 1991). They included fiction, the omission of such by *The Penny Magazine* contributed towards its decline (Mitchell 1981). The forties and fifties saw the rise of the Victorian family magazine, characterised by the provision of something interesting for every member of the family. In the fifties *The Family Herald* (1842-1939) and *The London Journal* (1845-1912) dominated the market; their combined sale was three quarter of a million copies a week (Mitchell 1981). A typical issue included a biographical feature, fiction, problem page, household hints, recipes, a short feature on fashion and puzzles. In her excellent survey of these two magazines Sally Mitchell (1981) concludes that the *The Family Herald* was more conservative and respectable in tone than the *The London Journal*. Other cheap weekly family magazines included *Chamber's Journal* (1832-1938), *Household Words* (1850-1859), *Howitt's Journal* (1847-1851) and *Eliza Cook's Journal* (1849-1854). These were a little

more expensive at between one and a halfpence and twopence, but they also proved to be popular, and of course like their penny weekly competitors were still open to an artisan readership.[19] All these journals catered for, and indeed even constructed within their pages, the cult of the family and of domesticity in particular. Historians have argued that these types of magazines are symptomatic of the demise of radicalism in the 1850s and a prelude to the mid-Victorian age of equilibrium. A refugee from the Chartist movement, George Reynolds, became a key figure in the production of another group of publications characterised by sensationalism rather than the time-honoured cult of the family. Reynolds is perhaps best known for his editorship of *Reynold's Weekly Newspaper* (1850-1924) which built up a circulation of 250,000 and was radical in approach but became known for its sensational and often even salacious fiction. Outstripping it in circulation figures was its main competitor *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper* (1842-1926). These were Sunday newspapers aimed at the working-class and they are considered the inventors of the format of the mass media.[20]

The Generic Features of the Periodical

Periodical is a generic term which includes magazines, reviews, journals and newspapers, although the diversity within the genre is quite prolific and indeed challenging, one consistent thread which

they all share is that as periodicals they have a marked association with time. As the first date-stamped commodity (Beetham 1989) periodicals appeared on the market at agreed regular intervals, most commonly daily, weekly or monthly, and they were produced by an economy which sought to satisfy consumer demand. They were undoubtedly part of the leisure and entertainment market, and it is important not to forget that they were the products of the capitalist system which was establishing itself in mid-Victorian Britain.

A periodical is easy to pick up, lay down and flick through; a book, on the other hand, demands more time and effort and to a certain extent, more perseverance. This is because of the demands it makes to engage in a reading regime which most readers certainly find difficult to break up outside of the chapter divisions. Perhaps because of this the periodical is more ephemeral, it is bought to be thrown away but it is at the same time a more intimate form of literature (James 1982). The relationship between the text and the reader is forged over time, and if readers are dissatisfied they can withdraw from the commitment of regular purchase. Thus, readers have expectations about matters relating to both form and content precisely because of the protracted nature of the relationship. For example, periodicals have a certain regularity about the order of their features; if the reader is accustomed to finding the letter page at the back then if it changes its place without warning this will disturb the reader's usual expectations. When layout changes

readers are usually warned and as change is usually in pursuit of improvement it is understood that advance notice is a beneficial selling technique. Victorian women's magazines certainly underwent frequent changes, usually in pursuit of improvement or simply for survival, hence the bewildering array of 'New Series' for the researcher to wrestle with![21] Each periodical is usually very quickly identified with its format; *The Queen*'s lavish banner headline and illustrations were associated with a certain 'classy' style, and the absence of columns and illustrations in drawing-room magazines such as *Blackwood's Lady's Magazine* identified them as serious upper-class publications for leisured women. The dense print of *The Englishwoman's Journal* embodies the tone of a publication which was devoted to serious reform issues, and the ornate style and well spaced typography of *Le Follet* identified it as luxury commodity which was commensurate with the expensive price. As periodicals depend upon this intimate relationship between text and reader and the significance of being identified with a certain lifestyle, then drastic change in content or style can have disastrous repercussions. The question about the relationship between producer and consumer is complex, having a number of sites of connection. The consumer is a recipient of the reading material and is also a participant in a transaction which involves more than just the exchange of money as I shall argue in chapter one. There is no doubt that the periodical, although ephemeral, has a unique relationship both to its readership and to the society from which it emerges.

Perhaps the most contentious issue surrounding the generic features of the periodical revolves around its status as both an open and closed form. It is undoubtedly a heterogeneous form which frequently juxtaposes visual images with the printed word and embodies a variety of genres within its pages. Any single issue of a woman's magazine could consist of reviews, letters, fiction, poetry and music or sewing sheets: indeed it is often an eclectic blend of the entertaining with the pragmatic and even didactic. Moreover, it is important to remember that some are evidently more homogenous than others, for instance feminist journals were more consistent in tone and approach than popular women's magazines. Within the single issue the reader is free to construct her or his own order and is not tied to the strict linear format required by other genres. This is one of the reasons why it has been classed as an open form. In the essay 'Theory of the Periodical' (1990) Margaret Beetham sets out the terms of this debate in a particularly cogent manner and concludes that it is both an open and closed form.[22] The use of Tania Modleski's (1984) work on another open form, the soap opera, has been very useful in the discussion about open forms being particularly 'feminine' forms. The specific attributes of an open form are the absence of a single author, the relationship to time and the self-referential nature of the serial, numerous possibilities of order available to the reader and resistance to narrative closure. Under this particular model, closed forms are seen as 'masculine' because they operate in a linear fashion and foist upon the reader a dominant meaning which denies the

possibility of diversity of reading pattern and construction of meaning.

Modleski argues that the serial nature of soap operas makes them open-ended narratives which are more fragmented and in tune with the rhythms of the housewife's day.[23] These features have been seen as playful and even disruptive, and the same can be said of the woman's magazine as an example of another open-ended form. Of course men read periodicals too, which somewhat disturbs this possible hypothesis, although magazines have traditionally been more popular with women and arguably this does have something to do with its formal qualities. Beetham (1990) also has some reservations about this and draws attention to the possibility that magazines are not open texts at all. She lists the reasons for this which are: consistency of format and content matter; the regulated nature of its appearance; the address to a regular and consistent 'reader' within the text and the fact that each issue is a self-contained unit in its own right and is thus necessarily end-stopped.[24] Thus, Beetham argues that periodicals are more likely to be conservative and repressive, rather than disruptive and liberating. What interests me is that the disruptive potential that the periodical undoubtedly has is a feature of its heterogeneity, and this raises some interesting but complex considerations. If a generic feature is the ability to present a diverse number of ideological positions within one apparent narrative framework then this needs to be tested out. Each single issue is like a bead which when thread onto a chain seeks both identity in its own right and the appearance of wholeness

and continuity. Thus duality is a fascinating feature of a specialised discourse which lends itself well to accessibility and popularisation. Before I go on to consider women's magazines in detail I need to provide some explanation of the methodological and theoretical issues which underpin this study.

Towards a Methodology and Theory of the Periodical

As periodicals are complex texts they do need to be considered with a methodological approach which can capture and problematise this complexity. This study does not attempt to produce a quantative or descriptive account of women's magazines, but will produce a critique which utilises the rigour of contemporary theory with the acknowledgement that these texts are from a period other than our own and therefore need to be located in another separate, but nevertheless related historical narrative. A number of methodological considerations do need to be raised before the theoretical input is presented. It is important to remember that the samples with which I deal demonstrate selective survival; that is that they are taken from what we have left, from what has survived, and the process of survival for these ephemeral publications is a precarious combination of good fortune and selective evaluative judgements (Maidment 1990). Indeed, I was disappointed to find a number of magazines which I found listed in the British Library

catalogue had been lost during the war, and others seem to have simply disappeared.[25] Complete runs are also quite rare, as are complete issues, since fashion plates and advertisements are often lost in the volume-binding process. At any rate, with what is left the researcher then needs to decide how to approach this material. I decided to cover issues of representation, those of femininity, domesticity, sexuality, work and independence, as they are concerns found, with varying degrees of interest, in all women's magazines. I also decided to explore each representation through the class of magazine which was most fertile in relation to it. For instance the chapter on work and independence revolves around feminist journals and popular magazines as these are the two groups which demonstrate the most interest, and in this sense the material for each chapter was virtually self-selective.

I also needed to consider the ability of these texts to reveal reliable evidence about the period from which they emerge. Louis James (1982) states that they are cultural clocks by which we measure the time, but before I could possibly hope to begin working with this metaphor a number of areas did need to be clarified. The key player here is the reader, and one must be careful not to collapse the ideal reader inscribed within the text into the historical or empirical reader. There is not a great deal of concrete critical evidence about Victorian readers, and the evidence that is available is often concerned with the collation of tabular information about sales figures and the demographic study of reading habits. Nevertheless, this information, although interesting, tends

to move away from a theoretical engagement with the notion of readerships. An audience is made up of individual readers, who may or may not share similar assumptions; an audience is thus a complex phenomenon and is comprised of numerous social and textual compositions. By reading Victorian periodicals it is possible to reveal something about reader and audience address, but one must be very careful about making assumptions about reader-response in the absence of empirical data.[26] It would of course be useful to combine rhetorical analysis with empirical evidence about the social composition of audience, and Lyn Pykett (1990) provides a particularly interesting critique of contemporary study of the periodical which has moved away from the empirical towards the theoretical. I sympathise with this argument and of course would want to defend my own attempts to reclaim these erstwhile lost cultural icons; but I must be honest about the need to find a compromise between theory and practice, one which avoids the rather flat collection of tables and statistics, whilst also avoiding the abstract conceptualising of texts which do have a material past and continue to have a material presence. I feel it is important to be realistic about the limitations of empirical evidence only, as one of the most dynamic projects of cultural theory has been the focus on cultural and historical formation through textual exposition. What one can be sure about with Victorian women's magazines is the nature of the textual constructions of the various discourses; this I will argue, can reveal something about a given culture and its self-articulation at a given time. What one cannot be sure about is the reliability of information about readership to be gleaned from

the content and address of a periodical. Nevertheless, it is possible to say something about the way magazines and their discourses locate themselves in relation to their potential and even ideal readerships, and it is possible to produce theoretical explanations of the significance of this relationship.

But what about James's metaphor of the periodical as a cultural clock? The periodicals in question were produced specifically for women who had already been identified as a separate special interest group in the eighteenth-century (Shevelov 1989), and Victorian women's magazines were interested in women's world in both a material and textual sense. The materialist position which I adopt looks at the relationship between literature, culture and ideology and it rests on the assumption that literature does not exist outside the system of social relations, but rather that it produces the system that makes it what it is. What is interesting about texts is that as they produce representations of the ideological formation from which they emerge they provide a site for anxieties to be worked out. Periodicals are particularly contemporary and, even to a certain degree, spontaneous texts and have an immediacy lacking in more permanent forms. As a feminist and a materialist I am interested in the representation of gender and the relationship between the particular representations, and the social formation from which they emerge. I agree with Kathryn Shevelov (1989) when she states that magazines situate themselves, and address and figure their readers in a particular way. The construction of a woman's world in these texts moves towards a consideration of the private

world of domesticity and the manner in which it operates. To focus on the materiality of these private arenas and on their quotidien engagement with motherhood and female sexuality for example, means the commitment to re-consider traditional historical constructions of culture.

My reading of Victorian women's magazines also acknowledges the existence of the ideology of separate spheres, but also recognises that it was a site of anxiety and that it was also being constantly contested. There is no doubt that in Victorian literature generally, social life was represented as based on sexual difference and that this was the result of a middle-class attempt to make sense of a world that was changing (Poovey 1989). However, as the following chapters will demonstrate, the idea of a totally monolithic dominant ideology is not really sustainable and does not do justice to the complexity of both the period and its textual representations. The hegemonic ideology of Britain was not stable and did contain dissenting voices, and I concur with the work of other materialist feminists who have produced a body of work in support of the contradictions apparent in an ideology struggling for dominance.[27] There are moments when the ideology of separate spheres actually empowered women, or at least operated as a source of pleasure and gratification, and the fact that women bought magazines as a source of pleasure is significant. Also from the private world of the home readings of magazines can show that the private was often public, which vindicates the need to interrogate the ideology of separate spheres.

But did these magazines shape or reflect ideology and in turn did they present or represent particular constructions of womanhood? It is impossible to assert that magazines mirror or reflect society in an unproblematic Aristotelian sense because the relationship between text and culture is highly mediated; textual constructions demonstrate the struggle to assert meaning, the struggles of editors and contributors but also of readers who were able to exercise choice in reading material and modes of reconstruction. The ritual of reading as a leisure activity is important too, as is the nature of women's lives which were uneasily situated between the dichotomy between work and leisure.[29] Female textual identity, although supposedly fixed, was a site of contradiction and my task is to consider the role of the periodical in this process.

In chapter one I look at popular and fashion magazines, and in particular at the construction of an ideal of femininity. I argue that popular magazines operate as kinds of conduct book and that the interest in the public and the private reveals an anxiety about separate spheres which is central to the discourse of femininity. I also consider the regulation of the fashionable female body, the pleasure of conspicuous consumption manifested by the female body as spectacle, and end by looking at representations of the Orient.

The second chapter is concerned with the ideology of domesticity in popular and evangelical magazines through the idealisation of the middle-class home and the mother's place within it. I also consider the attention paid to girls in magazines produced specifically for

them, and through the 'Girl of the Period' controversy in order to assess their significance as women of the next generation. The regulation of the home is a concern of many different types of women's magazine, and by looking at the running of the home and the supervision of servants I argue that class is a crucial determinant in the ideology of domesticity.

In the third chapter I look at the potential disruption of the ideology of domesticity through representations of the working-class woman and the prostitute. I use a range of publications aimed at different groups of women to confirm that the notion of respectability was firmly tied to class in the discursive framework of women's magazines.

In the fourth and final chapter I turn to feminist journals to consider how the twin issues of work and independence are covered, and how they construct alternative versions of woman's world within their pages. This involves a comparison between their formal and ideological frameworks and those of the popular magazines they work so hard to write against.

INTRODUCTION
NOTES

1. See Cynthia White, *Women's Magazines, 1693-1968* (London: Michael Joseph, 1970); Alison Adburgham, *Women in Print: Writing Women and Women's Magazines from the Accession of Queen Victoria* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1972); Ros Ballaster and others, *Women's Worlds. Ideology, Femininity and the Woman's Magazine* (London: Macmillan, 1991) and Kathryn Shevelov, *Women and Print Culture: The Construction of Femininity in the Early Periodical* (London: Routledge, 1989).
Cynthia White and Alison Adburgham provide historical surveys of the rise and development of the women's magazine; the others locate them historically but also theorise them from a range of feminist perspectives. Victorian women's magazines are not covered in detail by any of them,and although *Women's Worlds* does devote a chapter to the nineteenth-century it focuses on *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Queen* only, as it tends to be more interested in the post-1880 period. There are a number of articles devoted to feminist journals and details of these can be found in the notes to chapter four.

2. I must at this early stage explain my use of the terms periodical, journal and magazine. Periodical is the generic term for a publication of any frequency which appears at designated regular intervals and which has no expected termination date. The term journal tends to be used for publications dealing with specific subjects, journals are usually dense and unillustrated. Magazines on the other hand,are characterised by the inclusion of illustrations and articles by a number of writers.
Thus, I use the term periodical to make general statements, and reserve the terms journal and magazine to be more specific, especially in relation to particular texts. In the final chapter for instance, I categorise feminist publications as journals because of the specific nature of their content, approach and format.

3. There are though a number of publications which use gender-specific titles and which are not women's periodicals. For instance, *The Ladies' Own Journal and Miscellany* was a cheap 1½d weekly which included extracts from the fashionable and expensive *Le Follet* on fashion, but was in every other way a publication more geared towards general family reading and entertainment.

4. In terms of the British tradition of cultural studies the work of Raymond Williams was ground-breaking when it first appeared. But in the last twenty years the influence of continental post-structuralist theory has also made its mark on the shift from the traditional study of English literature. Antony Easthope's, *Literary into Cultural Studies*

(London: Routledge, 1991) has become one of the most influential and controversial books on the move to cultural studies in the academy in the last few years.

5. Although the theoretical approach of Alice Jardine in *Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985) does not inform my work, I have found the concept of gynesis which she describes as 'the putting into discourse of woman' to be a very apposite description of what happens in the nineteenth-century in terms of epistemological understanding.

6. See Judith Lowder Newton, 'History as Usual? Feminism and the "New Historicism"' in *The New Historicism* ed. by H. Aram Veeser (London: Routledge, 1989), pp.152-168, for an erudite discussion of the need for cultural materialists to define class consciousness in terms of the experience of women as well as of men.

7. See Eugenia M. Palmegiano, 'Women and British Periodicals, 1832-1867. A Bibliography', *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, 9, (1976), pp.3-36, where eighty-two periodicals for women are listed.
Although the research was done some time ago I have found it to be a useful source, although it is not totally reliable and I have found a number of publications for women which have not been listed. It is of course inevitable that there are omissions and errors in bibliographical studies of this type, for instance it includes *Eliza Cook's Journal*, which I call a family magazine. Although there may appear to be some room for debate on the question of family magazines, Palmegiano does not list *Howitt's Journal* or *Chamber's Journal*, other examples of this type, which leads me to believe that *Eliza Cook's Journal* is included because of the woman's name in the title. Thus, the author falls into a trap into which I nearly fell when I called up *The Ladies' Own Journal and Miscellany*!

8. As I detailed above, Palmegiano's bibliography does contain some inaccuracies. White also lists *The Young Englishwoman* as a penny weekly when it was a rather more expensive sixpenny weekly, and also suggests that *The Female's Friend* was a general reform magazine, but it was in fact a protectionist tract for the salvation of prostitutes.

9. Palmegiano appears to use size as a mean of classification for *The Lady's Own Paper* and *The Queen*, but then goes on to class *The Young Ladies' Journal* as a newspaper which defies the supposed logic as it was not a folio.

10 The figures can be split as follows, England and Wales 18 million, Scotland 3 million and Ireland 6 million, see William Hamish Fraser, *The Coming of the Mass Market, 1850-1914* (London: Macmillan, 1981).

11. See Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961), p.166 for comparable figures.

12. For studies of the rise of the mass market see Hamish Fraser; Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle* (New York: Stanford University Press, 1990) and the introduction to Rachel Bowlby's, *Just Looking, Consumer Culture in Dreiser, Gissing and Zola* (London: Methuen, 1985).

13. For details of the history of newspaper publishing, see George Cranfield, *The Press and Society* (London: Longman, 1978); Alan Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press, 1855-1914* (London: Croom Helm, 1976) and *Newspaper History from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day*, ed. by George Boyce, James Curran and Pauline Wingate (London: Constable, 1978). For details of the periodical press see Lionel Madden and Diana Dixon, *The Nineteenth-Century Periodical Press in Britain* (New York: Garland Publishing Incorporation, 1976); *The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings and Soundings*, ed. by Joanne Shattock and Michael Wolff (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982) and Michael Wolff 'Charting the Golden Stream: Thoughts on a Directory of Victorian Periodicals' in *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, 13 (1971), pp.23-38.

14. In 'Signs of the Times', *The Edinburgh Review* (1829), p.443.

15. *The Edinburgh Review* had a circulation of 13,000 copies at its peak, but by 1841 the figures had gone down to 8,000 due to the competition from monthlies like *The Athenaum* and *Notes and Queries*, see Cranfield, p.167.

16. *The Cornhill* had a circulation of 90,000 in 1860 but it had fallen to 18,000 in 1868 and then slowly declined from then on. It was also reputedly worthwhile to offer the then unknown Trollope £1,000 for the serial *Framley Parsonage*, so powerful was the public apetite for serialised fiction. See Q.D. Leavis, *Fiction and the Reading Public* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1932).

17. See Brian Maidment's catalogue 'Into the 1830's', produced for an exhibition on cheap octavo magazines held in Manchester Polytechnic Library during the Conference of the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals in 1992, for a very interesting description of twopenny octavo journals and their subsequent influence on the cheap periodical press of the 1840s and 1850s.

18. Williams puts the figure at 40,000 but Patricia Anderson in *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture, 1790-1860* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) agrees with the higher figure.

19. *Chamber's Journal* had a circulation of 55,000 in 1835, which by 1845 had approached 90,000, see Cranfield, p.147. *Howitt's Journal* and *Eliza Cook's Journal* had circulations of 25,000 and between 50,000 and 60,000 respectively, see Brian Maidment 'Magazines of Popular Progress and the Artisans' in *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 17 (1984), pp.83-94, for an interesting discussion of these magazines.

20 For a detailed study of the sensational popular press see Virginia Berridge, 'Popular Journalism and Working-Class Attitudes, 1854-86: A Study of *Reynold's Newspaper, Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* and *The Weekly Times*' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, 1976).

21. For this reason in all the references to the magazines I note the year and the page; as everything was bound in volumes by year of publication readers will have no problems finding them.

22. An earlier version of this article 'Open and Closed: the Periodical as a Publishing Genre' appeared in *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 22 (1989), pp.96-100, but as the later version is more detailed and polished I refer to that one.

23. See also Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance. Patriarchy and Popular Culture* (London: Verso, 1987) for a useful study of romance fiction and women's reading habits which forms part of the debate about feminine forms such as soap opera.

24. There is the argument of course that serialised fiction always looks forward to the next issue, but it has to be said that each single instalment has a rationale of its own. Also, the practice of binding periodicals into volume form assumes that each issue is ultimately part of a larger whole.

25. *The Ladies' Portfolio* and *The Lady's Review of Literature, Art and Social Economy* are catalogued as being held in the British Museum and the British Newspaper Library but both have been mislaid. A significant run of *Townsend's Monthly Selection of Parisian Costumes* has been war-damaged and *The Ladies' Book of Fashion* has been completely destroyed.

26. Apart from the circulation figures available for the more well-known women's magazines such as *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Queen*, it is extremely difficult to find details, and the usual method of calculating stamp duties is a notoriously unreliable way of finding out about circulation figures. Berridge, p.100, confirms this by stating that after 1855 accurate records are non-existent.

27. See Mary Poovey, *Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in mid-Victorian England* (London: Virago, 1989); Cora Kaplan, *Sea Changes* (London: Verso, 1986); *The Ideology of Conduct. Essays in Literature and the History of Sexuality*,

ed. by Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (London: Methuen, 1987); Terry Lovell, *Consuming Fictions* (London: Verso, 1987) and Lynda Nead, *Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988).

28. Although Kate Flint's, *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) came to my notice too late for me to use in this thesis, I recommend it as an excellent study of women's reading.

CHAPTER 1

REPRESENTATIONS OF FEMININITY

The Ideology of Separate Spheres

The first editorial address of *The Bouquet Culled from Marylebone Gardens* seems concerned to point out that whilst it encourages its female readers and contributors towards intellectual success,it does not wish to undermine or even question the supremacy of men.[1]

> It has been remarked as one of the characteristics of the present age, that women are asserting a right to greater consideration than they formerly held; and are maintaining it by the position which many, who are a glory to their sex, have achieved in literature and science. We need not say that the *Bouquet* has ever been open to our fair young friends: we have made it a point not to discourage the most fearful. Not that, like their sisters on the other side of the Atlantic, we would wish to see them *trenching on the prerogatives of men* or desiring to contest with them a supremacy of intellect which a sensible woman will rejoice that they hold. We believe that women have their own peculiar sphere, in which they are as unapproachable as man in his. If it is the business of men by their public labours to regulate the external forms of the world, it is woman's part by precept and example, from and in the seclusion of her own home, to give life and efficacy to those forms. (1851, p.vi.)

What is particularly interesting about this extract is the self-conscious endorsement of the ideology of separate spheres. Although

early in the years chosen for this study, this position is typical of many of the popular perceptions of women's role to be found in women's magazines throughout the period.

In their study of the provincial middle-class in the first half of the nineteenth-century, Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall argue that the polarities such as public and private which underpin the notion of separate spheres, are in fact ideological constructs and as such are '...with specific meaning which must be understood as products of a particular historical time.' (1987, 33). By the early nineteenth-century the differentiation between the two spheres of public and private had become a salient feature of the dominant social order. Indeed there are a number of studies on the ideology of separate spheres, and most attempt to investigate why such an ideological position should hold such powerful currency for such a long time.[2] Pursuing the thesis that ideological constructs must be understood in terms of the historical conjuncture from which they emerge, I argue that the Victorian view of society as naturally split between masculine and feminine spheres is a useful way to articulate and even explain the tensions of urbanisation and industrialisation being felt by all sections of society at this time. Furthermore, the question of the emergence of the ideology of separate spheres at this particular historical moment must be addressed. The fact that the middle-class as a relatively new social group were emerging and establishing themselves as a major political and economic force cannot be ignored.[3]

In the introduction to *The Ideology of Conduct*, Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (1987) argue persuasively that,

> The new dominant ideology not only provided a basis on which numerous competing social groups could each identify their interests but also provided a form of power exercised through constant supervision and the regulation of desire, thus preparing the cultural ground in which capitalism could rapidly flourish. (p.12)

As I argued in the introduction, this is a useful way of understanding how the ideology of separate spheres is linked to the notion of a dominant ideology; an ideology which was inextricably connected to the material conditions of social formation and perception.

However, despite the persuasiveness of this position there is the danger of shifting towards the advocacy of a form of crude economic determinism which neglects the way in which both dominant and dominated social groups interact and engage with the real material conditions of their lives; and concomitant with this, how they articulate this negotiation through cultural artefacts. It is important to see middle-class hegemony as not wholly uncontradictory but rather as fissured and self-contradictory. According to Mary Poovey in her study *Uneven Developments*, the middle-class ideology of the Victorian period was 'both contested and always under construction' (1989, 3). It also developed unevenly for a number of reasons. Firstly, it developed unevenly in the sense that it was experienced differently by different individuals. Clearly people of

different gender, race and class held differing responses and relationships to cultural discourses such as religion, politics and medicine. Secondly, ideology was not articulated in the same way by different discourses and institutions, and thus it also developed unevenly.

Poovey's hypothesis can also be put to active use in relation to the material covered by this study. Representations of femininity in magazines of the period are indeed contradictory. This seems particularly appropriate to a genre in which heterogeneity and fragmentation are inherent. However, as I shall go on to illustrate, the question of contradictory representations of femininity is not only connected to the formal properties and attributes of the texts in question, but more specifically is also bound up with ideological formations and reformations explicit in much of the literary and non-literary representations from the period. As this chapter progresses I shall demonstrate that magazines constitute a site for the battle for a unified representation of femininity to occur, and indeed that this battle was part of a more general attempt to define and control femininity as one polarity in the ideology of separate spheres.

One way of confining and indeed codifying femininity has been through the conduct book, and a number of studies of this genre have emerged which demonstrate the possibility of linking it with the women's magazine. Armstrong (1987, 100) states that the publication of conduct books declined in the late eighteenth-century because the

dominant ideal of the definition of true femininity had passed into the realm of common sense. In fact what did replace them were other types of conduct literature in other types of guises. Kathryn Shevelov's (1989, 4) study of eighteenth-century women's magazines claims that the periodical was a public disseminator of prescriptions for private behaviour, and that it contained normative images of 'private' life closely identified with women.

Women's Magazines as Conduct Books

I have chosen four women's magazines which were all in print at some point between 1845 and 1880 as examples of women's magazines as conduct books. They are *The Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion, Music and Romance* (1832-1870), *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (1852-1879), *The Ladies' Treasury* (1858-1895) and *The Lady's Own Paper* (1866-1872). The reason for this choice is that they represent a range of popular and successful women's magazines, and they are good examples of both the cheap weekly and the more expensive shilling monthly. However, within this group of four an interesting division can be made between the essentially conservative stance of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Ladies' Treasury*, and the more liberal *Ladies' Cabinet* and *Lady's Own Paper*. Despite the more liberal stance of the latter two, I shall argue that they are types of conduct book in the sense that as they embody the codification of femininity, then they therefore participate in the discourse of

femininity: but also that through this participation they demonstrate the contradictory nature of this discourse.

The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine (1852-1879) began as an illustrated twopenny monthly in 1852, and its first editor was Mary Isabella Beeton. Her husband Samuel Beeton became the sole copyright owner of the magazine in 1855, and such was its success that he went on to publish *The Boy's Own Magazine* (1855-1862), *The Young Englishwoman* (1864-1877) and *The Queen* (1861-1922).[4] Like other women's magazines *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* contained an interesting mixture of fiction, poetry, recipes, management of household pets, gardening, general articles and fashion; but where it was particularly innovative was in the inclusion of the 'Practical Dress Instructor' and its prime emphasis on 'woman's world'.[5] What the Beetons sought to do was to cover every aspect of the middle-class woman's life. Emphasis was, as the title indicated, on the domestic character of woman's life, and the appeal to nation also in the title is tied not only to the class aspect of the magazine but also to empire (Ballaster 1991). The cover page was very detailed and reveals much about the magazine. It features a proscenium arch with a bust of Queen Victoria on the top. The title of the magazine is presented around the bust so that Victoria's head is placed in between 'Englishwoman'. Five female figures are placed at the foot of the arch, three are standing in the middle and reading and two sit on either side of them, one is doing an embroidery and the other is playing with a small animal in a cage. Directly above them and between the arches, which are inscribed with

the contents of the magazine, is Buckingham Palace. Two female figures in classical dress look up to Victoria but the ordinary women in the foreground are completely engrossed in their tasks. It is as though they are part of an enclosed world, and indeed the world is that of the magazine as they are flanked by a parrot, a dog, a goldfish, plants, needlework and two cherubs. The world outside the arch is represented by the palace, and although perfectly centred in the middle, it is clearly not a world open or even inviting to the women who are located firmly, possibly even frozen, in their own private space. This image simultaneously represents the public and the private worlds, but the latter is the one which belongs to the readers of the magazine. The cover page with its balance and symmetry symbolises perfectly the juxtaposition of the world of the magazine, the world of women, with the outside world which is always visible but never quite within reach.

The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine was the first popular women's magazine to emerge on the market, not only through price but also through layout and tone, and as such can certainly be seen as a prototype to the modern women's magazine. Departures from the traditional women's magazine included an advice column 'Cupid's Letter Bag' and practical help with the physical and moral development of children. The success of the magazine soon became evident as by the end of the second year circulation was at 25,000. By 1856 these figures had increased to 37,000, and when the first series came to an end in 1860 sales had reached 50,000 (Hyde 1951, 46). Hyde credits *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* with being

the first magazine to issue coloured fashion plates but in fact it was *La Belle Assemblee* (Ballaster 1991).[6] The Beetons imported coloured fashion plates from Jules David in France who designed the plates for the prestigious *Le Moniteur de la Mode*. Part of the magazine's success may well have been the fact that the Beetons recognised that value for money was something which was desirable to the consumer. Issues included regular pull-outs on sewing and embroidery and by the 1870s the average number of pages was fifty two.[7]

The first year of publication is, as Ros Ballaster argues, significant, 'It appeared at the moment when bourgeois dominance of Britain became absolutely secure.' (1991, 87). The bourgeois concept of separate spheres was based upon the notion of the feminine as the domestic, and as *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* was a domestic conduct book then it necessarily spoke for this bourgeois philosophy. In the first address to readers the editor reveals something about what the magazine will offer, and implicitly I would argue, something about the bourgeois fear of the non-conforming woman.

> If there is one thing of which an Englishman has just reason to be proud, it is of the moral and domestic character of his countrywomen. Proudly we say it, that few are the exceptions to this rule; and we are bold enough to hope that our efforts will lessen even the number of these exceptions. THE ENGLISHWOMAN'S DOMESTIC MAGAZINE will doubtless be found an encouraging friend to those of our countrywomen already initiated in the secret of making "home happy;" and to the uninitiated, who, sometimes from carelessness, but oftener from the want of a guiding monitor, have failed in this

> great particular, we shall offer hints and advice by which they may overcome every difficulty, and acquire the art of rendering their efforts successful and their homes attractive. (1852, 1)

But what is perhaps most interesting about this extract is the sense of the magazine as a 'guiding monitor'; this is surely an apt example of the magazine as conduct book borne out even more emphatically in the reference to the magazine as a 'public instructor' found a few lines later.

> We should be fulfilling only a part of our duty as public instructors-and by far the least important part-if, while endeavouring to convey information upon matters purely domestic, we neglected to brighten the intellect and add to the general information and instruction of our readers. (1852, 1)

The magazine quite explicitly sought then to be a 'public instructor' to the private, and by definition domestic, world of the home. It is not so clear what the 'public' part of the phrase actually refers to; is it an instructor to the public at large or acting on behalf of the public interest? On reading the whole run of the magazine I would be inclined to state the latter, an argument which will be explored in more detail in chapter two.

However, to return to the middle-class character of the magazine, the incorporation of 'woman' in the title was a constant reminder that this was a middle-class magazine which sought a readership who would identify themselves as women, the queens of the domestic sphere, rather than as 'ladies'. But in the first editorial address

there is also some slippage in terminology, there is a reference to the "Practical Dress Instructor" and its paper patterns '...that any lady may readily furnish herself with...' (p.2). It seems that the confidence with which the magazine sought to assume its new endeavour was not quite so stable, indeed as the remainder of the chapter will demonstrate the definitions of femininity offered in publications like *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* were not as stable as they seemed.

The Ladies' Treasury (1858-1895) appeared on the market in 1858 and was published by Ward and Lock as a direct competitor with *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and it is perhaps because of this that it also presented a conservative stance.[8] It was an illustrated monthly edited by Mrs. Warren and as its full title indicates, *The Ladies' Treasury: An Illustrated Magazine of Entertaining Literature, Education, Fine Art, Domestic Economy and Fashion*, it attempted to broaden the range offered by *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* whilst including some emphasis on the domestic.[9] However, the use of 'lady' as opposed to 'woman' in the title in this and the following three magazines is significant. Regular features included a broad range of material such as music, biography, language tuition, fashion, advice, recipes and needlecrafts. It contained alot of fiction which was of a varied nature, including a significant amount of work from the popular 'Silverpen'.[10] The preface to the first volume is written with an air of jubilation, the first year had been a great success and this is captured in the preface, 'The success of a magazine is, in these

days, so singular a proof of intrinsic merit and popular appreciation, that we confess to being a little elated, or what is commonly called in high spirits.' (1858, p.iii). Again, clearly in competition with Beeton *The Ladies' Treasury* exploited the mixture of fashionable appeal with utilitarian aims.

> We shall *carry on* our practical directions for Flower and Landscape Painting, and for every elegant variety of Fancy Work; full directions for Wax and Paper Flowers being a prominent feature in our magazine, and an occupation at once fascinating and *à la mode*. Contributions like these will be even added to, for we feel that employment is the safeguard of the young female mind. Industry is the sworn foe to folly and vanity, and we all in riper years feel the full truth of the verse we lisped in childhood-
>
> "Satan finds some mischief still
> For idle hands to do."
>
> Our Fashions will be of the newest and most elegant, for the days are past when Wisdom was a dowdy. The good and gifted do not now disdain the Graces. (1858, p.iv)

Despite its interest in the domestic aspects of womens's lives, such as the long running and popular 'Aunt Deborah's Receipt Book' and its advice on cookery and household management, the main emphasis was on gentility, and *The Ladies' Treasury* ran successfully until 1895.

The Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion, Music, and Romance (1832-1870) was a rather traditional but enlightened shilling monthly edited by Margaret and Beatrice de Courcy until 1852, and later by Mrs. Loudon.'' It was so pleased with its success that in 1855 it thanked its 'workers', the female contributors, who helped to forge success, 'In the meanwhile, in thanking our subscribers we must not

forget the *workers*, who have in all earnestness helped us to win and maintain their support' (1855, 1). A typical number contained general articles, fiction, poetry and fashions including very attractive coloured fashion plates, although illustrations were sparse. In the early years of publication it was pocket-sized, but after a series of changes (a common feature of Victorian women's magazines) it became enlarged. The earlier numbers were characterised by a journal-type appearance, but this changed in 1852 when the two column magazine format appeared. In this respect *The Ladies' Cabinet* did not have the visually interesting appeal of the other popular magazines and looked more like a drawing-room magazine, but its broad range of content cover marks it out from the rather restricted scope of drawing-room magazines such as *Mrs. Ellis' Morning Call*. Fiction was generally of a higher standard than that found in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Ladies' Treasury*. This is to a large extent due to the fact that much of it was by American authors, particularly women such as Sarah J. Hale and Alice B. Neal who produced racy adventure stories in contrast to much of the sentimental contemporary English writing.[12] One of Nathaniel Hawthorne's short stories 'Feathertop: A Moralized Legend' also appeared as a short serial in 1852.

But one of the reasons which made *The Ladies' Cabinet* more liberal than the preceding two magazines was its willingness to print and invite discussion on a variety of issues concerning women at a time when the others were unwilling to do so.[13] For instance, it had dealt with and dispensed with the corset controversy long before it

was discussed in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (this will be dealt with in some detail later in the chapter). But perhaps more significant was the inclusion of a number of articles either by or about Bessie Rayner Parkes dealing with issues about property ownership, work and education for women.[14] There were also a good number of positive reviews of *The Englishwoman's Journal*, a feminist campaign journal edited by Bessie Parkes and Mary Hays; indeed it seems ironic that *The Ladies' Cabinet* should complain as it did about the 'heavy' tone of *The Englishwoman's Journal* in its reviews, when it also lacked the popular appeal of its competitors.[15] The reason for this may well have been revealed in a note to subscribers in the first issue for 1855.

> For our own part, we will continue to make the administration of these pages a labour of love - to exert a careful supervision of their contents, and as far as may be compatible with its feminine character, enable the Magazine to keep step with the march of more masculine literature.
> (1855, 1)

But despite its identifiably liberal approach *The Ladies' Cabinet* was also in many ways a type of conduct book through the codification of femininity found in many of its articles and features.

Another liberal publication which demonstrated an equally ambivalent approach to femininity to that found in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* , *The Ladies' Treasury* and *The Ladies' Cabinet* was *The Lady's Own Paper*. The full title was *The Lady's Own Paper. News of*

the Week, Music and the Drama, Fashions, Novelettes, &c. (1866-1872), and it began as an illustrated twopenny weekly aimed directly at women through title, contents and address. The cover page always included the banner headline which took a third of the space and detailed four women in a garden. One woman, possibly the mother, is seated in the centre with the other three kneeling or standing around her, and they are reading a copy of the magazine. On each side of the women are three discs which detail the leisure pursuits of gardening, letter writing, piano playing, horseback riding, drawing-room conversation and croquet. The scene is presented in perfect symmetry with the ornately lettered title placed on the top and clearly designed to attract, or at least suggest, a middle-class readership. It was cheap though and the job advertisements on the back page reveal something about the range of readership as the 'Positions Wanted' are almost always for governesses and the 'Positions Vacant' for servants.

Initially it was very good value for money containing a variety of informative articles with the usual diet of fiction, poetry, fashion articles, a children's corner, court news and general weekly news. It is the inclusion of the weekly news feature which presumably gives it newspaper status, but it is only this and the folio size which sets it apart from the other women's publications already discussed, and it was clearly not a newspaper in the usual sense of of the term. The reason for this is that the outside events seem to be brought into the world of the magazine, and this world is intimate and enclosed unlike the dangerous outside world which was

brought in in the form of weekly news features. These were chosen for their lurid and sensational qualities and included regular reports such as 'Crimes and Casualties' and 'Law and Police'.

Although *The Lady's Own Paper* did not include coloured fashion plates, the illustrations were stunning and the title page always opened with a large illustration and feature on a famous woman. In the first two years they included famous writers, artists and reformers such as Elizabeth Braddon, Jean Ingelow, Rosa Bonheur, Florence Nightingale and Frances Power Cobbe. But with the onset of the first new series in 1868 the attention shifted to members of the Royal court or celebrities. Publications like *The Lady's Own Paper* and a competitor like *The Queen* are characterised by the regular inclusion of biographical sketches of eminent people, especially women; this approach looks forward to the New Journalism of the 1880s and 1890s and the emergence of the personal interview.[15] Where this magazine differed from *The Queen* though was in tone and address, its stance was liberal and it included many interesting articles on the position of women. The publication dates of course are significant in terms of wider developments in society concerning the woman question; but these are not the only factors as, as we have seen, magazines such as *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* were also publishing at this time but maintained a conservative stance on many of the key issues. Nevertheless, despite the sympathetic portrayals of female reformers and their aims in the magazine, it presented these articles alongside frivolous fashion features which contributed to the delineation of the world of the

magazine which was at once both potentially radical and conservative.

The Lady's Own Paper ran for six years and in its final year when it experimented with price and format in order to survive, the editorial address revealed that it did not intend to be a poor second to *Le Follet* and *The Family Herald*. The fact that the two examples represent the expensive fashion and the cheap family magazine confirms my hypothesis that *The Lady's Own Paper* struggled to find a gap in the market which was not covered. It attempted to offer more than coverage of light and entertaining features, such as fashion, to a middle-class readership and it did succeed, at least for some time, in presenting itself as a woman's magazine with an intelligent and liberal edge.

Public and Private / Freedom and Control

The discussion so far has worked towards developing the claims made in the opening of the chapter about the ideology of separate spheres and the manner in which it operates in women's magazines of the mid-Victorian period. The ideology of separate spheres functions in the main on a series of polarities which operate to construct and maintain the dichotomous division of the world between opposite, but presumably complementary, states. The polarities that I would like to discuss in this second section of the chapter then are those of

public and private and freedom and control. By beginning with an exposition of the way in which these sets of polarities function in the samples already described and a number of monthly fashion magazines, I aim through this process, to show the way in which these examples of the ideology of separate spheres function successfully. Concomitant with this argument is the understanding that the notion of pleasure underpins these relationships in a number of very interesting and dynamic ways.

In the first issue of *The Ladies' Treasury* there is an article about a report by Mrs Jameson entitled 'Social Employment of Women' (1858, pp. 21-23).

> What we desire, by means of this paper, is to call popular attention to the principle which she sets forth and illustrates - the principle of communion of labour between men and women in the work of governing, reforming, guiding, succouring the depraved and the unfortunate. (1858, 23)

It is interesting that the editorial 'we', using a metaphor of labour, should be advocating 'communion' between men and women, and yet the principle of the private being an essentially female domain is extolled through the pages of *The Ladies' Treasury*.[17] The relegation of women to the sphere of the private meant in essence that women were isolated from each other. The magazine historically has been seen as a friend,and indeed modern magazines certainly work hard to illustrate and magnify this traditional relationship (Winship 1987). *The Ladies' Treasury, The Englishwoman's Domestic*

Magazine, *The Ladies' Cabinet* and *The Lady's Own Paper* are diligent in their use of the collective 'we' and attempts at the promotion of an intimate relationship between editor and reader. This was done in a number of ways; by the editorial addresses most often seen in the opening page, on special occasions such as anniversary issues, by features such as *The Lady's Own Paper*'s 'A Gossip Amongst the Ladies About Shopping' and by the advice columns and problem pages.

The Ladies' Cabinet did not include many articles on advice, certainly in an explicit fashion. *The Lady's Own* had a regular feature entitled 'Motherly Talks with Young Housekeepers' by Mrs. H.W. Beecher but this was mainly concerned with the running of a household and the responsibilities of the good housekeeper. However, both *The Ladies' Treasury* and *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* were far more concerned with not only issues about domesticity, but also about social etiquette and relationships, and actually voiced their concern through advice columns and problem pages. The reasons for this can be traced back to an earlier section in this chapter where the distinctions between the two types of magazine were made, namely the difference between the conservative and liberal. Both *The Ladies' Treasury* and *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* are prototypes for the modern women's magazine, and the role of the advice column and the problem page are causally linked to this development.

The Ladies' Treasury ran the regular 'Aunt Deborah's Receipt Book' which featured letters from an aunt to her niece on how to run a

household. It also ran another regular feature with the ominous title of 'Conduct and Carriage; or, Rules to Guide a Young Lady on Points of Etiquette and Good Breeding in her Intercourse with the World' which consisted of a dialogue between an ambitious mother and her daughter. The hints attempt to be 'agreeable and amusing' and it is revealed to the reader that this is the reason for the choice of dialogue format. Despite the attempt at brevity though the issue is a serious one for a lady, as the mother, Mrs. Vernon says ' It is only the ill-informed, half-bred, and vulgar that are really awkward in society' (1858, 119). Advice columns thus often played the role of surrogate mothers and sisters who acknowledged, and yet sought to alleviate, the problems of isolation and the lack of community that many women undoubtedly experienced.

The most intimate of advice columns were those devoted to matters of romantic love. Eighteenth-century women's magazines included problem pages of this type (Shevelov 1989), but Beeton's *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* was the first Victorian publication to revive this particular feature, which was, and remains, specific to women's magazines. 'Cupid's Letter Bag' appeared in the first volume of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* in 1852. As the Cupid of the title signified it was an advice column wholly devoted to matters of love, and as such became the prototype for the modern problem page. Beeton's Cupid always assumes that it is the responsibility of women to make relationships work, and when they do not then the woman is usually held to blame. For instance in one of the early letters a woman complains about her husband's habit of staying out late every

night and asks whether she should question him about his conduct. Cupid advises her against this and says that the remedy is to provide a cheerful and welcoming home (1852, 64). In the same year 'Cymon' of Sydenham writes, 'In your Magazine you are always lauding the constancy of woman's affection. I am about to give you a specimen which I hope you will insert...' (1852, 96). Cymon goes on to relate a tale about a woman who was seen with another man on a day when she was supposed to be busy at home. In this instance Cupid gives the woman in question the benefit of the doubt, and advises the writer to ask the woman for an explanation, for which he generously assumes there will be a good one. 'Cupid's Letter Bag' disappeared and re-appeared as 'Englishwoman's Conversazione' which, although not excluding romance altogether, dealt with a broader range of issues. In the 'Conversazione' the editor responded to requests and suggestions from readers, it was thus a space dedicated to the self-conscious pursuit of the ethos of friendliness and co-operation established by the magazine which was acting as a surrogate friend. It also represents the collaborative nature of aspects of the generic features of the magazine, and in spite of the chatty tone exemplified by the sophisticated Italian title, it remains testimony to the reality of the act of reading which is both silent and private. But if magazines, or aspects of them, sought to alleviate the problems of the isolated woman, they also sought to reconcile her to the restrictions of the home. In this sense the polarity between freedom and control comes into operation. Both public and private and freedom and control are inevitably and inextricably

linked, and the first of each set corresponds with the other. Unfortunately for women their lives corresponded to private and control, the second of each of the sets. However, as I have already indicated, the notion of pleasure does underpin these polarities and prevents the model from becoming a rather crude dyadic one which does not illustrate the complexities of the ideology of separate spheres in operation at this time.

The respectable woman's life was devoted to the management of relationships, typically referred to as 'affairs of the heart' as I have already argued, and this 'work' took place in the home (the significance of home and the ideology of domesticity will be discussed further in the following chapter). In the first article of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* entitled 'Female Education' (1852, pp.2-4) the importance of woman's responsibility for the maintenance of the personal life of the home is stressed,

> There is one part of female cultivation, however, that we have not yet mentioned, though of infinitely greater consequence than all of the rest - the cultivation of the heart... A wife is nothing to her husband whose heart is not bound to his by the sympathies of a kindred spirit - which, like that invisible force that turns the needle to the pole, and binds creation together, must direct to his happiness every impulse of her being, thereby knitting soul to soul by the affinities of undying love. (1852, 3)

In this period the home soon became seen as a place of psychological stability (Trudgill 1976, 41) and the cult of the mother was a very powerful tool in the insertion of women into that space, both

literally and figuratively. Eric Trudgill (1976) provides a lucid account of how the home, and woman's place within it, came to be seen as a safe haven from the instability of social and economic life, but he indicates that the home was also a place of morbid fear, misery and torment. Not only does he leave this fascinating point undeveloped but he also reveals his lack of interest in gendered experience when he goes on to state that,

> The middle-class woman was kept snug within the citadel of the home; the middle-class man faced the world abroad, the clash of new ideas, the nervous strains produced by technological change, the anxieties about the political and spiritual welfare of society, the harshness and the pressures of modern business life. (p.75)

In this defence of masculine 'domestic superiority' Trudgill seems to reinforce the argument that the home was a pleasant space to inhabit, and indeed this may well be why he does not pursue the idea of the home as a place of torment, precisely because it was so for women and not men.[18]

In the whole of the period in question women's magazines extol the virtues of the domination of the home by the woman, but in the later period another issue begins to creep into the focus, the question of women's work. In an article entitled 'Womanliness' (1870, pp.97-98) in *The Lady's Own Paper*, we can see the anxiety at the erosion of woman's influence in the home.

> Soon, it seems to us, there will be no such thing as the old-fashioned home left in England. Women are swarming out at all doors, running hither and thither

among the men, clamouring for arms that they may enter into the fray with them, anxious to lay aside their tenderness, their modesty, their womanliness, that they may become hard and fierce and self-asserting like them, thinking it a far higher thing to leave the home and the family to take care of themselves... The true womanly woman thinks it no degradation that she should take pains to please, to soothe, to comfort the man who all day long has been doing irksome work that her home may be beautiful and her life at ease. (1870, 98)

It must be noted that this article was abridged from *The Saturday Review* which was a publication renowned for its conservatism, however the position from which it argues is one which is not out of place in the magazine. If we compare the two examples from *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Lady's Own Paper*, we can see that, although they are separated by almost twenty years, the issues around woman's move towards the public sphere are still vexed.[19]

If women were to stay in the home, then their insertion into that space needed to be invested with positive cultural approval; in the period and texts in question this comes under the guise of sacrifice, which is represented as a potent symbol of cultural legitimacy. The definitions of femininity in currency at the time were complex, and by looking at them we can see that the repression of women did not function simply as one of power and control. This model of polarities that I have used needs to be understood as one which is underpinned by the notion of pleasure; this undoubtedly complicates and thus redeems a model which would otherwise be seen as a crude dyadic one, a point which I raised earlier. Lynda Nead in *Myths of Sexuality* (1988) uses Michel Foucault's theory of power in the

discussion of female sexuality in the Victorian period,and this helps to explain the potency of sacrifice.

> Power is both regulatory and productive and so the image of the feminine ideal cannot be seen simply in terms of a range of social, legal, political and cultural practices which restricted women and limited their pleasures; rather, respectable femininity was also actively produced around definitions of pleasure. (p.24)

In the following section I will demonstrate how the Foucauldian model of power and control through pleasure operates within women's magazines, using examples from the publications already described and from the expensive monthly fashion magazines. I will look at a number of areas where pleasure plays a key role in maintaining and even enhancing the status quo. Self-sacrifice, as the discussion of the significance of the home has already shown, used the gratification of dependency as an important moment in the construction of the principle of pleasure.

A short story entitled 'Saved by my Wife' published in *The Ladies' Treasury* (1865, pp.18-22), exemplifies a typical piece of fiction designed to have an essentially didactic role in the modelling of the perfect woman, the wife. In this story Hugh answers his friend Paul's questions about his marriage to a woman 'infinitely superior' to himself. Hugh explains that he embarked on a life of pleasure at his club, and did not behave as a respectable married man ought to.

> I fully believe it was given to that woman to redeem, elevate and save my soul, and that the wonderful influence which she exerted over me was a direct interposition of Providence to stay me in my mad, downward race to perdition, and turn my feet into ascending paths. (p.19)

His wife Agnes shows nothing but patience and humility in the face of her husband's profligacy, and 'daily sacrificing, as I well knew, her own wishes and interests to their enjoyment' (p.20). Predictably the story ends with Hugh explaining that through Agnes's devotion he reforms.

> It seemed as if God were speaking to me by her pure sweet lips, and I fell on my knees at her feet, and buried my face in her garments, and groaned aloud with my wretched sense of unworthiness. (p.22)

Another useful example of the notion of sacrifice as pleasure appeared in one of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*'s weekly features, the 'Wisdom and Wit' page. It details the 'strange perversity' that they regularly observe, in that women prefer violent and selfish remonstrations of love, and that they indeed like to make sacrifices for those they love (1852, 27). It is important to remember the context of these comments, the 'Wisdom and Wit' pages were regular and typical features of magazines which provided short witty aphorisms and anecdotes about human nature and specifically modern manners. This feature was intended to be amusing and frank, but without wishing to elevate this short piece to a position beyond its status, it would nevertheless be fair to say that this type of feature attempted to deal with topical issues; and indeed there is

much evidence to show that female self-sacrifice was a significant concern of documentary and literary texts.

In another article entitled 'How to Manage a Husband' the narrator speaks of her own experience of trying to dominate her husband.[20] 'The thought of being reduced to a tame, submissive wife, who could hardly call her soul her own, was not for a moment to be entertained' (1852, 77). Her attempts to dominate him fail and after many years of trying she gives up. Ironically, as soon as she has given up, her husband does as she pleases (as he did during their courtship as the narrator works hard to tell us), but at his whim and not hers. The story ends happily with the narrator revealing that she has finally triumphed, and that domestic harmony has been restored. This particular example again stresses the efficacy and indeed value of manipulation, 'Now, I held him only with a silken fetter, and guided him, without really intending to do so, in almost any direction.' (1852, 79). Despite her victory, it is made quite clear that men must never be tackled in a confrontational manner, as the preceding story from *The Ladies' Treasury* also indicates. In 'How to Manage a Husband', the 'manage' connotes skill and manipulation rather than action and control. In the final instance the tone of the piece is light-hearted and the readership is invited to share in the narrator's matrimonial journey. Indeed those that have already mastered how to manage their husbands can also enjoy with her the fruits of their collective efforts.

Undoubtedly there is a difference between the pleasure of self-sacrifice and the pleasure of reading about self-sacrifice. Neverthless in this context the two are in fact linked as the relationship between the woman reader and tales of self-sacrifice is a partly symbiotic one. The compensatory element of sacrifice is one of control, and the apparent cultural empowerment afforded this mode of behaviour is a result of a patriarchal structure which functions around the ideology of separate spheres. Of course these spheres are never equal, but in spite of this they continue to function precisely because the very inequality of difference operates around the notion that a separate space for women is culturally legitimate and has repercussions of power for those who exist within it. As we have seen in the examples cited, women's magazines were powerfully inscribed in this discursive knot, as both perpetrators and recipients, and the numerous ways in which they addressed their audience remains a testimony to the heterogeneous nature of their material and readings of the articulation of the ideology of separate spheres from within their pages.

This section began with a discussion about the reconciliation of woman to the home and comes to an end, really where it began, on self sacrifice. The respectable woman constructed by this group of magazines then was one who stayed at home, nurtured family relationships and most importantly perhaps, submitted to the will of her husband. As I have argued, this submission was not without reward, and the role of woman was venerated to an unprecedented height in almost all literature of the time. In the process of

generating and worshipping this construction of femininity came the ideal, the ideal woman. As an article of the same name published in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (1874, pp.102-104) stated,

> Our readers must bear in mind that the subject of this paper is an "ideal", not a "real" woman, and that there is a vast difference between the two. (p.102)

Nevertheless, it goes on to state "We merely mean to try and paint one of our sisterhood such as we ought to be, not such as we are." (p.102). Despite its recognition that the ideal does not exist, it proceeds to give advice on how one might attain it. The ideal woman should be without vanity and ostentatious taste in dress, she must enjoy croquet, but not too much; she must enjoy singing, but not crave too much adulation from her audience (indeed she must prefer a small private sitting). She does good works in the community such as teaching orphans and visiting the sick. Last of all she should cultivate lasting friendships "and she knows the more she loves the more she will have to bestow." (1874, 104).

This article illustrates very well the notion of deferred gratification, femininity is something which is much sought after, as the quotations point out, a picture is drawn of an ideal and it is one to which women ought to aspire. In this sense of course the ideal will never be attained, but there is the sense that it is pleasurable to pursue this goal. As Ballaster states "Femininity, therefore, becomes a (sic) both a source of anxiety and a source of

pleasure because it can never be fully acheived." (Ballaster 1991, 124). Although Ballaster is describing twentieth century magazines here the point can clearly be made with reference to Victorian women's magazines. If the model of power and control that I have described has space for pleasure, which of course it has, then as Ballaster states there is also pain involved in this process. The entry of anxiety here is that the anxiety wrought from deferred gratification is a fetishised pleasure, as this is the main topic of the next section it will be discussed in more detail later.

The notion of femininity is a complex one then; as the evidence shows there is a great deal of effort made to try and describe precisely what it is to be a woman. As the article "Womanliness" (*The Lady's Own Paper* 1870, pp.97-98) states,

> Womanliness; a word infinitely more subtle in meaning, with more possibilities of definition, more light and shade, more facets, more phases, than the corresponding word, manliness. This indeed must necessarily be so, since the character of woman is so much more varied in colour and more delicate in its many shades than that of men. (p.97)

It can be argued then that the construction of the signifier woman in these texts becomes a site of struggle, a struggle of definition, which places the whole project of the formation of gendered identity into flux. A short story entitled 'Margaret; or the Word "Obey"', published in *Townsend's Monthly Selection of Parisian Costumes* (1865), tells the story of a young woman who refuses to accept that she will submit to the will of the man she is to marry. The story

ends predictably with Margaret learning the error of her ways and obeying her husband. The reason I have chosen this particular example is not because it is a particularly interesting or unusual one, but rather because it comes from an expensive fashion magazine aimed at an upper-class readership,in contrast to the rather more middle-class readership of the last group. The call to sacrifice, demonstrated in this example of yet another didactic story, stands interestingly alongside a series of constructions of femininity which may seem at odds to those I have already illustrated. The following section of this chapter will seek to show, through a different group of publications, just how my theoretical model works in relation to pleasure when the definition of femininity is broadened out and becomes a rather more complex signifier of cultural construction than it initially seems.

Conspicuous Consumption and The Fashionable Female Body

I began this chapter with the discussion of the ideology of separate spheres and used *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, *The Ladies' Treasury*, *The Ladies' Cabinet*, and *The Lady's Own Paper* as examples of the woman's magazine as types of conduct book. Fashion played a significant role in all these examples,and the representation of the fashionable woman through the fashion plate is interesting when compared to the articles on dress. There are a significant number of

articles on the ideal model for femininity which stress the importance of being fashionable, whilst also warning against the dangers of being too ostentatious. This tended not to be the case with the expensive fashion monthlies which constructed a world which was not as complex and troubled as the world of the popular magazine. The focus of the next section is on conspicuous consumption, namely fashion and body shape. The term conspicuous consumption was first used by the economist Thorstein Veblen (1899) and was used to describe the habits, particularly the leisure habits, of the American nouveau riches. Veblen's model can be used to describe the Victorian middle-class who were also preoccupied with individual ownership and its public display. According to Veblen, once an individual possesses significant wealth and property, they begin to abstain from any association with labour and display their association with leisure as a mark of respectability and social standing. This definition of conspicuous consumption is developed further to include conspicuous leisure and vicarious consumption which was often represented by the wives and servants of middle-class men.

Drawing-room magazines were characterised by a format which looked prestigious, such as the absence of columns, which demonstrated that the saving of space was not a consideration. They also included exquisitely hand-coloured plates and in the case of *The Keepsake* included the work of very eminent writers. The 'leisured' format and presentation of these magazines in relation to the notion of conspicuous consumption, though is not as significant as it is in

relation to the fashion magazine. The representation of conspicuous leisure and vicarious consumption is particularly evident in the fashion magazine, through the evidence of the engagement with leisure as the non-productive consumption of time, and the focus on dress as both display and consumption. Any consideration of the process of the construction of femininity within these magazines must be viewed in relation to these terms, and must also engage with the notion that these texts are fluid and at times even unstable. Both fashion and body shape, the former of course being the property of the latter, and their centrality to the discourse of women's magazines are crucial in the move to understanding this process of construction of an ideal of femininity which often betrays its contradictions most lucidly in terms of class identification. In the earlier discussion of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* I raised the point about the solidly middle-class character of this publication both in terms of tone and of course of price. Beeton's magazine sought a readership who identified themselves as women, rather than as ladies, certainly in the 'domestic' aspects of the magazine as chapter two will demonstrate. However, as I stated, there was sometimes a slippage in the difference in terminology between 'women' and 'ladies'. It is at the locus of fashion that the slippage most clearly manifests itself, and the lacunae opened up by this is most interesting. Conspicuous consumption in all its complexity relates to the worlds of these magazines which all share, to varying degrees, an interest in fashion. However, it is important that the distinction be made between the type of magazine which had an interest in fashion amongst other things, and the magazine

primarily devoted to fashion. The latter can be described as the proto-type of the modern 'glossy', they were expensive and devoted to fashion and etiquette, the affairs of the drawing-room rather than those of the dining-room. In other words the emphasis was on leisure, the pursuit of leisure and the cultivation of leisure, and the key figure in this networking of leisure was woman. As Jacqeline Rose argues, the mid-century explosion of discourse on woman , 'made a spectacle' of woman (1986, 112). This spectacle can be identified across a range of discourses, and is particularly manifest in the fashion magazine with its interest in, amongst other things, the visual spectacle of the fashionable female body.

The Queen (1861-1922), a sixpenny weekly, was another of Samuel Beeton's major successes, but unlike *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* it was folio rather than quarto and was lavishly illustrated. This type of publication already existed in the form of *The Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times* (1847-1863) which finally merged with *The Queen* in 1863. Under Beeton's proprietorship Frederick Greenwood was the editor, but in less than a year Beeton sold it to Edward William Cox (Watkins 1990, 187). Even though the first number declares that it is a 'class journal' for educated, and presumably fairly wealthy, women it was not until Cox's proprietorship and the establishment of a female editor that *The Queen* really began to be specifically addressed to women.[21] The new, but anonymous, editor was Helen Lowe who held the position from 1862 until 1894 (Watkins 1990, 188). Its contents included society

news, the arts, articles of general interest and specifically women's features such as fashion and needlework.

The Ladies . A Journal of the Court, Fashion and Society (1872-1873) was another sixpenny folio which delivered the traditional recipe of fashion, music, domestic hints and informative articles.[22] It was an expensive version of *The Lady's Own Paper*, which had folded earlier in the year, in that both were relatively liberal publications. Indeed White (1969) argues that *The Ladies* did not survive precisely because it was radical,and although this may well be the case, there is evidence in the magazine that it attempted to combine its liberalism to the traditionally conservative attitudes of the women's magazine by pledging its support for the ideology of separate spheres. Indeed the case of *The Ladies* reveals that although the generic features of the magazine allows it an added heterogeneity, in the last instance the explicit alignment with the question of women's rights made a publication's survival on the market a vulnerable one. Both this publication and *The Queen*, despite their differing political allegiances, launched themselves on to the market as sophisticated, illustrated 'class' journals which were not strictly fashion magazines but did use elaborate visual material in an attractive and ostentatious manner.

The expensive fashion magazines were undoubtedly more myopic than any of the magazines previously mentioned,and their particular construction of a world of fashion and leisure is a particularly vital one. *The Ladies' Gazette of Fashion* (1834-1894) was a shilling

monthly and as its full title for 1868 indicates, *Containing Nearly Fifty Superbly Coloured Figures of French and English Costumes Selected From the Newest Patterns; and Moniteurs de Paris*, it was a magazine primarily devoted to fashion.[23] Besides the regular inclusion of coloured fashion plates the main regular features were short stories and miscellaneous articles, usually of a trivial nature. The fiction was always short and simple, but unlike the 'five minute fiction' of the modern women's magazine this was not short because of the busy routine of the reader, but because the whole ethos of the expensive fashion magazine was one of relaxed and undemanding leisure. *The Ladies' Gazette of Fashion* contained what were to become the classic features of the fashion magazine, a rich diet of fashion, fiction and advertisements.[24] It was well presented with three columns which had gone down to two by the eighties at the onset of a new series in 1874. *Townsend's Monthly Selection of Parisian Costumes* (1825-1888) was another shilling monthly devoted to fashion, fiction and court news, as was *The London and Paris Ladies' Magazine of Fashion, Literature, and Fine Arts* (1828-1891) and *Le Follet. Journal Du Grande Monde, Fashion, Polite Literature, Beaux Arts, Etc.* (1846-1900), although this publication was rather more expensive at one shilling and six pence.[25] These were prestigious magazines as the inclusion of extracts on fashion from *The London and Paris Ladies' Magazine* in the cheap weekly *The Family Herald* demonstrates.

An example of a magazine devoted entirely to fashion is *Myra's Journal of Dress and Fashion* (1875-1912) edited by Matilda Browne

whose contract with Ward and Lock as fashion editor of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and editor of *The Young Englishwoman* had ended (Freeman 1977). The cover page was sumptuous and included a woman in Grecian dress looking at herself in a mirror held up for her by a male child. The image was fitting for a magazine devoted to the adornment of the female body. Although devoted entirely to fashion the early issues of *Myra's Journal* gave free copies of a supplement of fiction entitled *The Lily Magazine.* In the very first issue the editor announced that she was quite well, contrary to the rumour that she had been ill. It seems that Samuel Beeton had passed rumours around that Matilda Browne was ill to sabotage her new endeavour and to support *The Young Englishwoman* which had just lost its very able editor. *Myra's Journal* appeared on the market in several different editions ranging from sixpence to twopence in order to appeal to a broad range of readers (White 1969). Even the sixpenny edition was a cheaper British version of Goubaud's *Le Moniteur de la Mode,* an expensive French fashion magazine with an international readership which sold at 3s. 6d. in England (Freeman 1977, 172). The fact that Browne had secured the illustrious fashion guru Marie Goubauld to write for her was also quite a coup.

These fashion magazines constructed a model of femininity which omitted any interest in the domestic and emphasized the importance of appearance, taste and accomplishment. Ballaster describes the 'ladies' journals of the post-1880 period in some detail, stating that,

> The stress on visual quality went beyond mere technological innovation. It was evidence of the continuing and developing importance of *appearance* in the definition of femininity. In tension with the domestic ideology centred on the maternal and the family was another ideal of the desirable woman which centred on physical beauty. Women's magazines like *The Lady's Pictorial* both carried and embodied the message that the visual was central to the feminine. (1991, 81)

All my examples began publication well before the eighties, which is seen as a significant cut-off point, both in this thesis and the quotation. I would argue that even whilst acknowledging those key factors which make the essential difference between the fifties and the eighties for example, this tension between the maternal and the beautiful begins to emerge and become significant as early as the fifties with the arrival of the popular women's magazine.

The 'lady' of the fashion magazine was identified by her conspicuous consumption, a signifier of this would have been the capacity to dress in fashionable clothes which were advertised implicitly by the coloured fashion plates and rather more explicitly by the advertisements at the back. The reader could purchase the magazine and through this exchange could also purchase the image on display. Through this model of femininity which operates around conspicuous consumption, we can see the seeds of the growth of a consumer culture and its concomitant construction of consumers around commodities such as magazines. To use one of the definitions of types of conspicuous consumption mentioned earlier, middle-class women became symbols of conspicuous leisure and were symbols of the economic success of their male relatives (Burstyn 1980, 30). The key

factor in the definition of a lady was clearly connected to class status; the lady did not work but consumed the fruits of her husband's labour. As Joan Burstyn notes, male production and female consumption characterised the middle-class way of life (1980, 30). But women's relationship to leisure is seen to be deeply problematic in all kinds of texts from this period. In the world constructed by this particular group of magazines leisure is continually defined against work,and the act of reading becomes a process almost wholly confined to and associated with consumption.

The magazine as a commodity, and of course as another source of income, also advertised other commodities through the presentation of advertisements. The substantial proliferation of advertising in women's magazines began in the seventies as a result of the expansion in mass-produced consumer goods. It is often difficult to tell the amount of advertising which originally appeared as they were routinely cut out during the process of volume binding. Some of the advertisements were pictorial, but most of them were all type, and as the use of typefaces was diverse they were still visually interesting. The most common advertisements though were for cosmetics, medicines, sewing machines and underwear. The underwear advertisements were usually for corsets and crinoline and these were always presented empty, that is with no body inside them, although the corsets were always represented as the desired shape with the waist pulled tightly in. Casey Finch (1991) produces a fascinating discussion of the representation of women's underwear in a number of contexts, and argues that the absence of the body is an illustration

of 'the semiotic order of fetishism itself, in which an object operates as a synecdoche for an absent whole' (p.347). The notion of synecdoche and representation of both absence and otherness is something which I will develop in some detail in chapter three.

The relationship between the magazine as commodity and woman as commodity is very complex and is structured again around the notion of consumption. The world of the magazine, itself a commodity, constructs an ideal of femininity which is also on sale to the woman reader. She can buy the image of herself by purchasing and reading the magazine, in other words she consumes the article, but at the same time she is consumed by the objectified image of herself. This is not to deny that Victorian women were self-conscious readers and that they decoded texts in as complex a way as contemporary women, but we have no empirical evidence about patterns of reading; even if evidence was available it would not negate the fact that the particular representations on offer operated on the premise that there was some pleasure to be gleaned by the act of viewing.

Ballaster (1991) discusses the visual appeal of fashion magazines in contrast to the rather more pragmatic and domestic concerns of the cheaper magazines.

> Unlike the domestic magazine they featured femininity as the object of the gaze, a definition relatively undisturbed by conflicting ideas of motherhood and homemaking. There were contradictions implicit in the gorgeous images of anatomically impossible women, but they were of a different order. Perhaps the most important of these contradictions was that between the role of the reader as the one who enjoyed the

> pleasures of looking, as against the invitation offered to her to be the one who is looked at, to act as object rather than subject of the gaze. (pp.95-96)

Furthermore, this process is still one that can be found in women's magazines today. Even in an apparently 'enlightened' article 'Gymnastic Classes for Ladies' in *The Queen* (1868, 125), the question of woman as both subject and object of the gaze is prominent,

> The effect of the dress is extremely pretty. It gives to the figure of the wearer a somewhat *petite* appearance, which is not at all out of place during the exercises. (p.125)

In the fashion plates, with their role as advertisements for paper patterns, the models never look directly out to the reader as contemporary models do, they often look to the side but whatever the direction of the look it is never directly towards the viewer, and the gaze is always averted. This shows again the inherent contradictions of women's magazines, on the one hand the expensive fashionable clothes signify status, but on the other hand the woman who is identified by this conspicuous consumption also has to stay on the respectable boundary of the uneasy division between ostentatious displays of affluence and cheap displays of vulgarity. The background of the plates is also significant, there are usually a number of models grouped in a particular indoor or outdoor setting. The settings always denote wealth and respectability such as the drawing-room, the conservatory, the seaside or the garden and thus remain as indicators of desirable and desired lifestyle.

Consequently the fashion plate operated as advertisement and as image, and indeed can be seen as the early equivalent of the shop window used to display a range of commodities, in this case fabric, patterns and accessories. The respectable fashionable woman was represented as a sumptuous visual spectacle through her wide and excessive crinolines, in themselves superb examples of conspicuous waste, and through the ostentatious display of personal accessories such as jewellery, ribbons, shawls and bonnets. Rachel Bowlby provides a fascinating and rigorous discussion of consumer culture in her work, and in the introduction to *Just Looking* (1985) she is particularly interested in the rise of the department store in the 1880s. Department stores with their large spaces and glass and metal constructions became an escape from the dull life of home and became a respectable place for women to visit (Bowlby 1987, 189). In a later essay Bowlby concentrates exclusively on shopping and makes a useful connection between both shopping and mothering as reproductive roles (1987, 186). Whilst motherhood is associated with self-denial, shopping can be associated with pleasure. Indeed shopping soon became a bourgeois leisure activity and soon, significantly, became a gendered one.[26] The reader of the magazine stepped out of the world of domesticity, or the world of bored leisure, to a 'safe' world of fashion where the pleasure was essentially private and possibly even narcissistic.

Again we come back to the pleasure and the pain offered by the women's magazine as the elements of luxury, symbolised most profoundly in the mid-nineteenth century by the coloured visuals of

the fashion plate and the coloured cover page, combined with the contents to present a recipe for femininity.[27] These magazines both aimed and claimed to be modern; to be fashionable was to be modern, and the recipe for the modern woman in the fashion magazines was one which was available to all who had the leisure to consume and to create from the blueprint which was on offer.[28] As Ballaster argues,

> In looking at pictures of women, the woman reader not only experiences the heady thrill of gaining subjectivity through objectification, but she also looks with an artisan's eye. Like the picture on the front of a knitting pattern, consulted to see how to interpret the instructions inside, representations of women in women's magazines offer blueprints or *illustrations* of the recipe for femininity offered by other aspects of the text. (1991, 165)

But the impact of being modern can also be pernicious, the fashion system can imprison women by its coercive nature (Mattelart 1986, 43), and this is nowhere better exemplified than in the wearing of restricting corsets which was both reflected and debated in all Victorian women's magazines.

Deprivation and Desire / The Regulated Female Body

The representations of the female body in these magazines demonstrate both a fascination and a sense of repulsion and even fear towards femininity. As Mary Jacobus states the feminine body is

not an invariant presence throughout history; it has no fixed base but is mediated through language and culture, and thus is always subject to historical change (1990, 4). The way the female body is articulated in women's magazines is irrevocably connected to, and indeed locates itself in, a discourse in which it is always both present and absent. I aim to interrogate the historical and textual significance of the various representations of the female body which are identified by class almost as markedly as they are by their gender specificity. Indeed as the following chapters will also illustrate, the textual representation of the female body was regulated on a number of levels which were all mediated by a class specific gendered perspective. In the following section I will look at the regulation of the bourgeois female body; just as the working-class woman was subject to restricted and often repressive representations of the 'labouring' female body within the pages of the magazine, so too did her middle-class counterpart become subjected to the restrictions of tight lacing.

The corset was not only associated with the female body, but it became a cultural fetish (Ballaster 1991, 92), and this is clearly signified in the interest taken in tight lacing as a form of discussion in women's magazines, particularly in the late sixties. That working-class women were not pressurised to wear them is significant; the middle-class woman's connection with the corset symbolises her confinement, her economic dependence and thus her lack of economic productivity.[29] The corsets of the fashionable woman put on average twenty one pounds of pressure on her internal

organs,and the long term effects of this were horrific and included displacement of the liver and uterine prolapse. The economic position of women, although the subject of much debate at the time, was still largely one of dependence (in public perceptions certainly that is); thus women were confined to the life of the body and as a result of this became preoccupied with it (Ehrenreich 1978).

However, the discussion was in currency before the hot debate of the sixties, and in an article entitled 'Stays' in *The Ladies' Cabinet* (1846, pp.150-153) the author displays concern about the ensuing effects of tight lacing on women's health.

> In a work expressly devoted to the entertainment and instruction of the fair sex, it would be misplaced to enter upon a medical disquisition respecting the uses and abuses of ladies' stays, were the writer able so to do; but he takes leave to offer a few short observations on that subject ... The writer is fully aware of the dangerous ground he is travelling upon when he presumes to offer his opinion in contradiction to that of fashion; but, as he has already stated, if females will suffer for fashion's sake, they merit no compassion.
> (p.150, p.153)

This article forestalls the key arguments of the for and against corset positions, that to wear them was *de rigeur* ' a moderate application of the corset may secure that most elegant female charm, a slender waist, without fear of injury of health' (*The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* 1867, 276), and that to abandon them meant better health. The juxtaposition of instruction with entertainment in the quotation also illustrates again the argument

about the woman's magazine as conduct book. Nowhere was the matter of instruction more explicit than in the letters page, and it was in 'The Englishwoman's Conversazione', the letters page of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, that the corset debate took on almost hysterical dimensions. In the 'The Englishwoman's Conversazione' the editor took up discussion with the readers by responding to their letters. In 1867 when the corset debate was at its height other topics of interest to this page were the position of female wood engravers and female education. But by far the most interesting to readers and editor alike, or so it would seem, was the corset debate. There were a number of letters from women who spoke of the practice of tight lacing at fashionable schools, one such reader admitted that after diligent use of the corset her waist measured only thirteen inches (*The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* 1867, 279). Another male correspondent, 'Benedict' writes,

> Although married years and years ago, I am still slave to a 'little waist', and, I am proud to say, my wife humours my whim, and *her* waist is decidedly a small one... Mothers against tight lacing are so prejudiced that they permit their daughters to grow up into clumsy, awkward young women, to their own disgust and great detriment in the 'matrimonial market'. (1867, 614)

In the same issue of the 'Conversazione' 'Walter' describes his own experience of tight lacing at boarding school in Austria and affirms his support of the practice '... the comfortable support and enjoyment afforded by a well-laced corset quite overbalances the theoretical evils that are so confidently prophesied by outsiders.' (p. 613). The authenticity of readers' letters has always been a

difficult one to prove, and indeed it has become practice for editors to manufacture letters in order to begin and to prolong debates, especially controversial ones which have boosted sales. Shevelov takes this up in her study of eighteenth-century women's magazines,

> Given the relative scarcity of publishing information, the question of authenticity is impossible to resolve completely. Nor....is it necessary to do so. Framed differently, the question of readers' letters becomes a question of representational practices: how were the letters presented and how did they function within the text as ideological and often didactic representations of social relationships, of consciousness, of values? In this context, the search for 'actual' authors can blind us to the function of these subjects as textual constructions. (1989, 38)

It is the ideological and didactic representations of social relationships which are important to bear in mind when considering, in this instance, letters from male readers.[30] Benedict's admission to being 'a slave to a little waist' is reminiscent of the earlier discussion about female manipulation. Here the pleasure invested in this letter is that for those supporters of the corset there is a space in which to insert the reward for the discomfort, which is male approval and social validation of the fashion. Again woman is represented as spectacle and contained by the restricting stays; the perfect image of respectable womanhood produced belies the effort and discomfort endured.

Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that like most textual representations these are not homogenous or even static positions. At the same time the anti-corset lobby was also launching into print

to make its case. The dictates of fashion ensured that women were as frail and delicate as they looked (Ehrenreich 1978, 98), and the anti-corset lobby consistently made a case for the debilitating effects on women's health and mobility. However, there was a difference between the position which argued that women needed to be healthy to better serve their families, and the rather more tentative position which called for the end to restrictive fashion so that women could go out to work. Of the former *The Ladies' Cabinet* is a good example, and it is interesting that this publication, generally more liberal than *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Ladies's Treasury*, should be rather more anti-corsets than the other two. The earlier quotation from *The Ladies' Cabinet* was very early in the period in question, this next one some ten years later, is still relatively early, but is consistent in its denunciation of tight lacing. In 'A Few Words About Delicate Women' (*The Ladies' Cabinet* 1856, pp.97-99) the author challenges the belief that it is a positive attribute to be delicate.

> The custom of confining the body in tight stays, or tight clothes of any kind, is exceedingly hurtful to the health of both body and mind. A girl has learned a very bad lesson, when she has been taught, that to gain the admiration of her fellow-creatures, she must, even to the endangering of health and life, distort her figure from that which Nature has made, to something which fashion presumes to dictate as more admirable. (p.98)

It lists a number of remedies for ill-health such as well ventilated rooms, fresh air and good food and is so concerned about the effects of the influence of 'delicate women', 'that possibly we might hear of

an Anti-delicate-ladies Association for the better promotion of family happiness and family economy' (p.99). Despite the joke the piece does have a serious aim and it raises important questions about women's 'physical and mental langour' and even premature death.[31] Dio Lewis, a feature writer for *The Lady's Own Paper* deals with fashion in a light hearted manner in 'A Sermon to Girls' (1870, p.274),

> ... with a wasp waist, squeezing your lungs, stomach, liver, and other vital organs into one-half their natural size, and with that long trail dragging on the ground, how can any man of sense who knows that life is made of use, of service, of work, how can he take such a partner? He must be desperate, indeed, to unite him-self for life with such a fettered, half-breathing ornament! (p.274)

Evidently Mr. Lewis takes a rather different stance to the 'slave of fashion' of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, but despite the difference in opinion, woman is still objectified by and for men in the pages of the magazine. That this piece uses the form of the sermon is of course an amusing parody,but it also takes part in the 'Girl of the Period' controversy which will be dealt with in the following chapter. Despite Mr. Lewis's protestations, the frail woman was not very far from the ideal woman who was venerated in both literature and painting (Ehrenreich 1978, 98). The delicate woman was a sign of affluence and her clothing symbolised her function, as the above quotation acknowledges, that of an ornament; indeed the delicate woman epitomised the 'lady'. Helena Michie (1989) argues that sickness, and particularly the recording of many cases of anorexia nervosa in the nineteenth-century, was a way for

women to gain control over their bodies. Women's bodies and particularly body shape was a key concern of the ideology of femininity, and thus by very definition, of fashion, and the role that the woman's magazine played in these textual and concomitant social constructions was a crucial one.[32] That the ideal female body in middle-class women's magazines was a regulated body is beyond doubt, but the representation of the fashionable female body does raise useful questions about the mediation of language and culture.

Representations of the Orient

Roland Barthes in *The Fashion System* notes that 'the rhetoric of fashion only reproduces at the level of clothing the mythical situation of Woman in Western civilization: at once the sublime and infantile' (1967, 246). It is interesting that, often through an interest in clothing and visual spectacle, the representation of the Western woman's counterpart, the Eastern or 'other' woman, displays this mythical situation in a rather different light. Women's magazines, like other texts of the period, display a curious interest in representations of the Orient, but these particular representations are, not surprisingly, primarily those of women. In the discussion of the fashion plates it was noted how the idea of the mirror image worked to send the reflection of the model back to the reader to remind her of what she ought to look like. In the

representations of foreign women in these magazines the reflection which is sent back to the reader is of the woman as the 'other', as her 'other'. Edward Said's (1978) work on representations of the Orient is indispensable here, as the theoretical model which he uses can be utilised to explain representations of gender, as well as of race. He uses the basic hypothesis that Western culture 'produces' the Orient sociologically, ideologically and imaginatively, and by doing so gains 'in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self' (p.3). What is interesting about Said's model in relation to my material, is that it can be used to create an extended model, one in which there is another dominating force, patriarchy, 'producing' another 'other', woman; but within this extended framework there is the other 'other', in this case the foreign or exotic woman.

In 1858, whilst a relatively new magazine, *The Ladies' Treasury* ran a series entitled 'The Women of Other Lands' which described the lives of foreign women in Tahiti, Japan, and Egypt.[33] The instalment on Tahitian women (1859, pp.216-217) is typical of the stance taken by all other magazines on this subject, as the following extract demonstrates.

> There is no better indication of the progress of civilization and refinement, than the position occupied by the gentler sex in the scale of society... We may notice how barbarism gives place to civilization; how - with the light of Christianity - woman has been raised to her proper position; and how - though for ages her lot might have been wretched - she has emerged from darkness and desolation into the happy socialities of civilised life.' (p.216)

The dichotomy between barbarism - the Orient, and civilization - the Occident, is stressed and as such was typical of the position taken up from within the discourse of colonialism. The article then goes on to discuss dress 'They exhibit much taste - taste that a belle of the season might envy - in their mode of arranging flowers in their hair; while their dress is, in nearly every instance, graceful and becoming.' (p.216). In a magazine like *The Ladies' Treasury* which, whilst not strictly a fashion magazine was certainly interested in fashion, the interest in dress is clear.

In 1870 *The Lady's Own Paper* ran a series entitled 'Our Fine Arts Gallery' where paintings were reproduced with a narrative explaining the subject. The illustrations in *The Lady's Own Paper* were very good, and as the first chapter indicates, the pleasure of the visual in printed matter at this time cannot be overlooked. The narrative accompanying the painting, entitled 'Woman of Montenegro and Child' (1870, pp.304-305) is an interesting example of an interest in the 'other', this time an Eastern European 'other'. The Montenegrins are criticised for being vengeful savages and praised for their love of freedom,but the description of the women is by far the most interesting.

> Our illustration, copied from a very clever painting, gives a very favourable notion of the almost barbaric love of ornament, that marks the wives of their chiefs, but the face of the lady depicted by the artist is surely sufficiently beautiful to win the admiration of even the fair critics of England. (p.304)

It seems ironic that the woman should be criticised for her love of ornament, but she is endowed with the status of a 'lady', undoubtedly because she is a primitive queen, and the naked baby asleep at her side endows the picture with connotations of the Madonna with Jesus. The woman in this illustrated narrative then is partly redeemed by her beauty and her status as a queen and a mother, but she remains inevitably outside the frame of the ideal of femininity through her national identity. Identity was not just about gender and class, but also about nation and in all the representations of the Orient in middle-class women's magazines the notion of national identity was clearly of paramount importance. *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*'s appeal to nation in its title is significant here as I mentioned earlier, and significant also is a series which *The Ladies' Treasury* ran through almost the whole of 1863. 'An Hour with Mamma', another of the ubiquitous dialogues of the conduct book tradition, consists of an extended conversation between an aristocrat and her daughter about English history. The purpose of the series is clear, it records every victory that England has achieved, and becomes just another one of many celebrations of empire to be found in the more conservative popular magazines.

But to return to the representation of foreign women, the question of the legitimacy of national and ethnic origin highlights a fundamental fracture in the construction of the ideology of femininity through the ambivalence about the conditions for the production of the ideal woman. It is never entirely clear whether

the ideal woman is a product of nature or civilisation, and through the partial discourse of colonialism observed in these representations of the Orient, the 'other' woman is frequently metonymically placed as worthy of adulation through her gender, whilst simultaneously carrying the burden of national origin as a contrast to the homespun virtues associated with Englishness. As the Montenegrin queen illustrates, the 'other' woman has a legitimacy founded upon her beauty, but the lack of civilised habits marks her as separate from, and indeed 'other' to her English counterparts. All the articles on the Orient that I have read in popular women's magazines take this particular position. As they are almost always illustrated, they also provide a visual spectacle for a cultural voyeurism which is always mediated by the specific conditions and context of production, the woman's magazine. From a woman-centred discourse then a fractured sense of otherness begins to appear.[34]

CHAPTER I
NOTES

1. *The Bouquet Culled From Marylebone Gardens* (1851-1855) was a shilling monthly printed originally for private circulation. It was edited by a number of ladies with floral pseudonyms, Bluebell (Lady H.G. Browne), Kingcup (Miss Knatchbull), Mignionette (Miss H.Middlemas) and Thistle. Amongst the original list of supporters was Margaret Oliphant.

2. See *The Ideology of Conduct. Essays in Literature and the History of Sexuality*, ed. by Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (London: Methuen, 1987); Patricia Branca, *Silent Sisterhood. Middle Class Women in the Victorian Home* (London: Croom Helm, 1975); *Victorian Women*, ed. by Erna Olafson Hellerstein, Leslie Parker Hume and Karen M. Offen (London: Harvester, 1981); Lynda Nead, *Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988); Mary Poovey, *Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian Britain* (London: Virago, 1989) and Kimberley Reynolds and Nicola Humble, *Victorian Heroines: Representations of Femininity in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Art* (London: Harvester, 1993).

3. The Reform Bills of 1832 and 1867 were very significant pieces of legislation which made the rise of the middle-class politically and economically possible.

4. *The Boy's Own Magazine* continued until 1890 under various name changes. Samuel Beeton parted company with his partner Clark in 1855, see Sarah Freeman, *Isabella and Sam: The Story of Mrs. Beeton* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1977) and George Hyde, *Mr. and Mrs. Beeton* (London: George Harrap, 1951).

5. *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* also published extracts from Edgar Allan Poe's poetry and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as well as running Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* in serial form.

6. The problem of finding out which magazines issued fashion plates is a real one when so many of the surviving magazines have had them removed by the original buyers or by collectors.

7. But in the seventies, some twenty years later, the price had gone up to one shilling.

8. Ward Lock and Tyler eventually bought Beeton out, see Freeman, p.249.

9. Mrs. Warren, known for her advice books, was certainly the editor from at least 1861.

10. 'Silverpen' was the pseudonym for Eliza Meteyard who was a professional writer, see Sally Mitchell, *The Fallen Angel: Chastity, Class, and Women's Reading, 1835-1880* (Ohio: Bowling Green University Press, 1981) and Kay Boardman, '"The Glass Of Gin". Renegade Reading Possibilities in the Classic Realist Text' in *Gendering the Reader*, ed. by Sara Mills (Brighton: Harvester, 1994), pp.199-216.

11. *The Ladies' Cabinet* was the same as *The Ladies' Companion*, *The New Monthly Belle Assemblee*, and in 1856 it became the same as *The Illustrated London Magazine*, see E.M. Palmegiano, 'Women and British Periodicals, 1832-1867, A Bibliography' in *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, 9 (1976), pp.3-36. *The Ladies' Companion* (1849-1851), before it merged with *The Ladies' Cabinet* in 1852, advertised itself as being assisted by the 'Most Eminent Writers and Artists'. This was no vain boast as it managed to publish work from well-known writers such as Fredrika Bremer, Miss Mitford and Julia Kavanagh.

12. Sarah. J. Hale was the editor of *Godey's Lady's Book* (1830-1898) from 1837 to 1877, which was in many ways the American equivalent of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*; see Mirabel Cecil, *Heroines in Love, 1750-1815* (London: Michael Joseph, 1974).

13. Cynthia White, *Women's Magazines, 1693-1967* (London: Michael Joseph, 1970), states that *The Ladies' Cabinet* had the 'high moral tone' of the upper-class journal and that it did not cover topical and intellectual issues. It certainly had a format which was closer to that of the drawing-room magazine than it was to the popular magazine, but it was surprisingly liberal.
    In the fifties *The Ladies' Cabinet* was already dealing with the question of female independence. Although *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Ladies' Treasury* began publication later, they did not really cover these issues until the late sixties and early seventies when these changes were already being felt through political agitation and attempts at reform. See the final chapter for a comprehensive discussion of the coverage of questions of female independence, and particularly work, in popular magazines and feminist journals.

14. See for example a good review of Parkes' 'Remarks on the Education of Girls' (1856), pp.328-330.

15. It was characterised by the dense print of the journal and as I shall argue in chapter four. *The Ladies' Cabinet* was similar to *The Alexandra Magazine* which superseded *The Englishwoman's Journal*.

16. It is worth noting that in the illustrations of famous actresses in the lead articles for *The Lady's Own Paper*, the women are shown as having long flowing hair. All other visual representations of women, no matter how glamorous, always have

their hair tied back.

17. See Clara Thomas, *Love and Work Enough: The Life of Anna Jameson* (London: Macdonald, 1967)

18. Although I have found Trudgill's book to be useful in terms of contextualising the debate about the cult of the home, I must say that I find his style very Victorian, especially when compared with the following extract from *The Lady's Own Paper* in the main body of the text!

19. The fact that the political agenda had begun to change in the 1860s has been taken into consideration in my argument and is the subject of the final chapter.

20. The articles are from a book entitled *Married Life, Its Shadows and Sunshine* by T.S. Arthur, and appears in two instalments, 'How to Manage a Husband' (1852), pp.45-47 and pp.76-79.

21. There appears to be some dispute about this, Freeman p.178 acknowledges that although it was announced as a 'Ladies' Journal' that it was more like an ordinary review than anything that had previously been published specifically for women. In an article entitled 'New Notes on Nursing' (1862), p.392 it begins by saying that it is glad that it has many women readers, which proves my hypothesis that it was not originally aimed at an exclusively female audience.

22. *The Ladies'* is not listed in Palmegiano's bibliography, but it is mentioned by Freeman, but the reference is incorrect as it was a weekly and not a monthly as Freeman states. It is also listed in *The British Union Catalogue of Periodicals* as running between 1872 and 1874, but if this entry is correct then I suspect that the issues for 1874 have been lost.

23. The sub-titles change very frequently in this magazine, usually at the onset of a new series. The price was one shilling in 1868 and by 1879 it was still the same price.

24. The new layouts of the late seventies were more spacious, and the advertisements were woven into the whole magazine rather than slotted in at the end as they had been before.

25. Another title *The Ladies' Monthly Magazine* (1852-1879) was, certainly in the seventies, the same as *The London and Paris Ladies' Magazine*. Both are listed in Palmegiano as separate entries, but Palmegiano only checked through 1843-1868 of *The London and Paris Ladies' Magazine* and 1868 of *The Ladies' Monthly Magazine*. I found them to be the same in 1872, so this may explain Palmegiano's omission. However, I cannot locate when this magazine began or ended because of incomplete runs. In The National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh *The London and Paris Ladies' Magazine* is incomplete and unbound which meant that I was able to read in its original state, a rare but pleasurable

opportunity! Also some of the volumes of *Le Follet* held there have been bound up incorrectly which is a little disconcerting for the novice!

26. *The Ladies' Gazette of Fashion* began a regular feature entitled 'Round the Shops' in 1879, a date which proves Bowlby's hypothesis well.

27. As a majority of magazines have been bound and in the process usually lose their cover pages, it is often difficult to know which ones had a coloured cover page, certainly in the early part of period in question when colour was still quite rare. *The Young Englishwoman* and *The Young Ladies' Journal* had coloured cover pages and it is likely that the expensive monthlies did so too.

28. There was a growing self-consciousness about being modern and *The Young Englishwoman* ran a series entitled 'The Young Englishwoman's Progress' in 1869 which exemplifies this quite well.

29. A letter about tight lacing in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (1867) pp.164-165,states that '...no young lady could go into good society with a coarse clumsy waist like a rustic.' p.164.

30. It is accepted that a significant number of readers of women's magazines are men (usually partners of the female readership), and there is no reason not to assume that this was also the case in earlier periods.

31. A humorous poem published in *The Young Englishwoman* entitled 'To The Slaves Of Fashion' by 'Chestnut' (1869), p.111, is another example of a light-hearted approach to corsets. It ends,

> You remember the first month, mother, what
> agony I bore,
> But I went through it without flinching;
> the corsets then I wore
> Measured seven-and -twenty inches; oh, I care
> not what they say,
> For it's *sixteen* inches to-day, mother, it's
> *sixteen* inches to-day.

32. David Kunzle in his article 'Dress Reform as Antifeminism: A Response to Helene E. Roberts's "The Exquisite Slave: The Role of Clothes in the Making of the Victorian Woman"' in *Signs*, (1977), pp.570-579, argues that corsets were not worn by upper-class women. The fact that expensive fashion magazines like *The Ladies' Gazette of Fashion* did not cover the corset debate seems to help to vindicate Kunzle's claim. However, *The Ladies' Cabinet*, another expensive magazine did cover it, so it may well be that the omission to cover the debate in the fashion magazine was more to do with its restricted appeal,

rather than because its readers did not identify themselves with the corset.

33. See *The Ladies' Treasury* (1858), pp.216-217, 264-265 and 308-310. Over the next few years they also published 'Persia and the Persians' (1859), pp. 135-138; 'A Moorish Lady's Toilet' (1860), pp. 47-48 and 'Bedouins' (1860), pp.343-344.

34. See also an article on 'Aztec and Bosjieman Children' reprinted from *The Lancet* in *Blackwood's Lady's Magazine* (1855), pp.171-172 and pp.192-201.

CHAPTER II

THE IDEOLOGY OF DOMESTICITY

The ideology of domesticity grew out of the evangelical movement in the 1830s, where it took hold amongst the middle-class and was also aimed at the working-class; though, for obvious economic reasons the ideal was far harder for the working-class to put into practice than it was for their middle-class peers.[1] By the 1850s debates about domestic ideology began to permeate literary and visual representational practices; its powerful cultural currency was particularly evident in women's magazines. As I argued in chapter one, the feminine ideal centred around the concept of separate spheres; middle class anxiety about the maintainence of separate spheres is also particularly evident in the ideology of domesticity, which aimed to insert women into the domestic space and men into the public. Under these terms the only acceptable work for women was domestic, it was to take place in the home and it was woman's job to oversee the regulation of the domestic economy. As Erna Olafson Hellerstein (1981) points out, it is ironic that Victorian culture failed to recognise women as workers when it was such a century of work. Neverthless, human experience did become articulated in terms of work, and many types of contemporary social and literary documents are testimony to this. But what I am interested in is how important the construction of gendered identity

was to the domestic ideal, and indeed what part magazines played in this process.

At mid-century, the zenith of the ideology of domesticity, a substantial number of periodicals appeared in response to the vogue for the domestic; most were cheap and many of them were aimed at the artisan section of the working-class.[2] Those aimed primarily at women were cheap monthly evangelical magazines which were specifically targeted at working-class women and were usually financed by religious organisations. *The British Mother's Magazine* was published by the London Central Maternal Mission and was typical of this type of magazine through its heavy didactic and polemical style. But middle-class women's magazines also demonstrated an interest in the domestic and indeed supported the ideology of domesticity in a number of complex ways. For instance, popular women's magazines covered issues of domestic management alongside fashion articles, a good example of this is *The Ladies Treasury*. But another popular magazine, *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, also had an interest in fashion and domestic affairs, but through its title aimed to privilege the legitimacy of the private sphere. As I argued in chapter one, *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* sought to be a 'public instructor' and pursued a traditional and rather conservative exploration of what it meant to be a woman at home. Magazines such as *The Lady's Own Paper* did not explicitly aim to celebrate the domestic in the way *The Englishwomen's Domestic Magazine* did, but neverthless it showed an interest in the middle class woman's role in the home. What all these examples serve to

illustrate is that each group responded to, and one could argue even created, the ideology of domesticity in different ways; but they all shared an interest in maintaining the division of work and home by inscribing woman as the centre of the home, the supreme domestic sphere. They also played a significant role in the adjustment of the household to the new consumer economy (Rendall 1987, 212). But as Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall (1987) argue, the notion of separate spheres as a key factor of domesticity is an ideological construct, and as such is vulnerable particularly in relation to work and leisure, as I shall illustrate. Indeed as the magazines will show, the ideology of domesticity covered anxiety about changing patterns of social and domestic life; and as a middle-class ideal it inevitably calls to attention the possibility that it may represent the fears of a dominant social group (Weeks 1985). This is however, mediated by the fact that the exploration is into a woman-centred discourse; as I argued in the discussion of the representation of the Oriental woman in chapter one, the question of a distinctly female province somewhat mitigates against a strict causal link between oppressor and oppressed. The ideology of domesticity was not always simply a narrow and restricting imposition upon women, neither was it simply accepted willingly; its currency in fact lay somewhere between the two. In this chapter then I will explore the ideology of domesticity as manifested in different types of women's magazines by looking at two key concerns of domesticity: maternal responsibilities, including the cult of the mother and the ideal of the girl; and domestic responsibilities,

including the regulation of the household economy and the regulation of servants.

Maternal Responsibility and The Cult of the Mother

In the eighteenth-century the home had been idealised and this idealisation continued throughout the Victorian period. At the centre of the home was the figure of the mother, and in both canonical and non-canonical literature representations of motherhood as sacred are in abundance. Woman's role was to fill the domestic space of the home both literally and figuratively; she was to give birth, rear children, attend to her husband and remain a spiritual influence to all members of the family. Coventry Patmore's poem 'The Angel in the House' was a product of the popular cult of the home, and its influence was enormous as it sold a quarter of a million copies over a forty year period (Trudgill 1976).[3] Motherhood was seen as a woman's mission in life and was the only appropriate expression of female sexuality. Christian tradition had of course provided a crucial precedent for the representation of motherhood through the iconography of the Madonna and child, and in Victorian literature the home came to be seen as an almost quasi-religious centre (Trudgill 1976). The reasons for this are complex and include the impact of the evangelical revival, political change and the anxieties of the emergence of early mass society, but whatever the reasons one factor remains clear; the home and woman's place within

it became a place of safety and sanctity at both literal and figurative levels. The cult of the mother was at the heart of the Victorian domestic ideal,and representations of motherhood from different types of literature and discourses ranging from the high to the popular display a remarkable consensus on this. Queen Victoria, as one of the most powerful symbols of the feminine ideal was also of course a mother. But what is most crucial about her symbolic role is that she bridged the gap between the contradictions inherent in discursive constructions of ideal womanhood in that she was both a domestic and a public figure.

What is perhaps less easy to generalise about though is the confidence with which this ideal was articulated and put into practice. As I have already indicated, the identity of woman as mother which was also synonymous with the Madonna, had to be regulated, and the problematics of uniform representation slip out when the figure of woman leaves the domestic space to work; this problematic will form the subject of the next chapter. In the first section of this chapter I would like to examine some typical representations of motherhood in a number of different types of magazines, the popular, drawing-room and fashion magazine and the working-class women's magazines published by the burgeoning number of evangelical organisations.

As I have argued, all Victorian periodicals even the early feminist ones, venerated the role of the mother but in the mid-Victorian years a new group of cheap domestic magazines were published which

responded to, and one could even argue helped to create, the cult of the mother. Publications like *The Mothers' Magazine* (1834-1862), *The Mothers' Treasury* (1864-1889), *The Mother* (1871), *The Mothers' Friend* (1848-1895), *The British Mothers' Magazine* (1845-1864) and *The British Workwoman* (1863-1896) were cheap monthlies aimed primarily at working-class women. They were all published by evangelical organisations and were particularly didactic in tone and address. Janice Radway's (1987) work on contemporary mass-market romance may be of some use in dealing with the reasons why women read formulaic texts like these. Radway argues that readers of romance fiction do not simply identify with the stereotypical heroines and plot, but actually read against the grain and appropriate the text for their own purposes. Although I do not have the benefit of the empirical data on readers that Radway has, I do have something to say about the implied readers constructed by the discourse of evangelicalism, and indeed Radway's restructuring of traditional critical readings of formulaic texts is very useful.

The Mothers' Friend (1848-1895) was a penny monthly which as its sub-title stated aimed 'To Aid and Encourage those Mothers who have little time to Read, and Little Money to spend on Books'.[4] The advice offered comes from a specifically Christian framework and like many publications of this type it was edited by a 'mother', whose advice and comforting tone permeates all the articles. In the first editorial address it says,

> This little magazine is prepared for your benefit, busy mother; it is very cheap, only a farthing a week, so you

> will not miss the cost of it... Come, sit down a minute: aye, take your boy on your lap if you like, he will not hinder you reading a page or two... Thus, while the father has been labouring for the daily bread, the mother has been trying to elevate her own heart and hearts of her children to the love of God and man. (1848, 1)

The discursive and rhetorical tone in the first article sets the pattern for the whole run: a typical issue would include advice to mothers, letters, poems and fiction.[5] The front page had a small illustration which changed every few years but always contained a cameo of a mother with her children, usually either reading with a work basket at her side or praying by the bedside. It is interesting, but not surprising considering the aims of *The Mother's Friend*, that it is always female children featured in the visual illustrations and they are always under some process of instruction.

In the fiction and articles there are a significant number of features about relationships between boys and mothers or brothers and sisters. In another example from the first volume there is evidence of this in an article entitled 'Mother, Do you Love your Boy?' (1848, 3),

> How much do you feel in your heart, mother, for that fat rosy boy of yours? Can you measure it? You look at him, and you admire his beautiful limbs with all his graceful movements; you touch his velvet-like skin and gaze into his bright blue eye and you say, 'No, indeed, I cannot measure the love I feel for my child.' A mother's love! What a charm there is in the sound! (p.3)

In the written narratives in the first decade of publication, unlike the visual illustrations, it is boys who represent children and

indeed symbolise the ideal child. They are also idealised as brothers, and sisters are appealed to, to make the home a comfortable haven for brothers and fathers whose responsibility it is to go out to work. Often in the absence of the mother the sister becomes the appropriate surrogate.[5]

Another of these cheap magazines was *The British Mothers' Magazine* (1845-1864) a three penny monthly published by the London Central Maternal Association which was an evangelical organisation seeking to offer a panacea to the ills of the working-class. This 'magazine', which was ironically presented like a tract, was essentially religious and like *The Mothers' Friend*, formed part of what was to become a genre of periodicals which were utilitarian in purpose and didactic in flavour, and sought to offer support and advice to working mothers through a Christian framework. Both magazines were unillustrated, but had a coloured and illustrated cover page which was very attractive, and with its competitor *The British Mothers' Magazine*, it also had a preoccupation with filial and domestic roles. In the last year of its twenty year run an article entitled 'He is your Brother. A Few Words to Sisters' (1864, pp.174-175) presents an interesting comparison to the earlier articles from *The Mothers' Friend*.

> He is your brother. - Could you follow him through the mazes of business for one day, you would not wonder that he came home crushed and overwhelmed with care and anxiety - you would not wonder that he seemed wrapped in his own thoughts, and scarcely noticed what was passing - that he had little interest in this social gathering, or the circle

> of gaiety. He is your brother, and perchance is toiling for *you*. Then strive to make home a place of rest for him. (pp.174-175)

In its 1864 farewell notice it states its pleasure that it has survived for seventeen years despite all the criticisms, and congratulates itself on its service to 'that most important class of readers - Mothers' (1864, p.iii).

Barbara Fass Leavy (1980) argues that *The British Mother's Magazine* privileges the role of the mother to such an extent that the role of the father is presented as passive and almost entirely without influence. This type of publication, although ostensibly a religious one, and as such one which operates on a different level than more commercial publications, nevertheless functions around a woman-centred discourse in which woman is located in a space all of her own, to which she has supreme control and command. Indeed in attempting to ask why or who actually read these magazines the question of pleasure inevitably occurs, and I feel that it is entirely possible that despite the often hectoring tone, these magazines offered a sanitized and uncomplex blueprint for the textual gratifications offered by self-sacrifice. As I argued in chapter one the ideal feminine woman constructed by popular and fashion magazines often functioned around the principle of self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice in the evangelical magazine is divested of frivolity and the notion of the woman as spectacle is also absent, but despite this, the call to moral and spiritual superiority was a

potent agent in the forging of the ideology of domesticity which located women firmly in the domestic space.

Magazines aimed at the middle-class woman also pursued the cult of the mother; although some of the social expectations and responsibilities may have differed according to class, the position on motherhood remained the same and the influence of the mother was praised in both fiction and non-fiction. The first piece of fiction to appear in *The Ladies' Treasury*, deals with the cult of the mother and is entitled 'The Little Mother' (1858, pp.17-19). It is the story of Margaret, a child of a poor family who dreams for a baby brother so that she can know 'the pleasures of a brother's love'. Her wish is granted and her mother gives birth to a son Henry who is idolised by his sister. Margaret then begins to take on the role of mother to the family and is seen to be fulfilled.

> Margaret was the housewife; Margaret was the nurse; Margaret was the schoolmistress; Margaret was everything to everybody, and Henry was everything to Margaret. (p.18)

Margaret's mother then dies and she then becomes a true substitute mother who sacrifices all for the family. In this instance so great is this heroine's dedication that she gradually sees the waning of her beauty and offers of marriage through her determination to support the family. In the meantime her brother Henry has embarked on a career at sea and his departure is mourned by his faithful sister. When he returns after many years at sea, he returns

'...safe, to find all changed at home except THE LITTLE MOTHER' (p.19).[7]

'The Little Mother' is a conventional story where female virtues are extolled through motherhood regardless of whether the mother is natural or a surrogate. Motherhood, by definition, is filial attachment, and the mother's relationship with the child ties her not only to her community, in a pragmatic sense, but also to the future. The training in motherhood prepares a woman for sacrifice to the needs of others and the sublimation of her desires into the desire invested in her role. In this particular example we have Margaret transferring her selfish desire into the desire to sacrifice herself for her father and her brother. In this type of text woman's 'natural' character is that of the Madonna, and it is the deviant who strays from this divine and venerated role. However, despite this, it is clear that this role of the Madonna was not an easy one to inscribe or to adopt, and therefore fiction like 'The Little Mother' served to offer both congratulations and status to motherhood.[8]

A very short story in *Townsend's Monthly Selection of Parisian Costumes* also illustrates the vogue for the idealisation of the brother in 'Our Brothers' (1865). The female narrator meets a young woman at a ball and the young woman is feeling unhappy about the restrictions her brother is putting on her in relation to her choice of dancing partner; this causes the narrator to reflect on the power of a brother's influence. The story is heavily idealised and the

message didactic, 'God bless all brothers! When the father's arm grows weak, who is there ready to avenge an insult offered to a female! Her brother.'.[3] The message is an important one, brothers are the guardians of women and particularly of their honour; the young woman of the story, destined to be a mother, will need the protection of her husband who will of course inevitably be another woman's brother.

In an article entitled 'The Maid, Wife, and Mother' in *The Ladies' Cabinet* (1847, pp.156-160) the role of the mother is elevated to saintly status,

> Christianity with all its unspeakable blessings, follow in her steps; and peace, religion, and prosperity adorn her reign, and make glad the nation; or vice, licentiousness and cruelty disfigure her empire, and ensure the misery of her subjects. (p.156)

Motherhood was often elided with monarchial or religious status as the eponymous title of Patmore's poem also reminds us. Using Biblical rhetoric the article moves forward to its pièce de resistance,

> But, great as is the influence of the maiden and wife, it seems to fade away when placed by that of the mother. It is the mother who is to make citizens for earth. It is the mother who is to make angels for heaven. (p.159)

Although highly rhetorical this article is a rather typical exhortation to the mother which can be found in a different range of

popular texts from this period. Whilst rather more pragmatic in address an article in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* some twenty years later still maintains the standard position. In response to an American women's attempt to become a doctor discussed in the 'Conversazione', section the editor stands firm in the belief that it is not woman's place to work outside the home.

> Englishwomen, with a few rare exceptions, are well content to hold the place which their mothers and grandmothers have held before them - to be wooed and won, and rule a household as a wife and mother. (1867, 109)

Motherhood was perceived to be sought after and once attained, like the feminine ideal, to be constantly desired and improved upon. The gratification of social approval as endorsed by the testimonies of these women's magazines answers some of the questions surrounding the reputed pleasure of the text.

The evangelical monthlies, as I have illustrated, utilised a consistently didactic stance on the attainment of the ideal of motherhood, so what does this signify about the implied reader of evangelical discourse? The implied reader constructed by this type of text is one who recognises the social, moral and spiritual value of instruction and who gains benefit from being part of a community of readers who participate in, and associate themselves with, a discourse which provides a critique of contemporary social behaviour.[10] However, the implied reader is not necessarily the same as the real reader, and without rehearsing an argument that I have already raised, it is nevertheless pertinent to enquire about

the empirical readers of these magazines. It is very likely that a possible cohort of readers would have been made up of; those who were members of the particular church or institution; those who bought it because it was cheap (illustrated magazines such as *The British Workwoman* would have been particularly attractive to this group especially); and those who were given it. What the actual readers actually thought of it is of course impossible to answer, but it is important to recognise that with formulaic texts, part of the pleasure of reading may have come from the conventional generic attributes as much as from the content.

Indeed, although evangelical magazines utilised a more explicit conduct book approach than middle-class magazines, both types of magazine participated in the cult of the mother with varying degrees of subtlety. The conduct book approach, whether implicit or explicit, tended to cover a sense of anxiety about motherhood. If it was such a venerated role, as it is seen to be in almost all cultural discourses, then why was the insistence of its value so consistently pressed in texts such as these? This is of course one of the problematics of this section, but what needs to be broached at this stage in the argument is the question of anxiety. As Pierre Macherey (1978) argues, the gaps in texts are often more interesting than the existing narrative. In the discourse of motherhood one ought to be aware of these possible silences, and of the unspoken anxieties about the unproblematic insertion of woman into the idealised role of mother.

Blackwood's Lady's Magazine published an extract from Mrs Pullan's *Maternal Counsels* entitled 'To Mothers' (1855, pp.19-22) which begins with the conventional exhortation to the role of motherhood. As the narrative progresses the possibility of women not being perfect mothers is broached.

> 'Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she may not have compassion on the fruit of her womb?' It would seem monstrous to suppose it possible, and yet daily do we see instances of the mother forgetting, or ceasing to regard with love, the being to whom she has given life. (p.19)

Mrs. Pullan was one of a number of female writers who produced advice manuals and they tended to be well reviewed in all types of women's magazines.'' In an instance like this the verbatim representation of an extract from a conduct book demonstrates the close relationship between the two genres. Nevertheless, in arguing that magazines are types of conduct books it may appear that I am ignoring the rich and diverse texture of the genre; indeed there are occasions when I seem to fail to differentiate between fiction and non-fiction. In the next example, a short story entitled 'The Dark Closet' which appeared in *The Ladies' Cabinet* (1852, pp.126-130) and deals with the fear of maternity, I hope to demonstrate that fiction, although generically different than the documentary or non-fictional prose, was often used as propaganda, albeit of an imaginative kind. 'The Dark Closet. A Story for Mothers' by the American writer Mrs. Sarah J. Hale is a confessional narrative by a mother, Louisa, about the manslaughter of her own daughter. Louisa begins by giving an account of her childhood and upbringing, which

she describes as woefully inadequate. This sets the scene for the ensuing drama when she locks her daughter away in a dark closet as a punishment for her wilfull behaviour. When Louisa returns to the closet after being delayed by a visitor, she finds her daughter dead, and the story ends on this harrowing revelation. 'The Dark Closet' is a macabre gothic tale with some degree of suspense but it is fundamentally didactic propaganda which deals with the fear of the murdering mother. Sally Shuttleworth (1993) makes an interesting case for the Victorian anxiety about motherhood by using advice texts, medical texts and fiction to argue that the functions of maternity were tightly regulated and controlled. The essay is cogent and uses a variety of material to make its case, finally stating that the images of pure and fallen woman come together in discourses of maternity. My point of departure with Shuttleworth's argument is on this question of the joining together of the two antithetical images of woman. I argue, and will illustrate my argument further in the next chapter, that although maternity is an important point of ideological contradiction, it is on the question of class that pure and fallen woman come together.

But the ideal of motherhood was not only a moral and spiritual ideal but also a physical one, both in terms of reproduction and of care. Women's magazines were, not surprisingly, interested in providing advice about aspects of maternal care, but it was a number of the popular magazines which excelled in covering this in intricate detail. It is on issues of practical help and advice that this group differs from drawing-room and fashion magazines which, as I have

illustrated, were interested in covering the spiritual aspects of motherhood rather than the pragmatic ones. The reason for this is one of class address and aspiration which I will address later in the chapter. For the middle-class family reproduction and consumption were dominant (Edmond 1988, 20), and women were the key figures in these processes as they took place within the home. Childbearing was woman's chief reproductive responsibility, and advice on childcare was in abundance in domestic magazines. *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* ran a regular series entitled 'The Sick Room and Nursery', and with high infant mortality rates there was a legitimate fear of illness and death. Furthermore, this type of advice can be seen to respond to anxieties whilst also cultivating them.[12] Shuttleworth (1993, 37) produces evidence from medical texts and advice manuals that indicates that women were blamed for infant mortality, and she concludes that as women were seen as the reproducers of the nation's wealth they were subject to regulation. In 'The Dark Closet' Louisa's crime is that through her own neglect her daughter dies, and the inference is that if she had been brought up better by her own mother then she would not have acted as she did. As all women were once girls, the passage from girlhood to womanhood is of importance to the maintenance of the domestic ideal, and in the following section I will look at representations of the girl, especially in relation to Shuttleworth's model of regulation.

Maternal Responsibility and the Ideal of the Girl

Mrs. Ellis' Morning Call had a page for girls entitled 'The Young Ladies' Portfolio', and many other women's magazines included features which were assumed to be of interest to girls as well as women. *The Young Englishwoman* (1864-1877) and *The Young Ladies' Journal* (1864-1920) both began as sixpenny monthlies and were aimed specifically at girls.[13] They are also testimony to the interest in the passage from girlhood to womanhood as one regulated by the ideology of domesticity; an idealised view of the daughter's role was also a crucial feature of both magazines. Although they were aimed specifically at girls and young women, like Samuel Beeton's *The Boy's Own Magazine* to which *The Young Englishwoman* was a companion paper, these publications have not been considered as true juvenile literature, mainly because girls were treated as women from an early age (Freeman 1977).[14] Nevertheless, these magazines did define their readership as youthful, even if only to create a space in a ferociously competitive market.

A typical issue of *The Young Englishwoman* contained fiction, music, poetry, fashion and needlework and like its sister paper, *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, it was edited by Samuel Beeton. It had a page for letters and general communication with its readership entitled 'Our Drawing Room' and correspondents wrote to the editor with questions on diverse topics. This feature also included an exchange column where, for a shilling, readers could swap ephemera

such as music sheets and paper patterns. In one of Beeton's regular editorial features 'Letters to Young English Ladies' which ran for the whole of 1874, we can see the often prescriptive approach to housekeeping which was women's (both young and old) chief domestic responsibility. In this sense *The Young Englishwoman*, like its sister paper, was very much a domestic magazine and when it was superseded by *Sylvia's Home Journal* (1878-1891) it announced,

> THE YOUNG ENGLISHWOMAN changes her name, as all young Englishwomen should do, and centres all her effort and happiness in the Home, as, again, all young Englishwomen should do. (1878, 5)

The ideology of domesticity depended upon marriage, the ideal state for women, and all domestic magazines assumed that their readership was either married, or like the young Englishwomen of *Sylvia's Home Journal*, training for marriage. *The Young Ladies' Journal* was a rival of *The Young Englishwoman* in a small but competitive section of the market, and it may be because of this that *The Young Ladies' Journal* privileged coverage of fiction and fashion over features on the running and regulation of the home. Despite the difference in content, both magazines aimed to train young women to become responsible bearers of culture by producing wholesome material for their readers. In an advertisement for *The Young Englishwoman* in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, the editor has this to say.

> The YOUNG ENGLISHWOMAN'S Literature is of the purest. The Tales written and chosen for the Magazine are of that high character that they may be with advantage placed in the hands of young girls. (1867, 56)

The ideal of the girl, like the cult of the mother, functions in these texts as something to be venerated and admired whilst also being subject to constant scrutiny and control.[15]

Perhaps the most cogent example of the popular attention paid to the behaviour of young women is in The Girl of the Period controversy, a harbinger of the New Woman debate of the eighteen-eighties and nineties. Eliza Lynn Linton, a popular novelist and journalist, began the debate with the infamous unsigned 'The Girl of the Period' article which appeared in the conservative weekly *The Saturday Review* in 1868 (pp.339-340). In the article Linton laments the rise of the 'Girl of the Period', a modern women who dyes her hair, paints her face, speaks in slang about 'doubtful' subjects and looks more like a maniac or a negress. The controversy was certainly taken on in popular periodicals, and it is arguable whether it was a topic primarily designed to spark good natured debate, or one which barely concealed an intense anxiety about the changing role of women. It is significant that it appeared in a year when female emancipation was at the top of the reform debate.[16] *The Girl of the Period Miscellany* (1869) was a sixpenny monthly which responded to the popular debate with alacrity but only survived as long as the issue was in currency. It was edited by 'Miss. Echo' who broadly supported Linton's case with stringent satire and sparkling wit. *The Lady's Own Paper* gave the Girl of the Period a fair amount of space, and the range with which it was covered illustrates well the general response of popular women's magazines. In 'American Girls of the Period (1869, pp.355-356) the writer takes a light-hearted look at

modern American women. Indeed, just as France became a symbol of taste and accomplishment in fashion and manners, America became a complex ambivalent symbol of both progress and decadence.[17] In this article the fear of the modern woman and change is ridiculed.

> As she trips out of sight it may give any man a heart pang to think that there is at least one lovely woman who is impenetrable to love; but then, if she were like those dear, soft, fond, impressible, confiding beauties of a former age, she would not be herself - a Girl of the Period! (p.356)

Other articles tended to describe what became known as 'other Girls of the Period' who were either benevolent philanthropists such as Florence Nightingale and Elizabeth Frye, or working women who needed respectable work to survive.[18] Despite the levity of the tone and the amount which publishers undoubtedly got from it, the Girl of the Period did provoke an interesting debate about the role of women in society. It also reveals the fear of change that many debates of this nature mask; appearing at the time that it did, it may signify something positive in that change needs to be on the horizon for culture to begin to grapple with it, in both positive and negative ways. The conservative response was one of lamentation for the future of society under the guardianship of these potential mothers, and the liberal response was one which tacitly applauded an age which could produce strong women like Florence Nightingale,whilst also being cautious about the dangers of progress.[19] The fact that girls and women were the subject of controversy and press attention is not surprising considering the context in which it appeared. But as I aim to demonstrate in the remainder of the chapter, the

scrutiny under which they were placed no matter how lighthearted it appears, often reveals that the sign woman did present a source of conflict, often of an epistemological nature. In the next section I will look at domestic responsibilities, an inevitable part of marriage for women of all classes, and particularly the regulation of the household and the regulation of servants.

Domestic Responsibility and The Regulation of the Household

As I have illustrated, all women's magazines, to varying degrees, participated in the ideology of domesticity, and it is this sense of varying degrees that gives a clue as to how it was articulated. Class identity was an important determinant, and in the remainder of this chapter I am primarily interested in exploring the contradictions of middle-class hegemony as it is manifested through narratives, both fictional and non-fictional, on domesticity, and specifically the regulation of the middle-class household. As Theresa McBride (1978, 44) notes, we cannot properly understand the ideology of domesticity without emphasising the importance of the growth and expansion of the middle-class in the mid-nineteenth century. The interest in the ideology of domesticity can be seen as a preoccupation because it was a feature of middle-class life and helped form a cohesive identity; at the same time though this preoccupation can be seen as an anxiety about change, the result of which may have seen the fragmentation of the family as a secure

productive and reproductive unit. Whilst men accumulated money to support their homes and families, women were to regulate household consumption in activities ranging from spending surplus income to organising servants, and the ideal domestic woman used all of her time to make the home run smoothly.

The Ladies' Treasury which has already been noted for its particularly didactic fiction, published 'Our Mothers. A Tale of Working-Day Life' (1863, pp.10-13) which is a good illustration of the fictionalised representation of the domestic ideal. It is the story of Fanny Birnie and Maria Bond, two childhood acquaintances who grow up to be paragons of virtue and indolence respectively. In their girlhood the seeds of their future selves are sown, and in the first part of the story the comparison between the domestic habits of their mothers shows female culpability, especially in terms of the education of daughters,and thus an early interest in what was to become The Girl of the Period controversy. Fanny's childhood home exudes domestic bliss, and her mother is thrifty and well organised, making home an exemplary refuge from the strains of public life.

> Now, we are so hungry, dear mother," cried Fanny, Fred, and Will Prior, as, rosy with health and spirits, they came bounding into the house: "Here are father and Peter coming up the street." Tea was soon ready - the table-cloth was spotless, the lamp neatly trimmed, and the china and glass glittered again - but the repast consisted alone of brown bread, fresh butter, roasted apples, tea and milk. The father always laid the cares of business aside when he came home. Home, he thought, was the place to be happy himself, and to make others so. (p.11)

Here the table cloth, lamp, china and food are metonymically linked to the domestic woman and as Nancy Armstrong (1987, 120) argues, under her supervision these domestic objects represent a form of value which enhances the value of other people and of other things. The husband thus wants to return home from the world of work to a world which binds the family together through affection rather than economic need. Like her mother before her, Fanny too has a husband who is eager to return home at night, as due to her 'systematic management, everything moves on like clockwork' (p.11).

It will come as no surprise that one of the most well known gurus of domestic economy was Mrs. Warren, editor of *The Ladies' Treasury*. Following in the wake of Isabella Beeton's *Book of Household Management* (1861), Mrs Warren published *How I Managed My House on £200 Pounds a Year* in 1864, and *How I Managed My Children from Infancy to Marriage* in the following year, the first of which was also serialised in *The Ladies' Treasury*.[20] Both books followed the popular, and by then also familiar, magazine approach by utilising a dialogue format with the perfect housekeeper advising the fledgling wife on how to run a household according to both sound budgeting and propriety. Mrs. Warren borrowed this style from *The Ladies' Treasury*'s 'Aunt Deborah's Receipt Book'. Mrs Beeton and Mrs Warren, as editors of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Ladies' Treasury*, were rivals and although the former made its name more as a domestic magazine the latter also, as I have already illustrated, participated in the ideology of domesticity.[21]

Another example of domestic fiction in this magazine is 'The Saturday Night's Sixpence' by Silverpen (1859, pp.138-142). The story is about a self-made and self-taught working man, Will Eliot, who teaches a young working-class couple, Tom and Jane, the rudiments of the philosophy of self-help. Complaining about the habits of his peers he states,

> They know no medium between a fast and a feast; and the larger portion of the workmen's wives, instead of buying a joint of good meat, cooking it properly, and eking it out through the week, provide simply from hand to mouth, feed their families on such wasteful viands as chops and steaks, consider that quantity is better than quality, and thus live through the first days of the week, whilst their ready money lasts, and are often more than pinched during the remainder. (p.139)

According to Will '...working people have no greater enemies than themselves...' (p.140),and it is no accident that he addresses his advice to Jane, who as housekeeper is responsible for household economy and the saving of the symbolic Saturday night's sixpence. The encouragement to emulate middle-class discipline and thrift drives home the point that women of both classes had the responsibility of making home a secure haven. As a result of Will's expert advice Tom and Jane become desirable models of thrift and self-regulation. 'The Saturday Night's Sixpence', although aimed at a middle-class or aspiring middle-class audience, is not substantially different to the fiction found in cheap evangelical magazines and improving family weeklies. In didactic narratives of this type the representations of working-class women remain straddled between the noble and the feckless, which I will illustrate further

in the next chapter. The ideal working-class woman like Jane, is one who aspires to middle-class repectability by being completely dependent upon her husband, and through careful regulation of the household economy manages to avoid the need to go out to work, thus maintaining respectability and keeping the proper role of woman intact.

The domestic ideal permeated through from the middle to the working-class, and although it was far harder for poorer people to maintain due to the necessity for woman's financial contribution to the household economy, it was nevertheless a very potent ideal (Zlotsky 1991, 10). A story entitled 'The Charwoman' in *The Mother's Friend* (1855, pp.158-159) illustrates the point very well. It is the story of Alice Chambers, a charwoman who lets her own house fall into disarray, and who is subsequently advised by the concerned middle-class narrator to clean up before her husband arrives home from work, and also encouraged to give up work if at all possible. In the middle-class home the issue was not so much of the fear of the working woman (the single-middle class woman is a different case and will be dealt with in the final chapter), than of the need to regulate the family and its servants in accordance with the domestic ideal. The home was a place of both work and leisure for middle-class women, and Ros Ballaster (1991, 89) argues that home was both a site of women's work and a denial of that work. Ballaster uses *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* to argue this case, but I would like to develop the argument by using more magazines as illustration, and I will attempt to identify how magazines played a part in the

uneasy relationship between work and leisure, especially in relation to women.

As I have already stated, popular magazines for girls and young women constantly offered and often prescribed advice on how to regulate the home. In the late seventies *Sylvia's Home Journal* ran a series entitled 'Home and Homework for Young Englishwomen' by Julia Chandler. The choice of 'homework' rather than 'housework' in the title is significant, especially through the implicit assumption that it is more useful for girls to learn domestic economy than book learning. The second part in the series is entitled 'Domestic Expenditure' (1878, pp.62-63), which opens by informing the reader in a self-consciously light-hearted manner that she is going to be shown how to 'keep house' for mother as a rehearsal for the future 'when "somebody" has done "waiting for somebody!"' (p.62). Despite the opening address and the levity of tone, it quickly assumes that the young woman is now married,and addresses the remainder of the narrative to a wife who is referred to as a 'manager' who will have to assume 'the reins of the domestic Government'. As a typical domestic magazine it privileges the notion of woman as efficient manager over the ideal lady, emphasising a pragmatic position on class identity and aspiration. But more importantly, it foregrounds the division between work and leisure for men stating,

> It is hard for him, away "figuring" all day long, or with his brain busily going in some other way, to get back to the homestead, and be obliged to calculate the domestic expenditure himself... "Evenings at home," after his toil is over, ought to be free from the multiplication table, decidedly. (p.62).

Here women's domestic work is acknowledged, it is something she must do to unburden her husband; for him home is purely a place of leisure, and for her it is a place of work and leisure. The article praises the merits of book-keeping offering meticulous detail on accounts and astute regulation of the 'paymaster's' money. In the tradition of the advice manual, magazines like *Sylvia's Home Journal* professionalised housework by attributing to it professional status.

Indeed, the scientific approach of domestic magazines was picked up in a very ambivalent way by the very short-lived publication *The Mother* (1871). In its opening address it states,

> While telling you how to manage house most profitably, I shall not weary you with scientific theory; my information as to the correct treatment of our constitution, shall not puzzle you with chemical problems, but as a loving sister in Christ, and *happy mother*... (p.2)

Here it is responding to the scientific vocabulary of the discourse of domesticity by positing its own religious and specifically evangelical rhetoric, and yet whilst doing so exposes a contradiction, that it is ,as its sub-title says '*A Journal of Social Science, containing Useful Hints, Interesting Tales, And other Matter, Especially Calculated to render Home happy and Children Healthful*. It seems that part of the legitimacy of domestic ideology was to foreground the scientific aspects of household regulation which endowed it with a status which actually held some currency in public life, a realm that was thus inevitably indebted

to the private which allowed it to function on both literal and figurative levels. Undoubtedly publications like this had their own agenda, nevertheless they are useful in that they illustrate my earlier point that working-class women were also under pressure to conform to the domestic ideal as *The British Mother's Magazine* lamented,

> It seems a bold statement to make, but it is put forth under a deep conviction of its reality and truthfulness, that the want of domesticity among women - of the working classes especially - is a great source of most of the "social evils" which are as a plague spot upon the nation at the present time. (1864, 175)

As the next chapter will illustrate the working-class woman was often represented as a threat to identity, and as this extract shows, national identity in particular. In an attempt to educate the working-class reader on the rudiments of household economy *The British Workwoman* produced a question and answer feature 'The Trials of a Complaining Wife. (A Conversation Between Mrs. Fretwell and Mrs. Candid.)' (1864, 47) where, rather predictably, Mrs. Candid persuades her neighbour that her duty is to her husband and to her home. Mrs. Fretwell's dialogue is in dialect, as opposed to that of Mrs Candid; here dialect is an explicit marker of class and an implicit marker of lack of moral rectitude.

But in returning to the central thread of this section I still have not fully discussed the question of women's leisure time. Men's relationship to leisure, as the example from *Sylvia's Home Journal*

illustrates, was far simpler than that of women. If the home was a place of work and leisure for women, what were seen as acceptable leisure pursuits for women, and indeed did these pursuits really constitute leisure? Fashion magazines had a clearer position on this than the magazines which devoted a significant part of their space to domesticity. Fashion magazines often flaunted women's vicarious leisure as a marker of status, particularly the status of men. But the cheaper middle-class women's magazines were not quite as straightforward in response to leisure, as idle amusements were excoriated and so too was work outside the home. For middle-class women leisure lay somewhere between these two poles.

Helena Michie (1989) provides useful evidence of how the Victorian novel depicts time and the passage of time in relation to women, and cites the extended time metaphor in *Dombey and Son* as one of the best illustrations from the period. Sewing was also a way of passing time, and this small piece 'Woman at her Needle' from *The Queen* (1866, 41) illustrates the point well.

> There is something extremely pleasant and even touching - at least of very sweet, soft, and winning effect - in this peculiarity of needlework distinguishing women. Man is incapable of any such bye-play aside from the main business of life: but women, be they of whatever earthly rank they may, however gifted with intellect or genius, or endowed with awful beauty, have always some little handiwork ready, to fill the tiny gap of every vacant moment. A needle is doubtless familiar to them all. (p.41)

The inference here is that every 'tiny gap of every vacant moment' must be filled and to leave gaps unfilled is almost unnatural and

decidedly unpleasant. But sewing was also a form of work for middle-class women, who by their stitching passed time and made a significant saving for the family purse. Most women's magazines responded to women's sewing duties, and the popular more than others, with *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* extending its sewing and pattern pages to cater for this need. Reading was also a middle-class leisure pursuit, and the periodical itself responded to the need for entertainment which increased leisure time meant. Nevertheless it is important to note that the regulation of reading for women and young girls was commonplace as Kate Flint illustrates in *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914* (1993). Michele Mattelart (1986, 16), in a discussion of the generic features of soap opera and its relationship to time, argues that the non-forward looking sense of time found in soap opera hinders women's access to the time of history. As I argued in the introduction, the periodical and the soap opera share similar generic features; however Mattelart's thesis is a difficult one to maintain with this material, as although I have concurred with her in one sense in the section on deferred gratification in the first chapter, I will argue in the last chapter that with one particular group of women's periodicals the sense of history is in fact magnified and celebrated through the forward looking aspect of the periodical.

But to return to the central thread of the chapter, it was the middle-class woman's responsibility to hire and control the servants who were employed to do the physical work required to run a home efficiently. This was perceived as legitimate work for women and

magazines offered a plethora of advice to women on how to train servants, and this is the subject of the final section of this chapter.

Domestic Responsibility and the Regulation of Servants

> To keep a maid of some order, no matter how wretched, is the line of distinction between a lady and a woman - an insignia of rank, so to speak! (*The Lady's Own Paper* 1870, 335)

> Do not mistake the *class* of hard mistresses of whom I give this description. It is to farmers' wives that I particularly allude. Women who, aspiring to the title of "a lady," unconsciously degrade themselves below the very servants whom they abuse. Far be it from me to accuse a real "lady," for I know that with their rank comes a better education, and with their education more humanity. (*The Bouquet Culled From Marylebone Gardens* 1851, 170)

In a discerning contemporary critique of the role of servants as bearers of rank, the first epigraph from an article entitled 'The Servantgalism of the Period, Or, The Alphabet of Woes' (1870, p.355) clarifies the difference between a lady and a woman. Despite the commonsense approach to housekeeping *The Lady's Own Paper*, by its very title, is revealed as yet another example of the struggle for definition of ideals. The article is humorous and gives a letter by letter account of the struggles of one family to find a cook. Eventually out of desperation they cook for themselves and

are pleasantly surprised at the improvement in both health and temper.

For many upper middle-class women the employment of servants meant a release from domestic drudgery, and even more importantly perhaps, was a means of giving them the status which was attached to vicarious leisure. Ironically, through their physical labour and low status, female servants actually enabled their mistresses to maintain the domestic ideal, and as Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall (1987, 33) illustrate, the private workplace of the home employed the majority of the female workforce as servants. It is also important to remember that the employment of a number of servants was the case for a small group of the upper middle-class only, as the standards of housekeeping at the core of the ideology of domesticity were set by the most affluent (Branca 1975). Nevertheless, I will argue that the evidence from magazines proves that what was at stake in the maintenance of the ideology of domesticity was middle-class identity and respectability which was forged by a number of factors, identity as a mistress being one of them. Whilst many readers of middle-class popular magazines would have had only one servant, they were keen to constantly make the distinction between the working-class woman who did all her own housework, and the middle-class woman who would ideally have at least one hired help.

In the first issue of *The British Workwoman* (1863, 8) a table of statistics appeared on the number of working women in the London

Metropolitan Division which was taken from the census for 1861. The highest number were employed in domestic service at 1,184,795, with the second group consisting of those employed in industrial work at 231,885. There were more women than men employed in domestic service and it quickly became identified as women's work, and as such as low status (Davidoff 1987, 395). Due to this low status and poor conditions employees often moved around regularly. Indeed most middle-class households had only one maid who remained with them on average for less than a year, and this became a source of great anxiety to the employing class (Mc Bride 1975).

Middle-class woman then, whether mistress of a large household with a considerable number of domestic staff or mistress of one maid of all work, had the responsibility of regulating the domestic economy which included the employee who was subject to strict regulation of both work and moral habits. The hiring of servants was often very time consuming and fraught with difficulties, or so at least it was perceived to be, as the article from *The Lady's Own Paper* and many others demonstrate, and other accounts from the period, both documentary and literary, are testimony to this (Davidoff 1987). As a result of this there was a substantial amount of interest in what came to be called 'The Servant Question' in the periodical press generally, and in women's magazines specifically. As with other aspects connected with the ideology of domesticity, this problem was covered in all types of magazine, but the servant problem in particular was very common in all women's magazines, even feminist journals as I shall elucidate in the final chapter.

The magazines fall into two groups on this, the middle-class ones were interested primarily in advice on the regulation of servants, and the working-class ones were mainly concerned with producing didactic fiction for working women, and on the subject of domesticity, presumably for servants themselves. In the articles on advice it is fairly easy to generalise, servants were seen to be in gross need of regulation, both of work habits and of manners. In the series 'Motherly talks with Young Housekeepers' in *The Lady's Own Paper* (1870) one of the titles is 'Systematic Labour' where advice is given on the training of servants.

> Unfortunately, most of that class upon whom many of us are obliged to depend, have had no opportunity for systematic training. So they pick up a few ideas here and there, and use them very inefficiently. For example: notice the manner in which many girls remove the dishes at the dinner-table. It makes one uneasy and nervous to sit by and observe the slovenly manner in which this work is often accomplished. (p.54)

The sense of domestic duty being one which is learnt by rote is common, and the term systematic is one which appeared on many occasions; in this instance it is reminiscent of the earlier discussion on the regulation of the household budget in *Sylvia's Home Journal*. There was it seems an exact science of management, but by all accounts it seems to have eluded most of the people most of the time. The regulation of the working-class subject, here in the guise of the servant became as difficult to manage as the regulation of the bourgeois body seen in chapter one.

Although many of the articles are good-humoured, the sense that servants do not understand the needs of their employers is almost always paramount. The following extract from 'The Persecuted Woman' (1970, pp.22-24) a long article printed in *The Lady's Own Paper*, exemplifies well that the middle-class woman saw herself as completely separate from her working-class counterpart.

> Human nature cannot, I think, be pronounced perfect by even the most charitable, if they have had an opportunity of studying the idiosyncrasies of the race of Bridgets. I have often myself tried to find out the principles upon which their minds are constructed and the laws which govern their movements. I can liken them to nothing so much as comets. (p.22)

Undoubtedly a key feature of an article like this, which addresses the reader as a friend who has had similar experiences, is to promote a sense of kinship that is so important to the cultivation of a loyal and regular readership. Therefore, the humour acts to bond the silent reader to her addresser, but it does also act to construct the reader of the magazine as someone who is not a Bridget, and thus who presumably gains some amount of pleasure from being identified as different and 'other' to a servant.

In the features on what it called '... the ever-fertile servant-question...' (1853, 324), *The Ladies' Cabinet* stressed the importance of treating servants in a humane, rather than draconian, manner. In 1853 and 1857 two short stories appeared, both entitled 'The Servant Question', and although they are different there are enough similarities to assume that the second was a rather

resourceful re-write of the first.[22] The closest similarity is that both masquerade as short stories, but soon become variations on the question and answer technique that is favoured by the conduct tradition in women's literature. They stress that servants must not be treated as machines and that they must never be commanded but requested to carry out their tasks. The first piece, despite its criticism of mistresses does end on a conciliatory note.

> I by no means wish to insinuate that servants are an unfortunate and badly-used set of people, or that mistresses forget all the Christian charities in their relation to them ; the former are, in many respects, a most well-to-do and fortunate class in the community ; 'but evil is wrought from want of *thought* as well as want of *heart* ;' and it is for this cause that we women are most likely to fail in our duties to our dependants. But let us think of it well ; we have glorious privileges with our responsibilities, and, secure in the sanctuaries of our homes, possess the holiest fulcrum for the emanation and extension of good and happiness mortal life can afford. (1853, 326)

The final emphasis on the privileges of mistresshood is significant, as it endows the responsibility with an almost religious status which takes its primary cue from the cult of the home and the cult of the mother who exudes her influence to family and domestic staff alike. Thus the liberal approach found in *The Ladies' Cabinet*, whilst stressing charity, does not challenge the basic assumptions about servility and the middle-class woman's maintenance of it.

In returning to the question of servants being treated as machines, I have found this to be a common concern in many of the articles that I have read. The industrial revolution heralded the beginning

of a machine era which forced people to consider the relationship between the human and the machine in a new way. Despite the fact that the efficiency of the machine often overshadowed the apparent inefficiency of the human worker, many texts from the period struggle to come to terms with the alienation of the modern worker who was often forced to become a type of machine. Articles sympathetic to the plight of the female servant stressed the dangers of seeing her as an automaton, but as I shall argue in the next chapter, representations of working women often struggled to define her as human,as she participated in the public world of work which did not count as legitimate labour. As an article 'The Trade Employments of Women' argued (*The Young Englishwoman* 1877, pp.634-635), women who stayed at home had '... humanising and refining tendencies...' (p.635), and presumably the world of outside work inevitably made women into automata.

Many popular magazines often published on the responsibility of the mistress to treat her servants with compassion, but in the case of the more domestically orientated ones, one can find strict and exacting instructions in one issue and a plea about their ill-use in the next. In a piece entitled 'The Cry of the Maidservant' in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (1869, pp.70-71) the writer makes an impassioned plea for the maid-of-all-work and the cessation of her hours of drudgery.[23]

> In the homes and kitchens of the middle classes in England, London especially, we do not hesitate to affirm that "white slavery" is rampant... How many of these labour and slave in their vocation sixteen,

> eighteen, and even more hours a day, rising at six and continuing on foot "upstairs and downstairs" but with slight interregnums for hastily-snatched, comfortless meals, often till past midnight. (p.70)

The article also makes a case for supporting servants who come to the town from the country and who are without any familial connections at all, confirming the existence of a paternalistic philosophy.

Although the focus of this section is on the bourgeois regulation of servants in textual representations from middle-class women's magazines, I propose to end this chapter by considering reading for servants. This enables me to juxtapose representations from both types of magazine, and also to look forward to the next chapter on representations of the working woman. The evangelical monthlies that were described at the beginning of the chapter fall into this category. *The British Workwoman* featured an attractive picture of a group of servants reading their publication on the front cover of the September 1868 issue, undoubtedly the magazine was a 'gift' from their mistress. A story for servants 'Lizzie Johnson; Or, the Plate of Jelly. A Tale for Servant Girls' (1866, 254) also typifies the type of fiction found in this magazine and. as the title promises, it is a predictable story of a servant's repentance after the theft of a plate of jelly.[24]

The best example of an evangelical domestic magazine aimed specifically at a servant readership is *The Servant's Magazine and Female Domestic Instructor* (1838-1869) a penny monthly which was

financed by the London Female Mission. Despite very attractive illustrations the content was heavily didactic and one can only wonder how many servants bought this of their own volition.[25] On reading articles such as 'Plain Questions Worth Asking One's-Self Daily' (1867, 21) it makes sense to guess that this may have been bought for servants by mistresses as ideal reading. This article, which is typical of many others to be found in this magazine, runs through eleven questions that a servant may ask herself, and these include self querying about diligence, modesty, thrift and honesty. The editors hoped this magazine would be read in place of '... smoking, drinking, idle talk, or novel reading, all of which are more or less injurious.' (1867, 2). As Louis James (1982) argues, we have no way of knowing if servants did actually read *The Servants Magazine*, and it seems much more likely that a magazine like *Bow Bells* would have appealed to female servants in that it provided racy and escapist fiction and was virtually free of the hectoring didacticism of the evangelical magazine.[26] James (1982, 353) raises a very interesting point when he states that in evangelical discourse reading was often perceived as a disciplined activity and evidently evangelical magazines sought to play their part in this. However, as I indicated in the previous section, reading is also a leisure activity, and the attention paid to the regulation of reading for women of both classes goes some way in vindicating the argument that women's relationship to work and leisure is particularly complex.

In the year that *The Servant's Magazine* ceased publication Charlotte Yonge was writing about the need for improving literature for both children and the working-class in the influential *Macmillan's Magazine.*[27] Yonge was responding to the concern about suitable literature for the working-classes and indeed she made her living by writing improving literature for children (Rowbotham 1989). In improving magazines the image of the servant was no different from those found in more expensive middle-class magazines, the only difference is in who was being addressed, the target readership. Servants did not produce literary representations of themselves and therefore what is left is necessarily distorted and mediated by class motive and aspiration. The domestic ideal in all types of women's magazines was one mediated by class,and the part played by magazines in the construction of legitimate and illegitimate gendered identity was a crucial one, as the next chapter will illustrate even further.

CHAPTER II
NOTES

1. See Patricia Branca, *Silent Sisterhood. Middle Class Women in the Victorian Home* (London: Croom Helm, 1975) for the range of middle-class incomes; see also Joan Perkin, *Women and Marriage in Nineteenth Century England* (London: Routledge, 1989) for a discussion of the precarious nature of middle-class life.

2. These publications had their roots in the tradition of *The Penny Magazine* and *The Saturday Magazine,* and a good example of a contemporary magazines of this type is *The Cottager and Artisan.* For a detailed discussion of the religious press, see Louis Billington, 'The Religious Periodical and Newspaper Press' in *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries*, ed. by Michael Harris and Alan Lee (London: Associated University Presses, 1986), pp.113-132.

3. Alfred Tennyson's 'The Princess', a less idealised poem than Patmore's, also went through seventeen editions in thirty years. This is another example of a different genre dealing with the position of women in society.

4. Eugenia. M. Palmegiano, 'Women and British Periodicals, 1832-1867. A Bibliography', *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter* (1976), pp.3-36 gives the dates of the run of *The Mother's Friend* as 1848-1887, but between 1888 and 1895 it went into a final new series under the editorship of Mrs. G. S. Reaney.

5. It also included a column entitled 'Mother's Monitor' which featured anecdotes about children's amusing mistakes; there is a similar feature now running in the contemporary magazine *Woman.*

6. On the rare occasion when an article is signed, it is signed by 'Albert' who writes about his sister in 'The Sister's Page. My Sister' (1852), pp.95-97. It is the story of a boy who is supported, both emotionally and spiritually, by his sister after the death of their mother. The only function of the male narrator is to glorify the sister and her self-sacrifice.

7. A brother away at sea was of course a popular motif in Victorian literature.

8. *The Ladies' Treasury* gave a good review of *The Mother's Friend* stating '*The Mother's Friend* is one of the penny serials most admirably adapted for a mother's reading to her little ones, and with excellent profit to herself.' (1866), p.173.

9. There was no pagination in any of the volumes of *Townsend's*

Monthly Selection of Parisian Costumes that I consulted.

10. See Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance. Patriarchy and Popular Culture* (London: Verso, 1987) for a discussion of the contradictory character of the romance reading experience. Evangelical magazines, like modern romance fiction, are formulaic and it may well be that like Radway's readers, the readers of magazines like *The Mother's Friend* negotiated positions of spectatorship or even read against the grain.

11. See Mrs. Pullan, *Maternal Counsels to a Daughter, designed to aid her in the care of her health, the improvement of her mind, and the cultivation of her heart* (London: Darton and Co., 1855); Sarah Stickney Ellis, *The Mother's of England: Their Influence and Responsibility* (New York: Edward Walker, 1843); Mrs. Beeton, *Book of Household Management* (London: Darton and Co., 1861); Mrs. Warren, *How I Managed my House on Two Hundred Pounds a Year* (London: Fisher and Co., 1864) and *How I Managed My Children from Infancy to Marriage* (London: Fisher and Co., 1865); Mrs. Pedley, *Infant Nursing and the Management of Young Children* (London: Edward Walker, 1866). In 1868 *The Queen* ran a series by Mrs. Pedley entitled 'Early Education'.

12. The first appearance of 'The Sick-Room and Nursery' (1852), p.30 gave advice on the treatment of leech bites and nettle rash and told the reader how to disinfect and air rooms and how to administer castor oil.

13. *The Young Ladies' Journal* began as a weekly but soon became a ninepenny monthly. It is classified by Palmegiano as a newspaper which, as I indicated in the introduction, I dispute. *The Young Englishwoman* became *Sylvia's Home Journal* in 1877.

14. Another magazine for young girls was the sophisticated *The Little Dressmaker. Fashions for Children and Dolls* (1872-1874), a sixpenny monthly edited by Madame Marie Schild which was completely devoted to children's fashion and patterns for clothes. In 1875 it was superseded by *Mother's Help and the Little Dressmaker* which ran until 1905.

15. See Deborah Gorham, *The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal* (London: Croom Helm, 1982) and Judith Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives. Guidance for Girls in Victorian Fiction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989).

16. See Lyn Pykett, *The Improper Feminine: The Woman's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing* (London: Routledge, 1992) for the Girl of the Period controversy as realised in the sensation novel.

17. Two of the most controversial arrivals from America were bloomers and female doctors, both of which were seen as completely iconoclastic by the more conservative magazines.

18. See also 'The Other "Girl of the Period"' (1870), p.96, and 'Something Wrong Somewhere. Being a Few Words Concerning the "Girl of the Period"' (1870), pp.239-240 in *The Lady's Own Paper*.

19. A humorous poem 'The Modern Proposal' in *The Young Ladies' Journal* (1869), p.571, sums up many attitudes towards young couples by ending 'Till some lucky circumstance/Grants us a divorce'.

20. Mrs. Beeton's *Book of Household Management* sold 30 000 copies in three years, see Branca, p.13.

21. In fact *The Queen* used the title 'My Great-Aunt's Receipt Book' which was suspiciously reminiscent of *The Ladies' Treasury*'s 'Aunt Deborah's Receipt Book'.

22. The Servant Question' (1853), pp.324-326 and 'The Servant Question' by Alice B. Neal (1857), pp.290-294.

23. The maid-of-all-work was as popular as a social theme in women's magazines as the seamstress was in Victorian painting. For a useful essay on the seamstress see T. J. Edelstein, 'They Sang "The Song of the Shirt": The Visual Iconology of the Seamstress' in *Victorian Studies* (1980), pp.183-210.

24. See also 'Persevere', *The Mother's Friend* (1860), pp.151-153.

25. See Louis James, 'The Trouble With Betsy: periodicals and the common reader in mid-nineteenth-century England' in *The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings and Soundings*, ed. by Joanne Shattock and Michael Wolff (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), pp.360-365. James claims that *The Servant's Magazine* ceased publication in 1866, but it did go to a new series until its final demise in 1869. He also says that it was unillustrated which it was in the early years of its long run, but certainly by the sixties it was lavishly illustrated.

26. 'The Cry of the Maidservant' in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (1869), pp.70-71, acknowledges that servants preferred more sensational reading.

27. 'Class Literature of the Past Thirty Years', *Macmillan's Magazine*, 20 (1869), pp.448-456.

CHAPTER III

REPRESENTATIONS OF SEXUALITY

As the previous chapters have shown, the struggle of the emergent middle-class to gain economic power accompanied the struggle to represent ideal feminine behaviour (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 1987). But just as the discourses of femininity and domesticity were complex, so too was the discourse of sexuality and in the years covered by this study it is undeniable that there was a discursive explosion around sexuality, particularly female sexuality. Even the most cursory reading of different types of Victorian texts, from both high and popular culture, reveals that the common denominator of representations of Victorian gendered identity was that women were defined by their sexuality and men by their class. The discourse of sexuality foregrounded woman's moral and sexual superiority; this emphasis had its epistemological roots in a Christian culture which set up a dualism between spirit and flesh. Thus, the material and the spiritual were divided in terms of gender, the material world belonging to man and the spiritual to woman. The growth of scientific rationalism in the eighteenth-century had served to reinforce this traditional Christian view. In the introduction to *Sexuality and Subordination*, Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall (1989) discuss the ramifications of this division and conclude that there was indeed a causal relationship between sexuality and political and economic subordination. Sexual innocence

was closely associated with political ignorance and in this sense the notion of woman as other became a powerful tool in the hegemonic discourse of separate spheres.

As Michel Foucault (1981) has shown, sexuality is a historical construct and is a product of negotiation and struggle; therefore the underlying economic conditions of these negotiations and struggles cannot be ignored. The social meanings which are given to biological difference are more important than the actual difference itself; but what is particularly dynamic about definitions of sexuality is that they are not fixed, but are often in contradiction (Weeks 1985).[1] Eric Trudgill (1976) argues that the Victorians were aware of the problems raised by the attempt to deny or repress sexuality and the ensuing charge of hypocrisy that this inevitably brought, but that they consciously or unconsciously, forged a connection between sexual decency and social stability. Others have also made a similar case by exposing the vibrant underworld of Victorian sexuality, but what I am interested in exploring is how the relationship between decency and stability operates in and through representations of female sexuality in women's magazines.[2]

Female sexuality presents a particularly troubled site in terms of representation because it holds a pivotal space in the contest for both gender and class hegemony. But what I want to interrogate specifically is how representations of the female body, as a dangerous and uncontained body, as opposed to the regulated female body of the discourses of femininity and domesticity seen in the

last two chapters, operate; and if indeed they reveal anything about the role they play in maintaining gender and class hegemony. The history of Western literary tradition has demonstrated that the body is the subject of much attention, and whilst it is discovered it is simultaneously denied.[3] The theoretical model with which I have been working pre-supposes that magazines are products of the economic conditions from which a culture and its signifying practices emerges. The rhythms of economic life provide the basic pre-condition and ultimate limits for the organisation of sexual life (Weeks 1985). But as before, the representational regulation of the uncontained female body comes from within a woman-centred discourse, and it is my task to consider the role of these representations in the construction of a complex view of what it is to be female.

The process of the regulation and codification of sexuality is important throughout the whole century, but is particularly crucial in the mid-Victorian period. In this period the attempt to define woman as either Madonna or Magdalen becomes almost totally class bound. As Madonna she is constructed as pure and respectable, as the section on the cult of the mother has shown; but whether the ideal woman is a domestic or fashionable heroine she is always controlled, sanitized and safe. Indeed, I shall argue that there is a fine line between these representations and those of the Magdalen where woman is uncontrolled, monstrously sexualised and dangerous. But there is a space in between the two which is, as yet, unaccounted for, and it is the interrogation of this space which forms the first part of

this chapter. This space is the one which encloses representation of the working woman and as the following quotation from Lynda Nead's *Myths Of Sexuality* (1988) indicates, the regulation of discursive space generally was class and gender specific.

> Respectability was organized around a complex set of practices and representations which defined appropriate and acceptable modes of behaviour, language and appearance; these social rules and moral codes worked to regulate both gender and class identities. (p. 28)

The image of the working woman is contested and contentious because she represents a gendered identity in need of regulation as well as class control. What I want to foreground here is the representation of the body of the working-class woman in the discourse of magazines, which is also fetishized like her middle-class counterpart, but is subject to a different kind of regulation which places her precariously between the Madonna and the Magdalen. The discussion of the figure of the Magdalen will form the second part of the chapter, and in both sections I will examine fictional and non-fictional representations of gender and class as important elements in the structures of domination and subordination which forge the discursive explosion around sexuality in women's magazines.

The Working Woman

The British Workwoman, as I have already described, was an evangelical penny monthly but it was was far more attractive than many others of its type as it was folio in size and beautifully illustrated. Despite the visual splendour the tone was didactic and a typical issue contained the usual diet of poems, fiction, religious aphorisms and moral tales. Perhaps because *The British Workwoman* was rather more sophisticated than other evangelical penny monthlies the contradictions in the attempt to define the working woman are more apparent. As the title and the first editorial state, the magazine was expressly designed for working-class women, and its aim was to elevate their position. This elevation is of course a moral and spiritual elevation rather than a political or economic one. On the very first cover page there is a beautifully illustrated picture of a young woman dressed in outdoor clothing with a caption entitled "The Two Ways - Which Way Shall I Go?" (1863, 1). The cover page of *The British Workwoman* was always a full page illustration which had a simple narrative or a short-story to accompany it. The story which accompanies 'The Two Ways' is one about Martha Careful, who on her way to church is stopped by Sally Dawdle and Caroline Smart. Sally, a domestic servant dressed in ribbons and cheap jewellery, ignores Martha's advice about the importance of religious piety, whilst Caroline, a mantle maker follows her conscience and decides to emulate Martha. As this is a religious publication we can

assume that the reference is to her spiritual journey, but we cannot discount the possibility that this is a veiled reference to her moral and sexual journey. A contemporary readership would undoubtedly understand the ambiguity of this message, an ambiguity which is ever present in the discourse of female sexuality in this period and these types of texts.

Many of the ambiguities, and sometimes even contradictions, are centred around images of the working woman in all the different types of women's magazine that I have covered. But the problems of defining the working woman are particularly acute in *The British Workwoman*. In the first editorial it prides itself on being one of many publications designed to elevate the industrious classes. It states its concern with workers, and one class of worker in particular, the working woman. In the definition of a working woman in the article 'Who Are Workwomen?' (1863, pp.2-3) it includes Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale and states that nowadays no one is ashamed of work.[4]

> And, therefore, we do not fear that the reader of this paper, be the hand that holds it fair and jewelled, or hard and plain and browned, will turn away from the lofty, honourable title of "British Workwoman". (p.3)

But it is those with hands that are 'hard and plain and browned' that occupy a vulnerable position in the construction of female sexuality through their precarious relationship to independence and the realm of the public. The ideology of separate spheres was different for the working-class woman than for her middle-class

counterpart as she shared a relationship to the public, and thus to the men of her class, through work and it is indeed this insertion of woman into the public space which causes so much anxiety. This anxiety, as the first cover page of *The British Workwoman* reveals, is about the fear of contamination which public means to the ideal of femininity.

The most common strategy used by the evangelical magazine is to insert woman back into the ideal. For *The British Workwoman* the resolution to the problem is to state that the most venerated worker of all is the mother.

> And yet there are those whose lives are even more busy. Mothers, with a round circle of little ones, looking up to them with all their wants; wives whose love has to be tested by their willingness to cook their husband's dinners, and keep their houses fair and clean, with their own honest hands. (1863, 3)

The strategy used by middle-class women's magazines to recuperate the working woman was similar. In general articles and in fiction the working woman was either idealised, as in the cult of the mother or the cult of nobility, or she was denigrated for her slovenly ways. Indeed this denigration led to assumptions of licentiousness as the final section of this chapter will illustrate. But what was actually at stake was the middle-class fear of the destruction of family life and those middle-class values of thrift and moral purity which were becoming the powerful cultural currency and heritage of the Victorian middle-class. The working woman, and thus the issue of female employment, inevitably led to this destruction of family life

which was held so sacred in many discourses. I agree with Lynda Nead (1988) in that it was the working woman's imagined sexuality and economic autonomy which made them objects of threat. Furthermore, my evidence concurs with Nead's in the assertion that middle-class attitudes towards working women were highly contradictory in seeing them as both picturesque and healthy, and morally degrading and threatening (Nead 1988, 31).[5]

Lily Meeke and the Noble Working Woman

In a rather bizarre short story entitled 'The Autobiography of a Pin; or, the Factory-Girl' published in *The Ladies' Treasury* the nobility of the working woman can be seen.[6] The tale, narrated by a dressmaker's pin, chronicles its adventures amongst a medley of working-class characters. It begins and ends with Lily Meeke, a factory girl who has won the heart of the factory owner's son Eugene Bullion. The names suggest a rather satirical tone, but nevertheless the resolution of the story is earnest in its marrying of the hero and heroine, and thus the two opposing classes. Like all working-class heroines who are not destined to be working-class for long, Lily wins Eugene's heart by the modesty of her demeanour.

> ... no vulgar expletives escaped those rosy lips, to destroy (as such things do) all the illusions with which beauty fills the heart of dreaming, passionate, early manhood. Lily, though a factory-

> girl, was one of nature's gentlewomen. There was an instinct courtesy, an innate grace about Lily. (*The Ladies' Treasury* 1858, 18)

The key word is of course the 'though', the factory girl was not usually or naturally a gentlewoman, but in the case of Lily she has to be an extraordinary factory girl to gain her wish. The story is of course fantasy, but whose fantasy is it? Is it for the working girl who dreams of being saved from a life of poverty and pain by a rich lover, or the fantasy of the middle-class who dreamt of anaesthetising the working-class by incorporating working-class women into their ranks? Aside from the interesting but nevertheless complex issue of reader-response, in this literary representation we see the idealised image of the working woman typical of Victorian fiction, and particularly popular fiction.

The question of the working woman raises a similar point to one raised in the discussion about the Orient in chapter one when I argued that it is not always entirely clear whether the ideal woman is the product of nature or civilization. In the case of the noble working woman, she is the product of nature 'one of nature's gentlewomen' as the next quotation from a story entitled 'Crazy Ruth' in *The Young Ladies' Journal* (1865, pp.229-230) confirms.

> Nature is the real democrat, whose caprice is to bestow the highest gifts of beauty or genius on those who are born to a very humble position on the social scale. (p.229)

But the ignoble working woman is not a natural product, but one tainted by the needs and ravages of a civilization which often

dehumanises her. On the other hand, the ideal is like Lily Meeke whose name is a type name, young, beautiful and virtuous and she is primarily defined, as the quotation illustrates, by her beauty.

In *The Flesh Made Word* (1989) Helena Michie discusses descriptions of the heroine's body in Victorian fiction and asserts that the body is the locus of interpretation and textuality. Moving on from the work of Francis Barker (1984) and Michel Foucault (1981) who reveal the human body as male, she argues that sexual difference needs to be addressed in discussion of the body as both historical construct and spectacle. The body in Western tradition, as discussed earlier, is discovered and then denied, and study of its movement at particular historical conjunctures has been well covered by both Foucault and Barker; but as Michie argues, the Victorian period is especially interesting in terms of representation of the female body.

> Women's bodies occupy no such stable and comforting relation to the unknown; since they are themselves the unknowable, the unpenetrable mystery, they are not so much vehicles of epistemological consolation as they are sources of change, disruption, and complication. (p.7)

The hypothesis that the female body does not present a source of epistemological consolation is one which makes a great deal of sense in relation to the evidence that I have already offered in this chapter, and it will continue to be a central thread in the remainder. Michie also looks at images of working women and finds that images of them actually working are more common in marginally

canonical and noncanonical texts. I do of course agree with this, but in magazines the images are far more to do with representation than the actual physical act of working. Michie's thesis is very thought provoking and she does provide a very interesting discussion of the working woman, I intend my research to complement her evidence and to add to its breadth by developing the issue of class even further.

Returning to Lily Meeke as an example of representation of the noble working woman we find that descriptions of her physical perfection abound; she is 'tall, slender, with the whitest skin, the bluest eyes, and the most luxuriant golden hair in the world', and she also 'had tears in her violet eyes, and a sob in her white throat' (1858 18). Lily and many other idealised working-class heroines of magazine fiction stand at the intersection between the delicate upper and middle-class heroine, and the coarse robust working woman found in both canonical and noncanonical texts. But what both type of heroines share is this intense interest in physical description as the quotation about Lily Meeke illustrates.[7] Another important aspect of Michie's argument is about the failure of language to represent the female body 'If women are simultaneously language and body, what does it mean to represent their bodies in language?' (1989. 7). In the next section I will consider just how powerfully the woman's body is inscribed through a persistent use of physical metaphor, and I would also like to consider synecdochal description as described by Michie. Synecdoche functions by using the represented to illustrate the unrepresented and it is a common

feature of language. In Victorian images of women generally we find particular attention focused on hands, lips, neck and hair, and as the descriptions of Lily illustrate the hair is often the centre of almost erotic attention. Michie explains and illustrates this point very well and notes that these, and other, body parts are fetishized (p.98). It seems then that the absent is most often the sexualized absence, the description of Lily may not be as well written as those by Charles Dickens and George Eliot but it does indeed illustrate the fetishization of women's body parts.

'Hard and Plain and Browned' and the Ignoble Working Woman

At the beginning of this section I used *The British Workwoman* as an illustration of a magazine which works hard to define the working woman, and of one which through the very process of definition seeks to recuperate her image. In the quotation in the title to this section the definition of the workwoman is characterised by her hands which are 'hard and plain and browned' (*The British Workwoman* 1863, 3). The hand is used synecdochally to denote the whole woman who is defined entirely by the physical work that she does. This type of definition is one which places the woman's physicality to the fore and is of course consistent with all representations of women at the time. But the working woman is defined by her coarseness rather than by her gentility as the following extract

from a regular feature entitled 'Employment For Females' run in *The Ladies'* confirms.

> Whole families work in these smithies. It is nothing uncommon to find a mother and her three lusty daughters, fully of marriageable age, stripped to their stays, and with a kerchief over their shoulders, wielding the hammers and tugging at the elbows, and working away with a will, amongst the banging and roaring and spark-flying, and singing as merrily as larks, if not as melodiously.... It appeared odd enough to see the women standing in the smithy ashes with a big hammer in their fist... (1872, 14)

The voyeurism of this piece of journalism is outstanding in that the reader is taken into an area which is very likely to be completely unknown to them, and is then made privy to the activity of the working women who are oblivious to the onlooker. Again the women's hands are foregrounded, the 'fists' are a marker of social class and act as a cultural shorthand recognisable to the contemporary reader.

A letter entitled 'Women Who Work' printed in *The Lady's Own Paper* (1870, 279) shows a working woman's perspective and makes an impassioned plea on behalf of working women.

> Yes, there is a certain respect I have for myself when I labour, that is worth far more to me than even my scanty wages. The bread I put in my mouth is sweeter, the clothes I wear look handsomer, when I glance in the mirror I quite admire myself, and my dear homely hands, how I love them! And yet am I quite sure of my position in society? (p.279)

The significance of this plea will be discussed in more detail in the final chapter, but what is of interest here is the description

of the 'dear homely hands' and the response to them. It is given as emphatically positive by two adjectives, but then is immediately negated by the anxiety about status in the last sentence. Whether the letter is genuine or not, an issue raised in chapter one, it does not alter the fact that hands again represent the whole, and this particular whole is one which is always subject to a particular kind of scrutiny, a scrutiny about respectability. Thus, the ignoble working woman is defined by her body which is in need of regulation. This leads me to consider that other worker, the prostitute herself a public woman, who was also subject to public scrutiny and who is the subject of the next section.

The Magdalen

Representations of Victorian sexuality, were both absent and present but the place where they were most present was in the image of the fallen woman, the prostitute. However, as I have argued the prostitute was also absent and present in the image of the working woman, as the pictorial and textual narratives 'Which Way Shall I Go?' in *The British Workwoman* so succinctly illustrate. The purpose of the final section of this chapter then is to explore the contradictions surrounding absence and presence which cluster around the supremely sexualised representation of woman's body, the prostitute. I will discuss briefly magazines wholly devoted to the

problems of prostitution and discuss in more detail fiction about prostitution in a range of women's magazines.

But before I move on to this discussion it is necessary to consider the social and political turmoil created by the enforcement of The Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864, 1866 and 1869. The Acts were introduced to control the spread of venereal disease among enlisted men on ports and garrison towns. The spread of venereal disease amongst the military had been on the increase since 1823 and by 1864 one out of three sick cases were venereal in origin (Walkowitz 1980, 49). The introduction of the first act in 1864 meant that prostitutes could be arrested and taken to police stations where they were subjected to an internal examination. If she was found carrying venereal disease then she was committed to a sanitorium until declared cured. However, any beneficial effect the procedure was thought to have had with regard to elimination of venereal disease was proved useless by the omission to also examine the enlisted men. Clearly then the act perpetrated a clear case of double moral standards by penalizing the women and not the men.

This case was taken up by the public in the seventies when groups of middle class non-conformists, feminists and radical working men formed a coalition to challenge enforcement of the acts by calling for a repeal (Walkowitz 1980, 1). The Acts were denounced most vociferously by The Ladies' National Association, which was formed as a pressure group in 1869, but also in response to the formation of the National Association which exluded the membership of women.

Josephine Butler led the Ladies' National Association,and they consistently branded the legislation as an example of both class and sex discrimination. It is interesting to note that Butler was able to use both her class and social position to advantage,thus enabling her to speak for women from a position of respectability and security. However, as Judith Walkowitz points out, the campaign's attack on patriarchy and male vice did not assert female sexuality, but rather advocated a 'separate sphere' ideology which assumed women's superior moral calibre and their need for protection from licentious male vice (1980, 256).[8] Walkowitz's analysis, like most work on sexuality in the last twenty years, uses Foucault's model of power and repression stating that the Acts reinforced patterns of class and gender domination. They were also the most explicit and draconian example of the Victorian preoccupation with and codification of sexuality,and prostitutes were the objects of class guilt as well as fear (Walkowitz 1980), and came to symbolise the sexual and economic exploitation of whole sections of women under capitalism. In this period most of these women came from the unskilled classes and they organised their trade amongst themselves displaying a strong female sub-culture,and remained in many ways a part of working-class life. Women who went to work on the streets usually went out of hardship,and Walkowitz notes that women often turned to prostitution as a temporary refuge from difficult circumstances.

> It was often an alternative to proletarianization, one that released them from an oppressive work regime and afforded them readier access to money and social independence. (p.31)

Thus the prostitute, by selling her labour and simultaneously her sexuality, symbolised the ultimate taboo, the 'public woman'. This term was not euphemistic but signalled moral transgression by the juxtapostion of 'public' with 'woman' (Levine 1990, 83), and one could even argue that the very term 'public woman' was actually oxymoronic.

This preoccupation with and codification of sexuality is certainly borne out by the appearance of a number of periodicals which were published to deal with the perceived problems of prostitution. During the eighteen-forties a significant amount of books and articles appeared about prostitution and this concern with the problem continued to be addressed throughout the nineteenth-century. The Contagious Diseases Acts were just one part of what Louis Althusser (1971) would call the actions of the repressive state apparatus, and publications such as *The Female's Friend* (1846) and *The Magdalen's Friend* (1860-1864) can be seen as examples of the ideological state apparatus. Both were cheaply priced at threepence and were dedicated to the elimination of prostitution; they were examples of paternalistic High Church propaganda at its least subtle.[9]

The Female's Friend published by the Associate Institution for Improving and Enforcing the Laws for the Protection of Women was as the title stated explicitly protectionist. The first issue stated in its address '... that deep and serious wrongs are inflicted upon

WOMAN, may be proved to demonstration...' (1846, 1), and its answer to the problems of prostitution was to call for new laws to regulate sexual behaviour. It later describes prostitutes as,

> .. *the victims of treachery* are the *most beautiful*, most *interesting*, and most *defenceless* part of the community; and, therefore... the crime is characterized by everything unmanly, cowardly, mean, beastly, deceptive, profane, diabolical, cruel, and deadly. (p.84)

Both periodicals were heavily didactic, although the coloured cover pages of *The Magdalen's Friend* seemed to be some acknowledgement that visual, if not literary pleasure, was what a readership sought. Just who the readership were is difficult to say, but it is unlikely they were the addressees, indeed considering the relentlessly didactic and propagandist tone it is not surprising that both folded within one and four years respectively.[19] Periodicals which were published in support of the lobby against the Contagious Diseases Act include *The Shield* (1870-1920), *Medical Enquirer* (1875-1883) and *The National League Journal* (1875-1883). These were pressure group periodicals produced wholly in support of the cause, and as such are not the complex amalgamation of different genres and tones found in the magazine. Returning to the quotation from *The Female's Friend* though, the fascination for the 'victim of treachery', the prostitute, is almost voyeuristic in its defence of her. In the last part of this chapter I will look at fictional representations of the prostitute and at just how far they go towards reclaiming or damning her.

Fictional Representations of the Magdalen

The discussion of the Magdalen covers two types of dangerous woman, the fallen woman and the prostitute, and representations of the fallen woman are more common in all women's magazines than those of the prostitute. The fallen woman is one who is usually reclaimed, but pays the full penance by death, perhaps the best canonical example of this is Elizabeth Gaskell's eponymous heroine Ruth. Ruth is endowed with moral fibre and maturity only when she becomes a mother herself, and thus even illicit motherhood has a religious calling. With reference to the section on the cult of the mother in the previous chapter, it comes as no surprise that Ruth begins to seek her social regeneration through the responsibilities laid down for her through this womanly service. In her letters Elizabeth Gaskell revealed that she would be satisfied if she had succeeded in making people talk about the fallen woman (Mitchell 1981, 33).[11]

Fiction explicitly about the fallen woman was rare in middle-class women's magazines, as were articles on prostitution. *The Lady's Own Paper* made a reference to the Contagious Diseases Acts in one of its letter pages, but this reference was exceptional.[12] What was more common was fiction covering the dangers of seduction, and if seduced the middle-class heroines did not usually stay alive long enough to become a fallen woman. An interesting example of this type of story is 'Eliza, or the unfaithful Wife' published in *Blackwood's Lady's Magazine*.[13] The story is set in the West Indies where '...

scorched by a perpetual summer, the passions partake of the intensity of the climate...' (p.33), and involves a young newly-wed, Eliza Melton falling for the charms of the lustful Strickland. Seduction is to blame for the young bride's infidelity but it is the seducer who is blamed.

> Conscious of its frailty, he attacks a lovely flower, -prevails, and blasts it FOR EVER! The sensual gratification indulged, he seeks other objects, other adventures; and leaves the victim of his brutality to shame, to infamy, and destitution. (1857, 33)

Eliza in fact is saved from this infamy by her husband who kills her and her lover and then commits suicide.[14] What is interesting about this story is that the narrator blames male seducers wholeheartedly, but reveals that women's passions prevent then from controlling themselves. Eliza's husband has no idea that he may be 'welcomed home by an adultress (if so harsh a term can be applied to one so fair, so sweet)' (p.69), and it seems that there is a problem about using the term adultress to describe an upper-class woman. Here the feminine ideal clashes with the figure of the fallen woman, which is much easier to articulate in regard to the working-class woman than to her middle or upper-class counterpart.[15] Perhaps this was the reason why fiction about the Magdalen was more common in religious magazines aimed at very specific audiences such as working- class women or clergymen's wives. The first group were to be protected, and often of course protection was a euphemism for control, and the second group were to help do the protecting; at least as far as the didactic fiction included in their pages seemed to indicate.

Magazines produced specifically for these women included such titles as *The Vineyard* (1867) and *Woman's Work in the Great Harvest Field* (1872-1892). Apart from the address to middle-class clergymen's wives such as the full title of *The Vineyard. A Journal for Clergymen's Wives, District Visitors, and Other Church and Parish Handmaidens* indicated, the price of eightpence and fourpence respectively was aimed at readers in a different income bracket than the patrons of cheap publications such as *The Mother's Friend* and *The British Workwoman*.

'Zoe.-A Tale' appeared in the first volume of the shortlived *The Vineyard* (1867, pp.19-21), and is a story about a fallen woman who reaches her predicament by eloping with a lover after a series of love affairs with other men. Like Mrs Melton of 'Eliza, or the Unfaithful Wife' (*Blackwood's Ladies' Magazine* 1857), Zoe is treated with sympathy by the narrator, but nevertheless is only redeemed by her death. Zoe and Mrs Melton are typical of the fictional middle-class fallen woman in that they are victims of their own passion. Before she eloped with '... a handsome German itinerant vendor of clocks and watches.' (p.21). Zoe's little affairs happened every month, undoubtedly a veiled reference to the belief that the menses made women more sexually active. These vulnerable women often succumbed to the charms of eloquent seducers. Indeed many articles in middle-class women's magazines warn young women of the dangers of the profligate male, who as the *Ladies' Cabinet* describes (1847, pp.156-160), often frequent brothels, presumably when they are unsuccessful with their rather more 'respectable' prey.

> ... youthful purity and loveliness should turn with abhorrence and disgust from the man who would prey upon innocence, or debase himself in the haunts of pollution. (p.157)

Fiction about the figure of the prostitute, rather than the fallen woman, was as I have said more popular in the cheap evangelical magazines. 'Poor Meggy; or, the Wages of Sin' is the story of the death of a prostitute which appeared in *The British Workwoman* (1866, 275). It is the exemplary tale of Meggy a young prostitute who gives up her life on the streets after witnessing the agonising death of her older, and significantly unnamed, friend. The narrative opens with the deathbed scene which takes place in the inner city.

> In a fever-haunted den, in one of the lowest districts of the metropolis, lay a dying woman.
> She was literally a moral and physical wreck, steeped to the very lips in vice and infamy, her spirit polluted with almost every crime that can cast disgrace on womanhood, and her form, which had been beautiful, branded with sad traces of her dark career.
> The scene of her exit from the world in which she had helped to diffuse so much of the poison of sin reeked with ill odours, arising from filth and neglect; and still more with the sickening miasma exhaled each moment from the pestilential breath of the loathsome disease which was destroying her. (1866, 275)

The rhetoric is powerful but it seems that the figure of the prostitute is either conspicuous by her absence, or her presence is exaggerated and distorted to such a degree that she is totally dehumanised and debased. In 'Poor Meggy' the extent of the prostitute's crime is signified by the metaphor of the lips,which also doubles as a metonymy for her unbridled sensuality; her looks have been all but defaced by the venereal disease which finally

kills her. All the subsequent references to her signify debasement as she is seen writhing and shrieking on her bed, the scene of all her past crimes. Meggy, terrified by the sight of the dying woman is taken away by another prostitute '... a woman, seemingly in the prime of life, in vigorous health, and of showy exterior...', but when she also dies a few days later Meggy leaves her former life and enters a hostel for the homeless.[16]

As the 'showy exterior' of Meggy's friend the unreformed prostitute and the showy ribbons of Sally Dawdle reveal, dress was both a stable and instable social and moral signifier (Valverde 1989). As the section on conspicuous consumption in chapter one demonstrated, ostentatious dress on a lady was acceptable,but the difference between the woman and the lady often lacked clarity. The definition of the working-class woman was not quite as troubled, as this chapter has already shown and as the following extract from 'The Altar of Fashion' (*The Lady's Own Paper* 1866, 6) confirms.

> The lady commoner copies the peeress-the merchant's wife, thecommoner-the tradesman's wife, the middle-class lady-the shop-girl, her employer-the servant-girl, her mistress; and six months after a mode has come into vogue in Mayfair, we find a ridiculous parody of it in Whitechapel. It may be as little like the original as the gorilla is to the man-but there it is, the caricature, the rough outline, be it fitting or unfitting. (p.6)

References to the dehumanised and even debased working woman abound in all types of the heterogenous mix found in magazines. Furthermore, the working-class woman who dressed in inappropriate

finery was making herself conspicuously vulnerable; an interest in fashion placed her precariously close to a loss of virtue.[17] In the short story 'Our Mothers' in *The Ladies' Treasury* (1863, pp.10-13) which I discussed in chapter two there is a very good description of the indolent working woman Maria Thomas.

> Maria's face was sallow, and her silk dress soiled and ill-fitting; her collar and sleeves were of the finest lace, while her hair, which had already become thin from neglect, was decorated with large bows of pink ribbon and black velvet. Her little girl... was also dressed in the extreme of the fashion; her clothes were very short and full, every skirt richly trimmed with embroidery, while her neck and arms were bare. (pp.11-12)

As I argued in chapter two it is at the locus of the discourse of sexuality that class distinction becomes most acute. Lyn Pykett (1992) argues that in the sensation novel of the 1860s the fallen woman is represented as both victim and as predator. As the examples from fiction in middle-class magazines have shown, the fallen woman that was reclaimed was middle-class and was viewed with some sympathy. The predatory fallen woman was more likely to be working class, and in evangelical magazines she was usually a prostitute. Female sexuality is a troubled site in terms of representation in women's magazines, and it is the working woman who is most rigorously contested, as her relationship to the mode of production, a world of work and independence, places her precariously close to her working counterpart, the prostitute. It seems that in the discourse of sexuality a relationship with earned money is particularly dangerous for the working-class woman.

CHAPTER III
NOTES

1. Jeffery Weeks in *Sexuality and its Discontents: Meanings, Myths and Modern Sexualities* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985) illustrates his point through what he sees as the contradictory representation of woman as either home-maker or whore in contemporary women's magazines.

2. See Ronald Pearsall, *The Worm in the Bud. The World of Victorian Sexuality* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969); Stephen Marcus, *The Other Victorians: A Study of Sexuality and Pornography in Mid-Nineteenth Century England* (London: Meridian, 1977) and Eric Trudgill, *Madonnas and Magdalens: The Origins and Development of Victorian Sexual Attitudes* (London: Heinemann, 1976).

3. See Lynda Nead, *Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988); Helena Michie, *The Flesh Made Word: Female Figures and Women's Bodies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) and Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics, and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality Since 1800* (London: Longman Group, 1981).

4. *The British Workwoman* was at least consistent in its policy of definition as the title of an article on Princess Alice some years later shows, 'Twice Royal; Or, A Royal British Workwoman' (1879), p.36.

5. See also Sally Shuttleworth 'Demonic Mothers. Ideologies of Bourgeois Motherhood in the mid-Victorian Era' in *Rewriting the Victorians*, ed. Linda Shires (London: Routledge, 1992), pp.31-51, for a similar discussion about representation of the reproductive capacity of working women.

6. Published in two parts, *The Ladies Treasury* (1858), pp.18-22, and pp.34-38.

7. See Jeanne Fahnestock, 'The Heroine of Irregular Features: Physiognomy and Conventions of Heroine Description' in *Victorian Studies*, 24 (1981), pp.326-350.

8. See Mary Poovey, 'Speaking of the Body: Mid-Victorian Constructions of Female Desire' in *Body/Politics. Women and the Discourses of Science*, ed. by Mary Jacobus, Evelyn Fox Feller and Sally Shuttleworth (London: Routledge, 1990), pp.29-46, for a defence of Josephine Butler. Poovey argues that Butler's campaign was significant because it was an important part of a move towards an active construction of the female subject; this ia an issue which I will develop in the final chapter.

9. See Trudgill for details of The Church Pentitentiary Association formed in 1851 and The Society for the Rescue of Young Women and Children formed in 1853.

10. Another publication of this type was *Friendly Leaves* (1876-1917) a monthly published by the Girl's Friendly Society.

11. There was a review of *Ruth* in *The Lady's Own Paper* (1867), p.433, which was quite perfunctory and claims it had not been as popular as Elizabeth Gaskell's other works because of '... the nature of its subject...'.

12. The reference appeared in a letter from 'A French Lady' entitled 'A French Lady on English Homes and English Housewives' (1870), p.425, which was about the slack nature of English housewives. It complains that women busy their brains upon subjects such as the Contagious Diseases Act instead of attending to more 'Christian efforts'.

13. It was published in two parts, *Blackwood's Lady's Magazine* (1857), pp.33-37 and pp.69-73.

14. The image of female sexuality as a vulnerable flower is a conventional one,and the quotation about Eliza as a 'lovely flower' contrasts well with the following quotation from 'The Sacredness of Girlhood' in *The London and Paris Ladies' Magazine* (1879), p.8, 'The delicate bloom is soon rubbed off the peach, but more transient, more than evanescent, is the bloom of girlhood'. Idealised descriptions of the feminine ideal can still be found in abundance at the end of the period with which I am concerned.

15. Sally Mitchell, 'Sentiment and Suffering: Women's Recreational Reading in the 1860s' in *Victorian Studies*, 21 (1977), pp.29-45, refers to the difference between representations of the fallen woman in fiction from the 1840s and 1860s.

16. The details of prostitute culture and its bonds of attachment have been well researched by the writer,as the second woman arranges for the funeral of Meggy's friend despite the fact that they are sworn enemies. See also Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society. Women, Class, and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

17. As the following extract from 'Work Done by Women' in *The Ladies'* (1872), p.30, demonstrates, the factory girls of Birmingham were prime examples of the love of finery. 'The language of many of them is simply vile, and their dress-the cast-off finery of their masters' daughters-was tasteless enough when new, and is wretched now that it has passed through the hands of the second-hand dealers. So much a stranger might see and judge from; but, happily, the working-girls of Birmingham are not all of this class. Some lead respectable,

orderly, well-regulated lives, but these are the women who work at the most womanly employments.'

CHAPTER IV

INDEPENDENCE AND THE DISCOURSE OF REFORM

> We women have a voice in the nation - let the men say what they will. Nor, I think, will any good man say ought unkind of it, or of us, so long as we take care to keep this voice what it should be - what God and nature meant it to be - low and sweet in their ears as the voice of Eve in Adam's: yet clear, firm, and never to be silenced or ignored, like the voice of conscience in their hearts.
> (*Victoria Magazine* 1864, 97)

The types of women's magazine that I have looked at so far have been popular magazines, magazines for girls, drawing-room magazines, fashion magazines and evangelical magazines, and all were aimed (except for the last group) at a broadly middle-class readership. They all engaged with the ideologies of femininity and domesticity in a complex, but not very often challenging, manner and they all, despite the difference in target audience, constructed ideals from a middle-class framework. In looking at these publications one could be forgiven for using the empirical evidence and the subsequent theoretical models to claim that these samples demonstrate the pervasive, but not totally monolithic, influence of a dominant bourgeois ideology on its subjects and their cultural forms. However, the picture would not be complete without looking at the periodicals which presented an alternative perspective on the ideologies of femininity and domesticity and operated from within a

discourse which was both challenging and radical. As I argued in the introduction, the Victorian period, like any other historical period, had a multiplicity of discourses competing for cultural and political space and legitimacy. Thus, the missing link in the chain is a group of periodicals which were for a female middle-class readership, and which challenged female subordination from an identifiably feminist position. The application of the term feminist to periodicals from the mid-Victorian period may be problematic as the term is usually reserved for the post-women's suffrage era. Of course the writing from within these texts never identified itself as feminist, and there was not an organized feminist movement in this period, but we can use it anachronistically to define feminist as a critique of male supremacy which actively proceeds to redefine the boundaries between separate spheres (Levine 1990). Historical studies of the rise of feminism have attributed it to a number of factors, all of which were a complex association of the economic, the political and the intellectual (Herstein 1985). Thus, it comes as no surprise that these texts were generated and read by middle-class women who were writing against their own class, a class which we have already seen as the originator and focus of the ideologies which subordinated them.

If this group of periodicals is defined as feminist, then it is perhaps useful to explain precisely how they differ from the others. I will argue in this chapter that the obvious difference is in their attempt to provide, if not an alternative, at least a broader and more liberal definition of woman shaped from an identifiably female

perspective. I will argue that they participate in a kind of counter-discourse, one which provides an early feminist critique of culture and woman's place within it. The fact that women completely dominated the writing, editing, printing and publishing of these journals is significant. The other magazines that I have looked at, although for women and often edited and contributed to by women, took a less radical position on issues of emancipation, and inserted their complex sets of contradictions and ambiguities within a broadly conservative discourse of separate spheres. The question of agency is undoubtedly more complex with respect to these publications as I have demonstrated. Neverthless, it is important to state that even the most conservative of these magazines began to follow, and sometimes tacitly support the slow move towards the opening up of possibilities for women's lives in terms of education and work, whilst at the same time maintaining a residual grip on the ideology of separate spheres. Similarly, feminist journals supported and often agitated for the erosion of separate spheres, and negotiated an alternative definition of femininity, whilst simultaneously maintaining a residual grip on the ideology of domesticity. The discourse of female sexuality is displaced because, as I argued in the previous chapter, representations of sexuality were to do with the public woman, who was either a workwoman or a prostitute. As the business of feminist journals was to promote the move towards middle-class female emancipation, the question of the public sphere was dealt with in a rather different manner; the public woman was defined by her class, and although the workwoman was still objectified, she was not the source of fear and disruption that

I illustrated in chapters two and three. It is the aim of this chapter therefore to interrogate the move towards the re-definition of femininity, domesticity, work and independence, and particularly the way in which this move manifests itself in both reform agitation and the more abstract, but nevertheless politically motivated, discursive space of representation.

The Feminist Journals

The Waverley Journal (1856-1858) was the first of the Victorian feminist journals and appeared as a fivepenny fortnightly edited by Eleanor Duckworth and published in Scotland. As its sub-title *Edited and Published by Ladies. For the Cultivation of the Memorable, the Progressive, and the Beautiful* proudly claimed, it was unique because it was produced wholly by women, and its banner headline included a picture of a woman at a writing desk with another woman in the background at a printing press.[1] This attracted Bessie Parkes, who became one of the key members of the feminist reform group known as The Langham Place Circle, and she suggested that the magazine move from Edinburgh to London in order to be at the vanguard of the emergent metropolitan feminist movement (Herstein 1990). This journal, as details of its history demonstrate, was the embryo of *The English Woman's Journal*, and is best known by feminist historians as the original place of publication of Barbara Bodichon's early feminist tract *Women and Work* (1857).[2] In terms of

contents it included what was to become the staple diet of the women's reform journal; articles on reform, general interest features, fiction and back page advertisements.

The English Woman's Journal (1858-1864) was a shilling monthly edited by Bessie Parkes and Matilda M. Hays.[3] It appeared with significant financial backing from Barbara Bodichon who became a key figure in the early Victorian women's movement. Like its predecessor it contained an interesting mixture of reform articles, features on women's work, general articles, poetry and fiction and it was very much a campaign journal which was self-conscious about both aims and intentions.[4] Through the campaigns mounted by the journal a nucleus of women devoted to the women's cause emerged, they included Bessie Parkes, Barbara Bodichon, Jessie Boucherett, Emily Davies, Maria Rye and Emily Faithfull. The poet Adelaide Ann Procter was also involved until her untimely death in 1864 at the age of thirty eight; George Eliot also pledged her support but never contributed.[5] When the journal collapsed in 1864 Parkes devoted her energies to *The Alexandra Magazine*, Davies became the editor of Faithfull's new *Victoria Magazine*, Boucherett went on the edit *The English Woman's Review*, Rye set up The Female Emigration Society and Bodichon devoted all her energies to suffrage reform. Superseding *The English Woman's Journal*, *The Alexandra Magazine* brought its price down, probably in order to maintain the falling readership of the journal, and to gain new readers by the more accessible price of sixpence. It was edited by Bessie Parkes who changed the balance of campaign articles against more general ones in favour of the latter, and

through this revision it began to look more like an enlightened drawing-room magazine than a feminist one.[6] The attempt to provide a more pragmatic approach in contrast to the theoretical bias of *The English Woman's Journal* was however not successful, and *The Alexandra Magazine* folded a year after it was launched. A longer running version of these two attempts appeared two years after the demise of *The Alexandra Magazine*, and this was *The English Woman's Review* (1866-1869) which began as a shilling quarterly. It was edited by Jessie Boucherett who gave up the editorship in 1870 with the onset of a new series under the extended title of *The English Woman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions.*[7] Unlike its predecessor, *The English Woman's Journal*, the *Review* published consistently on campaign issues and went on to be an important mouthpiece for the suffrage movement, and thus did not provide the usual magazine recipe used by the rather more general feminist journals.

A publication which combined a commitment to women's issues with attention to the traditional concerns of periodical literature such as general articles and fiction was *The Victoria Magazine* (1863-1880), whose format was very much that of the drawing-room magazine. It was a shilling monthly edited by Emily Faithfull and published at her own printing press, the Victoria Press. The Victoria Press had already published part of *The English Woman's Journal* and it claimed to be the first press which utilised wholly female labour.[8] As its full title *The Victoria Magazine. The Woman's Gazette or, News About Work* indicated, it was concerned with news and issues about women's work. On the cover page it presented the name of the Queen, whom it

was named after and who had given her approval, and also included the names of other famous contemporary women; these were Florence Nightingale, Mary Somerville, Rosa Bonheur and Jenny Lind. The words 'wife' and 'mother' also appeared alongside the notable nurse, scientist, painter and singer which all combined to present a dynamic picture of womanhood. As I shall go on to argue later in this chapter, the inclusion of the essentially domestic figures of wife and mother demonstrate the commitment to the ideology of domesticity, which often presented itself uneasily alongside the radical intentions of much of the contents of this magazine and of indeed of others in this class.[9]

Woman's World (1868) was another publication with feminist leanings as its sub-title *Dux Foemina Facti* (woman leads the action) demonstrated. It was a sixpenny monthly edited by Charles Jones, and contained the usual blend of fiction, poetry, general articles on women's reform issues and even included a free monthly supplement which covered fashion. The cover page was simple with a border enclosing the half figure of a woman who looks straight out to the reader; this is a direct contrast to the averted gaze of the fashion model in more commercial magazines. After less than a year *Woman's World* became *The Kettledrum* (1869), but the change of name and the expansion of feminist commitment did not lead to very much and it folded soon after.[10] Two more shortlived attempts were *Woman* (1872) and *Woman's Opinion* (1874), both edited by Amelia Lewis. *Woman* was a three penny weekly which covered different types of reform issues and also included a literary supplement.[11] *Woman's Opinion* appeared

as a penny weekly and was another unsuccessful attempt by Lewis to produce a successful journal for women.[12] A rather more successful venture was *The Ladies' Edinburgh Magazine* (1875-1880), a monthly devoted to women's reform issues, especially education, general educational articles and fiction, and it was very like *The Victoria Magazine* in that the format was very much of the drawing-room magazine.

Between 1850 and 1880 there was a proliferation of periodicals dedicated to what were becoming seen, in intellectual circles at least, as women's issues, those of work and suffrage. All the periodicals mentioned above devoted all, or aspects of, their content to either one or both of these issues. There was however, a whole group of other publications devoted entirely to these issues. For instance in the fifties, when women's work was becoming a debated issue, monthlies like *The Sempstress* (1855) and *The Governess* (1855-1856) appeared, and although shortlived attempted to fill a gap in a market which was fast becoming saturated in general interest women's magazines.[13] By the late sixties these types of periodicals, which were devoted to single issues like work and education, or specific campaigns like the burgeoning suffrage campaigns in the seventies, were in abundance and included *The Woman's Journal* (1870-1912), *The Englishwoman's Year Book* (1875-1916), *Women and Work* (1874-1876), *Women's Suffrage Journal* (1870-1890), *Women's Education Union* (1873-1882) and *Women's Union Journal* (1876-1890), *Woman's Gazette* (1875-1879) and *The Women's Advocate* (1874). These periodicals were not popular in either tone or circulation, and indeed they self-

consciously recognised that as campaign journals the essence of their approach was educational and often didactic. As campaign journals the content was very specialised and I do not intend to cover them in this chapter. Instead I will concentrate on the first group which were more general feminist journals. They were not complex texts in the sense that the other magazines seen in the other chapters were, as they usually exercised firm editorial control which tended to lead to uniformity of tone and address. They were not usually illustrated and so did not include the interesting juxtaposition of the visual and print. However, as a group they were not uniformly similar, these are classifications which I have given them and I am aware of the dangers of working with what appears to be strict categorisation. Most of them were not commercially viable, the best example of this can be seen in *The English Woman's Journal*, which had only a few hundred subscribers and owed its survival solely to the influx of cash from Barbara Bodichon (Herstein 1993); *The Victoria Magazine* was the exception in that, as a rather more conservative publication, it managed to secure a regular readership of 20 000 at its peak and was respectable enough to be held by Mudie's Circulating Library.[14] In the following sections of this chapter I aim to demonstrate how feminist journals responded to patriarchal culture and its representations of women by the construction of an alternative and pragmatic space for women.

The Petticoat in the Politics Of England

If any single campaign represented the pivot of the burgeoning Victorian women's movement it was the campaign to repeal the Married Women's Property Law. In common law all a woman owned became the property of her husband on marriage, and in legal terms a woman had no separate identity apart from her husband. The only way to protect a woman from this fate was to draw up what was known as a separate estate in equity, thus leaving her the same property rights as a single woman. However, this was an exceptionally expensive business, so expensive that only a fraction of women could afford to have this contract drawn up (Holcombe 1972, 8). Caroline Norton's struggle, which began in the thirties and culminated in *A Letter to the Queen on Lord Cranworth's Marriage and Divorce Bill* (1855), epitomised the way the law actively discriminated against women, and her case undoubtedly spurred reformers to take on the government and attempt to change legislation which denied women at least a modicum of rights (Holcombe 1972). Barbara Leigh Smith's (who was later to become Barbara Bodichon) *A Brief Summary, in Plain Language, of the Most Important Laws Concerning Women* (1854) was published in an attempt to raise public awareness of the need for reform.

As I have already described, the Langham Place Circle formed around this particular campaign and a petition was drawn up requesting parliament for reform of the Married Women's Property Law. More than

26,000 signatures were collected, and amongst the most eminent assignees were Anna Jameson, Harriet Martineau, Elizabeth Gaskell and Elizabeth Barrett Browning (Holcombe 1972). But whilst the Married Women's Property Bill was still undergoing its second reading in the House of Commons another bill, the Divorce Bill, came from the House of Lords and was passed in 1857, thus drawing attention away from property reform as it gave partial property provision to married women. It was not until 1882 some twenty five years later that the Married Women's Property Act finally passed through parliament.

The Englishwoman's Journal began publication in 1858 as a mouthpiece for the Langham Place Circle, and continued the campaign for legislative reform in favour of women's rights. In the first issue it produced a short piece on the property of married women, which reminded readers not to forget the inadequacy of the Divorce Act and urged them to press for the demands made in the petition for the reform of the Married Women's Property Law (*The English Woman's Journal* 1858, pp.58-9). The style is difficult and dense which was a feature of all the journals' articles; this, combined with the lack of illustrations, immediately set this out as a serious feminist journal. What all the feminist journals had in common was the claim that women were people and not property; this may seem a truism now but in the mid-nineteenth century this was a bold assertion; and although not an entirely new claim it was still a contentious one, as the failed Property Act illustrated. An article in *Woman's World* entitled 'A Woman's Letter To The Pall Mall Gazette' signed by 'A

Being of the Inferior Class' (1868, pp.219-220) articulates this very well.[15]

> But the fact is that when you have made laws about women hitherto you have never thought of them as *women*, but merely as men's daughters, men's wives, and men's mothers. (*p.*220)

There was of course a response to the campaign in other magazines, and when we remember that it was Leigh Smith's *A Brief Summary of the Laws Concerning Women* that mobilised the reform campaign, we cannot ignore what has become Margaret Oliphant's famous reply in 'The Laws Concerning Women' which appeared in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1856. In the reply Oliphant put the case that men were equally, if not more vulnerable, than women as any feckless wife could bring financial ruin to a family.[16] Popular magazines also responded to the feminist campaigns as they began to emerge from the fifties, and some were more enthusiastic than others. *The Ladies' Cabinet* gave Leigh Smith's pamphlet a very good review agreeing in principle with all its demands.

> Women in the present day need justice rather than protection, and amended laws which would simplify and cheapen the process of divorcement, legalize marriage in some prayed-for directions, hand seduction over to the punishment of the criminal tribunal, and enlarge the control over, as well as the retainment of property, would be among the best improvements of advanced legislation. (1855, 50)

The piece concludes positively stating that 'There is room enough and need enough for this class of female intellect.' (p.51). As the petition was being brought before the House of Commons *The Ladies'*

Cabinet also published an article by Bessie Parkes entitled 'The Laws of Property as They Affect Married Women' (1856, pp.295-6). The fact that this magazine gave space to this article proves that it was one of the more liberal publications, especially considering that the rather more progressive sixties had still not arrived. Parkes engages with Oliphants' reply to Smith in *Blackwoods' Edinburgh Magazine* and uses a powerful polemical style to make her case.

However, despite the emergence of women's issues in the popular press in the late sixties and seventies, the shadow of male dominance was still around and commented upon as previous chapters illustrate. Even those publications wholeheartedly in favour of the maintenance of separate spheres recognised the vulnerability of women, particularly after marriage. A short story 'A Chapter on Husbands' in *The London and Paris Ladies' Magazine* (1873, pp.6-8) deals with this through a mother's concerns about her daughter's welfare which are voiced to the bridegroom on their wedding day.

> He feels he is sadly mistrusted, and is altogether unworthy to be the legal owner of that fairy-like being in mauve silk and white lace bonnet, whom he hands into the carriage a few minutes later. (p.7)

Despite the levity of tone the story deals quite openly with the issue of female dependence and the image of the 'fairy-like' figure, with its connotations of innocence and vulnerability, is very reminiscent of Edith's bridal pose in Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South*.

As *The Englishwoman's Journal* shows, in the late fifties and early sixties the issue for feminist reformers was one of female independence; the suffrage debate although alive in the fifties did not emerge as a vibrant public and political issue until the sixties (Rendall 1985, 313). In the last year of publication it produced 'The Enfranchisement of Women' which represented Harriet Taylor's argument in her essay of the same name published originally in *The Westminster Review* in 1851. But 1866 is the year that historians focus on, as it was the year John Stuart Mill presented the Ladies' Petition for women's suffrage to the House of Commons. The petition was drawn up by members of the nucleus of feminists engaged in a number of reform issues including Barbara Bodichon and Emily Davies, who later became known as the founder of Girton College. After Mill had presented the petition, the group then tried to drum up as much support from the press as they could; however, they did not manage to persuade the high Tory *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*,who published another of Margaret Oliphant's anti-feminist polemics 'The Great Unrepresented' (1866, pp.367-379). In her usual eloquent style Oliphant argued that suffrage would de-feminize women; although the erosion of the pervasive influence of the ideology of separate spheres had begun in earnest in the sixties, conservative opinion still remained influential. The group's idea to canvas the periodicals shows how important an influence the press was (comparable to the power and influence of television today), and they realised the importance not only of their own journals, but also of the wider periodical press which would, if they published, bring new

ideas to the unconverted. They did have some success with the more liberal monthlies like *Macmillan's Magazine* and *The Cornhill*, and even with conservative women's magazines like *The Queen*.[17] In 1867 Mill announced that he wanted to amend the proposed reform bill to allow women to vote on the same basis as men, and despite the defeat the issue had become such a public one that many of the important and influential periodicals included features or reports on it. Consequently the suffrage debate was widely covered in the feminist journals, and they often used their articles to both promote their cause and to challenge what they saw as bad coverage in the conservative press.[18] *The Ladies' Edinburgh Magazine* supported the suffrage claim wholeheartedly, and recognised that women had an interest in the election of parliamentary candidates, primarily as a matter of gendered interest.

> When any one class of people hold all the power in their own hands, it is always found that they attend more to their own interests than to the interests of other and powerless classes. They may not mean to do so, but it is impossible that they should help it... At this time there are many questions under discussion relating to the employment, education, property, and treatment of women, which of course are of more immediate interest to women themselves than to men. (1876, pp.98-99)

By the seventies even conservative magazines covered the campaigns, if only to bow to pressure from the momentum swinging towards issues of women's rights and some were more enthusiastic than others.

The two magazines identified as conservative conduct books in chapter two, *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Ladies'*

Treasury, covered the slow move towards female emancipation but were muted in their response. In 1867 *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* published a report of Mill's attempt to bring suffrage to qualified widows and unmarried women, and although it was quite supportive of Mill's efforts it reveals that it was not against the final decision to throw it out (1867, 332). *The Ladies' Treasury* broadly supported the move towards respectable work for middle-class women, as I shall indicate later in this chapter, and gave a number of good reviews to feminist journals, but it was not quite so enthusiastic about the issue of women's suffrage.[13] The year after Mill's amendment had been defeated it published an article entitled 'Should Women Be Permitted To Vote?', which was reputedly written 'By a Woman' (1868, pp.171-174). It supports suffrage for what it terms 'money-getting women', who it claims are in a minority, but as far as the majority of women are concerned it is less positive.

> The weak of the sex are in the majority. Most women above the lower class seem born into the world to lean upon others; they repeat the thoughts of others, see with the eyes of others, and have no notion of self-responsibility. Are these the women to whom the franchise should be extended? Certainly not, and until a very different moral and mental education is bestowed on them from that now in practice, it is vain to look for women's progression in political, intellectual, and ethical matters. (p.174)

It goes on to argue that women are more impulsive, patient, charitable and unselfish, and thus more open to prejudice. Even widows and unmarried women ought to be more interested in womanly pursuits than 'chattering about politics' (p.174), as politics is a masculine pursuit. The conventional argument about women losing

their femininity by being tainted by politics is brought up along with some examples of women's disastrous political involvements during the French Revolution.

The liberal magazines such as *The Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion* and *The Lady's Own Paper* were, not surprisingly, more supportive of the move towards female suffrage when it was covered; though this support displays the often contradictory positions on the wider definitions of femininity found in this group of magazines. In 1867 *The Ladies' Cabinet* covered the suffrage debate closely and reprinted a supplement from *The Englishwoman's Review* which listed the petition presented to Parliament; it also gave a number of good reviews to the *Review* although it did criticise it for the heavy tone.[20] *The Lady's Own Paper*'s relatively short run coincides with the years of the suffrage debate, and as it was a topical paper it did cover the issues very well, and even included news of suffrage meetings. 1870 was a year in which the paper was particularly interested in suffrage, and Justin Mc Carthy's 'The Petticoat in the Politics of England' (1870, 20) uses a popular metonymy to discuss the possible impact of suffrage reform. 'Lady Amberley on the Claims of Women' (1870, 337)is a sympathetic report of a speech by the reformer Lady Amberley. Amberley dismisses the popular anti-female suffrage argument used by the previously discussed article in *The Ladies' Treasury*, that women only abused political power, and cites the example of Queen Victoria as a woman unsullied by public influence.

> She demanded whether the life of the Queen was devoid of the great interests of the political world, and

whether the public ceremonies in which she was constantly the central figure and the cultivation of mind she had to bring to bear upon her duties had made her one whit the less a real woman, a loving mother, a sorrowing wife, a ready sympathiser with all the sorrows brought under her notice. Her Majesty had ever been held up as the model of an Englishwoman, and the beauty of her domestic life had not been in the least impaired by the responsibilities of her great public life. (p.337)

This was of course a very powerful weapon in the reform cause, and as I argued in the second chapter, the symbol of Queen Victoria as a representation of the public, and as public property, was in fact a complex one.[21] Despite the assertive nature of the speech, the article reports that Lady Amberley apologised for taking a public forum as it may have been seen as unfeminine. Both this apology and the remark about Queen Victoria's beautiful domestic life look towards later in the chapter when I discuss the residual grip on the ideology of domesticity, which had a tenacious hold on even the most radical of reform magazines.

Towards the Filling of her Place / Challenging Definitions of Femininity

As I have already indicated, the debates about womens' entrance into political life turned around the assertion that women ought not to be denied access to the voice of the nation. As the epigraph to this

chapter states womens' voices were threatening to be heard, and the distinctive woman-centred culture from which these magazines emerged played a decisive and innovative role in the promotion of important re-definitions of the discourses of femininity and domesticity.[22] An article from *The Englishwoman's Journal* entitled 'A Question. Are Men Naturally Cleverer Than Women?' (1859, pp.333-336) sets out the terms of the debate around the traditional argument about women's intellectual inferiority. Men are superior to women, it argues, because they have more educational opportunities and more freedom.

> Let us not despair, but set to work with hearty good-will to break down whatever impediments to the mental improvement of women it may be in our power to remove, while we endeavour to train from the rising generation a body of reasoning, thinking, practical women who will be ready to take advantage of every favorable opening, and before whom those barriers of prejudice may disappear which hitherto have proved insurmountable. (p.336)

The promotion of equal opportunities for women is seen here as a labour, and certainly the task of challenging the popular definition of ideal femininity was an onerous one. The rational women may well have been envisaged by Mary Wollstonecraft nearly seventy years earlier, but Victorian feminists were well aware that the absorption of this into popular cultural understanding was not going to be an easy passage. Indeed popular women's magazines were often cited as playing a direct role in preventing women from gaining equal rights. One such instance can be found in *Woman's World* which, although shortlived as a publication, made a significant contribution to the debate on the woman question. In the regular feature 'Our Special

Butterfly', 'Butterfly' takes a number of opportunities to criticise the most popular women's magazine of the day, *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*.

> ...but I do dislike the mixture of dress and literature. Women's intellects should be written up, not lowered with such miserable, degrading rubbish as those correspondences and interchanges. There is the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, a popular and respectable publication; but I should like to light up the November bonfires with some of its pages. (1868, 45)

Features like 'Our Special Butterfly' use frivolity in an acerbic and polemical fashion in order to both critique and resist popular discourses of femininity.[23] The debate about female education and its importance to the public and political role of women becomes a key argument in the vocabulary of reform.[24] Education was covered in all types of magazine, with the exception of fashion magazines. *The Ladies' Edinburgh Magazine* gave it detailed coverage, and when education was covered in other liberal magazines it tended to be treated as a topical feature and was usually treated sympathetically.[25] Education, as a secular pursuit, was not considered a priority in the evangelical magazines and a piece on Emily Davies published in *The British Workwoman* (1873, 14) states their prime concerns very well.

> We care very little for the question as to the equality of the sexes; but we care a great deal for the principle that they should be equally well educated, and that their education should be adapted in kind, quality, tone, and extent to make them, in their different spheres, equally valuable members of the body politic. (p.14)

The piece is illustrated with a picture of Emily Davies and is presented as a character study, the rise of which is just appearing at this time as I indicated in chapter one. Eager to keep up with the modern changes in publishing style and technique *The British Workwoman*'s presentation was always immaculate, but its content was always slightly at odds with the slick exterior form. Coverage of educational reform in feminist journals was consistent with the tone of other features, but the broader theoretical issues about emancipation were privileged over it.

One of the most searching re-definitions of femininity to be found in any of the feminist magazines is Bessie Parkes' 'Types of Character' which appeared in *The Englishwoman's Review* (1866, pp.5-12). 'Types of Character' is a sensitively written piece which begins by looking at representations of women in literature and ends as a call for the celebration of the diversity of women; what Parkes seeks to do here is what Virginia Woolf was to go on to address in *A Room of One's Own*. Parkes complains that popular writers on Shakespeare are only really interested in the female characters in their relation to men, and even more searchingly she suggests that we do not forget the ordinary women such as the farmer's wife and the maidservant who are just as interesting as a figure like Lady Macbeth.

> To ignore the wealth of creation in any department of life, is as blind as if one saw nothing but oaks and elms in a forest, flint and chalk in a rock, or blue and green in a rainbow. The more we find to observe in external nature or in humanity, the more we find to rejoice in and to occupy ourselves about; and it is into the capacity of perceiving

> distinctions that all culture is ultimately to be resolved; whether such culture relate to the vibrations of music, the gradations of colour, the subleties of motion, or the infinite aspects and developements of the human being. (p.12)

Here we see Parkes asserting the value of difference and celebrating the contribution that diversity brings to culture; and by reviewing fictional representations of femininity alongside more general cultural representations, she makes the point that change must be effected through the recognition that different does not mean unequal. Indeed in *The Englishwoman's Journal* some years earlier Matilda Hayes, in 'Florence Nightingale and the English Soldier' (1858, pp.73-79), made a similar point.

> Strange, that the necessity for the male and female element should be recognised in the government of the family, but ignored in the government of the world, that universal and comprehensive family... Let the slow. logical intellect of the man be fertilised by the rapid intuitive perceptions of the woman; let the calculating male brain be tempered by the warm emotional faculties of the female; let his physical courage be refined and inspired by her moral courage, and the sterility which characterizes our social organisation may perchance give place to fruitfulness and plenty unknown to the dream of the Utopian. (p.76)

The reference to the relationship between the family and the state is, as I argued at the beginning of this section, one which originated in the work of Mary Wollstonecraft, and was one which had not really made much progress in the first half of the nineteenth-century. The natural images of fertility and sterility in the call for a kind of androgyny which will herald a new society are typical

of a critique which stresses the organic nature of change as I will indicate later in the chapter.

Many feminist contributors and editors made the connection between the rights of women in their own contemporary culture and in other cultures, and the rights of either other races or other social classes. In an editorial address in *Woman's World* the editor states that,

> The Chinese women are to have their feet released, by a late imperial decree; and I hope the time will come when our women will have their minds released from the degradation they are now subjected to. (1868, 29)

In 'Women and Politics', this time in *The Englishwoman's Journal* (1863, pp.1-6), the writer stresses the connection that can be made between different types of oppressed groups, namely negroes, ragged school children and itinerant shoe cleaners, who are seen as inferior because they are denied education and independence.

> Why should we not apply the same treatment to ourselves, and because our minds are weak, place a high endeavour before them and perhaps find out that we have powers which neither we nor others dared to hope were our portion? As surely as the negro slave rouses to new action when the fetters fall from his limbs, as surely as the untaught children in our own land behold another world in their every-day existence when knowledge shines out of their eyes, so surely shall we behold a new glory in our beginning when we bend every energy we possess to grappling with those large schemes of thought and enterprise which at once exalt and lay low the soul, but in which men are too apt to rejoice alone. (p.2)

The evangelical imagery towards the end of the piece indicates the missionary nature of their task and gives legitimacy to the cause which is being advocated. The editor goes on to stress that the advances made by women need not threaten men and certainly need not de-feminize women.

> But should we not spoil ourselves - should we not make our own minds rough and masculine by making them so large and strong? That is the same sort of question which Chinese women put, as they look down smilingly upon their little feet. But development increases natural tendencies, it does not alter nor destroy them. And a little mind is a more serious evil than a little foot. (pp.2-3)

In both this extract and the one from *Woman's World* the argument for women's education and political involvement is made through cross-cultural comparison. Although the above extract holds Chinese women culpable for their social position,it maintains that women will not lose their distinctive qualities through the emancipation of the mind. The participation by women in political life, as the title of the editorial 'Women and Politics' suggests, would enrich society by using female intellect instead of wasting it on domestic concerns only.[26]

A common feature of all the radical posturing found in these journals, and indeed in the piece above, is the assertion that women would not be de-feminized by political and economic independence. An article in *The Ladies' Edinburgh Magazine* made an interesting contribution to this debate in an article entitled 'Men's Rights' (1878, pp.559-562). It is presented as a dialogue between a Member

of Parliament, Mrs Tredemdown and her husband, as she is leaving for the House of Commons. It is a very humorous sketch of complete role reversal, with Mrs Tredemdown refusing to hold the baby in case its head falls off, and becoming more and more impatient about the arrival of her friends Mrs. Henpecker and Lady Snapemup. In another context this piece would be seen as a bitter satire on the moves for female emancipation, and indeed this was certainly the case in the conservative press where satirical cartoons and articles on the subject regularly appeared. It is only because *The Ladies' Edinburgh Magazine* was so consistently pro-women's emancipation that we can read this piece in the spirit that it was written, as a humorous tongue in cheek play on conservative fears about the 'new woman'. Indeed to parody what had become a popular attack on the woman question is, in this example, an interesting instance of self-conscious articulation and parody of the exaggerated fear of change.[27]

Historians have long argued that Victorian feminists had to compromise a little in their claims, and that the main point of compromise was on denial of the loss of femininity.[28] The article 'Women and Politics' (*The Englishwoman's Journal* 1863, pp.1-6), although in many ways strident in tone, does concede that women need not lose their 'sweet voices', 'bright eyes' and 'genial smiles' through independent thought and action. Through the language of compromise and rationality, even feminist journals construct a model of woman that is still in some ways fetishized and reduced to the level of the body. I argued earlier that fashion,and notably

fashionable body shapes were a feature of all commercial women's magazines. Not surprisingly feminist journals tended to ignore fashion altogether; not only because as we have seen they were not aiming to be popular, but also because (and of course the link is causal) they were often opposed to the notion of the fashionable female body for reasons of health and of emancipation.[29] Bessie Parkes was a writer who was particularly vocal on the question of female dress and health, and one of her early articles on this subject 'Physical Training of Females' appeared in *The Waverley Journal* (1856, pp.104-105). It argues for the cessation of corset wearing in order for women to be tall, energetic and strong, as opposed to the 'ill-expanded corporeal frames' of Pre-Raphaelite women (p.105). A later piece 'Women's Dress in Relation to Health' published in *The Alexandra Magazine* (1864, pp.225-232) develops the idea that fashion prevents women from taking their rightful place in society, as they are debilitated by the physical constrictions placed upon them by restrictive clothing. It lists precise points in the argument against fashion; namely the wearing of tight corsets, heavy clothing, wide hoops and highly flammable clothing, and like most other articles on fashion is decidedly unplayful in approach. Compared to the regulation of the fashionable female body seen in the first chapter, the feminist journals urged women to free themselves of restrictive clothing and conservative attitudes towards female health by providing a critique of the connection between fashion and female subordination. Another piece 'The English Gentlewoman' (*The Alexandra Magazine* 1864, pp.81-89) laments womens' attempts '... to conceal their littleness.' and looks forward to

'The steady progress she is making at present, towards the filling of her place, gives us perfect confidence in the calculation that she will exercise great force in the future of our community.' (p.88). The notion of woman 'filling her place' in order to take her place is in direct contrast to the iconic fashionable woman who seeks to make herself invisible through the regulation of her body.[30]

In order for women to take their place in society then they needed to be independent,and in order to be independent they needed to work. In the following two sections I will look at the feminist press's attitude to work, both middle-class and working-class women's work, and I will examine the difference between the two. As the previous chapters have indicated, work was a fraught concept in relation to women, through its relationship to the ideology of separate spheres, and more specifically through the dichotomy between public and private. In the other groups of magazines I have looked at work, both in relation to middle-class women and the work of running the home, and in relation to working-class women when it means moving into the public sphere, which potentially threatens the maintenance of the ideology of domesticity. I did not look at the developing interest in the emergence of respectable middle-class women's work, and it is my aim in the first half of this section to consider the meaning of the term work, as conceptualised in both types of magazine. Through this comparison I will consider any differences in approach and will interrogate the historical

specificity of the emergent re-definition of woman to be found in these very different publications.

Respectable Work / Work and Independence in Popular Magazines

The question of middle-class women's work arose as a result of the high numbers of 'surplus women', women who did not marry and thus were not guaranteed a secure dependent life. However, the perceived problem was not in fact a new one as the percentage of unmarried women was lower in the nineteenth-century than it had been in previous centuries (Branca 1975). It may well be that the importance attributed to single women then, was more to do with differing expectations than demographic change. Maria Rye, a founding member of the Langham Place Circle also founded the Female Emigration Society in an attempt to provide financial independence abroad for women of the middle and working-classes who could not find suitable work at home.[31] It is important to note that the call for wider opportunities for middle-class women's work was related entirely (in a popular sense that is) to unmarried women and widows, and where it related to married women, it was only deemed as acceptable in extreme cases of hardship.[32]

In popular women's magazines the question of work for middle-class women was discussed, but in both liberal and conservative examples it was stressed that it was acceptable only for single women. As

early as the fifties the issue was being covered, although for reasons already discussed the debate proliferated around the late sixties and early seventies. In a very dogmatic piece from *The Ladies' Cabinet* entitled 'Women As They Are, And Might Be.' (1857, pp.240-246), the writer acknowledges the fact that women may need to work, and if that is the case then they should '... cease talking of imaginary difficulties, which no one is putting in your way; and in Heaven's name go and *do*' (p.246). It asserts that women are themselves to blame for imagining that men wish to impede their progress and that the responsibility lies with themselves alone. Nevertheless, despite the call to pragmatism it does conclude rather predictably that women can be of more use at home than anywhere else. A conservative competitor, *The Ladies' Treasury* ran a number of articles devoted to these issues in the sixties when the debate had become a popular one; this culminated in the insertion of a weekly column devoted to employment advertisements.[33] Conservative weeklies like *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and its sister paper *The Young Englishwoman* did not take up the cause of the single woman with the same commitment as the liberal publications, but they did cover the debate occasionally and when they did so tended to focus on the jobs which were becoming accepted as respectable such as writing, engraving, photography, telegraphy and clerical work. Some popular magazines occasionally questioned the unfair status given to women's work, as a piece in *The Lady's Own Paper* entitled 'The Omnipotence of Labour; Or, Encouragement For Ladies Who Work. By One of Themselves' (1870, 64) laments.

> Labour has made England what she is both physically and socially; it has changed her climate, drained her lands, and turned her swampy fens into fields of waving, golden grain... Labour is the magic wand that catches the sunbeam, and fixes the solar rays on paper; it has annihilated distance and time, and sends our thoughts with the velocity of lightning round the globe.
>
> If, then, labour is so omnipotent and grand, is it more honourable for men to be workers than women? Why should we, in the numerical sense the "better half" of the inhabitants of the world, be doomed to a life of either inaction or servitude? (p.64)

The sense of national pride through labour is interesting, especially when the reader is reminded that half of the population are denied proper access to this prestigious state. The writer quickly reminds us though that she is not referring to what she terms 'physical labour'. Respectable work is always differentiated from physical labour, which is seen as totally unfit for middle-class women in magazines of all political persuasions. Labour is constructed both here and elsewhere as being synonymous with masculinity and strength, whereas work is a word fast becoming more easily and readily associated with women; although as I have illustrated, it is still not a word used without controversy in relation to women. The writer here concedes to the popular truism that women are physically inferior to men and argues that if women are to succeed 'there must be no trifling with the work' (p.64).

In an unusually strident piece for a popular magazine 'Employment For Females' in *The Ladies'* (1872, 14) the writer asserts that,

> Give a man no more muscular training or exercise than a woman commonly has and we believe his muscular power would not be greater than the woman's is....
> ... our object not being to advocate the adoption of

> unfeminine employments, but merely to show that the weakness of women, which is so often exaggerated in arguments tending to exclude them from most of those trades and professions which are now exclusively filled by men, is rather a matter of physical education and training than natural debility. (p.14)

This was not an argument which was common in this type of publication, but *The Ladies* went on to demonstrate its commitment to the issues surrounding women's work by publishing a lead article on The Society for the Promotion of the Employment of Women, organised by the feminist reformers of the Langham Place Circle, a few issues later (1872, 169).[34] In this article the danger of unchannelled or unproductive leisure is hinted at.

> Steady application to any task for an hour is considered in too many circles "a horrid bore" and is understood to be lady-like and becoming to act upon that consideration in reference to almost anything. This failing is the ruin of thousands of men, whose lack of success seems mysterious - who somehow contrive to drift from the cosy drawing room into the bleak and homeless street. People wonder how it is that such men, though well-known to be what is called clever, never get on. Girls, who of all things make a merit of doing nothing when necessity does not compel them, if they should suffer a reverse of fortune, are the precise counterparts of those men. (p.169)

It is worth noting how the parameters of the debate concerning leisure shift in the argument for the profitable use of time, as we shall see even more clearly in the next section of this chapter. In the quotation above there is a concern about the dangerous aspect of unproductive time, and this is often hinted about in writing advocating the beneficial aspects of respectable middle-class work alongside its often acutely necessary existence. In a similar

article on female photographic artists in *The Ladies' Treasury* (1864, pp.73-76) the same fear is voiced.

> This employment is especially adapted for women, though it has been said that "the business is unhealthy, from the exhalation from the chemicals; and the staining of the silver from the nitrate of silver is a great drawback to photography ever becoming a women's work." This is a great mistake; better to stain the fingers to an ebon hue than to stain the soul with the slightest smirch. (p.76)

The new respectable professions for single middle-class women were, as indicated earlier, light semi-skilled trades such as engraving, printing and telegraphy. The most established and by now infamous profession was that of the governess, which was of little interest to the popular women's magazines. It seems they were more interested in the rising new professions than one which had caused so much controversy in the past, particularly in fiction; however, as I stated earlier, even the features on work were most certainly not the most prominent features of their fare.

Writing was a profession for women which was acknowledged quite frequently by popular magazines, and an example from *The Ladies' Cabinet* illustrates the general trend very well. Entitled 'American Female Authorship'(1854, pp.41-44) by Alice Neal, it is true to its signature in that Alice Neal was a successful popular American author, but it is less true to its title in that it is a general piece on women's writing rather than an account of an American writing tradition. Commenting on the contemporary popularity of writing it states,

> But just now the needle seems to be for the first time threatened by a powerful rival; the work-box is replaced by the desk, and the portfolio has usurped the corner sacred to the tambour-frame. In other words, authorship is the mania of our ladies; and an ambition for literary distinction becomes even in childhood the *grande passion*. (p.41)

It also goes on to affirm that writing is no longer a social stigma for women and one of its advantages is that for those whose '... well cultivated minds make them shrink from actual contact with business-life' (p.43) it can provide a living from the sanctity of home. The relationship between women writers and home has been well documented in many studies, but what does remain to be stated here is that we can find in this article the common link being made between domesticity and writing.[35]

> The time is gone past when literary tastes or pursuits are admitted as a stigma upon the social relation of any woman. That she can write an able review, is no longer considered an excuse for a neglected household; and there is nothing inconsistent in a mind that can fashion a dainty lyric, and trim a becoming cap. Let the needle and the pen lie side by side - and they will not wrangle; for the one induces long, pleasant reveries, and the other can give them expression. (p.43)

Here we can see writing being placed on a natural continuum with proper domestic notions of womanhood which gives it an appropriate cultural space from which to operate (Michie 1989, 63); this is from within the household as the writer of the piece makes clear. It is then, a piece which seeks cultural legitimacy for the profession, whilst simultaneously offering sound advice on writing style and technique. It concludes by encouraging would-be writers to try their luck, but also offers a friendly warning not to fear disappointment.

Another very new profession for women was that of the doctor, which was often met with ridicule in the popular press. The female doctor, like the female factory worker, was seen as an invader of an ostensibly male workplace, and the only legitimate way to practice was to tend to women and children only.[36] *The Lady's Own Paper* (1866, 1) published a lead feature on the American medic Dr. Mary Walker which showed Dr. Walker dressed in the, by then slightly infamous pantaloons. It ends by praising her for steadfastly choosing the short dress in the face of hostility and prejudice. The prejudice facing Dr. Walker and other 'strong minded-minded women of America.' can be seen in 'The Englishwoman's Conversazione' of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (1867, pp.109-112) when the editor comments on her inappropriate clothing and celebrates the fact that English women are content to be 'wooed and won' (p.109).[37]

Just Half the Race / Work and Independence in Feminist Journals

In order to challenge their subordination Victorian feminists had to challenge existing definitions of womanhood, therefore the notion of the independent woman was constructed through feminist journals as one who ought to have political and financial independence. The plight of the single woman was one which the reformers rallied to, no more so than through the radical re-definition of woman as capable of working and maintaining her femininity.[38] Josephine

Butler's response to this was one which could be consistently found in reform journals; writing of conservatives on the woman question she states.

> They argue in favour of all which is likely to make women better mothers, or better companions for men, but they seem incapable of judging of a woman as a human being by herself, and superstitiously afraid of anything which might strengthen her to stand alone, prepared, singlehanded, to serve her God and her country. .... Every good quality, every virtue which we regard as distinctively feminine, will under conditions of greater freedom develop more freely, like plants brought out into the light from a cellar in which they languished, dwarfed and blanched, without sun or air.
> (*Woman's World* 1868, p.150-151)

Reform journals, as mouthpieces for this kind of view were consistently assertive in the call for independence, one which Butler asserts here as single minded autonomy. The metaphor of woman as a plant in need of light is a common one, and one which was used in support of an organic view of culture which consistently called on an omnipotent God for legitimacy as we can see from the quotation above. Indeed, in the editorial address 'The Use of a Special Periodical' in *The Alexandra Magazine* (1864, pp.257-263) Bessie Parkes states that a journal ought '... to be *organic*; not a mere machine...' (p.259).

The popular magazines as I have argued, made some contribution to the debate on women's work and on the dissemination of information about it for their readership; but a number of the reform magazines differed in that they were in some instances actually acting as pressure groups for particular causes, in this case female

independence through economic and political participation. *The Englishwoman's Review* was one such publication, and the first article of the first issue was written by the editor Jessie Boucherett and titled significantly 'The Work We Have To Do' (1866, pp.1-5). Here Boucherett sets out the aim of the journal which is to ameliorate the position of women in society.

> There is a prevalent impression, that the evils which press so heavily on our female working population arise from obscure causes, inseparably connected with an advanced state of civilization, causes which can hardly be understood, and which it is impossible to remove.
>
> One of the objects of this Review will be, to show that this is a mistaken view, and to set forth as clearly as the powers of the writers permit, that these evils are distinctly traceable to causes which only require study to be understood, and which it is by no means impossible to remove. (p.1)

The promise to provide a critique of contemporary culture and to produce answers to particular problems becomes a major concern in *The Englishwoman's Review*, and in this sense the first editorial words stay true to their promise. Reform journals like the above made the task of ameliorating women's position their 'work', thus taking the word both literally and figuratively. In a long series of articles entitled 'Letters to Women on Money Earning' which appeared in *The Alexandra Magazine*, the writer makes the very valid point that women do actually participate in work, even in the home and even if it is unacknowledged as such.[39] It says that women get confused about the difference between business and work, and although they are often uneasy with the former, they actually know a great deal about the latter.

> Work! aye, indeed, their very idleness is work! Every woman is always at work, after her fashion - sewing - cooking - teaching - nursing the sick - feeding the hungry, etc., etc., - work of all sorts employ them - but how much of this is business? (1864, 121)

The writer here is concerned to promote women's knowledge of business as a means to enhancing their money earning potential in a very practical and forthright manner; but the critique of woman's contribution from within the home as one of work is extremely interesting when compared to the anxiety about housework in popular and evangelical magazines described in chapter two.

As far as the recommendation of specific professions was concerned they were the same as those indicated in popular magazines, such as printing, telegraphy, photography, writing, and teaching.[49] If work for middle-class women was to be accepted, it had to maintain pre-eminently class position and class respectability. An explicit indicator of this is through the register of employment kept by Bessie Parkes and Barbara Bodichon under the auspices of *The Englishwoman's Journal*, where two different groups were identified as needing the assistance of a register. They were middle-class women generally, and 'ladies' from the upper middle-class who had to be very careful not to lose caste through inappropriate choice of profession.

The profession of the governess was one which excited the most interest and controversy in feminist journals. Again the reason for this is again connected to class interest, in that it is no surprise

that journals written by radical middle class women for other middle-class women were primarily concerned with issues which directly affected them.[41] The plight of the governess was certainly a preoccupation in fictional work and *The Englishwoman's Journal* was one periodical which took up the cause with great rigour and energy. In an early article 'The Profession of the Teacher' (1858, pp.1-13), it states that everyone from the middle-class has had contact with a governess, and that it is a profession which provides '... a platform on which middle and upper classes meet, the one struggling up, the other drifting down.' (p.1). It acknowledges the fact that many women will not consider some of the new semi-skilled professions because they are beneath them socially and points out the erroneous nature of this view.

> The arts, literature, and tuition might be safely left to provide for the livelihood of *clever* women, if *sensible* women would but turn their sense to its many legitimate spheres of action. But women will not manage washing and sewing machines, work electric telegraphs, keep tradesmen's books, or set up shops, so long as they think, and so long as society enforces the idea, that by so doing they forfeit caste and are rendered unfit to associate with "ladies," though their fathers, brothers, and prospective husbands may each and all be engaged in some form of business. (p.11)

Again we see the concern over the association with business which was covered in the preceding quotation. The solution to possible social ostracism offered by the writer of this piece is one which demonstrates a good deal of fighting spirit.

> And if the worst came to the worst, and one were not asked out to tea - why then one might stay at home by the fire of one's own earning, inside one's own door, and snugly locked up by one's own key, teaching

> the widow's son to read, and the motherless bairn to sew, or holding comfortable converse with Dickens and Thackeray, Tennyson and Mrs. Browning, or some of those elder spirits among "the just made perfect" who have left us records of earnest lives and holy deaths, as a compensation for living people whom we have not met because they would not meet us, - because we kept a shop! (pp. 11-12)

The idea of comfort derived from financial and independence and self reliance is a radical one, especially for the fifties, and it is from examples like this that one can argue that the reform journals set the pace for social change. To challenge social perceptions and even prejudices, such as class expectation, was a bold move and reform journals worked very hard indeed to impress readers that loss of caste was not such a terrible fate. 'The Governess Question' (*The Englishwoman's Journal* 1860, pp. 163-170) has this to say on the question of supposed gentility.

> We believe that some confused notion of *gentility* (a very useful word, though now proscribed) has much to do with this inhuman mania, by which their daughters' future existence is virtually blighted. Whatever *gentility* may once have attached to the profession of governess has long since vanished, and it is impossible to name any occupation, not positively disreputable, which confers so little respectability, - respectability in the worldly sense.... Once more we strenuously entreat parents not to doom their daughters to the wretched life of governesses. Give them a trade. Do not be led away by insane ideas of silly pride. Continued uprightness will ennoble their station; the governess, however well conducted, remains a governess; may starve *genteelly*, and sink into her grave friendless and alone. (p. 163, p. 170)

There is an engagement here with the need to recognise that aspiration and need are not the same, and that the reality of the spurious nature of respectable appearances means that many young

women suffer. Part of the problem for middle-class families was that the daughter who had been brought up to ornament her father's drawing room had, as a result of the family's misfortune, to sell herself to another family in order to display their prestige (Delamont 1978). Moreover, the governess guaranteed the maintenance of conspicuous consumption for her employer, whilst also representing the fall in status of her own family. Feminist reformers recognised the tensions, but were interested in the pragmatic issues surrounding female employment, and thus consistently stressed the need to improve the opportunities for middle-class women seeking work and to free them from restrictive social codes concerning so called 'respectability'.

A profession very far removed from that of the governess was the actress, and it was one which did not excite interest from women's magazines generally for rather obvious reasons. As I argued in chapter one, actresses were interesting subjects for the new type of journalism found in some popular magazines, but the job was never suggested as being suitable for ordinary women. It was not a concern of feminist journals either, although *The English Woman's Journal* did publish an article on the subject. 'A Few Words About Actresses and the Profession of the Stage' ([1859, pp.386-398) deals with the practical details of the professional life of the actress, and in this respect is very bold, it even includes the address of an acting agency for any interested readers. It begins by stridently dispensing with popular prejudice and misapprehension about the profession.

> The life of an Actress is to the world at large a curious *terra incognita*, peopled by forbidding phantoms of evil, or seductive visions of pleasure and success; as a gifted woman's devotion to art, or the honest and laborious means by which she earns her bread, the vocation of the actress is understood by few. (p.385)

It appeals to the reader to consider the honest hard-working actresses who are a credit to their craft and to '... strip away from their idea of the actress for awhile, both the soiled drapings of vice and the glittering but worthless stage tinsel that may very possibly hang about it.' (p.387). Matilda Mary Hays, the co-editor of the journal, was an actress and a friend of the celebrated Charlotte Cushman, and therefore had an interest in the promotion of her craft and in the dissemination of positive information about it (Rendall 1985). An article of this type, although not a common occurence in the reform journals, does exhibit the challenge offered by feminists to the popular constructions of ideal femininity. However, in the next and final section of this chapter I will consider just how class entrenched the discourse of radicalism was.

Work and Domesticity
Representations of the Working Woman Outside the Home

In the last section I looked at representations of middle-class work in popular and feminist journals. On reading the articles on work and the working-class woman, it seems that the concept work means

something slightly different in relation to the working-class woman, and a regular series run in the shortlived weekly *Woman* typifies the distinction well. It was entitled 'Labour, Bodily' and 'Labour, Mental' and working-class women's work was covered in the former and middle-class women's work in the latter. Bodily labour was associated with lack of regulation, even disruption as I illustrated in the last chapter, and mental labour was becoming seen as regulated and controlled. Also, in connection with this, I have found that work and domesticity are two mutually exclusive terms, because they are bound up in such a complex way. I will argue that as the ideology of domesticity, as seen in all the other magazines, was a prescriptive model for the middle-class and targeted as an ideal for the working-class, so too was it conceptualised in reform journals as one structured around both gender and class. The aim of this last section then is to explore what role the ideology of domesticity plays in reform magazines, and to interrogate its presence as either one of active critique, or of residual influence.

Representations of working-class women appear in reform journals too, and like those found in the other types of magazines, they cluster around the concept of domesticity. They are represented either as working outside the home and threatening the ideology of domesticity, or working inside someone else's home as a servant, thus maintaining the ideology of domesticity for the middle-class. This is of course consistent with the representations that we have seen so far, but with one departure, when they are seen working

outside the home they not only threaten the ideology of domesticity, but more importantly in this context, the possibilities of work for middle-class women. An article entitled 'Cheap Clothing' (*The Alexandra Magazine* 1865, pp.1-9) exemplifies this very well. Beginning as a piece written in support of overworked and underpaid needlewomen, it appeals to its middle-class readers to think very hard about their demands for cheap, fashionable, and highly worked clothing, and the effect that this has on those women who make the clothes.[42] It soon begins to reveal however that it has another motive.

> Hood's immortal "Song of the Shirt" is no overdrawn picture,, but a graphic description of the life of thousands of these unfortunate creatures. I would, in fact, be impossible, in a few pages, to give our readers an adequate idea of the length and breadth of the human misery endured by this class, composed of a sex which, from their very dependence and weakness, calls for our peculiar sympathy and protection. (p.3)

Despite the concern for the exploitation of 'these unfortunate creatures', the writer goes on to lament the fact that, despite the possibilities of other less demanding jobs which would not detract from their femininity, they still seem to prefer these low-paid low-status jobs. The reason for this is that they prefer the freedom which the lifestyle brings them.

> The evening amusement London offers, in the low theatres and dancing rooms, which are open at a few pence, are with many the attraction. At these place they spend their wages and there, alas! many lose their characters, and rapidly descend the scale of misery and crime, until they end in the Union and the Refuge .... Blind to their own interests of future provision, as soon as the younger portion of the female sex arrive at the ages of fourteen or so, they rush

> in crowds to flower-making, or dressmaking, machine-work, anything that will give them liberty of action and power to indulge in the cheap, smart dress, which in these days is sold so cheap that it is a lure in itself on the path of vanity and ruin. (pp.8-9)

'Cheap Clothing' begins with the best of intentions but ends as a protectionist tract which would not have been out of place in an evangelical magazine. This article is not an isolated example though, and in 'A Workwoman's Holiday Thoughts' (*The Alexandra Magazine* 1865, pp.432-36) there is a similar stance.[43] Written by a 'workwoman' it argues for the keeping of the sabbath holiday and for an appreciation of the merits of rest. Using the Biblical image of the lily it states.

> Lilies do not "toil", to accumulate substance and become great trees, nor "spin", in order to extend their fibres through the earth, and encompass wide possessions. They simply flourish in their own true field; clothed in the raiment of their order, they bloom and vanish at their appointed time.... We want to seem "well off", and we "toil and spin" for it. Workwomen wish to look like ladies, and desire to keep up an appearance beyond their means; this effectually hinders them from having a holiday, gives them no time to "consider the lillies", and keeps them, and ever, "toiling and spinning" in the unhappy circle addressed as "Ye of little faith!". (p.435)

The metaphor of the plant is seen again here to signify woman who develops organically when left in her natural state; it is seen as decidedly unnatural to work to accumulate money to buy more possessions, which may blur class status and appropriate class expectation. The working-class woman is called on to 'regulate' her time better so as not to give '... too strong an impulse to the energies of men'. The working woman threatens the maintenance of the

ideology of domesticity by being susceptible to those masculine impulses of accumulation of capital and business, which the discourse of reform works so hard to encourage in the fledgling middle-class women's workforce. But she is also seen as working in order to buy clothes, which as I argued in the last chapter, made women particularly vulnerable to the call of the streets.

In 'The Temperance Movement and Working Women' in *The Englishwoman's Journal* (1863, pp176-180), the writer makes the popular argument that work is for single women and that the Society for the Employment of Women and the temperance movement have a common aim, which is to encourage the removal of married working-class women from the labour market in order to improve the lifestyle of the working-class and help middle-class women enter the workforce in their place.

> Thus, those who are interested in the Temperance cause and the home-comfort of the poor, ought to look with a friendly eye on the Movement for the Employment of Women. The more the subject is studied, the more clearly it will be perceived that the two movements are kindred ones, and that both are working together for the same object - the improvement of the working classes, especially the condition of the female portion. (p.180)

What is emerging so far from these examples is the sense that reformers had a rather strict sense of class allegiance which tended to obstruct explicit and unconditional gender alliance. Again and again we find that working-class women are seen as separate from middle-class women in terms of both needs and perceptions. This is very apparent in articles on charity, where the working-class and most notably working-class women are seen as in need of protection

and regulation; very rarely are they seen as equals engaged in a similar battle against prejudice and rigid social expectations. A review of a book on the poor in *The Alexandra Magazine* (1864, pp.42-3) illustrates my point very well.

> It is a remarkable characteristic of the present day, that the poor are under most especial notice... The author records a few of their traits that are intensely interesting; and she gives the poor credit for much that people rarely think of ascribing to them. Mrs Sewell sees the worth, and the beauty, of poverty... How very seldom the benefit of being poor is recognized!... "Thy Poor Brother" is worthy to become the Englishwoman's *vade mecum*. (pp.42-43)

The Englishwoman of the reform journals is one defined by her class; she may be a more independent, better educated and self-reliant Englishwoman and she is to be differentiated from her lower-class sister.[44] The voyeurism endemic in the quotation above marks out the poor as other to the middle-class, and in this instance the poor are idealised and even glorified by their want.[45]

Many of the articles on the poor were documentary accounts of trips into the city slums which brought the unknown world of the working-class into the middle-class home, similar to the way that contemporary television documentaries take the viewer into uncharted places and countries. A particularly good example is from *The Victoria Magazine* and is entitled 'A Poor Woman's Work' (1864, p.396-99). It is about a Parochial Mission Woman who is a paid worker who visits the slums '- *to help the poor to help themselves*' (p.397). It lists some of the slums from the East End of London and

tells of the crimes and acts of depravity committed there, all of which is the result of '... the tainted atmosphere, moral and physical, which surround the great mass of the London poor' (p.396) where people die like beasts. The Parochial Mission Woman is a poor and shabby working-class woman who is '... superior to her class in habits of order and cleanliness' (p.397) and is employed to go into the slums to educate her peers on thrift and self-help. The writer goes on to admit that it would be inappropriate in the present context to dwell too much on the religious nature of the Mission woman's work, but feels it important to mention her role and to inform the readers of the address of the organisation that promotes the work of the Parochial Mission. In one of *Woman*'s 'Labour, Bodily articles (1872, pp.179-180) 'Working Women in Lancashire', the narrator tells the story of his journey into a cotton mill, and like an anthropologist, he records the sight of the women working.

> The warmth of the work-rooms influences them also in other ways; it acts upon their growth as a hot-bed upon flowers, bringing the girls to maturity rather early. Hence, results, too, that the women often fall off in appearance when they ought to be in the prime of life. They may remain physically strong; but, like Indian woman, they lose something of their comeliness. (p.179)

The working woman, although described sympathetically in this article is objectified, but not for a male gaze but for a female one, which is marked as subject and self as opposed to object and other by her class.[46] That factory girls reputedly reach puberty very early, confirms the representations illustrated in the last

chapter, and presumably their sexual maturity was one of the main reasons for their precariously close relationship to the prostitute.

Work and Domesticity
Representations of the Working Woman in the Home

In chapter two I looked at the ideology of domesticity and how it functioned in popular and evangelical magazines. In this section I would like to explore how this ideology operates in reform journals, and to consider the relationship between radicalism and the essentially conservative stance of domesticity. As I stated earlier, the names of these journals are significant, they are either named after the gender they are addressed to, or in the case of *The Victoria Magazine*, named after the monarch who represents the epitome of domestic respectability. In both cases though the construction of the desirable Englishwoman revolves around her status as middle-class and respectable, and to be respectable she must be middle-class; therefore, her radicalism lies in her potential to be intellectually and financially independent, rather than through any political allegiance with women of the working-class.

Reform journals do not express a commitment to the cult of the mother and the cult of the girl in the same way that the other types of magazine do. The cult of the girl is completely absent; these publications are much more interested in women taking their rights

and responsiblities as adults, than in the cultivation of girls into womanhood. The cult of the mother is addressed, but not actually as a cult, but rather as an unequivocal commitment to motherhood as a state which is desirable for women.[47] It is in fact, in many ways the ideal, but women who do not marry are not seen as 'old maids' and socially redundant, but rather as legitimate contributors to cultural life.[48] They do however express a commitment to the ethos of domesticity, and the only lead article, entitled 'Domestic Life', on the subject to be found in *The English Woman's Journal* (1858, pp.74-81), expresses the commitment very well.

> We know, and freely confess, that an intimate connection must exist, both for men and women, between the outward conditions of social life, and the inward conditions of social life, and the inward conditions of the home. But as they are obviously not the same, so is this important distinction to be observed between them, that while the <u>first</u> set of conditions can be largely affected by external means - by changes in the law, and revolutions in public opinion, - the <u>last</u> set of conditions are too deeply rooted, and of too delicate a complexion, to be much affected by any such coarse implements of reform. To God and His Providential discipline, to the conscience of parents, and to the labors of the clergyman and the minister can we, it seems to us, alone look for the growth of true and holy principles of domestic life. (pp.74-75)

It goes on to proclaim that a publication like *The English Woman's Journal* would be rash to attempt to preach on the 'most delicate chords of human existence'. They state that their 'work' is practical and has no place tampering with a subject which is the Church's business to administer and oversee. The first article to appear in *The Women's Advocate* (1874, pp.2-3), a short-lived early suffrage journal, had this to say on the subject.

> They do not despise their home duties; on the contrary, they wish to become more capable wives and mothers than their stunted education has ever yet permitted them to be; but none the less they do desire to take an earnest part in the stirring movements which are going on around them. (p.2)

Written by the editor F.J. Haslam on behalf of women, we find echoed here something which women also said of themselves as the preceding quotation confirms. No matter how radical these journals were in terms of marking out new parameters for women's social and economic activity,they left unchallenged and intact the ideology of domesticity. It is almost as if they made the domestic sphere an ahistorical sphere which was completely separate from the political campaign work to which they were all so deeply committed. The piece from *The Women's Advocate* acknowledges this as almost a contradiction in terms by needing to state that despite commitment to the domestic, women still want to participate in the world around them.

Another area in which the reform journals were united was in the commitment to the regulation of the household economy,and most notably through the regulation of servants. Most working women were employed in domestic service,and in these publications we find a concern with the treatment of servants by both the writers of, and contributors to reform journals, who responded from a middle-class position. It is clear that domestic duty was the forum where women of both classes met, both literally and figuratively; it was the concern of both sets of women, as women, but from the middle-class perspective the question of control, regulation and responsibility

were always paramount. In a general sense reform journals were as concerned about the conditions of servants as the popular magazines were, but whereas popular magazines gave advice about ethical treatment of domestic staff, reform magazines were interested in issues about formal training and fair pay and conditions,as well as in appropriate control of and responsibility for their staff. They all saw domestic service as a viable employment opportunity for lower-class women,and were genuinely concerned to alleviate poor conditions.[43] The response was of course double-edged,as there were also many articles on household management for the 'liberal' middle class housewife which sometimes clashed with the sympathetic voice of reform. 'The Servant Question' which caused so much anxiety for popular magazines also demonstrated itself as a cause for concern in these publications too.

In *The Alexandra Magazine*'s short run it showed itself to be particularly interested in the 'servant question', and in one particular article entitled 'Domestic Service' (1865, pp.499-506), it aims to deal with the problem as it was one which affected every middle-class household. It reports on a public meeting called to deal with abuses in the system of domestic management in order to bring together the two disaffected groups.

> The meeting had a grave and honourable purpose. It proposed to look in the face the difficulty of associating two persons mutually dependent, and yet stangely discordant.... for it cannot be denied that these matters of daily domestic life, affect not only individual interests, but the well-being of the community at large. (p.499, p.501)

For this woman-centred discourse it is important for social harmony that mutuality exists between different social groups, and it is very important for the discourse of reform that domestic issues are brought into a public forum. Moreover, as already seen in other representations of working-class women, domestic servants are seen as being in need of protection. The continuous change of workplace which so many servants sought, is seen not only as inconvenient to the employer, but also as an action which puts the woman at risk morally. This article refers euphemistically to the 'UNFORTUNATE CLASS OF FEMALES' (p.505) who, as a result of this instability, end their days in refuges and similar institutions. *The Alexandra Magazine* ran a regular series of 'Notices of Benevolent Institutions' which reported on the progress of institutions such as 'The London Society for the Protection of Young Females', 'The Friendless Home' and 'The Penitents Home'.[50] The first is praised for its good work in training a new generation of servant girls.

> We want another, a different kind of servant: we want an *humble* servant. Now, it is not our wish to depress, or keep down any women, or make abject menials of any creatures, but we are anxious to have women about us who like being servants, who feel happy in our houses, and to whom our service is preferment, not degradation. (1864, 186)

Servants were seen as deserving fair wages and fair treatment, but were always seen as separate from their employers in terms of class status and expectation. A lead article in *The Woman's Gazette* 'Maids versus Mistresses' (1878, pp.147-148) had this to say on the matter.

> It is astonishing that people's selfishness and care for their own interest do not teach them, if they are

> alive to no nobler motive, to make friends of their servants more than they do. Not confidantes, not intimates on equal terms, such as one makes with one's relatives or neighbours, but such *friends* as men and women who acknowledge the same God to be Father of all... (p.147)

All the articles that I have seen on the subject confirm this explicit angle, that servants are not equals and that servility is acceptable as long as employees are not exploited. Indeed the true mark of a distinguished and respectable mistress is one who gets the balance of fairness, strictness and efficiency right. As 'A Contented Mistress' wrote to *The Victoria Magazine*.

> Servants have often told me that some mistresses consider them as 'dirt under their feet', as they forcibly put it, but they invariably add, 'but then they are not real ladies.' And I do observe that it is the lower middle class - the wives of tradesmen and under-bred women generally- who complain the most of their servants, and exact the most from them. (1865, 572)

The mistress here then goes on to explain that she always reminds her servants that what separates them is money, that she has it and they do not.

From the evidence in this chapter I find that the emergent re-definition of woman in the discourse of reform is historically specific, namely through the evidence of class rather than gender loyalty. It is historically specific because the middle-class were consolidating their position and they were also developing unevenly; different discourses were competing for cultural legitimacy and through a reading of feminist journals we can conclude that at this

moment in the Victorian period the anxiety about class permeates even the most radical and oppositional of discourses. It is at the site of the interplay between the emergent re-definition of femininity and the ideology of domesticity that we can see how early Victorian feminism took support from an ideology which it sought to challenge.

CHAPTER IV
NOTES

1. Eleanor Duckworth was also the editor of *The Englishwoman's Review and Drawing Room Journal* during the first few months of its existence.

2. The details of *The Waverley Magazines*'s genesis and subsequent move to London have been well documented elsewhere. See Sheila Herstein, *A Mid-Victorian Feminist. Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); Sheila Herstein, 'The *English Woman's Journal* and the Langham Place Circle: A Feminist Forum and Its Women Editors' in *Investigating Victorian Journalism*, ed. by Laurel Brake, Aled Jones and Lionel Madden (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp.61-76; Jane Rendall, *The Origins of Modern Feminism: Women in Britain, France and the United States* (London: Macmillan, 1985) and Jane Rendall, 'Friendship and Politics: Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon (1827-91) and Bessie Rayner Parkes (1829-1925)' in *Sexuality and Subordination: Interdisciplinary Studies in Gender*, ed. by Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall (London: Routledge, 1989), pp.136-170.

3. Eugenia Palmegiano, 'Women and British Periodicals, 1832-1867. A Bibliography' in *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, 9 (1976), pp.3-36, lists *The English Woman's Journal* as ending in 1863, but it ran until 1864.

4. See Bessie Parkes, 'Review of the last Six Years' in *The English Woman's Journal* (1864), pp.361-368.

5. See Jessie Boucherett's obituary for Adelaide Procter in *The Englishwoman's Journal* (1864), pp.17-21.

6. See 'The Use of a Special Periodical' in *The Alexandra Magazine* (1865), pp.257-263.

7. *The Englishwoman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions* ran until 1910. C. Ashurst Biggs took over the editorship in 1871 until 1889. See Janet Horowitz Murray, 'Class Versus Gender Identification' in *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 18 (1985), pp.138-142.

8. See William E. Fredeman, 'Emily Faithfull and the Victoria Press: An Experiment in Sociological Bibliography' in *The Library*, 29 (1974), pp.139-164, and James.S. Stone, 'More Light on Emily Faithful and the Victoria Press' in *The Library*, 33, (1978), pp. 63-67.

9. Emily Faithful recognised that a successful magazine needed 'good quality' fiction and managed to publish work by eminent writers such as Margaret Oliphant and Nassau Senior.

10. An extract from John Ruskin's 'The Stones Of Venice' was published in *The Kettledrum* which reveals something about the target readership. It was succeeded by *Now-A-Days* which only survived one issue.

11. See David Doughan and Denise Sanchez, *Feminist Periodicals, 1855 1984* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1987), where they claim that *Woman* does not deal with feminist reform issues which I dispute; the suffrage debate was given significant coverage as were issues of women's work. Half-way through its first, and indeed only, year of publication it became *The Social Review* and dropped the price to twopence. *Woman* differed from many of the other reform journals in that it used alot of different, named contributors which made for an interesting journalistic mix, nevertheless it presumably did not sell well and hence its quick demise.

12. Lewis was evidently using material from her previous editorship of *Woman* in the series 'Working Women in Lancashire'.

13. *The Sempstress* was a penny and *The Governess* was sixpence, the prices are good indicators of the class of the target readership. Palmegiano lists *The Governess* as appearing in 1855 only, but it was published in two volumes between 1855 and 1856.

14. According to a source quoted in Philippa Levine, '"The Humanising Influences of Five O' Clock Tea": Victorian Feminist Periodicals', *Victorian Studies* (1990), pp.293-306, the circulation figures for *The English Woman's Journal* were rather better than Herstein's calculations.
Bibliographers who cite circulation figures for *The Victoria Magazine* usually point out that the readership was relatively small, however when you compare a peak circulation of 20 000 with the circulation of *Macmillan's Magazine* for instance, then it seems that the circulation figures were in fact quite successful. See for example Alvar Ellegard, 'The Readership of the Periodical Press in Mid-Victorian Britain' in *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, 13 (1971), pp.3-22.

15. Another important article on the Act published in *Woman's World* is 'The Property of Married Women' which appeared in two parts (1868), p.380 and p.19.

16. The infamous Cornelius O'Dowd of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* also published 'One of Our Two Puzzles' (1864), pp.631-634, which was a satirical engagement with 'the woman question' which opens, 'The two puzzles of our era are, how to employ our women, and what to do with our convicts; and how little soever gallant it may seem to place them in collocation, there is a bond that unites the attempt to keep the good in virtue with the desire to reform the bad from vice, and which will save me from any imputation of deficient delicacy.'p.631.

17. Emily Davies worked particularly hard canvassing *The Queen* and the details of the proposed amendments to the reform bill were reported in great detail.

18. See Barbara Bodichon, 'Authorities and Precedents for Giving the Suffrage to Qualified Women' in *The English Woman's Review* (1867), pp.63-75; 'Female Suffrage. An Answer to the Article in *The Pall Mall Gazette*' in *Woman's World* (1868), pp.57-58. The first article is also a good example of the relentlessy didactic tone of *The English Woman's Review* which was characterised by a particularly dense prose style.

19. The good reviews include an extract from *The Alexandra Magazine*, entitled 'Benefit Societies for Women', (1864), p.249; for good reviews of *The English Woman's Review* see (1866), p.344, and for *The Victoria Magazine* see (1876), p.740.

20. In the same year *The Ladies' Cabinet* also included a supplement from *The English Woman's Review* entitled 'List of Petitions Presented to Parliament for the Enfranchisement of Qualified Women' on its back page (1867), p.366. It had also criticised *The English Woman's Review* for its tone some years earlier, 'There is, however, a probability in human nature of growing weary of good things; and therefore we are glad to see a fairer proportion than usual of matter calculated to amuse as well as to instruct.' (1859), p.276.

21. A few weeks later *The Lady's Own Paper* published a letter 'A few Thoughts on the Woman Question' that alluded to the Queen's public role, (1870), p.369, 'As England has a model Queen, that is a true woman and good mother, despite of the usually demoralising effects of such high station...'.

22. The opening address of *The Kettledrum* put the case very well, 'It may be objected that Kettledrum has another meaning, signifying a noisy musical instrument, and that in this sense the word is inappropriate to the magazine. We beg leave to differ. The word seems to us vastly appropriate, for we intend to make a noise in the world.', (1869), p.2.

23. *Woman's World* also criticises *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*'s problem page which trivialises women's lives by concerning itself with '... a remedy for black spots on the face.', (1868), p.27.

24. The debate about educational reform lies beyond the scope of this study. See Philipa Levine, *Victorian Feminism, 1850-1900* (London: Hutchinson, 1987) and *Feminist Lives in Victorian England: Private Lives and Public Commitment* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990) for succinct chapters on women's education.

25. There was a warm review of Bessie Parkes' 'Remarks on the Education of Girls' in *The Ladies' Cabinet* (1856), pp.328-330. See also 'The Higher Education of Women' in *The Ladies'*

Cabinet (1869), pp.221-222 and 'High Education for Women' in *The Lady's Own Paper* (1869), p.99.

26. On the question of cross-cultural comparison it is appropriate to raise the point that feminist journals, like other women's magazines, also showed a significant interest in the coverage of articles on other cultures and particularly other races. See 'Among the Black Boys: Being the History of an Attempt at Civilising Some Young Aborigines of Australia' in *The Victoria Magazine* (1864), pp.442-456; 'A Night on the Plain of Sharon. By a Young Traveller' in *The Victoria Magazine* (1863), pp.81-89; 'Women in Turkey' in *The English Woman's Journal* (1859), pp.44-54; 'The Story of an Indian Princess' in *The English Woman's Journal* (1863), pp.235-251; 'The Parsees in London' in *The Alexandra Magazine* (1865), pp.98-107 and 'The Touaregs' in *The Alexandra Magazine* (1865), pp.155-160. The sense of otherness which emerges from representations of the Orient in these magazines is rather different from that which emerges from the popular magazines. In the feminist journals the other is not quite the spectacle of the popular magazine, not only for the obvious reason that the narratives are not usually illustrated, but because the journalistic style tends to be more detached and documentary. They tend also to be extacts from travel narratives and focus on the experience of the narrator, whereas the examples I cited in chapter one were cameos rather than extended narratives. I would go so far as to say that the feminist journals were more fascinated by the otherness of the the working woman than they were by the foreign woman.

27. In 1868 *The Lady's Own Paper* ran a series 'Woman's Parliament Tempus-1880' which was a satirical look into the future.

28. See for instance, Rendall (1985) and Levine (1987).

29. *Woman's World* was the exception here with the fashion supplement which I mentioned earlier. Neverthless this did not make this journal 'popular' in the sense that the others which included fashion were, in that it was equivocally feminist in its ideological position. It may well be that the editor recognised that to reach a broader audience and to be more commercially viable that more variety was needed; whatever the reasons the experiment was not commercially successful.

30. Thus, a picture of the emancipated woman, as constructed by the feminist journals, is emerging but is most often articulated through the rhetoric of reform found in the most significant proportion of the journals, namely reform articles and non-fictional prose. Sally Mitchell in *The Fallen Angel: Chastity, Class, and Women's Reading, 1835-1880* (Ohio: Bowling Green University Press, 1981) looks at cheap family weeklies and concludes that we have to wait until the 1880s to find images of emancipated women in the fiction of publications of this type. As I have demonstrated in other chapters, the representation of the emancipated woman, particularly in

fiction in commercial women's magazines is not a possibility. This is also the case with feminist journals where the fiction that they published was not generally used to complement the overall political remit.

31. The question of female emigration was often a source of amusement for popular women's magazines. See for example 'Englishwomen at Home and in the Colonies' in *The Queen* (1861), p.97, where one pictorial narratives depict a woman looking for shopwork and being told that women prefer to be served by men, and where the other depicts English women being absolutely inundated with dancing partners in Sydney.

32. According to Levine (1990), p.131, the increase in the numbers of women actually engaged in the new professions was tiny.

33. See 'The Employment of Women' (1860), pp.6-8; 'The Experience of a Gentlewoman in search of "Ladies' Remunerative Work"' (1863), pp.211-217 and 'Employments for Women' (1864), pp.73-76. A concern voiced in a number of these articles is that middle-class women seeking work are vulnerable and often fall prey to unscrupulous employers.

34. Details of the organisation and membership of The Society for the Employment of Women have been well covered in Herstein (1990), Levine (1990) and Jane Rendall, 'A Moral Engine'? Feminism, Liberalism and the *English Woman's Journal*' in *Equal or Different: Women's Politics, 1800-1914*, ed. by Jane Rendall (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), pp.112-138.

35. Take for instance the many accounts of writers like Jane Austen and Elizabeth Gaskell who wrote from home.

36. See for example the report of a clinic run by Elizabeth Garrett in *The Queen* (1866), p.41.

37. Although to be fair I must mention that the subject of Dr. Walker is raised by the editor's observation on the dangers of the crinoline.

38. But as we have seen in the extracts from popular magazines, work did pose a problem of protection. Middle-class women often lacked the skills for employments appropriate to their class and could not take up menial work, so they were often seen as at risk. See Jessie Boucherett's article 'The Work We Have To Do' in *The English Woman's Review* (1866), pp.1-5, where the implicit fear is of prostitution, '... the moral degradation arising from want is contagious, and spreads in all directions.', p.1.

39. See (1864), pp.54-57, pp.118-124, pp.178-183, pp.245-250, pp.311-315 and pp.378-382.

40. Medicine, and particularly the career of Elizabeth Blackwell was

well covered in *The English Women's Journal.*

41. *The Governess* is of course a key publication here.

42. *The English Woman's Journal* carried a great deal of articles on the pay and conditions of distressed needlewomen.

43. It also published a poem 'A Working Woman's Morning Thoughts' (1864), pp.146-147, which is written in a similar vein.

44. In one of the 'Women and Work' sections in *The Victoria Magazine* there is a reference to the working-class woman as less cultivated than her middle-class counterpart, see (1876), p.481.

45. The regular series 'Notices of Benevolent Institutions' which appeared in *The Alexandra Magazine* again lays testimony to this.

46. See also 'Cottage Habitations' in *The English Woman's Journal* (1859), pp.73-82, for another documentary account.

47. I must challenge Helena Michie's assertion in *The Flesh Made Word. Female Figures and Women's Bodies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), that motherhood was sometimes used as a way of justifying leaving home.

48. In 'The Employment of Women' in *Woman's World* (1868), pp.150-152, Josephine Butler defends single women saying that they may not be mothers but they are foster-mothers and '... are free to bring their capacities to bear where they are most needed.', p.151.

49. *The English Woman's Journal* ran a series 'The Training of Female Servants' in 1859.

50. See also 'A House of Mercy' in *The English Woman's Journal'* (1858), pp.13-27, which is a documentary account of a reform home where the residents are described as '... poor, torn, desecrated doves, whose plumage has been soiled by the filth of great cities, how one's spirit longed for their purification and emancipation!', p.17.

CONCLUSION

This study has focused on mid-Victorian women's magazines, and has situated them historically as texts which are a fertile locus for a consideration of the relationship between textual representation and social change. As a viable but rather neglected field of enquiry, I am confident that my research into them has made a contribution to the development of cultural studies in the academy. I refer back to Antony Easthope's (1991) claim that cultural theorists ought to be involved in the pursuit of a viable discourse of knowledge, and want to summarise in these concluding pages how I have made my own particular contribution to this challenge and how I intend to point the way forward.

Magazines provide a useful tool because they are particularly immediate texts and readings of them show that they attempt to make sense of a changing world. Women's magazines in particular form part of a woman-centred discourse which seeks to engage in a relationship with the reader, this relationship though is inevitably highly-mediated. I have aimed to show that these texts do not exist outside the system of social relations which produces them, and that cultural value and meaning is constructed within them. As a feminist materialist I have yoked together an interest in popular signifying practices and an interest in gender, and have illustrated through my material the significance of the historical

and cultural sign woman to the emergence of the middle-class as a hegemonic group.

The choice of dates is of course significant, the end of the 1840s saw a demise in radicalism and the rise of the so-called age of equilibrium. But as my readings have shown, this is not an adequate description; my evidence comes from a marginalised discourse and the significance of this is pertinent. The representations which I have focused on are part of a female discourse which encapsulates both acquiescence and dissension. A consideration of conservative publications like *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* fractures the notion of the age of equlibrium as resolutely as radical journals like *The Englishwoman's Journal* do. All the different types of women's magazine share an investment in a participation in a changing world, one in which both gender and class are crucial determinants. There was indeed a demise in male working-class radicalism in the 1840s, but the 1850s saw the slow but resolute emergence of feminist radicalism; both movements although separated by gender and class, demonstrate the pervasive influence of the underlying social and economic conditions which steered the journey towards consumer capitalism which was in place by the 1880s. Women's magazines played their part,and these developments were articulated in a complex web of representations which I have attempted to unravel.

Each group of magazines is situated in culture and by culture in a particular way, and although one must be careful about rigid

categories, the thesis has shown that the choice of this methodology has been beneficial to an understanding of the way particular ideological viewpoints have been positioned. I refer back to the explanation of my methodology in the introduction, where I stated that the heterogeneous nature of the magazine and its disruptive potential does not negate the possibility that, complex as they are, they often demonstrate a consistency of format, address, and ideological position.

In 'Representations of Femininity' I looked firstly at the ideology of separate spheres and the way this functions in a number of magazines. Taking four representative samples I defined these kinds of magazines as types of conduct book. This demonstrated both that the categories are to some extent fluid, and that even liberal publications participated in a discourse which sought to approve designated ideals of femininity. I argued that issues such as the call to self-sacrifice demonstrated the need to invest women's subordinate role with value and even pleasure. Secondly, I looked at conspicuous consumption and the way it operates in popular and fashion magazines, and argued that the ubiquitous interest in fashion in both types of magazine manifests a degree of uncertainty about the definitions of terms such as woman and lady. I also considered the notion of the female body as spectacle, both regulated spectacle through the corset debate, and visual spectacle through the fashion plate. Indeed the textual and cultural investment in the female body emerged early in the study as something which was to go on to become extremely significant.

Finally, I looked at representation of the Oriental woman as a signifier of otherness which also looked forward to further representations of otherness in later chapters.

In 'The Ideology of Domesticity' I considered the role of domesticity as an ideological and discursive formation which inscribed woman at its centre. Firstly, in the section on maternal responsibility, I looked at how the hugely popular textual engagement with the cult of the mother operated in a range of texts. I found that the construction of the ideal mother was very similar in cheap evangelical magazines and popular women's magazines. I concluded that the preoccupation with motherhood as an elevated role masked anxiety about its changing status. In the section on the girl I reached a similar conclusion, although the imminence of change was felt in a rather more positive way. Finally, in the section on domestic responsibility I looked at definitions of work and leisure for both working-class and middle-class women. In terms of the regulation of the household the middle-class woman was always seen as the regulator of the household economy and of her staff. The role of the ideology of domesticity was to inscribe women into the world of the home, and to make that world as complex and as diverse as the world of work. Legitimate work for women was in the home, and magazines of very different persuasions worked hard to establish this. But the home was the world of work for domestic servants, and the textual articulation of their relationship to the home is constantly one of regulation and instruction. It is at this point in the thesis that

the question of class becomes most contested and ambiguous, and moves the argument on to more general representations of working women.

In the third chapter 'Representations of Sexuality', I looked at the representations of dangerous and uncontrolled bodies such as the factory worker and the prostitute, in the light of the discussion of the regulated female body troped in the discourses of femininity and domesticity. Between the Madonna, seen in the cult of the mother, and the Magadalen, lay the working-class woman who was as uncontrolled as her deviant counterpart through her relationship to money and independence. All magazines to varying degrees represent the workwoman in relation to the uncontrollable nature of her perceived independence, which was not only of an economic nature. In the section on the Magdalen I made the distinction between the fallen woman and the prostitute, and found that in fictional representations in particular, class was the most reliable indicator of potential moral and spiritual redemption.

In the final chapter 'Independence and the Discourse of Reform', I introduced what I called the missing link in the chain, feminist journals. As I explained in the introduction, the choice of samples for each representation was self-selective, and as feminist journals have a specific commitment to independence, then it was clear that they would form the main focus of the chapter. In feminist journals I found an alternative woman-centred discourse, one which self-consciously and polemically wrote against hegemonic discourse. I

found that these journals addressed and inscribed their readers in a manner which was always mediated through the prism of class. In fact feminist journals made bold claims for middle-class women, but failed to call for wholly democratic changes for all women. This was not only at a pragmatic political level through their use of print to publish their cause, but also at the more abstract, but nevertheless crucial, level of representation. The means to independence for the editors, writers and presumably readers of these texts was through work and independence, and they made a concerted effort to represent middle-class women's work as respectable. But in the sixties and seventies even popular magazines like *The Queen* and *The Ladies' Treasury* covered issues of middle-class work, and thus participated, if only reticently, in the slow move towards female emancipation. Neverthless, only the feminist journals wholeheartedly supported female independence, and even then due to the residual grip on the ideology of domesticity it was coloured by class allegiance.

Victorian women's magazines are unusual because of their formal attributes which present a variety of heterogeneous forms simultaneously. The popular magazine has a particularly rich and diverse form, because of the juxtaposition of fantasy which is invested in romantic fiction and fashion, and reality which is invested in practical advice and doucumentary features. The fashion magazine has a more homogenous form, and displays a relentless blend of textual and visual narratives constructed around the notion of conspicuous consumption. The drawing-room magazine's attention to

quality, style and consistency may not be the eclectic blend of the popular magazine, but their apparent function as prestige publications is significant. The evangelical magazine's juxtaposition of didactic narratives with rhetorical excess and occasional visual splendour, makes it a particularly challenging formulaic genre. The textual world constructed by the feminist journal becomes a way of writing reality, and as a result of this the political commitment cannot be separated from the forwardlooking aspects of its generic form.

The institutional shape of the Victorian women's magazine is also diverse and each title has its own particular market, modes of revenue such as advertising, and patterns of sales and distribution. All the magazines that I have looked at, with the exception of drawing-room magazines, contain advertisements which were primarily a source of revenue, but which also become another part of the overall heterogeneous mix. Each had its own specific target readership and took a specific place in the growing mass-market for reading. Some were of course much more commercially viable than others, but it is important to remember that not all of them invested primarily in their role as commodity. Obviously they were all commodities and were exchanged on the market for money, regardless of price or ideological commitment; but some were clearly launched on the market as an explicit way of reaching readerships, as a means to an end which was politically or ideologically motivated. In this respect the magazine published by an evangelical organisation was closer to the feminist journal

than it was to a commercial magazine such as *The Queen* for instance. This is not to say that the other types of magazine were not ideologically or politically motivated, but that their specific place in the market was driven by a slightly different set of criteria than it was for those which had clearly defined religious or political purposes. Patterns of distribution are largely unknown, but it is likely that nearly all the magazines that I have covered reached an urban readership, indeed in many ways magazines were at the vanguard of the evolution of a sophisticated, urban consumer culture.

Both the formal characteristics and the institutional shape of the woman's magazine can only be understood through the way it relates to the sign woman as it was constructed through the various discourses which were competing for hegemony in the mid-nineteenth century. The relationship between magazines and the sign woman then is dialectical, as the magazine both responded to and constructed the material and discursive situation of woman in culture. But as I have shown, the generic attributes of the periodical make the examination of these issues potentially complex. As I argued in the introduction, the periodical is a hetergeneous form, but this does not mean that many of them do not have an overall consistency and mode of address. *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* was more interested in woman's place in the home than it was in woman's place outside the home through its entire run, but this does not mean that there were not any articles which covered, and indeed were even sympathetic to, the notion of

respectable work for single middle-class women. But in terms of single issues, one isolated article on female printers for instance, alongside six more devoted to domesticity, albeit through a variety of genres, hardly makes the case for the magazine as a radical one. Thus I argue that the overall ideological position of the magazine was one of conservatism.

This whole question is really part of a general debate about the contradictory nature of the sign woman, and one of its modes of articulation, the woman's magazine. Just as the juxtaposition of an reactionary article on the ideal of femininity with an article on Lydia Becker in *The Lady's Own Paper* demonstrates the complexities and contradictions inherent in representations of femininity; so too the juxtaposition of a feature on how to train servants with a narrative denouncing American slavery in *The English Woman's Journal,* demonstrates the complexities and contradictions inherent in representations of class and power. As each chapter has shown, different representations of woman competed for space in magazines, and in a host of other signifying practices in the Victorian period.

By bringing together the whole range of mid-Victorian women's magazines, by contextualising them and theorising their content and form, I have made an original contribution to the study of the history of the woman's magazine as a popular cultural signifying practice. But what about the future? This thesis locates itself within the development of the study of women's magazines, a

development which will take place in the new and exciting areas being mapped out by the terrain of a theoretically informed study of culture. Further research lies at the interface between the empirical and the theoretical,and when more contributions have been made to this area, issues such as the exploration of reading practices, motives and agency will all be more easily excavated. My work has focused on the texts, but what about the readers? Were these acts of reading a significant part of their lives? Did these representations affect readers,or did they provide them with ideological tools for their own use? How free were readers in the construction of meaning, or how far were they restrained? Like all scholarly activity this project answers many questions,but also raises a whole series of new and related questions for the research community to engage in and develop. I believe that my contribution to research into the Victorian period, the Victorian periodical, and into cultural studies generally has been a useful one.

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The Englishwoman's Review and Drawing Room Journal

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The Englishwoman's Review of Literature, Science and Art

The English Woman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions

The Female's Friend

Le Follet

Friendly Leaves

The Girl of the Period Miscellany

The Governess

The Keepsake

The Kettledrum

The Ladies'

The Ladies' Cabinet

The Ladies' Companion

The Ladies' Edinburgh Magazine

The Ladies' Gazette of Fashion

The Ladies' Journal

The Ladies' Monthly Magazine

The Ladies' Own Journal and Miscellany

The Ladies' Portfolio

The Ladies' Treasury

The Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times

The Lady's Own Paper

The London and Paris Ladies' Magazine

The Little Dressmaker

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The Mother

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APPENDIX

In the following pages I have included covers, extracts and advertisements from a selection of periodicals.

a. Cover page of *The Lady's Own Paper.*

b. Cover page of *The Ladies'.*

c. Advertisements from *The Ladies'.*

d. Fashion plate from *The Ladies' Treasury.*

e. Fashion plate from *The Ladies' Treasury.*

f. Cover page of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine.*

g. 'Cupid's Letter Bag' from *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine.*

h. 'Our Practical Dress Instructor' from *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine.*

i. Article from *The Queen.*

j. Article from *The Queen.*

k. Advertisements from *The Ladies' Gazette of Fashion.*

l. Cover page of *Woman's World.*

m. Lead page from an article in *The Governess.*

n. Cover page of *The British Workwoman.*

o. Cover page of *The British Workwoman.*

p. Cover page of *The British Workwoman.*

q. Feature from *The British Workwoman.*

I.R.NEW

REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

[THE LIGHT OF TRANSLATION IS RESERVED.

News of the Week, Music and the Drama, Fashions, Novellettes, &c.

No. 4.] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1866. [PRICE TWOPENCE.

DR. MARY WALKER.

THE subject of this week's engraving is so well-known, through our own articles and those of the daily press, that it is unnecessary for us to do more on the present occasion than draw prominent attention to two or three points in her eventful life.

She may be considered in two aspects, not only as a lady who by marvellous perseverance in the face of almost insuperable difficulties has won her way into public notice and position; but also as the representative of a class of ladies who of late years have earnestly striven to redress the grievances under which their sex has too long laboured.

We will devote our remarks more especially to Dr. Mary Walker in the former relations; in the latter capacity she is tolerably well known.

In reference to her early training for the Medical profession, and the motives that prompted her to enter it, we cannot do better than let her speak for herself. She was one of those, she stated in her recent lecture at St. James's Hall, who thought it better and easier to live out their own individual lives, and to use the powers specially bestowed upon them, than to live according to other people's notions—to live, in fact, the lives of other persons. More than 15 years ago she resolved thus to do her whole duty to humanity, as she comprehended it, leaving the results to care for themselves. Her own approval of her own conduct was worth more to her than the applause of all the world would be without such self-approval. At 17 years of age she entered the seminary, where large classes of both sexes were held, and among her greatest troubles were the reproaches levelled at the supposed immodesty of desiring to be present at operations, and the perpetual worry attendant on long dresses. This dress question has been a sore trial to her. At the lyceum, when she attended the classes with two other ladies, many of the male students threatened to secede, but did not do so. The other ladies discussed the subject of dress freely with her, but did not like to make themselves remarkable, declaring that it was no use to go against the fashion.

She held out, however, and succeeded in overcoming a great deal of the obloquy first cast upon her. Her opinions on this point are very decisive. She holds it as a fact, admitting of no denial, and one perfectly well known to doctors, that long dresses are killing women; and she attributes the failure of the Bloomer movement, some years ago, to the circumstance that the ladies who favoured it then were for the most part incapable of appreciating and explaining the physiological, hygienic, and moral bearings of the question.

Doubtless there are very many of our readers who may dissent from these opinions; yet they will not fail to admire the courageous manner in which Miss Walker set herself, in the face of all but overwhelming opposition, to redress what she conscientiously considered a great social anomaly.

Dr. Mary Walker's professional career has been as chequered as her student life. She practised medicine in New York for five years before the war broke out, then volunteered for the Federal army medical service, and served through a campaign of four years, during the first three years being with the Army of the Potomac. In the course of her military career, she was taken prisoner of war, and, after a captivity of four months, was regularly exchanged, the "happy rebel whose freedom was thus purchased being a full-grown and moustached surgeon, six feet high."

In Dr. R. T. Trall's "Herald of Health," published in New York, are some interesting particulars bearing upon her army practice, from which we learn that, in 1862, the United States Congress passed an act giving to the soldiers of the United States Army a medal of honour for special meritorious services, and the President of the United States decided who were to receive such honours. Amongst the number selected for the distinction of a "testimonial and medal of honour" was Miss Walker, who had achieved a distinction in the annals, not only of military surgery, but of military service, never before accorded to one of her sex. The *Washington Republican* says:—

"President Johnson, carrying out the purpose of his predecessor, President Lincoln, and acting upon the recommendations of such high military authority as Major-Generals Sherman, General Thomas, and McCook, has been pleased to issue his order in favour of Doctor Mary E. Walker. The order is handsomely inscribed upon parchment, and is the only compensation under the law that the President is empowered to bestow upon the Doctor, because she happens to be a lady. Much of the service rendered by her to the Government could not have been accomplished by a man. She risked her life many times, and nearly sacrificed her health, in her efforts of patriotism, as time will hereafter tell. Until Congress can do Dr. Walker some degree of pecuniary justice, she must be content with the noble parchment testimonial of the President, so justly bestowed, and all that he has the power legally to give."

This document was signed by Andrew Johnson, and bears date November 11th, 1865.

In concluding this slight sketch, we may mention another interesting fact. Dr. Mary Walker stated in her lecture, that she had been anxious to volunteer for service in the Crimean hospitals, but the war closed too speedily. She therefore devoted herself to private practice among women and children, only attending husbands at the special request of their own wives. The practice which she acquired might be attributed to various causes. Some employed her because she lived near them; some because she made her toilette quicker than the gentleman; some because they liked her personally; and some because they believed it to be the true position of a woman to be a physician to her own sex.

Dr. Walker intends writing a history of her doings and sufferings as *soon* as she regains her full health and strength. Throughout her whole war-life of four years she has persisted in wearing the "short dress," and by the indomitable energy of her will, and inexhaustible resources of her "strategy," she has not only won the admiration of the military authorities of the country, but compelled, as it were, a recognition of woman's right to dress as she pleases, and to fill any station, public or private, which capacity and inclination fit her for.

PORTRAIT OF DR. MARY WALKER.

THE LADIES.

A JOURNAL OF THE COURT FASHION AND SOCIETY

No. 18.—Vol. I. [With a Photograph of Muckross Abbey, and an Eight Page Illustrated Supplement.] SATURDAY, JULY 27TH, 1872. Registered for Transmission Abroad. { Price Sixpence. / By Post, Sixpence Halfpenny.

SERVANT GIRLS.

"THE servant girl will always rule till the mistress is able and ready to do the work. Know housework and cooking, madam. Then you can issue your declaration of independence against your tyrant," once said an American contemporary.

I smiled when I read these words: their author was so complacently sure that in them the conclusion of the whole matter was reached.

So I thought on my wedding-day, two years ago. The serene exultation with which I looked forward to my housekeeping, can never be told. For did I not know it

216. COSTUME FOR THE COUNTRY (see page 412).
Cut Paper Pattern of each Vignette, 1

all? Had I not for years in my country home, at no inconvenient distance from town visitors, gone over and over the whole gamut of domestic preparations, from soft soap to Charlotte Russe?

I was bringing, too, to my prospective housekeeping that health whose absence in our girls magazines so love to bemoan. I could work upon my feet from dawn to darkness without discomfort. Well might my soul with secret pleasure look forward to the day when, released from the cares of eldest daughter in a houseful, I should sit down in my own little home with no years of rubbish choking its corners. Everything would be so spick and span and bran new, I was afraid I should feel like the sneerings! The resemblance proved a brief one.

I could scarcely imagine how I and my servant were both to keep occupied. I planned elaborately for my future leisure; at last I should have time to write.

Somehow, that leisure has not yet come. Visitors, however, did arrive. Perhaps the novelty about a new visiting place helped to keep the room full six months of the first year.

Why was there *so much* for me to do? We may come to understand it better if I come to sketch one of my servants: she came "well recommended."

I would rise betimes in the morning and hasten down stairs to see about breakfast. *See* about it, indeed! Two sticks would be feebly smouldering under a hod of coal in the range. Not even the tea-kettle boiled. Explanation: "fire wouldn't burn—was up before daylight"—of course.

My husband's business brooks no delay of breakfast, and all my "smartness" must be put forth to have the meal in time. Nothing can be gained here by scolding, so I work. My handmaid stands within three feet of me, motionless, waiting such orders as, "Cut the bread," "Bring the butter," "The ice water," &c. A special message for every article! I cook the breakfast from first to last, and sit down at length with a red face, ringing the bell every two minutes for napkins, spoons, and other natural omissions.

You will imagine how the day progresses after this, and how much assistance my assistant must have to get through the multifarious details of modern housework.

We dine at four; and when a man has eaten nothing between breakfast and that hour, punctuality rises into a very high realm of duty. I keep a nervous eye upon the kitchen — two o'clock — three — Biddy is beating about the kitchen like a bat in the dark — a quarter past, and I rush down — at four, dinner and I are hot.

Biddy knows that missis knows how! I sometimes wonder how things really would go, if I were a Dora; whether Biddy, seeing that the wheels must fatally stop unless she applied a responsible shoulder, would do so. As it is, my servants rarely fail to act upon the discovery that I can do everything better than they can; and knowing there will be a remedy for every hitch, they poke along without plan or forethought.

When a young lady, I thought the discussion of servants constantly going on tiresome and vulgar; but since, I have not seldom found it more difficult to talk about Ruskin, or the war in France, than to make my moan upon the deeply disappointing condition of domestic service, or to slip out of the parlour to see if Biddy were not burning up the bread.

But, for the most part, I have tried to hold my peace, and did not even tell my guests of what lay hidden under the tablecloth when they dined. But you shall know it, for it is one of the best illustrations of the need of change in the domestic "situation" I can offer.

I was busy preparing for a supper-party of ten, and there were so few things my girl could be trusted to do where everything must be perfect, that my hands were over-full. But I thought of one thing, anyhow: "You *can* put the leaves in the table," said I. "Ma'am?" I remembered I had not occasion for this operation since she came. "Pull the table open—so," said I, applying my own strength; "and then get those boards in the closet and fit them in."

217. TOILETTE DE VILLE (see page 412).
Cut Paper Pattern of each Vignette, 1

She seemed to understand, and I hastened upstairs to get the silver. Presently, startled by loud concussions, I came flying back. Too late! she had already "put in" no less than twenty blows with the back of the axe upon the smooth sides of the dining-table.

She had put the leaves in wrong side up; of course, they did not fit; and with for once, she had run and brought the axe to make all compact and comfortable.

I did not say one word. I stood conquered by the might of such invincible stupidity!

Of course I do not mean to say all my girls have been as imbecile as this: but for the most part, like David Copperfield's servants, some from one reason, some from another, they have exhibited a wide variety of failure."

JOHN GOSNELL & CO.,

WHOLESALE AND EXPORT PERFUMERS,

BY APPOINTMENT TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN, H.R.H. THE PRINCESS OF WALES, ETC., ETC.,

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JNO. GOSNELL & CO.'S Princess Louise of England Perfume.

JNO. GOSNELL & CO.'S Marquis of Lorne Perfume.

JNO. GOSNELL & CO.'S Emperor of Germany Perfume.

JNO. GOSNELL & CO.'S Prince Imperial of Germany Perfume.

JNO. GOSNELL & CO.'S "Cherry Tooth Paste," greatly excels all other preparations for the Teeth.

JNO. GOSNELL & CO.'S "Toilet and Nursery Powder," celebrated for its purity.

JNO. GOSNELL & CO.'S "Agua Amarella" restores Grey Hair to its pristine hue, no matter at what age.

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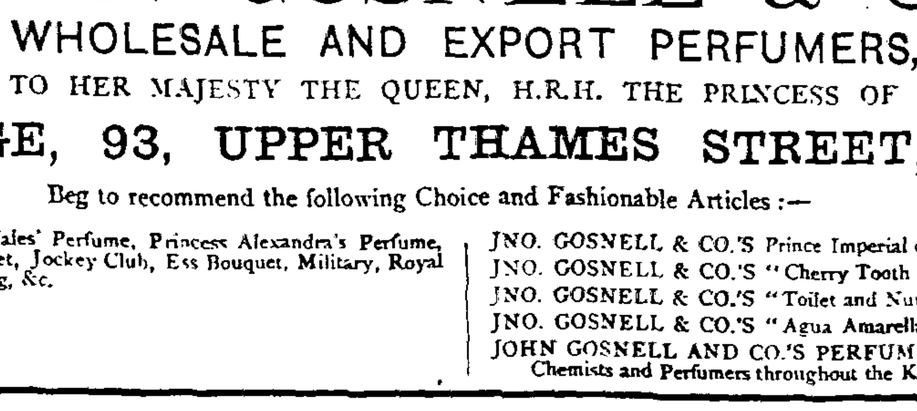

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Necklace with cross	10	6
Ditto with 5 elaborate Pendants	16	0
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Brooches	8	0
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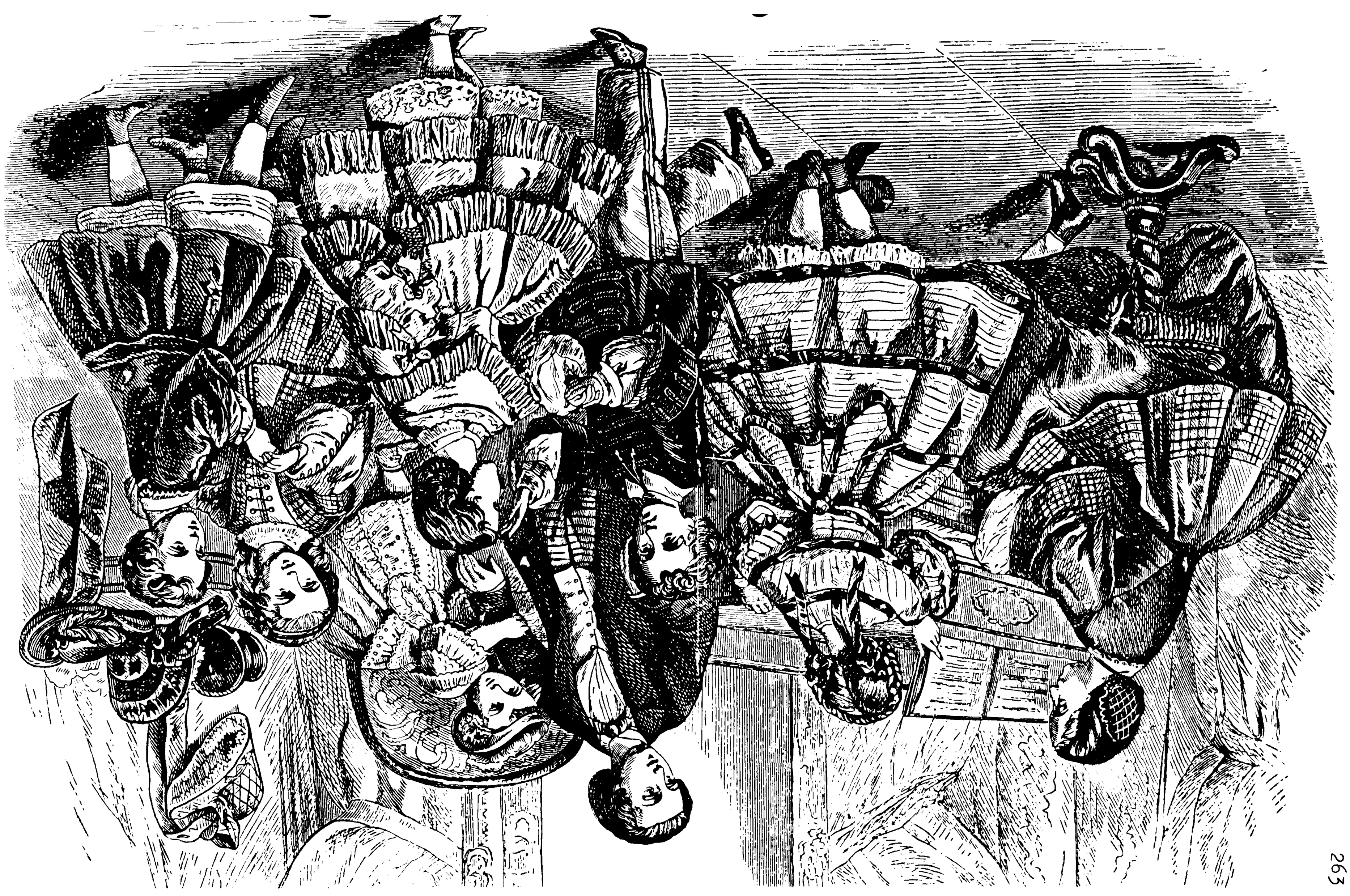

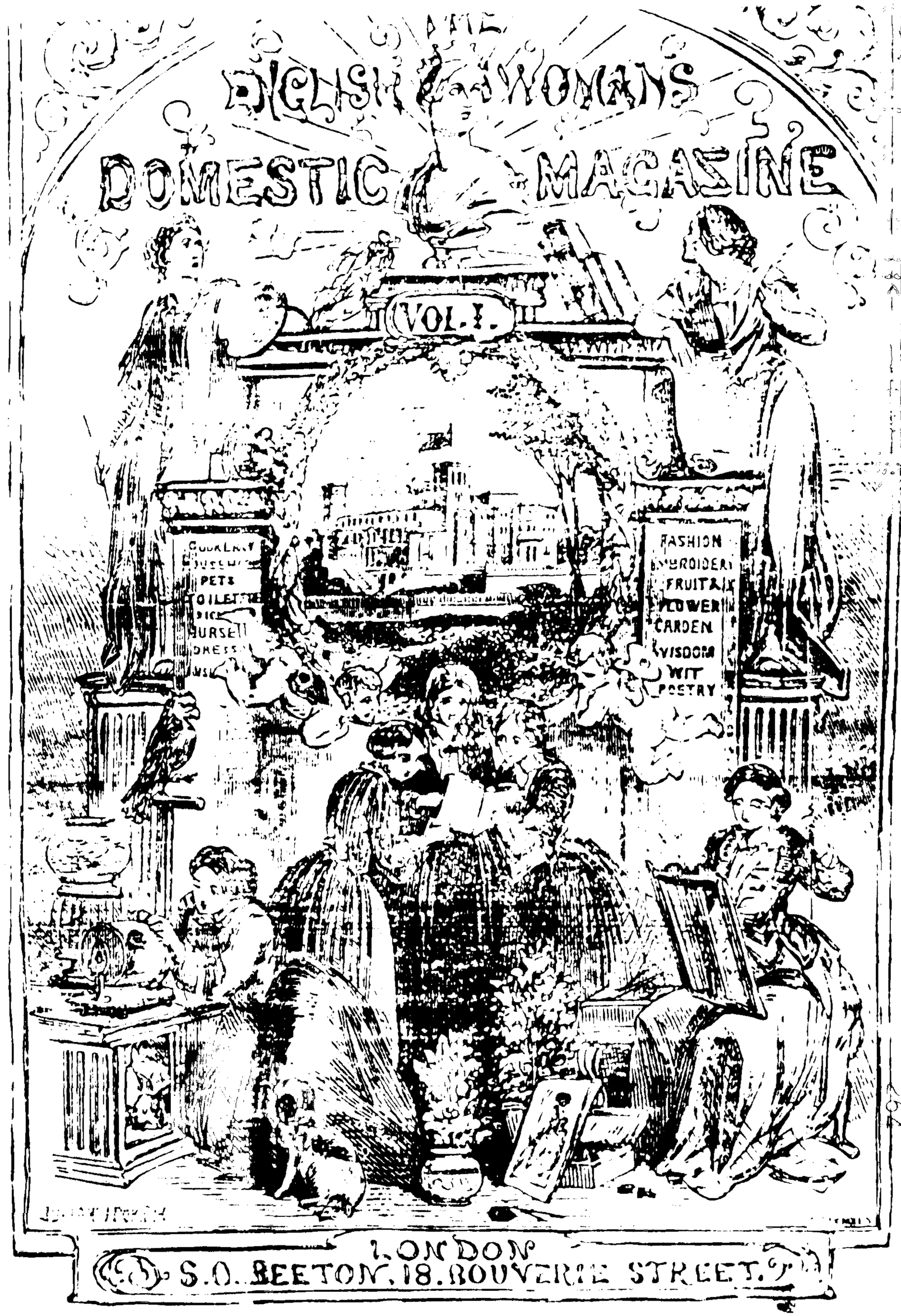
ENGLISH WOMANS
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VOL. I.
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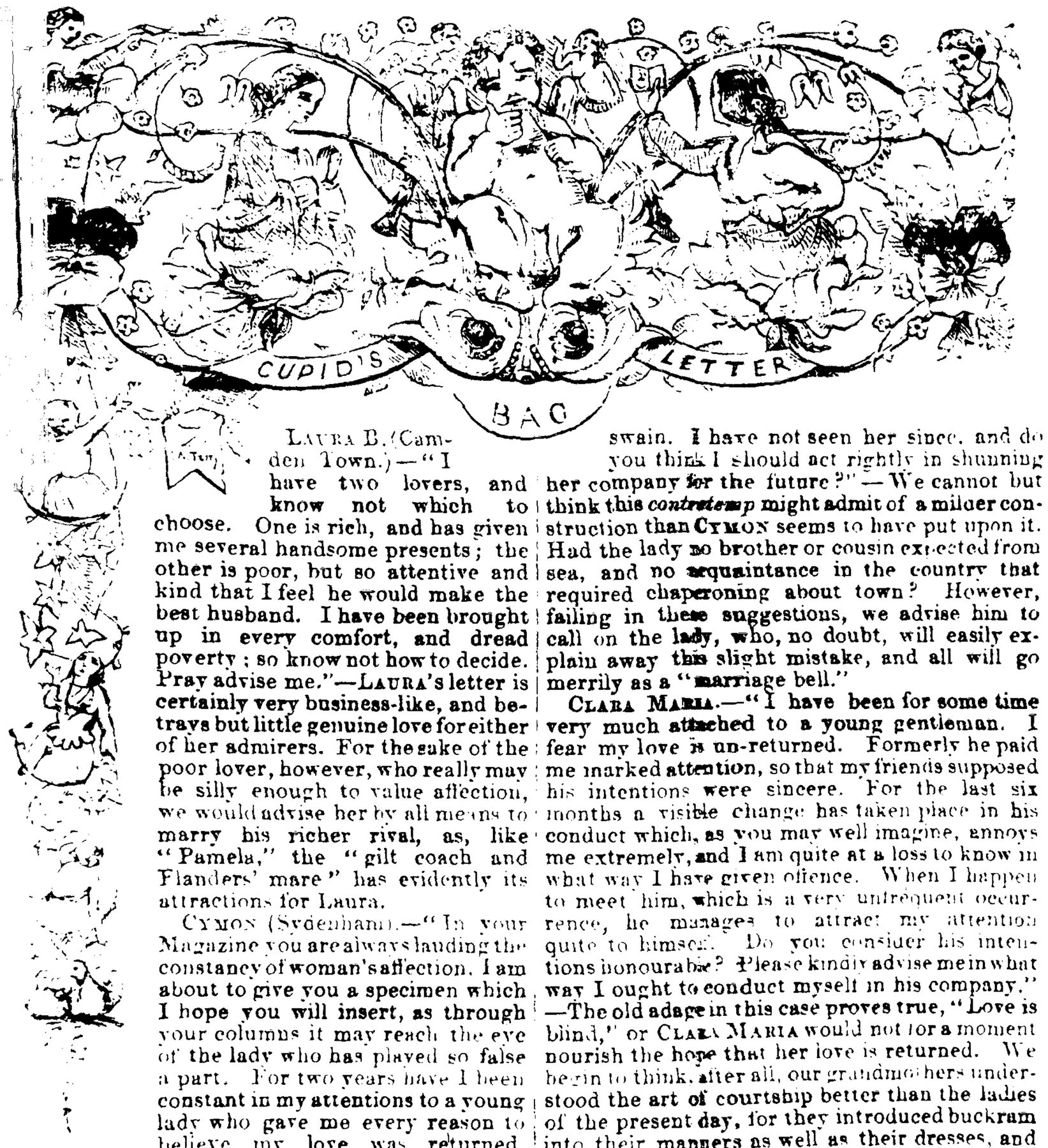


LAURA B. (Camden Town.)—"I have two lovers, and know not which to choose. One is rich, and has given me several handsome presents; the other is poor, but so attentive and kind that I feel he would make the best husband. I have been brought up in every comfort, and dread poverty; so know not how to decide. Pray advise me."—LAURA's letter is certainly very business-like, and betrays but little genuine love for either of her admirers. For the sake of the poor lover, however, who really may be silly enough to value affection, we would advise her by all means to marry his richer rival, as, like "Pamela," the "gilt coach and Flanders' mare" has evidently its attractions for Laura.

CYMON (Sydenham).—"In your Magazine you are always lauding the constancy of woman's affection. I am about to give you a specimen which I hope you will insert, as through your columns it may reach the eye of the lady who has played so false a part. For two years have I been constant in my attentions to a young lady who gave me every reason to believe my love was returned. Presents have passed between us, and vows of unaltered and unalterable affection. Had a serpent stung me, I could not have felt more horror-struck than when, visiting the Zoological Gardens a week ago, I saw a form too well known hanging on the arm of a gentleman, evidently pleased with the foppish attentions he was paying her. Being of a confiding disposition, I believed her when she told me the night before that on this particular day she should be busy with house-

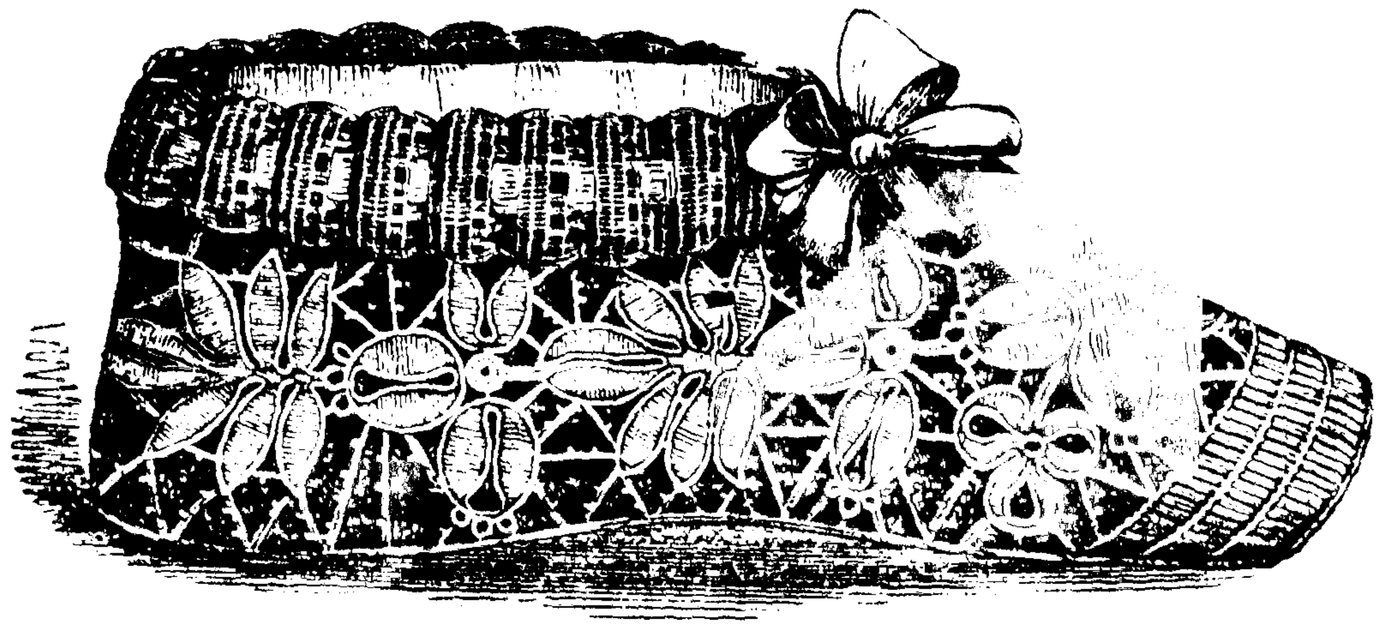
swain. I have not seen her since, and do you think I should act rightly in shunning her company for the future?"—We cannot but think this *contretemps* might admit of a milder construction than CYMON seems to have put upon it. Had the lady no brother or cousin expected from sea, and no acquaintance in the country that required chaperoning about town? However, failing in these suggestions, we advise him to call on the lady, who, no doubt, will easily explain away this slight mistake, and all will go merrily as a "marriage bell."

CLARA MARIA.—"I have been for some time very much attached to a young gentleman. I fear my love is un-returned. Formerly he paid me marked attention, so that my friends supposed his intentions were sincere. For the last six months a visible change has taken place in his conduct which, as you may well imagine, annoys me extremely, and I am quite at a loss to know in what way I have given offence. When I happen to meet him, which is a very unfrequent occurrence, he manages to attract my attention quite to himself. Do you consider his intentions honourable? Please kindly advise me in what way I ought to conduct myself in his company."—The old adage in this case proves true, "Love is blind," or CLARA MARIA would not for a moment nourish the hope that her love is returned. We begin to think, after all, our grandmothers understood the art of courtship better than the ladies of the present day, for they introduced buckram into their manners as well as their dresses, and thus became objects of pursuit instead of pursuer. CAN CLARA MARIA see a good-natured hint in these remarks?

MARY L. (Burton-crescent)—"Some time back I met a young gentleman at a friend's house, and in the course of the evening he flirted a great deal with several ladies, and in the end wished to transfer his attentions to me. I exhibited a marked coolness towards him, which seems to have inspired him with a sincere attachment, as

LETITIA ELIZABETH LANDON.

Crochet.



INFANT CROCHET SHOE. BY S. T.

MATERIALS.—Rather fine white cotton, Walker's Penelope hook No. 1, and sufficient blue or cerise velvet to cut to the size required; 1 yard of narrow ribbon. After making the shoe commence working.

The Sole.—1st Row—34 chain, turn, and on the chain 34 long, fasten off; make both ends alike. 2nd Row—Miss 2, 1 long in 3rd loop. 3rd and 4th Rows—Miss none. 5th Row—Miss 2. 6th Row—Miss 1. 7th Row—Miss none. 8th Row—Miss 1. 9th and 10th Rows—Increase 1. 11th Row—Miss none. 12th Row—Increase 2. 13th Row—Increase 1. 14th Row—Miss none. 15th Row—Increase 1. 16th Row—Miss 1. 17th Row—Miss none. 18th and 19th Rows—Miss 1. 20th Row—Miss none. 21st, 22nd, and 23rd Rows—Miss 1. 24th Row—Miss none. 25th and 26th Rows—Miss 1. 27th Row—Increase 1. 28th Row—Miss 1. 29th Row—Miss none. 30th Row—Increase 1. 31st Row—Miss 1. 32nd, 33rd, and 34th Rows—Miss none. 35th Row—Miss 2. 36th and 37th Rows—Miss 3. 38th Row—Miss 2. D c. all round. Fasten the 1st row round the toe of the shoe, so that the 3rd row comes to the end of the toe.

1st Flower.—5 chain, make it round by working 1 s.c. on 1st chain; then in round loop "5 chain, 1 s.c., repeat 4 times more,"* 1 s.c. in the 1st stitch of 5 chain; 7 chain, turn; and on the 7 chain miss 1, 1 d.c., 1 long, 2 d. long, 1 long, 1 d.c., 1 s.c. in 2nd chain stitch of 5 chain, 1 s.c. in 3rd chain stitch; 3 chain, join to 2nd d. long of last section; 8 chain, join to the top of same section; turn, and on the 8 chain "1 s.c., 3 chain, repeat twice more," miss 1, 1 d.c., 1 long, 2 d. long, 1 long, 1 d.c., 1 s.c. in 4th chain, repeat four times more,* ** then on the middle 3 chain of the 5th section of 1st flower, 1 s.c., 11 chain.

2nd Flower—Miss 5, 1 s.c. in 6th chain; then in round loop "1 s.c., 5 chain, repeat twice more;" then on each 5 chain from * to * in 1st flower three times. Then down the stem 1 d.c., 3 long, 1 d.c., fasten off. 1 s.c. in 1st chain stitch of 11 chain of 2nd flower.

1st Bud.—10 chain, turn, miss 5; 1 s.c. in 6th chain; 1 chain to cross, and in round loop 1 s.c., "5 chain, turn, and on the 5 chain; miss 1, 1 d.c., 3 long; 1 s.c. in round loop, repeat four times more," and on the stem 5 s.c.; fasten off. The other bud to be worked to join 4th flower on the other side of the vamp. Then, on the middle, 3 chain of 3rd section of 2nd flower 1 s.c., 20 chain.

1st Leaf.—Turn, miss 1, 1 d.c., 4 long, 3 d.c., 1 s.c., * "6 chain, join to 4th long in last section of leaf; 6 chain, turn, miss 1, 1 d.c., 4 long, 3 d.c., 1 s.c., repeat twice more; 4 d.c. down the stem, repeat twice more.* 4 long, 1 s.c. in same as last long, fasten of; 1 s.c., in top section of 1st leaf, 11 chain.

3rd Flower.—Same as second. Fasten off; then, on the middle, 3 chain of 3rd section of 3rd flower work 1 s.c., 20 chain.

2nd Flower.—Same as first leaf, fasten off.** Repeat from ** in 1st flower to ** in 2nd leaf. Put the flowers on in the following manner:—Fasten 1st flower on the vamp of the shoe, so that the 2nd and 3rd section may meet the long stitches across the toe; then bring the 2nd flower and 1st bud round the side: 1st leaf, 3rd flower, 2nd leaf; this brings to the heel. On the other side of the vamp, 4th flower and 2nd bud, 3rd leaf, 5th flower, and 4th leaf; this brings to the other side of the heel.

Then work the bars to connect the flowers and leaves together, as shown in the engraving.

Bars.—5 chain, turn, miss 2, 1 s.c. in next chain, repeat in same manner throughout.

For the Frill.—1st Row—12 chain; "1 long, miss 1, 1 chain, 1 long, repeat four times more," turn. 2nd Row—* 2 long in 1st loop, 1 chain between each long; repeat *, miss 1 loop; 5 chain, repeat twice from * to *, turn. 3rd Row—** 2 d. long, 1 chain between each long, repeat twice more **, in large loop 6 d. long, repeat three times more, from ** to ** turn. 4th Row—*** 2 long in 1st loop, 1 chain between each loop, miss 2, repeat five times more ***, turn, repeat from 1st row till the required length.

Fasten the ribbon at the back of the shoe, run it through the frill, and tie with bow and ends.

Our Practical Dress Instructor.

THE TALMA CLOAK.

This Cloak is at the present time quite the rage in Paris, both for ladies and children. It is made of cloth, trimmed with fur, and in some cases of velvet, in various colours.

THE ENGLISHWOMAN IN LONDON.

FOREMAN.—WELL, I'M SORRY I CAN'T: YOU'RE A GOOD-LOOKING GIRL; BUT THE FACT IS, THE LADIES WON'T HAVE YOUNG WOMEN IN THE SHOP.

ENGLISHWOMEN AT HOME AND IN THE COLONIES.

In a late number of THE QUEEN appeared a letter from a very talented and benevolent lady about the emigration of educated women. We do not remember that our correspondent took the view suggested by these pictures; but we are quite sure of this, that nothing in a pictorial way could better assist the movement she advocated. Here, on the one hand, you behold destitution and tyranny; on the other, wealth and adoration: and only a three months' voyage between them! Other commodities have a different value in England and in her colonies; but at no time—not even when a pound was given in Australia for a British tobacco-pipe—has the difference been greater than at this moment with respect to that "drug" in the markets of England—pretty, educated women. Oh, that we should have lighted upon times when they *are* called drugs, and matrimony a market! However, we can't help that.

The Sydney scene is not a sketch from imagination, as some of our readers may fear it is. Fatigued by those constant allusions in the newspapers to the tightness of the matrimonial market in England—mortified by the airs of the new set in male society who vote matrimony a weakness and flirtation a bore—the fair reader may here refresh her eyes with a scene every bit of which is true; only, the artist (who has witnessed it all herself) has brought out each incident with the clearness in which all things are seen by Art and Humour. It is actually a fact—or it was a fact a year or two ago—that gentlemen danced with gentlemen in Sydney publicly, and unashamed. But then what are the poor things to do!

As to the other picture, it is very strange—can it be true! We have certainly heard of such things before, and what is more, we have read of them in the newspapers. *Then* they seemed very sad; but put down upon paper in this forcible way, they are positively shocking! However, we will not moralise here; besides, it would be of no use if we did. We must, therefore, leave these engravings to be pondered by all whom they may concern. There is a fine moral in them, and a great deal of amusement.

THE ENGLISHWOMAN IN SYDNEY.

NEW NOTES ON NURSING.

It is our good fortune to have many lady-readers; and to women the nursery is an always new, always delightful subject of discussion. This consideration has moved us to put together some of the curiosities of baby-nursing—to depict, ere they go out of use and memory, as the once familiar horn-book has gone, some of the many machines invented for baby's benefit and nurse's ease. Of course, it is not a very important subject, but it is an interesting one; all old domestic customs are interesting, especially when they are dying out.

And it cannot be denied that our nurseries have been entirely revolutionized of late, among other things. What has become of its literature, for instance? The strategic Giant-killer, the elegant Valentine, the rude Orson, Cinderella most charming, are all falling back into the limbo of worn-out mythologies; while, as for the nursery rhymes we used to hear, who repeats

PAD FOR THE HEAD.—A DEVONSHIRE CONTRIVANCE.

them now? Not many nurses, not many mammas. Long before the famous New Zealander of the future arrives at London Bridge they will be extinct; and if that *savant* happens to recover them amongst the ruins of the British Museum, Bloomsbury, he will be even more puzzled over them than with the nursery rhyme written for his savage progenitors by Mr. Punch:—

Catch a little white boy,
Catch him by the leg;
Cook a little white boy,
Bring the crumbs and egg——

What is the rest of it? It ends, you know, with

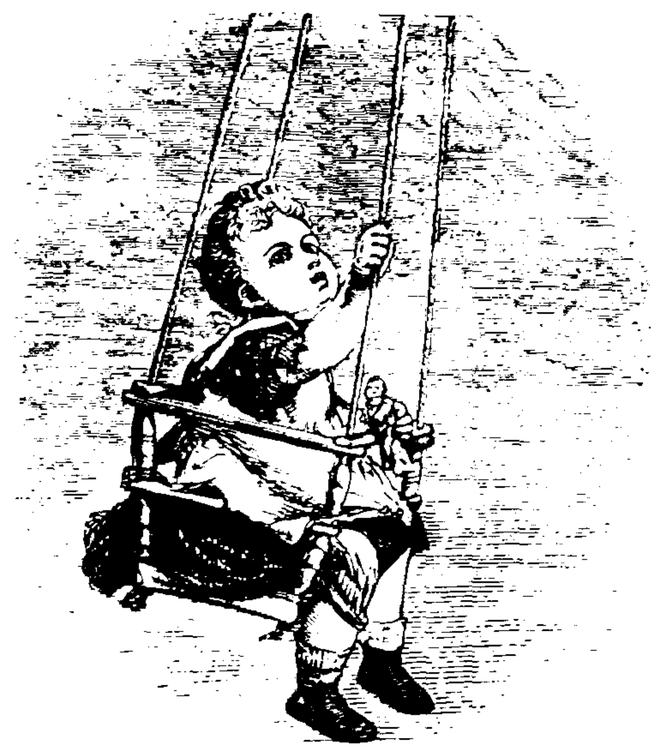
Put him on the table with the missionary pie!

Of course nothing need be said about the familiar inventions of modern days—nothing, for instance, about the baby-jumper—a machine for the pacification of querulous infancy, which at one time seemed likely to become as universal as the much-abused perambulator is now. Cruikshank proposed, indeed, to give the invention an application which would have extended its benefits throughout the

THE CHAIR AND "PEGGY-TUB."

family. Some of our readers may remember an etching of the humourist's in which Materfamilias sat darning stockings in peace, while every member of the household—from papa to the baby—was delightfully dozing in a "jumper." However, the machine was not destined for any great success—spite of several improvements, the last of which appears to be giving a "highty-tighty" motion to the chair by means of springs beneath.

Swings are probably as old an institution as infancy; and as it is the fashion now to account for the origin of everything, we have no difficulty in making the suggestion that the art of swinging was originally invented by a monkey. It is a favourite diversion of that ingenious animal, and nature has provided him with a double means of indulging it—in the lithe parasitical plants of monkey-countries, and in the possession of a prehensile tail. According to Lord Monboddo's theory, the human race in its infancy may also have enjoyed both these advantages; though the probability is that it did not. However, it is just as likely that the monkey taught



THE SWING.

the human race to swing as that pigs invented the plough; and it is the opinion of no less a scholar than Mr. Gladstone that the pig's snout, turning up the earth for roots, did suggest to some brilliant savage the construction and use of that important instrument of agriculture. The construction of the swing is naturally very simple; though that which we have engraved is the product of years of civilization. The cross-pieces slide up the ropes, baby is placed on the seat, the cross-pieces are then hauled down again, and he is as secure as a Chinese thief in his *cangue*. Swings are recommended by the "faculty" in preference to rocking-horses—on mathematical principles. We forget how the difference is made out, but the one determines blood to the head, they say, and the other does not. Both frequently determine the head to the turf—a matter of less importance in ancient times than now, since the skull grows thinner, generation after generation, as civilization advances.

Our other contrivances for the pacification of the infant mind, for controlling the exercise of infant restlessness, or for teaching unlearned babies the art of locomotion, have been very numerous. Most of them are now antiquated, or altogether out of date. "Leading-strings" were at one time almost universally used in the nursery, and to be "still in leading-strings" lives as a byeword and a reproach now that they themselves have been long forgotten. Children are often assisted to walk in our own day by a handkerchief or shawl passed round their waists; but the leading-strings of old—such as we have depicted—were contrivances expressly fashioned for the purpose. A band met round the child's chest (where it was fastened by buttons) and to the band the "strings" were attached.

THE ROUNDABOUT.

The "go-cart" was a much more complicated apparatus. Its construction—familiar, no doubt, in the memory of many of our readers—is shown in the fifth picture on the present page. Some of these elaborate engines were made with the top a "permanent circle," so that the child had to be dropped within it; others were divided and hinged on, so that it could open and close upon the ambitious infant whose first attempts at pedestrianism it was intended to facilitate. There was another sort of "go-cart," not unlike a small double towel-horse; and some were made of wicker-work.

"Go-carts" are shown in many Italian and French pictures; and the machine, slightly varied, seems to have been commonly used throughout Europe for several centuries. In the picture of "Infancy"—the first of a set of four in the National Gallery, the productions of Lancret, who died in 1745—the "go-cart" figures. It is of much the same shape as that shown in our engraving; the chief difference being that Lancret's "go-cart" does not run on castors, but on fixed

THE GO-CART.

wheels. A greater painter than Lancret, and one who lived long before him, also left the "go-cart" among his designs. Michael Angelo, in his old age (he was modest as well as great), drew the figure of an old man in a "go-cart," and wrote beneath it,—"Ancora impara" (still learning). We have had painters since who appear never to have seen the force of this design.

The Roundabout—represented in the larger engraving on this page—was a contrivance far less common than the go-cart, though it was almost as ingenious. To be sure, there was this objection to it, that going rapidly round and round a pole, at a distance of a couple of feet or so, is likely to produce giddiness, and even, perhaps, to addle infant brains. On the other hand, while it was impossible to calculate the orbit of a phenomenon in a go-cart—while in vigorous little hands (or with vigorous little hands in it) that apparatus was constantly coming into collision with you and your furniture in a way surprising and disastrous to all parties—you always knew where to have a baby in a roundabout. There were practical limits to the dear child's enterprise of which *he* was ignorant, and with which *you* had many reasons to be satisfied.

The sketch from which our drawing was made was taken at

THE PERAMBULATOR.

Caistor, in Lincolnshire, seventeen or eighteen years ago. We have since seen in other parts of England—in old country cottages—a hole in the beam above, and another in the floor below, which evidently once accommodated a revolving pole like that shown in our picture. In almost every case, however, the then occupants of the cottage were totally ignorant of what these holes were designed for.

We have also included in our series some ruder schemes. To case children in a chair turned on its side is a common expedient with the working classes. In the west of Yorkshire, in Lincolnshire, and in Cheshire, the "peggy-tub" is turned to the same account. The peggy-tub is so called, we believe, because it is used in connection with a three-legged, or three-pegged instrument, churn-wise. There is an obvious danger to baby's chin in all these contrivances: the go-cart itself was open to this grave objection, the force of which was found when the pretty prattler lost his footing.

To pad the head is a Devonshire expedient, designed to mitigate the effects of a fall. It is known elsewhere, no doubt; we think we

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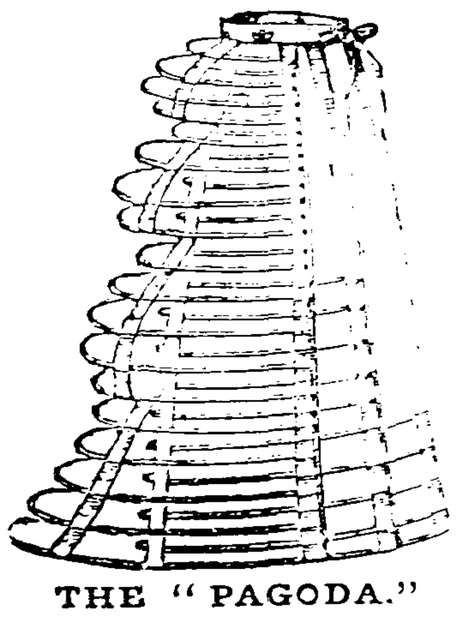

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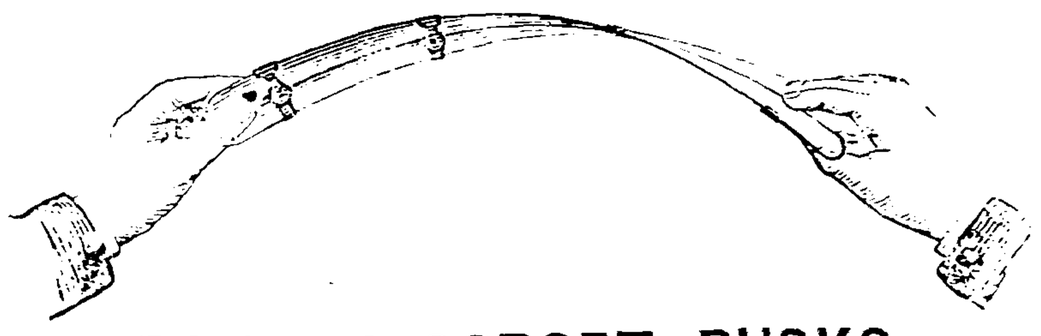

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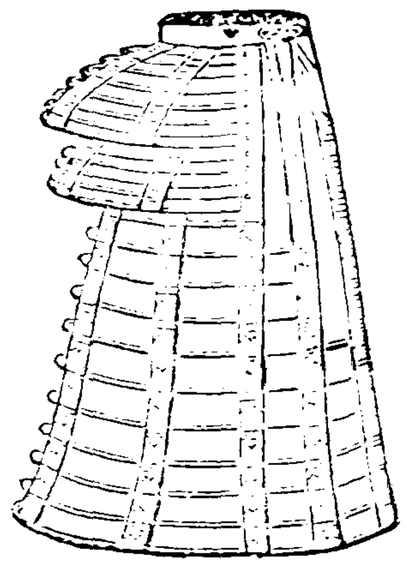

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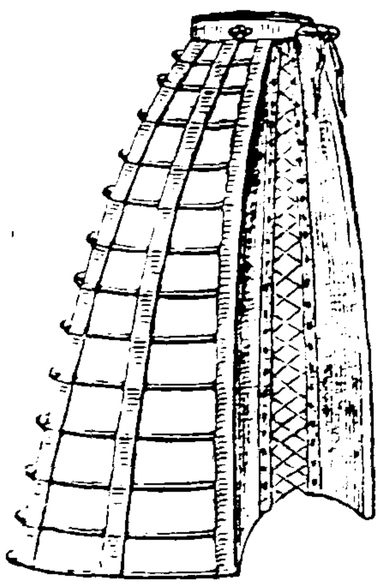
Supplies, with the least possible weight, Tournure and Jupon in one.



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This form of Crinoline, which lays against, instead of encircling, the figure, will be found to answer its purpose admirably.

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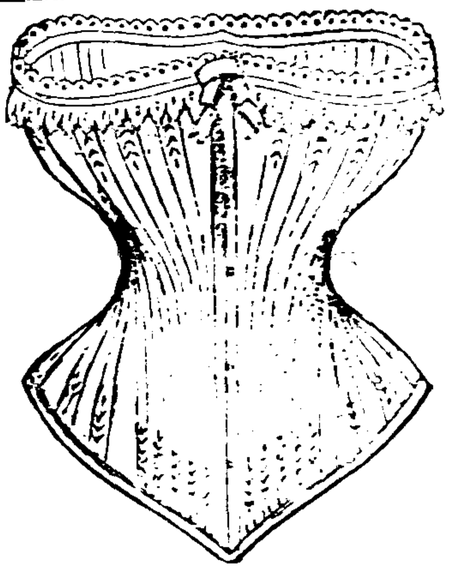
"Thomson has completely emancipated Ladies from the heavy penalties of wearing ill-constructed Corsets, and heavy, shapeless, 'all round' Crinolines."

"Thomson, to whom so many manufacturers pay the unconscious homage of imitation."

The Genuine Goods are always stamped with the name "THOMSON," and Trade Mark.

TRADE **MARK.**



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PART I. NEW SERIES. MAY, 1868. SIXPENCE.

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THE GOVERNESS.

NOTES
OF
LECTURES ON METHOD
IN
LEARNING AND TEACHING,
DELIVERED AT QUEEN'S COLLEGE, HARLEY-STREET, LONDON.

(*Continued from page* 425.)

LECTURE VIII.

ON THE CULTIVATION OF THE MEMORY.

PLATO's idea of knowledge was, that it is mainly made up of the remembrance of things once known in a former, and perhaps higher, state of existence. With this theory, whatever its merits or demerits, we have at present no more to do than to notice that it at once supplies us with a starting point for our present inquiry—into the use and cultivation of the Memory.

1. Since all possess knowledge to at least some extent, *all possess some powers of memory*. It is necessary to make this assertion, although to some it may appear a mere truism; of which we shall, however, have more to say hereafter.

Let us start, then, with a definition of the word *memory* itself. "Memory," says Locke, "is the power to revive again in our minds those ideas which after imprintment have disappeared." The train of ideas so revived constitutes a *remembrance*. What sensibility is to sensation, *memory* is to *remembrance*.

Reminiscence is the act of recovering, and *recollection* the act of *combining remembrances*. Those eminences to which we attach the subordinate parts of an object come first into reminiscence; when the intervening portions present themselves in order the recollection is complete.* Thus accurately defined, we shall use the words *memory, recollection,* and *remembrance*.

* Taylor's Synonyms.

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. 37.—November 1st, 1866.—Published Monthly.—Price One Penny. Registered for Transmission Abroad.

THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN
OUT AND AT HOME.

"A Woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.—Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her."—Prov. xxxi.

SINGLE BLESSEDNESS. (?)

BRITISH MUSEUM

No. 33.—December 1st, 1866—Published Monthly.—Price One Penny. Registered for Transmission Abroad.

THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN

OUT AND AT HOME.

"A Woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.—Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her."—Prov. xxxi.

DOUBLE BLESSEDNESS AND TRIPLE BLESSEDNESS.

No. 59.—September 1st, 1868.—Published Monthly.—Price One Penny.

Registered for Transmission abroad.

THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN

Out and At Home.

THE "BRITISH WORKWOMAN'S" WELCOME AMONG THE SERVANTS.

It is Better to Cry over your Goods than after them;

OR,

SHE THAT PAWNS ONCE BUYS TWICE.

When first you put away your belongings in pawn, take my word for it, you put away more than your gown, or your husband's coat, or your bedding, or your clock, or whatever else it may be, for you put away with them your nice sense of honesty, your spirit of sturdy independence, your resolution to battle with the ills of life, and to conquer them, your perseverance, your energy, your self-reliance.

* * * * *

"There is nothing, to my way of thinking, that is sooner lost, or harder to find again, than the spirit of straightforward, honest independence. It is like the down on a butterfly's wing. You may rub it off in no time, but he would be a clever workman as could put it on again."

A BUNDLE OF HOUSEHOLD PROVERBS.

There is no Mirth Good but with God.

Store is No Sore.

Cleanliness is Next to Godliness.

Fine Feathers Make Fine Birds.

More are Drowned in Beer than in Water.

It is Better to Cry over your Goods than after them.

When Poverty Comes in at the Door, Love Flies out at the Window.

Use the Means, and Trust to God for the Blessing.

Pay as You Go, and Keep from Small Score.

Marry in Haste, and Repent at Leisure.

It is Never Too Late to Learn.

Well Begun is Half Done.

[A charming, useful series of Tracts, illustrating these beautiful Household Proverbs are being published by Messrs. Shaw & Co. We feel it quite our duty to recommend them to the earnest attention of our readers, believing that great good may be derived from their perusal and distribution. They are very cheap, and are well got up.]

Use the Means, And trust to God for the Blessing;

OR,

ELLEN SIMONS' FIRST PLACE.

"Wait a bit, my child," said Molly, with one of her kind smiles. "Take my word for it, all is not gold that glitters. A tired body may be bad to bear, but it is nothing to the pain of a wearied heart."

* * * * *

"Ah," said Mrs. Turner, "so long as you live in the world, you must have an eye to the main chance."—"There you and I are quite of a mind," replied Mrs. Simons. "The only point on which we differ is, as to what we mean by having an eye to the main chance. It seems to me, you may keep such a bright look out on things present, as quite to blind you to things future; and, to my way of thinking, that is a mistake."

Pay as you Go, And keep from Small Score.

If there is truth in the old proverb, "Short reckonings are soon cleared," there is truth likewise in the reverse side, and that there is nothing so difficult to settle as an account that has been allowed to run on, till, like a Yorkshire pie, you hardly know what it is made up of, when may be a little of that which is not the true thing finds its way in under cover of the right flavour.

"It is better to go to bed supperless, than to rise in debt. It is better to pay, and have but little left, than to have much, and be always in debt."

Marry in Haste, And Repent at Leisure.

"Nine fools will not make one wise woman," replied Mrs. Jenkins, with a smile; "and I think no right-minded girl should ever give her consent to being married till she can see a reasonable prospect of being able to do her duty by her husband and her children. You might as well expect the pot to boil if you put it on the grate with no fire under it, as to look to a woman being able to keep a comfortable home over her husband's head, if the means are lacking of enabling her to do so.

* * * * *

"He would be uncommon good at summing, as could write the word, 'Enough,' in such plain figures as every body could add them up."

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