5

Education in the Age of Empire, Globalization and Technological Change

INTRODUCTION

At the turn of the twentieth century, Britain and Denmark both created national secondary education systems, linked them to new, improved primary schools, and expanded national administrative capacities in public education. Yet British policymakers developed a system primarily benefitting elites, whereas the Danish innovations expanded access to secondary education for all. The British Secondary Education Act of 1902 created a unitary secondary education system based on the grammar school model that emphasized humanistic classical studies. Math education was limited, and funding was shifted away from vocational and technical training programs for less-academically inclined youth to the new secondary schools. This move created a shortage of workers with practical skills and hastened the decline of British manufacturing. In sharp contrast, the Danish Law on Higher Education of April 24, 1903 ("Lov om højere Almenskoler, April 24, 1903") constructed classical, mathematics, and modern language gymnasium tracks; prior to this, an 1892 act amply funded vocational, agricultural, and folk high schools. As in Britain, Denmark's new secondary education system operated on a national scale but Danish local authorities retained significant autonomy over curricula and examination processes.

The establishment of these systems in both countries was fueled by economic, political and social pressures that had been building for decades to put secondary education on the political agenda. Global economic competition, amplified by breakthroughs in industrial technologies, motivated policymakers to invest in expanding workers' skills. Britain's John Gorst, President of the Board of Education, predicted that global competition would kill British industry without improvement in workforce skills (Gorst 1896, 427). Yet in debates over British educational policy, improving technical skills was just one concern among many vying for attention. Strengthening British culture

through humanistic studies, expanding equality of educational opportunity, and enhancing national efficiency with greater centralization were all concerns that loomed at least as large for policy makers (Daglish 1997). Danish reformers were also committed to developing workforce skills, augmenting productivity, increasing equality, and nurturing citizenship; however, they viewed these goals as more harmonious than did their British counterparts.

In both countries, authors' narratives about education and society contributed to the momentum for secondary education, influenced future educationalists, and set the context for the expression of class interests. British authors largely supported secondary schools for the middle classes, with most advocating for a classical curriculum. Some authors (T.H. Green, John Ruskin, William Morris, and Mary Augusta Ward) also wanted improved technical education for workers, but their voices were drowned out by the louder celebrants of classical education such as Rudyard Kipling, Thomas Hardy, and HG Wells – the literary descendants of Matthew Arnold. Hardy dreamed of extending the benefits of classical study to the working class. Kipling tied humanistic education to nationalist imperialistic ambitions. While Victorian schools were stratified by social class, beginning in the 1880s, activists pushed for measures to make them more uniform in order to expand avenues for social mobility (Evans 1985, 7–9).

Danish authors contributed to the intellectual and political discourse surrounding secondary education in the decades leading up to the 1902 and 1903 acts, yet they coalesced around a multi-track model. Writers across the political continuum portrayed workers' education and skills as essential to the industrial project, competitiveness in the world economy and the collective good. Authors of the Modern Breakthrough movement (like Georg and Eduard Brandes, Henrik Pontoppidan, and J.P Jacobsen sought skills to build Denmark's industrial power, and scorned the excessive classicism of the older Latin Schools. While they fully accepted a government role in education, they strongly supported community activism and local control.

Writers became directly involved as activists in political struggles over secondary education reform. The British Fabian circle – including Sidney Webb, Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, and H.W. Wells – were intent on building a comprehensive national education system to reduce inequities and improve efficiency; and they worked closely with Robert Morant, the architect of the 1902 secondary education act. The Fabians reluctantly accepted funding for the church schools as a necessary price to pay for a national education system and pressured Liberals such as Richard Haldane to accept this compromise. Kipling wrote stirring testimonials about the importance of literary studies for workers and soldiers, a message that resonated with his cousin's husband, John Mackail, who drafted the 1904 secondary education regulations. While Kipling was a conservative and Mackail, a socialist, the two agreed that classical education was essential to sustain the superiority of the British people and the strength of empire.

In Denmark, authors in the Modern Breakthrough movement organized a splinter faction of the Left Party (Venstre), which was called Literary Venstre (or European or Intellectual Venstre). This faction allied itself with the peasant faction of Venstre, helping to forge the party's positions on education and to foster closer ties among evangelical farmers and workers. Modernist authors persuaded educators within the folk high schools to develop more skills-intensive curricula and authors also supported strengthening the study of modern languages, mathematics and sciences within academic secondary education (which had emphasized classical studies in the past). Because the political system was so deadlocked at the end of the nineteenth century, the cultural sphere became a particularly important venue for developing reform ideas and forging consensus on educational policy (van der Liet 2017, 105–6). Members of the Literary Venstre would later form a new Radical Liberal center party (Radikale Venstre), which would go on to play a significant role in every coalition for major welfare state initiatives over the course of the coming century. Victor Pingel (leader of the Student Association and Literary Venstre activist) remarked that while in some countries, the democratic movement occurred along materialist dimensions, the Danish struggle for democracy transpired in the cultural sphere (Skovgaard-Petersen 1976, 135).

CHALLENGES AND SCHOOL CHOICES AT CENTURY'S TURN

Economic, political, social, and educational challenges broadly motivated the establishment of secondary education systems in Britain and Denmark. Britain was a clear front-runner of the industrial revolution in the early nineteenth century but had become a laggard by the century's end. The Liberal President of the Board of Trade, Joseph Chamberlain, was particularly fearful about Britain's growing trade deficit (Platt 1968, xxxiii, 81–2; Matthew 1995, 163–5; Trentmann 2008). In 1896, journalist Ernest Edward Williams published *Made in Germany*, a cautionary tale about the decline of British international competitiveness that became an immediate staple of drawing-room discourse. He wrote menacingly in the book that "The industrial glory of England is departing, and England does not know it" (Williams 1896, 1). Leading factors contributing to the decline, in Williams's account, were the country's inadequate education system and its contentious industrial relations. An endorsement on the front cover of the fourth edition stated, "Germany has long been – 20, 30, or 40 years – ahead of us in technical education" (Williams 1896, front cover).

Social strains associated with industrialization brought pitched labor market conflicts and ever more frequent strikes. Skills were a particular point of contention in industrial relations. Unions controlled the production of workforce skills, for example, by limiting the number of apprenticeships they offered in order to drive up wages, and this provided an important lever for challenging employers' power. Employers responded by mechanizing industrial processes

even more, thereby reducing their dependence on skilled labor (Burgess 1975; Zeitlin 1990; Hall and Soskice 2001). Tensions culminated in an 1897 lockout staged by the Engineering Employers Federation, in which employers resisted union demands for skilled operators, higher wages, and an eight-hour day. An accord was ultimately reached whereby the EEF recognized the union's right to bargain collectively in exchange for employers' control over the skills content of jobs; however, the conflict strengthened the strong mistrust characterizing British labor relations (Fulcher 1991; Burgess 1975, 4; Clegg et al. 1964, 161–7; Zeitlin 1990).

Granted, some elites worried about Britain's abysmal skills and launched a "scientific movement" to strengthen science and technology in post-primary education. Prince Albert joined leading intellectuals and politicians such as Herbert Spencer, Thomas Huxley, Lyon Playfair, and Bernard Samuelson in pushing for a more expansive program of technical higher-grade courses and colleges. Many manufacturers (especially in scientific industries) supported the movement, and it won a major victory with the establishment of the Department of Science and Art (Evans 1985, 4–6).

Political challenges both motivated and impeded the development of secondary school systems. British economic and military imperialism required a literate working class, as Williams made clear in *Made in Germany*. Leading Liberal politician Richard Haldane concurred: "we as a nation have to face the problem of preserving our great commercial position, and with it the great empire which the great men of past generations have won…we shall require above all things enlightened views, and not least enlightened views about our commerce…not only elementary education in this country, but our secondary and tertiary systems must be thoroughly overhauled and coordinated if we are to be brought near to the existing level of Germany" (Haldane 1902, vii–ix). At the same time, contentious party politics and sharp religious cleavages created obstacles to reform. Thus, Sir John Gorst mournfully observed:

> The chief obstacles to the progress of education in England are party spirit and religious intolerance. Proposals for educational reform are discussed and decided, not in a philosophical spirit, but with all the acrimony of partisans…England is engaged in a struggle with her foreign competitors not only for the supremacy but even for the very existence of her industries…better education, both elementary and technical, is vital to the continuance of her prosperity…Yet, nonwithstanding all this, English statesmen will postpone reform indefinitely if they can see their way to secure a party advantage thereby (Gorst 1896, 427).

Policymakers of this period also confronted existing educational deficiencies in their efforts in to revamp the education system. First, middle and working-class students had restricted *access* to secondary education. Although the 1870 act did not address secondary education, school boards (particularly in urban areas) developed some post-primary technical classes, and by 1895, 67 higher-grade schools were serving 25,000 students (Lawton 2005, 21).

At the same time, county councils were permitted to raise a rate for technical education and Parliament passed a series of industrial acts to foster vocational training, providing still more opportunities for skills development. But despite all of these steps, from a cross-national perspective technical education in England remained dismal and failed to meet the growing need for skilled workers (Devonshire Commission 1872–5; Gowing 1978). Decades later in 1937, G.A.H. Lowndes determined that the endowed grammar schools served less than 1 percent of eligible students (Dent 2012, 12–3).

Second, policymakers considered how to design *curricula* in response to the economic requisites of the new age. Should secondary education be limited to a unitary classical, humanistic track, or should it also include a more practical, technical track? Proponents of humanistic education alleged that the Department of Science and Art and the board schools' higher-grade courses gave preference to technical studies over humanistic ones. Policymakers deliberated whether to model secondary education on the Grammar School's classical curriculum, or on the more technical, scientific courses offered by the higher-grade classes developed by the school boards (Dent 2012, 4).

Third, policymakers recognized problems with the quality and *oversight* of the various primary, secondary and technical schools, and pondered solutions to these problems. Before the secondary education reform of 1902, three different agencies had monitored schools, a haphazard and unwieldy system that critics sought to streamline. The Charity Commission oversaw voluntary church and endowed schools. The Department of Science and Art was responsible for post-primary technical and industrial education. The Education Department was responsible for the board schools, including their upper-grade, vocational courses (Robinson 2002, 159–63). Policymakers questioned whether a national education department or local school boards should manage primary and secondary schools (Dent 2012, 12; Gosden 1962, 44; Archer 2008). Quality concerns about the voluntary church schools amplified the perceived need for oversight. By the late nineteenth century, the voluntary church schools, which served 60 percent of the population, had dramatically fewer resources (1.95 pence per pupil) than public board schools (2.5 pence) (Niessen 1984, 200–1).

Denmark grappled with its own share of economic, political, social, and educational challenges during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Agricultural productivity steadily increased over the nineteenth century and by 1870, Denmark had a per capita income of $2003 (in 1990 US dollars); this was lower than Britain's per capita income of $3191 but higher than Germany's $1821 or Sweden's $1664 (Kærgård 2017, 3). Around the same time, innovations in transportation and refrigeration were causing the price of grain to plummet, producing a worldwide depression that would last into the 1880s. Denmark responded to the depression by increasing the production of specialty agricultural products, which created an ever-growing need for skilled workers (Gourevitch 1986). By the turn of the century, technical innovations

and new investments capital from domestic and international sources produced high rates of economic growth and national income per person nearly doubled from 625 krone in 1871/75 to 1,105 in 1901/05 (Skovgaard-Petersen 1976, 43–7).

As was also the case in Britain, industrial conflict rose in Denmark over the late nineteenth century. The Danish Trade Act of 1857 (Næringslov af 1857) ended the guilds and deregulated labor relations. Industrial conflict then peaked in 1885 with an acrimonious battle within the iron industry that nearly shut down the country (Due et al. 1994, 73–4; Galenson 1952). Yet in the 1890s, organized business and labor negotiated a new system of industrial coordination (Due et al. 1994, 80–1; Martin and Swank 2012).

Denmark's dysfunctional party politics stymied efforts to address these challenges. The elite National Liberal Party disintegrated after the disastrous war of 1864, and the United Left Party (Det Forenede Venstre) and Right Party (Højre) filled this vacuum. Højre represented landed aristocrats and industrial interests and maintained absolute control over the upper chamber of Parliament, the Landsting, because only propertied people could vote for its members. Venstre represented farmers, school teachers, and intellectuals and controlled the lower chamber, the Folketing, because most white males had the right to vote for its members. Højre Prime Minister Jacob Brønnum Scavenius Estrup, who held office from 1875 until 1894, became a virtual dictator because he was entitled to make policy if at least one chamber supported him, which the Landsting consistently did. Estrup imposed provisional budgets when he could not gain Folketinget's approval for his finance policies; Venstre responded with a withering politics (visnepolitikken) and refused to pass any bills. The resulting political stalemate between Højre and Venstre meant that no significant legislation occurred during this period (Petersen 1979, 4; Jacobsen and Pedersen 2009, 8).

Like their British counterparts, Danish reformers recognized glaring inadequacies in schools that became more pressing with socioeconomic change. First, *access* to secondary education remained limited for agricultural and industrial workers, most of whom could not afford to pay student fees. The secondary "exam schools" (including twelve public Latin schools and some other private schools) primarily served upper and middle-class students preparing for university. Workers received some post-primary education in agricultural schools, Grundtvigian folk high schools, and urban technical schools, yet these schools failed to meet demand. In 1872, 51 folk high schools served only 1,903 young men out of the 11,000–12,000 rural candidates for secondary education (Skovmand 1944, 224–5). State subsidies for technical schools were meager, as Latin Schools received over three times as much funding per student as agricultural high schools in 1861. Yet leaders of folk high schools were wary about state funding, as they feared that the government would take away their control over exams, curricula, and quality controls (Skovmand 1944, 125, 230–1). Some towns created their own upper-grade classes for

workers to teach practical skills, history, geography, and natural sciences; but most localities lacked the resources to do so, and by 1883, only twenty-six such schools existed (Larsen 1899, 63). Educational access for the working class was also constrained by the widespread need for child labor. The first child labor law passed only in 1873 and was not strictly enforced; in 1908, the Danish Teachers Association found that a third of Danish youth continued to hold regular jobs, either for their families or for outsiders (Gjerløff and Jacobsen 2014, 261–3).

A second educational priority facing Danish policymakers was the issue of curriculum design, and how it should be used to balance skills training and cultural development. Latin Schools offered instruction in classics and religion, topics well-suited for clerical and bureaucratic careers; however, industrialization and globalization required advanced competencies in mathematics, natural sciences, and modern foreign languages. Similarly, Grundtvigian folk high schools taught Danish language, mythology, literature, and history to build a collective identity, yet these institutions only sporadically taught the advanced skills necessitated by new agricultural and industrial technologies (Gjerløff and Jacobsen 2014, 175).

Third, reformers grappled with questions about school quality, administrative oversight, the role of the church, and the balance between public and private schools. Teachers' work conditions were quite poor during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the status of teachers as a group had fallen since the enlightenment age when many hoped that teachers would replace the church as agents of cultural formation. Municipalities were increasingly burdened by the cost of funding their local schools and sought increased subsidies from the national government (Larsen 1899, 69–70; 478–81). Until the 1890s, only five administrators at the Ministry of Culture monitored education, and reformers favored stronger national government involvement in funding local schools, providing teacher training, and setting salaries. Yet support for local self-determination by municipalities, schools, and parents remained strong. Additionally, the left would diminish the role of local clergy in school oversight, as critics found many priests to neglect their educational responsibilities (Gjerløff and Jacobsen 2014, 85–94).

Despite facing similar challenges, British and Danish politicians made different choices in the construction of their secondary education systems. On programmatic and curricular *differentiation*, Denmark developed distinctive modern languages, math/science, and classical tracks in the new gymnasiums in 1903, whereas Britain established only one track focused on humanistic studies in the 1902 act. Britain also abolished alternative forms of secondary education like higher-grade courses and teacher-pupil schools when creating its integrated secondary school system. In 1892, Denmark expanded state subsidies for and bolstered the alternatives to academic upper secondary tracks, such as the folk high schools, technical schools, and agricultural schools. Both countries developed new middle schools to connect primary and secondary

education. Yet the British middle school was designed to move students into upper secondary education, while the Danish middle school served as a gateway to various types of education.

These different choices in programmatic design meant that Danish working-class youth had much greater *access* to secondary education than their British counterparts. In addition to expanded funding for various technical schools, Denmark included a one-year, trade-oriented "real class" at the upper secondary level that was designed for the "small people" of the country and prepared students for apprenticeships or further technical education ("Lov om højere Almenskoler, April 24, 1903").

The two countries also diverged in their *oversight* of the education systems. Britain expanded the role of the national government in administrative oversight by replacing the local, democratically controlled school boards with new local educational authorities (LEAs) supervised by the national board of education. In Denmark, the national government took a more active role in funding schools; however, local municipalities, schools and teachers retained significant autonomy over curricula and staffing choices. Moreover, there was enormous partisan political conflict in Britain over the continuation of church schools. The Danish act passed easily with broad support across parties and classes: private schools were allowed to continue although they gradually faded away and a scaled back role for the church generated little conflict.

AUTHORS AND SCHOOLING IN BRITAIN

Authors' Networks

In the late nineteenth-century, modernist literature replaced realism: compared to their Victorian predecessors, late realist/modernist authors were more attuned to the contradictions inherent in global capitalism, structural social risks, and traditional moral standards (Crosthwaite 2010, 336–7). The grim modernist view reflected Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and Herbert Spencer's formulation of social Darwinism. Echoing Malthus, Spencer posited that excessive state intervention and support for the weak would pervert both individual liberty and the survival of the fittest (Spencer 1884; Clarke 1978, 25).

Alongside other intellectuals, fiction writers contemplated the new social problems brought by the changing political economy and considered how education might ameliorate these problems. Three particularly important cohorts participated in this debate: a circle in Oxford that coalesced around T.H. Green, a network led by the publisher W.E. Henley, and a group of Fabian socialists.

First, Green's idealist philosophy inspired a network of writers and future bureaucrats to seek expanded educational access for the working class. Drawing from Hegel, Green argued that self-realization was an individual's

greatest responsibility, education was central to the development of the citizen, and the state was to lead this process. In keeping with this philosophy, Green rejected utilitarian individualism, in which individuals pursuing their own happiness produced collectively beneficial outcomes and the state acted as a guarantor of individual liberty (Bogdanor 2006, 147–8). While Green favored classical training for the upper class, commercial instruction for the middle class, and vocational skills for workers; he wished for talented working-class youth to have access to an academic education (Watson 1982). In an 1882 lecture, he hoped "for a time when that phrase ('the education of a gentleman') will have lost its meaning, because the sort of education which alone makes the gentleman in any true sense will be within the reach of all" (Green 1882, 475–6; Leland 1911, 47).

Green drew inspiration from authors of the past and Wordsworth, Coleridge, Thomas Arnold, Carlyle, FD Maurice, and Charles Kingsley were revelatory to Green's thinking. For instance, like Coleridge, Green believed that an educated upper and middle class would cultivate appropriate sentiments among the working class (Gordon and White 1979, 3–8). Green viewed novelists such as Defoe and Fielding as helping individuals to comprehend interests that lie beyond their own class, and these works "had a real lesson to teach mankind"; yet Green warned against the paperback writer who "helps to level intellects as well as situations" (Green 1911, 67, 69–70).

Green also inspired fiction writers of his time. He was close to Mary Augusta Ward, Matthew Arnold's niece and a pioneer of the settlement movement, who wove idealist ideas into her fiction. In her novel, *Robert Elsmere* (1888), Ward even based a character on Green, a Professor Grey who inspired undergraduates to work for the greater good (Gordon and White 1979, 10). Green was responsible for an about-face in George Eliot's thinking. During her days on the *Westminster Review*, Eliot had been deeply influenced by Herbert Spencer's Social Darwinism; but over time she became influenced by Green's ideal philosophy (Eliot and Cross 1903, 149). Eliot explored the limits of individualism, advantages of positive freedoms associated with idealism and conceptions of the socially constructed self in *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda* (Freed 2005, 60–2). Finally, Green's Oxford contemporaries on the left, including the socialists John Ruskin and William Morris, also supported expanding access to education and art for the working classes. Morris rejected the bourgeois values of the industrial revolution, painted a utopian vision of the Middle Ages, translated Icelandic sagas and recognized labor's intrinsic value in producing beautiful crafts (Carey 1992; Hale 2003, 269–80; Bevir 2011, 127).

In the Oxford crucible, Green greatly influenced the future "educationalist" civil servants central to secondary education reform, such as his contemporary, James Bryce, and students, Arthur Acland, Richard Haldane, and Michael Sadler (Gordon and White 1979, 10, 88). In 1857, Green joined a reading group called the Old Mortality Club (named after Walter Scott's novel,

Old Mortality). Other members of the club included Bryce, philosopher Edward Caird, and authors Algernon C. Swinburne, Walter Pater and John Addington Symonds (Green's future brother-in-law). Members were inspired by Kingsley and Carlyle and took turn reading comedic passages from Dickens and Robert Browning's poems. They debated the Bronte sisters, Gaskell, and Thackeray and ran radical in their embrace of literature, art, politics, and religion. They hung a portrait of Emperor Napoleon III's would-be assassin over the fireplace, strongly supported Lincoln in the US Civil War, and argued vigorously for comprehensive national education (Monsman 1970, 359–75). Many of Green's followers spent time at Toynbee Hall, where the socially conscious upper class did good works (Gordon and White 1979, 104–5).

A second network of authors participating in educational debates came together through the publisher, W.E. Henley (Minchinton 1975, 230). These authors, following Matthew Arnold, were keen enthusiasts for literary studies, disparaged the growing emphasis on math and science, and often offered a literary defense of the British Empire. Thomas Hardy was passionate about humanistic studies and advocated for making classical education widely available to all social classes. Hardy's biographer, Michael Millgate (2004, 88–9), described Hardy's goals as "self-education, self-development and self-discovery." To emphasize that all classes had the capacity for such learning, Hardy drafted the words of his rural, working-class characters to capture "intelligent peasant talk" (Millgate 2004, 185). Hardy's passion for education reflected his own thwarted desire to attend university; indeed, while supporting himself as an architect, Hardy spent his free time learning Latin and Greek. A political Liberal, Hardy's early works were so focused on social reform that an editor told Hardy to tone down the politics and hone his literary ambitions instead (Millgate 2004, 106).

Rudyard Kipling shared Hardy's passion for classical education and, despite political differences, became friends with Hardy and other members of the Henley circle, such as Rider Haggard, J.M. Barrie, and Henry James. In 1891, Henley, Hardy, Haggard, James, and Kipling's cousin's husband, John Mackail, sponsored Kipling's election to the prestigious Savile Club (a men's club in London that specialized in the arts); and Hardy took the Kiplings house hunting around the south of England (Gilmour 2002, 90, 167). As a Conservative, imperialist, and celebrator of British culture, Kipling was disgusted by Gladstonian Liberals, socialists, and virtually all who denigrated the British Empire. Rider Haggard referred to Kipling as the "true watchman of our Empire" (Gilmour 2002, 124). Kipling believed that an inadequate system of secondary education was a detriment to imperialism (a pressing concern during the Boer War) and he shared the group's interest in promoting humanistic studies (Gilmour 2002, 115). The author R.D. (Richard Doddridge) Blackmore, author of *Lorna Doone*, was another Tory in this friendship circle, ardently studied classics, and worked as a teacher ("Occasional Notes" 1900, 168–9). James Barrie (author of *Peter Pan*) was

also close friends with Hardy, Kipling, Blackmore, and other authors of the period, and in 1887, James Barrie formed a cricket team for his literary friends of questionable athletic prowess (Telfer 2010).

A third network of authors and intellectuals interested in educational policy was associated with the socialist Fabian Society. These progressive writers included Sidney and Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, and Bertrand Russell, among others (Garver 2011, 92–3). The Fabians were both an important source of policy expertise for politicians and a significant force in shaping public opinion. Their essays were hugely popular and Shaw bragged that the Fabians – whom he called "the recognized bullies of and swashbucklers of advanced economics" – had a special talent for packaging expert knowledge for popular consumption (Shaw 1892, 16). At its outset, the society was sharply antagonistic to mainstream political initiatives. For example, when Radical/Liberal MP Richard Haldane presented his party's program for educational reform in 1888, attendees pointed out that educational reforms would do little to reverse the suffering of working people while an idle class controlled vast wealth. According to George Standring in *The Radical*, "the short, sharp tones of the Chairman's voice told that the carnage was about to commence. After some desultory questioning, Mr. Sidney Webb sprang to his feet, eager, excited and anxious to shake the life out of Mr. Haldane before anyone else could get at him.…Then up rose George Bernard Shaw, and as he spoke, his gestures suggested to me the idea that he had got Mr. Haldane impaled upon a needle, and was picking him to pieces limb by limb, as wicked boys disintegrate flies" (Shaw 1986, 357–8). Yet Fabians grew more reformist with time and became strong supporters of education reform. HG Wells' entry into the society expanded Fabian influence on popular discourse. Wells' *Anticipations* (1901) provided a series of predictions and prescriptions for the technological and social revolution of the Twentieth-Century. Beatrice Webb called it "the most remarkable book of the year: a powerful imagination furnished with the data and methods of physical science, working on social problems" (Webb, Beatrice, December 1901, 2115).

Authors' Narratives about Education

These three networks of writers and philosophers helped to frame the educational debates on issues of access, curricula and administrative oversight in secondary education reform. While the literary left and right disagreed about voluntary church schools in education, authors converged considerably in their support for humanistic studies and in their advocacy for a national, rationalized education system with local agency.

First, fiction writers from all three groups wanted the working class to have *access* to post-elementary education, and linked educational access both to social stability and to fighting the culture of poverty. Gissing's novel *The Nether World* portrays a dangerous cruelty within the urban working classes, describing one character's brutality as a "lust…for sanguinary domination" that "was the natural enough issue of the brutalizing serfdom of her

predecessors in the family line" (Gissing 2016/1889, Loc. 95). Gissing's moral protagonist, Sidney, is impeded from achieving his fullest potential by a lack of education and unfortunate circumstances. "His enthusiasms, his purposes, never defined as education would have defined them, were dissipated into utter vagueness [and]…profound discouragement, recognition of the fact that he was a mechanic and never could be anything else" (Gissing 2016/1889, Loc. 908). For Anarchist Oscar Wilde, charity demoralized the poor, while education cultivated individualism and independence: "Socialism would relieve us from that sordid necessity of living for others which, in the present condition of things, presses so hardly upon almost everybody…. Socialism itself will be of value simply because it will lead to Individualism" (Wilde 2014/1900, 1, 5).

H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (2011/1898) imagined the immeasurable costs of the extreme deprivation of the working class in a futuristic world where the haves and have-nots quite literally evolved into different species. When encountering the happy, artfully attired upper-world denizens, the time traveler initially believed that social and economic problems were overcome; but he soon learned that by banishing the laboring population to an underground world, oppressors became prey (Wells 2011/1898, Loc. 500). Yet Wells feared cultural degradation with the expansion of mass culture and the "extravagant swarm of new births" as the "essential disaster of the nineteenth-century" (Carey 1992, 1). Even Shaw, who favored full funding of schools, shared some concerns about mass culture. Shaw recalls that his novel, "Immaturity," was rejected by London publishers because the mass readers no longer wanted "excessively literary" writers, but rather adventure stories. Shaw sadly notes, "I, as a belated intellectual, went under completely" (Carey 1992, 3).

Shaw lamented the shortcomings of an ignorant society in the preface to *Pygmalion*, writing that the English "have no respect for their language, and will not teach their children to speak it…It is impossible for an Englishman to open his mouth without making some other Englishman hate or despise him" (Shaw 2017/1913, 3). Over the course of the play, education changes Liza Doolittle "into a quite different human being by creating a new speech for her. It's filling up the deepest gulf that separates class from class and soul from soul" (66). Shaw puts a comedic twist on the culture of poverty and avoids casting aspersions on the working class by having Liza's father say, unabashedly, "I'm one of the undeserving poor: that's what I am. Think of what that means to a man. It means that he's up agen middle class morality all the time… it's always the same story: 'You're undeserving; so you can't have it.' But my needs is as great as the most deserving widow's that ever got money out of six different charities in one week for the death of the same husband" (44).

For many authors, education provided much more than a vehicle for taming the unruly masses, rather schooling was a means by which workers could improve themselves and establish self-respect. Hardy was inspired by John Stuart Mill's utilitarian argument for education for social mobility and Hardy supported autodidact education by which the worker could educate himself/herself (Mattisson 2013, 188–90; Cordner 2016). Hardy also was concerned

about the plight of the poor; thus in a letter to Florence Henniker on January 24, 1897, he writes that "of all men dead whom I should like to meet in the elysian fields I would choose Shelley…for his genuineness, earnestness, & enthusiasms on behalf of the oppressed" (Hardy and Millgate 1990, 112–3). George Eliot believed that women's education could offset gender discrimination. Thus she wrote to Mrs. Peter Taylor on 30th May, 1867, "I do sympathize with you most emphatically in the desire to see women socially elevated – educated equally with men" (Eliot and Cross 1903, 13). She noted to Madame Bodichon on 6th April, 1868 that in creating higher education for women, one must acknowledge the "enormous social unproductive labor" (Eliot and Cross 1903, 27).

In Mary Augusta Ward's novel *Robert Elsmere*, the eponymous protagonist and his wife Catherine are the epitome of Toynbee House social activists. When asked if Catherine is happy in charity, her sister replies "anything that has two legs and is ill, that is all Catherine wants to make her happy" (Ward 2012/1888, 3474). Elsmere is accused of being one of "the fools with a mission who have teased our generation – all your Kingsleys, and Maurices, and Ruskins" (4361), and Elsmere enthusiastically goes "mad" for "Dirt, drains, and Darwin" (3189). When Elsmere resurrects a local Workmen's Institute and starts a Naturalists' Club with local children, a violent boy is transformed by learning about science (3371). Elsmere later works in London's East End with skilled artisans, offering a historical lecture series and storytelling sessions, "drawing from simple frolic and fancy of fiction – fairy tale and legend, Greek myth or Icelandic saga, episodes from Walter Scott, from Cooper, from Dumas" (8707).

Second, many writers from across the different intellectual circles weighed in on *pedagogy* by advocating for humanistic studies at the secondary level, sometimes to expand academic studies to working-class youth and sometimes to enrich British culture. Arnold viewed literature as crucial to modernizing Britain, worried that middle-class commercial education depressed English culture, and lobbied relentlessly for a humanistic secondary education until his death in 1888. In his famous Liverpool Address in 1882, Arnold drew a direct line from the middle class's lack of cultural awareness to the Britain's decline as a great nation (Rapple 1997, 160). Arnold noted to brother-in-law William Forster that politicians would recognize the importance of public secondary schools "if our middle class does ever come really to life" (Arnold, May 1879). Arnold feared that the Darwin craze would tip the scale toward science and famously debated T.H. Huxley in a series of lectures on scientific versus humanistic education (Saffrin 1973, 47–8).

Arnold parodies English educational curricula in the satire, "Friendship's Garland" (1871). Upper-class aristocrats and clergy follow "the classical curriculum," which unfortunately constitutes "four nights without going to bed, and an incredible consumption of wet towels, strong cigars, and brandy-and-water…one of the most astonishing feats of mental gymnastics I

ever heard of" (Arnold 1883/1871, 49–50). The middle-class receive instruction in commerce and scientific studies, and Arnold's distain for this curriculum comes through in the description of a teacher, Archimedes Silverpump Ph.D.:

> Original man, Silverpump! Fine mind! Fine system! None of your antiquated rubbish – all practical work – latest discoveries in science – mind constantly kept excited – lots of interesting experiments – lights of all colours – fizz! fizz! bang! bang! That's what I call forming a man! (Arnold 1883/1871, 50–1).

Hardy extolls the virtues of humanistic secondary education for all classes, particularly in *Jude the Obscure*. Jude seeks enlightenment through classical education but is beaten down by a hostile society and class-based restrictions on access to education for working-class children. His compatriots among the working class are ignorant, hostile, and abusive, and he feels fellowship only with the birds that also live "in a world that does not want them" (Hardy 2014/1895, 11). Town folk consider Jude "very stuck up, and always reading" (35) and enjoy take pleasure in his fall from grace, remarking "All his reading had only come to this, that he would have to sell his books to buy saucepans" (49). Jude briefly realizes that there is dignity in the manual work of the stone-cutter, but he forgets this insight "under stress of his old idea" (74). Jude also suffers from the strictures of middle-class morality in marriage, after being ensnared by a heartless and mercenary barmaid (43). Learning is Jude's great solace and he longs to escape to the "city of light," the Oxbridge-inspired Christminster (19–20). But Jude is told that "Such places be not for such as you – only for them with plenty of money" (100) and that "you will have a much better chance of success in life by remaining in your own sphere" (104). Jude's problems are associated with the lack of educational opportunities afforded to the working class.

For Kipling, literature was the source of civilization. In *The Book of Words*, he writes, "a man who goes into life with no knowledge of the literature of his own country and without a certain acquaintance with the classics and the value of words, is as heavily handicapped as a man who takes up sports or games without knowing what has been done in these particular sports or games…He doesn't know the records and so he can't have any standards" (Kipling 1928, 82).

Granted, some authors during this period also recognized the value of hands-on, experiential learning. T.H. Huxley argued that elementary education was "too bookish," not practical enough, those particular faculties which are of utmost importance to industrial life" (Huxley 1960/1887, 421). In *News from Nowhere*, William Morris described a utopian society in which labor is inherently beneficial, all master skills, and cooperation is the norm. Children learn through exploration and school institutions disappear. "Most children, seeing books lying about, manage to read by the time they are four years old… As to writing, we do not encourage them to scrawl too early" (Morris 1890, 28). (Fabian Graham Wallas suggested that the work required in the lifestyle

of *News from Nowhere* would add up to 200 hours a week) (Clarke 1978, 30). Yet on the whole, humanistic education received the greatest praise among writers of fiction.

Third, education became a matter of crucial national importance in the colonial age and schools to sustain the British Empire would require greater state control. Arnold had long since advocated for the rationalization of the education system with links between primary and secondary schools and a ministry of education (Connell 1950, 88–9, 112). But Kipling gave this reform new urgency with his indictment of British preparedness. The defense of the British Empire required men of action, who would (in the words of Kipling's famous poem), "Take up the White Man's burden – Send forth the best ye breed – Go bind your sons to exile To serve your captives' need" (Kipling 1902). Turn of the century wags came up with mocking variations on Kipling's poem, including "The Black Man's Burden," "The White Woman's Burden" and the perhaps most idiosyncratic, the "Old Maid's Burden" (Gilmour 2002, 127–8). Yet while the White Man's Burden was a racist ode to imperialism, it also constituted a warning about the British education system. The final stanzas of the poem were directed toward British youth, who according to Kipling, were not receiving the education they would need to rule the world. "Take up the White Man's burden – Have done with childish days – The lightly proffered laurel, The easy, ungrudged praise. Comes now, to search your manhood Through all the thankless years, Cold-edged with dear-bought wisdom, The judgment of your peers!" Kipling further attacked the sorry state of the British military and education in a 1901 poem entitled "The Islanders." The people sent "Sons of the sheltered city – unmade, unhandled, unmeet" off to war, and then "ye returned to your trinkets; then ye contented your souls With the flannelled fools at the wicket or the muddied oafs at the goals." www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/poems_islanders.htm. A London *Times* (1/15/02) editorial described the poem as "a reproach against our system of higher education that it encourages an abnormal reverence for athletic prowess, and sends so many young men of the governing classes out into life with no higher ideals than those of the cricket ground or football field…it is to the higher education which molds our view of life that the nation looks to set an example of all that is best and noblest and most patriotic in the English character" (Gilmour 2002, 39–40).

Kipling's novel *Kim* (2014/1901) might seem to offer a different message about a regulated education system, as Kim amasses vast knowledge of India by growing up on the streets and spends his youth evading missionaries and other charitable agents. Yet Kim's Buddhist priest pays for Kim to go to the best school in India, writing "Education is the greatest blessing if of best sorts. Otherwise no earthly use" (Kipling 2014/1901, 87). After one of Kim's guardian angel/spy protectors convinces Kim to study Wordsworth, Lear and Julius Caesar; Kim comes to appreciate both his formal schooling and literature as a way of learning about life (134).

Beyond highlighting education's importance to empire building, late realist and early modernist writers conjured up dark visions of societies that lacked the coordinating functions of the state. These depictions, in turn, created space for more positive views of government in education. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (2012/1899), for example, portrays an enclave devoid of political regulation, a Hobbesian world in which one sick man terrorizes and rules with tyrannical impunity over his unwilling subjects. The anti-imperialist Conrad stood Kipling on his head by asking how a man with a European education, the evil Kurtz, could descend into demonic behavior. Yet Conrad's racist, essentialist assumptions about black Africa reflected a belief in the decency of British political institutions. Anthony Trollope (who ran for Parliament as a Liberal) more gently drew attention to the irregularities inherent in education without national control. In *Barchester Towers*, an odious low-church reformer uses Sunday school classes to gain power in the small rural village (Trollope 2015/1857, 4655). The state became a friend rather than foe for this more collectivist age.

Even some Fabian Socialists also harbored imperialist sympathies; and all wanted a strong, centralized system of education under national government control, which they felt was necessary to mitigate class disparities. As it stood, the British education system was an administrative muddle with a confusing division of labor, in which the Education Department supervised regular secondary education, the Charity Commissioners were responsible for church education, and the Science and Art Department was in charge of technical education. Sidney Webb wrote: "Certainly if some evil genius had inspired us to do our worst to hamper and restrict instruction it could not have done better than create the existing system of administration. A true ideal of education would take into account the needs of the nation as a whole" (Webb 1901, 1). "For confusion, isolation, and want of co-operation, the remedy is unity" (Webb 1901, 5).

Authors in Episodes of School Reform

Liberal Educational Initiatives (1870–1895)

The forward march toward a secondary education system in Britain began in earnest when Liberal Party governments appointed royal commissions to explore different options for post-primary technical instruction and academic secondary education. In the decades after the 1870 education act, many Liberal politicians expressed strong support for technical training aimed at working-class youth. The Royal Commission on Scientific Instruction and the Advancement of Science (initiated in 1870 and chaired by William Cavendish, the 7th Duke of Devonshire) considered technical, scientific, and vocational skills. The commission found that British workers' scientific and technical skills were inadequate compared to other countries; this was a consequence of minimal government subsidies and underinvestment in technical training, and

led to lower manufacturing productivity and innovation. The commission recommended that the Science and Art Department fund science and vocational courses to ameliorate these deficiencies (Devonshire Commission 1872–5). Nevertheless, in spite of the commission's recommendations and Liberal support, Prime Minister Gladstone was reluctant to make investments, as he favored low taxes, limited spending and individual responsibility for education (Gowing 1978, 1–12).

Next, in 1884, a Royal Commission on Technical Education, chaired by Sir Bernhard Samuelson, recommended that local school boards develop post-elementary, higher-grade courses, which would be funded by Science and Art Department grants. This accelerated the role of local school boards in secondary education and espoused a principle of local innovation. The commission also endorsed technical colleges modeled on the Zurich Polytechnikum (Gowing 1978; Allen 1965, 148). The Royal Commission on Elementary Education (led by Richard Assheton Cross) proposed funding the courses with rates raised by local school boards (Gowing 1978; Allen 1965, 148; Royal Commission on Education 1887; Allen 1934, 100–1; Schupf 1972, 162; Ward 1973, 34).

These recommendations reached fruition with the 1889 Technical Instruction Act that gave new county and county borough councils (established by the 1888 Local Government Act) the authority to award grants and to raise a penny rate for secondary technical schools. In an ingenious act of creative funding, the government allowed the proceeds from a new sin tax on public houses (called "Whiskey Money") to be used for technical education courses (Marcham 1973). By the late 1890s, the Department of Science and Art had created 200 science-oriented secondary high schools or courses (Gowing 1978, 10–2). An 1893 article in *Nature* magazine concludes that "the work of technical instruction is firmly established, and it only needs to be organised and consolidated to become a very important factor in our educational system" (Gregory 1893, 185).

The Liberal Party's efforts to establish technical training received significant support from the National Association for the Promotion of (Secondary and) Technical Education, a group established by Arthur Acland in 1887 and chaired by the Marquess of Hartington (the 8th Duke of Devonshire). H. Llewellyn Smith (economist, disciple of John Ruskin, and Toynbee Hall activist) served as secretary. Acland had been part of T.H. Green's inner circle at Oxford, worked with Toynbee's cooperative education movement, and supported workers' voluntary associations. Acland lectured to co-operative societies, plugged practical skills training, and promoted education to build citizenship; yet he insisted that "the object of education is not to make us rise above our surroundings" (Gordon and White 1979, 60, 93–8). Acland advocated within the Liberal Party for a new collectivism to replace the individualistic Utilitarian philosophy of Bentham that had dominated the party in the past (Hughes 1960, 119).

T.H. Huxley strongly supported the national association and, in an address to the association's November 1887 meeting, urged that technical education

was "of vital importance – to the welfare of the country" and that the "purpose of the association" was "the development of industrial productivity of the country to its uttermost limits consistent with social welfare" (Huxley 1960/1887, 428). Ruskin was also a fervent supporter of technical education and later wrote "every youth in the state, from the King's son downwards, should learn to do something finely and thoroughly with his hands." Doing so, he said, would teach young people "a multitude of other matters which no lips of man could ever teach" (Marsden 1960, 47; Ruskin 1893, 201). The national association strongly criticized the Science and Art Department's practice of making grants contingent on test results (the old payment by results logic) as this motivated cramming and hampered the development of useful, lasting skills (Smith 1889, 23–4).

In addition to these efforts to advance technical training, other commissions contemplated extending academic secondary education to a broader range of students, including those from the working class. The 1864 Schools Inquiry Commission was chaired by Henry Baron Taunton and included T.H. Green, James Bryce, and Matthew Arnold, who toured European schools. The so-called Taunton Commission studied secondary schools with permanent charitable endowments (including grammar, religious and university-linked schools but not elite "public schools"). The Taunton Commission's report criticized the limited, patchwork system of secondary education and its clear class bias, as endowments brought in "many more of those above the labouring classes than of those below" (Taunton Commission 2018/1868, 121, 1–9, 106). Furthermore, public resources were severely limited: "there is no public school and no public education for the middle and upper classes" (Taunton Commission 2018/1868, 168, 107). Bryce reported that in his district Latin was "the only subject taught with thoroughness" (Taunton Commission 2018/1868, 24). The Commission proposed a national system for secondary education consisting of classical education for the upper class, commercial education for middle-class professions, and trade courses for workers (Taunton Commission 2018/1868).

Both a national secondary education system and a vocational education track received a boost when Liberals gained control of the government in August 1892 and Arthur Acland became Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education under Gladstone. Acland sought the centralization and nationalization of schooling under a "High Council of Education" (Gordon and White 1979, 96); and in 1893, Acland held a conference at Oxford to discuss the problem of secondary education (Allen 1934, 103). After the Oxford conference, Acland persuaded Prime Minister Gladstone to set up the Royal Commission on Secondary Education under the leadership of Sir James Bryce, a leading Liberal politician (Acland, January 30, 1894). Bryce was an Oxford friend of TH Green, former assistant commissioner for the 1864 Schools Inquiry Commission, leading Liberal politician, brilliant historian, future ambassador to the United States and long-standing proponent of a national

secondary education system. Members of the Commission included Acland's other old Oxford friends, H. Llewellyn Smith, Henry Hobhouse, and Michael Sadler, among others (Phillips 2006, 43).

The Bryce Commission's 1895 report proposed the creation of a new central department for education headed by a Minister of Education and new local educational authorities, reporting to county and county borough councils, that were to develop secondary schools. While the commission sought to centralize and rationalize education with the new ministry, it also would preserve some local autonomy: "we propose to leave the initiative in public action to local authorities…So far from attempting to induce uniformity, we trust that a free and spontaneous variety, and an open field for experiment and enterprise of all kinds, will be scrupulously preserved" (Bryce Commission 1895, 257; Dent 2012, 30–1). The commission also included technical instruction in secondary education, although this was a point of contention even among liberal politicians (Saffrin 1973, 551). The Bryce Commission Report stated: "We are aware that there are some who would limit the term education to the…more humane or generous studies, and who would deny the name to instruction in those practical arts…But this is an impossible limitation…all education is development and discipline of faculty by the communication of knowledge" (Bryce Commission 1895, 135).

The Bryce Commission proposals resonated with the faction of the literary community that supported technical education. While one cannot say definitively that these authors directly influenced the party's agenda, Liberal politicians and civil servants of the era had close ties to authors and philosophers. James Bryce had many connections to authors, some of whom he wrote about in his *Biographical Studies*. Shortly before her death in 1865, Elizabeth Gaskell provided the youthful Bryce with two letters of introduction to local political figures to support Bryce's political aspirations (Gaskell 1997, 594). Bryce sent Charles Kingsley his book on the "Holy Roman Empire" in 1866, and Kingsley praised Bryce's original thinking and research (Kingsley, December 28, 1866). George Eliot contributed one hundred pounds when Bryce helped to establish the Girton College for women (Fisher 1927). Bryce frequently stayed with James Kay-Shuttleworth (Kay-Shuttleworth, August 7, no year). Bryce also enjoyed a decades-long friendship with Matthew Arnold, and even asked Arnold to propose him as a candidate in 1874. Arnold had already proposed Harriet Martineau's brother James, and was thus precluded, but felt that Bryce would be "a very popular candidate" (Arnold, December 19, 1874). Bryce considered his close friend, Anthony Trollope, to have trenchant insights into contemporary manners and a perspicuous grasp of the political world. Bryce wrote in his *Biographical Studies* about Trollope: "Like most of his literary contemporaries, he was a politician, and indeed a pretty keen one" (Bryce 1903, 120). Bryce corresponded regularly with William Morris and supported Morris's political activities to help working men (Morris, February 18, 1878). Bryce acted as a go-between to explore whether Morris would

consider becoming poet laureate, but Morris declined due to his opposition to the monarchy (Morris, October 27, 1892). Bryce was one of the founders of the National Liberal Club, which included George Bernard Shaw among its members. James Bryce saw the Webbs socially, turned to Sidney for advice and solicited help with finding talented analysts (Sidney Webb, December 1891).

The scholarly Arthur Acland also had a deep appreciation for literary giants and he produced a compendium of essential reading entitled *A Guide to the Choice of Books* in 1891. Acland's father had been close friends with Charles Dickens and Gladstone, and Arthur inherited the family penchant for literature and politics (Acland and Acland 1902). In his advocacy for worker education, Acland maintained that literature was better placed than scientific studies to expand horizons and enhance citizenship; Dickens, Eliot, Kingsley, biographies, and history topped his list of course content for the enlightened working-class mind (Gordon and White 1979, 93–8). Like Bryce, Acland was close to the Fabian Socialists and Beatrice Webb wrote that Sidney was "in constant request" by Liberals seeking advice (Beatrice Webb, January 12, 1895, 1358–9).

Yet despite Liberal support for technical education, most British authors came down on the side of the classical, humanistic model of secondary schooling. Hardy was initially inspired to write *Jude the Obscure* (1895) by the April 1888 House of Commons debate on secondary education and the problem of youth transition from primary school to university. Hardy wrote to Edmond Gosse on November 10, 1895 that the novel was concerned "with the labours of a poor student to get a University degree" (Hardy and Millgate 1990, 191). Hardy's story about a talented working-class man's inability to go to Oxford resonated with reformers who sought equality of educational opportunity (Millgate 2004, 318). Five years after *Jude* was published, Oxford created a special two-year program, the Ruskin College, to train talented young working-class men in engineering and trades. Hardy later quipped that it should be renamed "College of Jude the Obscure" (www.ruskin.ac.uk/perch/resources/the–ruskin–college–fellowship–and–the–first–world–war.pdf).

After her novel *Robert Elsmere* was published in 1888, Mary Augusta Ward met with Gladstone, hoping to convince the prime minister to implement Liberal programs to alleviate ignorance and poverty. Ward argued that there was a strong connection between moral evil and "the physical and social and therefore removable conditions" in which it arose. She differed with Gladstone, she said, in "that to you the great fact in the world and in the history of man, is sin – to me, progress" (Clarke 1978, 16).

Whether or not these personal connections mattered, the Bryce Commission report was certainly consistent with the dominant thinking about education among Liberal Politicians and their literary friends in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The report sought expansion of secondary schooling beyond the upper class, stressed state leadership and centralized authority for educational improvements, and recognized the value of humanistic studies. Yet on

one point – the retention of vocational skills training – authors and Liberal politicians alike remained divided and this was to become a major source of political conflict at century's end. While some authors followed their Victorian predecessors, such as Dickens and Kingsley, in advocating for technical training, many others sat firmly in the classical studies camp.

Initiatives under the Conservative/Liberal Unionist Coalition

Despite some support for vocational training by conservative politicians, the fortunes of technical education fell in 1895, when a Conservative and Liberal-Unionist coalition led by Robert Gascoyne-Cecil (3rd Marquess of Salisbury) gained power and another conservative government with Arthur Balfour as prime minister followed thereafter. Spencer Cavendish (8th Duke of Devonshire) became the new Lord President of the Council, Sir George Kekewich became the Secretary to the Education Department and Sir John Gorst became VP of the Committee of Council on Education. The new administrations would eventually pass two important education laws, the Board of Education Act in 1899 and the Secondary Education Act of 1902, and they also took further measures to reform elementary education. While the acts shared much with the earlier Liberal proposals, they ended local innovation in secondary education courses and dramatically scaled back vocational education alternatives.

The Duke of Devonshire set up two committees to rationalize British secondary education. First, Gorst chaired a committee to investigate how the Science and Art Department awarded grants to schools. Gorst was an enthusiastic supporter of education, which he viewed as part of the Tory Democracy platform. As a young man, Gorst created the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations to build a working-class constituency; for example, he brought Disraeli to Lancaster to speak with workers in 1872 (Gorst, January 25, 1872). Disraeli initially opposed the Elementary Education Act of 1870, but Gorst persuaded Disraeli that such a position would alienate many Conservative proponents of education (Niessen 1984, 34–51). Tory Democracy was at odds with the aristocratic wing of the party and Gorst wryly observed that "landowners exhibited that distaste to intellectual development which was characteristic of a territorial aristocracy" (Allen 1934, 182).

Despite Gorst's prior support for vocational training, the Gorst committee proposed a bill in 1896 that would vest control over education – including the allocation of grants for post-primary education – to the county and county borough councils. This meant that school boards would lose control over their higher-grade schools and that the Whiskey tax, instead of being used only for vocational courses administered by the Science and Art Department schools, would now support all types of advanced education. The school boards and Science and Art Department – joined by Arthur Acland, the teachers' union, and the London Nonconformist Council – protested that under such a law, schools would be controlled by bodies with little knowledge of education (Niessen 1984, 212–7; *The Times*, April 18, 1896, 10; Daglish 1997, Loc. 1910).

The second committee set up by Cavendish was chaired by Sir George Kekewich, Secretary to the Education Department, and included headmasters and higher-grade school representatives from the School Boards. This committee was mandated to develop a rationalized system for overseeing all schools at both the elementary and secondary levels, including technical education. Michael Sadler served as the secretary to the committee, and Robert Morant became his assistant. Sadler and Morant came from the Office of Special Inquiries, a special branch of the office for educational research and publication that had been set up by Acland to investigate educational systems in foreign countries and to make policy recommendations. Sadler and Morant developed statistics to show that the administration of secondary education was woefully ineffective and needed desperately to be organized and improved. They also found that secondary and higher-grade students came from different socioeconomic backgrounds and pursued equally diverse future careers (Sadler, July 7, 1899; Daglish 1997, Loc. 1988–2000; Allen 1934, 96–7).

The two committees advanced quite different ideas about education system reform. Gorst's committee wanted to take authority away from the local, democratically controlled school boards, while the Kekewich committee sought to give them even more power. Gorst's committee would move vocational funding to general education; Kekewich would retain a strong commitment to technical schools. The law that was ultimately enacted, the 1899 Board of Education Act, was much more aligned with Gorst's proposal. Under that law, a new national-level board would supervise all levels of education and assume functions of the prior Education Department and Department of Science and Art.

The two sides engaged in fascinating political machinations, with much of the intrigue provided by Robert Morant. Sadler and Morant initially became great friends, as they shared formative years at Oxford and a passion for education. Sadler joined the Green circle at Oxford and Acland became an important mentor to Sadler. After graduation, Sadler served as secretary of the Green-inspired Oxford extension school, traveled through Britain giving lectures on "education for citizenship," and grew the school to over 20,000 by 1890–1 (Phillips 2006: 41–3, 42). Robert Morant studied theology at Oxford, but he was also inspired by Green's philosophy, Kingsley's reflections on poverty in *Yeast*, and Toynbee Hall. After spending time working on education in Siam, Morant moved to the Toynbee Hall university settlement, where he lived next door to Gorst (Allen 1934, 95).

Yet relations between Sadler and Morant deteriorated so significantly that the two men hardly spoke by the early 1900s. Morant had a tremendous aptitude for flattery that allowed him, in turn, to emotionally seduce and then alienate Sadler, Kekewich, Gorst, and Balfour. When Sadler's report on education was to be submitted publicly from the Committee on Education, Morant wrote: "It is a tremendous piece of work. I cannot think how you found time & brains to put into so delightful and readable & convincing a form so much

matter employing profound thought. It is quite too absurd that such matter should be addressed to the Queen by Kekewich, Gorst & Devonshire. They will surely…be ashamed to have their names under it" (Morant, August '98). Yet Sadler came to consider Morant ambitious beyond measure, manipulative and deceitful: "When I first met Morant, he had about him a dim halo of Buddhist austerity…He was far and away the best of the applicants…[Later]…The restlessly ambitious side of him came uppermost and again he found delight in intrigue" (Sadler, no date).

In June 1899, Morant moved to Gorst's office, and began working with Gorst on legislation to transfer control over secondary education from the school boards to the new county and county borough councils. Morant suggested that the upper grade courses developed by the school boards might be illegal, because these school boards were charged only with administering primary education (Daglish 1997, Loc. 2146). The London School Board (with higher grade schools and free evening classes) and the County Council's Technical Education Board petitioned the Education Department to resolve questions about the post-primary schools. Subsequently, the Cockerton Judgment supported Morant's view that rates raised by the school boards were authorized to cover only elementary school costs (Allen 1934, 113–33). After Gorst and Morant attacked the school boards, Morant characteristically avoided taking responsibility for his agency in the matter, writing to Sadler in a November 1899 letter: "This has been one of the most uncomfortable & difficult situations in my life. The outcome of it, viz running Gorst's rotten ideas, is also not an easy situation to face…a struggle…would have been fatal to your chances for the Secretary job. That is why I went on as I did today"(Morant, November 21, 1899).

Secondary Education Act of 1902

The Secondary Education Act of 1902, with Robert Morant now installed as Secretary of the Board of Education, built on the initiatives of the past decade. First and foremost, it made Britain's educational system more centralized, creating a comprehensive secondary education system, abolishing local school boards, and taking away the ability of local communities to create their own technical education programs (Maclure 1965, 140; Gowing 1978; Ward 1973, 34). The act created new Local Education Authorities (LEAs) that would be monitored by the national Board of Education (Robinson 2002, 159–63). But whereas the earlier school boards had been democratically elected and thus subjected to community oversight, the new LEAs were appointed (Vaninskaya 2010, 952). Voluntary church schools would receive funding that would be allocated by the local education authorities (Taylor 1994, 136, 143).

Both the 1902 act and additional regulations passed in 1904 presumed that the secondary schools should follow the grammar school framework with a humanities-intensive curriculum. The 1904 regulations also set standards for teacher training and ended the pupil-teacher centers in primary schools

that served as a sort of apprenticeship program for teachers (Robinson 2002, 167–9). In taking these steps, the legislation reduced the number of alternative secondary school options. Educationalist Cloudesley Brereton wrote in *The Fortnightly Review* in 1904, "The happy moment so long awaited in vain by Matthew Arnold has at length arrived" (Brereton 1904, 525). Literary critic Edmund Chambers agreed that the 1902 act was essentially based on Matthew Arnold (Chambers 1932, 92).

Gorst appointed Robert Morant to draft the bill and to manage political opposition; yet Morant used the opportunity to elevate his own political fortunes at the expense of his mentors, Gorst and Kekewich. Thus, Beatrice Webb observed that Morant became acquainted with "the politicians – Cabinet ministers and conservative private members, who were concerned with Education Bills and Educational Policy. Presently these folk – specially (sic) the Cabinet Ministers, found him a useful substitute for Kekewich (Permanent Head) who was deadly opposed to their policy and to Gorst with whom they were hardly on speaking terms…Both Kekewich and Gorst have been absolutely ignored. Neither the one nor the other having seen the bill before it was printed." Ultimately fed up with Morant's ambition, Gorst later wrote that he hoped that Morant's administration (as Secretary of Education) "would atone for the questionable method by which he climbed to the head place, but I now am afraid it will not" (Gorst, March 25, 1905). Beatrice Webb reflected, "Morant is the one man of genius in the civil service: but he excites violent dislike in some men and much suspicion in many men. He is public spirited in his ends but devious in his methods…He is a strange mortal, not altogether sane, but in spite of his malicious tongue and somewhat tortuous ways, he has done more to improve English administration than any other man" (Beatrice Webb, November 14, 1917, 3544).

Two crucial conflicts threatened to derail the 1902 legislation. First was the question of whether voluntary church schools should receive rate-based funding. Conservatives and Anglicans argued in favor of funding, as they worried that the voluntary schools would otherwise go bankrupt; Morant reportedly had the Church of England's interests at heart (Eaglesham 1962; Daglish 1997, Loc. 1166). Liberals, nonconformists and many Liberal Unionists sought universal secular education and opposed forcing ratepayers to support religious schools; thus, Balfour anticipated in his introduction of the legislation that the "militant denominationalists" would be most dissatisfied with the measure (Gullifer 1982, 86). Liberal MP James Bryce moved to reject the bill and a leading Liberal Unionist wrote to Devonshire that "The adoption of such a policy might even be fatal to the L.U. Party" (Allen 1934, 164).

Second, unlike the Conservative supporters of the bill, Liberals wanted the extant board schools, rather than new county authorities, to exercise control over elementary and secondary education. Herbert H. Asquith wrote to Arthur Acland on October 30, 1901, "I have been getting more and more apprehensive for some time past about this cry for a 'single authority.'"

A.J. Mundella (employer and member of the London School Board) argued that the new local authorities were not up to the task of managing education and Bryce worried that the new administrators would not grasp the differences between elementary and secondary schools. Henry Campbell Bannerman objected to allowing a national department control over the allocation of local rates (Gullifer 1982, 91–3). Ultimately, only two Liberals, Richard Haldane and T.J. Macnamara, broke rank to vote with the government (Allen 1934, 178–9).

The 1902 Act and 1904 regulations largely eliminated vocational education and scaled back the study of science and math in the new secondary schools. John Mackail, a classicist who was in charge of developing new curricula guidelines, placed little value on science and math classes, and proposed limiting laboratory work to two hours per week; the final regulations stipulated eight hours instruction in math and science (Eaglesham 1962, 156–7; see also Mackail 1924, 19; Vaninskaya 2010, 952; Ward 1973, 34). A 1903 report by school inspector James Wycliff Headlam claimed that British schools had an insufficient study of humanistic subjects and this bolstered Mackail's position. Morant later acknowledged persuading Headlam to write the report as a means of legitimizing changes that the bureaucrats had already planned (Eaglesham 1962, 153–5). By ending the alternative secondary schools created by the old local boards, the 1902 act institutionalized the elite cultural predilection for a romantic, liberal arts education, and this had powerful implications for the education of the British working class (Vlaeminke 2000, 5).

Writers and intellectuals participated in political deliberations on secondary education and worked to sway public opinion in favor of the bill. First, they enthusiastically lobbied for an encompassing and efficient national school system; indeed, Webb and his Fabian comrades placed a higher value on administrative efficiency than on working class access to secondary education (Kang 1984, 59). Sidney and Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, and H.G. Wells accepted the continuation of church schools as a small price to pay for a national education system (Gullifer 1982, 92). Sidney Webb had self-interested reasons for shifting power from the old school boards to the new county and county borough councils: he had won a seat representing Progressives on the London County Council in 1901, in what his wife described as a "sweeping victory for the Progressives" (Beatrice Webb, March 8, 1901, 2069).

Robert Morant frequently stayed with the Webbs and strategized with Sidney "for many hours [about] the best way of so influencing the Cabinet and its advisers that we get a good authority for London." They circulated a report and "set on foot quiet 'agitations' among the Church folk and other conservative circles" (Beatrice Webb, April 25, 1902, 2143–9). Sidney Webb was so involved in the process that Beatrice wrote, "our radical school-board friends scoff about 'Webb's bill.'" Sidney contacted Chamberlain and Balfour and "I think he has written to every prominent personate to each according to his views and degree of influence" (Beatrice Webb, April 25, 1902, 2143–9).

Fabian influence extended across the political spectrum; thus, Beatrice observed about her husband, "He is less of a doctrinaire than of old, more of an investigator. He is not a leader of men, but he is an initiator of policies: his influence is not concentrated in his own personality, it ramifies through many organisations and persons, the outcome of multitudinous anonymous activities" (Beatrice Webb 1901, 2072). Sidney "reaps many of the advantages, in the scope and variety of social intercourse, of belonging to the inner circle of the political and scientific world" (Beatrice Webb 1901, 2073). The Webbs organized weekly dinner parties, called the Co-Efficients dining club, and brought together a range of political interests ranging from conservatives like Gorst to liberals like Haldane. Beatrice wrote that "Haldane and Sidney are constantly co-operating in educational matters. Haldane has taken a bold line in supporting the Government Bill and breaking from his political friends" (Beatrice Webb, November 10, 1902, 2169). At one gathering, Beatrice found Balfour to have "the charm of genuine modesty and unselfconsciousness, and that evening he seemed in earnest about education…[I] seized every opportunity to insinuate sound doctrine and information as to the position of London Education" (Beatrice Webb, no date but probably late November 1902, 2172–3).

The Webbs also had powerful family connections through Beatrice's sisters' marriages to influential politicians. One sister, Margaret, married Henry Hobhouse, a member of the Bryce Commission; another sister, Catherine, was married to the Liberal Unionist Leonard Courtney. A third sister, Theresa, had died in 1893, but the Webbs continued to spend family holidays with her husband, Charles Alfred Cripps (Lord Parmoor), a Conservative turned Liberal MP. At Christmas in December 1901, Cripps sought a compromise between Balfour and Chamberlain on the education bill. According to Beatrice's diary entry, Chamberlain opposed state aid while "Balfour felt the force of the Church's cry 'now or never.'" The gatherings were broadly focused on "National Efficiency" and the special combination of imperialism abroad and social reform at home (Beatrice Webb, January 30, 1902, 2116–7).

Shaw and Wells, too, participated in the Webbs' offensive to pass the bill and enthusiastically plugged national efficiency to various politicians and bureaucrats (Manzer 2003, 104). Shaw repeatedly dined with Haldane, Asquith, and Balfour (Shaw 1986, 1119). H.G. Wells attacked educational inequality and strongly favored a national system of oversight with new institutions under the control of the board of education (Wells 1934, I, 339, 341; Mattisson 2013). He believed that the government exercised "no public control" over private schools, and "no standard of attainment" (Vaninskaya, 959) and recalled his own negative school experiences with exams (Wells 1934, I, 339, 341). Wells believed that high-quality education was necessary to prepare the managerial and technocratic elite who would organize life in the Twentieth-Century (Wells 1901; Bergonzi 1961, 169–70).

The Fabians tried to dampen Liberal opposition to the education bill, and to smooth the divisions within the party between the Gladstonian laissez-faire

liberals (e.g., Campbell Bannerman and Lloyd George) and the collectivist, pro-state imperialist wing (best represented by Asquith and Haldane). The Second Boer War divided the two camps, as Bannerman and George sought to minimize Britain's involvement in the conflict, while Haldane, Asquith and Grey cheered it on as part of Britain's glorious imperial responsibility. Haldane informed Sidney and Beatrice of the divisions within the Liberal party on education and "enlisted Sidney on Asquith's [collectivist] side" as opposed to Campbell Bannerman's "Gladstonianism" (Beatrice Webb, July 9, 1901, 2084). Sidney considered many Liberal M.P.s to be too influenced by moneyed interests: "They are desperately in awe of the 'City', consider the opinion of the 'Times' and have their eye on the goodwill of manufactures – even on that of the brewers" (Beatrice Webb, July 9, 1901, 2086–7).

The Webbs spent much time socially with Asquith, Haldane, and others in the Liberal party's collectivist/imperialist wing; yet, Beatrice was privately exasperated with this wing, and referred to them in her diary as the "limps" (Beatrice Webb, February 28, 1902, 2120–5). As she put it, this wing appealed to "voters on the broad and shallow ground of Empire and efficiency…Our contempt for their limpness and our distrust for their reactionary views are too apparent" (Beatrice Webb, March 19, 1902, 2133). After one dinner with Asquith and Haldane, Beatrice complained that "Haldane was still keen on winning the 'Centre,' a term which he always uses as synonymous with the 'non-political voter' in whose ultimate power we believe." Beatrice wished that they would appeal to the "great lower middle class and working class" (Beatrice Webb, November 1, 1901, 2098). After the passage of the 1902 education act, the Webbs continued to work on the 1903 act governing London schools and the 1904 regulations; for example, in April 1904, the Webbs had a dinner party for Balfour, the Bishop of Stepney, Wells, and Shaw to push their agenda (Beatrice Webb, April 20, 1904, 2285–6).

Second, many writers supported the humanistic, classical curriculum within the new secondary schools, as many worried that vocational education for the working class would only reinforce class distinctions. H.G. Wells was the strongest Fabian supporter of humanistic education system, as he considered technical education to be suitable only for substandard jobs; education, as he saw it, should nurture inquiry rather than teach facts (Wells 1934, 93; Wells 1966/1937, 1062; Vaninskaya 2010, 960). Wells was deeply troubled by the English-speaking people's appalling use of their own language: "the barbarians of our streets…live in our mother tongue as some half-civilised invaders might live in a gigantic and splendidly equipped palace…I doubt if the ordinary member of the prosperous classes in England has much more than a third of the English language in use" (Wells, January 1903, 171–2). Broadly accessible mass education was the requisite cure for this linguistic pandemic: "It is integral in the New Republican idea that the process of Schooling…should be fairly uniform throughout the social body…there shall be no disadvantages imposed upon the child of any class…To keep poor wretches in serfdom on the

land by depriving them of all but the most rudimentary literary education…is altogether antagonistic to New Republican ideas" (Wells, August 1903, 353). Sidney Webb was more open to secondary vocational education for working-class children than Wells, but Graham Wallas agreed with Wells that education was necessary to raise the human spirit (Stone and Smith 1983, 704–7).

Rudyard Kipling lobbied relentlessly for humanistic secondary education in the service of British imperialism, and Kipling had the ear of the Conservatives. Future conservative Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin was Kipling's cousin and in 1895, another future conservative Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, sought to make Kipling Poet Laureate. Prime Ministers Salisbery in 1899 and Balfour in 1903 offered a knighthood to the author, although Kipling declined these honors (Carrington 1955, 262, 393). On the first day of the Boer War, Kipling rushed to London to dine with Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain, Balfour's uncle and a leading Liberal Unionist politician. Kipling's biographer surmises that Chamberlain encouraged Kipling to use poetry to rally the nation in support of the militaristic project. Kipling believed that the Boer War would elevate the British people, as "it has the merit of being the one war that has been directly fought over the plain issue of elementary freedom for all white men…England is slowly waking up to her possibilities and when the war is ended will be a different land" (Lycett 1999, 434 quote, 430).

Kipling somewhat exaggerated his own influence on the war; thus, he wrote "In the Boer War I controlled many many pounds of cake tobacco and millions of cigarettes to distribute; and the entire British army ran after me wagging its tail" (Lycett 1999, 437). Kipling's wife, Carrie, predicted to a friend that her husband "will become so absorbed in the Imperial Federation and other questions of National importance that he will sacrifice his literary career to them" (Lycett 1999, 393). Kipling's close relationship with Cecil Rhodes drew him increasingly into the Boar War, so much so that Rhodes built a house for Kipling and other visiting authors next door to Rhodes' own South African home. Kipling believed that only the common Englander could win the war of imperialism and that the English army must be educated. As he wrote to Jack Mackail, "It will be the common people – the 3rd class carriages – that'll save us" (Lycett 1999, 406). A reviewer of Kipling's *Stalky Stories* concluded that Kipling had sacrificed his artistic identity to his role as political propagandist (Lycett 1999, 449). Kipling was far less interested than the Fabians in the administration of the national system (Carrington 1955, 407).

Kipling's celebration of literary studies resonated in the bosom of his close relation, John William Mackail, the author of 1904 revisions at the Board of Education. Mackail was married to Rudyard Kipling's favorite cousin, Margaret, the daughter of Edward Burne-Jones and Kipling's aunt Georgiana. Kipling spent Christmas holidays with the Burne-Jones family, while his own parents were in India, and describes these sojourns as the only happy moments during his otherwise bleak stay in England (Gilmour 2002, 9). Kipling wrote to his cousin, Margaret, with terms of endearment as "Margot" and "Sweet

Lady" and the extended family remained close (Kipling, Vol 2., 1890–9, 105, 333). When Kipling's family returned to Britain in 1897, they moved in with Margaret's parents at Rottingsdean, subsequently purchased their own home there, and spent summers with the cousins. The Mackail family visited frequently and Kipling's daughter, Josephine, was best friends with Mackail's daughter, Angela (Lycett 1999, 406–8). Mackail was a pallbearer at Kipling's funeral.[1]

Mackail's socialist politics could not be more different from Kipling's; yet despite their political differences, Kipling and Mackail shared racist views that British people must protect their superior culture and both believed in the character-building study of literature (Coates 1980, 17; Mackail 1902, 21). When "The White Man's Burden" was published, Mackail wrote enthusiastically to Kipling that in his household "your poem…was read with tumult of acclaim…There are all the signs of England saving up for the most tremendous smash ever recorded in history if she does not look to her goings." Kipling wrote back to Mackail about his disgust with the foreign "white men" who fail to live up to their cultural burden and put their own interests first: "I've been round with the Channel Fleet for a fortnight and any other breed of white man, with such a weapon to their hand, would have been exploiting the round earth in their interests long ago. This is no ideal world but a nest of burglars, alas; and we must protect ourselves against being burgled" (Carrington 1955, 267–8).

After the passage of the 1902 Act, authors continued to promote humanistic studies. Thomas Hardy, J.M. Barrie, poet Alfred Noyes, and others joined the English Association, formed in 1906 to seek improved instruction in English literature and to formulate a national canon to prevent children from reading the wrong books. Arthur Acland, Robert Morant, and Commissioner Bruce also became members (Marsh 2004, 249–50; Ball 2012, 67–70).

Finally, although many writers were wary of state funding for church schools, many accepted this funding as a necessary concession in the fight for a universal, governmental school system. Shaw wrote in the *Daily News*: "For my part, I say that as long as there is a school in England to which children practically must go, either because their parents choose to send them there or for want of a better one in their neighborhood, that school should be placed under the Education Department and fully financed by the State, whether it be Established Church, Nonconformist, Roman Catholic, Positivist or Parsee" (Allen 1934, 199–200). Shaw noted that the religious wars over education need not be over religious doctrine: "What unsectarian education really comes to is that the children shall read the Bible in school without comment, & that their parents & pastors, at home & in places of worship on Sundays, shall tell them what the Bible means." Shaw encouraged the prime minister to change the terms of the debate:

[1] Flanders argued that Kipling considered Mackail to be pompous; however, family members disputed this claim and argued that the families were exceedingly close (Circle of Sisters, 220).

to say more or less frankly to the nation 'our schools must be made more efficient than they are if the country is to hold its own. Being an intensely & incorrigibly denominational people, you insist on having denominational schools as well as denominational buildings to worship in. Well, have them; but they must be efficient schools. And you must pay for their efficiency without any anarchist nonsense…The Government is therefore going to take the first step toward making those schools efficient by putting them on equal terms with the Board Schools as far as money is concerned' (Shaw, no date).

After passage of the 1902 legislation, the recently formed Labour Party endorsed the principle of equality of opportunity that had been advocated by progressive authors for decades. At its January 1905 annual Congress, the party's platform read: "This Congress condemns the educational policy of the Government, and desires to formulate a constructive educational programme based upon the **principle of equal opportunities for all**, such programme to aim at securing (1) that all schools, whether elementary, secondary, or technological, shall be under popular control – that is, under the control of the directly elected representatives of the people; (2) that primary, secondary, and technological education shall be free" [my bold] (Dent 2012, 51).

Yet in the wake of the 1902 legislation, technical education disappeared almost entirely from the secondary school scene, with only some limited evening technical courses remaining. R.F. Young (secretary to the Consultative Spens Committee in the 1930s) later wrote about the 1902 reform in the Spens Report: "The most salient defect…is that they failed to take note of the comparatively rich experience of secondary curricula of a practical and quasi-vocational type which had been evolved in the higher grade schools, the organized science schools, and the technical day schools. The new regulations were based wholly on the tradition of the grammar schools and the public schools…An unreal and unnecessary division was introduced between secondary education and technical education" (Dent 2012, 37).

AUTHORS AND SCHOOLING IN DENMARK

Authors' Networks

Overlapping networks of fiction writers and intellectuals also engaged in important educational debates in Denmark at the end of the nineteenth century: the "Modern Breakthrough," folkloric movement, and student society were particularly important. First, the "Modern Breakthrough" ("Det Moderne Gennembrud") or "free thinker" movement gathered around literary critic Georg Brandes. Beginning in the 1870s, Brandes led a revolt against the prior generation of Golden Age writers and strove to make Danish literature more relevant to international literary conversations and European readers (Gibbons 1979, 113). In a November 1871 lecture on European literature ("Emigrantlitteraturen"), Brandes waged war on elitist cultural formation, the state church, oppressive religious norms, traditional family structures,

and the conception of man as a symbol of God's work. He advocated for free thinking, the recognition of social risk, and a new morality system based on happiness ("lyksalighedsmoral") (Nørr 1979, 96–100). Literature should address controversial topics such as societal relations, property rights, marriage, and religion (Frederiksen 2020, 69; Brandes 1890). Brandes believed that workers' social and economic well-being was more important than political participation and he considered British literature to be overly wedded to parliamentary democracy (Gibbons 1979, 183–4). Darwin was interpreted differently by Danish modernists than by British intellectuals. While Herbert Spencer feared that supporting the poor would weaken nature's sorting mechanism, Danish authors' social Darwinism emphasized the advantages of cooperation. Thus Victor Pingel's view of social Darwinism stressed that social coordination fostered the collective survival of society and that evolutionary forces would deliver a balanced relationship between the whole and the individual (Sevaldsen 1974, 233).

Georg Brandes' brother, Edvard, was an important member of the Modern Breakthrough circle. A fiction writer and journalist, Edvard served as co-editor of Morgenblade, was co-founder of the newspaper Politikken, and later became an inaugural member and Finance Minister of the Radical Liberal Party (Radikale Venstre) (Nolin 1980, 27). In 1876, he helped to form the Venstre Club (Venstreklubben), which became an important hub for bringing together intellectuals and Venstre members of Parliament (Hvidt 2017, 125).

Another important member of the Modern Breakthrough was J.P Jacobsen, a writer of great talent who made a splash in European literature before dying of tuberculosis at the age of 33. Jacobsen had studied biology at university and stressed naturalistic themes in his work; like many Modernists, he embraced Darwin and interpreted the theory of evolution as a refutation of God's existence. Another important member of the circle, Herman Bang, was influenced by Emile Zola's realism and believed that authors could only describe and not interpret reality (Kristensen 1980, 18).

The nationalist poet, novelist, and painter, Holger Drachmann, was another early devotee of the Modern Breakthrough Movement, although he later left and became a central figure of the folkloric movement. Drachmann had attended Latin school with Edvard Brandes and was enlisted to write political poems in support of the movement (Hvidt 2017, 17). The magazine *Socialisten* published Drachmann's poem, "English Socialists" ("Engelske Socialister"), which was an ode to working-class heroes across the North Sea (Frederiksen 2020, 15, 65–6). In Fæderland, Carl Ploug noted that Drachmann was both an artist and an enemy of the existing social order (Frederiksen 2020, 65–6).

Sophus Schandorph was a writer of lesser talent but was one of Georg Brandes' closest associates and a highly engaged political activist in the movement. This may be why the National Liberal author, Carl Ploug, savagely attacked Schandorph's book, *Young Days: a Story in Verse*. Ploug used his book review to lay out everything he hated about the Literary Left. According

to Ploug, modernist authors claimed to more accurately depict reality; yet their stories were more about their own psyches than the external world. Before the modernists, authors had used their works to encourage progress toward a higher moral order and sought poetic truths aligned with Christian beliefs; however, the modernists' rejection of religion and conventional morality left them without any goal other than personal happiness. Drachmann rose to Schandorph's defense with a poem called "Parade Horse Parmo" (Parmo being Ploug's middle name) about a horse that runs round and round in circles without ever going anywhere to great applause by the bourgeoisie (Frederiksen 2020, 154–5). A number of journalists and politicians associated with the movement, such as Viggo Hørup, worked closely with the modernists to end National Liberal domination by swaying public opinion on social rights, education and religion (Frederiksen 2020, 70–1, 114, 166–7).

A second group of authors was associated with the folkloric movement led by Sven Grundtvig (son of Nikolai Grundtvig) and enjoyed closer ties to the "small people" than the authors of the Modern Breakthrough. Folklorists often came from the Grundtvigian folk high school movement and were connected to the peasant wing of Venstre (Coe 2000, 27). Holger Drachmann, who celebrated Danish myths and people in verse and art, became an important member of the folkloric movement after breaking with the modernists when he came to fear that European influences would cause Denmark to lose its defining character. He made a commitment to national well-being, promoted funding for an idealistic military, and sought a broad collective movement across the entire land that would transcend partisan conflict and overly proud, negative, skeptical, atheistic influences (Drachmann 1921, Breve III, 40). Drachmann expressed frustration with the lack of interest among Copenhagen intellectuals in the "small people," whom writers viewed as aesthetic constructs rather than as real people. For example, when Drachmann invited literary friends to a party to celebrate the Ewalds Fishermen at Rungsted Kro, no one made the effort to attend (Frederiksen 2020, 158–9).

Jakob Knudsen similarly straddled the Modern Breakthrough and folkloric camps, with his greater penchant for naturalism and conservativism, compared to other modernists. His father, Jens Lassen Knudsen, had been a folk high school activist, who shared a room with Kristen Kold, taught at the first folk high schools in Rødding and Dalum, and helped Kold to form the "Little Danish Society," where participants would read aloud works by Ingemann and others. Jakob Knudsen appreciated his special upbringing, and remembered fondly his parents' speaking to him "about Religion, Poetry, Fatherland, Culture, Art, as living people talk about life." He contrasted this educational experience with one in which "an officially appointed lecturer speaks about the subject of education with children who are forced by the state (the Soul-executioner!) to listen to it" (Begtrup 1918, 31). Yet Jacob Knudsen also recognized the abuses of the folk high schools in his novel *Two Kinds* (*To Slægter*), about his father's partial disillusionment with the movement

(Begtrup 1918, 109, 8–25). Knudsen became enamored with the modernists as a university student and greatly admired Holberg during this period; Drachmann was another major influence and helped Knudsen to launch a play (Frederiksen 2020, 244). Yet with time, Knudsen, like Drachmann, became more conservative, supported the peasant wing of Venstre, and celebrated Danish folk culture (Begtrup 1918, 133, 90, 256, 140).

Nobel prize winner Henrik Pontoppidan also grew up in a Grundtvigian family and straddled the folk high school and modern breakthrough movements. Henrik taught for some time in a high school and his brother, Morton Pontoppidan, was both a folk high school teacher and leading figure within the Grundtvigian movement. Like Drachmann, Henrik was also concerned about the "small people," but his novels were more realistic and less picturesque than Drachmann's poems (Frederiksen 2020, 204–6).

The Modern Breakthrough authors wielded influence through a third group engaged in educational debates, namely, the Copenhagen Student Society ("Studentersamfundet"), led in the 1880s by Herman Trier (future literary critic, educator and legislator), Niels Neergaard (future prime minister), Victor Pingel (future politician and educator), and Julius Schiøtt (future administrator and entrepreneur). Fiction writers inspired the society's students, many of whom were future teachers who would soon lead the charge in educational reform, and Pingel and Trier were particularly close to the modernist movement. Students advanced working-class education through evening classes provided by the "Student Society" and Trier later founded a periodical entitled "Vor Ungdom" (Our Youth) which was an important source for educational ideas. Pingel wrote manifold articles criticizing the Latin Schools (Skovgaard-Petersen 1976, 51–2).

Finally, Danish teachers joined the battle over educational reforms. The Teachers' Union ("Pædagogisk Selskab") had been formed in 1874 and was initially focused on issues such as curricula (especially the predominance of religious instruction), teachers' salaries, working conditions, and the role of the church in school affairs. The teachers were unable to achieve much during the political stalemate of the 1880s, yet schools were a site of daily conflict, as many teachers belonged to Venstre in communities populated by Højre voters. Moreover, younger teachers tended toward more radical views, and as older teachers retired, they were replaced by a more progressive cohort (Nørr 1979, 156, 184). Teachers advocated for adult education, which was particularly important in communities lacking any secondary instruction (Skovgaard-Petersen 1976, 55–6).

Author's Narratives about Education

In advance of the secondary education reforms, these groups of authors and intellectuals contributed to the cultural framing of education on a number of key points. First, writers challenged the old elite-dominated cultural project

and instead advocated for cultural formation for the masses (almendannelse); they fought to give farmers and workers *access* to secondary education both to strengthen mass culture and to build workforce skills. Their position contradicted the earlier claims by golden age authors that elites, rather than the masses, must determine the parameters for cultural formation (Skovgaard-Petersen 1976, 11).

Modernist authors contended that elites' and workers' interests were not necessarily aligned and realistically portrayed the trauma in the lives of their working-class characters. Herman Bang's *Tine* begins with a charming description of country life on the eve of the 1864 war and concludes by portraying the disastrous consequences of war and the class system for a young woman caught up in the social upheaval. In the pre-war period, class distinctions are muted in a small village and there is a close familiarity between citizens of all ranks. Commissioner Berg, the father of the manor house, reads Holberg and Oehlenschlager to the servants at night and the mother of Tine (a servant) effuses that people "down in the big house…have kind hearts" (Bang 1984/1889, 22). School children "sang national songs of Denmark" (24) and the curate is a patriotic Grundtvigian (41). But elites start the war and the villagers – seduced by the stirring verse of the old poets – await the battle with enthusiasm: "No longer was it possible, they could see, to cringe like dogs at the Germans table" (45). The battle of Danevirke is lost and in the wake, "An endless procession of carts was toiling past the inn…Old women, scarcely able to walk, plodded on numbly by the side of the carts, stumbling over the rain-drenched quilts which they were dragging. Children blinded by the rain… blundered on, screaming" (109). In the chaos of war, the Commissioner – a pillar of prewar life – sexually assaults Tine, who becomes overcome with grief and drowns herself. The novel's gut-wrenching conclusion suggests that happy village life was always something of an illusion.

Modernist and folkloric authors both held positive views of organized labor and portrayed expanded access to education as a partial solution to the injustices of the old order and conflict among social classes. In *Lucky Per* (*Lykke Per*), Henrik Pontoppidan recognizes the collateral damage imposed by industrialization on workers, and depicts education and social protections as the best way to compensate for industrial upheaval. Per views workers and their collective spirit with admiration: "They did not quarrel with anyone and were held together by mutual respect" (Pontoppidan 2019/1898, 480). Per's finance, Jacobe, writes about her growing interest in "different labor movements that had such close ties with modern technical development" and her initial fear of workers gave way to "feelings of alliance with the sooty, subjugated army of workers craving light, air, and humane treatment: the 20th century men" (199–200). Jacobe establishes a school for the poor in Copenhagen because "little is done on the social side to help them to a humane, a merely natural existence…the children will also be given the capital for a bright and fruitful sense of life" (477–8).

Authors used their works to encourage social solidarity and to transcend social division. Holger Drachmann draws from folkloric themes in his 1885 "There Once Was" (Der var engang), the most performed play in Danish history (Frederiksen 2020, 233–4, 265, 200–1). A Danish prince seeks to wed a beautiful but haughty foreign princess. For complicated reasons, the princess's father sends her off to Denmark to live in poverty with the disguised prince, where she must learn to obey her new husband, abandon her upper-class pretensions and develop survival skills. The prince tells the princess that he would rather be a beggar in his own land than to own the glories of the world (Drachmann 1902/1885, 26). When she complains about the toils of poverty, he responds that "the little people must bear life's burdens together" (72). In disguise, the prince chastises the princess for wasting her power on trivial pursuits and putting the land's welfare at risk; he feels lucky to be born poor instead of in purple (80). Despite highly suspect gender politics, the play's warm-hearted peasants, folkloric themes and witty songs make it a crowd-pleaser, but so does the story of love conquering all and human redemption through the affirmation of community. The play concludes with a song, "We love our land," that is still sung every year on the summer solstice to reinforce community and collective identity (Frederiksen 2020, 6). The third stanza emphasizes Denmark's love of peace and commitment to defending the country against external enemies and internal discontent:

> Each town has its witch and each parish its troll
> We keep them from life with joy that we hold
> We will have peace here in this land
> Saint Hans, Saint Hans
> Peace can we win if hearts never be cold (Drachmann 1902/1885, 121).

Concern for the peasantry and workers, of course, had a political dimension. The Danish constitution of 1849 had greatly expanded voting rights for Danish men, although some categories were still denied this right, and older National Liberals such as Culture Minister JN Madvig worried that an ignorant but newly empowered public could weaken civil society (Skovgaard-Petersen 1976). Modernist writers did not seek to challenge the capitalist system; rather they imagined a working class that was integrated, both politically and culturally, into Danish society. Thus, in Sophus Schandorph's short story, "The Vote" (2019/1890), a corrupt estate owner pressures a farm worker to vote for a candidate from the Right Party, Højre. When the well-informed worker points out that the candidate has broken constitutional law, the owner threatens to have the worker evicted. Another progressive estate owner promises to protect the worker if he wishes to vote with his convictions. After the election, the progressive owner visits the worker and remarks, "We are all under a lot of pressure, my good man. We must see to help one another. You can be happy that you did not vote against your conscience" (Schandorph 2019/1890, 2789).

Second, the literary depictions of modernist works informed discussions about the *differentiation* of and decisions about curricula for secondary education tracks. Modernist authors were ardent promoters of studies in math and science, due to their admiration for Darwin and concerns about industrialization; at the same time, their fascination with European literature led them to advocate for expanded instruction in modern foreign languages. Their enthusiasms came through in their literary characters and descriptions, and these depictions resonated with educators who endeavored to prioritize useful skills rather than classical studies in secondary education curricula (Skovgaard-Petersen 1976, 53).

Modernist authors cast aspersions on classical studies with their depictions of unsympathetic, self-indulgent young protagonists, who used Greek and Roman tropes to over-romanticize the world and to alienate themselves from society. Writers of this period throughout Europe featured protagonists as self-absorbed artists with poetic souls; but in Danish works, self-indulgence received a sardonic gaze and young artists longed for community life even while critiquing traditional moral standards. These themes appear in Jacobsen's *Niels Lyhne* (1880), a tale of a man's struggle with atheism, social isolation, and premature death. Niels Lyhne is a dreamy boy, who chooses to feel special and alienated, rather than happy and integrated into village life. "He realized perfectly that it was contemptible to be like ordinary people, and he was quite ready to submit to the hard fate that belonged to heroes" (Jacobsen 2020/1880, 27). Yet at times, Niels longs to be like his simple father, "well-nigh forgetting that it was the same father whom he was wont to look down upon with pity from the pinnacles of his dream castle" (29). Niels ultimately becomes "weary of himself, of cold ideas and brain dreams…[and of] forever poetizing about your own life instead of living it" (87). Although the book was beautifully written, even Brandes rejected its self-indulgence and called the book unworkable, inward, and crazy (Madsen 1966, 124). Reviewer Hermione Ramsden charged that *Niels Lyhne* would never be a great novel because it had only one character, the author's own (Ramsden 1900, 279; Downs 1944, 273).

Yet Jacobsen criticizes rather than glorifies self-indulgence and, with the character of Niel's tutor, Mr. Bigam, Jacobsen demonstrates how irrelevant classical education (found in Latin schools) gives rise to self-absorption. Bigum is a useless philosopher and "not one of the productive philosophers who find new laws and build new systems" (34). He is also overly proud, believing "that his intellect had a wider span than that of other mortals" (34–5). Bigum's hubris alienates him from society, yet he secretly has a "cowardly longing to sink down to the level of the common herd, to share their lowborn happiness, to become a native of their great earth and a citizen of their little heaven" (37). Niels's talented friend, Erik, offers a counterpoint to useless education, alienation, and failure. Erik escapes Latin school when a famous sculptor sees his sketches and invites him to become an apprentice. The sculptor sardonically

notes that "It did not require much classical education to find a Greek name for a nude figure" (67).

The modernists' appreciation for practical studies stems from their favorable views of industrialization as a tool for nation-building and for improving the material circumstances of citizens, including the small people. They regard favorably both state institutions and private associations for industrial coordination (such as unions) (Skilton 1980, 37–43; Brantly 1993). For example, in Pontoppidan's *Lucky Per*, although the protagonist has personality flaws, his wonderful idea for industrial development is welcomed as an opportunity for Denmark to obtain "commercial independence in relation to the great neighboring nations" (344).

Third, modernist authors pushed for more government oversight of education with stories of corruption in private schools. In *The Old Priest* (*Den Gamle Præst* 1899), Jakob Knudsen writes about the ugly politics of building and funding a new (private) Folk High School in a small village. A fire-and-brimstone pastor arrives in the village, announces his plans for a school, and conspires with two lowlifes to defraud the local count, who has a genuine paternalistic interest in the well-being of his fellow citizens. The corrupt cabal is "almost unregulated, in any case erratic – also in a moral sense" (Knudsen 1901, 29). The story stresses that even the Grundtvigian folk high schools can become corrupt and recognizes the need for greater government regulation and oversight.

Authors in Episodes of School Reform

Authors and Party Politics

In addition to their framing of educational choices, fiction writers participated directly in party politics. The party deadlock between Prime Minister Estrup's Right Party (Højre) and the Left party of intellectuals and farmers (Venstre) precluded significant political reforms until the 1890s (Henrichsen 1911, 67–72). The dysfunctional political realm led writers to ascertain that cultural politics and literature would be the best venue for debating social issues and advancing political change (Frederiksen 2020, 65–6). Modernists developed a faction of Venstre called "Literary Venstre" (or European Venstre or intellectual Venstre). The Brandes brothers and their associates envisioned this faction as a vehicle for authors and men of science to weigh in on burning questions of the day.

Plans for the new party faction emerged at a celebration for the Norwegian modernist poet Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson in November 1878. Attendees included modernist authors Georg and Edvard Brandes, Holger Drachmann, and Sophus Schandorph; journalists Herman Trier and Victor Pingel; and radical politicians such as Viggo Hørup. The newspaper *Morning Paper* (*Morgenbladet*) reported that participants discussed the duty for all – including men of science – to become politically active. Hørup declared that free-thinkers could be

more "realistic" in their treatment of social problems; it was time for Denmark to move beyond Grundtvig's nationalist bravado and the National Liberal's obsession with cultural formation (Hvidt 2017, 122–8). Denmark should strip away all illusions and prepare for the global age.

Literary Venstre made overtures to the peasant (or Grundtvigian) wing of Venstre, led by Christian Berg. Edvard Brandes wrote to his brother Georg in 1877 that the political problems were not due simply to Højre's strength; Venstre's weakness was also at fault and the literary wing should cooperate with the farmer wing to stop the dictator on the right. In a letter to Paul Heyse, Brandes further detailed how urban intellectuals might contribute to the farmers' cause (Gibbons 1979, 179). Berg came from the peasant movement, but he sympathized with the free thinkers and particularly admired writers who utilized folkloric themes (Henrichsen 1911, 67–8, 81–3).

Student Society leader Victor Pingel helped to align the urban intellectual left with the peasant wing of the party by emphasizing their common interests and urging students to be more respectful of the peasants. Pingel himself was initially hostile to Grundtvig and the peasant wing, for example, writing in 1877 that the Grundtvigian sentiments of the folk high school threatened "to drown us in a sea of baby food" (Sevaldsen 1974, 238). In a letter to Brandes, Pingel wished to understand the Grundtvig mentality better, even though it seemed completely crazy. But in an 1878 pamphlet on the Learned Schools, Pingel retracted his earlier caustic remarks, by praising the sharp contrast between the folk high schools and the learned schools. Pingel called the high schools "a phenomenon of education that is of such significant importance that all else becomes insignificant in comparison" and described Grundtvig as a "great creative spirit, the only pedagogical genius that Denmark has ever produced" (Sevaldsen 1974, 239). Venstre members of parliament welcomed students into the party at a February 1882 event, where there was much talk of shared antagonisms toward Estrup (Sevaldsen 1974, 235–8), and the 65 Venstre politicians and 407 students concluded with songs by Holger Drachmann (Frederiksen 2020, 176). Participants from the literary and farmer factions also met at the Venstre club to discuss strategies for cooperation (Hvidt 2017, 121–30).

The alliance between the literary and peasant wings of Venstre brought more men of letters into the Folketing. Venstre politicians Berg and Hørup persuaded Edvard Brandes to run for a free seat in Svendborg in 1880, on a platform of state-supported free schools, legal rights, and a good defense bill. Brandes and two other candidates campaigned for three days, debating (at the top of their lungs) before 1500 people in the open air. Brandes had to defend his Jewish ethnicity and atheism: he pointed out that religion should be separate from politics and that Luther, Jesus, Holberg, Oehlenschlager, Grundtvig, and Heiberg were all free thinkers. Brandes also humorously promised not to burn down Parliament or plunder libraries. In the end, he won by a huge landslide (1133 to 396 to 16) (Hvidt 2017, 131–4). When

a priest in the district urged his parishioners not to vote for Brandes, Berg pointed out that if your loved one were sick, you would not reject a doctor because he was only a paper Lutheran (Henrichsen 1911, 87). When Brandes was sworn into parliament, the Folketinget leader offered to let him not sign the oath, which mentioned the Christian God. Brandes signed anyway, saying that his personal views should not matter. But together with Berg and Hørup, Brandes used the occasion to point out the great harm imposed by religious discrimination (Hvidt 2017, 142–4).

The Literary Left helped the Venstre opposition to forge a new ideological platform that was crucial to the battle for constitutional reform. Berg noted that the old National Liberals had used their hegemonic conception of cultural formation – even more than their political power – to combat alternative visions of society. Venstre also needed to formulate a dominate narrative and the Literary wing provided the script for the insurgency against Estrup. Berg explained, "As long as the other had all the intelligence, it was a hopeless case to make people understand that true opinion was on our side." But with the help of the Literary Venstre faction, "We waged war with culture more than with the party." The Literary Left constituted, "our poets, our professors, our jurists, journalists…Like manna from heaven, the literary Left came down into this desert…we had what we lacked" (Hvidt 2017, 127–8). The alliance between the literary and peasant factions disintegrated in 1884 when peasant wing formed an alliance with the moderates within the Left Party. Yet the faction later became the highly influential Radical Left party that was extremely important to the origins of the welfare state (Henrichsen 1911, 96).

Authors and the 1892 Act

Authors' participated in movements to advance secondary education for non-academic students that eventually produced the "Law for State Support for Folk High Schools and Agricultural Schools of 1892" ("Lov om statstilskud til Folkehøjskoler og Landbrugsskoler i 1892"). Following Grundtvig, folk high schools initially emphasized spiritual awakening, nationalist sentiments, and cultural formation more than skills acquisition. Yet competition in international agricultural markets required more advanced workforce skills, bringing Venstre leader Frede Bojsen to note in an 1879 lecture that folk high schools were waning due to their excessive emphasis on the emotional and spiritual world (Skovmand 1944, 422).

Recognizing this pressure, writers encouraged the folk high schools to adopt a more skills-oriented curriculum. The older generation of "high school men" considered "free-thinking" writers as antagonistic to their values, and they refused to allow students to read modernist books. But around 1880, younger folk high teachers and students developed close connections to Brandes and the authors in his circle. Christian Berg, Herman Trier (editor of *Our Youth*, *Vor Ungdom*) and Otto Borchsenius (editor of *Away and Home, Ude og Hjemme*) encouraged the interchange among folk high school students and

modernist writers. Harald Holm, who came from both worlds, wrote in "Dansk Folketidende" that fruitful cooperation would benefit both sides. Grundtvig followers recognized the importance of the people's enlightenment (Folkeoplysning), but could also learn from the realists about the importance of great scientific work (Holm 1880; Skovmand 1944, 423–4).

The struggle to shift gears was not without bloodshed. When the novelist and teacher Morten Pontoppidan (brother of Henrik) proposed putting modernists on the curricula, Ludvig Schrøder responded that realist books (unlike Grundtvig's work) did not bring the sunshine and rain to nurture the seeds of the Danish spirit. Pontoppidan wrote in the *Højskolebladet* (*High School Paper*, December 17, 1880) that fresh air helps rain and sun to do their job better and that Denmark should welcome the great cleansing wind from Europe. After Schrøder attacked Pontoppidan in print, Pontoppidan wrote a painful and sincere private letter to Schrøder, saying "You are one of the stars in my youthful heaven" and stressing that Grundtvig himself opposed dogmatism (Skovmand 1944, 428–31). In another skirmish, Askov high school invited Norwegian poet Bjørnsterne Bjørnson to give a lecture in the fall of 1887. Jeppe Adkjær (future poet and novelist) led student protests in the wake of the lecture, demanding a curriculum change and leading students to an off-site location where they studied modernist writers, Charles Darwin, and Henry George (Skovmand 1944, 435). Finally, the modernist authors moved the folk high schools to update their offerings, expand their scope, and strengthen their capacities to serve students. Pastor H.F. Feilberg suggested that the schools had a civilizing influence, in awakening people's desire to read and in lifting the "equality of people's intelligence" (Skovmand 1944, 443–4, 463).

Urban intellectuals also worked to expand educational opportunities for lower-skilled technical workers, a group that had increased with industrialization and that required different training from the type provided to highly skilled craftsmen. After the Free Trade Law (Næringslov) of 1855 ended guilds, conflict had increased among craft and industrial sectors. Crafts schools had existed for some time and the New Handwork School ("Ny Haandværkerskole") created by industry associations in 1868 merged into the Technical Institute ("Det tekniske selskab") to train for both craft and technical skills. The Joint Representation of Industry and Handwork ("Fællesrepræsentation for industri og haandværk") was developed in 1879 to reduce conflict and improve coordination in training (Bøndergaard, no date, 16–22).

Folk high school advocates tried to open folk high schools in Copenhagen to industrial workers, but the evangelical spirit of these schools held limited appeal for the mostly agnostic workers (Skovmand 1944, 452). Young "folk high school men," such as Morten Pontoppidan and Falkenstjerne, recognized that farmers and workers shared common problems and they sought to reconcile Christians and socialists. In an article, "High School Work and the Current of the Times," Falkenstjerne wrote that "Youth should leave the cloister well-equipped to take part in the battles of the times. Enlightenment must now

answer to the political and the social" (Skovmand 1944, 466–7). A couple of hundred workers attended an 1880 meeting to hear about Falkenstjerne and Pontoppidan's plans for a school, but most doubted that the school's focus on religion and Danish culture would be of much use to them. One man declared that Christian Kold was the biggest idiot who ever lived, and union leaders concluded that the Christian focus would only distract workers' attention from world affairs, solidarity, and brotherhood (Skovmand 1944, 452–6).

Students, writers, and other intellectuals were more successful in their advances to urban workers and they helped to build bridges between farmers and workers. The popular Student Society's free, evening classes ("Studentersamfundets Aftenundervisning for Arbejdere") annually served between 1500 and 2000 workers in Copenhagen (Skovmand 1944, 457). Association president Pingel scheduled lectures from leading writers (Georg Brandes, Karl Gjellerup, and Sophus Schandorph), folk high school advocates (Jens Nørregård), and politicians (Hørup, Harald Holm, and Høgsbro) (Sevaldsen 1974, 244).

The movements to advance agricultural and technical skills culminated with the Law for State Support for Folk High Schools and Agricultural Schools on April 12, 1892. The law established permanent funding (an annual amount of 300,000 Danish Kroner) for folk high schools, agricultural schools, and technical schools (Larsen 1899, 482). In the past, the Grundtvigian "high school men" had been reluctant to accept state funding, as they feared that it would lead to examinations and expanded state oversight, which they adamantly opposed. For example, when Cultural Minister JCH Fischer surveyed the high schools in 1875, he found resistance to any oversight activities that might encroach on the schools' independence. But in advance of the 1892 act, Christopher Krabbe (later defense minister of Radikale Venstre) guaranteed that the private folk and technical schools would retain the right to develop their own exams (if any) and curricula (Skovmand 1944, 15, 230–6, 214–23).

Authors and the Secondary Education Act of 1903

Modern Breakthrough authors and intellectuals also helped build momentum for the 1903 school reform act. The Latin School reform movement was populated by former Student Society leaders, such as Victor Pingel, Herman Trier, and Julius Schiøtt, who had been close to the modernist authors since university and joined them in Literary Venstre (Skovgaard-Petersen 1976, 134). Pingel asserted that classical languages occupied too much space on class schedules; students would receive greater benefits by studying mathematics, natural science, newer languages, and history (Pingel 1884, 491; Skovgaard-Petersen 1976, 134, 138, 150). Berg worried that Latin schools produced too many graduates (about 450 a year) for the 150 or so government positions that many of them sought (Nørr 1979, 221). In response to a survey circulated by Culture Minister Scavenius, experts and school headmasters testified that the mathematics line was too commercial, it failed to provide general education

and it neglected useful modern languages (Skovgaard-Petersen 1976, 142). C.N. Starcke noted in *Vor Ungdom* that students at Latin Schools (and feeder middle schools) had lost their passion for learning, something that did not happen in the folk high schools and agricultural schools (Nørr 1979, 173). Jakob Knudsen agreed upper secondary schools offered little benefit to real life (Nørr 1979, 196).

Activists across the political spectrum also sought secondary education for a much wider range of social classes as a way to build society ("sambundets udbytte") (Skovgaard-Petersen 178, 138). Educator and politician Vilhelm Rasmussen, for example, argued that Denmark's greatest asset was its people, and a good education would both inspire young people to improve their life circumstances and bolster cultural development and democracy. Rasmussen sought appropriate schools for students of all abilities and supported examinations to place students properly, as these could identify students' innate capacities, initiative, and ingenuity (Nørr 1979, 197–8).

Advocates did not want a new secondary education system to teach the same curriculum to all; instead, they favored differentiated courses to meet varied skills demands combined with some general education courses for all to nurture a shared understanding of society (Nørr 1979, 197–8). As Vilhelm Rasmussen noted, democracy does not mean "that all are equal in everything: and this is folly…People are not the same and they should not be the same… Natural science teaches us namely that the unmeasurable examples of differences between the single individuals are one of the conditions for progress or development" (Nørr 1979, 197–8). Similarly, in an essay entitled "On Reading" ("Om Læsning"), Georg Brandes wryly noted that a uniform education would have to be made so accessible that no one would learn anything from it (Nørr 1979, 198–9).

Authors were drawn to the New Pedagogical Movement that promoted experiential learning within secondary schools. This philosophy had been well-known in Denmark since Holberg and received a boost from John Dewey and German worker schools; however, the Latin Schools did not utilize experiential instruction (Gjerløff and Jacobsen 2014, 273–7). In the late 1800s, new private schools experimented with alternative instructional methods and their successes contributed to the popularity of experiential learning at the secondary education level. Philosopher Carl Nicolai Starcke (a former student society leader) launched the private Danish Company School (Det Danske Selskabs Skole) in Frederiksberg in 1899. Starcke designed courses for the new school that he hoped would both further students' vocational aspirations and cultivate citizenship. He wrote in *School Thoughts*, "The goal must therefore be to obtain a place for individual's richest and freest possible development of their socially beneficial nature." "One does not get a finer spirit by rejecting the practical life. One gets only a narrower spirit" (Nørr 1979, 173). Starck felt that middle school exams were overly focused on academic subjects and prepared youth for neither practical life nor the commercial world

(Borup-Nielsen no date, 73). Consequently, his school offered interdisciplinary studies of natural science, math, foreign languages, and history, and students were encouraged to create their own textbooks. Parents participated in school administration and writers such as Henrik Pontoppidan sent their children to the school (Nørr 1979, 171).

Højre remained committed to the Latin schools into the 1880s and Pingel suspected that the Right favored these schools to bolster conservative interests against the rising democratic tide (Skovgaard-Petersen 1976, 134). Yet by 1890, the partisan stalemate had begun to subside, and Pingel pushed Venstre to negotiate with Højre on educational reform (Nørr 1979, 209). Business constituents of Højre, who sought better employee skills, provided crucial political support for a more practical secondary education program and many conservatives correctly identified a significant gap between the demand for and supply of students specializing in classics (Gjerløff and Jacobsen 2014, 75). Julius Schiøtt (former student leader and secretary of the Industrial Federation, Industriforeningen) organized a meeting on January 31, 1899 to consider "Our leaving school examinations and the needs of practical life." Participating employers agreed on the need for improvements in school-to-work transitions and the contributions of education to economic competitiveness (Nørr 1979, 204–5). The Federation of Danish Employers (Dansk Arbejdsgiverforeningen) included an article in its periodical, *Employers* (Arbejdsgiveren), on the relationship between competitiveness and school reform (Nørr 1979, 205).

Højre's Culture Minister H.V. Sthyr proposed a secondary education system reform in 1899 that included three distinct lines: classics, mathematics, and modern languages. Legislative action was delayed by Sthyr's departure from office and by the sense that primary education should be reformed before secondary education; subsequently, the parliament enacted teacher training and primary school educational bills (Nørr 1979, 223–31). Yet, even before the system change in 1901, groups across society converged in supporting secondary school reform. Educators, authors, student society members, folk school advocates, workers, business managers, and government officials all sought educational reforms "to create a better society" ("at skabe et bedre samfund") (Nørr 1979, 206–7).

The 1903 Secondary Education Act ("Lov om Højere Amenskoler, 24. april 1903") set up a public system with five years of primary education and four years of middle school. After this, students could either attend higher general education schools ("højere almenskole") that replaced the old Learned Schools or they could move into a one-year "real" class that served as a gateway to vocational or agricultural secondary schools or apprenticeships. The reform added a third track (in modern languages) to the upper secondary academic schools and introduced more general education for all three tracks. The legislation stated that the public gymnasium should be open to all students, regardless of their social class, if these students had the requisite academic capacities. Girls were also given full rights to education ("Lov om højere Almenskoler,

April 24, 1903"). Thus, the new system both extended educational opportunities to young people from all classes and retained diverse options for academic and non-academic learners.

The 1903 act retained religious instruction, but reduced the role of clergy in education and gave professional educational experts more power in school administration. The Danish Teachers' Union was a strong advocate for reducing the involvement of the clergy, but this was driven less by an anti-religious spirit than by the concern that the clergy had insufficient expertise in school matters. While the new law established a national system, teachers, parents, and local governments continued to have primary control over schools. There was very little debate on these issues and the bill passed with a high level of cross-party and cross-class consensus (Gjerløff and Jacobsen 2014, 94).

CONCLUSION

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Britain and Denmark both enacted major education acts that laid the groundwork for modern schooling, but these laws differed in terms of the types of education offered and, consequently, on the availability of secondary education for the working class. In 1902, Britain created a secondary education system based on the grammar school model of humanistic studies. Before the act, the Department of Arts and Science and higher-grade schools offered courses in industrial and technological studies, but these courses were abandoned with the passage of the new law. Policymakers would not develop technical secondary education for non-academic learners until 1938, when they established Junior Technical Schools (Dent 2012, 4).

In sharp contrast, Denmark's 1903 secondary education reform developed three tracks (classical, mathematics, and modern languages) within new higher general education schools and a special "real class" for students continuing into vocational schools. Extensive funding for trade, agricultural, and folk high schools had already been passed in 1892 and was retained with the development of the new system. Both countries increased the national government's presence in education in these largely decentralized school systems, but Danish municipalities, schools, teachers, and parents retained significant control whereas Britain implemented national regulation of educational choices (Gjerløff and Jacobsen 2014, 91).

Both countries had deeply dysfunctional partisan politics in the late nineteenth century, but even so, the Danish bill passed with broad support across parties and classes. In contrast, the British 1902 bill generated tremendous political conflict, largely on religious grounds, despite significant points of agreement among Liberal and Conservative educationalists. Conservatives charged Liberals with harsh treatment of the voluntary schools, which were subjected to stringent building standards, and felt that the church schools could not be sustained without public funding (Allen 1934, 98, 105–6). Religious wars had little to do with the death knell of technical secondary education for workers,

as both Liberals and Conservatives included supporters of a national public education system with secondary schools specializing in humanistic studies.

Fiction writers and other intellectuals helped to set the context for Britain and Denmark's different educational choices. Authors were disproportionately associated with the liberal parties in both countries (Bryce 1903, 120); yet British and Danish writers differed in their views toward workers, industrialization, culture, educational forms, and government involvement in education. Danish authors held more positive views than British ones about industrialization and stressed the importance of the working class to social cohesion (Skilton 1980, 37–43; Brantly 1993). In contrast, British authors often attributed workers' reduced life circumstances to their own culture of poverty. Danish modernists would extend processes of cultural formation to the working classes, whereas many British authors (and even socialists such as H.G. Wells) believed that mass culture would degrade elite culture. Although some British writers sought technical skills for workers, most desired a secondary education system based on humanistic studies. Danish authors more uniformly supported a strong vocational track.

This critical turning point in the evolution of education systems was to have major impact on the unfolding of the political economy. British reforms espoused equality of opportunity for students; yet entrance to secondary schools required credentials possessed by few workers. After the 1902 act, no educational tracks were available to develop workers' skills and the lack of skills encouraged Fordist manufacturing strategies relying on semi-skilled workers. An education system that kept workers in darkness diminished the fortunes of the working class and preserved elite hegemony. Denmark, meanwhile, created diverse tracks to ensure that workers at all levels would be trained to contribute to society. Even though this differentiation reinforced class distinctions, workers became highly skilled, and educational segmentalism ultimately served to reduce the disparities among classes.