

Unravelling Punishment

**The Representation of Punitive Practices in Golden Age Children's
Literature in France, England and America**

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Abstract

The thesis analyses the complexities at the heart of the representation of punitive practices in French, English and American books published during the Golden Age of children's literature. This study juxtaposes twelve titles by major children's writers published between 1859 and 1905 which demonstrate a shift away from bodily violence towards the internalisation of moral rules through less physical and more insidious means of discipline. The works of this period have not been examined from this perspective before, as the Golden Age tends to be associated with pleasure and entertainment. Punishment and discipline did nevertheless also continue to play a key role, resulting in complex and compelling works. In this corpus, the representation of the prison and characters' experience of confinement express adults' empathy for and anxiety about children's desire for liberty, while simultaneously justifying the need to limit their freedom. The writers in our corpus acknowledge the potent impact that the vicarious experience of the suffering of others has and use it to make narratives both pleasurable and instructive. Authors are keen to explain and justify the use of punishment, but also acutely aware of the impact this may have on the enjoyment of readers. This thesis explores not only young characters' experiences of punishment, but also its ricochet effects on adult characters and readers. Because punitive rationales are entwined with adults' protective justifications and their sense of obligation, punishment becomes a shared experience between children (within and beyond the text) and adults. Punishment is understood and proffered as a fundamentally collaborative enterprise, in which children are given the illusion of autonomy, with varying degrees according to the gender of the characters and the place of publication of the work in question. The outcomes of this thesis have an interdisciplinary dimension, pertaining notably to research on the construction of childhood, the history of emotions and space in literature.

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List of Abbreviations

<i>Les Malheurs</i>	Comtesse de Ségur, <i>Les Malheurs de Sophie</i>
<i>Petit Diable</i>	Comtesse de Ségur, <i>Un Bon Petit Diable</i>
<i>Tom Sawyer</i>	Mark Twain, <i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i>
<i>Wonderland</i>	Lewis Carroll, <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>

Translations Used

- Ariès, Philippe, *Centuries of Childhood*, trans. by Robert Baldick (London: Jonathan Cape, 1962)
- Bachelard, Gaston, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. by M. Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994)
- Durkheim, Émile, *Moral Education*, trans. by Everett K. Wilson and Herman Schnurer (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2002)
- Foucault, Michel, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1979)
- Hugo, Victor, *The Last Day of a Condemned Man*, trans. by Christopher Moncrieff (London: One World Classics, 2009)
- Renard, Jules, *Poil de Carotte*, trans. by G. W. Stonier (London: Grey Walls Press, 1946)
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *Émile*, trans. by Barbara Foxley (London: Dent, 1992)

Unless stated otherwise, all other translations into English are my own.

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Introduction

The success of Christos Tsiolkas's 2008 novel *The Slap* reveals the extent to which corporal punishment is still a vexed question in Western countries today. The blow given to a four-year-old throwing a tantrum at a barbecue party is the fulcrum of the novel. The ensuing structure reflects adult characters' emotional responses to this unexpected physical abuse, spurring bitter debates among them. While some advocate that adults should rule by love, others fear that too much permissiveness will result in children's uncontrollable defiance of authority. Punishment, some of them argue, is for children's own benefit. Crucially, the adults find themselves entwined in and prisoners of their educational convictions, sometimes burdened by parental responsibilities.

The adults' disagreements, concerns and anxieties in *The Slap* are the direct echoes of the discourses emerging from the twelve children's texts that comprise the corpus of this thesis. However, as opposed to Tsiolkas's novel, which does not envisage the aggrieved child's reaction or afford him a voice, our texts use narrative strategies that give priority to fictional children's viewpoints and adult-child relationships. Although produced over a century ago, the discussions about discipline and punishment present in these books, their underpinning debates about the legitimacy and efficacy of corporal punishment, are still current today – most notably when, in March 2015, the Council of Europe's European Committee of Social Rights found that French law did not prohibit smacking and slapping clearly enough, and breached article 17 of the European Social Charter whose signatories promise 'to protect children and young persons against negligence, violence or exploitation'.¹ The persistence of corporal punishment throughout ages raises many fascinating questions.

¹ Angélique Chrisafis, 'France debates smacking in runup to Council of Europe judgment', *The Guardian*, 03.03.2015 <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/03/france-debates-smacking-council-europe-judgment-le-monde-laurence-rossignol>> [accessed 02.05.2015]; Anne-Aël Durand, 'Autorisé en France,

‘Why is punishment [...] capable of such symbolic resonance and force?’, asks David Garland in *Punishment and Modern Society*. ‘What makes it an area of social life to which people attend and from which they draw meaning?’² While these vast questions are beyond the scope of this research, Garland’s interrogations are important. Indeed, this thesis rests on the conviction that the literary representation of punishment gives a unique ‘resonance and force’ to the fictional texts in our corpus and is at the heart of their underlying meanings. This thesis is organised around several other central questions: What does the term punishment mean when applied to children? Can the literary representation of punitive sanctions contribute to the understanding of the history of the concept of childhood? How can we explain the high incidence of the tropes of the carceral and confinement in texts for young readers? What types of punishment are applied and who is aggrieved? Does the representation of punishment reinforce social norms or does it have recreational, perhaps pleasurable, purposes? How is punishment justified and explicated, and what are the narrative implications of these explanations?

Because punishment extends to many aspects of adult-child relationships and areas of social life, the outcomes of this thesis have an interdisciplinary dimension, as the later sections of this introduction will show. Punishment indicates how our society thinks, views and acts towards childhood, and reveals the complexities at the centre of intergenerational relationships. It is therefore a lens through which we can look at various issues relating to the construction of childhood and examine the relationships among them. Punitive choices expose different styles of parenting, and their analysis suggests the level of responsibility a society feels towards children as well as the level of autonomy, both physical and intellectual, it is ready to grant them. It sheds light on what is deemed acceptable or not and the justifications used to validate adults’ resort to violence, but also adults’ willingness to communicate their own emotions and how they may have been affected by punishment themselves. Critics agree that children’s literature can provide valuable insights into

fesser un enfant est interdit dans 44 pays’, *Le Monde*, 03.03.2015 <http://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2015/03/03/autorisee-en-france-la-fessee-est-interdite-dans-44-pays_4586431_4355770.html> [accessed 02.05.2015].

² David Garland, *Punishment and Modern Society: A Study in Social Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 273.

the concepts, moral ideals and pedagogical debates of their time.³ In our texts, the condemnations of corporal punishment demonstrate that, at the time of our study, the child was partially regarded as an entity by him- or herself, but also needed to be protected and controlled.

Scholars have investigated punitive practices in individual texts or as part of broader explorations of adult-child relations in books for young readers; however, many of these studies focus on texts published in the early period of children's literature. From its inception, punishment has been a crucial component of the literature for young readers. Critics have shown that up to and in the first half of the nineteenth century storytelling for children was traditionally overtly moralistic.⁴ Narratives were used to exemplify lessons, warn young readers against unwanted behaviour and mould their actions. These narratives had strong educational subtexts about the effectiveness of different punitive strategies, the fear of deviance and the importance of adult authority. According to Jennifer Popiel, 'didactic tales provide particular insight into the development of the rhetoric of self-control and particularized gender expectations as they related to the construction of a new society'.⁵ Ann Scott MacLeod also remarks, with reference to American narratives, that they were 'centered on a child in need of moral correction; the correction of this or that fault then constituted the whole plot'.⁶

These texts could depict quite harsh methods of discipline. From early cautionary tales to post-Romantic children's texts, Penny Brown outlines that '[t]he depiction of pain, grief and suffering of all kinds in early children's literature was a common narrative strategy'.⁷ This may have been the pain of children or of others. In Mrs Sherwood's *The History of the Fairchild Family* (1818–1847) children who did not live

³ Penny Brown observes that 'books for the young have always played an important role in reflecting, perpetuating and promoting the ideas and values of their day and hence provide the social historian with valuable information about cultural concepts and change.' Penny Brown, 'Children of the Revolution: The Making of Young Citizens', *Modern & Contemporary France*, 14.2 (2006), 205–220 (p. 205).

⁴ Anne Scott MacLeod, *American Childhood: Essays on Children's Literature of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Athens, Georgia and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1994); Jack Zipes, "The Perverse Delight of Shockheaded Peter", in *Sticks and Stones: The Troublesome Success of Children's Literature from Slovenly Peter to Harry Potter*, ed. by Jack Zipes (New York and London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 147–170.

⁵ Jennifer Popiel, *Rousseau's Daughters: Domesticity, Education and Autonomy in Modern France* (Durham, New Hampshire: University of New Hampshire Press, 2008), p. 117.

⁶ Scott MacLeod, *American Childhood*, p. 91.

⁷ Penny Brown, 'The different faces of pain in early children's literature', in *La Douleur: Beauté ou Laidneur*, L'ULL Critic 9–10 (Lleida: Edicions de la Universitat de Lleida, 2005), p. 117.

in the fear of God would die in dreadful agonies, such as Augusta Noble who is burned alive. But Augusta's worst crime is to die unrepentant and unredeemed. The young protagonists in Sherwood's book witness the punishment of adults – they are made to sit under the remains of a man who murdered his brother, hanging on a gibbet, in order to illustrate their father's lesson about sibling relations.⁸ Mrs. Fairchild also recounts to her children that she was punished as child; for instance, she was once locked in a dark room for three days with only bread and water. Religious morals were often prevalent, and the notions of transgression, authority, responsibility, guilt and penance had a real impact on the language and plot of such stories. Evangelical, Puritan and Catholic movements all had strong and lasting influences on writings for children in England, America and France.

The importance given to punishment in earlier texts impacted on the construction of narratives in the second half of the nineteenth century, where it remained a key component. Throughout the century, however, punishment became more internal, targeting the child emotionally. Judith Burdan remarks that a change 'from the physical to the psychological, from the punitive to the reformatory'⁹ started to emerge in eighteenth-century texts for children and continued to develop from this time onwards. Some texts would induce children to self-control, as one of the American writer Maria McIntosh's titles, *Ellen Leslie or The Reward of Self-Control*, unequivocally indicates (1847). Around the 1840s, English texts for children were becoming less overtly didactic: 'although the tradition of the moral tale, often evangelical in tone, continued in the work of such writers as Mrs. Sherwood, the moral tale was changing in character and becoming less explicitly theological.'¹⁰

⁸ The German educationalist Katarina Rutschky notes that the display of corpses to children was an educational technique in the eighteenth century: 'the sight of a corpse evokes solemnity and reflection [...]. By a natural association of ideas, [the child's] memory of the scene will also produce a solemn frame of mind in the future.' Cited in Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good: The Roots of Violence in Child-rearing*, trans. by Hildegarde and Hunter Hannum (London: Virago Press, 1987), p. 46. Rutschky coined the term 'Scharre Pädagogik' or 'black pedagogy', a term that influenced Alice Miller's analysis of what she terms 'poisonous pedagogy' in *For Your Own Good*.

⁹ Judith Burdan, 'Girls Must Be Seen and Heard: Domestic Surveillance in Sarah Fielding's *The Governess*', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 19.1 (1994), 8–14 (p. 9).

¹⁰ Dennis Butts, *Children's Literature and Social Change: Some Case Studies from Barbara Hofland to Philip Pullman* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 2010), p. 13.

Scott MacLeod also notes a similar movement in American literature in the first half of the nineteenth century.¹¹

In the second half of the nineteenth century, children's literature thrived. Overt didacticism was on the wane and the idea that texts for young readers could be a space appropriate to the display of painful edifying spectacles was challenged. David Rudd has for instance shown how Catherine Sinclair illustrated the ineffectiveness of corporal punishment with the character of Mrs. Crabtree in *Holiday House* (1839).¹² In France, in *Les Aventures de Jean-Paul Choppart* (1832), Louis Desnoyer invented a mischievous character able to dodge punishment. The year 1845 saw the publication in Germany of *Strummwelpeter* by Heinrich Hoffmann, a pioneering work in the deployment of punishment as a source of irony and grotesque humour for the delight of a young audience – both the Comtesse de Ségur and Mark Twain, who figure in our corpus, were familiar with and appreciated Hoffmann's book.¹³ Lewis Carroll implicitly mocked earlier cautionary tales in *Wonderland* and Mark Twain parodied moralistic tales in *The Story of a Bad Little Boy* (1875), a text where the archetypal bad boy is not drowned, burned or struck by lightning but is instead rewarded for his crimes.

The period during which these writers began to endorse amusement as a main objective for their books is commonly referred to as the Golden Age of children's literature in Western countries.¹⁴ This was also a period of demographic explosion,

¹¹ Anne Scott MacLeod, 'Child and Conscience', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 14.2 (1989), 75–80 (p. 76).

¹² David Rudd, 'The Froebellious Child in Catherine Sinclair's *Holiday House*', *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 28.1 (2004), 53–69.

¹³ Francis Marcoin notes that Ségur sent a copy of the French edition in 1861 to her grandson, Jacques de Pitray. See Francis Marcoin, *La Comtesse de Ségur ou le bonheur immobile* (Arras: Artois Presses Université, 1999), p. 72. Mark Twain translated *Strummwelpeter* into English as *Slovenly Peter* in 1891. Twain chose to translate this work for his own children, with 'the prospect of giving pleasure to his children, which he succeeded'. See J. D. Stahl, 'Mark Twain's "Slovenly Peter" in the Context of Twain and German Culture', *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 20.2 (1996), 166–180 (p. 169).

¹⁴ Although dates vary according to countries, the Golden Age of children's literature often spans from 1855 to 1920. Sophie Heywood notes about France: 'Many [experts] use the date that Ségur signed her first contract with Hachette in 1855 to mark the dawn of the golden age in France.' Sophie Heywood, *Catholicism and Children's Literature in France: The comtesse de Ségur (1799–1874)* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 51. Julia Mickenberg observes: 'This new perception of childhood precipitated what has come to be known as the "Golden Age of children's literature," stretching roughly from 1865 to 1920'. Julia Mickenberg, 'Children's novels', in *The Cambridge History of the American Novel*, vol. 1, ed. by Leonard Cassuto, Clare Virginia Eby and Benjamin Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 3. See also Joseph Zornado, *Inventing the Child: Culture, Ideology, and the Story of Childhood* (New York and

of increased literacy and unprecedented production of child-orientated books and periodicals, many of which subsequently became “classics”. The developments occurring in children’s books reflected the changes happening in society: discourses against corporal punishment, a growing tolerance towards children’s behaviour, more space given to emotions. This does not mean, as this research demonstrates, that punishment disappeared from books for children altogether; rather it became more complex and therefore more interesting. Some forms of punishment were condemned, echoing mounting discourses in favour of the protection of children. However, the representation of punishment in books must not be seen simply as a mirror of social values. In our texts, punishment is also a powerful narrative instrument. The Golden Age authors we examine continued to use it as a key ingredient for the construction of plots and also for the amusement of readers. They exploited punishment as a great magnetic force to forge deep emotional links between readers and characters, including adults. What is more, the authors to be considered used disciplinary episodes to explore, and make readers reflect on, questions of justice and ascendancy.

In spite of the importance of punishment in nineteenth-century children’s texts and societies, cross-cultural studies focusing on its literary representation in the Golden Age period are lacking, in particular those investigating a large corpus of works. This comparative study examines twelve texts from this period, from three Western countries, namely France, England and America. The French titles include two books by the Comtesse de Ségur: *Les Malheurs de Sophie* (1859) and *Un Bon Petit Diable* (1865); *Poil de Carotte* (which was first published in fragments in periodicals, then in book format in 1894)¹⁵ by Jules Renard; and Jules Verne’s late title *Les Frères Kip* (1902). Our English corpus incorporates Lewis Carroll’s seminal work *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865); Juliana Horatia Ewing’s *The Land of Lost Toys* (published in *The Brownies and Other Tales* in 1865);¹⁶ *Kind Little Edmund*, a tale by Edith Nesbit that features in her *Book of Dragons* (1899); and *The New Mother* by Lucy

London: Garland Publishing, 2001) and Marie-Thérèse Latzarus, *La Littérature enfantine dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1924).

¹⁵ Published in book format in 1894, but first published in the periodical *Gil Blas* between 1890 and 1893.

¹⁶ It was republished in the 1869 edition of *Aunt Judy’s Magazine*, the children’s periodical created by her mother Margaret Gatty.

Lane Clifford (published in *Anyhow Stories: Moral and Otherwise* in 1882). Finally, the American texts comprise Louisa May Alcott's *Little Men: Life at Plumfield with Jo's Boys* (1871); *What Katy Did* by Susan Coolidge (1872); *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) by Mark Twain; and Frances Hodgson Burnett's *A Little Princess* (1905).¹⁷ This thesis also examines some of these texts' original illustrations, which reveal differences and details unavailable in the texts and often reinforce quiescent moral values.

The focus on these three countries is in line with the fact that the modern “model” of childhood underwent similar changes around the same time in Western countries.¹⁸ Moreover, interactions with regard to literature for young readers increased between these countries; not only did the production of children's books flourish in the period, so did translations and adaptations. According to Isabelle Guillaume, with regard to children's literature, France, England and America formed ‘un jeu de regards croisés’ [a growing literary triangle of influence].¹⁹ Guillaume argues that, although specific national characteristics emerged, they often occurred by way of reference to their differences too. The literary products of these countries dramatically influenced each other and shared many characteristics. The influence of English-speaking literature over French children's authors was stronger than that of Germanic writers, and characters frequently travel across the Atlantic and the Channel.²⁰ Anne-Laure Séveno-Gheno notes that English-speaking writers, particularly British, had a strong influence over French authors, and also notices intertextual elements in the treatment of themes and characters (both adults and children).²¹

Furthermore, critics have outlined the intertextual exchanges between several writers featuring in our corpus. Marie-José Strich contrasts and points out the areas

¹⁷ The book initially appeared as a short novella in the children's periodical *St Nicholas* in 1887. Burnett later transformed it into a play, then into a full-length novel for children. This novel is really at the crossroads between England and America. The story is set in England, but its author, who emigrated to the United States, is claimed a national in both countries.

¹⁸ Peter Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, 2nd edn (London and New York: Routledge, 2011).

¹⁹ Isabelle Guillaume, *Regards croisés de la France, de l'Angleterre et des États-Unis dans les romans pour la jeunesse (1860–1914) : De la construction identitaire à la représentation d'une communauté internationale* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2009), p. 23.

²⁰ Guillaume, pp. 15–16.

²¹ Anne-Laure Séveno-Gheno, ‘De *Jack* à *Maggie* : Regards croisés sur l'enfance dans les romans d'expression françaises et anglaise à la fin du XIXe siècle’, in *L'Ère du récit*, ed. by Alain Schaffner (Arras: Artois Université Presses, 2005), pp. 49–70.

of interaction between the works of Carroll and Ségur.²² Twain was also familiar with some of Ségur's books.²³ In some cases these exchanges may have been happening only one way. Gillian Avery, for instance, notes how the works of Louisa May Alcott or Susan Coolidge were much appreciated by English children, while some English domestic tales, such as those of Juliana Horatia Ewing, never appeared in American periodicals.²⁴ Avery also notes how '[t]he liberated atmosphere of American family books in the nineteenth century, and the robust and confident children [...] fascinated young Britons, who could find nothing comparable in their own books.'²⁵ The *What Katy Did* books had a significant success in America but were even more influential in England.²⁶ Burnett, on the other hand, a transatlantic author, was popular both in England and America.²⁷ *A Little Princess*, like its predecessor *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1885), was popular with children on both sides of the Atlantic, even though Sara Crewe, the heroine of *A Little Princess*, has a confidence and self-reliance that is perhaps more frequent in American titles than in English texts. Marah Gubar also establishes links of influence among English writers: 'Nesbit embraces the optimism about the child's creativity and agency that suffuses stories by female authors such as [...] Ewing but seasons it with a dash of pessimism present in the work of their male colleagues.'²⁸ Nina Auerbach and U. C. Knoepfelmacher contend that 'the special indebtedness of these women to Lewis Carroll, who institutionalized amorality in juvenile literature, was also a burden. [...] Carroll's nostalgia, his resistance to female growth and female sexuality could hardly inspire Ewing',²⁹ although this position is quite debatable. These female writers seemed 'optimistic about the child's chances of

²² Marie-José Strich, *La Comtesse de Ségur et Lewis Carroll* (Paris: Didier-Érudition, 1995).

²³ See note from Mark Twain, *Notebooks & Journals Volume III (1883-1891)*, ed. by Frederick Anderson, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979), p. 128.

²⁴ Gillian Avery, *Behold the Child: American Children and their Books 1621-1922* (London: The Bodley Head, 1994), p. 156.

²⁵ Avery, p. 156.

²⁶ Peter Hunt, *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History* ed. by Peter Hunt (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 234. *What Katy Did* was the first instalment of what became a series including *What Katy Did at School* (1873) and *What Katy Did Next* (1886).

²⁷ Critics have commented on the intertextuality of her text with books on both sides of the Atlantic, including Twain's novels. See U. C. Knoepfelmacher's introduction to *A Little Princess* (London: Penguin, 2002), p. vii.

²⁸ Marah Gubar, *Artful Dodgers: Reconceiving the Golden Age of Children's Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 131.

²⁹ Nina Auerbach and U. C. Knoepfelmacher, *Forbidden Journeys: Fairy Tales and Fantasies by Victorian Women Writers*, ed. by Nina Auerbach and U. C. Knoepfelmacher (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 6.

coping in a creative way with the pressure exerted on them by adults and adult-produced texts.³⁰

The texts to be considered were intended for the entertainment of a young readership. Ségur's novels, dedicated to her grandchildren, were meant for eight to twelve years olds,³¹ and the Comtesse was careful to use language that reflected her young readers' age.³² She specifically expected readers in "collèges" to be delighted by her *Petit Diable*. Similarly, Ewing devised her tale *The Land of Lost Toys* for the delight of young readers: 'It is a regular child's story—about Toys—not at all sentimental—in fact meant to be amusing.'³³ *Wonderland* was famously told and written for the entertainment of the Liddell children, and *Little Men*, a 'moral pap for the young' as Alcott disparaged her children's books, was conceived specifically for the juvenile market (following the success of *Little Women*, Alcott had discovered how lucrative this market was).³⁴ Alcott's publishers, Roberts Brothers, who had established a niche for realistic juvenile fiction, also published *What Katy Did*.

Yet, and as for many books of this period, these texts also had a multigenerational readership. Often, the educational undertones of these books were directed not only at children, but also at adults. Some writers even acknowledged their double addressees. Hence, the preliminary poem in *What Katy Did* speaks of a 'childish story' (xvi), but also addresses adults: 'here we are in bonnets and tall-coats' (xv). Mark Twain in his preface declares his intention to address adults too: 'Although my book is intended mainly for the entertainment of boys and girls, I hope it will not be shunned by men and women on that account'. In fact, in a letter to William Dean Howells, Twain wrote: 'It is not a boy's book at all. It will only be read by adults. It is only written for adults.'³⁵ Some writers seemed unable to escape children's texts' dual readership. Barbara Wall notes that Ewing's 'stories were regarded from their

³⁰ Gubar, p. 127.

³¹ Lisette Luton, *La Comtesse de Ségur: A Marquise de Sade?* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), p. 31.

³² See Ségur's letter from 2 March, 1858: 'mon correcteur [...] fait tenir aux enfans un langage très au-dessus de leur âge', [my proofreader forces me to use a register too high for the age of the children] p. lxvi.

³³ Letter to H. K. F. G., December 8, 1868, in Horatia K. F. Eden, *Juliana Horatia Ewing and her Books* (London: The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1896), p. 178.

³⁴ John Matteson, 'An Idea of Order at Concord: Soul and Society in the Mind of Louisa May Alcott', in *A Companion to American Fiction 1865–1914*, ed. by Robert Paul Lamb and G. R. Thompson (Malden, Oxford and Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), p. 462.

³⁵ Quoted in Joe Fulton, *The Reverend Mark Twain: Theological Burlesque, Form, and Content* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006), p. 84.

first appearance as difficult for children; indeed it seems that she was always much read by adults.³⁶ In spite of her efforts to address children only, Ewing thought her stories often took an ‘older turn’. Conversely, Verne consciously targeted a double audience. In *Les Frères Kip*, the narrator’s voice conveys a level of experience and knowledge that can satisfy adults’ reading standards. *Kind Little Edmund*, which features in Nesbit’s collection of stories *The Book of Dragons*, was initially commissioned for and published in the illustrated monthly magazine *The Strand*, which published all kinds of fiction ‘from adult melodrama to fantasy to fairy-tales’.³⁷ *A Little Princess* originally appeared as a novella for ‘Children and Grown-Up Children’. Equally, *Poil de Carotte* was not intended for young readers. Written as a reaction to his mother’s treatment of his new wife, Renard conceived it, partly, as a fictional childhood memoir — Michel Autrand calls it a ‘non récit d’enfance’ [a non-childhood memoir].³⁸ It is, however, often considered a children’s book, studied in schools because of the protagonist’s young age (which, in fact, remains vague throughout the novel). The naïve tone of the narrative voice perhaps also contributes to its classification as a text for children.

As a result of their double audience, these texts do not side either with children or with adults. Instead they invite sympathy for and identification with both. In his preface, Twain admits his hope that *Tom Sawyer* may ‘pleasantly remind adults of what they once were themselves, and of how they felt and thought and talked’. As with other “bad boy” narratives, the novel plays with adult’s feelings of nostalgia for their childhood. But conversely, *Tom Sawyer* also invites young readers to understand how adults feel and talk. Similarly, in *What Katy Did*’s opening poem, children realise that adults were once young, while adults forget that they have grown up. Many of these books evoke not only young characters’ experiences and feelings, but also adults’ emotions and thoughts. Narrative voices and shifts in focalization show how these writers require readers to envisage not only the experience of punished children, but also the punishers’ moral dilemmas.

³⁶ Barbara Wall, *The Narrator’s Voice: The Dilemma of Children’s Fiction* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), p. 84.

³⁷ Julia Briggs, *Edith Nesbit: A Woman of Passion* (Stroud: Tempus, 2007), p. 228.

³⁸ Michel Autrand, ‘Poil de Carotte ou le non-récit d’enfance’ in *L’Ère du récit d’enfance (en France depuis 1870)* ed. by Alain Schaffner (Arras: Artois Presse Université, 2005).

The titles we will examine all share a concern about teaching about questions of justice and fairness. We note many references to the functioning of the justice system and the justifications for the punishment of deviant individuals. *Les Frères Kip* and some passages of *Wonderland* explore the question of unfair punishment – a theme in fact not uncommon in this period, and which can also be found for instance in Nesbit’s *The Railway Children* (1905). Several texts deal with the theme of the carceral, legal punishment and the confinement of prisoners. Earlier texts had used the representation of the prison as a deterrent for the moral education of children. In the poem *A Visit to Newgate* (1828) by Henry Sharpe Horsley, a father brings his two sons to visit prisoners, ‘just for example’s sake’.³⁹ Yet, already in 1832, the prison also emerges as a potential source of amusement for readers and empowerment for characters. In Louis Desnoyer’s *Aventures de Jean-Paul Choppart*, the young protagonist is thrown in prison by the village’s policeman and escapes. In our corpus, the theme of the prison is particularly strong in *Les Frères Kip*. Critics have noted how ‘[l]e thème du crime et de la recherche du coupable est [...] récurrent chez Jules Verne.’ [the theme of crime and the search for the culprit is [...] often recurring in Jules Verne’s titles.]⁴⁰ However, in this novel, while the story features crime and suspense, it is the description of the justice system and the evocation of life in prison that dominate. In this sense, the novel sits within the vision of Verne’s publisher, Pierre-Jules Hetzel, who wanted to ‘éduquer au sens large du mot et surtout enseigner une morale. [...] À l’origine de cette ambition encyclopédique, se profile l’idée que la connaissance est source de progrès moral.’⁴¹ [to educate in the wider sense of the word and above all to teach a moral. [...] Behind this encyclopaedic ambition emerges the idea that knowledge is a source of moral progress.] Other titles such as *Tom Sawyer*, *Les Malheurs* or *What Katy Did* also explore the theme of the prison.

³⁹ Published in *The Affectionate Parent’s Gift; and the Good Child’s Reward* (1828). At the time, children could still be sent to prison. An 1834 newspaper article reports that a young child was sent to Newgate ‘in the benevolent hope’ that this will ‘save him from utter ruin’. ‘Punishment of the offences of children’, *The Times*, July 1834, London <www.bl.uk/collection-items/punishment-of-the-offences-of-children-from-the-times> [accessed 12.06.2015].

⁴⁰ Yves Gilli, Florent Montclair, and Sylvie Petit, *Le Naufrage dans l’œuvre de Jules Verne* (Paris: L’Harmattan Littérature, 1998), p. 90.

⁴¹ Daniel Compère, *Jules Verne : Écrivain* (Paris: Droz, 1991), p. 18.

Throughout our corpus, characters' captivity can also be found in the representation of home and domestic life. The titles to be considered challenge the traditional image of home as a place of safety where characters are cared for, or from which they depart but to which they eventually return. This image is notably encroached upon through the use of episodes of confinement, characters' sense of captivity, oppression and the frustration of their desires in domestic settings. It is reinforced by their desire to run away and, for some, by their attempts to escape. The representation of home as an ambivalent space of protection and punishment reveals the ambiguities at the heart of adults' discourses on childhood.

While all of the texts in this study present punishment in remarkably complex terms, the frequency, the intensity and the types of punitive practices used vary from text to text. Although mentalities were shifting away from bodily and violent practices, the texts to be considered demonstrate that, in literature for children, corporal punishment exists alongside other forms of correction. In terms of the frequency of punitive episodes, the texts by the Comtesse de Ségur appear at the forefront of our corpus. In *Les Malheurs*, punishment plays an integral part in the plot structure. Sophie, curious and intrepid, commits endless acts deemed reprehensible for which she is systematically corrected. In *Petit Diable*, punitive episodes also shape a significant portion of the text. Charles is frequently whipped and beaten by his guardian, Mme Mac'Miche, as well as at boarding school. Extremely popular in her time, and still widely read today, the Comtesse has however been regularly accused of sadism because of the physical and psychological violence in her texts.⁴² But more recent studies show the complexity of Ségur's educational messages. Lisette Luton believes that Ségur's malevolent adult characters are so exaggerated that they become comical.⁴³ Mary Katherine Luton contends that Ségur's works provide invaluable historical information on the use of corporal punishment during her lifetime.⁴⁴ Indeed, in her letters to her editor, Ségur

⁴² François Caradec, *Histoire de la littérature enfantine en France* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1977); Marc Soriano, *Guide de la littérature pour la jeunesse* (Paris: Flammarion, 1975). For a discussion of this, see also Claire-Lise Malarte-Feldman 'La Comtesse de Ségur, a Witness of Her Time', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 20.3 (1995), 135–139.

⁴³ Lisette Luton, p. 41.

⁴⁴ Mary Katherine Luton, "Les Malheurs de Ségur": An Examination of Accusations of Sadism Against La Comtesse de Ségur' (doctoral thesis, University of Virginia, 1997). Laura Kreyder has also explored the

defends the veracity of the cruelty in her manuscripts, which her correctors try to soften.⁴⁵ Ségur was both a social critic and a reformer who condemned arbitrary violence yet endorsed other practices, such as confinement, shame or humiliation. Although not corporal, these are nonetheless distressing to modern readers. Sadism resides not necessarily in the punitive acts themselves, but perhaps rather in the more general rationales upon which some educational systems are based, as we will see in the later chapters of this thesis.

Psychological and latent forms of violence are also found in, and indeed dominate, other texts. *Poil de Carotte* recounts the trials and constant abuse of a redheaded child. The seemingly gratuitous sadism of the protagonist's mother, Mme Lepic, has marked readers' imaginations for generations (popular since its publication, it has been called 'un des textes les plus riches et les plus prometteurs de la fin du siècle dix-neuf' [one of the richest and most promising texts from the end of the nineteenth century]).⁴⁶ Emotional pain is also present beyond our French corpus. Cynthia Griffin Wolff remarks that '[v]iolence is everywhere in Tom [Sawyer]'s world'.⁴⁷ The story, inspired by Samuel Clemens' childhood, entwines Tom's daily life at home and school with a story of crime and suspense involving the town's criminal, Injun Joe. Transgressions and punishments are crucial to the text and its structure,⁴⁸ and Tom's boyish offences and sanctions are echoed by Injun Joe's crimes and demise. Similarly, *Wonderland* is inhabited by a frightening undertone about the arbitrariness of adults' authority over children, and Alice finds herself the victim or witness of punitive practices or threats. Hailed as a watershed in the evolution of children's literature from instruction to delight,⁴⁹ *Wonderland*, as

different types of deviance and the lexical field relating to misbehaviour in Ségur's books. Laura Kreyder, *L'Enfance des saints et des autres* (Fasano: Schena ed., 1987).

⁴⁵ See letter, 16 March 1858, in Comtesse de Ségur, *Œuvres*, ed. by Claudine Beaussant, vol. 1 (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1990), p. lxvi.

⁴⁶ Autrand, p. 71. A few years after its publication, Renard adapted the text into a play, which was staged for the first time in the théâtre Antoine in Paris in 1900 and was an immediate success. It was then translated to English and brought to theatres in London and New York.

⁴⁷ Cynthia Griffin Wolff, 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer: A Nightmare Vision of American Boyhood', *The Massachusetts Review*, 21.4 (1980), 637–652 (p. 641).

⁴⁸ Robert Paul Lamb, 'America Can Break Your Heart: On the Significance of Mark Twain', in *A Companion to American Fiction 1865–1914* ed. by Robert Paul Lamb and G. R. Thompson (Malden, Oxford and Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), pp. 477–478.

⁴⁹ Hunt, *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History*, p. 141. For Hunt, 'alternations' in size are also violent and 'reflect the asymmetries of power between grownup and child derived from differences in knowledge and size'.

mentioned earlier, often refers back to the didacticism and rules of Victorian society found in moralistic children's texts.⁵⁰

Variations in our corpus also exist in terms of their literary genre and the degree to which they incorporate real-life punitive systems. Several texts belong to realist and naturalist traditions, notably French and American. Punishments in Ségur's work are often inspired by real-life episodes, and are extremely varied and rich in detail. Similarly, Verne's story of the Kip brothers was inspired by 'des fait réels [...] les aventures tragiques de deux frères'⁵¹ [true facts [...] the tragic adventures of two brothers], the trial and deportation in 1893 of two French men, the Rorique brothers, for murder and piracy at sea.⁵² Likewise, the punishments in *Little Men*, although highly innovative, were based on real disciplinary attempts. Alcott was the daughter of the educational pioneer Bronson Alcott, who had set up experimental schools. The novel borrows from her father's practices and *Little Men* follows the educational tribulations of Jo Bhaer (Jo March in *Little Women*) and her husband, Professor Bhaer, at Plumfield, a modern establishment not burdened by too many rules, focusing instead on self-control and progressive attitudes to education. Other punishments have more traditional undertones. In *What Katy Did*, the young heroine must remain confined in her room for several years following a spinal injury. Her confinement acts as a form of penance for her heedlessness, and Katy must learn to reform herself before she can finally find her rightful place in society. Her punishment is based on very traditional values. According to Claudia Nelson, Coolidge's theme is wholly typical of her era,⁵³ while Lois Keith argues that Katy's punishment and her ability to overcome her disability are strongly embedded in Christian faith.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Susan Ang, 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' in *The Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English*, ed. by Victor Watson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 21.

⁵¹ *Entretiens avec Jules Verne 1973–1905*, ed. by Daniel Compère and Jean-Michel Margot (Genève: Éditions Slatkine, 1978), p. 182.

⁵² Avrane, Patrick, *Jules Verne* (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 206. See also archived newspapers of the case: <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/8717876>> [accessed 28.08.2014].

⁵³ Claudia Nelson, 'What Katy Read: Susan Coolidge and the Image of the Victorian Child', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* (1991), 217–222 (p. 220).

⁵⁴ Lois Keith, *Take Up Thy Bed and Walk: Death, Disability and Cure in Classic Fiction for Girls* (London: The Women's Press Ltd, 2001), p. 22.

In our English texts, the originality of the punishments is often linked to the imaginary worlds where the characters evolve. As opposed to our French and American texts, which belong to the realist genre, the four English texts in our corpus are modern fairy tales and characters evolve in fantasy realms.⁵⁵ In these texts, the imaginary tends to be deployed to protect readers' sensitivities from harsh realities: punishment takes place in secondary worlds and is performed by imaginary creatures, which creates a safe distance between the punitive actions and the readers. Some of these texts share striking similarities. Hence, both *The Land of Lost Toys* and *Wonderland*, written in the same year, incorporate framed narratives shaped around the wandering of a female protagonist through an underground world, accessible through a hole in the ground, where they meet imaginary creatures. Both heroines escape from their subterranean world after awakening from a dream. Ewing's domestic and family story, however, as opposed to *Wonderland*, has undisguised didactic intents, and readers' sensibilities are perhaps treated with more caution.⁵⁶

In Clifford's Victorian fairy tale, in spite of the distance created by the unreal nature of the events, the text has terrifying qualities. Two girls are punished when their beloved mother abandons them and is replaced with a monstrous, imaginary creature. The text has been both condemned and celebrated by critics. Avery and Bull consider this text to be 'the most extreme example of pointless cruelty in a century that abounded in terrifying stories for the young'.⁵⁷ Alison Lurie describes it as 'unsettling',⁵⁸ while Anita Moss observes that its troubling ending 'contrasts sharply with the past resolutions, simplistic morals, and artificial happy endings of moral tales'.⁵⁹ On the other hand, in *Kind Little Edmund*, the realm of the imaginary is a shelter while the real world is threatening. The tale recounts the story of a boy

⁵⁵ I use fantasy here to refer to imaginary worlds or supernatural phenomena that play a substantial role in the plot, as opposed to realistic events, and not in the stricter definition of the fantastic genre established by Tzvetan Todorov in *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1970, 1973). To an extent, *A Little Princess* also shares similarities with fairy tales, not because of its literary genre, but because of the victimisation of the young heroine, who is not unlike a Cinderella. Fairy tales had been rejected by earlier children's authors, both in France and in England, for instance by Arnaud Berquin and Sarah Trimmers.

⁵⁶ Yet Barbara Wall also observes that Ewing 'found it difficult to address any narratee as other than an equal.' Wall, p. 84.

⁵⁷ Gillian Avery and Angela Bull, *Nineteenth Century Children: Heroes and Heroines in English Children's Stories 1780-1900* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1965), p. 52.

⁵⁸ Alison Lurie, *The Oxford Book of Modern Fairy Tales*, ed. by Alison Lurie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. xiv.

⁵⁹ Anita Moss, 'Mothers, Monsters, and Morals in Victorian Fairy Tales', *The Lion and the Unicorn* 12.2 (1988), 47-60 (p. 58).

who wants to make discoveries outside the confines of school and discovers a cockatrice living in a cave. An epistemological conflict opposes Edmund to his schoolmaster, who regularly and severely punishes him because of the 'true tales' he tells the other pupils.

In addition to differences in terms of literary genre and frequency of punitive episodes, the texts to be considered present variations with regard to the genders and ages of those punished. Our corpus includes both male and female protagonists to show that the strategies used to afford or deny characters agency and resistance to punishment vary according to the sexes. Gender-specific emotional reactions to punishment can help shape the concepts of boyhood and girlhood conveyed by the texts. Boy characters benefit from a more romantic approach and a greater acceptance of their wrongdoings and several of them can dodge or even escape punishments. Some characters, such as Tom Sawyer or Charles in *Petit Diable*, provide partially bad role models and celebrate boys' rebellious streak, while girls' emotional reactions, in particular to corporal punishment, are more intense. Yet these gender characterisations are not so clear-cut. Some girl protagonists challenge adult oppression and intimidation. Nonetheless, one can question whether any of them fully escapes their frustrations. Equally, boy characters are never completely free, and their characters are shaped by moral standards too. Even a work such as *Tom Sawyer*, which the author claimed to envisage solely for the entertainment of readers, 'could hardly evade moral and ethical questions altogether'.⁶⁰

Whether they feature female or male protagonists, the texts selected in this thesis place a great emphasis on the emotions of characters, including adults, and present the use of tenderness and love as effective instruments for the correction of children's behaviour. To date, cross-cultural studies on the use of love as a disciplinary device in Golden Age children's texts are lacking and no detailed analysis of both children's and adults' emotional pain in relation to punishment has been undertaken. While the main victims of punishment are young characters, several texts also deal with the emotional distress of adult punishers. Writers were indeed careful to suggest adults' own helplessness when faced with disciplinary

⁶⁰ Scott MacLeod, *American Childhood*, p. 72.

obligations. Some texts even make adults victims of punishment while, in subversive turns, the children become agents of punishment, suggesting writers' desire to make readers reflect on and question the legitimacy of adults' power.

With regard to power, the texts to be considered reveal an imbalance between children and adults, which is hardly surprising. Scholars argue that punishment is 'perhaps the most prominent amongst an array of parental practices, which expose changing concepts of legitimacy and power within the family.'⁶¹ For Susan Bitensky punishment indicates a form of ownership between the adult and the child; she asks whether the 'corporal punishment of children [has] been sustained over the centuries by an antecedent and fundamental inequity in the way most societies have viewed children'.⁶² In our texts, the mechanisms used to legitimise and perpetuate forms of violence are often the result of norms and peer pressure. This research therefore partakes in the scholarly debates on the question of power and autonomy in children's literature. The idea that ideological underpinnings are at play in children's texts, as argued by John Stephens and Robyn McCallum, is now widely accepted.⁶³ Power, as a theoretical framework, is often applied to the examination of children's texts, where imbalanced relationships between children and adults lend themselves particularly well to such analysis. Jack Zipes, in his examination of *Der Struwwelpeter*, notes that the story 'formed part of a normative discourse through which parents contended for power'.⁶⁴ For some, power in children's texts is inevitable and it is the role of critics to reveal writers' deliberate or unintentional strategies of domination that child readers cannot contest themselves.⁶⁵ Joseph Zornado argues that children's literature is a form of "colonization" of the child:

Stories written for children reflect a world in which the adult inflicts emotional and physical trauma upon the child and then demands that the child deny his or her own suffering and replace it with the adult's

⁶¹ Deborah Thom, "Beating Children is Wrong": Domestic Life, Psychological Thinking and the Permissive Turn', in *The Politics of Domestic Authority in Britain since 1800*, ed. by Lucy Delap, Ben Griffin and Abigail Wills (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 261.

⁶² Susan Bitensky, *Corporal Punishment of Children: A Human Rights Violation* (Ardsley, New York: Transnational Publishers, 2006), p. 7.

⁶³ John Stephens, *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction* (London and New York: Longman, 1992), p. 3.

⁶⁴ Zipes, p. 155.

⁶⁵ Peter Hollindale contends that the role of the scholar is to raise awareness of the inevitability of ideology in children's texts. Ideology may be overt or on the 'surface', it may also be more covert and inherent, within language. Peter Hollindale, 'Ideology and the Children's Book', in *Literature for Children*, ed. by Peter Hunt (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 33.

interpretation of the conflict. In other words, much of what we call children's literature reveals an ideology of parent-child relations in which the parent "colonizes" the child and demands that the child accept this process or be annihilated.⁶⁶

Others, however, offer a vision of power that incorporates the possibility of subversion and escape. Maria Nikolajeva views children's literature as a mechanism of oppression and proposes a study of the representations of the child's "otherness", revealing imbalances and inequalities between adults and children. However, she contends that children's literature can also 'subvert its own oppressive function, as it can describe situations in which the established power structures are interrogated without necessarily being overthrown.'⁶⁷ Nikolajeva considers that Michel Foucault's theory of power, among others, can be a valuable tool for children's literature research as it does not 'offer ready-made implements to deal with literary texts; instead, they suggest a general way of thinking about literary texts which the scholars embrace and from which they mould their own method and approaches'.⁶⁸ Other critics have also used Foucault's concepts to examine children's texts. Ann Alston offers a Foucauldian reading of the representation of the family in English children's literature, arguing that '[t]he idea of the family is not simply an innocent idealistic fantasy but an ideological system in which issues of power and control are embedded.'⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Joseph Zornado, 'Swaddling the Child in Children's Literature', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 22.3 (1997), 105–112 (p. 105). According to Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle too, '[t]he telling of a story is always bound up with power, with questions of authority and domination.' Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle, *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*, 4th edn (Harlow: Longman, 2009), p. 54.

⁶⁷ Maria Nikolajeva, *Power, Voice and Subjectivity in Literature for Young Readers* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 9. Clémentine Beauvais, on the other hand, aptly suggests ways for a more precise reconceptualisation of the notion of power. Beauvais comments that, when applied to child-adult relationships in children's texts, the question of who is empowered and who is deprived of potency is not clearly established: 'The adult, even when didactic, should not necessarily be seen as powerful; the child figure, even when reified as a projector-screen for adult desires, is not automatically deprived of potency.' Instead of power, Beauvais prefers the term 'might', which she feels has attributes that can apply both to the child and to the adult – might, or potency, incorporates the idea of the future, while authority is rooted in the past. Clémentine Beauvais, 'The Problem of 'Power': Metacritical Implications of Aetonnormativity for Children's Literature Research', *Children's Literature in Education* 44.1 (2013), 74–86 (pp. 78 and 81).

⁶⁸ Nikolajeva, *Power, Voice and Subjectivity in Literature for Young Readers*, p. 4.

⁶⁹ Ann Alston, *The Family in English Children's Literature* (New York and London: Routledge, 2008), p. 9. For other Foucauldian readings of nineteenth-century children's texts, see also Richard H. Brodhead who includes some children's texts, notably Suzan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World* (1851), in 'Sparing the Rod: Discipline and Fiction in Antebellum America', *Representations*, 21 (1988), 67–96; Peter Messent, 'Discipline and Punishment in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*', *Journal of American Studies*, 32.2 (1998), 219–235; Eugenia Gonzalez, "'I sometimes think she is a spy on all my actions': Dolls, Girls, and Disciplinary Surveillance in the Nineteenth-Century Doll Tale', *Children's Literature*, 39 (2011), 33–57; David Rudd also talks about

While I agree that power and ideology are inherent to children’s literature, I wish to nuance this view by offering a definition of power that “envelops” not only the child but the adult too. This view is based on the idea, developed by Foucault, that power encompasses not only the object of power but also the authority exercising it. In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975, 1977), Foucault examines the evolution of punishment into a form of institutionalised discipline based on norms and relying on mechanisms of control and surveillance. Power cannot be attributed to specific institutions and agents of authority. Instead, it is anonymous, insidious, invisible and invades many areas of social life. Thus, ‘l’individu à corriger doit être entièrement *enveloppé* dans le pouvoir qui s’exerce sur lui’.⁷⁰ [the individual to be corrected must be entirely *enveloped* in the power that is being exercised over him.] Discipline is a mechanism or technology of power used to correct, direct, transform and reform the behaviour of individuals, framing them and directing their future and potential. Potentiality, in the case of children’s texts, lies not simply in the future behaviour of fictional characters but in the moral conduct of young readers.

Thus, crucial to this thesis’s main argument is the idea that punishment is a process that ‘sees not only the fly as ensnared in the web’s sticky maze but the spider as well.’⁷¹ This overarching argument helps us answer the question of what punishment means when applied to children. In our texts, punitive practices amount to the exercise of control and the frustration of the child’s desires. However, these

punishment in terms of “bio-power”, referring to Foucault, in Rudd, 53–69; Frida Beckman, ‘Becoming Pawn: *Alice*, Arendt and the New in Narrative’, *Journal of Narrative Theory*, 44.1 (2014), 1–28.

⁷⁰ Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et Punir : Naissance de la prison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1993, p. 153. Emphasis added. ‘La discipline ne peut s’identifier ni avec une institution ni avec un appareil ; elle est un type de pouvoir, [...] elle peut-être prise en charge soit pas des institutions “spécialisées” (les pénitenciers ou les maisons de correction du XIXe siècle), soit par des institutions qui s’en servent comme instrument essentiel pour une fin déterminée (les maisons d’éducation, les hôpitaux), soit par des instances préexistantes qui y trouvent le moyen de renforcer ou de réorganiser leurs mécanismes internes de pouvoir (il faudra un jour montrer comment les relations intrafamiliales, essentiellement dans la cellule parents-enfants, se sont disciplinées [...]).’ Foucault, p. 251. [Discipline may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus; it is a type of power [...] it may be taken over either by ‘specialized’ institutions (the penitentiary or ‘houses of correction’ of the nineteenth century), or by institutions that use it as an essential instrument for a particular end (schools, hospitals), or by pre-existing authorities that find in it a means of reinforcing or reorganizing their internal mechanisms of power (one day we should show how intra-familial relations, essentially in the parents-children cell, have become ‘disciplined’).] In French, Foucault describes power as ‘indiscret’, because it is everywhere at the same time, and as ‘discret’, in the sense that it is silent.

⁷¹ ‘The web has no point outside of it: there is no transparent designer; there is no transcendental point from which the spider sees, understands, assesses, judges, or values the web’. Jeffery Polet, ‘Punishing Some, Disciplining All: Foucault and the Techniques of Political Violence’ in *The Philosophy of Punishment and the History of Political Thought*, ed. by Peter Karl Koritansky (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011), p. 200.

practices are not perpetuated by *intentional* colonizers. The force behind punishment, its authority, what convinces adults to strike, humiliate, confine or exclude, does not come simply from individual decision-making but from values shared by all. It is crucial to detach, to an extent, the individual adults from the willingness to impose power. Instead, this thesis contends that adults are enmeshed in their own punitive practices.

Marah Gubar develops the notion of collaboration for her analysis of Victorian English writers, demonstrating that not all Golden Age authors embraced a Romantic vision of children as innocent victims of adults' domination. This thesis applies Gubar's insights to a wider corpus and uses the complexities of punitive practices to explore the level of agency writers are able to grant fictional children. The question of children's liberty is at the heart of punishment, and can function as an acid-test for Gubar's argument that not all acts of influence are oppressive and that 'the manufacturing of childhood can be a mutual process'.⁷² Gubar objects to the 'colonization paradigm that has proven so popular and influential with theorists of childhood and children's literature [and] assumes that all acts of influence are oppressive, one-way transactions in which adults exploit and manipulate the child'.⁷³ She offers an innovative reading that attempts to unravel the complicated relationship between children and adult authors, and argues that some writers resisted the idea that childhood should be treated as a separate sphere from adulthood. Instead, they used 'the trope of collaboration to dwell explicitly on the issue of influence' and precisely to blur the boundaries between children and adults.⁷⁴ Writers such as Carroll, Ewing and Hodgson Burnett 'often characterize the child inside and outside the book as a literate, educated subject who is fully conversant with the values, conventions, and cultural artefacts of the civilized world',⁷⁵ and is the authors' creative collaborator. However, Gubar also recognises that these writers were aware that their subversive subtexts could function as attractive illusions that would curtail children's agency.

⁷² Gubar, p. 148.

⁷³ Gubar, p. 148.

⁷⁴ Gubar, p. 7.

⁷⁵ Gubar, p. 6.

This thesis contributes to the literature on the history of adult-child relationships by arguing that punishment is far more than a history of unidirectional violence but also one of anxiety and of efforts to collaborate. The books comprising our corpus indicate that, although harsh punishment is still present, authors try to explicate the responsibilities of each group (adult, child) and the ways in which their emotions are entangled. This intergenerational collaboration with implied readers stems from the desire to make the emotions of adults known to children, and from these texts' double audience – authors may want adult readers to feel that their positions are communicated to young readers. As in reader-response criticism, this thesis suggests that literature is a form of communication.⁷⁶ Indeed, some branches of reader-response theory, notably multicultural and feminist, have focused on exploring the narrative strategies encouraging empathy with victims of racism or gender-biased norms, or inviting readers to resist.⁷⁷ With regard to punishment, writers invite readers to see both children and adults as victims of punitive practices, but also suggest ways for them to be together. The writers in our corpus make different demands on readers, notably in terms of gender, which can help us to discover the type of implied readers the texts inscribe. While it is difficult to gauge readers' reception, our texts reveal narrative strategies for the enculturation and socialisation of children and for the communication of emotions – both provoking emotions, such as pleasure, and sharing characters' emotions, including adults'.⁷⁸

This research therefore develops a dynamic argument that punishment not only reinforces moral values but also expresses emotions. It follows and goes beyond the insights of research into the history of emotions, a field that emerged several decades ago but gained momentum in recent years.⁷⁹ Scholarly interest in emotion and the history of childhood are still emerging but they have recently intensified,

⁷⁶ For children's literature, this was reasserted by Aidan Chambers in 'The Reader in the Book', in *The Signal Approach to Children's Books*, ed. by Nancy Chambers (Metuchen: Scarecrow, 1980), pp. 250–275.

⁷⁷ Michael Benton, 'Readers, texts, contexts: reader-response criticism', in *Understanding Children's Literature*, ed. by Peter Hunt (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 92.

⁷⁸ Gaps, repetitions and suspense around punishment and escape create a form of reading pleasure.

⁷⁹ Susan Matt and Peter Stearns, *Doing Emotions History* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2013). The introduction and the first chapter provide a useful account of the genesis and the challenges of the field, and Chapter 2 a description of methodologies. Javier Moscoso remarks that representations of pain 'do not show us history, but emotions.' Javier Moscoso, *Pain: A Cultural History* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 12.

with Hugh Cunningham examining the link between childhood and happiness,⁸⁰ and Peter Stearns demonstrating the emotional intricacies at the heart of family life. Emotions in children's literature also need to be unpicked, as suggests a recent collection of essays edited by Ute Frevert, *Learning How to Feel*.⁸¹ Children's texts may not uncover actual emotional experiences, but they can enhance our understanding of what causes child-adult bonds and offer an exciting source of analysis of emotional standards and behaviours. They suggest complexities that confirm the fact that emotions are variable rather than constant,⁸² varying not only with time but also according to individuals, and that parental feelings for children are changeable. Children's texts also reveal how emotional norms are transmitted through generations with great variations in terms of gender. By examining through a comparative lens the use of affection and negative emotions to discipline children, this thesis provides evidence that shifts away from physical harshness, shame or guilt were complex, their history cyclical rather than linear. Moreover, it explores other emotions related to punishment – pleasure, pain and boredom – and argues that they are used as narrative instruments.⁸³ Such emotions, as well as writers' respect of children's sensibilities, counter-balance ideological or power explanations of narrative strategies, and reveal, beyond normative intents, a more complex picture.

Fundamentally interdisciplinary, this research also makes a contribution to research in the field of law and literature; literature can make us think about the meaning of justice and its process.⁸⁴ As mentioned, a significant number of the texts to be examined deal with the carceral, with issues of jurisprudence and with court proceedings, which require readers to reflect on the question of fair and arbitrary sentencing. These are merged with educational messages. Trials enable writers to employ the theatricality of punishment to affect both fictional and real audiences.

⁸⁰ Hugh Cunningham, 'Childhood and happiness in Britain', *GRAAT, Histoires d'enfants, histoires d'enfance*, 36 (2007), 19–30.

⁸¹ *Learning How to Feel: Children's Literature and Emotional Socialization, 1870–1970*, ed. by Ute Frevert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). Each chapter focuses on one emotion and the essays highlight the importance of emotions both in books for young readers and in advice manuals.

⁸² Matt and Stearns, p. 2.

⁸³ It also broaches other emotions such as loneliness and homesickness.

⁸⁴ For Richard Posner, however, literature cannot teach us details about legal proceedings but 'law figures in literature more often as metaphor than an object of interest in itself'. Richard Posner, *Law and Literature*, 3rd edn (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 21.

Theories of Law and Literature manifest themselves in children's texts, as some scholars, notably Ian Ward, have shown. Ward outlines the traditional distinction between law *as* literature and law *in* literature, and considers that '[b]oth the "child" and the "law" are imagined conceptions described *as* literature and *in* literature'.⁸⁵ What makes children's literature particularly jurisprudential, according to Ward, is its fragmentation with regard to meaning.⁸⁶ As opposed to discipline manuals and advice literature targeting an adult readership, children's texts address implied child readers, as well as implied adult readers. Furthermore, the writers in our corpus are aware of the ricochet effect that the spectacle of punishment in books can have, and how identification with characters' experiences of penalties can affect readers and help them think about the meaning of fairness. The restrictions of children's freedom and their justifications trigger overarching human questions that pertain to educational principles as well as societal governance and jurisprudence.

Finally, by attending to sites of punishment, this thesis partakes in the rising interests in geographies of childhood and demonstrates that space plays a crucial role in modern conceptions of children's discipline. The representation of space in books for children reveals cultural constructions of child-figures as well as adults' concerns. As Jenny Bavidge rightly observes, '[c]hildren's literature represents one of the most powerful manifestations of the ways in which the world is interpreted and explained to children.'⁸⁷ Recently, scholars have paid particular attention to space and place in children's literature,⁸⁸ but none of this work has been applied to

⁸⁵ Ian Ward, 'Law, Literature and the Child', in *Legal Concepts of Childhood*, ed. by Julia Fionda (Oxford and Portland Oregon: Hart Publishing, 2001), p. 112. See also David Gurnham, *Memory, Imagination, Justice: Intersections of Law and Literature* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009); John Morison, 'Stories for Good Children' in *Tall Stories? Reading Law and Literature*, ed. by John Morison and Christine Bell (Aldershot and Vermont: Dartmouth Publishing, 1996), pp. 113–143. For Kieran Dolin, the examination of law and literature is based on the premise that both 'law and literature structure reality through language'. Kieran Dolin, *A Critical Introduction to Law and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 11.

⁸⁶ Ian Ward, *Law and Literature: Possibilities and Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 116.

⁸⁷ Jenny Bavidge, 'Stories in Space: The Geographies of Children's Literature', *Children's Geographies*, 4.3 (2006), 319–330 (p. 321). Bavidge also called at the time for more studies of space in children's texts: 'children's literary criticism has not paid enough attention to questions of spatiality (particularly urban space) and has rarely attempted to theorise the nature of place and space in children's literature.' Bavidge, p. 323.

⁸⁸ See *Space and Place in Children's Literature, 1789 to the Present*, ed. by Maria Sachiko Cecire, Hannah Field, Kavita Mudan Finn and Malini Roy (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015); Jane Suzanne Carroll, *Landscape in Children's Literature* (New York and London: Routledge, 2012); or the collection of essays in *Knowing Their Place? Identity and Space in Children's Literature*, ed. by Terri Doughty and Dawn Thompson (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011). Kiera Vaclavik analyses the underground landscape, Kiera Vaclavik, *Uncharted Depths: Descent Narratives in English and French Children's Literature* (London: Legenda, 2010). Some studies of the

the representation of punishment specifically. Yet punitive space has a resonant complexity; it taps into adults' contradictions, their wish to keep children safe by controlling their movements, as well as their awareness of children's desires for autonomy. Foucault's writings on punishment are again useful to examine the high incidence of episodes of captivity, confinement and exclusion. Space, contends Foucault, became an instrument to maintain order and control the behaviour and movements of individuals, be it in prisons, schools, mental institutions or the family.⁸⁹ It was used not only for legal sentences but also as an instrument for education and reform. In our texts, space participates in the disciplinary "envelopment" of the child, both inside and outside the book. The analysis of space therefore confirms this thesis' argument that our authors do not draw sharply-cut outlines between children and adults.

This thesis, in short, is organised in a way that aims to demonstrate the complexity at the heart of punitive practices and challenges the idea that punishment is solely a relationship of oppression. It can be that, but it is also far more intricate; it is a process that envelops children and adults equally. How, then, should we understand the term punishment when it comes to children? How can it inform us about the development of the construction of childhood? The first chapter provides conceptual elements to answer these questions. It aims to understand the notion of punishment, its application to the sphere of children's education and more generally the historical evolution of the concept of childhood in relation to discourses on children's discipline.

Building on conceptual and historical aspects examined in the first chapter, Chapter Two will be concerned with the experience of punitive space by fictional characters and its meaning in texts for a nineteenth-century double audience. Why do the tropes of the carceral and confinement find their way into texts for young readers? The carceral appears in the background of most of our stories, making the

literary representation of confinement focus on institutionalised and organised imprisonment, in particular in Dickens' books. Jan Alber considers indeed that 'prisons narratives influence the cognitive categories of their recipients and thus the popular understanding of the prison.' Jan Alber, *Narrating the Prison: Role and Representation in Charles Dickens' Novels, Twentieth-Century Fiction and Film* (Youngstown, New York: Cambria Press, 2007), p. 1.

⁸⁹ Foucault remarks that the concept of 'cell' applies not only to prisons or monasteries but also to the family unit.

motif of imprisonment an ever-present theme. The trope of the prison invites readers to reflect on the question of fairness of punishment, its role in society, but also reinforces values with regard to children's autonomy. Confinement is a metaphor for both children's and adults' anxieties, inherent to intergenerational relationships. Often challenging the ideal image of domestic life, our texts project children's longing to seek adventures beyond the confines of the home, and adults' echoing desires to protect and control. However, if children's desires are often frustrated, adults can also find themselves prisoners of their own pedagogies.

The penultimate chapter explores the magnetic power of the spectacle of pain and its interaction with pleasure. Is the spectacle of punishment used in order to deter, to scare possible imitators (child readers), or can it also be a form of entertainment for a young audience? The representation of pain can help us to investigate what types of punishment are applied and who is aggrieved. Indeed, Chapter Three outlines how gender distinctions vary with regard to the experience and the performance of pain. The representation of bodily harm and psychological pain reveal different discourses about autonomy, self-control and social expectations for girl and boy protagonists. Furthermore, this chapter examines the relationships between punishment and pleasure from a narrative viewpoint, exploring the significance of episodes of punishment for the plot, the narrative drive and reading pleasure.

The final chapter asks how punishment is justified to young protagonists and implied readers and examines the discourses around the use of the "loving pedagogies" presented in Chapter One. The idea that punishment is for children's own good and its emotional repercussions will be unpicked. This chapter also considers the narrative implications of the need to justify punishment. We explore how and when punishment is explained: before or following the punitive action, as warnings or justifications, through dialogues or interrupting the narrative. This chapter argues that the need to explicate and justify punishment testifies to the anxious desire on the part of adults (including authors) to respect children's sensibilities, but also acts as a way to manipulate children's emotional pain. Finally, the thesis concludes by drawing together the strands to provide an overview of

punishment in Golden Age children's literature and to reflect on the relevance of the texts examined today. The conclusion also envisages the avenues that this research opens, and indicates unexpected ways in which the relationships between punishment and the study of children's texts can be further pursued.

Chapter One

Punitive Rationales

According to the historian Harry Hendrick, while at the beginning of the nineteenth century the notion of childhood was still undefined, by the time of the outbreak of the First World War, ‘the uncertainty had been resolved and the identity determined’.¹ Yet other historians observe that the development of the notion of childhood did not follow a linear trajectory but was influenced by many, and sometimes conflicting, discourses. Hence, Roger Cox considers that, at the end of the century, several conceptions of the child were still prevalent in Western societies:

predominantly, the child of didactic literature, always morally suspect but with the burden of original sin lying somewhat lighter. There was the child of a more utilitarian morality, for whom good work and enterprise received their just reward. But there was also the child of Romantic fantasy, Bunyan’s Christian turned child and let loose in enchanted worlds, there to fight evil and to find their own soul. And lastly, there was the child as critic, prober and all-too-insightful observer of adult follies.²

Children’s texts were not impervious to such complexities. In France, Sophie Heywood notes that, in particular amongst Catholic circles, conceptions of the child were still varied and at times clashing:

Jean-Noël Luc’s analysis of educational manuals written by Catholic authors concludes that ideas about young children were often contradictory, particularly in the Church. Was sinfulness innate or hereditary (a view gaining currency in scientific circles)? Were children primitive savages who needed socialising? Or were they angelic innocents?³

If the figure of the child was nebulous, adults’ behaviour and feelings towards children were also varied. Adults’ concerns for children’s well-being, treatment and

¹ Harry Hendrick, *Children, Childhood and English Society, 1880–1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 36.

² Roger Cox, *Shaping Childhood: Themes of Uncertainty in the History of Adult-Child Relationships* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 118.

³ Sophie Heywood, p. 56.

instruction had many motivating forces: humanistic ideals, the progress of industrialisation, a better understanding of children's vulnerability and biological specificities, enlightenment philosophies, as well as the need to better control populations.⁴

The evolution of the punishment of children, and the discourses surrounding it, reveal adults' attitudes and feelings towards children and how they fluctuated – not always in linear or regular movements. The period with which this study is concerned witnessed major developments in the notion of punishment with regard to children, but also to adult prisoners, leading Jo-Ann Wallace to argue that the invention of childhood took place alongside the evolution of the prison system.⁵ A shift in emphasis took place as to what type of punishment was justifiable and legitimate, and as to the function of punishment. Punishment became a means to transform and improve individuals through the use of disciplinary techniques, and this was in part related to the discussions over the edifying value of the punishment of children. The aim was not simply to deter potential offenders but also to act on the conscience of individuals and mould their behaviour. Christian beliefs played an important role but debates were also driven by social concerns and children were at their heart. Punishment was progressively envisaged as an educational reform that targeted the future potential of individuals.

This chapter is concerned with the intersections between the concepts of the child, the treatment of children and the general notion of punishment – intersections that have evolved considerably, in sometimes erratic ways. Although not focusing on corporal chastisement, the latter plays a key part in the definition of punishment because the legislation that emerged for the protection of children in the nineteenth century was primarily concerned with bodily harm. As it evolved, punishment moved away from physical pain towards other penalties, notably confinement and the use of negative emotions, such as humiliation, shame or guilt. Other non-corporal forms of punishment for children increased (deprivation, letting the child

⁴ Drops in child mortality reveal a greater concern for children from parents and authorities, and conversely 'improvements in child's health and the consequent drop in infant mortality rates transformed the way in which adults viewed childhood'. Deborah Cogan Thacker and Jean Webb, *Introducing Children's Literature: From Romanticism to Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 19.

⁵ Jo-Ann Wallace, 'Subjects of Discipline: The Child's Body in the Mid-Victorian School Novel', in *Literature and the Body*, ed. by Anthony Purdy (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Editions Rodopi, 1992), p. 60.

suffer the logical consequences of their actions), as well as the greater use of rewards. Nonetheless, in the main, physical chastisement remained a legitimate form of discipline, and some actions and terminology that seem unacceptable from our current moral and legislative perspective were often sanctioned and condoned.

The first section of this chapter aims to understand the term punishment with regard to the disciplining of children. In particular, it asks to what extent the punishment of children shares its meaning and legitimacy with the punishment of adults. As it evolved, the rationale for children's punishment was surrounded by wider discourses on governance, the discipline of individuals and education. The punishment of criminals and children in the past raised similar concerns with regard to the issues of deterrence, control, reformation but also protection. However, the idea of protection, when applied to children, contains a fascinating ambiguity: those in need of protection, therefore the most vulnerable, are also those being punished, sometimes harshly. Can, and should, the general definition of punishment extend to the correction of children? To what extent does the evolution of the rationales behind the punishment of children help us understand conceptions of childhood? Indeed, punishment tells us not only about how children were treated but also how they were regarded. Through discourses about children, adults' literature, philosophical treatises, education manuals and books intended for young readers, adults have encouraged and disseminated specific constructions of childhood. What do these discourses tell us about adults' concerns for children? Finally, we shall examine the realities and implications of the treatment and chastisement of children in the period under study. Does the condemnation of corporal punishment reflect a concern for children's welfare in nineteenth-century culture or a desire for control, or both? Do the movements towards less physical forms of punishment mean more autonomy for the child or more self-reform and self-control?

To appreciate the complexities behind the chastisement of children in our period of study, it is helpful to examine the concept of punishment more broadly. Although modern definitions of punishment for children in Western societies can be useful, we must nevertheless be cautious when looking at them and aware of the risk of anachronism. Contemporary definitions may rely on a legal framework that already prohibits or greatly limits the use of punishment, in particular corporal, whereas, in the period under study, this framework was in its infancy.⁶ In his ‘Prolegomenon to the Principles of Punishment’ (1959–1960), the legal philosopher H. L. A. Hart provides an exhaustive list of the standards required to describe an action as a punishing act:⁷ it must involve pain or other consequences normally considered unpleasant; it must be for an offence against legal rules; it must be of an actual or supposed offender for his offence; it must be intentionally administered by human beings other than the offender; it must be imposed and administered by an authority constituted by a legal system against which the offence is committed.

This definition, often used as a point of reference in discussions about the legal meaning of punishment, is useful when trying to understand the evolution of the treatment of children because it encompasses punishment in the past and because of its broadness. Hart considers that sub-categories of punishment do not need to meet all standards but only some of them, and his definition therefore extends to the punishment of juveniles. This includes the punishment of children at home or at school, which is the result of someone breaking rules other than legal rules. One key element in Hart’s definition is the deliberate application of pain, which will be crucial for Chapter Three of this thesis. The intention of causing pain or injury therefore suggests that the punisher is able to manipulate pain, to control and operate it in specific ways. Both for adult criminals and for children, such pain may be not only physical but also psychological and emotional. María José Falcón y Tella notes that ‘[t]he idea of manipulated pain is not exclusively covered by physical pain

⁶ For instance, Susan Bitensky defines corporal punishment as ‘the gratuitous intentional infliction of pain on children’s bodies for the purpose of modifying behavior’. However, this definition relies on the general acceptance that the ‘corporal punishment of children is the gratuitous intentional infliction of pain because the punishment *serves no lasting good* and because there are *other, more effective ways of handling children’s misbehavior*.’ These ideas were not commonly shared at the time of our study. Bitensky, p. 28. Emphasis added.

⁷ H. L. A. Hart, ‘Prolegomenon to the Principles of Punishment’, in H. L. A. Hart and John Gardner, *Punishment and Responsibility: Essays in the Philosophy of Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 4–5.

or suffering but spreads to all imaginable situations involving the *frustration of personal desires*.⁸ The notion of the frustration of personal desires is pivotal to this research because it helps us to understand how punitive actions extended beyond corporal sanctions, and may include measures such as confinement, banishment, exclusion, shame, humiliation and guilt. The frustration of personal desires also extends to the restriction of one's personal choices or autonomy, the ability to make decisions for one's own life. Desires concern not only actions in the present time, but also potential actions. Similarly, discipline is concerned not only with punishing the past actions of children, but also orienting their future movements and activities.

To an extent, this view of punishment is close to deterrent theories, which are also concerned with future actions. According to James Marshall, deterrent theory 'is concerned with the behaviour of the offender, and with changing that behaviour. [...] At first sight then this forward looking aspect may have some attraction for a search for the justification of punishing children.'⁹ This is crucial when examining the punishment of children who are often distinguished from adults in terms of their future realisations. Children are often viewed as adults in becoming and punishment may be applied so as to influence their actions in the near or distant future. When it comes to the punishment of children, Michael Donnelly and Murray Straus link the application of pain to the intention to change and improve the child's behaviour. Donnelly and Straus thus define the punishment of children specifically as 'the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correcting or controlling the child's behavior.'¹⁰ In the case of children, the term punishment refers to an action performed by a parent, a guardian, or someone acting in loco parentis, and has a moral intent: to correct or educate, but it can also be to preserve the welfare of the child or, as in the case of legal punishment, the community.

⁸ María José Falcón y Tella and Fernando Falcón y Tella, *Punishment and Culture: A Right to Punish?*, trans. by Peter Muckley (Leiden and Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2006), p. 8.

⁹ James Marshall, 'Punishment', in *The Encyclopaedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory*, ed. by M. Peters, T. Besley, A. Gibbons, B. Žarnić, P. Ghiraldelli (2000) <<http://eepat.net/doku.php?id=punishment>> [accessed 18.07.2014] Nowadays, however, the idea of reform as a justification for punishment is usually dismissed, according to Marshall: 'the way in which the legal institution of punishment works, especially in prisons, is hardly conducive to reform.'

¹⁰ Michael Donnelly and Murray Straus, *Corporal Punishment of Children in Theoretical Perspective* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 3. There were concerns about limiting injury in the nineteenth century, and punishers targeted areas of the body that would not damage the child.

Several theorists, however, have challenged definitions, such as Hart's, that focus on intentionally inflicted pain. In 'Punishment as Language', Igor Primoratz notes that these definitions miss an important point: the symbolic significance of punishment.¹¹ Both elements are crucial to understanding the full function of punishment. Primoratz then reviews expressionist theories of punishment, notably that of the nineteenth-century theorist Émile Durkheim, which define punishment as an expression of feelings and emotions. These theories are not incompatible with deterrent theories that view punishment as a way to prevent crime. For Durkheim, punishment plays a crucial role in social cohesion and expresses the collective conscience. And, as in other expressionist theories, punishment is a form of spectacle because it has an impact on its audience. In *Moral Education* (1925),¹² Durkheim tries to demonstrate that corporal punishment, for both adults and children, is a poor deterrent if it merely intends to punish a criminal act. It also needs to have a moral impact.

Punishment, Durkheim explains, aims to achieve the socialization of individuals and solidarity.¹³ His views depart from religious approaches to punishment, which saw in it a form of expiation or atonement, a compensation for the offence that eliminates the evil act. Durkheim does not completely reject this idea, and sees in punishment a language that enables offenders to make amends and show the public that the offence was morally wrong. In Durkheim's view, punishment, like education, has the potential to reinforce social cohesion, and is an example of the *conscience collective* at work.¹⁴ On the one hand, punishment expresses collective sentiments and norms; on the other hand, it reasserts these norms. Crimes disturb social cohesion and punishment helps to reinforce it by expressing moral

¹¹ Igor Primoratz, 'Punishment as language', in *Punishment*, ed. by Antony Duff (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1993), pp. 55–73. Other theorists have developed similar expressionist views of punishment, notably Alfred Cyril Ewing at the beginning of the twentieth century. For Ewing, punishment is also a language, which teaches a moral lesson and educates the public. Punishment can be regarded as a form of communication between justice experts, offenders and, above all, onlookers. The true target is the public. It is through the association of punishment with the notions of discipline and reform that the relationship between punishment and education becomes more apparent. Several thinkers have outlined this connection. According to Ewing's 'educative theory', punishment carries a moral message intended to 'help the criminal realize the wrongness of his actions and mend his ways'. Primoratz, p. 56.

¹² Durkheim's educational lectures (*L'Éducation morale*) were given in 1898 before being published in 1925 in France. Émile Durkheim, *L'Éducation Morale* (Paris: Alcan, 1938).

¹³ An important criticism of this point is that punishment and laws sometimes go against popular sentiments (for instance with anti-racial legislation). The term socialization can also be associated with the idea of normalisation.

¹⁴ David Garland, 'Durkheim's sociology of punishment and punishment today', in *Durkheim and Foucault: Perspectives on Education and Punishment*, ed. by Mark S. Cladis (Oxford: Durkheim Press Ltd., 1999), p. 19.

disapproval. Its authority comes from the fact that the emotions expressed are shared by everyone. Both punishment and education, therefore, emphasise the ‘constitution or reconstitution of moral individuals’.¹⁵ Durkheim’s views on punishment are still identifiable in more modern discussions of punishment, for instance when María José Falcón y Tella notes that punishment acts as a reinforcement of morality.¹⁶

James Marshall also contests some aspects of Hart’s definition, notably the idea that the punishment of adults and children can be understood as similar actions. Marshall asks whether Hart’s definition can really also be applied to the punishment of children. His overall argument concerns the arbitrariness and justifications for the punishment of children. He concludes that there are no general justifications for punishment, only justifications for each individual case: ‘There is a family resemblance between these uses which we learn and apply in practice, and there is no one sense, or logically prior sense of “punishment”’.¹⁷ However, this thesis does not ask whether particular forms of punishment or punishment per se are justifiable, but how they were legitimised in the past. Marshall argues that there is not one single overarching concept of punishment but several, and that they differ when applied to adult criminals and to children.

Yet the evolution of the punishment of adults can shed light on the justifications that have accompanied the application of the punishment of children.¹⁸ Although the punishment of children and adults in Western societies have differences, they also share common rationales; to an extent, the punishment of children and that of prisoners are indebted to each other. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, educators who wrote about the punishment of children often compared it to the

¹⁵ William Ramp, ‘Durkheim and Foucault on the genesis of the disciplinary society’, in Cladis, p. 82.

¹⁶ For Falcón y Tella, the role of punishment is not ‘to punish the guilty or to intimidate possible imitators. From such a perspective, its effectiveness is debatable and even mediocre. Its true function is a double one. On the one hand, it is an individual emotion and, on the other and at the same time, a collective reinforcing of morality.’ María José Falcón y Tella, *Punishment and Culture: A Right to Punish?* (Leiden: Boston, 2006), pp. 31-32

¹⁷ James Marshall, ‘The Punishment of Children’, in *The Encyclopaedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory*, ed. by M. Peters, T. Besley, A. Gibbons, B. Žarnić, P. Ghiraldelli (2000)

<http://eepat.net/doku.php?id=children_and_punishment> [accessed 22.07.2014].

¹⁸ Some scholars such as Myra Glenn examined the punishment of prisoners, women and children together, because the rationales behind them (and their prohibition) were the same. Myra Glenn, *Campaigns Against Corporal Punishment: Prisoners, Sailors, Women and Children in Antebellum America* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984).

issues surrounding the chastisement of criminals. In *Practical Education* (1798), the English educator Maria Edgeworth and Richard Lovell Edgeworth begin a chapter entitled *Rewards and Punishment* by examining the legal meaning of punishment in a penal context, before embarking on their analysis of the punishment of children for educational purposes. The role of the educator, they assert, is to induce in children a love for justice and laws so that they may never turn to crime. In *The Evil Tendencies of Corporal Punishment* (1847), the American educator Lyman Cobb introduces his work on the disciplining of children by considering the effectiveness of the prison, the gallows and public executions: ‘within a few years, both in this country and in England, capital punishment has been more limited or restricted than formerly. Can we not see in this a sufficient argument or reason for using the rod (if used at all), *only* as the *ultimatum* or *last resort*, and not as a means of *moral discipline*?’¹⁹ Similarly, the justifications for Mettray, a French reformatory colony for young offenders, were found in the benefits for the greater good, or, as a French journalist wrote in 1865: ‘De la bonne éducation de la jeunesse, dépend la prospérité des empires’.²⁰ [The prosperity of empires relies on the careful education of young people.]

How, then, did the general notion of punishment evolve in modern times? According to Louis Carney, punishment rationales can be divided into three main categories: retribution, deterrence, or reformation.²¹ In early Western societies, the punishment of adult criminals was used as a form of retribution, a way to avenge the power in place; in breaking the law, the criminal challenged and offended the authority of the ruler. The retributive rationale is the most ancient theory of punishment, which can be ‘traced back to the Old Testament adage of “an eye for an eye.”’²² Both corporal and public, chastisement was also a form of deterrent to reinforce the power in place. Following a very strictly codified procedure, the body of the offender was therefore publicly used to convey a political message to onlookers. Often surpassing in violence the actual crime and involving extreme physical pain, the most common form of punishment amongst Western countries

¹⁹ Lyman Cobb, *The Evil Tendencies of Corporal Punishment as a Means of Moral Discipline in Families and Schools, Examined and Discussed* (New York: Mark H. Newman & Co., 1847), p. 9.

²⁰ Quoted in Jean-Louis Mongin, ‘Michel Verne à Mettray’, *Bulletin de la Société Jules Verne*, 186 (2014), 4–28 (p. 14).

²¹ Louis Carney, *Corrections, Treatment and Philosophy* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1980), p. 5.

²² Marshall, ‘Punishment’.

was whipping, while death was the 'supreme penalty'.²³ In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault argues that during public executions, the people acted as both spectators and warrants of the penalty by witnessing that punishment took place. Increasingly, however, they disapproved of and challenged violent sentences performed publicly. In rare instances, the offender was saved by the mob in a fundamentally subversive act where roles were reversed; the authority of the power in place was flouted and criminals transformed.²⁴

In the eighteenth century, punishment underwent radical changes and progressively became a tool to reform individuals. These changes continued and culminated in the nineteenth century, which 'focused on more or less practical strategies to reform the prisoner'.²⁵ Like the movements for the protection of children, the discourses that emerged in the eighteenth century regarding the treatment of criminals were born out of ideological debates but also political concerns. Humanistic interests merged with the need to control individuals. Many eighteenth-century philosophers condemned the use of torture as cruel and unnecessary, advocating more humane forms of punishment. Crucially, while imprisonment was used prior to the nineteenth century, it was mostly a temporary tool not considered as an appropriate or sufficient means of chastisement. The widespread use of confinement as the main form of punishment in Western countries emerged at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. The evolution both of the prison system and of the disciplining of children participate in and result from a similar rationale: as the administration of bodily pain to criminals and children decreased, their confinement also progressed. Legal confinement was used against young delinquents, who could be sent to prison, but also for children defying parental authority. Hence, Jennifer Popiel notes that in the eighteenth century in France, '*lettres de cachet* could ensure the imprisonment of children who threatened their parents' authority'.²⁶

The early days of confinement did not preclude the use of bodily chastisement, however punishment became more internal. In the nineteenth century, a new

²³ Burk Foster, *Corrections: The Fundamentals* (New Jersey: Pearson Education Ltd., 2006), p. 3.

²⁴ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p. 64.

²⁵ Heather Shore, 'Crime, Policing and Punishment', in *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain*, ed. by Chris Williams, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), p. 391.

²⁶ Popiel, p. 93.

penitentiary system called the ‘separate system’, based on solitary confinement and absolute silence, emerged and spread through Western countries. This so-called ‘separate’ system used in America and England conceived of confinement as a tool to reform individuals. In *The Rationale of Punishment*, published in 1770, Jeremy Bentham, father of the concept of the Panopticon, which Foucault analyses in *Discipline and Punish*, wrote against corporal punishment, including that of children. Bentham, whose reflection on punishment and the architectural organisation of prisons had a major influence on our punitive systems, strongly believed that the fear of being punished by the law was a powerful deterrent.

The corrective rationales that encouraged the development of incarceration also had a strong religious element. Confinement worked on the conscience of the offender, and the prison became a place of penance, where offenders were meant to feel regret for what they had done. Confinement, it was believed, would engender feelings of remorse, and give the prisoner the opportunity to reflect upon his errors and generate religious awakening. Punishment was understood not only as a deterrent and a retributive action, but also a cure; isolation and separation were employed for the moral instruction of the criminals and considered ‘therapeutic’.²⁷ The length of the sentence was of crucial importance. Time and duration, linked to boredom and monotony, played pivotal roles in the experience of punishment.²⁸ According to Richard Fenn, the new penitentiaries in America, which Charles Dickens visited,

like purgatory, offered a time for purification of the soul based on repentance. A secularized “process of reasoning” led to the formation of a prison based on solitary confinement, which broke the soul and buried a prisoner alive for a time that seemed to have no end and no redeeming moment. The prisoner endured the slow and progressive dissolution of the soul into something incapable of enjoying life outside the prison.²⁹

²⁷ Eirick Prairat remarks that the term penance, in its religious origin, means a form of medicine. Eirick Prairat, *Eduquer et Punir : Généalogie du discours psychologique* (Nancy: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1994), p. 43.

²⁸ The expression ‘doing time’, used notably in the context of twentieth and twenty-first century prisons that are no longer associated with hard labour but, instead, with monotony and boredom, is particularly revelatory.

²⁹ Richard Fenn, *The Persistence of Purgatory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 17–18. Dickens was interested in the different treatments of prisoners. For instance, he noted in Boston an effort to mix individualism with a sense of community responsibility, which he did not find in New York prisons.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault argues that confinement was part of a disciplinary mechanism more anonymous, more automatic and less visible than earlier corporal forms of punishment. Discipline, through its use of space and time, could mould the body as well as the mind of individuals. Other scholars concur that the aim of punishment in the nineteenth century was to practise ‘corrective discipline—to create habits of industry through the application of strictly enforced rules’.³⁰ Foucault uses the expansion of the prison system in Western countries as a metaphor for the emergence of a new kind of control of modern society. But this has limitations, in particular the fact that Foucault’s analysis pays little attention to strategies for subversion. Foucault’s statements should be taken with caution and his interpretations, although groundbreaking, have often been deemed unsatisfactory because of their lack of historical explanations. Moscoso, for instance, argues that Foucault fails to explain the link between the waning of the spectacle of punishment and the emergence of the prison. Moscoso does not read into the emergence of confinement as a punitive technique an opposition between body and soul, but rather between private and public spheres: ‘repression no longer aspired to political control through an abuse of force, but rather to the sustaining of a social pact through the education of its citizenry.’³¹ Foucault conceived imprisonment as an effective form of control, neglecting that it can be counterproductive and failing to pay attention to its agents.

Yet his analyses are helpful in suggesting that disciplinary confinement, with its intention to reform individuals, had an educational aspect. Foucault considers that the penitentiary system initially modelled itself on already existing disciplinary techniques, found in the army and monasteries, and also boarding schools. Foucault argues that these institutions used space and time to separate and segregate individuals, with time becoming fragmented, regulated by strict routines, and space becoming “cellular”. Indeed, French schools would use designated places of isolation to punish their pupils: ‘Dans la gradation des punitions et des châtements

³⁰ Foster, p. 22. Javier Moscoso also agrees with Foucault that, in Western civilizations, ‘techniques of confinement began to be linked with both productive and educational criteria’. Moscoso, p. 62.

³¹ Moscoso, p. 63. For another critique of Foucault, see David Garland, ‘Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* – An Exposition and Critique’, *American Bar Foundation Research Journal*, 11.4 (1986), 847–880.

en usage, en effet, existent différentes formes de réclusion'.³² [Within the range of punishments in use there exist several types of imprisonment.] In England too, Eric Midwinter reports that Hazelwood School in Birmingham, for instance, used 'solitary confinement in the dark as a final sanction'.³³ Confinement and separation were used in institutions for young delinquents too, where the borders between education and punishment became particularly blurred. However, as with the incarceration of prisoners, which was not only a way to control but also regarded as a compassionate form of punishment, more respectful of emerging ideals of human rights, the punishment of children evolved away from physical harshness at home and in educational institutions. The use of confinement and other, milder forms of punishment testify to an evolution in the way children were regarded, as well as treated.

Conceptions of childhood

The evolution of punitive practices reveals variations in the way children were viewed by adults. The forms of discipline a society chooses suggest its conceptions or constructions of childhood. The French historian Philippe Ariès first developed the idea that childhood is a construction in *Centuries of Childhood* (1962),³⁴ a turning point in the academic study of the history of childhood and children – 'And in the beginning was Ariès', notes Heywood wryly.³⁵ Ariès stressed that childhood should be regarded as a construction that changes with temporal, cultural and geographical location. His research has helped appreciate that childhood is not a tangible object that can simply be observed, but a concept. To be aware of childhood means to be conscious of 'la particularité enfantine, cette particularité, qui distingue essentiellement l'enfant de l'adulte même jeune.'³⁶ [the particular nature that distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult.] The philosopher

³² Guillemette Tison, *Une Mosaïque d'enfants* (Arras: Artois Presses Université, 1998), p. 294. Schools also used confinement techniques to punish their pupils, as in *Poil de Carotte*, where the protagonist is threatened with 'quatre jours de séquestre' [four days of confinement] by his boarding school headmaster (59).

³³ Eric Midwinter, *Nineteenth Century Education* (London: Longman, 1970), p. 28.

³⁴ Philippe Ariès, *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Seuil, 1973). This book was first published in France in 1960 and translated into English in 1962.

³⁵ Colin Heywood, *A History of Childhood* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p. 11.

³⁶ Philippe Ariès, p. 177.

David Archard usefully distinguishes between childhood as a *concept*, based on the idea that children are different from adults, and *conceptions* of childhood, which are the very differences between children and adults. This distinction is crucial in understanding the way we think of children, and will also be useful when considering their punishment. Thus Archard writes that '[t]he *concept* of childhood requires that children be distinguishable from adults in respect of some unspecified set of attributes. A *conception* of childhood is a specification of those attributes'.³⁷

Historians have disputed several aspects of Ariès's research: his methodology, interpretations and lack of direct evidence supporting his arguments and, crucially, his claim that there was no consciousness of the specificity of childhood in pre-modern times. Predominantly examining iconographic sources, Ariès found that children were often missing in mediaeval art. If they were portrayed, their morphology was represented like that of adults. Scholars have intensely contended this point and have shown that the lack of an awareness of childhood in pre-modern times is a moot point. Whether the idea of childhood was discovered at a specific point in history remains open to question but probably, as John Darling notes, 'there was no act of inventing' childhood.³⁸ Yet critics fundamentally agree with Ariès that, in modern times, a shift occurred in the way adults considered childhood, in their expectations and behaviour towards children. An awareness of childhood probably existed in pre-modern times but was very different from our current conceptions.³⁹

More recently, scholars have paid closer attention to the history of children's and parents' emotions. Some historians have examined the emotional bond between children and adults, arguing that parents always showed concern and affection towards their offspring. Their research indicates that adults demonstrated an awareness of childhood and cared deeply for their progeny. Sander Breiner argues

³⁷ David Archard, *Children: Rights and Childhood* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 22.

³⁸ John Darling, *How We See Children: The Legacy of Rousseau's Émile* (Aberdeen: Centre for Educational Research, University of Aberdeen, 2000), p. 3.

³⁹ The paucity of direct evidence is one of the major issues scholars face when studying the history of children and childhood, particularly when questioning the way children were treated. Recent investigations insist on using as many direct sources as possible, such as diaries, autobiographies or reports from court cases. Whatever the sources, two main difficulties always remain. First, most records are linked to middle-class families. Second, there are very few records of children's personal impressions, opinions, feelings or thoughts. This inevitably results in limited findings about how children were treated and perceived.

that several ancient societies rarely used corporal punishment and dealt with their children in a gentle manner.⁴⁰ This suggests that the evolution of the discourses around child-adult relationships was not a linear march towards progress and enlightenment. John Sommerville also remarks that Puritan parents were often advised to ‘use simple admonitions wherever possible, and schoolmasters should stop their habits of beating like “frantic men.”’⁴¹ Similarly, Linda Pollock, through excerpts from a variety of primary sources, demonstrates that parents were usually caring and gentle towards their children. Already in the seventeenth century she notes reports of parents refusing to mistreat their children: ‘We were bred tenderly, for my mother naturally did strive to please and delight her children, not to cross and torment them, terrifying them with threats, or lashing them with slavish whips’.⁴² Pollock does not deny the use of corporal chastisement before the modern period, or the fact that some parents even enjoyed its deployment. But she argues that punishment was usually regarded as a necessity rather than a choice. Morality and parental responsibilities demanded firm disciplining, while children’s obedience was regarded as a virtue. Nonetheless, Pollock considers that ‘[l]ittle attempt has been made to place punishment within the entire spectrum of parental attitudes to children or within the function of the parental role. Thus, we have been presented with a distorted, misleading history of repressed children brought up under the threat of the rod.’⁴³

Two opposing concepts of childhood had a crucial impact on parental attitudes towards children in Western societies: the innately corrupt child and the pure child, or, in the words of the critic James Kincaid, the naughty child and the gentle child.⁴⁴ The origins of this dichotomised conception of children as either good or evil can be traced back to Christian doctrine. According to Christian principles, children are pure beings close to God, while adults are further away from Him. The child is ‘without fault or sin, innocent of evil’, ‘Adam or Eve before the Fall’.⁴⁵ Yet also

⁴⁰ Sander Breiner, *Slaughter of the Innocents: Child Abuse Through the Ages and Today* (New York, London: Plenum, 1990).

⁴¹ John Sommerville, *The Discovery of Childhood in Puritan England* (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1992), p. 94.

⁴² Linda Pollock, *A Lasting Relationship: Parents and Children Over Three Centuries* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1987), p. 182.

⁴³ Pollock, p. 166.

⁴⁴ James Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992).

⁴⁵ Archard, p. 37.

rooted in Christian beliefs is the idea that children are innately corrupt. As the fruit of temptation, the child was marked at birth 'by the stain of Adam and Eve's defiance of God's will'.⁴⁶ Various seventeenth- and eighteenth-century religious groups stemming from reformation movements (most particularly Puritans in England and in America), but also some Catholic factions (such as Jansenists in France), saw the child as innately depraved from the moment it was born. For both Catholic and Protestant, supervision, obedience and discipline were therefore considered a necessity. Puritans placed particular emphasis on the upbringing of children, and greatly contributed to the emergence of texts specifically for young readers. They saw in children the potential for religious reform. Disobedience was a double offence against religious laws and domestic order.⁴⁷ Children's inner 'badness' meant that they needed to be controlled and strictly treated. Puritans, notes David Archard, 'conceived children as essentially prone to a badness which only a rigid disciplinary upbringing could correct'.⁴⁸ Religion was at the same time an explanation and a justification for the harsh treatment of children, as well as a cure.⁴⁹ The doctrine of original sin shaped Western approaches to discipline, and aimed to counteract the child's perceived immorality. It 'could justify a punitive approach to children and considerable use of fear as a disciplinary tool, with threats of damnation if children did not toe the mark'.⁵⁰ It was not uncommon, notably in books for the young, to use the threat of death and eternal punishment as a disciplinary tool. Yet some historians also argue that Puritans, notably through their writings for the young and parental advice literature, prescribed the respect of children and 'moderation in discipline'.⁵¹ Therefore, approaches to discipline and punishment were complex, even within particular religious movements.

In the seventeenth century, new conceptions of childhood emerged that challenged the ideas of the Augustinian doctrine of original sin and the child's innate wickedness. The child was viewed in more neutral terms, not yet as a figure of innocence but not as innately corrupt either. John Locke was a turning point in

⁴⁶ Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, p. 61.

⁴⁷ David Grylls, *Guardians and Angels: Parents and Children in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), p. 24.

⁴⁸ Archard, p. 38.

⁴⁹ In England, remarks Kincaid, the Victorians looked to religion for 'a discourse of explanation and justification' for punishment. Kincaid, p. 249.

⁵⁰ Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, p. 60.

⁵¹ Anne Scott MacLeod, 'Reappraising the Puritan Past', *Children's Literature*, 21 (1993), 179–184 (p. 183).

revoking the latter doctrine, although Jeremy Waldron points out that Locke doubted the validity of original sin ‘in its literal form of inherited fault, not in the looser sense of our nature being inept for perfectly rational control of our actions’.⁵² In *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), Locke stresses the importance of education and its impact on the behaviour of children. Young children are not yet able to manipulate ideas and not used to abstract thoughts: ‘Long discourses, and philosophical reasonings, at best, amaze and confound, but do not instruct children.’⁵³ Nonetheless, reasoning remains the truest and best way to deal with them, ‘but it must be by such reasons as their age and understanding are capable of, and those proposed always in very few and plain words.’⁵⁴ Children, explains Locke, love being treated as rational beings and understand why they should behave a certain way. While the child is not born rational, it is capable of developing reason. The crucial task of education, and of adult-child relationships, is therefore to practise, teach and develop their potential to think rationally and to progress towards the pinnacle of adulthood.

Locke’s *Thoughts* had an enduring impact on conceptions of childhood, particularly on nineteenth-century England. The idea that children were improvable and that their will could be manipulated guided some parents’ thinking about discipline. Linda Pollock records this comment made by Thomas Cobden-Sanderson in 1886 about his son: ‘Our anxiety for his future makes us careful in ridding him of bad habits and making his will “supple” as Locke – whom we are now reading – would say.’⁵⁵ The idea of the child’s malleability also had an enduring impact in the development of a literature for children. In the early didactic stories of the nineteenth century, ‘many works, proclaiming themselves as “Méthode amusante” or “Amusing and Instructive,” betrayed their Enlightenment influences as they

⁵² Jeremy Waldron, *God, Locke, and Equality: Christian Foundations in Locke’s Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 111. David Archard also notes that Locke ‘does not subscribe to any naive belief in the inherent innocence or goodness of the child. His comments on the readily observable cruelty of young people are down to earth and perceptive.’ Archard, p. 5. Yet Locke believed that the ‘pleasure they take to put any thing in pain’ is not a natural disposition of children, but something they learn. John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2007), p. 92.

⁵³ Locke, p. 65.

⁵⁴ Locke, p. 65.

⁵⁵ Pollock, p. 192. John Sommerville notes that the idea of manipulating the will of the child emerged in the eighteenth century: ‘All histories of Puritan attitudes toward children refer to this program [of correcting children] as “breaking the will”, but actual citations of the phrase come from the eighteenth century rather than the seventeenth’. Sommerville, p. 94. Sommerville claims that puritans had a great concern for balance in the way they used discipline, trying to train (aristocratic) children without crushing their will.

assumed, in line with current educational theory, that the child's mind was a blank slate, gaining knowledge through experience and reflection.⁵⁶

Furthermore, Locke's *Thoughts* was a watershed in the rejection of the severe treatment of children.⁵⁷ Locke contends that corporal punishment is usually inefficacious and only a temporary solution; it does not influence the child's mind in the long term. Beatings are a 'lazy' and 'short' way to educate children, and 'the worst, and therefore the last means to be used in the correction of children'.⁵⁸ Yet Locke's position on corporal punishment can also appear quite contradictory. He recommends whippings in specific situations, notably when the child challenges the authority of adults and perseveres in his or her rebellion: 'stubbornness and an obstinate disobedience must be mastered with force and blows: for there is no other remedy [...] unless, for ever after, you intend to live in obedience to your son.'⁵⁹ The compliance and obedience of the child must be achieved at whatever cost, and in some cases the only solution is corporal punishment. However, Locke insists that, even in such cases, discipline should be applied with an attitude that suggests it is a difficult task to perform for the punisher. The latter should never appear as an enemy, rather as a 'compassionate friend',⁶⁰ a piece of advice that many adults in the stories comprising our corpus take on board, as we shall see in more detail in Chapter Four.

However strong Locke's influence was, for Colin Heywood the 'outstanding figure in the construction of childhood' is Jean-Jacques Rousseau.⁶¹ Like Locke, Rousseau insists that children's natural progression should be respected. He divides childhood into different stages and considers that children should be taught according to their age. However, in the second book of *Émile ou de l'éducation* (1762), dealing with his pupil from the age of five to twelve, Rousseau argues: 'Raisonner avec les enfants était la plus grande maxime de Locke [...] pour moi je ne vois rien de plus sot que

⁵⁶ Popiel, p. 121.

⁵⁷ Andrew O'Malley, *The Making of the Modern Child: Children's Literature and Childhood in the Late Eighteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 89.

⁵⁸ Locke, p. 67. Roger Cox notes that 'Locke's discussion of corporal punishment mirrors very closely that of his Puritan predecessor in seeing it as a sign of failure on the part of parents, to be used only as a last resort'. Cox, p. 55.

⁵⁹ Locke, p. 61.

⁶⁰ Locke, p. 70.

⁶¹ Colin Heywood, *A History of Childhood*, p. 24.

ces enfants avec qui l'on a tant raisonné.’⁶² [“Reason with children” was Locke’s chief maxim [...] those children who have been constantly reasoned with strike me as exceedingly silly.] Education should respect the specific nature of the child; if a child could already reason, there would be no need for education, as the child would already be an adult. Locke had specified that reasoning with a younger child was different than with an older one, and needed to be done in a fashion that respected the child’s abilities. But for Rousseau, when using ‘moral arguments with a child who was not yet a moral being, one risked his forming disastrously erroneous ideas of the moral world’.⁶³

Rousseau fully articulated the idea that the child’s special nature needed to be respected and saw in childhood a separate stage of life, rather than a path to becoming an adult. In the preface to *Émile*, Rousseau urges readers to avoid ‘l’homme dans l’enfant, sans penser à ce qu’il est avant d’être homme.’⁶⁴ [looking for the man in the child, without considering what he is before he becomes a man.] This is an idea he repeats later: ‘La nature veut que les enfants soient enfants avant que d’être hommes.’⁶⁵ [Nature would have them be children before they are men.] Furthermore, Rousseau rejects more overtly than Locke the doctrine of original sin, which he regards as ‘false and wicked’.⁶⁶ In a letter, Rousseau explains that the general purpose of *Émile* was to bolster ‘ce principe avancé par l’auteur dans d’autres écrits que l’homme est naturellement bon’.⁶⁷ [this principle proposed by the author in other works that man is naturally good.] The child, born innocent, should be preserved from the corruption of society. Rousseau therefore reverses the idea of the child’s innate corruption, and instead blames punishment and adults administering it for the wickedness of children: ‘quelques fois on le châtie avant qu’il puisse connaître ses fautes, ou plutôt en commettre. C’est ainsi qu’on verse de bonne heure dans son jeune cœur les passions qu’on impute ensuite à la nature, et qu’après avoir pris peine à le rendre méchant, on se plaint de le trouver tel.’⁶⁸

⁶² Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile ou de l’éducation* (Paris, Flammarion: 1966), p. 106.

⁶³ Peter Jimack, *Rousseau: Émile* (London: Grant & Cutler Ltd, 1983), p. 60.

⁶⁴ Rousseau, p. 32.

⁶⁵ Rousseau, p. 108.

⁶⁶ Timothy O’Hagan, *Rousseau* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 61.

⁶⁷ Letter to Philibert Cramer, in October 1764. Quoted in Jimack, p. 9.

⁶⁸ Rousseau, pp. 50–51.

[sometimes he is punished for faults before he is aware of them, or rather before they are committed. Thus early are the seeds of evil passions sown in his young heart. At a later day these are attributed to nature, and when we have taken pains to make him bad we lament his badness.] Rousseau also makes here a crucial connection with intent; failure to communicate with children when punishing them, to clearly justify sanctions and to explain their intent, leads children to commit wrongdoings.

According to Roger Cox, the major difference between Rousseau and Locke lies in the child-adult relationship and in the visibility of the educator. Locke stressed ‘the dependence of the child upon the authority of the adult [...] only through adult control of the will of the young child could virtue be achieved’.⁶⁹ Rousseau, on the other hand, believes that the child should not act out of obedience; the tutor should behave as an educative yet shadowy figure, and their teaching and authority should be invisible to the child. For Rousseau, the child should be educated through his senses, a principle influenced by his reading of Locke, but Rousseau also considers that the child should learn to rely on their own judgement through their experience of the world, quietly controlled and manipulated by adults. This is of crucial importance with regard to his conception of punishment. While chastisements may be necessary, Rousseau considers that they should not visibly derive from adults’ authority. Rather, if children commit a mischief, they should suffer the natural consequences of their actions: ‘il ne faut jamais infliger aux enfants le châtement comme châtement, mais il doit toujours leur arriver comme une suite naturelle de leur mauvaise action.’⁷⁰ [children should never receive punishment merely as such; it should always come as the natural consequence of their fault.]

In *Émile*, the young boy’s punishments are analogous to his crimes and he suffers the consequences of what he has done. Hence, his punishment for breaking a window is to be locked in the dark: ‘vous l’enfermez à l’obscurité dans un lieu sans fenêtre.’⁷¹ [you will shut him in a dark place without a window.] Rousseau suggests

⁶⁹ Cox, p. 67.

⁷⁰ Rousseau, p. 123.

⁷¹ Rousseau, p. 122. *Émile* suffers the opposite of his wrongdoing, as in the idea of contrapasso punishment found in theological and Medieval sources such as Dante’s *Inferno*, suggesting that Rousseau’s educational theories, although rejecting Original sin, are not impervious to earlier literary and religious influences.

that the benefit of confining the child is to trigger remorse and introspection. However, Rousseau was not in favour of keeping children inside to educate them, instead advocating their access to the outside world: ‘Rien n’est si triste que les ténèbres ; n’allez pas enfermer votre enfant dans un cachot.’⁷² [Nothing is so gloomy as the dark; do not shut your child up in a dungeon.] To an extent, the restriction of the child’s freedom was pivotal to Rousseau’s educational tenets but it took the form of an illusion of freedom: ‘Il n’y a point d’assujettissement si parfait que celui qui garde l’apparence de la liberté ; on captive ainsi la volonté même.’⁷³ [There is no subjection so complete as that which preserves the forms of freedom; it is thus that the will itself is taken captive.] Similarly, in the episode of Émile’s confinement, someone finally comes to let him out, yet gives him the impression that he participates in this decision: ‘après que l’enfant aura demeuré là plusieurs heures, assez longtemps pour s’y ennuyer et s’en souvenir, quelqu’un lui suggérera de vous proposer un accord au moyen duquel vous lui rendiez la liberté, et il ne cassera plus de vitres.’⁷⁴ [when the child has been there several hours, long enough to get very tired of it, long enough to make an impression on his memory, some one suggests to him that he should offer to make terms with you, so that you may set him free and he will never break windows again.] The adult plants the seed that an agreement could be reached, giving the child the illusion of agency. In this passage, ‘some one’ is an undetermined person, possibly a servant, who appears as another anonymous shadowy person surrounding Émile. Taken out of context, the passage could appear to refer to a diplomatic agreement over the release of a prisoner of war. Rousseau suggests that the child must be brought to agree with the adult in a way based on mutual agreement or collaboration – although the most powerful party is clearly making the decisions.

Rousseau’s approach to punishment, and his stress on the controlled liberty of the child, must be placed in the context of his thoughts on freedom: ‘l’homme vraiment libre ne veut que ce qu’il peut.’⁷⁵ [man is truly free who desires what he is able to perform.] The child’s freedom is therefore discreetly limited by the educator:

⁷² Rousseau, p. 171.

⁷³ Rousseau, p. 150.

⁷⁴ Rousseau, p. 122.

⁷⁵ Rousseau, p. 99.

‘N’offrez jamais à ses volontés indiscrètes que des obstacles physiques ou des punitions qui naissent des actions mêmes, et qu’il se rappelle dans l’occasion’.⁷⁶ [Let his unreasonable wishes meet with physical obstacles only, or the punishment which results from his actions, lessons which will be recalled when the same circumstances occur again.] Although Émile feels free, in fact he lives under the concealed guidance of his tutor: ‘Dissimulation and devious stratagems play a large part in Rousseau’s pedagogical method’.⁷⁷ Rousseau’s thoughts on adult intervention led him to reject the use of books in children’s education until the age of twelve – with the exception of Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Fénelon’s *Les Aventures de Télémaque* (1699), which is not only a treaty of natural education but also combines amusement and instruction. Yet many of his followers were inspired to write books for children developing his theories and came to see childhood as a separate and distinct period of life. For Jennifer Popiel, Rousseau’s influence on early nineteenth-century children’s authors was strong ‘not only in a frequent description of the child as naturally good and spoiled only through improper adult intervention, but also [...] the stories they provided attempted to maintain discipline through natural consequences, rather than simply prohibiting behavior’.⁷⁸

Scholars concur that Rousseau’s writings had a determining impact on conceptions of childhood throughout the nineteenth century. In England and France, the sacralisation of childhood was indeed the work of Romantic writers and thinkers. Archard notes about England that Rousseau influenced ‘especially Blake and Wordsworth, which chiefly celebrates the original innocence of childhood’.⁷⁹ Aimé Dupuy asserts that Romanticism transformed the child into a significant protagonist in French literature: ‘C’est donc bien le Romantisme qui s’est fait l’introducteur de l’Enfant dans la Cité des Lettres Françaises’,⁸⁰ [Romanticism did introduce the Child into the domain of French Literature] and Jean Calvet notes how Victor Hugo made of childhood ‘un thème littéraire’ [a literary theme] and created with his

⁷⁶ Rousseau, p. 101.

⁷⁷ Maurice Cranston, *The Noble Savage: Jean-Jacques Rousseau 1754–1762* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 176. Cranston also claims that ‘[i]f corporal punishment is banished from Rousseau’s educational methods, his alternatives sometimes seem no less sadistic’.

⁷⁸ Popiel, p. 131.

⁷⁹ Archard, p. 39.

⁸⁰ Aimé Dupuy, *Un Personnage nouveau du roman français : l’enfant* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1931), p. 10.

poetry ‘le poncif de l’enfant’ [the stereotype of the child].⁸¹ The romantic child initially born from Rousseau’s writings became the nineteenth century’s paradigm of idealised childhood. Sophie Heywood notes how Rousseau’s ideas even helped shape new religious approaches to childhood:

[a] modernising current within Catholicism, led by Mgr Dupanloup, argued that children had the capacity for evil, but that this was only the germ of evil that had not yet had the time to develop, and so they were not innately evil. He even quoted from Rousseau, on how naughty boys can often, with a good education, become the most likeable and generous of men.⁸²

The Romantic heritage was clearly felt in America too. Cogan Thacker and Webb point out that Transcendentalism, ‘the American form of romantic idealism’, ‘found a particular relevance in a childlike apprehension of the landscape and the revolutionary project of the American nation’.⁸³ Transcendentalism, in particular the work of Ralph Waldo Emerson, influenced many American artists and writers, including Susan Coolidge.⁸⁴ In echo of Rousseau’s writing, Emerson ‘claimed that a child’s ability to see through ‘fresh’ and innocent eyes was disrupted by society and, thus, could only be regained through contemplation of nature’.⁸⁵ In *Self-Reliance* (1841), Emerson also argued that the grown man is ‘as it were, clapped into jail by his consciousness’, while children have a nonchalance and an independence of mind that we should imitate.⁸⁶

Perhaps the most relevant Transcendentalist for the purpose of this study is Bronson Alcott. A contemporary and friend of Emerson, as well as the father of Louisa May Alcott, Alcott was also an educator. His experiences as an educationalist are believed to have influenced some of the punishment episodes in *Little Men*.⁸⁷ In his essay ‘The Doctrine and Discipline of Human Culture’ (1836), Alcott attributes

⁸¹ Jean Calvet, *L’Enfant dans la littérature française* (Paris: F. Lanore, 1930), vol. 1, p. 137.

⁸² Sophie Heywood, p. 63.

⁸³ Cogan Thacker and Webb, p. 16.

⁸⁴ In her eulogy ‘Concord. May 31, 1882,’ after Emerson’s death, Coolidge wrote: ‘urging upward, year by year,/To ampler air, diviner light.’ Quoted in Randall Fuller, *Emerson’s Ghosts: Literature, Politics, and the Making of Americanists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 29. Mark Twain, on the other hand, took a more critical view of Emerson’s writing and transcendental philosophy.

⁸⁵ Cogan Thacker and Webb, p. 22.

⁸⁶ Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays, First Series* (Boston and New York: Fireside Editions, 1909), p. 51.

⁸⁷ A critic writing in the *Boston Daily Advertiser* in 1872 noted when *Little Men* was published: ‘Some of the peculiar modes of punishment used at Plumfield were really successfully tried, we think, in Mr. Alcott’s school’. Quoted in *Louisa May Alcott: The Contemporary Reviews* ed. by Beverly Lyon Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 144.

divine qualities to the child. Childhood also remains a mystery: 'Its pure and simple nature; its faith and its hope, are all unknown to us. It stands friendless and alone, pleading for sympathy and aid.'⁸⁸ The child's vulnerability and feebleness require him or her to be guided and disciplined, although in Alcott's theory this does not involve traditional corporal punishment. In the 1830s, Alcott founded Temple School, an experimental educational establishment where, with Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, he developed a style of education based around conversations, and refused to use traditional corporal punishment. In Alcott's view, educators should be exemplary figures as it is the best means of influencing the child. Whereas in real life, '[w]e train children amidst these evils [appetites and self-indulgence] [...] surround them by temptations, which stagger the feeble virtue', literature according to Alcott can influence children positively. Alcott recommends not only religious texts but also children's stories (generally those with a religious significance)⁸⁹ and, to an extent like Rousseau, advocates respecting the liberty of the child:

Liberty is a primary right of all created natures, and the love of it inherent in all... The child must be treated as a *free, self-guiding, self-controlling* being. He must be allowed to feel that he is under his own guidance, and that all external guidance is an injustice which is done to his nature unless his own will is intelligently submissive to it...⁹⁰

Romantics wanted primarily to preserve a childlike ideal and saw childhood as representing a lost paradise, adults' lost origins. Nineteenth-century artists, feeling increasingly alienated from modern society, identified with the powerless child whose vulnerability was associated with nostalgic emotions. Romanticism also altered Rousseau's view of children's innocence. Crucially, its proponents saw in children's innate goodness the symbol of newly found qualities – sensibility, wisdom, spontaneity, imagination, sometimes even divine qualities. If the child could be receptive to sublime knowledge and transcendental truth,⁹¹ if s/he was seen as the carrier of moral certainties, this also meant that, in reverse, the child

⁸⁸ Amos Bronson Alcott, p. 25.

⁸⁹ As far as religious texts are concerned for the education of children, Alcott had a predilection for the homiletic text *The Pilgrim's Progress*, as can be seen in some of his school reports. See Amos Bronson Alcott, 'Report on the Concord Schools' in *Essays on Education (1830–1862)* (Gainesville, Florida: Scholars' Facsimile and Reprints, 1960), pp. 246–47.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Pollock, p. 172.

⁹¹ In France, the nineteenth-century historian Jules Michelet saw in the child figure the voice of the people. For Michelet, 'L'enfant est l'interprète du peuple. [...] Il est le peuple même, dans sa vérité native, avant qu'il ne soit déformé'. [The child is the people's interpreter. [...] S/he is the people itself, it is original truth, before it is altered.] Jules Michelet, *Le Peuple* (Paris: Flammarion, 1974), p. 166.

could 'educate the educator' – a wholesale reversal of Locke's theories.⁹² This vision of childhood innocence, for some historians, had a direct impact on the way "real" children were brought up and educated, most particularly in the domain of children's literature. Romantic visions of childhood opened up 'a body of imaginative literature which would have been denied to [children] if the spirit of Locke had retained complete dominance', notes Hugh Cunningham.⁹³ However, this vision remained an ideal rather than a reality. If it applied to children, it was mostly to children of bourgeois or middle-class backgrounds and rarely to children from poorer backgrounds. Poor children's lives could hardly be associated with ideas such as purity or innocence because 'the innocence of infancy – of not knowing – was soon stripped away by exposure to the realities of their crowded, exploited and often sordid environment'.⁹⁴

And yet, romantic ideas of children's innocence also had a major impact on the emergence of child-saving movements and children's rights in the nineteenth century in the West. Many artists depicted the child as a fragile being who required protection rather than harsh treatments. This shift in perception contributed to the emergence of various sets of reformist legislation to safeguard children. New laws aimed to enhance the protection of children, notably working-class children, and to provide a more organised and efficient education system. Significant transformations, such as the control of family size, the reduction of the infant death rate and the involvement of the State in children's care, cannot be overstressed.⁹⁵ The development of education and the increasing number of schools reinforced the vision of childhood as a separate stage of life. Schools, according to David Grylls, by 'segregating children from the adult world [...] were material proof that children were not grown-ups'.⁹⁶ These alterations had at their core a concern for the harsh life of children, their treatment and a desire to protect them.

⁹² Colin Heywood, *A History of Childhood*, p. 25.

⁹³ Hugh Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500* (London and New York: Longman, 1995), p. 77.

⁹⁴ James Walvin, *A Child's World: A Social History of English Childhood 1800–1914* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 15.

⁹⁵ Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, pp. 72–73.

⁹⁶ Grylls, p. 21.

The movements towards the better protection of children were neither linear nor without ambiguities and, for the greater part of the century, discourses remained mostly 'at the intellectual level'.⁹⁷ Cruelty and violence were still a reality in the nineteenth century for many children in England, France and America. Nineteenth-century children did not immediately benefit from this new age of enlightenment where corporal chastisement no longer played the major role in education and, although condemned by some, the application of bodily pain was not yet regarded as abuse. As with other shifts in outlook, such as those relating to race or gender, the changes in conceptions of childhood took time to effectively impact children's daily lives and their treatment. In fact, Marilyn Brown points out that in 'Europe the diffusion and sentimental glorification of the cult of childhood coincided exactly with an unprecedented industrial exploitation of children'.⁹⁸ Children were for a long time viewed as a main component of the labour force and were often punished at work.⁹⁹ The industrial transition of Western societies resulted in new misery for lower-class children, mistreated and used as labour. The harsh working and living conditions of working-class children, denounced for instance by Charles Kingsley and Charles Dickens, indicated a conflict between the imagined ideal purity of children and the actual abuse of this very innocence.

Children's rights movements only emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century,¹⁰⁰ and notions of child abuse and specific rights for children between the 1870s and 1914.¹⁰¹ Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children were set up in the 1870s in America and in the 1880s in England and France. In England, notes Fiona McCulloch, it is in the late 1920s that Child Guidance Clinics emerged, 'furthering the shift in emphasis away from behaviourism and the need for discipline to psychology and the focus on childhood anxieties, fears and wishes. As a result, there was a move away from corporal punishment, though it was not

⁹⁷ Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, p. 67.

⁹⁸ Marilyn Brown, *Picturing Children: Constructions of Childhood between Rousseau and Freud*, ed. by Marilyn Brown (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 3.

⁹⁹ Walvin, p. 51.

¹⁰⁰ Michael Freeman, *The Moral Status of Children: Essays on the Rights of the Child* (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1997), p. 18.

¹⁰¹ Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society since 1500*, p. 151.

eradicated in schools until 1982 and it still occurs in the home.¹⁰² Children's vulnerability and innocence, that the Enlightenment and the Romantics had celebrated, could also be used to justify the correction of children. According to Goshgarian, in the middle of the nineteenth century in America, while children were seen as 'immanently good', they were also perceived as 'eminently corruptible.'¹⁰³ And Michael Freeman notes how some 'founders of societies to protect children from abuse still vigorously defend corporal chastisement' and could happily recommend a good flogging to deal with disobedient children.¹⁰⁴

Furthermore, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, young offenders were still punished in similar ways to adults. In England, after seven years of age, juvenile criminals could face penalties such as imprisonment (including solitary confinement), penal transportation or even capital punishment.¹⁰⁵ While the transportation of young delinquents in Britain ended in 1853,¹⁰⁶ until the 1908 Children's Act, children under fourteen could still go to prison.¹⁰⁷ Many severe penalties and treatments were applied to juvenile offenders. In his 1897 pamphlet *Children in Prison*, Oscar Wilde gives a heart-breaking account of the mistreatment of children in Wandsworth and Reading prisons. The 1908 Children's Act established Borstals, or youth detention centres. However, reformers argued in favour of a discrete penal system for juveniles not only for humane reasons but also for practical ones: young and fragile, they could pick up bad habits, but they could also be reformed and trained more easily.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, the movements for the protection of children were enmeshed in social concerns about moral depravity, juvenile delinquency and debates around the child's worth to society.

¹⁰² Fiona McCulloch, *Children's Literature in Context* (London, New York: Continuum, 2011), p. 20.

¹⁰³ G. M. Goshgarian, *Kiss the Chastening Rod: Domestic Fiction and Sexual Ideology in the American Renaissance* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 37.

¹⁰⁴ Freeman, p. 48.

¹⁰⁵ Pamela Horn, *Children's Work and Welfare, 1780–1880s* (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1994), p. 74.

¹⁰⁶ Walvin, p. 58. The theme of transportation, however, can be found in earlier didactic stories. In an 1829 collection of stories by Reverend William Carus Wilson entitled *Child's First Tales*, a child is deported for having snatched things from a shop (tale 34, 'The Young Thief'). <www.bl.uk/collection-items/childs-first-tales-written-by-the-bront-sisters-headmaster>, [accessed 11.02.2014].

¹⁰⁷ Walvin, p. 59. Then, Walvin notes, '[f]logging was therefore seen increasingly as an alternative to prison', suggesting that the treatment of children in these prisons may have been harsher than corporal chastisement.

¹⁰⁸ Foster, p. 34.

The later part of the century saw an evolution away from general prisons towards the development of numerous institutions that used separation to punish children. Eirick Prairat remarks how, in the nineteenth century, there emerged a form of banishing-punishment, which meant ‘arracher [le corps] d’un groupe qui lui donne sens’.¹⁰⁹ [to cut the body off from a group that defines it.] In *Moral Education*, Durkheim indeed remarks that ‘la forme principale de la punition a-t-elle consisté de tout temps à mettre le coupable à l’*index*, à le tenir à distance, à l’isoler, à faire le vide autour de lui, à le séparer des gens honnêtes.’¹¹⁰ [‘the principal form of punishment has always consisted in putting the guilty on the index, holding him at a distance, ostracizing him, making a void around him, and separating him from decent people.’] Separate prisons for children existed throughout the nineteenth century, and in France, deviant children were sent to agricultural and correctional colonies (closed only in the first half of the twentieth century).¹¹¹ *Maisons de correction* were created to deal with young delinquents sent by courts, orphans, but also children in need of correction sent directly by their parents.¹¹² These institutions aimed not only to correct but to provide children with a practical and religious education. However, Paul Lutz, introducing a volume on juvenile correction establishments in France, remarks that the tragedy of the nineteenth century is precisely the overlap of educational actions with punitive sanctions.¹¹³ The separation of children and their isolation participated in a combined effort to both correct and educate: ‘Protection, punishment, prevention, cure, correction, restoration and purification were rationales that underwrote the invention and elaboration of exclusionary practices in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,’ note Bashford and Strange.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ Prairat, p. 63.

¹¹⁰ Durkheim, p. 200.

¹¹¹ Similar colonies were also created in Holland and Belgium. See Henri Gaillac, *Les Maisons de correction : 1830–1945* (Paris: Cujas, 1971), pp. 76–85.

¹¹² Paul Lutz in Gaillac, pp. 15–16. They often received significantly longer sentences than adult criminals because the duration of their punishment was linked to their education.

¹¹³ [I]l faut choisir entre action éducatrice et action sanctionnaire. Le drame du XIXe siècle réside dans le télescopage de ces deux notions’. [A choice must be made between educating and sanctioning. The tragedy of the nineteenth century is the fact that these two notions concertinaed.] Quoted in Gaillac, p. 15. Prior to Mettray, La Petite-Roquette had been established in 1838 for the punishment of young delinquents, where cellular confinement and absolute silence were imposed on inmates. Carl Ibsen, *Italy in the Age of Pinocchio* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 130.

¹¹⁴ Alison Bashford and Carol Strange, ‘Isolation and Exclusion in the Modern World: An Introductory Essay’, in *Isolation: Places and Practices of Exclusion* ed. by Alison Bashford and Carol Strange (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), p. 6.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault describes in detail the architecture of a French agricultural colony for young offenders, Mettray, founded in 1839–1840 by the magistrate Frédéric Auguste Demetz, who had visited American penitentiaries and wanted to reproduce the American system in France.¹¹⁵ Mettray’s architecture had an air of freedom (there were no walls surrounding the site) and the colony did not rely on corporal punishment: Demetz wanted to control children through ‘la persuasion à la discipline la plus sévère et aux travaux les plus rudes, sans recourir à la force armée ou à la force brutale’.¹¹⁶ [persuasion to the most severe form of discipline and the hardest work, without resorting to armed or violent force.] Instead it applied penalties in other ways. It resorted to surveillance and confinement as disciplinary mechanisms, and inspired similar initiatives throughout Europe. The reality for the young children sent to Mettray was quite bleak, as they were often the victims of mistreatment and abuse.¹¹⁷

One section at Mettray applied the ‘régime cellulaire’ [cell treatment],¹¹⁸ *La Paternelle* or *Maison Paternelle*, a school of repression (“école de repression”) proposed to wealthy families. In 1876, Jules Verne sent his son, Michel Verne, for six months, because of his unruly behaviour. It was indeed reserved for children of the aristocracy and the middle classes, sent directly by their parents; these children were isolated from the rest of the colony. The nineteenth-century French playwright and moralist Ernest Legouvé praised the work of the colony: ‘Depuis trente ans, parmi les trois mille détenus de Mettray, il n’a pas été donné un coup, pas un ! La seule punition, c’est la cellule’.¹¹⁹ [For the last thirty years, among the three thousand inmates at Mettray, not one of them was beaten, not one! The only punishment is the cell.] What Legouvé does not reveal, however, is the extent to which the procedure for the internment of a child in *La Paternelle* resembled the imprisonment of a convict. The father needed to obtain permission from a magistrate and the child was then accompanied by a gendarme to Mettray. Referred to by a number

¹¹⁵ Mongin, p. 9.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Mongin, p. 9.

¹¹⁷ Mongin, p. 12.

¹¹⁸ This expression is used in Alphonse Daudet’s novel, *Jack* (1876) as the characters pass nearby Mettray and enquire about its functioning. Quoted in Mongin, p. 15.

¹¹⁹ Ernest Legouvé, *Les Pères et les enfants au XIXe siècle* (Paris: J. Hetzel, Bibliothèque d’Education et de récréation, 1907), p. 77. Significantly, Legouvé was also a contributor to Pierre-Jules Hetzel’s *Magasin d’éducation et de récréation*.

rather than his name, the child was usually isolated in an individual cell for several weeks until his behaviour started to ‘improve’, at which point he was allowed some access to external activities. From his cell, the punished child could see poorer inmates working outside, usually adding to his sense of confinement.¹²⁰ During his stay, he received moralising lessons. Parents paid relatively high fees to benefit from this treatment. Indeed, the name of the section, *La Paternelle*, indicates that subjecting children to this cell treatment was a parental choice and responsibility, as well as a form of protection. As in *La Paternelle*, isolation was a punishment commonly used for the children of the upper classes in the context of home, as Isabelle Papieau remarks: ‘Propre aux enfants des élites sociales, cet espace clos astreint à un travail formateur, voire répétitif [...]. Le fait de reclure l’enfant a pour but l’amendement de ce dernier.’¹²¹ [Typical for the children of the social elite, this enclosed space forces engagement in instructive work, sometimes repetitive [...]. The fact of keeping the child enclosed aims to reform him.]

In the domestic sphere, historical accounts diverge on the intensity, frequency and level of corporal punishment received by children. James Walvin notes that English children from all social classes suffered physical pain: ‘corporal punishment featured large in the lives of most Victorian children. [...] at home, at school or by the order of magistrates’.¹²² However, Peter Stearns also remarks that in Victorian England ‘a guilt-laden exile to one’s room became the most widely acceptable form of punishment.’¹²³ Similarly, Pollock reports the following memory of an adult woman, Mary Haldane: ‘We [...] were shut for a day at a time and fed only on bread and water.’¹²⁴ Although considered a gentler form of punishment, controlling a child’s food in order to correct his or her habits, which corresponds to very basic needs and desires, resembles the training of animals that are broken in by their trainers. Robertson also relates the story of a five-year-old boy, ‘shut up in his room for two

¹²⁰ Mongin, p. 23.

¹²¹ Isabelle Papieau, *La Comtesse de Ségur et la maltraitance des enfants* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1999), p. 47.

¹²² Walvin, pp. 46–47.

¹²³ Peter Stearns, *Anxious Parents: A History of Modern Childrearing in America* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2004), p. 59.

¹²⁴ Pollock, p. 200. As we saw in the introduction, the confinement of children with only bread and water already appeared in Mrs Sherwood’s *The History of the Fairchild Family*.

days on bread and water explicitly to break his spirit'.¹²⁵ This scene evokes Locke's recommendations to find ways to make children's will more supple. Yet the extracts Pollock selected also indicate that corporal punishment was regularly used throughout the nineteenth century, even if with reluctance:

In the main, whippings were reserved for an accumulation of faults, or for a specific offence which the parents deplored, such as lying and above all for outright defiance of a parental command. Parents definitely wished for obedient children and chose a path which they hoped would produce this end, but controlling children through fear was not condoned.¹²⁶

Until the end of the century, Victorian children, including the very young, could still expect harsh correction at home: '[i]f a child did not listen, it was punished.

Corporal punishment was used on children as young as three'.¹²⁷ Punishment was not simply physical, but also internal and still often linked to religion; adults did not hesitate to threaten the child with damnation and divine punishments.¹²⁸

If corporal punishment decreased in some British homes, conversely it increased in severity in schools, although harshness did not apply to all establishments. Priscilla Robertson notes that corporal punishment lessened during the century but mostly at the end: 'Caning never ceased to be used in the British public schools, and it was late in the nineteenth century before birching at home was abandoned by the most enlightened parents.'¹²⁹ Parents would increasingly condemn such harshness, yet at the same time did not want to see their children unpunished and spoiled. Graeme Newman notes that while corporal punishment of school children was abolished in France in 1882, '[i]t had just reached its zenith in England at that time', where caning was commonplace until the mid-twentieth century.¹³⁰ 'School punishment books show', observes Janet Sacks, 'that children were caned for answering back, sulkiness, being late and throwing ink pellets, among other

¹²⁵ Priscilla Robertson, 'The Home as a Nest' in *The History of Childhood: The Untold Story of Child Abuse*, ed. by Lloyd de Mause (London: Bellew Publishing, 1991) p. 415.

¹²⁶ Pollock, p. 166.

¹²⁷ Janet Sacks, *Victorian Childhood* (Oxford: Shire Publications, 2010), p. 26. The Balfour's Education Act in 1902 was introduced in part for and resulted in the decrease of the physical punishment of very young children.

¹²⁸ Walvin, p. 47.

¹²⁹ Robertson, pp. 415–416.

¹³⁰ Graeme Newman, *The Punishment Response*, 2nd edn (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2008), p. 64. See also Robertson, pp. 415–416.

things.¹³¹ In England, state-funded schools lost the legal power to resort to corporal punishment only in 1986, and as recently as 1998 in public schools.

In France, corporal punishment was condemned in the nineteenth century, although no specific legislation was introduced to regulate its use. While caning or whipping were accepted for young apprentices, in the domestic sphere, France seems to have introduced ‘milder’ forms of punishment more quickly than its English counterpart. Robertson remarks that physical chastisement seemed less frequent and violent in France than in England, notably among the middle classes where beatings were not commonly used. Instead, the ‘customary punishments were confinement or putting children on dry bread.’¹³² Papieau also remarks that these measures were commonly used among the French upper class. Such practices were not exclusive to France and, as we saw, being locked in a room with only bread and water was also a common reality for nineteenth-century children in England. Interestingly, Robertson notes that foreign observers found middle-class French children spoiled because they were subjected to “milder” forms of punishment. In the last third of the century, the corporal punishment of children became particularly frowned upon in French upper-class families, and bourgeois families instead resorted more frequently to reprobation (although the ‘verge’ [rod] and the ‘martinet’ [small cat o’ nine tails] were still active).¹³³ When the comtesse de Ségur claimed to her editor that the harsh scenes of her books were inspired by real mothers she had seen behave in this way, her editors’ initial reluctance to incorporate such scenes indicates a recoiling from corporal punishment on their part and on the perceived part of readers. And yet, conversely, some critics of Ségur worried that she was advocating against corporal punishment too forcefully: ‘when the Catholic journalist Louis Veuillot objected to the portrayal of violence in the comtesse’s book, it was because he felt she was arguing against corporal punishment, in contradiction to teaching in Scriptures.’¹³⁴ For Heywood, ‘Séгур’s

¹³¹ Sacks, p. 52. ‘A child who got something wrong could be forced to wear a dunce’s cap and stand on a stool in front of everyone to shame him or her. Treatment of children was strict and there was little praise to encourage their effort.’

¹³² Robertson, p. 418; Papieau, p. 44. Jean Perrot also notes how frequent bread and water are in Ségur’s work. Jean Perrot, ‘La décision de l’enfant : entre Jean-Jacques Rousseau et la violence’ *Enfance* 43.1–2 (1990), 149–160 (p. 151).

¹³³ Michelle Perrot, ‘Figures et rôles’ in *Histoire de la vie privée*, ed. by Philippe Ariès and Georges Duby, vol. 4 *De la Révolution à la Grande Guerre*, ed. by Michelle Perrot (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1987), p. 159.

¹³⁴ Sophie Heywood, p. 95.

noble education was gentle but firm by nineteenth-century standards, at a time when parents routinely had recourse to more brutal methods.¹³⁵ Ségur and her editors' mixed concerns demonstrate the complexity of establishing clearly, and in practice, what constituted too harsh corporal punishment, and how adults' perceptions on the subject were varied and conflicted.

At the end of the century, physical punishment still divided French opinion, with strong defenders and clear opponents. In 1867, Ernest Legouvé wrote a fictitious diary of a father about his relationships with his son entitled *Les Pères et les enfants au XIXe siècle*. In it, he notes that '[r]ien ne donne lieu à des opinions plus contradictoires que cette question des châtimens corporels.'¹³⁶ [nothing sparks more contradictory opinions than this issue of corporal chastisements.] In a chapter entitled 'Châtimens corporels' [corporal chastisements], Legouvé offers a gendering of these viewpoints by making a husband and his wife debate over the justifications for bodily chastisement. The mother, by telling of her own experience and abused childhood, manages to convince her husband not to use physical punishment to correct their son: 'si vous voulez être digne d'élever des créatures humaines, il ne faut pas sévir sur le corps pour gouverner l'âme, mais agir sur l'âme pour dominer le corps.'¹³⁷ [if you want to be worthy of educating human beings, you must not punish the body in order to govern the mind, but influence the mind to master the body.] In France, corporal punishment was also heavily criticised and condemned in the context of schools under the provisions of the 1881 and 1882 Jules Ferry Laws, which established free and mandatory education. The Ferry legislations were unequivocal: 'il est absolument interdit d'infliger aucun châtiment corporel.'¹³⁸ [It is absolutely forbidden to inflict any corporal punishment.] However, for children of the popular classes, 'tannées' (a familiar term for spanking) were still tolerated as long as they did not leave a physical mark on the child's body.¹³⁸

In America, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, orthodox Calvinists and evangelicals still 'stressed the importance of breaking a child's sinful will and

¹³⁵ Sophie Heywood, p. 62.

¹³⁶ Legouvé, p. 72.

¹³⁷ Legouvé, p. 77.

¹³⁸ Michelle Perrot, p. 159.

instilling respect for divinely instituted authority.¹³⁹ Legislation on the use of corporal punishment varied from one State to another. In the 1840s, [p]arents, teachers, naval and prison officials increasingly experimented with a range of disciplinary techniques that were psychologically, if not physically, punitive. Significantly, reformers often advocated the use of these techniques as well as the use of various positive incentives.¹⁴⁰ Progressively, however, the child's nature was no longer viewed as sinful; education reformers, such as Catharine Sedgwick or Horace Mann favoured ending corporal punishment, embracing Unitarianism and rejecting the Calvinist doctrines of predestination and human depravity.¹⁴¹ Mann had himself suffered from physical discipline as a child and favoured moral suasion, 'the development of internalized moral restraints'.¹⁴² He saw in corporal punishment the repression of children's natural buoyancy. In the first half of the century, he led opposition campaigns in the classroom against the use of corporal punishment. Punishment in school became a matter for public debate based on differences in religious beliefs, conceptions of childhood and governance. Even though the 'trend towards milder measures' continued, in many late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American families, notes David Macleod, 'the problem was still controlling violence.'¹⁴³

Macleod also notes that [t]he use of objects as tools for chastisement, rather than simply one's hand, represented an attempt to ritualize punishment and, possibly, give the adult a moment to reflect.¹⁴⁴ The idea that adults could take time to ponder, before performing a punitive action, suggests an awareness of the implications of punishment for both the punisher and the child. Similarly, Bronson Alcott recalls a scene with his daughter Louisa when she was aged two, during which she refused to obey her father. The latter threatened to punish her 'for she must mind *father* [...] I spanked her. She cried the louder [...] I repeated the punishment, and did not attain peace and quiet for her, till I had repeated it

¹³⁹ Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 81.

¹⁴⁰ Glenn, p. 128.

¹⁴¹ Glenn, p. 15 and p. 103.

¹⁴² Glenn, p. 41.

¹⁴³ David Macleod, *The Age of the Child: Children in America, 1890–1920* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998), p. 56.

¹⁴⁴ Macleod, p. 56.

again.¹⁴⁵ The very fact that, as a parent, Alcott wrote this down shows a pressure to be self-aware of one's actions and an understanding that parental responsibilities, when punishing, extend beyond the correction of children. It also shows the complexity of adults' attitudes towards physical punishment. Punishment must be justified and needs to have a meaning. Following a line of reasoning similar to Locke's, Alcott finds corporal punishment here justifiable because it is a last resort and it intends to protect adult authority, which the child is threatening.

A shift occurred in America in the nineteenth century whereby a greater emphasis was placed on self-condemnation. Punishment could not be effective if the child did not partake in it and learn to regulate him- or herself: 'modern parents applied the rod not to stress the awful remoteness of power, but to induce their offspring to identify with the powerful', remarks Goshgarian.¹⁴⁶ To an extent, punishment brought the punisher and the punished closer together and invited the child to identify with the adult's position. Bronson Alcott insisted the most on this change, notes Goshgarian, and even claimed that the child had to become the law: 'harshness and restraint, fear and interdiction... where the laws of affection, order, and conscience generally prevail, will not be often required... [properly raised] the child becomes a law to himself.'¹⁴⁷ The child therefore becomes self-regulated by identifying with the adult. Reformers, 'evangelicals and nonevangelicals shared a conviction that the primary purpose of childrearing was to instil habits of regularity and self-control through techniques emphasizing tenderness, love, and patience.'¹⁴⁸ Punishment, therefore, persisted but took different forms and reflected the idea that love and discipline were not mutually exclusive.

As conceptions of childhood evolved, so did intergenerational relationships, with affection becoming a main driving force. Love became a crucial element in the characterisation of the successful family, with mothers at the very heart of it, and part of propaganda campaigns since the late eighteenth century for the better care

¹⁴⁵ Pollock, p. 189.

¹⁴⁶ Goshgarian, p. 39.

¹⁴⁷ Amos Bronson Alcott, *Observations on the Principles and Methods of Infant Instruction*, (Boston, 1930) cited in Goshgarian, p. 39.

¹⁴⁸ Mintz, p. 82.

of infants.¹⁴⁹ Peter Stearns notes that this ‘emphasis on familial love was unprecedented’ between the eighteenth century and 1914.¹⁵⁰ In America, in 1847, Lyman Cobb wrote at length on the subject of love and corporal punishment, demonstrating the ill effects of harsh flogging and other cruelties, and how they could be more usefully replaced by disciplines that did not jeopardize the health of children.¹⁵¹ Cobb’s book offered alternative methods, encapsulated in this bold initial statement: ‘I LOVE CHILDREN! [...] My *excessive* love of children has been the most prominent motive.’¹⁵² Governing by kindness, explained Cobb, would lead to the child’s ‘perfect submission’.¹⁵³ In France, Legouv   also wrote on the subject. In *Les P  res et les enfants au XIXe si  cle*, the narrator begins his fictional diary by observing how adult-child relationships have changed, highlighting the greater intimacy between parents and their children: ‘Les enfants occupent aujourd’hui une place beaucoup plus grande dans la famille : on vit plus avec eux, on vit plus pour eux’.¹⁵⁴ [Nowadays, children occupy a more significant place in family life; we live more with them, we live more for them.] Legouv   associates adults’ sense of devotion towards their children with the fact that children share more of their parents’ daily life and insists on the stronger affection parents feel towards their offspring, in both popular and middle-class families. This fondness brings them closer: ‘l’affection nous a rapproch   de nos enfants.’¹⁵⁵ [affection brought us closer to our children]

There were fears, however, that parents were not caring for their children properly. Legouv   was indeed disparaged by critics for writing ‘un nouvel   mile de Jean-Jacques’ encouraging the view of the child as ‘l’enfant roi’.¹⁵⁶ [child king] Similarly, *La Paternelle* in Mettray the section dedicated to the disciplining of wealthy children sent by their parents, relied on the very idea that parents could be weak in their

¹⁴⁹ For Colin Heywood, the cult of motherhood in the West was favoured by various factors, such as the decline in birth rates, the withdrawal of married women from active population, and the increase of separate spheres between sexes. Colin Heywood, *Growing Up in France: From the Ancien R  gime to the Third Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 120.

¹⁵⁰ Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, p. 76.

¹⁵¹ Cobb, p. 8.

¹⁵² Cobb, p. 12.

¹⁵³ Cobb, p. 100.

¹⁵⁴ Legouv  , p. 1.

¹⁵⁵ Legouv  , p. 5.

¹⁵⁶ Philar  te Chasles, *M  moires*, vol. 2 (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1877), pp. 222–223.

education and needed extra help to overcome the challenges linked to education. As the economic value of children dwindled, adults were also anxious that their offspring would become spoiled or ignorant. Research by Sian Pooley shows how English parental manuals exhorted loving parents to improve their parenting skills and exercise their authority satisfactorily:

Inadequate parenthood was identified in many mid-nineteenth-century didactic texts and religious tracts as primarily the result of a failure on the part of mothers and fathers to exert their proper domestic authority. That most parents naturally loved their offspring was not doubted. Instead it was the magnitude of parental responsibilities and the resulting difficulties that parents faced in establishing their authority that was represented as a threat to modern children.¹⁵⁷

The education of children triggered considerable parental anxiety. Pollock reports the following comment from an American mother of two young children in 1813: ‘There is scarcely any subject concerning which I feel more anxiety, than the proper education of my children. [...] and the more I reflect on my duty to them, the more I feel is to be learnt by myself.’¹⁵⁸ This mother reveals how educational duties can be the cause of many torments and trigger a feeling of vulnerability.¹⁵⁹ Even the noted psychologist Alice Miller, who sees in loving discipline manipulative desires, concedes that adults use the pedagogy of love, notably in the nineteenth century, as a self-defence manipulation deriving from their own anxieties. Although Miller cannot find a justification for it, she acknowledges:

[a]nyone who has ever been a mother or a father and is at all honest knows from experience how difficult it can be for parents to accept certain aspects of their children. It is especially painful to have to admit that we really love our child and want to respect his or her individuality yet are unable to do so.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Sian Pooley, ‘Child Care and Neglect: A Comparative Local Study of Late Nineteenth-Century Parental Authority’, in *The Politics of Domestic Authority in Britain since 1800*, ed. by Lucy Delap, Ben Griffin and Abigail Wills (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 225.

¹⁵⁸ Pollock, p. 179.

¹⁵⁹ It is difficult to trace the emotions of parents, and even more of children. Pollock’s interpretations, however, have been criticised for not considering enough children’s points of view, instead outlining the anxieties and efforts of parents. Harry Hendrick notes how ‘she trawls through diaries and autobiographies looking for confirmation of her view’ and ‘tends to ignore the general feelings of children as well as their interpretation of parental attitudes and practices’. Hendrick reminds us, however, of how difficult it is to judge the level of affection parents showed their children, in particular when examining the past: ‘Affection is one of those terms, like ‘love’, which is extraordinarily difficult in historical perspective. Interpretations are made difficult by the fact that parents may love, or care for, their children without showing them much affection.’ Hendrick, pp. 24, 27–28.

¹⁶⁰ Miller, p. 5.

The deep emotional involvement of parents with their children made punishment particularly difficult. To an extent, adults were themselves caught in the rationales behind disciplinary actions and the demands made on them by society to ensure that their children were properly educated and learned to respect authority.

Conceptions of childhood were also being shaped by the idea that ‘parental love could only exist if the child was defined exclusively as an object of sentiment and not as an agent of production’.¹⁶¹ This new assessment of the value of childhood applied to the Western world generally.¹⁶² In *Pricing the Priceless Child*, Viviana Zelizer argues that, in both middle- and lower-class families, children’s worth kept on growing progressively throughout the century. The key to understanding this transformation is the child labour conflict, according to Zelizer.¹⁶³ The value of children shifted from a market value, where poor children were seen as a commodity and middle-class children as an investment for the future, to a new ideal of the child, the recipient of education. The nineteenth century involved a gradual yet concrete conversion from preparing children for work to educating them; although systematic, compulsory schooling did not take place immediately but was a process that evolved throughout the century. At the end of the nineteenth century, theoretically every child had the same non-economic value, whatever their social background or class, and by the 1930s ‘lower-class children joined their middle-class counterparts in a non-productive world of childhood’.¹⁶⁴ In particular at the end of the nineteenth century, ‘an emphasis on the nonpragmatic value of children did nothing but swell’, remarks Joe Sutliff Sanders.¹⁶⁵ Children’s value became increasingly sentimental at the beginning of the twentieth century.

This general shift towards an emphasis on affection and love had a substantial impact on the disciplining of children at home and in schools. In England, the socialist Robert Owen created community schools based on revolutionary precepts, including to educate ‘not by severity, but by kindness’.¹⁶⁶ Educator Edward Thring,

¹⁶¹ Viviana Zelizer, *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 72.

¹⁶² Hendrick, p. 11.

¹⁶³ Zelizer, p. 57.

¹⁶⁴ Zelizer, p. 7.

¹⁶⁵ Joe Sutliff Sanders, ‘Spinning Sympathy: Orphan Girl Novels and the Sentimental Tradition’, *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly* 33.1 (2008), 41–61 (p. 43).

¹⁶⁶ Walvin, p 50.

in the later part of the century, also tried to eliminate punishment in his school completely, without fully succeeding.¹⁶⁷ Corporal punishment was more often morally condemned and progressively (but not entirely) replaced by other ways of inflicting pain, such as ostracising and shaming children, but also by using rewards. In the context of schools, Émile Durkheim was a pioneer in establishing a clear system of negative and positive sanctions. These, according to Falcón y Tella, 'have in common is that they reinforce the fulfilling of norms. They do this antagonistically: in the case of negative sanctions, by punishing the malefactor; in the case of the positive, they reward those who fulfil their duties.'¹⁶⁸ Rewards are therefore *incentives* or *advantages*, and, according to Durkheim, should be used conjunctly with punishments in order to reinforce the collective conscience and reassert moral rules that have been or could be broken. Also used in Mettray, rewards were supposed to instil a sense of honour. They were not exclusive to children's education in France, but were also often used in English schools in tandem with punishments.¹⁶⁹ In the United States, on the other hand, reformers had more reservations towards them, as they feared positive sanctions would socialise children 'towards competition and greed',¹⁷⁰ and possibly spoil them.

Durkheim considered that effective negative sanctions, or punishments, should be based on two non-corporal techniques: exclusion-deprivation and blame, or in his words: 'Privation de jeux, tâches supplémentaires, voilà donc, avec les blâmes et les réprimandes, les principaux éléments de la pénalité scolaire.'¹⁷¹ [Denying participation in games, extra tasks, as well as reproaches and reprimands.] The child should be excluded from the group's enjoyment and made to feel contrite for what s/he has done. This is similar to the rationale Durkheim advised for adults' punishment, based on reform and rehabilitation. In Durkheim's approach, blame is the true purpose of punishment, and corporal punishment is counter-productive as it does not reproach or blame the guilty. Durkheim therefore advocated the absolute prohibition of corporal punishment,¹⁷² which he thought had a 'demoralizing' effect

¹⁶⁷ Walvin, p. 54.

¹⁶⁸ Falcón y Tella and Falcón y Tella, p. 15.

¹⁶⁹ Glenn, p. 139.

¹⁷⁰ Walvin, p. 50.

¹⁷¹ Durkheim, p. 226.

¹⁷² Durkheim, p. 209. Several critics outline Durkheim's influence on Foucault's writings on punishment, even though Foucault rarely acknowledges this influence. See Cladis, p. 3, and Ramp, p. 71. For both

on the child and on the moral conscience of the group. Yet the idea of absolute prohibition becomes ambiguous and misleading when Durkheim later writes that corporal punishment can be justified in the case of very young children at home: ‘La peine corporelle n’est admissible que quand l’enfant n’est encore qu’un petit animal. Mais il s’agit là d’un dressage, non d’une éducation.’¹⁷³ [Corporal punishment is justifiable when the child is still a small animal. It is then a matter of training, not of education.] Durkheim justifies this inconsistency by arguing that, at home, tenderness and care can soften the harshness of physical suffering. ‘Dans la famille, les mauvais effets en sont facilement atténués, neutralisés par les manifestations de tendresse, par les effusions affectueuses qui s’échangent sans cesse entre les parents et les enfants.’¹⁷⁴ [In the family, the bad effects are easily softened, neutralized by shows of tenderness, by affectionate expressions continually exchanged between parents and children.]

Thus love and gentleness do not preclude pain. Painful punishment, physical or psychological, did not disappear but needed to be better justified when it was used, and their justifications could be found in the affection and care of parents for their progeny. Miller contends that, from the late eighteenth century until the Second World War, a ‘poisonous pedagogy’ was prevalent in Occidental societies, based on the ‘conviction that parents are always right and that every act of cruelty, whether conscious or unconscious, is an expression of their love’.¹⁷⁵ This pedagogy, which was – according to Miller – partly inherited from Rousseau’s pedagogical tenets introduced in *Émile*, aimed to suppress the child's emotions in order to achieve obedience and was profoundly manipulative.

According to Sacks, ‘as the practice of physically punishing a child lessened through the century, emotional blackmail took its place and children were made to feel bad because in some way they had disappointed their parents and God.’¹⁷⁶ The expression ‘emotional blackmail’ should not be taken lightly. Emotional forms of

Foucault and Durkheim, education and punishment are tools to control individuals socially, ‘to instil and secure the authority of social norms’, Cladis, p. 5.

¹⁷³ Durkheim, p. 209.

¹⁷⁴ Durkheim, p. 209.

¹⁷⁵ Miller, p. 5.

¹⁷⁶ Sacks, p. 26.

punishment, using negative emotions, had potent effects on children, which theorists had realised quite early. Already in *Some Thoughts*, Locke considered shame to induce more obedience and respect for adult authority: ‘tis shame of the fault, and the disgrace that attends it, that they should stand in fear of, rather than pain’.¹⁷⁷ Anne Scott MacLeod argues that conscience became a powerful alternative to corporal punishment in the education of American children in the first half of the nineteenth century. Bronson Alcott, along with several reformers in Antebellum America, understood that bodily harm does not manage to reform and correct the child as successfully as negative emotions, such as guilt and the fear of hurting others. In the later part of the century and at the beginning of the twentieth, as we have just seen, Durkheim also argued that punishment must make the child suffer through fear or emotions that force internal penitence such as shame, humiliation or the fear of hurting others. On the one hand, these negative emotions are directed outwards, towards the external gaze of onlookers, but on the other hand they are also acting internally, affecting the child’s pride, self-confidence and producing shame. Prairat argues that public humiliations have long been used in the context of French schools, where, to force penitence, ‘le puni est un être à l’orgueil meurtri par les regards moqueurs ... Il a honte de lui’.¹⁷⁸ [the punished child’s pride is hurt by being mocked by those who look at him... he is ashamed of himself.] In its religious form, penitence would compel culpable individuals to recognise their fault, to feel indebted and to learn how to improve and comply with norms and expectations. However, remarks Prairat, in nineteenth-century schools, where humiliation was used, this was not the case; instead of feeling guilty yet grateful, the child only felt shame.¹⁷⁹ He or she was just mocked and the victim of others’ amusement and laughter.

A stronger place was progressively granted to the idea of the autonomy of the child, but this was not without ambiguities. As children gained more rights, parents lost some of their control over the body of their children, in particular fathers.¹⁸⁰ In legal terms, parents could lose their absolute authority over their child, who would

¹⁷⁷ Locke, p. 61.

¹⁷⁸ Prairat, p. 43.

¹⁷⁹ Prairat, p. 47.

¹⁸⁰ Catherine Rollet, *Les Enfants au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Hachette Littérature, 2001), p. 229.

then be handed over to the State. But what parents lost in authority or right to chastise physically, they gained in ‘emotional influence’, as David Grylls explains:

The concept of childhood took on a new shape; parental duties diminished in breadth but grew in intensity. Decade by decade parents were deprived of legal and material powers; but what was expected of them, although altered, remained demanding and taxing enough: a moral and emotional influence, a desire and ability to bring up their children with loving and scrupulous care. The significance of children, the role of their parents – these things were extensively revised, and the process, confused, distressing and comic, is reflected in the literature of the time.¹⁸¹

Legouvé advocated that education amounted to the preparation and the respect of children’s self-sufficiency: ‘il faut élever les enfants pour eux-mêmes, non pour nous, admettre que leurs “intérêts” peuvent ne pas coïncider avec ceux du groupe, qu’ils auront à assumer seuls leur destin, et par conséquent développer leur initiative, voire cultiver une certaine indétermination qui préserve leur capacité de liberté, voie que préconisent les pédagogies libertaires.’¹⁸² [we should raise children for their sake, rather than for our own benefit, and accept that their “interests” may not be the same as the group’s, even let our education be a little undefined so as to preserve their freedom, as libertarian educational theories tend to recommend.]

Also insisting on and developing the idea of the child’s autonomy, Alcott proclaimed that infants should be free and under their own guidance, and not made obedient by force. Freedom was a necessity to achieve self-regulation. Durkheim’s approach to discipline was also based on the idea that it should render the child autonomous in his or her desire to act morally. When children are capable of moral reasoning, punishment should aim to reinforce morality in them. The idea of moral suasion also meant that children accepted punishment as good for them or rightly deserved. David Macleod reports a study conducted in 1894 that found ‘children surprisingly accepting of punishment. For example, a girl who cried so hard at having her hair washed that her aunt whipped her and locked her in a room wrote, “I think I deserved it.”’¹⁸³ If this child identifies with the adult rather than with her own pain, she will use the same discourse as the adult and start to self-regulate.

¹⁸¹ Grylls, p. 15.

¹⁸² Quoted in Michelle Perrot, p. 162.

¹⁸³ Macleod, p. 57.

However, significantly, although she writes down that she accepts and approves her punishment, she also confesses that she is not fully certain of her own feelings towards it ('I think') and seems confused, suggesting that inducing self-regulation was not necessarily as successful in practice as in theory. As the expression 'emotional blackmail' used by Sacks suggests, loving disciplines and the efforts to induce in children self-control go hand in hand with a desire to control both the mind and the actions of the child. Robertson gives the example of Dr. Schreber, a prominent German doctor who set himself up as an authority on child psychology just before 1840:

Dr. Schreber believed in total control of a child's mind and actions. He didn't believe that beating was the best method to achieve this state, but rather that a well-trained child could be controlled by the eye of the parent, since a good child would not want to behave differently from what the parent wished. The child was meant to feel genuine love and freedom, and if he were beaten, he was to shake hands with a friendly smile afterwards just to prove there were no hard feelings.¹⁸⁴

Therefore, in spite of the desire to educate children by reforming rather than repressing them, these reformist efforts were complex. The developments in children's welfare, the respect for their autonomy and the intention to protect them from harm also stemmed partly from a desire to control them. Children's path to self-reliance, freedom and liberty had its limitations. In 1859, the philosopher J. S. Mill in *On Liberty* argued that the notion of personal autonomy did not apply to minors: 'Those who are still in a state to require being taken care of by others, must be protected against their own actions as well as against external injury'.¹⁸⁵ As we saw, Bronson Alcott located those limitations in children's absolute duty of obedience towards their father. In becoming autonomous, children were meant to internalise adults' moral standards and reach a level where they would yearn for these moral standards more than their own personal desires. In this context, love becomes entangled with punishment; the child must love the adult for helping him or her to behave in a way considered desirable. With this internalisation process, the child's desires were thus not only controlled but also frustrated. As we shall see in

¹⁸⁴ Robertson, p. 415.

¹⁸⁵ J. S. Mill, *On Liberty* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002) p. 31.

the next chapters, the idea of the frustration of personal desires is key to understanding the scope of punitive practices.

Conclusion

In *Self-reliance*, Emerson urged adults to trust themselves, to be nonconformists and to believe in the integrity of their own mind – just like children, he argued: ‘Infancy conforms to nobody’.¹⁸⁶ Yet in the same essay Emerson also admitted that ‘minors and invalids [are] in a protected corner.’¹⁸⁷ This protected corner could be used to justify the implementation of punitive measures geared at the conformity of the child. Just as the nineteenth-century child was surrounded by conflicting discourses,¹⁸⁸ appeals for kinder forms of punishment, away from bodily pain, were surrounded by profound ambiguities and contradictions. The boundaries around what would be considered abuse and what was legitimate shifted. When our texts were produced, physical pain was becoming an incidental repercussion of punishment, rather than its essential constituent.¹⁸⁹ The use of the physical discipline in the private sphere and in educational institutions was an accepted form of social control, but mentalities were also changing. The aim of punishment was understood to be a way to influence children’s behaviour and habits of thought, to redirect their will and to enforce self-regulation. The general emergence of disciplinary mechanisms of punishment, which aimed to mould the body and the mind, had significant impacts on the evolution of the corrections used to educate children. This is why our understanding of punishment in our period of study is as a form of penalty that extends beyond the application of bodily pain to the frustration of the child’s desires. However, it is important to note that physical chastisement did not disappear, in particular for specific categories, such as young delinquents, apprentices, or pupils in schools, but also in some cases at home. The desire to promote loving disciplines, and the wish to use discipline as a means to bring adults

¹⁸⁶ Emerson, p. 50.

¹⁸⁷ Emerson, p. 49.

¹⁸⁸ Cox, p. 118.

¹⁸⁹ Durkheim, p. 167.

and children together, must have made punishment an exacting task for adults and rendered their punitive duties challenging.

Adults' discourses around the punishment of children show ambiguities and a complexity that, as we shall see in the next chapter, is visible in the spatial representation of punishment. In particular, the recourse to confinement as a humane alternative to physical chastisement must be unpicked. Confinement can be a potent metaphor to represent the relationships of authority and control between children and adults. Indeed, the justifications attributed to the deprivation of a child's freedom, both physically and metaphorically – through the frustration of their desires – can be compared to the rationales for the incarceration of criminals, as Miller remarks:

I cannot attribute any positive significance to the word *pedagogy*. I see it as self-defense on the part of adults, as manipulation deriving from their own lack of freedom and their insecurity, which I can certainly understand, although I cannot overlook the inherent dangers. I can also understand why criminals are sent to prison, but I cannot see that deprivation of freedom and prison life, which is geared wholly to conformity, subordination, and submissiveness, can really contribute to the betterment, i.e. the development, of the prisoner.¹⁹⁰

In the texts that comprise our corpus, punitive space reveals adults' sense of obligation to limit and frustrate children's desires in order to educate and protect them. Because adults understand children's longings to discover things by themselves, in our texts, adult characters sometimes give children the illusion of freedom in line with, as we have seen in this chapter, the arguments put forth by Locke and Rousseau.

¹⁹⁰ Miller, p. 101.

Chapter Two

Punitive Geographies: Prison, Confinement and Beyond

The concept of space has undergone a long evolution and triggered many debates. In particular, space and time have not always been considered equal in narrative value. Traditionally, narrative was defined as the representation of a series of events temporally or causally connected.¹ Space was often equated with descriptions and setting, backdrops that could be discarded by the reader without altering the story, interruptions to the unfolding of the plot. Several influential scholars, such as Genette, Prince or Brooks, prioritised time over space, using temporality as the main criterion of narrativity.² Genette explained that although space forms an integral part of the narrative, it cannot be regarded as time's equal counterpart, and that narration takes a prominent role over description.³ He also remarked that 'on imagine mal, en dehors du domaine didactique (ou de fictions semi-didactiques comme celles de Jules Verne), une œuvre où le récit se comporterait en auxiliaire de la description'.⁴ [it is hard to imagine, apart from the didactic genre (or semi-didactic fictions such as Jules Verne's novels), a work where the narrative would support

¹ See *Narratology: An Introduction*, ed. by Susana Onega and José Ángel García Landa (London and New York: Longman, 1996), p. 5; Gerald Prince, *Narratology: The Form and Function of Narrative* (Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton Publishers, 1982), p. 4.

² In *Discours du récit*, Gérard Genette examines in great detail temporal aspects of narratives (focusing on three main elements, namely "order", "duration" and "frequency") while hardly mentioning space. See Gérard Genette, 'Discours du récit', in *Figures III* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1972), p. 280. Genette explains that space forms an integral part of the narrative yet it cannot be regarded as its equal counterpart. Peter Brooks, in *Reading for the Plot*, contends that narratives are 'one of the large categories or systems of understanding that we use in our negotiations with reality, specifically, in the case of narrative, with the problem of temporality.' See Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. xi. The question of the imbalance between time and space has also brought up other considerations. Indeed, narrative space has several layers or 'laminations' (space can be envisaged at a topological or textual level and the temporal structure of the plot can also be regarded in terms of its spatiality).

³ In *Discours du récit*, Genette reasserts the elementary role of space in the narrative and defines diégèse as 'l'univers spatio-temporel désigné par le récit' [the spatio-temporal universe designated by the narrative]. Gérard Genette, *Nouveau Discours du récit* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1983), p. 72.

⁴ Gérard Genette, *Figures II* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1962) p. 58.

descriptions.] And indeed, critics agree that space was for a long time devised to convey moralistic and educational discourses in children's texts.⁵

This chapter, however, argues that space plays more than a didactic role in the texts to be considered; it also partakes in the narrative drive, communicates characters' emotions to readers and conveys the complexity of adult-child intergenerational relationships. Spatial analyses are particularly relevant to children's texts, where whole narratives are often constructed around back-and-forth movements between inside spaces and the outer world. Furthermore, in recent years, literary theory has insisted that space is a crucial constituent of the fabric of narratives, and that the narrative value of time depends on its relation to space – for time and space are 'more than background elements in narrative; they are part of its fabric'.⁶ Ruth Ronen argues, contrary to Genette, that the imbalance between description and narration is a purely theoretical one. According to Ronen, descriptions can be narrative.⁷ As outlined by Rimmon-Kenan, both time and space relate to perception, and are essential aspects of the type of focalization used in a story.⁸ In our texts, for example, time and space are both crucial in revealing the way in which characters experience and react to confinement. The closer the focalization is to the characters, the more the reader knows of their emotional and psychological reactions when they are enclosed. Other critics have looked at the symbolic function of spatial elements. Susan Stanford Friedman, for instance, contends that the

⁵ For Isabelle Brouard-Arends, in eighteenth-century books for children, space was 'un accessoire essentiel pour le pédagogue qui l'utilise, le manipule' [an essential accessory for the educator who uses and manipulates it]. Brouard-Arends notes, for instance, about Madame de Genlis's eighteenth-century stories for children: 'Les lieux, l'espace sont des ressorts majeurs pour la conduite éducative'. [Places, spaces are major devices for the educative conduct.] See Madame de Genlis, *Adèle et Théodore*, ed. by Isabelle Brouard-Arends (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2006), pp. 24 and 26.

⁶ Teresa Bridgeman, 'Time and Space' in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, ed. by David Herman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 52; Marie-Laure Ryan, 'Space' in *The Living Handbook of Narratology* <<http://lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/space>> [accessed 04.12.2012]; Gabriel Zoran, 'Towards a Theory of Space in Narrative', *Poetics Today*, 5.2, *The Construction of Reality in Fiction* (1984), 309–335; Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European Novel (1800–1900)* (London: Verso, 1999).

⁷ Tracing back the history of description, Ronen explains how, having been regarded first as a rhetorical tool, and then as an ornamental one, description was brought 'into the overall meaningfulness of a literary work', revealing for instance the psychology of characters or their social and biological background. Ruth Ronen, 'Description, Narrative and Representation', *Narrative*, 5.3 (1997), 274–286 (p. 278). Mieke Bal is more cautious and states that, in nineteenth-century realistic novels, 'descriptions were at least narratively motivated if they were not made narrative'. Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 2nd edn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), p. 37. The theoretical separation between narration and description was particularly strong in the twentieth century, with structuralists and semiotic approaches. In *The Place of Space in Narration*, for instance, the semiotician Jan Joost van Baak claims that 'structural prominence of descriptions [...] will result in the suppression of the plot and its dynamic manifestations, or in the retardation of its development.' Jan Joost van Baak, *The Place of Space in Narration* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1983), p. 3.

⁸ Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 2nd edn (London and New York: Routledge, 1983), pp. 78–80.

crossing of borders in literature reveals identities and otherness: borders ‘function symbolically and materially around the binaries of pure and impure, sameness and difference, inside and outside — polarities that set in play spatially enacted oscillations, migratory movements back and forth’.⁹

What is more, the reconstructed worlds in fiction may not always be independent of their context or place,¹⁰ which is often associated with specific locations, landscape or territory. Space may seem more abstract than place, yet the two often merge. For Yi-Fu Tuan space becomes place through lived experience: ‘In experience, the meaning of space often merges with that of place [...] what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better.’¹¹ What we could call the metamorphosis of space into place is closely linked to perception and movements, two fundamental elements of the experience of space. In literature, notes Mieke Bal, place turns into space through the perception of the characters: ‘places seen in relation to their perception are called space’.¹² In ‘Spatial Stories’, Michel de Certeau makes a similar claim when he notes that, in narratives, space is ‘a practiced place’.¹³ For de Certeau, place has to do with the being-there of objects and stability, while space is more dynamic than place.¹⁴ De Certeau attributes the dynamic nature of space to characters. Space, thus, is constitutive of storytelling but also plays a central role in conveying characters’ reactions and perceptions.

In this chapter, our focus shall be on punitive places and spaces, how they are perceived and how they affect young characters. In the texts to be considered, punitive spaces cannot be fully separated from carceral places. The fictional

⁹ Susan Stanford Friedman, ‘Spatial Poetics and Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things*’, in *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, ed. by James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), p. 196.

¹⁰ Cognitive approaches to fictional space focus strongly on this relationship and the reader’s mapping of the story world. See in particular the works of David Herman and Marie-Laure Ryan. Hilary Dannenberg, based on a cognitive approach of narrative, extends the idea of spatial form to the reading activity. Reading is seen as a journey. Hilary Dannenberg, *Coincidence and Counterfactualty: Plotting Time and Space in Narrative Fiction* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2008).

¹¹ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), p. 6.

¹² Bal, p. 133. For Bal, place refers to the topological positions of characters and events, the specific locations where the story unfolds. Perception is the key to the merging of space and place in narratives. Leonard Lutwack, on the other hand, does not fully separate the two notions, considering that space is an element that defines or structures place: ‘Place is part of the physical context of a literary work’, which ‘consists of such elements as space, time, objects, and processes’. Leonard Lutwack, *The Role of Place in Literature* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1984).

¹³ Michel de Certeau, ‘Spatial Stories’, in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven Rendell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 130.

¹⁴ de Certeau, p. 118.

representation of the prison reflects the growing impact of confinement on nineteenth-century imaginations. But why did popular writers such as Carroll, Twain, Ewing or Ségur delve into the motif of carcerality when writing for a young audience? Was it solely to draw on humanist and philanthropic concerns or was it so that readers could sympathise with the lived experience of prisoners? To what extent are readers invited to identify with imprisoned adults and how often are young characters also made prisoners? After examining the overwhelming presence of prisons in our corpus, we will see that the experience of confinement is not limited to actual carceral institutions, but spills over into the domestic realm. Several authors do not hesitate to compare the protective world of home to a prison. The examination of punitive space shows that domestic places were not perceived as positively as eulogies of home in the period would suggest, but were instead presented as spaces where young characters' desires could be frustrated and where they often felt captive. In particular, some characters' lack of spatial scope show our authors' awareness of the potentially oppressive qualities of familiar places.¹⁵ But are fictional girls' and boys' experiences of domestic confinement the same? Having examined characters' sense of imprisonment, we will see how, when characters try to escape home and run in the natural world, they feel excluded from their own community. We will ask whether exclusion is a reversed form of confinement – one can go anywhere except where one wants to. Is the use of confinement and exclusion, as for nineteenth-century prisons, intended to induce repentance and reform in young characters, or is it triggered by adults' anxieties and solicitude, or both?

Carceral spaces

The representation of the carceral in our texts is frequent and several authors evoke actual prisons. The most compelling portrayal of carcerality, inspired by a real punitive institution, can be found in *Les Frères Kip*. The novel could pass as an adventure story (the narrative opens with an expedition) but it is not about the characters' journey. Instead, the most resonant passages are those conveying the

¹⁵ 'The scope of the world can contribute strongly to the effects of a text', Bridgeman, p. 60.

eponymous protagonists' helplessness during their trial and period of captivity. The novel recounts the tribulations of the Kip brothers as they attempt to regain their freedom and prove their innocence after being wrongly accused of murder. The story begins with the journey of the *James Cook*, a ship travelling to Australia. During the voyage, the crew rescue two Dutch brothers (Kip) who, following the wreck of their ship, are stranded on an island. The brothers are honest men, who try to stem a mutiny on the *James Cook*. But the noose tightens around them; they are wrongly accused and sentenced for the murder of the captain. After being kept in separate cells during their trial, they are sent to Port-Arthur, a penitentiary located on the Tasman peninsula, where they share the harsh life of convicts, until they manage to escape with two Irish political prisoners, and eventually prove their innocence. Critics have commented on Verne's preoccupation with political themes, especially in his later novels.¹⁶ In *Les Frères Kip*, the eponymous heroes appear quite late in the narrative, and although they are seamen, their quest is not one of exploration. It becomes evident that the driving force of the narrative is the theme of unfair punishment. Although only beginning in the second part, the brothers' trial and their life at Port-Arthur overshadows the first section of the novel.

As a realist, and as an author working within a specific publishing framework, Verne believed fiction had to rely on verifiable facts: 'Dans chacun de mes livres, tout fait géographique ou scientifique a été l'objet de recherches attentives, et scrupuleusement exactes' he explained in an interview in 1902.¹⁷ [In all my books, any geographic or scientific fact has been meticulously and precisely researched.] Inspired by the case of two French men, Verne changed their nationality (to Dutch) and created several characters out of these two men, splitting them into two moral opposites: on the one hand the upright main characters, and on the other the corrupt villains. In the initial description of the settlement, the narrator recounts the history and geographical location of the penitentiary with a rich profusion of details. While characters and plot are only partially based on the case, reality and fiction meet closely in the setting. In both, the convicts were mostly deported from Britain

¹⁶ Timothy Unwin notes 'a shifting of the focus from the mechanics of travel to more somber political realities as he becomes more critical of the direction in which civilization is moving.' Timothy Unwin, 'Jules Verne Negotiating Change in the Nineteenth Century', *Science Fiction Studies*, XXXII: 1 #95 (2005), 5–17 (p. 10).

¹⁷ Compère and Margot, p. 179.

and undertook various types of labour. Therefore, their punishment was double: they were both imprisoned and banished at the same time, and their confinement was accentuated by their exclusion. Port-Arthur had been a working penitentiary between 1830 and 1877 and its functioning was based on the system of Pentonville prison in London, designed to subjugate the spirit of convicts without corporal punishment by means of work, solitary confinement and religious instruction.¹⁸ Although Verne's protagonists are not physically chastised, the whip is presented as a potential threat in the novel. However, corporal punishment was rejected in favour of more modern forms of correction in Port-Arthur. Verne does not recount how the prison was quite innovative and, in 1849–1850, introduced a separate system of confinement, whereby some prisoners were kept in solitary cells in order to contemplate their sins and to reform; a practice which became prevalent only in the second half of the century.¹⁹

The initial account of Port-Arthur, in Part 2 Chapter VIII, takes no less than seven pages. The description of the penitentiary plunges the reader into what seems to be a different piece of work altogether after an exciting journey, with a journalistic and instructive tone. Although Verne's meticulous descriptions might come from 'semi-didactique' intentions, Verne's attention to detail also stemmed from his ambitions as a stylist, according to Timothy Unwin.²⁰ Rather than being secondary and supporting the story, descriptions come to the fore. And the lengthy, scientific details are powerful precisely because of their underlying instructive content. They actively participate in the novel's underpinning discussions about the role of the prison in society, the question of fair penalty and the justification of punishment. Jules Verne considered that, as a writer, his main object of study was geography as well as human nature, 'la science la plus importante de toute'.²¹ [the most important

¹⁸ See the documentation available on the Port-Arthur Historic Site website, in particular 'Port-Arthur Separate Prison Fact Sheet': <<http://portarthur.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Port-Arthur-Separate-Prison-Fact-Sheet1.pdf>> [accessed 27.08.2014]. Today it is regarded as one of Tasmania's leading tourist attractions. The penitentiary movement that saw the generalisation of incarceration in the West took place between the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries.

¹⁹ 'In the nineteenth century, 'troublemakers' were either punished corporally or sent to dark solitary cells. At the beginning of the twentieth century, disobedient or violent prisoners were no longer flogged. Solitary confinement gradually became the most extreme punishment in prisons.' Alber, p. 31.

²⁰ Timothy Unwin, *Jules Verne: Journeys in Writing* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), p. 30. However, Unwin also notes that 'documentation often becomes so overwhelming that it reshapes the entire storytelling process [...] while the more traditional elements of fiction – characters and plot development – recede into the background. Unwin, 'Jules Verne Negotiating Change in the Nineteenth Century', pp. 11–12.

²¹ Compère and Margot, p. 188.

science of all] In *Les Frères Kip*, geography enables him to examine human nature in more depth.

Verne's descriptions of the prison reflect the century's interest in the plight of convicts, which could be found in the work of other writers at the time, such as Dickens. However, Verne's approach to prisons is more ambiguous than what Jan Alber calls Dickens' 'mature fiction', which 'represents the prison as an instrument of a fundamentally unjust society which is to be blamed for the existence of criminals.'²² While Jean Chesneaux remarks that 'Jules Verne s'exprime avec sévérité au sujet du pénitencier juvénile de Port-Arthur', [Jules Verne makes harsh comments about the penitentiary for young people at Port-Arthur], I would argue that Verne does not criticise the justice system in place and finds the punishment of convicts justified. Verne is keen to detail the harsh reality of Port-Arthur, but his narrator strives to show that men sent to prison deserve to be punished and readers will find it difficult to identify with the fate of ordinary prisoners. The ideological discourse that underpins the description of the prison in Verne's novel is complex. The narrator portrays 'l'épouvantable existence du forçat' (353) [the horrendous life of the convict] as bleak and painful: on top of daily hard labour, prisoners risk 'l'emprisonnement dans les cachots, le supplice de la « chain-gang », enfin, le plus terrible de tous après la mort et qui l'amenait quelquefois, la fustigation du coupable, déchiré par les lanières du cat !' (354) [solitary confinement, the ordeal of the chain-gang, and finally, the most horrifying form of pain but for death, and which could incidentally lead to it, being lacerated by the lashes of the cat 'nine tails!'] On the one hand, the narrative voice condemns the brothers' sentence because of their innocence. On the other hand, their punishment is perceived as fair by the general public and their misery justified by the need to protect society. Most of the men locked in Port-Arthur clearly deserve such treatment and the narrative voice shows confidence in the validity of this prison system and the violence used against convicts, reminding readers that the penitentiary was reserved for '[les] malfaiteurs les plus intraitables, les plus endurcis' (354). [the most untreatable and hardened offenders]

²² Alber, p. 2.

The Kip brothers are victims of unfair punishment and stand out from the other inmates: ‘eux innocents, dans la promiscuité de ces criminels dont les chaînes bruissaient lamentablement’ (354). [they were innocent men, yet rubbed shoulders with these criminals whose chains clanked miserably] In *Jules Verne et le roman initiatique*, Simone Vierende divides the *Voyages Extraordinaires* into three degrees of ‘initiatory’ quests: explorations; fights against monstrous forces; colonisation of a sacred place.²³ Vierende places *Les Frères Kip* in the second category, without naming the nature of the monstrous force. Vierende also remarks that in these stories ‘Jules Verne semble hésiter à doter le monstre d’une totale malfaisance’.²⁴ [Jules Verne seems reluctant to make his monsters completely evil]

The monstrous force, I would argue, is the justice system, which the narrator both denounces and supports. Negative comments concern not the carceral per se, but specifically the English people and court, and denote Verne’s hostility towards the British Empire.²⁵ Indeed, the narrative is set in a British colony, adding a sense of exoticism and distance to the experience of confinement. It also brings out a political sub-text. The narrator unequivocally attributes the failures of the justice system to the nature of the British ‘race’: ‘les magistrats anglais ont souvent la main lourde’ (346). [English magistrates tend to be merciless] Later, the presence of two Irish Fenians, the O’Brien brothers, who help the protagonists to escape, reinforces the political underpinning of the novel. This strategy enables Verne to explore the topos of the prison with some distance, thus helping his young audience to dissociate themselves from the terrible life of the inmates and the plight of the main protagonists.

However, when it comes to the rationale of the penitentiary and in particular the imprisonment of children, Verne does not make negative comments about the British race. The narrator even praises some aspects of the penitentiary’s work. In the following passage, Verne focuses his journalistic descriptions on the area in Port-Arthur reserved for young offenders:

²³ Simone Vierende, *Jules Verne et le roman initiatique* (Paris: Editions du Sirac, 1973), pp. 60–61.

²⁴ Vierende, p. 58.

²⁵ These national stereotypes can be found throughout the novel, although Verne did not always disparage the British, as noted by Timothy Unwin. Timothy Unwin, ‘The Fiction of Science, or the Science of Fiction’, in *Jules Verne: Narrative of Modernity*, edited by Edmund Smyth (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), pp. 46–59 (p. 56).

Son nom de Point-Puer indiquait qu'il était destiné à de jeunes détenus – plusieurs centaines d'enfants compris entre douze et dix-huit ans. Trop souvent déportés pour des délits en somme peu graves, ils occupaient des baraques de bois aménagées en ateliers et en dortoirs. C'est là qu'on tentait de les ramener au bien par le travail, par l'instruction moralisatrice que les règlements imposaient, par les leçons qu'ils recevaient d'un ministre chargé de diriger les pratiques religieuses. Enfin, c'est de là qu'ils sortaient parfois bons ouvriers [...]. Mais on leur faisait la vie dure, à ces jeunes reclus, sous la menace des punitions en usage, l'internement en cellule, la mise au pain et à l'eau, le fouet incessamment brandi par la main des constables contre les récalcitrants. (348)²⁶

Its name, Point-Puer, indicated it was intended for young convicts – several hundred children between the age of twelve and eighteen. Too often deported for what were in fact small wrongdoings, they lived in wooden shacks arranged into workshops and dormitories. The work they did there, the moralising teaching imposed, the lessons they received from a minister responsible for religious worship were an attempt to set them back on the straight and narrow. Finally, sometimes they would come out as good workers. [...] But life was not made easy for these young convicts. They lived under the threat of prescribed punishments, confinement in cells, restriction to only bread and water, and the whip, which constables used relentlessly against anyone defying their authority.

The children's conditions are not different from adult prisoners', except that they receive a moralising instruction through which it is hoped they will learn to reform. Their incarceration is therefore both punitive and corrective. The narrator implicitly condemns the imprisonment of young delinquents, not only by detailing their harsh treatment but through brief interventions: 'Mais on leur faisait la vie dure, à ces jeunes reclus'. [But life was not made easy for these young convicts] The conjunction 'mais' and the adverb 'incessamment' to describe the application of the whip, suggest a critical stance. The narrowing of the focalization on the constables' 'hand', rather than on the whip itself, highlights the adults' direct involvement in and responsibility for the pain of the children. Furthermore, by asserting that only some of the children, sometimes ('parfois'), were good workmen as they came out, suggests that Port-Arthur may not have been as effective as it appeared.

However, the narrative voice is also ambivalent and legitimises the rationale behind Port-Arthur by showing that it offers children a chance to reform, to be morally trained and to learn a trade. Thus, its objective is to transform transgressing

²⁶ Written in 1902, the threat of transportation in the colonies seems here an anachronism. See Chapter One.

young individuals into obedient adults. The language Verne uses to describe the penitentiary approach to the punishment of juveniles is very similar to the ideals of Demetz, the founder of the French colony for young offenders, Mettray, where Verne had sent his son, as we saw in the previous chapter. Demetz wanted to set up a colony where children previously sent to prison and ‘d’jà corrompus’ [already corrupted] could be led to good: ‘les attacher aux travaux des champs, les amener au bien, les rendre honnêtes, reconnaissants, religieux’.²⁷ [keeping them busy in the fields, bringing them back on the straight and narrow, making them honest, grateful, religious.] Once released, young convicts ‘gardent surtout trace des bonnes leçons qu’ils ont reçues’ [for the most part remember the good lessons they were given] and, if they reoffend, ‘c’est dans le pénitencier des hommes qu’ils sont enfermés alors, quelquefois pour la vie, et soumis à toutes les rigueurs d’une discipline de fer.’ (349) [then they face being locked in the adult penitentiary, sometimes for the rest of their life, and suffer discipline under an iron fist] While the narrator’s voice may initially try to help young readers identify with the children in the penitentiary – detailing for instance their age – it becomes clear that it bolsters the idea that the prison is necessary to control marginal individuals who have transgressed social rules. A great distance is created with readers, hindering their identification. Punishment is justified for those who are deviant. Should they fail to reform, they will suffer harsher punishment as adults, with no hope for escape.

One could say that the monstrous force identified by Verne extends to these young criminals, society’s future transgressors, who may contaminate others and pervert the course of morality. In a later passage, the children are indeed depicted as monsters:

Et que l’on juge du degré de perversion auquel atteignaient parfois ces petits monstres ! L’un d’eux, qui en voulait à un constable, répondait, lorsqu’on lui faisait entrevoir la potence dans un prochain avenir s’il ne s’amendait pas : “Et bien ! mon père et ma mère m’auront montré le chemin, et, avant d’être pendu je tuerai ce constable !” (352)

And judge for yourself just how perverse these little monsters could sometimes be! The answer of one of them, who bore a grudge against a constable, when he was shown the gallows where he would soon end if he did

²⁷ Quoted in Mongin, p. 9.

not improve, was: “Fine! I’ll follow the path my father and mother have walked, and, before I am hanged, I will kill this constable!”

Contrary to the tone of other writers such as Twain or Carroll, there is no humour, no irony in these comments, only indignation and contempt. The Kip brothers, with whom readers are invited to identify, do not belong to their group. Some children have already reached a ‘degree of perversion’ beyond salvation, having been corrupted by their milieu. Verne is careful to bring in the direct responsibility of the parents, and the child is presented as a victim: ‘mon père et ma mère m’auront montré le chemin’ [I’ll follow the path my father and mother have walked]. The State or their lack of education are not blamed for the children’s corruption, in particular since the penitentiary provides them with a form of apprenticeship and religious education. Behind this reasoning emerges the idea that harsh punishment is necessary for the lower classes, while a vision is proffered of childhood as a period of education where recalcitrance is not tolerated. The prison remains a distant, alien world reserved for criminals of the worst sort.

In other texts, however, the carceral is brought closer to readers’ experiences and used as an indirect warning or direct threat to unruly characters. *Petit Diable* opens with the prison looming over the protagonist. While waiting for her nephew, Mme Mac’Miche complains: ‘Toujours en retard ! [...] Il finira par la prison et la corde, si je ne parviens pas à le corriger.’ (1133) [Always late! He will be sent to prison or hanged if I don’t manage to straighten him out.] This is exaggerated rhetoric, but behind Mme Mac’Miche’s overstated comment is the suggestion that minor misdemeanours can lead to major crimes. Mme Mac’Miche’s warning is directed not at Charles, who is not in the room, but at readers. Children’s little misbehaviours are a slippery slope and parents must intervene early in order to keep them from becoming society’s transgressors. The novel is set in Scotland, and children in Britain could still be sent to prison, as we saw in Chapter One. However, the narrator does not exactly condone the use of the prison. There is also irony in Mme Mac’Miche making such a comment; she clearly neglects Charles’ education and has no desire to improve his behaviour – her only concern is for his inheritance money.

The prison reoccurs a few pages later, this time as a direct threat to the protagonist. To avenge himself for his bad treatment, Charles wants to set Mme Mac'Miche's house on fire. Juliette, Charles' gentler cousin, admonishes him:

Juliette

[O]n t'aurait mis dans une prison, où tu serais resté jusqu'à seize ou dix-huit ans.

Charles

En prison ! Quelle folie !

Juliette

Oui, mon ami, en prison ; on a condamné pour incendie volontaire des enfants plus jeunes que toi.

Charles

Je ne savais pas cela ! C'est bien heureux que tu me l'aies dit, car j'aurais recommencé à la première occasion. (1152)

Juliette

You would have been sent to jail, where you would have been kept until the age of sixteen or eighteen.

Charles

In jail! That's crazy!

Juliette

Yes, my dear, in jail. Children much younger than you have been sent to prison for arson.

Charles

I did not know this. It is lucky you told me because I would have done it again at the next opportunity.

Here the mention of the prison functions as an educational deterrent for Charles and, by extension, for readers. By evoking the prison as a potential punishment, Ségur warns her implied readers of the dangers of playing with fire, both metaphorically and literally.²⁸ Charles' reaction and the positive effect the warning has on him, suggest the fear that children may have had of prison, which was still a reality for many delinquent children. It also shows how adults may have used this fear to help children internalise the logic between committing a crime and being punished by an external authority. The threats of the prison are never actualised. Yet this does not mean that Charles does not experience the carceral life. Indeed, when he is sent to a boarding school, the punishment of the pupils is markedly similar to

²⁸The fear of children setting a house on fire appears in other titles of our corpus: in *What Katy Did*, Aunt Izzie tells the 'troublesome children' after they manage to lock themselves in the nursery: "How do I know", she concluded, "that before I come home, you won't have set the house on fire, or killed somebody?" (33) In *Little Men*, Tommy actually manages to set his bedroom on fire while secretly smoking his first cigar. 'I always knew Tommy would set the house on fire, and now he has done it!', cries Mrs Bhaer. (82)

the experience of prisoners; pupils' sanctions are referred to as 'exécutions' [executions], the children are regularly sent to a dark 'cachot' [dungeon or isolation cell] and the schoolmaster calls the children's misconduct 'crimes' (1203).

In *Les Malheurs*, Ségur also deploys the carceral motif as a direct threat to the child character. However, as opposed to Charles, Sophie has fully internalised the process that leads from crime to prison. Although she is only four years old, she does not need an adult intervention for the threat to be effective. In Chapter XVII (*La boîte à outils*), Sophie steals the contents of an embroidery box, not knowing that it is a present intended for her. As she empties the box, the narrator explains: 'Son cœur battait, car elle allait voler, comme les voleurs que l'on met en prison.' (335) [Her heart was beating because she was about to steal just as the thieves who are sent to jail.] The picture below accompanies the episode and conveys Sophie's idea of what being imprisoned might mean. Horace Castelli shows a pickpocket stealing a handkerchief, evocative of George Cruikshank's illustrations of child-thieves in Dickens's *Oliver Twist* (1836–39) and of popular fears of juvenile crime.²⁹

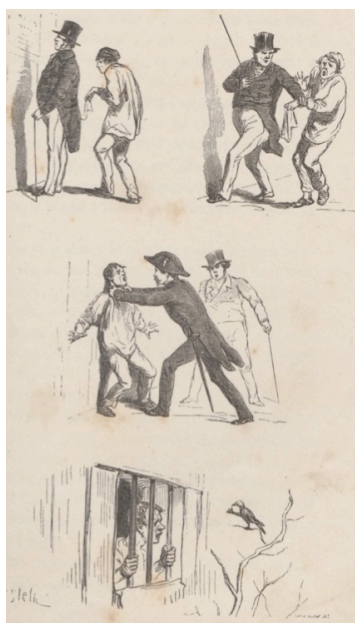


Fig. 2.1. *Les Malheurs de Sophie*, XVIII: *La boîte à ouvrage*. Horace Castelli (1858)

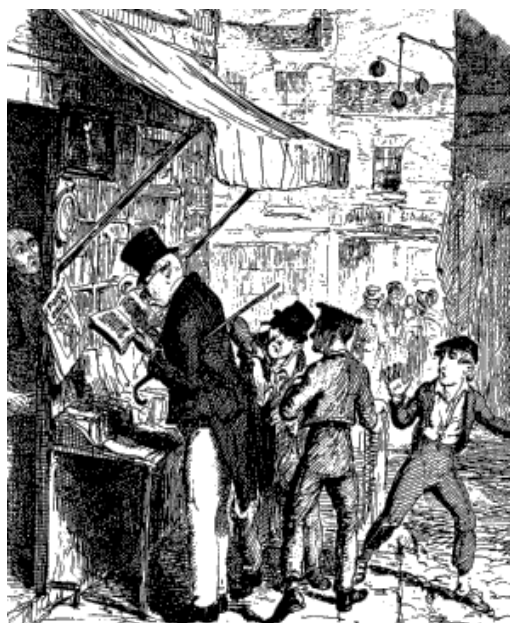


Fig. 2.2. *Oliver Twist or, The Parish Chapter Boy's Progress*. George Cruikshank (1837)

²⁹ In his article 'Juvenile Crime in the 19th Century', Matthew White notes that juvenile crime was a reality in the nineteenth century, 'particularly for the theft of silk handkerchiefs'. <www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/juvenile-crime-in-the-19th-century> [accessed 11.02.2014].

Both images show an elderly, well-dressed gentleman being robbed. In Cruikshank's illustration, Oliver stands away, shocked by the other boys' (Jack Dawkins, the Artful Dodger and Charley Bates) lack of morality. In Castelli's drawing, on the other hand, the focus is less on the crime and more on its direct consequences. The series of images suggests that the prison is part of a narrative in which the process of imprisonment is carefully crafted in order to transmit a moralistic message. The illustration is enlightening in terms of what it implies and omits. Notably, the reasons behind the thief's action are not revealed. The emphasis is instead on the fact that his offence deserves punishment. The intervention of the policeman implies that punishment must come from an appointed authority and, significantly, there is no transition between the third and last vignettes, giving the impression that confinement arrives as a logical denouement. The series ends with the prisoner standing behind iron bars, contemplating a bird on a tree, suggesting his emotions and his deprivation of freedom. As in Verne's text, the prison suggests an awareness of the influence that the themes of convicts' lives and incarceration have on children's minds. And in both Verne and Ségur, the responsibility for children's futures is entrusted to adults.³⁰

Castelli's illustration amplifies and expands on a point that is otherwise very brief in the text, reflecting the publishers' understanding that the prison had a particular resonance with readers. The illustration suggests to readers the same internalisation of the prison narrative that is already effective in Sophie's mind. In fact, Sophie has internalised the logic of the prison so well that she applies it to smaller creatures. She holds a squirrel as 'un malheureux prisonnier' [a miserable prisoner] in a wooden cage after luring it with a few nuts. She uses confinement as a way to correct the squirrel from its greed, reproducing the lessons she has learned from adults: "tu seras bientôt en prison [...] tu verras comme on est puni de la gourmandise" (300). [soon you will be in jail [...] wait and see how greed is punished] Imprisonment in her mind is a logical sanction. Sophie is not the only

³⁰ However, Ségur renders a vision of a Second Empire where children pay for the educational mistakes of adults, whereas Verne's evocation shows a society that believes criminal children's behaviour can be reformed. These two views are not necessarily mutually exclusive. *Petit Diable* and *Les Malheurs* belong to the first period of Ségur's literary career, which focused predominantly on education as well as moral issues, and condemned adult abuse of authority. In later works, as observed by Malarte-Feldman, she turned her critical attention to weak parents, spoiling their children. Malarte-Feldman, p. 137.

young character in our corpus to make small creatures their prisoners. Tom Sawyer keeps a beetle and a tick in a 'prison' (49) (a little percussion-cap box), and plays at 'exercising the prisoner' when bored at school (53). In *Little Men*, Dan, the 'lawless', wild fourteen-year-old orphan, who does not fit in with the other children and brings all sorts of vices to Plumfield, arrives at school one day with a pack of little crabs 'in a state of great indignation at their imprisonment.' (121)

As the examples above suggest, the threat of the prison is not limited to French texts; we also find it in our English and American corpus. In *Wonderland*, the carceral remains a distant threat, never described or illustrated. Characters simply vanish and their conditions of imprisonment are not depicted or mentioned. The threat of the prison is not directed at Alice; however, like the Queen's constant threats to execute her people, it intensifies the feeling of arbitrariness that permeates Wonderland. Critics have compared the seemingly irrational logic of Wonderland with the worlds of Franz Kafka, which have profoundly dark implications.³¹ Several characters are kept prisoner on the Queen's orders, while others are sent to custody. In Chapter IX, by the end of the croquet game, no one is left apart from the King, the Queen and Alice; the Queen has placed all the other players 'in custody and under sentence of execution.' (81) The Duchess is sent to prison, although no reason is given for it and she is freed relatively quickly. The threats are empty and absurd, but nonetheless terrifying, precisely because of their lack of motive.

In *Through the Looking-Glass*, like Sophie in *Les Malheurs*, Alice has internalised the logic of the prison. She ponders what would happen to her if all her punishments were saved up and applied at once: "What *would* they do at the end of the year? I should be sent to prison, I suppose, when the day came".³² Alice's intonation, with the stress placed on 'would', suggests myriad possible punishments, as if Alice finds the prospect amusing. Yet the prison presents itself as a natural consequence, implied by Alice's laconic phrase 'I suppose'. There is a sense of performance in this expression, and the suggestion that punishment deeply interests her. More intriguing, still, is the use of the pronoun 'they', a vague, undefined authority, a shadowy adult figure not unlike the indistinguishable 'some one' in Rousseau's *Émile*

³¹ Patrick Bridgwater, *Kafka, Gothic and Fairytale* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003), p. 98. For Bridgwater, the Queen's threats to sentence first and punish afterwards are simply 'a joke'.

³² Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass* (London: Penguin, 1998), pp. 123–124.

(see Chapter One). Although a non-religious authority figure, it evokes a ubiquitous God who always knows children's mischiefs and will ultimately punish them, similar to the God found in Ségur's titles and to the panoptical surveillance described by Foucault. The idea of 'saving up' Alice's punishments for later also conjures images of purgatory. The prison, in Alice's mind, appears to be the ultimate punishment, a place where she will expiate all her crimes.

One character, in *Through the Looking-Glass*, is effectively sent to prison. Hatta, the King's Messenger is in jail, waiting for his trial. The episode is depicted in one of Tenniel's illustrations.



Fig. 2.3. *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There. Chapter V: Wool and Water.* John Tenniel (1871)

Tenniel has given Hatta the features and the hat of the Hatter, creating an ambiguous continuity between the disquieting trial episode at the end of *Wonderland* and the theme of imprisonment. Although Hatta's imprisonment seems more tangible than the Queen's empty threats in *Wonderland* (she wants the Hatter executed as he leaves the court, but he escapes), it too is absurd and Kafkaesque. The messenger is confined for a crime he has not yet committed (and may not ever commit).³³ The White Queen tells Alice: "He's in prison now, being punished: and the trial doesn't even begin till next Wednesday: and of course the crime comes last

³³ A similar illogic is applied in Carlo Collodi's *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (1883), when Pinocchio is imprisoned for four months for having been robbed of four gold coins.

of all.”³⁴ Although apparently illogical, this imprisonment actually follows a preventative rationale.³⁵ The messenger cannot commit his crime, as long as he is in prison. The White Queen explains to Alice that not committing any faults would be better than being punished for a wrongdoing: ‘that would have been better still; better, and better, and better!’³⁶ The overall objective in society is to avoid deviance whether by applying punishment or using it as a threat. The text provides no details about the Messenger’s experience of the prison.³⁷ Tenniel’s illustration, however, shows Hatta attached by a solid and very short metal chain, making his deprivation of liberty very real.

By contrast with *Through the Looking-Glass*, the lived experience of the prison is presented in far more detail in *Little Men*’s sequel, *Jo’s Boys* (1886). Dan, the lawless boy of Plumfield, is tamed by the school’s unconventional educational methods, but only up to a point. In the sequel, Dan ends up in jail after killing a man to protect a boy threatened following a gambling game. Dan’s imprisonment seems unfair (he was trying to protect someone), yet the narrator justifies this punishment. Dan’s real offence is his lack of self-control, the main educational tenet that the educators want to instil in the children at Plumfield. Dan’s proclivity towards rebellion, in spite of his transformative years with the Bhaers, got the better of him: ‘Yes, Dan was in prison’, comments the narrator, ‘for his own bosom sin had brought him there, and this was to be the bitter lesson that tamed the lawless spirit and taught him self-control.’³⁸ Like Verne, Alcott uses the prison to suggest that children are corrupted through their milieu and that everything is decided in the early stages of life, presenting this moral corruption as a modern equivalent of predestination. Dan was therefore doomed to the carceral life: ‘the firebrand can’t be saved’, he admits to himself while in jail.³⁹ Only through his experience of the prison is he eventually reformed, and the prison appears as a place of salvation, where, although shut in, he is finally delivered from his sins. As in *Wonderland*, where Alice considers the prison

³⁴ Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, p. 172.

³⁵ This rationale particularly resonates today in the context of debates over its usage to combat terrorism.

³⁶ Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, p. 172.

³⁷ This lack of textual details contrasts with the more gruesome details that can be found in earlier English tales. In Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Original Stories* (1788), a woman recounting her experience of a French prison details the vermin, mouldy biscuits and regular deaths of other prisoners.

³⁸ Louisa May Alcott, *Jo’s Boys, and How They Turned Out* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition, 2009), p. 406.

³⁹ Alcott, *Jo’s Boys*, p. 409.

to be the ultimate punishment, here too carcerality is presented as a final solution to save and reform Dan.

Alcott adds a new layer to the representation of the prison experience, which cannot be found in Verne, Ségur or Carroll. She uses the prison to evoke the power of storytelling over children, to show how stories too can preserve them from harm and help them find a way to reform and be forgiven for their sins. During his captivity, Dan experiences a religious awakening. The prisoners attend religious services focusing on reform and penitence. One of these sermons transforms Dan's confinement. The speaker, a woman, tells the inmates a story and adds: 'as all stories should have a little moral, let me tell you mine'.⁴⁰ Suddenly, for Dan, the prison becomes a place of purgation. Being away from his community and society helps to relieve him from his impulses and allows him to submit to moral values. His experience of captivity becomes an allegory of the Christian threefold way (purgation, illumination and union – the latter being about integration, where the individual is empowered in taking ownership of the lessons learned). The speaker compares the prison with a 'hospital for soldiers wounded in life's battle' (411). The prisoners are sick men, victims of a disease rather than deliberate agents of crimes. She continues: 'all the ills that come from broken laws, bringing their inevitable pain and punishment with them [...] but penitence and submission must come before the cure is possible. Pay the forfeit manfully, for it is just; but from the suffering and shame wring new strength for a nobler life.'⁴¹ The female speaker's intervention suggests a considerable degree of self-reflection about the power of storytelling on the part of Alcott; children's stories can save children's morality and lead them on the right path.

Actual prisons also appear – albeit in marginal positions both geographically and within the narrative – in two other American texts published only a few years apart, *Tom Sawyer* and *What Katy Did*. In both texts, the trope of the prison reveals an interest in the humane and concerns for the sufferings of prisoners. It also has a symbolic function; it alludes to the protagonists' ensuing confinement. However, contrasting these works reveals major gender differences in their approach to the

⁴⁰ Alcott, *Jo's Boys*, p. 411.

⁴¹ Alcott, *Jo's Boys*, p. 411.

prison. In *Tom Sawyer*, Muff Potter, a drunkard white outcast, is wrongly accused of the murder of Dr. Robinson. It was Injun Joe, ‘that murderin’ half-breed’ (65), who killed the doctor as an act of revenge and planted the ‘fatal knife’ in the hand of Porter, who was too inebriated to remember. The scene takes place in the village cemetery, where Tom and Huck have gone in search of adventure in the middle of the night. The boys are the only ones to know of Potter’s innocence (Potter himself believes he is guilty). Too scared to speak out, they make a solemn oath to remain silent. While Potter is locked in St. Petersburg’s jail, waiting for his trial, Tom comes to visit him. Described as ‘a trifling little brick den that stood in a marsh at the edge of the village, and no guards were afforded for it’ (78), the building denotes Potter’s marginality and lack of significance within the community. Before the court trial, Tom and Huck visit Potter again, smuggling tobacco and matches through the window. Potter is touched by their kindness and passes on to them his wisdom: “‘don’t *ever* get drunk—then you won’t ever get here. [...] Shake hands—yourn’ll come through the bars, but mine’s too big. Little hands, and weak—but they’ve helped Muff Potter a power, and they’d help him more if they could.’” (136) The image of the small hands passing through the iron bars is powerful and the illustration on the following page amplifies the ‘childishness’ of the boys outlined by this expression. Too small to reach the window, Tom has climbed on Huck’s back, as if playing a game. Yet Potter’s face, in particular his closed, downward lips and his gaze at the child in front of him, conveys his sadness.



Fig. 2.4. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Chapter XXIII.*
True Williams (1876)

Apart from his own warning to the boys, Potter's imprisonment does not bestow a particularly cautionary aspect to the novel. Yet it is meaningful in another way. Critics have found in Injun Joe Tom's 'racial other'.⁴² I would argue that, similarly, Potter is Huckleberry Finn's double.⁴³ When Potter arrives at the cemetery, Huck recognises his voice: "I bet I know it. *He ain't sharp enough to notice us. Drunk, same as usual, likely – blamed old rip!*" (65) Huck comes from the same social strata as Potter. His father was also the drunk of the town, as Huck himself explains in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Like Potter, Huck lacks the wit and astuteness of Tom or of Injun Joe, who unashamedly double-crosses Potter. Likewise, Tom

⁴² Robert Paul Lamb, 'America Can Break Your Heart: On the Significance of Mark Twain', in *A Companion to American Fiction 1865–1914*, ed. by Robert Paul Lamb and G. R. Thomson (Malden, Oxford and Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), p. 478.

⁴³ Griffin Wolff examines the similitude between Tom and Injun Joe. See Griffin Wolff, pp. 637–652. Injun Joe is the real outlaw, 'almost a parody' of Tom's dream outlaw. Tom's desire to rebel and his outcast activities are realised by Injun Joe, and Joe pays the price with his death. Tom himself plays with death, and hurts the community's emotions by faking his own death. For Griffin Wolff, Tom and Injun Joe share '[s]omething irrational and atavistic, something ineradicable in human nature. Anger, perhaps; violence, perhaps. Some unnamed, timeless element.' Griffin Wolff, p. 650.

betrays Huck by breaking their pledge to stay silent.⁴⁴ Symbolically, Tom proves himself Huck's superior when taking their oath – Huck cannot spell. Tom's literary knowledge, about robbers and pirates, also makes him a leader. Twain's suggestion of the power of storytelling is wryer and more cynical than Alcott's religious and hopeful perspective. Huck implores Tom to keep him in the gang: "You wouldn't shet me out, would you, Tom? You wouldn't do that, now, would you, Tom?" (201) His pleading voice and language are strikingly similar to Potter's supplications: "Joe, don't tell! Say you won't tell, Joe [...] You won't tell, will you Joe?" [...] O, Joe, you're an angel!" (67–68)

This mirroring of adults suggests that Huck is an innocent victim, while Tom is culpable and, to an extent, deserves the same ultimate punishment as Injun Joe, who ends up being shut in a cave. However, Tom shows more empathy and morality than Injun Joe. His prison visits to Potter indicate that he can experience guilt and has a (troubled) conscience. Yet Tom can also show disregard for others. In the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, when Jim is unjustly locked in a small plantation hut, Tom treats the situation as a source of amusement and puts together an elaborate plan of evasion based on his reading of adventure stories. The plan involves convincing Jim that he has returned to his status of slave. Again, Tom's literary superiority means that Huck cannot object. Tom is only interested in making his plan as mysterious and intricate as possible, at the expense of Jim's freedom. Huck wants to warn Tom that his attempt to save a slave will 'make himself a shame'.⁴⁵ In both imprisonment cases (of Potter and Jim), the boys have different degrees of control over the incarceration and the liberation of adults. In the case of Potter, the children have no direct power over his incarceration (although later, Tom will secure his release by revealing that Injun Joe is guilty). Furthermore, Tom's lack of interest in Jim's actual freedom, and Huck's acceptance of the community's values, show the limits of society's philanthropic concerns and compassion for others, which is race-based. The prison appears an entertaining game to Tom only when it involves someone who does not belong to his race. But it also suggests that while

⁴⁴ As a result of Tom breaking their oath, Huck loses faith in the human race: 'Since Tom's conscience had managed to drive him to the lawyer's house by night [...] Huck's confidence in the human race was well nigh obliterated.' (140)

⁴⁵ Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 210.

Huck is able to rebel against his society's values, Tom's immaturity confines him to follow society's rules, which he accepts without criticism.

In *What Katy Did*, children also show compassion for the fate of prisoners. Katy Carr is a boisterous girl who easily befriends people. Her general sense of empathy leads her to pay visits to a thief in the local prison:

There was a thief in the town jail, under whose window Katy used to stand, saying "I'm so sorry poor man!" and "Have you got any little girls like me?" in the most piteous way. The thief had a piece of string which he let down from the window. Katy would tie rose-buds and cherries to this string, and the thief would draw them up. It was so interesting to do this that Katy felt dreadfully when they carried the man off to the State Prison. (56)

Like Tom, Katy uses the man's imprisonment as an opportunity for pleasure. The adjective 'interesting' suggests that the plight of prisoners and the pains of others might have been a source of curiosity, perhaps even of voyeurism, for contemporary young readers (we shall examine this in more details in Chapter Three). However, unlike Tom, Katy does not bear any responsibility for the man's imprisonment. Katy's sentimentalist tone evokes her childish innocence. The theme of the prison therefore appears as an outlet of sentiment and feeling. The passage above is also evocative of the poem *The Singer of the Prison* (1869) by Walt Whitman:

When down a narrow aisle, amid the thieves and outlaws of the land, [...] Calmly a Lady walk'd, holding a little innocent child by either hand [...] With deep half-stifled sobs and sound of bad men bow'd and moved to weeping, And youth's convulsive breathings, memories of home, The mother's voice in lullaby, the sister's care, the happy childhood

In Whitman's poem, the child reminds prisoners of their homes. Similarly, Katy is able to see in the prisoner a family man with goodness in him. In this romantic vision, the innocence of childhood and the guilty prisoner are placed side by side to evoke adults' nostalgia for a lost innocence.

While in *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* the prison generates tension and comedy, in *What Katy Did* it underpins an ideological message about girls' roles as carers. Tom's offerings are modest, mere 'small comforts', while Katy creates an intricate string of rose-buds and cherries – later, food and prettiness will be two elements Katy will learn to provide for her family. The tying of rose-buds to the thief's piece

of string adds a feminised note to her visits. The intricacy of the string with rose buds also reflects the complexity of Katy's emotions towards the idea of confinement, which later participates not only in her moral awakening, but also in the construction of her gender. She is punished for her rebelliousness by a swing accident that will leave her an invalid. Confined to her room, she learns self-control,⁴⁶ forgets her selfish ambitions and instead develops nurturing qualities and learns to care for her family.

Furthermore, the link between gender and confinement is reinforced in another episode. Katy makes a new friend in Mrs Spencer, an invalid lady left at home alone by her husband. When the latter is revealed to be a criminal (who is sent to jail for counterfeiting), Katy's aunt is ashamed of Katy's visits. But her father laughs; 'he didn't think that kind of crime was catching' (60). Whereas the mirroring of Tom and Injun Joe suggests that boys could be morally contaminated, Katy does not seem at risk of criminal contagion. Instead, her fate lies in the woman's invalidity. Katy has an insatiable desire to visit the secluded woman, as if drawn by her confinement: 'The romance of the closed door and the lady whom nobody saw interested her very much.' (57) The 'romance of the closed door', which could be used to describe Coolidge's book, sustains an idealised and gendered view of confinement – significantly, the term confinement can also refer to the condition of being in childbirth. By the 1870s in America, notes Lois Keith, '[i]n books where the naughty child was a girl, her rebelliousness could be enjoyed but always with the knowledge that to enter womanhood, she would repent and learn quieter, more domestic ways.'⁴⁷ Furthermore, the prison is also used to outline gender differences between Katy and her brothers. Katy finds the prison interesting because she empathises with others and feels a responsibility to try to alleviate other people's suffering. Her brothers, on the other hand, see the prison as a source of amusement. When the police come to arrest Mrs Spencer's husband, Katy's brothers invent a new pastime, "Putting Mr. Spencer in Gaol", which for a long time was one of their favourite games.' (60)

⁴⁶ Keith, pp. 69–94.

⁴⁷ Keith, p. 74.

Burnett also developed the theme of imprisonment in *A Little Princess*, albeit in a way very different from our other texts.⁴⁸ Sara Crewe builds imaginary prison walls that, strangely, bring the illusion of safety. The carceral is used here as a form of escapism. In her discussion of the representation of the prison experience in Victorian adult novels, Monika Fludernik notes that the prison can be ‘an exotic scenario that has an escapist potential’.⁴⁹ When Sara arrives at Miss Minchin’s school for girls, she is the wealthiest and most regal-looking pupil. However, her father dies penniless in India and Sara, demeaned, is left destitute. Treated as an ‘under servant’, dressed as a beggar, she must perform domestic tasks and live in the institution’s attic. The narrator associates it with a prison cell – Lottie, the scullery-maid also living upstairs, is called ‘the prisoner in the next cell’ (89). It is a bare space, away from the rest of the school, which feels strange and foreign to Sara. It is associated with the prison through Sara’s sense of alienation in this unfamiliar space devoid of love and comfort – the opposite of home. On her first night, ‘her mind was forcibly distracted, now and then, by the strangeness of her surroundings.’ (71) The text is evocative of Oscar Wilde’s writing on children in prison: ‘The present treatment of children is terrible, primarily from people not understanding the peculiar psychology of a child’s nature. [...] [B]eing taken away from its parents by people whom it had never seen, and of whom it knows nothing, and finding itself in a lonely and unfamiliar cell.’⁵⁰ Sara’s sense of imprisonment is accentuated by her window. Like the illustration of the prisoner looking through iron bars in *Les Malheurs*, Sara gazes at clouds and sees ‘islands or great mountains enclosing lakes [...] places where it seemed that one could run or climb’ (102).

However, the exoticism of Sara’s new prison does not come solely from the fact that it is an unfamiliar place. Sara is able to transform the place of the attic into a space that she reconstructs. Convinced that ‘everything is a story’ (89), she reinvents her space: “I am a prisoner in the Bastille. I have been here for years and years –

⁴⁸ In a 1904 story, entitled *In the Closed Room*, Burnett expands on this theme and tells the story of a little girl, Judith Foster, also fascinated with a closed room in her parents’ apartment. This is, however, a mystery story, that tells of the inexplicable doom of the protagonist’s early death.

⁴⁹ Monika Fludernik, “Stone Walls Do (Not) a Prison Make”: Rhetorical Strategies and Sentimentalism in the Representation of the Victorian Prison Experience’, in *Captivating Subjects: Writing Confinement, Citizenship and Nationhood in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Jason Haslan and Julia M. Wright (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), p. 147.

⁵⁰ Oscar Wilde, *Children in Prison and Other Cruelties of Prison Life* (London: Murdoch & Co., 1897), p. 7.

and years; and everybody has forgotten about me. Miss Minchin is the jailer [...]. I shall pretend that, and it will be a great comfort.’ (79)⁵¹ Sara’s identification with prisoners is also influenced by her literary knowledge, in particular of Alexandre Dumas’s *The Comte of Monte Cristo* (1844): “‘Other people have lived in worse places. Think of the Count of Monte Cristo in the dungeons of the Château d’If.’” (79) While no one had ever escaped from the Château d’If, Edmond Dantes, Dumas’s protagonist, manages to flee, suggesting Sara’s freedom to come.⁵² Various aspects of Sara’s living conditions are associated with the experience of the prison. Hence, after Lottie’s visits, Sara feels ‘just as perhaps prisoners feel a little more desolate after visitors come and go, leaving them behind.’ (84). When she discovers a rat in her room, she declares: “‘Prisoners in the Bastille used to make friends with rats. Suppose I make friends with you.’” (85) And when winter comes, she notes: “‘Sometimes I try to pretend it is another kind of place; but the Bastille is generally easiest—particularly when it is cold.’” (89) As opposed to accounts of the prison intended to highlight the miseries of prisoners, Burnett uses the prison as a strategy to show Sara’s resourcefulness.⁵³ Whereas in the other texts we examined, the prison is an institution separated from home, in *A Little Princess* the theme of carcerality merges directly with the child’s experience of his or her own environment. Yet, in most of our texts domestic places are also perceived as places of captivity, as we shall now see in more detail.

⁵¹The reference to French prisoners does not seem uncommon. Robertson notes how a young nineteenth-century girl, Fanny Kemble, who, as punishment, was ‘[f]ed a-on bread and water, [...] declared that she was now like those poor French prisoners everyone pitied so.’ Robertson, p. 418.

⁵²Juliet Dusinberre makes an interesting parallel between Sara’s confinement and characters stranded on islands: ‘Defoe made it plain that being marooned was a condition of life that he knew well and that, like Frances Hodgson Burnett’s Sara Crewe, he had used the story to transform a different kind of desert island: ‘All these Reflections are just History of a State of forc’d Confinement, which in my real History is represented by a confin’d Retreat in an island.’ Juliet Dusinberre, *Alice to the Lighthouse: Children’s Books and Radical Experiments in Art* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 228–229.

⁵³The Bastille had also appeared in English texts for children, such as Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Original Stories* (1788), in a short passage entitled ‘The man confined in the Bastille’ (Chapter III). The passage insists on the prisoner’s sense of loneliness, ‘comfortless solitude’ and malnourishment. Not unlike Sara with her rat, the prisoner finds comfort in the company of a spider that he feeds and looks after. But he is eventually forced to kill it by a prison guard.

With the exception of Verne's novel, all our titles take place in familiar settings, either home or school, or a combination of both. Even in *Wonderland*, the domestic and the schoolroom often merge, and Alice's thoughts frequently turn towards or are influenced by her memories of them. Home is traditionally associated with positive feelings and conventional images of safety. In *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard depicts it as the place where '[I]a vie commence bien, elle commence enfermée, protégée, toute tiède dans le giron de la maison.'⁵⁴ [I]ife begins well, it begins enclosed, protected, all warm in the bosom of the house.] The idea of domestic enclosure ('enfermée') is directly associated with that of protection. For the privileged classes in the nineteenth century, observes Robert Polhemus, 'home and family came to be idealized as sacred places.'⁵⁵ A family shelter, home is often set in opposition to the outer space, notes the semiotician van Baak: 'the interior of a house, representing positive values of domestic life like security, warmth and nourishment and of cultural continuity'.⁵⁶ The opposition between inside and outside can be harmonious, for instance 'the typical equilibrium at the beginning (and end) of fairy tales and comparable types of narrative'. In many children's texts of the period, home has a particular significance; it is also often a shielding and idyllic place 'where the protagonists belong and where they return to after any exploration of the outside world',⁵⁷ and it gives several of our texts a *Bildungsroman* quality. For Ann Alston, in texts for a young readership, home is usually 'the antithesis of away, and therefore the word 'home' becomes culturally loaded as it invokes a nostalgia for warmth and comfort.'⁵⁸ In the texts comprising our corpus, home is often the main setting (containing 'the actual events and situations of the

⁵⁴ Gaston Bachelard, *La Poétique de l'espace* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1957), p. 26.

⁵⁵ Robert Polhemus, 'Lewis Carroll and the Child in Victorian Fiction', in *The Columbia History of the British Novel*, ed. by John Richetti (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 588.

⁵⁶ 'Typical' in this connexion means that the relation between the various spaces and human cultural behaviour is presented as proper (or, as we called it above, canonical), and therefore as harmonious. The modelling function of this opposition inside–outside is of course not restricted to houses; on various scales we may find analogues (like cities or even countries) which typically represent some of the following features and values: inside associated with 'safe, own, known, comprehensible, order, good' *v.* outside associated with 'hostile, alien, unknown, incomprehensible, chaos, bad'. van Baak, p. 61.

⁵⁷ Maria Nikolajeva, *From Mythic to Linear: Time in Children's Literature* (Lanham, MD and London: The Children's Literature Association and The Scarecrow Press, 2000), p. 25. Nikolajeva speaks here of 'Arcadia-type narratives' and argues that not all children's texts follow this pattern.

⁵⁸ Alston, p. 70.

narrative that compose what may be termed the story space'),⁵⁹ or the initial frame of the narratives,⁶⁰ from which characters wish to depart. It can be 'the site of maternal love and influence and hence a place of womb-like retreat',⁶¹ and, when they are away, it is not unusual for characters to be homesick. Tom Sawyer longs for home when he is on Jackson's Island; Alice laments "[i]t was much pleasanter at home," and almost wished she 'hadn't gone down that rabbit-hole' (32); Sara misses home when she arrives at Miss Minchin's school; in *Little Men* Nan and Rob long to find their way home when they get lost.

Yet the values attached to the domestic realm can also be inverted, and sheltering realms may become negative internal spaces. Home, argues Alston, may be 'a place of disciplinary control, both enriching and stifling, a sanctuary and a prison, a place to return to and to escape from.'⁶² In the texts comprising our corpus, confinement is not limited to carceral imprisonment; it frequently takes place in familiar spaces, notably domestic ones. Monika Fludernik notes about adults' fiction that 'there are numerous instances of metaphors of imprisonment (prison as source domain) in literary texts' because 'many situations in our lives are experienced as confining.'⁶³ Similarly, we find a wealth of metaphors of imprisonment in our texts, emphasising the characters' restriction of movement or sensation of oppression, and fears and feelings associated with imprisonment such as starvation, separation or abandonment.⁶⁴ The ambiguity of familiar spaces is particularly visible in small spaces, which evoke children's size. Corners, for instance, are small ambivalent microcosms; they can be experienced either as confining or protective. Indeed, corners are spaces traditionally used for the punishment of children. In *A Child's World*, James Walvin quotes an English children's book entitled *Only for Very Good*

⁵⁹ Ronen, p. 425. I am here using Ronen's categorisations: setting, secondary/background frames, inaccessible frames, spatio-temporally distant frames and generalized space. Sometimes home and school seem to merge, as in *Little Men* (and to an extent *A Little Princess*).

⁶⁰ Alston, p. 75.

⁶¹ Alston, p. 70.

⁶² Alston, p. 69.

⁶³ Fludernik, p. 229.

⁶⁴ Throughout the nineteenth century, we find many metaphors of imprisonment referring to the life of children, in the vein of Victor Hugo's poem 'Melancholia' in the third book (Les luttes et les rêves) of *Les Contemplations* (1856): 'Où vont tous ces enfants dont pas un seul ne rit ? [...] / Ils vont, de l'aube au soir, faire éternellement / Dans la même prison le même mouvement.' Victor Hugo, *Oeuvres poétiques*, vol. 2 (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), p. 572. [Where do these children go for whom nobody laughs? / [...] They go to work – fifteen hours in the mill; / They go from dawn to dusk, eternally repeating / The same motions in the same prison.] Trans. by Geoffrey Barto

<http://gbarto.com/hugoinfo/2003_06_01_hugoarchive.html#200400225> [accessed 30.07.2015].

Children (1891) that ‘began with a picture showing a door and the inscription ‘No admission to any but Very Good Children’ and ‘In the corner there was portrayed ‘The Black Hole for Naughty Boys and Girls’, with bread and water at the entrance.’⁶⁵ In *The Land of Lost Toys*, at the beginning of the framing narrative, the two young children are punished. Sam is ‘condemned to the back of the nursery for the rest of the day’ (7), and Dot put ‘into the corner’ (8). Tom Sawyer also ‘sulked in a corner and exalted his woes’ (26) after being scolded by his aunt, acting as a victimised child.

Yet, like home, corners can also be associated with positive qualities. In *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard remarks that both corners and home convey a sense of protection. Referring to the way we inhabit the domestic space, Bachelard even notes that home and corners can merge: ‘la maison est notre coin du monde’⁶⁶ [our house is the corner of the world]. British and American newspapers in the nineteenth century offered *Children’s Corners*, pages or columns for younger readers.⁶⁷ Naturally shielding, corners are ideal spaces of safety. In *The Land of Lost Toys*, Aunt Penelope explains how she hides from danger in a corner: ‘I turned back and sat down in a corner in some alarm’ (32).⁶⁸ Corners are also perfect hiding places during children’s games, and Katy and her siblings like to huddle into ‘holes and corners and poke-away places’ (42) in the garden shed’s loft. In *What Katy Did*, the narrator insists on the protective and entertaining qualities of their favourite hiding place: ‘a low, dark loft without any windows, and with only a very little light coming in through the square hole in the floor’ (41) – details that could also describe a place of confinement.

On a larger scale, domestic spaces in our texts display the same ambiguity as corners. Metaphors of imprisonment are used to convey Tom Sawyer’s sense of captivity. When he has to stay in his bedroom with the measles, for ‘two long weeks Tom lay prisoner, dead to the world and its happenings’ (132). This sense of captivity extends from home to other familiar places, such as school. Hence, Tom

⁶⁵ Walvin, p. 47.

⁶⁶ Bachelard, p. 24.

⁶⁷ In France, Claude Debussy also entitled a suite for piano, which he wrote for his three-year-old daughter, *Children’s Corner* (1906–1908).

⁶⁸ Although an adult, in *The Land of Lost Toys*, Aunt Penelope partially reverts to her childhood self.

begins every Monday morning ‘wishing he had had no intervening holiday, it made the going into captivity and fetters again so much more odious.’ (43) Significantly, it is through Tom’s focalization that home appears like a prison, rather than through the comments of the narrator. But while Tom is the focalizer, the metaphors of imprisonment belong to the extra-diegetic narrator’s voice – Tom does not use terms such as ‘captivity’, ‘fetters’, or ‘odious’ himself.⁶⁹ This strategy helps to create a distance, which elicits irony and suggests to readers that Tom’s feelings are the exaggerations of a child’s mind. The fence around Aunt Polly’s house, which Tom must whitewash as a punishment, symbolises Tom’s enclosure in his familiar settings. This symbolic border runs through the narrative, and often finds its way into True Williams’s illustrations. Chapter VI, for instance, begins with Tom’s feelings of ‘captivity’ and ‘fetters’ about returning to school. As if to evoke the boy’s sense of enclosure, the illustration below suggestively shows the fence weaving across the page as the chapter opens.

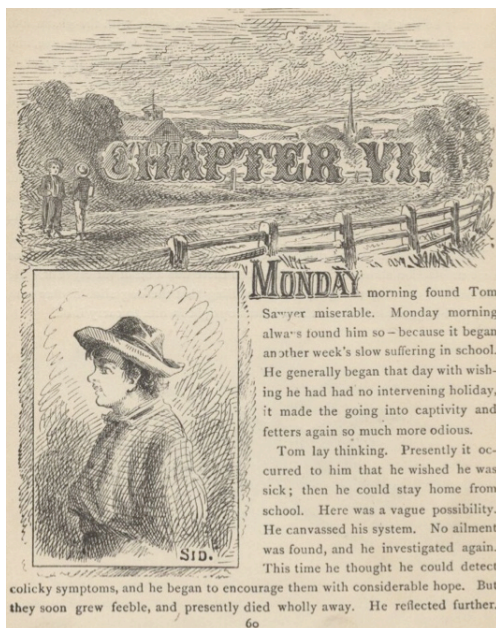


Fig. 2.5. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Opening page of *Chapter VI*. True Williams (1876)

For Neil Campbell the fence exemplifies ‘the conforming nonconformer’,⁷⁰ and allows an acceptable level of transgression for boys: “To actually transgress into the “seductive outside””, notes Campbell, ‘is to move closer to Huck Finn’s world of the

⁶⁹ As Rimmon-Kenan observes, the identity of the focalizer and the narrator may be distinct. In the case of child characters, one way to note whether focalization and narration are combined is to look at the register of the vocabulary used. Rimmon-Kenan, pp. 72–75.

⁷⁰ Neil Campbell, “The “Seductive Outside” and the “Sacred Precincts”: Boundaries and Transgressions in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*”, *Children’s Literature in Education*, 25.2 (1994), 125–138 (p. 130).

“lawless ... outcast” and ultimately into the world of Injun Joe.⁷¹ Tom yearns to join the ‘free boys’, in particular Huck, who ‘came and went, at his own free will.’ (46) Huck lives on the margins of society; like Diogenes, who slept in a wine jar, he sleeps ‘on door-steps in fine weather and in empty hogsheads in wet’ (46). Children ‘admired him so, and delighted in his forbidden society’ (45) but mothers ‘hated and dreaded’ him (45). Tom is allowed a certain level of transgression but knows how far he can play around the community’s limits and eventually, he will conform.

Huck also expresses his feelings of captivity when he is adopted by the Widow Douglas:

He had to eat with knife and fork; he had to use napkin, cup and cake; he had to learn his book, he had to go to church; he had to talk so properly that speech was become insipid in his mouth; whithersoever he turned, the bars and shackles of civilization shut him in and bound him hand and foot. (199)

Twain uses internal-focalization to evoke Huck’s sense of captivity; however, the narrator also gives readers comic insights into Huck’s mind. The register is a mixture of the narrator’s and Huck’s words. The repetitions of ‘have to’ suggest Huck’s sense of external obligation and oppression. In two ensuing tirades, Huck depicts his everyday imprisonment, starting with his new morning routine: ‘she makes me git up just at the same time every morning’ (199). It ends with Sunday sermons: ‘I hate them ornery sermons!’ (200). Huck’s vernacular language makes his own metaphors of imprisonment more cogent than Tom’s feelings of captivity: “‘It’s awful to be tied up so.’” (200). What the boy dreads most is the stringent regularity of his new life. Ordered by the ring of a bell, Huck’s routine resembles that of an inmate or of someone in the military: ‘The widder eats by a bell; she goes to bed by a bell; she gits up by a bell – everything’s so awful reg’lar a body can’t stand it.’” (200) His complaints echo Foucault’s description of the mechanisms of ‘coercion’ and surveillance in *Discipline and Punish*: ‘Le dressage de la conduite par le plein emploi du temps, l’acquisition des habitudes, les contraintes du corps impliquent entre celui qui est puni et celui qui le punit un rapport bien particulier. [...] L’agent de punition doit exercer un pouvoir total’.⁷² [The training of behaviour by a full time-table, the acquisition of habits, the constraints of the body imply a

⁷¹ Campbell, p.129.

⁷² Foucault, p. 152.

very special relation between the individual who is punished and the individual who punishes. The agent of the punishment must exercise complete power.] This special relation, according to Foucault, is one aiming for absolute control and “envelopment”, as we saw in the introduction: ‘l’individu à corriger doit être entièrement enveloppé dans le pouvoir qui s’exerce sur lui’.⁷³ [the individual to be corrected must be entirely enveloped in the power being exercised over him.] On the surface, the widow’s attitude is charitable, but in Huck’s experience, it is one of oppression, surveillance and control. For Goshgarian, surveillance was ‘the chief means by which the Jacksonian middle class disciplined itself.’⁷⁴ Perhaps, the widow’s charitable control is also driven by Huck’s social position; coming from a lower-class background, his habits need to be completely changed and he requires constant surveillance. Huck shows some level of resistance but eventually gives in after Tom intervenes. Huck’s and the widow’s relationship, and the use of confinement for educational purposes, suggest the dominant position of higher classes over the poor, of the adult over the child and of the community over the individual.

Home is often represented as a confining space in texts featuring a female character, and the confinement of the child is used as a punishment. In two American novels in our corpus, girls are physically and metaphorically attached to home to teach them a lesson about the limits of freedom. Attachment of children also appeared in earlier books such as Dorothy Kilner’s *Histories of More Children than One; Or Goodness Better than Beauty* (1780s), in which a mother attached her son to a tree for several hours (ready to leave him there all night if necessary) and without any food to combat his insubordination. In *Little Men*, Chapter 12,⁷⁵ after Nan runs in the woods and gets lost, taking little Rob with her, Jo Bhaer decides to teach her ‘the difference between liberty and license’ (155). Like Hatta in *Through the Looking-Glass*, who is attached to a wall, Nan (and Rob, who wants to stay) is attached to the sofa in her room. This is an unusual punishment but ‘as Mrs Jo liked odd penalties,

⁷³ Foucault, p. 153.

⁷⁴ Goshgarian, p. 40.

⁷⁵ The chapter is entitled *Huckleberries*, and could echo Henri Thoreau’s 1860–1861 similarly named essay on the theme of true and false education, self-discovery and the means to preserve wild nature. Joel Myerson, *The Cambridge Companion to Henry David Thoreau*, ed. by Joel Myerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 161. In *Little Men*, Mrs Bhaer tells Dan ““never mind the berries, but sit about and enjoy the lovely things which you know how to find all about you”” (141).

she tried it' (155). The sounds and smells coming from secondary frames ('Never had the hall seemed so inviting'), as well as their thoughts about other children, torture Nan and Rob. The punishment may seem cruel but Mrs Bhaer justifies it by claiming that she is only 'helping the children to punish themselves' (157). The adult magnanimously seeks collaboration from the children.

Mrs Bhaer lengthens Nan's bonds 'so that she could look out of the window' and 'see the fun if she could not join in it' (158). Nan's confinement is effective: 'nothing atoned the loss of freedom; and a few hours of confinement taught Nan how precious it was' (158). The latter emerges from her captivity 'quite subdued' (159) and sheds a few tears. Nan's punishment is presented as a 'cure for running away', as if Nan's urge for the outside was an illness. Nan agrees: "'All children run away [...] as if it was as natural and necessary a thing as measles or whooping cough' (155). Although presented as common to all children, in the novel this disease mostly affects girls. Before attaching Nan, Mrs Bhaer 'tells several tales to enforce her lecture', presenting 'the very natural desire of all young people for liberty' (199) as a natural, even animalistic, yearning: 'I don't like to tie you up like a naughty little dog,' she tells Nan, 'but if you don't remember any better than a dog, I must treat you like one.' (156) The string used to tie up Nan is like a leash. The association of the unruly child with an animal conjures up the discourses of Locke and later Bronson Alcott, suggesting that educators must find ways to make children's will supple.

Jo Bhaer furthermore tells Nan a story about her own childhood. As with the religious sermon given to prisoners in *Jo's Boys* – key to Dan's reformation – Nan's punishment is reinforced by the power of storytelling. When Mrs Bhaer was a young girl, she ran away from home and her mother punished her. 'I did it a good many times till [my mother] cured me.' (155) In order to effect this cure, Jo's mother attached Jo to her bedpost. Therefore, the lesson about self-control is passed down through generations of women. The frustration of the child's desires (defined as a form of punishment in Chapter One) is presented in this episode as a cyclical female legacy, perpetuated by women themselves. Mrs Bhaer transmits the very punishments and pains she has undergone herself without questioning their validity, although the shift from the bed to the sofa as the object to which the girl is

attached perhaps suggests a limited degree of progressive change. Although Nan's lesson benefits the other children (they now 'regarded being lost as the greatest ill humanity was heir to, and hardly dared to put their little noses outside' (160)), it is a girl character who must undergo this form of punishment. As the novel develops, Nan learns to be less of a tomboy and starts helping with domestic affairs.

The image of the female physically bound to a bed is also resonant in *What Katy Did*, where, after her spinal injury, Katy Carr is physically and metaphorically attached to her bed for several years. Katy's confinement and lack of scope are a clear symbol of the boundaries of her gender; her horizon and future are limited to being the 'heart' of the house.⁷⁶ Coolidge uses portals and access to outside frames to suggest the effect of Katy's confinement on her inner conflicts. At the beginning of her seclusion, Katy kept her blinds 'shut tight, and she lay in the dark, thinking how miserable she was, and how wretched all the rest of her life was going to be' (97). The world outside becomes a background frame of which she is barely aware, then turns into a hypothetical frame, as she does not know if she will ever walk outside again.⁷⁷ Only after her cousin Helen's visit does Katy open the blinds in her bedroom. Helen (also an invalid) helps her to understand that she can only achieve happiness through self-control and her awakening to God. Katy's two-year confinement is used to help with her spiritual development. When the novel opens, Katy is buoyant and growing up fast: 'Poor Katy always said "when I'm grown up", forgetting how very much she had grown already' (15). Inspired by her readings, Katy dreams of doing 'something grand' with her life, ambitions that conflict with her late mother's wish that "'Katy must be a mamma to the little ones, when she grows up'" (38). The only dream that Katy does not have is to become the angel of the house. Yet as the eldest of a 'transnormative family',⁷⁸ Katy must learn to care

⁷⁶ Richard Fenn reminds us that it was not until the twelfth century that a need for a purgatory place was felt. Until then, the purgatory was a notion 'located' in time, prior to the Last Judgement. Fenn, p. 5.

⁷⁷ Frames, explains Ruth Ronen, may be classified according to their level of factuality or actuality – whether characters are actually in that space. Some frames may only be potential or hypothetical, for instance if they remain in the characters' imagination.

⁷⁸ Katy's mother passed away when she was younger, and her father is helped by his sister, Aunt Izzie. The latter dies while Katy is still disabled, at which point Katy decides to take her place and be responsible for the running of the house. The term 'transnormative' is used by Elizabeth Thiel to refer to 'those family units headed by single parents, step-parents, aunts [...] identified primarily by the temporary or permanent absence of a natural parent or parents, often by the presence of a surrogate mother or father'. Focusing on Victorian families, the 'transnormative family was deviant in that it challenged the verisimilitude of the domestic ideal by depicting paradigms of family that existed beyond the desirable norm.' Elizabeth Thiel, *The Fantasy of*

for others rather than herself: her desires need to be redirected. Katy's broken spine is a metaphor for her mind, which also needs mending, similar to the orthopaedic process depicted in Nicolas Andry's illustration featuring in *Discipline and Punish*.



Fig. 2.6. *L'orthopédie ou l'art de prévenir et de corriger dans les enfants les difformités du corps*. Nicolas Andry (1749)

The 'orthopaedic' science aims to prevent and correct physical deviance through the manipulation of the body and it is a slow process. Katy's lengthy confinement and the fact that she is bound to her bed, to some extent, also have an orthopaedic objective. They will not simply help to repair her body, but will also 'correct' her defiance towards gender expectations in a slow, manipulative and invisible process. In fact, when she is finally cured, Katy feels freer than ever, even if her desires have changed; she gains an illusion of freedom, controlled by adults, similar to the restricted freedom her father affords her with regard to reading: 'He kept a few books locked up, and then turned her loose in the library.' (33) Through her spatial confinement, Katy now embraces the place, home, that effectively imprisons her and becomes a collaborator in her own punishment.

In some of our English texts, home is presented not only as a place of confinement but also of female conflict. *The New Mother* and *Wonderland* address the realities of children's and mothers' relationships through the destruction of the

domestic realm and present home as a place of oppression for female characters. In both texts, home first appears in positive terms. In Clifford's tale, a mother lives with her two daughters (called the Turkey and Blue-eyes) and a baby in a lonely cottage on the edge of a forest.⁷⁹ The father is away at sea, and the mother looks after the cottage alone, like a perfect angel of the house, tidying at night when the children are asleep. The cottage is described with picturesque details; the white walls, the baking-dish, the fish-slice, the saucepan, the baby chair and the clock, contribute to the overall sense of simple domestic bliss.⁸⁰ Every time the girls go out and come back, 'there would be the mother waiting and watching for them, and the tea could be ready, and the baby crowing with delight' (74). Similarly in *Wonderland* Chapter VI (*Pig and Pepper*), the Duchess's house initially appears to be well looked after; however, as Alice gets closer, she quickly realises that it is not an idyllic Victorian home.

In both stories, the ideal image of home is tainted. The natural elements surrounding the cottage in *The New Mother* seem to foretell a darker future: 'the tall fir-trees were so close that their big black arms stretched over the little thatched roof, and when the moon shone upon them their tangled shadows were all over the white-washed walls.' (73) At the Duchess's house, sounds coming from inside suggest a fight or argument: 'there was a most extraordinary noise going on within—a constant howling and sneezing, and every now and then a great crash, as if a dish, or kettle had been broken to pieces' (50). The front door opens and a plate skims through. Inside, for no evident reason, the cook is 'throwing everything within her reach at the Duchess and the baby—the fire-irons came first; then followed a shower of saucepans, plates and dishes' (53). Alice jumps 'up and down in an agony of terror' (53). Similarly, in *The New Mother*, broken objects encapsulate the disruption of the domestic ideal. One day, the two girls are sent by their mother to the village to see if a letter from their father has arrived. On their way back, they pass by a young girl in shabby clothes. She carries a strange instrument that triggers their curiosity – a peardrum with a closed box attached to its side. The girl tells them that the box contains a dancing little man and woman, which they may only

⁷⁹ Featuring a 'transnormative' family, this tale is closely examined by Thiel in *The Fantasy of Family*.

⁸⁰ For a detailed analysis of the description of the cottage see Naomi Wood, "'The New Mother': Domestic Inversions, Terror, and Children's Literature', *The Journal of Narrative Technique*, 26.3 (1996), 292–309 (p. 295).

see if they become naughty. At first, the two girls resist but their curiosity prevails and they demonstrate their naughtiness by destroying their cottage. They ‘turned everything upside down’ (83), obliterating the picturesque elements mentioned earlier in the text: ‘they pulled-down the baking-dish and the cake-tin, the fish-slice and the lid [...] they broke the clock’ (83).

Patricia Demers notes how ‘[t]he expected protection, or bonds, of the nuclear family disintegrate’.⁸¹ As a punishment for their behaviour, the mother threatens to leave, warning that a new mother with a wooden tail and a glass eye will take her place. Equally, in *Wonderland*, Alice is a witness to the destruction of what seems on the surface to be an ideologically perfect home, a place of tenderness and love. The Duchess is indeed nursing her infant and singing a lullaby. But the words of her song, which we analyse in more detail in Chapter Four, describe the punishment of the infant and convey another reality about mother-child relationships. In Clifford’s tale, after the mother’s departure, the cottage becomes a place of penance.⁸² The passing of time resonates because of the broken clock, which has ‘the tone of a clock whose hours are numbered.’ (87) The emphasis on cooking utensils accentuates the children’s fear of starvation. Even though the girls have been told that their mother will never come back, and in spite of the imminent arrival of their new mother, they remain inside. When the new mother finally knocks on and breaks the cottage’s door, they run outside. The only adult female character to remain in the cottage is the fiendish new mother, whose glass eyes and silence indicate a complete lack of self and individuality. All other female characters have rejected the cottage, most particularly the village girl who ordered the girls to demolish their home. For Anita Moss, the wild girl and her womb-shaped instrument are ‘a provocative emblem of woman’s creativity taken over, assaulted, and controlled by patriarchal culture [...] the little man and woman may represent the Victorian family whose every move is controlled by convention—in public and private.’⁸³ After their mother has left, the village girl passes by the girls’ window, dancing and chanting. Is

⁸¹ Patricia Demers, ‘Toys and Terror: Lucy Clifford’s *Anyhow Stories*’, in *The Nineteenth-Century Child and Consumer Culture*, ed. by Dennis Denisoff (Aldershot: Algate, 2008), p. 190.

⁸² Elizabeth Thiel interprets the destruction of the perfect, blissful cottage as ‘the death of the perfect mother [...] of the angel of the house’. Thiel, p. 83. The mother’s final departure, to the sea with the girls’ absent father, is also symbolic of dying, notes Thiel.

⁸³ Moss, pp. 57–58.

she celebrating the mother's escape from the demands of domesticity and child rearing? Similarly, does the Duchess's lullaby, followed by her sudden departure – leaving her infant behind with Alice – suggest her desire to be childfree? Although Carroll does it with humour, both he and Clifford raise difficult questions and do not provide a clear resolution.

In *The New Mother*, although the two girls run outside, they roam endlessly around the cottage, as if imprisoned in a timeless space expiating their naughtiness. In *Wonderland*, Alice is physically imprisoned in domestic settings. Marie-José Strich remarks how Alice often experiences confinement, with spaces that trigger the image of enclosure (the well, the tunnel, closed doors).⁸⁴ Most significantly, Alice finds herself locked in the White Rabbit's house, in 'a tidy little room' (32). Rapidly, the focus shifts to her experience of space. She decides to drink from the bottle in the hope of growing again. But she grows so much that 'she found her head pressing against the ceiling, and had to stoop to save her neck from being broken' (32). In Tenniel's illustration, the house in which she is imprisoned is visible and Alice looks fierce, almost combative.



Fig. 2.7. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Chapter IV: The Rabbit Sends in a Little Bill.* John Tenniel (1865)

⁸⁴ Strich, p. 29.



Fig. 2.8. Illustration of *Alice in the White Rabbit house* from Lewis Carroll's original manuscript of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* (1864)

By contrast, in Carroll's own drawing of the episode, Alice's body is compressed solely by the frame of the illustration, as if it was the book page that was entrapping and squashing her. Her confinement is physically painful, and it appears more so in Carroll's illustration. In the text, Alice says that she cannot get out: "As it is, I can't get out at the door". The narrator insists: 'there seemed to be no sort of chance of her ever getting out of the room again' (32), the adverb 'ever' suggesting not only a lack of space but also of scope, as if Alice's future was doomed. Alice seems resigned to her fate: "I'm all grown up now," she added in a sorrowful tone: "at least there's no room to grow up any more *here*." (33) The expression 'grow up', used by both Alice and the narrator, has replaced the simpler form of the verb ('grow') used earlier. Alice's confinement is not simply physical but extends to her future horizon and adulthood. As Aneesh Barai notes, Alice associates physical growth with maturity, but 'has difficulty reconciling the age she knows she is with her size, all confounded in the notion of being "grown up", positing adulthood as a relative height.'⁸⁵ Her thoughts turn to the implications of becoming an adult: "That'll be a comfort, one way—never to be an old woman—but then—always to have lessons to learn!" (33) Once she is grown up, Alice would like to see a book written about her, a wish that recalls Katy Carr's dreams of doing 'something grand' later in life. But Alice laments that she is already grown up, suggesting that her future is set up for her. Carroll's illustration of the episode, more than John

⁸⁵ Aneesh Barai, *Modernist Repositionings of Rousseau's Ideal Childhood: Place and Space in English Modernist Children's Literature and Its French Translations* (doctoral thesis, Queen Mary, University of London, 2014), p. 221.

Tenniel's, expresses Alice's physical and emotional oppression. Curled up in a foetal position, Alice seems to be withdrawing within herself, as if trying to protect herself. Her facial features and her stare suggest a quiet sadness.

Whereas in *Wonderland*, Alice is both a child and a future prisoner, her desires constantly thwarted,⁸⁶ in *Through the Looking-Glass*, she is more forceful about her own wishes. The White Knight (whom some critics see as a representation of Carroll himself)⁸⁷ believes that rescuing Alice automatically makes her his prisoner. But Alice refuses to be made captive or a maiden in thrall. Instead, she yearns for autonomy: "I don't want to be anybody's prisoner. I want to be a Queen." (207) For Marah Gubar, 'this conflict is instantly resolved in favour of Alice [...] [the scene] invites children to regard adults' desires as something they can say no to'.⁸⁸ The scene taps into adults' difficulties in coming to terms with what they see as their protective duties towards children, in particular girls.

Child prisoners in domestic settings also appear in Ségur's titles, with familiar places becoming spaces of tension where the child's desires are frustrated. In Ségur's texts, the confinement of the child is associated with the prison not only through the young characters' perceptions, but also because it is presented as such by adults. In *Petit Diable*, the word prison is used by Charles, the punitive adult and the narrator. At home, Charles is locked in a dark cabinet, which is a small room inside the house described as a 'trou sale et noir' [this dark and dirty hole] and evocative of a sordid dungeon. He feels like a captive and calls the room 'ma prison' (1140). Mme Mac'Miche also tells her maid: "N'oubliez pas d'ouvrir la prison de ce mauvais sujet dans une demi-heure" (1136). [Do not forget to let this wayward subject out of his prison in half an hour] Asserting her authority over Charles, Mme Mac'Miche treats him like her subject and behaves like a supreme ruler, calling to mind the tempestuous Queen in *Wonderland*. The dark cabinet also has a pedagogical

⁸⁶ Her status of child prisoner is hinted at in John Tenniel's illustrations of *Through the Looking-Glass*, where Alice now wears striped stockings. In *The Devil's Cloth: A History of Stripes*, Michel Pastoureau explains how, historically, stripes have long been associated with those on the margin and were a sign of exclusion. In the nineteenth century, however, stripes also acquired new positive meanings, in particular with regard to children (they signified hygiene and good health). Yet Pastoureau argues that 'the boundary separating the good stripe from the bad stripe is often vague. On one side, the sailor, the bather, the athlete, the clown, the child, and on the other, the madman, the executioner, the prisoner, the criminal.' Michel Pastoureau, *The Devil's Cloth: A History of Stripes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), p. 80.

⁸⁷ Stephanie Lovett Stoffel, *Lewis Carroll and Alice* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), p. 109.

⁸⁸ Gubar, p. 121.

underpinning. Just as nineteenth-century prisons were conceived to alter the behaviour and the mind of convicts, Mme Mac'Miche uses confinement to reform and break Charles' spirit. He is sentenced for a given length of time and placed 'en pénitence' [to pay penance] in order to act on his conscience.⁸⁹ Charles' imprisonment continues at school. When he enters Fairy's Hall, a boarding institution, the place is described as a prison: 'Betty frappa, on ouvrit, et ils franchirent le seuil de leur prison.' (1191) [Betty knocked, someone opened and they crossed the threshold of their prison] Charles's constant captivity alludes to his metaphorical confinement and his lack of scope; in these settings, he has no room to develop his inner goodness. The later part of the narrative sees Charles liberating himself from these spaces, achieving both physical and moral deliverance.

Whereas Ségur condemns Charles' episodes of imprisonment in *Petit Diable*, she presents Sophie's confinement as an instrument to good. In *Les Petites Filles Modèles* (1857),⁹⁰ the moderate Mme de Fleurville also locks Sophie in a cabinet. But instead of being a sordid and dark hole, this is a 'cabinet de pénitence' [penance closet] where Sophie must pray, reflect upon her misdeeds and atone. Nonetheless, her punishment directly evokes the life of a prisoner; Mme de Fleurville explains that it includes solitary confinement for several days, limited access to the outside and absolute silence: 'vous passerez vos journées ici, sauf deux heures de promenade que vous ferez avec Élisabeth qui aura ordre de ne pas vous parler.'⁹¹ [you will spend your days here, except for two hours of promenade, which you will do with Élisabeth who will be instructed not to speak to you.] She will only be released once she genuinely repents. Mme de Fleurville advises Sophie to ask God to let her live through the night and not to let her die before she truly repents. A purgatory-like space, the timelessness and spacelessness of the room lead to the child's deep remorse: 'Sophie, se précipita vers elle [...]: *Pardon ! Pardon !* [...] Ma chère enfant, le repentir expie bien des fautes.'⁹² [Sophie ran to her [...]: *Forgive me! Forgive me!*

⁸⁹ An hour seems like a short time compared to the punishments mentioned in *The History of the Fairchild Family*. As mentioned in the introduction, Mrs. Fairchild recalls how she was locked as a child in a dark room for three days with only bread and water. This suggests a reduction in the intensity of the use of confinement.

⁹⁰ *Les Petites Filles modèles* is part of Ségur's trilogy, which also includes *Les Malheurs* and *Les Vacances* (1859).

⁹¹ Comtesse de Ségur, *Les Petites Filles modèles*, in *Œuvres* ed. by Claudine Beaussant, vol. 1 (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1990), p. 196.

⁹² Ségur, *Les Petites Filles Modèles*, p. 197.

[...] My dear child, many misdeeds can be redeemed through repentance.] To today's readers, Mme de Fleurville's use of confinement and the threat of death are unsettling: 'Jusqu'où serait allée la claustration que nulle protection de l'enfance ne pouvait soupçonner ? [...] L'oublier là, jusqu'à sa mort ?' [How far would this confinement have gone, [...] Leave her there until she dies?], asks Hortense Dufour.⁹³ There is nothing new in the association of the notions of obedience and death, as shown by Maria Tatar in *Enchanted Hunters*.⁹⁴ Yet Mme de Fleurville's educational methods are moderate compared to the treatment of real children at the time, as represented by the educative methods of Sophie's stepmother, Madame Fichini (and Mme Mac'Miche as well). Sophie, observes Sophie Heywood, 'learns to appreciate that, instead of beating her, Madame de Fleurville has shown her compassion.'⁹⁵ Fleurville refuses to use corporal punishment, and believes her techniques will have a real influence on the (girl) child's conscience. To Ségur's contemporary readers, when corporal chastisements were still common practice, Madame de Fleurville's approach to confinement may have seemed mild and progressive.

Repentance, as we just saw, is a key instrument in Fleurville's education system. For Laura Kreyder, all crimes can be absolved through repentance – an emotion that reoccurs regularly throughout *Les Malheurs*. 'Il n'y a pas de fautes, de crimes, d'erreurs, qui ne puissent être pardonnées et rachetées en premier lieu par le repentir, puis la confession, ce qui implique de la part du coupable [...] l'introspection et l'examen de conscience.'⁹⁶ [All faults, crimes, mistakes can be forgiven and redeemed first of all through repentance, then confession, which requires from the guilty individual [...] introspection and an examination of conscience] Confinement leads Sophie to feel remorseful, like Nan in *Little Men*. Both eagerly want to reform and, thanks to their repentance, both are pardoned. Thus, both girls learn to help themselves through episodes of confinement and adults make them their collaborators when punishing them. However, there are

⁹³ Hortense Dufour, *La Comtesse de Ségur née Sophie Rostopchine* (Paris: Flammarion, 1990), p. 293.

⁹⁴ See Chapter 3, 'Now I lay Me Down to Sleep': Brushes with Death', in Maria Tatar, *Enchanted Hunters: The Power of Stories in Childhood* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 2009), pp. 93–127. Newman also reminds us that Luther had claimed: 'I would rather have a dead son than a disobedient one.' Newman, p. 63.

⁹⁵ Sophie Heywood, p. 62.

⁹⁶ Kreyder, p. 147.

differences between these episodes. Nan's confinement is about learning the value of restricted freedom, and gaining an appreciation of how 'precious' freedom is. Sophie, on the other hand, discovers very little about freedom and learns only to suppress her own desires. Mrs Bhaer believes that, although limits should be placed on her children's autonomy, 'the small hopes and plans and pleasures of children should be tenderly respected by grown-up people, and never be thwarted or ridiculed' (141). In contrast, Sophie's emotions are always controlled by her mother, Mme de Fleurville or Mme Fichini, and her yearnings are repeatedly crushed. For Pipet, this type of education implies 'le reniement mortifère de tous les plaisirs de la vie.'⁹⁷ [the mortifying renunciation of all earthly pleasures]

In many of our texts, confinement runs parallels with the frustration of the child's desire for and pleasures associated with food. Restriction of food accentuates the image of the child as a prisoner. Nourishment represents the adults' capability to shelter and look after the child. Conversely, when food is restricted, it becomes a form of punishment and oppression. In *Through the Looking-Glass*, Alice ponders: 'suppose each punishment was to be going without a dinner: then, when the miserable day came, I should have to go without fifty dinners at once!'⁹⁸ In an early scene of *What Katy Did*, Katy and her siblings lock themselves in the nursery: 'Elsie, sobbing violently, explained that Dorry had locked the door, and now the key wouldn't turn, and they couldn't open it.' (32) The episode ends in tears, with the children melodramatically fearing they may die of starvation. Similarly, food extends the metaphor of Sara's imprisonment. Burnett insists on the heroine's malnourishment and on the frustration of her desires, in particular after Miss Minchin takes away all the food items Sara's friends had brought to her attic in order to console her. In *The New Mother*, food first represents domestic happiness: 'when they saw the tall loaf, baked crisp and brown, and the cups in a row and the jug of milk, all waiting for them they [...] felt a little happier' (79). At the end of the tale, it suggests their punishment and suffering when they are left wandering endlessly in the forest: 'feeding on the wild strawberries in the summer, or the nuts

⁹⁷ Patrick Pipet, *Comtesse de Ségur, Les Mystères de Sophie : Les Contenus insoupçonnés d'une œuvre incomprise* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007), p. 49.

⁹⁸ Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, p. 124.

when they hang green; on the blackberries when they are no longer sour in the autumn, and in the winter on the little red berries that ripen in the snow' (90).

For Rosemary Lloyd, 'food is one of the clearest ways in which the child becomes aware of its individuality, of its relationship with the external world, and of the rules and conventions of adult society'.⁹⁹ The control of food highlights the authority of adults over children, who cannot provide for themselves. '[F]ood, so often in children's literature, is life itself', notes Roderick McGillis.¹⁰⁰ After Mme Mac'Miche locks Charles in a dark cabinet, she adds another punishment to his sentence: "Une heure de cabinet et du pain et de l'eau pour dîner" (1134) [One hour in the cabinet with water and bread for dinner]. Similarly, in *Les Malheurs*, Sophie is ordered: 'dans votre chambre [...] et je ne vous enverrai pour votre dîner que du pain et de la soupe au pain' (294) [go to your room [...] and I will give you only bread and soup for dinner]. Feeling sorry for Sophie, her maid smuggles in some food: 'je n'ai pas voulu vous laisser manger votre pain sec, parce que cela ne vaut rien pour l'estomac, et qu'on donne aux prisonniers même autre chose que du pain.' (295) [I did not want you to eat this piece of dry bread; it is bad for the stomach and even prisoners get something better than bread.] The indulgence of the maid evokes Victor Hugo's poem *Jeanne était au pain sec...* in his collection *L'Art d'être grand-père* (1877). In this poem, a grandfather secretly smuggles jam to his granddaughter who has been locked in a dark 'cabinet' with only bread and water as a punishment. Other adults accuse him of threatening the 'government' of the child and the 'power' of adults. Comparing the raising of children with the ruling of a country, the grandfather is forced to admit that such indulgences would indeed bring a country to its downfall. In *Les Malheurs*, while the narrator seems to sympathise with Sophie by comparing her to an inmate, the maid's indulging behaviour is also promptly condemned. Spoiling Sophie will damage the effect of her punishment and ruin the governance of adults.

⁹⁹ Rosemary Lloyd, *The Land of Lost Content: Children and Childhood in Nineteenth-Century French Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 196.

¹⁰⁰ Roderick McGillis, 'Humour and the body in children's literature', in *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Literature*, 1st edn, ed. by M. O. Grenby and Andrea Immel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 262. *Cambridge Companions Online* <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CCOL9780521868198.016>> [accessed 24.02.2014].

The frustration of a child's most basic desires through confinement in a domestic setting also appears in *Poil de Carotte*. In this text, however, the child's desires are not linked to food. Poil de Carotte's sense of oppression at home develops throughout the narrative, culminating in the chapter *Le Pot*. The mother locks Poil de Carotte in his bedroom for the night, following a protective rationale: 'elle l'enferme à clef parce qu'il est peureux.' (14) [she locks the door because he is so nervous] As if reassured by the locked door, at first Poil de Carotte 'goûte d'abord le plaisir d'être seul' (14). [The first thing Poil de Carotte does is to savour the pleasure of being alone] But he wakes in the middle of the night, needing to relieve himself. Although he knows that his mother refuses to leave a chamber pot under the bed, he did not go outside before his bedtime. The night before, he had already relieved himself in his bed – it was raining so he decided not to use the outside toilet before bedtime. Now, he feels guilty and sees his situation as a punishment: 'Il a péché par paresse hier soir. Sa vraie punition approche. [...] La porte est fermée. La fenêtre a des barreaux. Impossible de sortir.' (15) [His sinful laziness of the evening before has found him out, his punishment is approaching. [...] The door is locked. The window has bars. Impossible to go out.] The brevity of the last three sentences gives an impression of suffocation. The boy seems to be gasping for air, experiencing the sense of claustrophobia that can accompany confinement. As in a prison cell, the window has iron bars. The feeling of suffocation is also rendered through the character's reaching for the window, knocking himself against the walls and the furniture:

[Il] se lève et va tâter à la porte et les barreaux de la fenêtre. [...] Il aime mieux remuer, marcher, trépigner que dormir [...]. Il se cogne au mur et rebondit. Il se cogne au fer du lit. Il se cogne à la chaise, il se cogne à la cheminée [...]. Poil de Carotte ne s'est endormi qu'au petit jour, et il fait la grasse matinée, quand Madame Lepic pousse la porte. (16)

[H]e gets up and tries the door and the window bars. [...] He prefers keeping on the move, walking, stamping his feet to going to sleep [...]. He bumps into the wall and bounces back. He bumps into the iron bedstead. He bumps into the chair, he bumps into the fireplace [...]. Carrots didn't get to sleep till daybreak, and he is having a good lie in, when Madame Lepic opens the door.

The tension evokes the episode from Rousseau's *Émile*, already mentioned in the first chapter, when Émile refuses to go to sleep. The tutor locks him in a room and lets him cry.

je le mène tranquillement dans un cabinet dont les volets étaient bien fermés, et où il n'y avait rien à casser : je l'y laisse sans lumière ; puis, fermant sur lui la porte à la clef, je retourne me coucher sans lui avoir dit un seul mot. Il ne faut pas demander si d'abord il y eut du vacarme, je m'y étais attendu : je ne m'en émus point. Enfin le bruit s'apaise ; j'écoute, je l'entends s'arranger, je me tranquillise. Le lendemain, j'entre au jour dans le cabinet ; je trouve mon petit mutin couché sur un lit de repos, et dormant d'un profond sommeil.¹⁰¹

I led him quietly into an adjoining dressing-room with the shutters firmly fastened, and nothing he could break. I left him without a light; then locking the door on him I went back to my bed without a word. What a noise there was! That was what I expected, and took no notice. At last the noise ceased; I listening, heard him settling down, and I was quite easy about him. Next morning I entered the room at daybreak, and my little rebel was lying on a sofa enjoying a sound and much deepened sleep after his exertions.

The term 'rebel' is used to translate the French 'mutin', meaning both mischievous child and insurgent. Émile is therefore equated with a mutineer who tried to rebel against the authority of his tutor. Poil de Carotte, on the other hand, is not presented as rebellious. As opposed to Émile, he is the focalizer of the narrative and a greater emphasis is placed on his distress, physical pain and later release. Yet, in both episodes, the outcome is the same. Émile is forced to surrender. Similarly, Poil de Carotte must abdicate to his mother's authority. Jean Bugarel argues that the protagonist's mother wishes to maintain her son in an early stage of childhood: 'À s'en tenir au texte, Poil de Carotte n'est pas incontinent. Mais sa mère le place sans cesse en situation d'échec. Comme si elle voulait le maintenir au stade d'analité.'¹⁰² [According to the text only, Poil de Carotte is not incontinent. But his mother endlessly sets him up to fail as if she wanted to see him stay at the anal stage.] His confinement is also metaphorical; his prison is the family cell. The illustrations on the following page convey poignantly the boy's physical and metaphorical enclosure.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Rousseau, p. 153.

¹⁰² Jean Bugarel, 'Une lecture de *Poil de Carotte*. Le non-roman d'enfance. Structures de *Poil de Carotte*', in *Poil de Carotte & Jules Renard autour d'un chef d'œuvre*, ed. by Jean-Michel Roudier (Nevers: Musées de la Nièvre, Etudes et Documents, 2010), pp. 61–77 (p. 65).

¹⁰³ Félix Vallotton and Francisque Poulbot were respectively the second and third illustrators of *Poil de Carotte*. The first one, Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen, produced only two illustrations that were published in the



Fig. 2.9. *Poil de Carotte, Chapter Le Pot*. Félix Vallotton (1902)

In the illustration above, the boy is seen relieving himself inside the fireplace. His enclosure is suggested by the thick outer frame of the drawing, which is echoed by the dark lines framing the fireplace where Poil de Carotte's crouched figure partially disappears. His facial expressions also vanish behind his clothes, showing no emotions, as if his feelings were irrelevant. The next illustration of the same episode, by Francisque Poulbot, also evokes the boy's confinement with the bedroom evoking a prison or monastic cell.



Fig. 2.10. *Poil de Carotte, Chapter Le Pot*. Francisque Poulbot (1907)

Here too the child's facial features are partly concealed under the bedclothes, his nose and mouth invisible as if smothered by his mother's purported solicitude. The illustrator has chosen to concentrate instead on the atmosphere of the room and its monastic austerity.

periodical *Gil Blas* in 1895, in which the novel was serialised. One of these illustrations figures in Chapter Three (Fig. 3.9).

The domestic realm is therefore a complex and ambivalent space where the child's feelings are often suppressed. However, some texts also suggest that the child may partake in the confinement of the familial space. In *Little Men*, when Dan arrives with little crabs at Plumfield, they are placed in a cage, suggestively called 'their new house', so that they may not escape. One morning, the children discover that the largest crab has eaten one of his 'relations'. For William Blackburn, this episode is a metaphor for the torments of familial relationships, and indicates 'a dark reality behind the sunny façade of Plumfield'.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, Renard suggests that the child is not simply an innocent victim. In the chapter *Le Toiton*, Poil de Carotte is hiding away in a little outhouse used to shelter chickens, rabbits and other animals. He transforms this space into a protective microcosm: 'Il oublie le monde, ne le craint plus.' (73) [He forgets the world; he is no longer afraid.] Suddenly someone – possibly his mother – comes aggressively looking for him. The intruder eventually leaves but the boy remains crouched in his hiding place, contemplating a spider that has imprisoned a fly in its net and is slowly moving towards the insect: 'l'araignée tragique fonce, ferme l'étoile de ses pattes, étreint la proie à manger' (74) [the relentless spider swoops, closes up the star of its legs and hugs its prey before eating it]. Poil de Carotte is excited, 'il se dresse debout, passionné, comme s'il voulait sa part.' (74) [he stands up excitedly as though he wanted his share] The scene evokes the all-encompassing atmosphere of enclosure in the domestic setting, and perhaps the devouring mother at the heart of it.

Whereas Alcott does not reject the domestic ideal, but rather shows its nuances, in Renard's text, the protagonist expresses his wish to leave his mother at the end of the novel. At the end of *Little Men*, the children gather around Mr and Mrs Bhaer: 'With the last words the circle narrowed till the good Professor and his wife were taken prisoner by many arms.' (266) The 'circle' that the young characters form around the adults represents the family unit but also denotes a sense of enclosure. However, as Elizabeth Lennox Keyser remarks, although the family requires conformity and makes demands on the individual, Alcott fundamentally sees it as a place of self-fulfilment. In different degrees, Alcott and Renard, and to a lesser extent Carroll, Ségur and Clifford, imply that home may be a place of conflict where

¹⁰⁴ William Blackburn, "'Moral Pap for the Young'?: A New Look at Louisa May Alcott's *Little Men*", *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* (1980), 98–106 (p. 104).

the child's desires cannot be fully satisfied and that children participate in the construction of the family cell.¹⁰⁵ The authors in our corpus try to expose readers to the complexity of intergenerational relationships by offering an ambivalent image of home as a place of shelter and confinement. Such is the importance of this ambivalence and of the message it transmits about restricted freedom that it pertains not only to domestic realms but also to the very place where young characters go when they escape home: the natural world.

Shutting children out

Like home, natural spaces have a resonant ambivalence and a fascinating complexity; alluring at first, they are symbolic instruments of discipline where characters suffer a double form of confinement, being both shut in and shut out. Some children are entrapped and at the same time excluded from the rest of their community. Like confinement, exclusion restricts one's movement and, therefore, one's liberty. Natural geographies, like home, seem at first protective. Woods and forests, for instance, are perfect hiding or sheltering places. In *Les Frères Kip*, the dense forest around the penitentiary appeals to criminals who wish to escape. In *The New Mother*, anthropomorphised trees seem to protectively cover the cottage: 'tall fir-trees were so close that their big black arms stretched over the little thatched roof' (73). In *Wonderland*, when Alice escapes her confinement in the White Rabbit's house, she 'soon found herself safe in a thick wood' (37). In *The Land of Lost Toys*, Aunt Penelope has a love for woods and those she enters seem, at first, attractive: 'A wood is charming enough [...] but, if you have never been there, you have no idea how much nicer it is inside than on the surface' (23).

The natural world is therefore presented as an exciting land of possibilities. However, it may also have an ominous quality. In *The New Mother*, at the end of the tale, the forest now appears as a place of everlasting punishment where the girls wander endlessly around the same 'tall dark firs or beneath the great trees beyond.' (90) They are shut out from their home, not allowed to enter the little house which

¹⁰⁵ Elizabeth Lennox Keyser, 'Domesticity versus Identity: a Review of Alcott Research', *Children's Literature in Education*, 16.3 (1985), 165–175 (pp. 165 and 174).

has been completely locked by the terrifying new mother: ‘the new mother stays in the little cottage, but the windows are closed and the doors are shut, and no one knows what the inside looks like’ (89). At the same time, they are also shut in the forest outside the cottage, unable to leave. In *Wonderland*, Alice peers ‘anxiously among the trees’ from the White Rabbit’s house, not knowing what they hide; she eventually runs into an enormous puppy who, she fears, may want to eat her. And in *The Land of Lost Toys*, Aunt Penelope’s escapade into the woods rapidly turns into captivity as she finds herself in a go-cart on her way to her own court trial. Similarly, fugitives in *Les Frères Kip* quickly realise that the forest is a more perilous place than the penitentiary: ‘des fugitifs ont pu quelquefois s’évader du pénitencier, se réfugier dans les bois environnants, se soustraire à toute poursuite, en se condamnant à une vie plus épouvantable que celle du bagne, et la plupart meurent de misère ou d’inanition.’ (350) [some fugitives have managed to escape from the penitentiary, but they sentenced themselves to a more horrendous life than life in prison, and most of them would die either of hardship or starvation] Their punishment becomes double; not only are they excluded, as they were in prison, but they are also starved to death.

Thus, as they venture outside familiar places, characters discover that the natural world carries with it the risk of being excluded from the main community. In *Little Men*, Mrs Bhaer recounts to her school pupils the story of her own urge to run away when she was a child and outlines the normality of this impulse: “‘I was told not to leave the garden’” (155), she explains, to outline the fact that she too disregarded adults’ warnings. She details her adventures: “‘I ran away and was wandering about all day. [...] Such a time I had. I frolicked in the park with dogs, sailed boats in the Back Bay with strange boys, dined with a little Irish beggar girl on salt fish and potatoes, and was found at last fast asleep on a doorstep with my arms round a great dog.’” (155) As Mrs Bhaer relates her own desires for liberty, she deftly associates the world outside with elements that suggest marginality and exclusion: the beggar girl and sleeping on a doorstep. Meaningfully, these two details also recall Huckleberry Finn, ‘the juvenile pariah of the village’, envied by Tom for his ‘gaudy outcast condition’ and feared by mothers (45–46), who ‘slept on door-steps in fine weather and in empty hogsheads in wet.’ (46) Although Huckleberry Finn is an

outcast, Tom envies his freedom. But while Alcott takes children's needs to run away seriously, Twain presents Tom's desires with irony. The boy's urge to leave home is often provoked by his melodramatic feelings of captivity. For instance, as he begins 'hard labour' (painting the fence), the narrator describes the hills on the horizon: 'Cardiff Hill, beyond the village and above, was green with vegetation, and it lay just far enough to always seem a Delectable Land, dreamy, reposeful, and inviting. Tom appeared on the sidewalk with a bucket of whitewash and a long-handled brush.' (18) Cardiff Hill re-emerges every time Tom feels entrapped. At school, for instance: 'Away off in the flaming sunshine, Cardiff Hill lifted its soft green sides [...] Tom's heart ached to be free' (53). This gives a light-hearted and comical tone to Tom's desire for freedom, making it appear a childish fancy.

When Tom ventures too far from home, he is entrapped in the natural world and loses his way. Tom and Becky descend into McDougal's cave, 'a vast labyrinth of crooked aisles that ran into each other and out again and led nowhere. [...] No man "knew" the cave.' (162) Narrow, obscure and remote, the cave promises exploration and enjoyment. But their adventures into the unknown are the instrument of their punishment. The narrator warns: 'It was said that one might wander days and nights together through its intricate tangle of rifts and chasms, and never find the end of the cave; and that he might go down, and down, and still down, into the earth, and it was just the same—labyrinth underneath labyrinth, and no end to any of them.' (162) The repetition of the adverb 'down' suggests a progressive sinking or burying of those entering the cave, an absolute envelopment in the underground space. The children are oblivious to this and, as can be seen in the illustration on the following page, Tom squeezes himself behind a small waterfall to find 'that it curtained a sort of steep natural stairway which was enclosed between narrow walls, and at once the ambition to be a discoverer seized him.' (175)



Fig. 2.11. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Chapter XXXI.* True Williams (1876)

Tom and Becky discover a ‘bewitching spring [...] in the midst of a cavern whose walls were supported by many fantastic pillars which had been formed by the joining of great stalactites and stalagmites together’ (175). At first fascinating, the stalactites and stalagmites ‘of the length and circumference of a man’s leg’ (175) become menacing. In True Williams’s illustration below, they surround the children and seem to be closing in on them like iron bars, as if the cave was progressively taking the shape of a prison.



Fig. 2.12. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Chapter XXXI.* True Williams (1876)

The lexical field used to describe the children also changes; they are now ‘captives’, ‘fugitives’, and when they finally hear the voices of the others again, the narrator describes ‘the joy of the prisoners’ as ‘almost overwhelming’ (180).

Outside frames intensify Tom and Becky’s sense of captivity and exclusion from their group. At the beginning, they are looking forward to recounting their adventures and they move ‘in search of novelties to tell the upper world about.’ (175) But they quickly realise that everyone else is gone. Tom shouts for help, but ‘[t]he call went down the empty aisles and died out in the distance in a faint sound that resembled a ripple of mocking laughter.’ (177) He keeps calling, telling Becky that someone ‘might’ hear them: ‘The “might” was even a chillier horror than the ghostly laughter.’ (177) Progressively, the thoughts of the children turn to what the others are doing outside. When they hear ‘a sound like the faintest, far-off shout,’ (180) their hopes rise, but the searchers turn away. The children’s sense of confinement is also exacerbated by their awareness of time, which weighs upon their conscience. As they start losing their sense of geography, they begin to ‘bear the weight of the heavy time in idleness.’ (181) Like the forest in *The New Mother*, the cave becomes a space of distress, between the living and the dead, where time slowly loses its texture – a form of purgatory ‘through which the living pay the penalty for sin that has been repented of and confessed, but for which the sinner did not provide satisfaction prior to his or her death’.¹⁰⁶ Neither *The New Mother* nor *Tom Sawyer* overtly conveys a religious message, yet both evoke the image of purgatory in their treatment of natural space, conjuring religious images of hell and punishment in the other world, where sinners eventually face great torments.

The message behind Tom’s imprisonment can be found in Injun Joe’s demise. The criminal is also trapped in the cave but, unlike Tom, he does not eventually find his way out. Instead, he receives a symbolic death sentence. Nonetheless, Tom and Injun Joe share similar experiences during their captivity. When the criminal’s body is eventually found near the cave’s shut door, ‘Injun Joe lay stretched upon the ground, dead, with his face close to the crack of the door, as if his longing eyes had been fixed, to the latest moment, upon the light and the cheer of the free world

¹⁰⁶ Fenn, p. 5. For Fenn, ‘the invention of purgatory had a profound effect on the development of Western society and Western social character’, p. 15.

outside.’ (186) Injun Joe is imprisoned, but he is at the same time excluded from the rest of the community (who have installed and sealed a door at the entrance of the cave, not knowing he was inside). Tom is the only one to understand the thoughts of the prisoner and his desire to escape. He is ‘touched, for he knew by his own experience how this wretch had suffered.’ (186) Tom is indeed profoundly affected by Injun Joe’s dead body. The depiction of the corpse of a criminal in a text for children is not innocuous, and builds on a tradition of texts that used it to offer educational lessons, as we saw in the introduction. The display of Injun Joe’s body suggests to Tom the risks that may come from transgressing society’s rules. Paradoxically, the episode of the cave implies that Tom must accept the confines of his community in order not to be excluded from it. For Cynthia Griffin Wolff, the message is clear: ‘Lock away the small boy’s anger; lock away his anti-social impulses.’¹⁰⁷ The cave is a space where Tom learns to atone and when he emerges he is ready to conform to the demands of his community – and to convert others, such as Huck.

We have seen how outsidings spaces, shaped into labyrinths with their winding paths or secret passages, suggest the possibility of entrapment. In some texts, natural spaces retain their protective qualities but they are spoiled instead by the intervention of adults. In *Kind Little Edmund*, Edmund is eager to discover things outside school. He plays truant, wants to learn things by himself, and discovers a passage leading to a cave: ‘[t]he passage wound and twisted, and twisted and turned, and turned and wound’ (143).¹⁰⁸ When Edmund sees the hole in the ground, the narrator notes: ‘And, being a boy, he climbed up to it and crept in’ (143). Like Alcott, with the expression ‘being a boy’ inserted between commas, Nesbit emphasises the idea that children or boys (the comment is not clear) have a natural longing for new discoveries. Edmund has the desire to be free and self-guided, as Emerson would like to see in a child, but he is punished and excluded from others for his desire to seek knowledge beyond the confines of his community. In the cave, Edmund discovers a cockatrice with ‘a man’s face and a griffin’s body, and big feathery wings, and a snake’s tail, and a cock’s comb and neck feathers’ (144). A

¹⁰⁷ Griffin Wolff, p. 651.

¹⁰⁸ Although Edmund wants to learn by himself through his experience of the natural world, his education could not be qualified as Rousseauist; his adventures lead him to the realm of fantastic stories, which Rousseau rejected for the education of *Émile*.

mythical creature, the cockatrice represents the blend of the real and the imaginary that Edmund longs for. He asks the cockatrice to tell him '[a]bout true things that they don't know at school' (144) and, when he returns to school, he tells the others of the 'wonderful true tales' he heard but is punished for telling lies. The schoolmaster accuses Edmund of 'untruthfulness'. One day, a dragon comes creeping across the plain and swallows the whole town. Edmund is left alone, excluded, and desperate to get his town back because he is separated from his grandmother. With the guidance of the cockatrice, he vanquishes the dragon and the town returns. But when he goes back to school and recounts his adventures, Edmund is caned again and no one wants to believe him. The story ends on an equivocal note: Edmund returns to the cockatrice's cave accompanied by the whole town to prove his tale, but the creature has locked itself away, and nobody believes him.

Edmund, like many other characters in our texts, is both shut in and shut out. In his case, at the end of the tale, he finds himself locked outside the world of imagination, and trapped in a place where he must conform. Yet, he offers some resistance and refuses to give up on his desires: 'He does not argue quite so much [...] and he agreed to be apprenticed to a locksmith, so that he might one day be able to pick the lock of the cockatrice's front door [...] But he is quite an old man now, and he hasn't gotten that door open yet!' (156) While commentators traditionally see in Nesbit's characters emancipated children, free from the oppressive authority of adults,¹⁰⁹ Erika Rothwell detects in her later works a more complex image of childhood, where children are 'separate and powerless beings who are repeatedly subject to failure and confusion'. These characters, continues Rothwell, 'can hope for no more than amused condescension from the kindest adults.'¹¹⁰

Similarly, two female characters in our corpus also venture into imaginary underground and labyrinthine passages, and find themselves locked in. In *Wonderland* and *The Land of Lost Toys*, the heroines are trapped in the distant

¹⁰⁹ In particular when analysing Nesbit's most famous titles, the Bastable trilogy, which comprises *The Treasure Seekers* (1899), *The Wouldbegoods* (1901) and *The New Treasure Seekers* (1904).

¹¹⁰ Erika Rothwell, "'You Catch It if You Try to Do Otherwise': The Limitations of E. Nesbit's Cross-Written Vision of the Child", *Children's Literature*, 25 (1997), 60–70 (p. 61).

underworld they discover. When they first penetrate these worlds underground, the heroines do not question how they will come out. Alice does not hesitate to jump into the underground passage, and is at first unaware of her progressive entrapment: 'In another moment down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get again out'. (10) Likewise, Aunt Penelope recounts her emotions when she discovered a hole in the ground: 'I was a good deal absorbed in considering the size of the hole, and the very foolish wish that seized me to do what I had often longed to do in childhood, and creep in [...] there was no one to witness the escapade.'¹¹¹ (21) The term 'escapade' suggests adventure and excitement, but also 'escape' from the gaze of disciplinarian adults.



Fig. 2.12. *The Land of Lost Toys*. Honor C. Appleton (1865)

Although Alice does not realise her entrapment immediately, the narrator alludes to her enclosure during her fall with the repetition of the adverb down (repeated three times, as in the description of the McDougal's cave in *Tom Sawyer*): 'Down, down, down. Would the fall never come to an end?' (10). The tone is playful, yet

¹¹¹ Here again, the visibility (or, in this case, invisibility) of the character is evoked. Aunt Penelope suggests indirectly that, like a child, she felt that no one would scold or judge her, since no one could see her. But paradoxically, by suggesting that she understands how a child thinks, she relays the idea that children can never do anything outside adults' knowledge and gaze.

Alice finds herself slowly enveloped in a maze-like underground space.¹¹² She soon begins to worry about how far away she is from home and throughout the rest of the narrative, the adverb ‘away’ appears frequently, suggesting a distance from her familiar realm. For Marah Gubar, the early chapters of *Wonderland* ‘reveal Carroll’s intense self-consciousness about working in a genre that had habitually tried to bully young people into submissive compliance.’¹¹³ Alice’s relationship with space reflects her anxieties about her capacity for self-determination and Carroll’s awareness that children’s authors tend to dictate their characters’ future horizons.

As soon as she lands, Alice starts to wonder how she will get out of Wonderland. Decreasing in size, she nearly drowns in her own tears. The pool of tears is both a natural space, which reminds Alice of the sea, and a space created by her. Hence she immediately blames herself for her misfortunes: “‘I wish I hadn’t cried so much! [...] I shall be punished for it now, I suppose, by being drowned in my own tears!’” (21) Trapped both within Wonderland and within herself, her enclosure seems like a natural and logical punishment, since there is no visible adult authority. Instead, Alice’s fears result from the fact that she has integrated the logic of the cautionary books of her time, and expects something dreadful to happen at any moment. The pool of tears imitates the logic of such stories, or rather mocks their illogic.

Aunt Penelope also worries about how she will get out of the underground world she has entered. As she starts to walk, she becomes anxious about ever returning home: ‘I wandered [...] and was beginning to wonder how I should find my way’. (23) Quickly, she is surrounded by her old toys and finds herself ‘the prisoner [...] at the bar [...]’ and ‘inside the go-kart.’ (34) She is put on trial by her old toys for not looking after them properly as a child. Her feeling of entrapment is due to the demonic qualities of the toys, who wish to see her severely punished. In *Wonderland*,

¹¹² In the young-adult novel *Bog Child*, by Siobhan Dowd, the world of Wonderland is used to convey the main character’s sense of entrapment while visiting the infamous Maze Prison in Northern Ireland. Set against the background of the Troubles in 1981, 17-year-old Fergus is visiting his brother in the Maze – considered at the time to be one of the most escape-proof prisons in Europe. As he leaves the prison with his mother, ‘Fergus steered her down the bleak corridors and through the gated doorways. When they got back outside, with the last door closed behind them, Fergus made a sound like a horse blowing out through its muzzle. “Jesus. It’s like *Alice in Bloody Wonderland* in there.”’ Siobhan Dowd, *Bog Child* (Oxford: David Fickling Books, 2008), p. 84.

¹¹³ Gubar, p. 113.

the narrator insists on the fact that Alice may not get out again, and never suggests how she might escape. In the hallway, Alice realises:

There were doors all round the hall, but they were all locked; and when Alice had been all the way down one side and up the other, trying every door, she walked sadly down the middle, wondering how she was ever to get out again. (12)

Alice finds herself in a liminal space, both shut in yet also shut out of the lovely garden where she desperately wants to go. After eating a piece of cake, still disorientated, she nervously asks: ‘Which way? Which way?’ (15) Her bodily alterations confuse her, she has lost sense of where and who she is: “‘Who in the world am I?’” (18), she wonders, mixing her physical place with her sense of identity. Frustrated, Alice starts crying. Strich argues that ‘Alice pleure quand elle grandit car l’espace si confortable jadis devient prison : l’espace, le temps, les rêves, les souhaits se limitent sévèrement au fur et à mesure que le temps passe.’¹¹⁴ [Alice cries when she grows because the comfortable space that used to surround her has now become a prison: space, time, dreams, wishes dwindle as time goes by.] Alice’s sadness expresses the frustration of her geographical horizon but also the limitation of her own desires. Even as she explores Wonderland, she is still shut out from the garden and only sets foot in it in Chapter VIII. Like other outside spaces, the garden is attractive at first but turns out to be different from what it seemed.

Alice also finds herself excluded from others through word games and language. Thus, although there is plenty of room at the Mad Hatter’s tea table, the creatures greet Alice rudely, crying “No room! No room!” (60)¹¹⁵ Language is used throughout the narrative to perpetuate this sense of exclusion. For Marah Gubar, ‘Carroll realizes that the act of withholding meaning can easily be experienced as a form of deprivation, punishment, or exclusion.’¹¹⁶ Alice feels hurt when the creatures order her around and Gubar comments that ‘she cannot escape other people’s effort to direct, control, and contain her’.¹¹⁷ Her communication with the

¹¹⁴ Strich, p. 37.

¹¹⁵ Alice’s exclusion is reminiscent of children’s cruelty at party games, a theme that Christina Rossetti developed in *Speaking Likenesses* (1874). When the young heroine, Flora, arrives in the middle of a birthday tea party, none of the children present invite her to sit down: ‘Every single boy and every girl stared hard at Flora and went on staring: but not one of them offered her a chair, or a cup of tea, or anything whatever.’ Christina Rossetti, *Speaking Likenesses* (London: Macmillan, 1874), p. 74.

¹¹⁶ Gubar, p. 118.

¹¹⁷ Gubar, p. 119.

characters in Wonderland is often a source of debate, which makes her feel rejected. In Chapter III, Alice is even punished by the mouse for talking ‘nonsense’. Maria Nikolajeva considers that Alice is ‘humiliated and threatened’ through language, and that her sense of exclusion through language extends to the implied reader.¹¹⁸ At times, Carroll chooses not to explain words which Alice does not understand, or confuses, while it is clear that the implied reader probably does not know their meaning either.¹¹⁹ In spite of her efforts to understand her discoveries and her own story, Alice is often denied meaning or explanations. In particular, withholding the denouement of a story is an effective threat and sanction from which Alice suffers several times. The mouse, for instance, refuses to pursue its tale, feeling insulted by Alice’s ‘nonsense’ (29). In Chapter VII, the Dormouse warns Alice that it will not finish its story if she keeps on interrupting. The frustration of the readers’ expectations runs parallel with the frustration of Alice’s own desires.

Likewise, in *Tom Sawyer*, games are also used to exclude and marginalise. Tom threatens to reject Huck from their group of robbers if he does not comply with the community’s rules: “‘Huck, we can’t let you into the gang if you ain’t respectable, you know.’” Huck is desperate to stay in the group and surrenders: “‘I’ll go back [...] and see if I can come to stand it, if you’ll let me b’long to the gang, Tom.’” (201) Children’s desire to belong may influence their behaviour as they dread being alone. Tom has fully internalised the process of exclusion and can now use it. Equally, in *Through the Looking-Glass*, Alice has internalised the use of exclusion as a punishment and literally threatens to shut out the black kitten: ‘I was very nearly opening the window, and putting you out into the snow! And you’d have deserved it, you little mischievous darling!’¹²⁰ By taking the role of the adult punisher, Alice projects onto the kitten what she has learned and how she, herself, has been punished and treated.

Exclusion generally affects young characters most strongly, concurring with Bruno Bettelheim’s claim in *The Uses of Enchantment* that ‘[t]here is no greater threat in life

¹¹⁸ Nikolajeva, *Power, Voice and Subjectivity in Literature for Young Readers*, p. 57.

¹¹⁹ Nikolajeva, *Power, Voice and Subjectivity in Literature for Young Readers*, pp. 31–32.

¹²⁰ Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, p. 122.

[to the child] that he will be left alone.¹²¹ It is not so much exclusion that seems to sadden Alice, but the idea of being abandoned. Like Tom and Becky in the cave, she longs to see someone appear: “I do wish they would put their heads down! I am so very tired of being alone here!” (19) After being left by all the animals in Chapter III, she cries: “Oh, my dear Dinah! I wonder if I shall ever see you any more!” And here poor Alice began to cry again, for she felt very lonely and low-spirited.’ (30) In *Les Malheurs*, Sophie is often separated from her family as a punishment, sent to her room alone. In *Les Petites Filles modèles*, after Sophie begs for forgiveness, Mme de Fleurville accepts her repentance but tells her that she must still spend the day separated away and not see her friends until the following day.¹²² According to Pipet, ‘[à] cet âge, être séparé signifie mourir et inversement, mourir signifie se séparer’ [At this age, being separated means dying and conversely, dying means to be separated].¹²³ Similarly, in *Little Men*, when Nat is accused of a theft (which he did not commit), he would prefer corporal punishment to being ostracised by the others: ‘even the hardest whipping he ever received from his father was far easier to bear than the cold looks, the avoidance, and general suspicion that met him on all sides.’ (170)

There is therefore a link between separation from one’s community and death, which is also made in *The New Mother*. In Clifford’s tale, the girls are shut out from their cottage and roam endlessly in the woods outside. When they realise that their mother will never return, their sense of grief caused by the separation is painful to read. Their exclusion from the cottage suggests the death of their relationship with their caring mother through her emotional detachment. Their experience is reminiscent of the archetypal pattern of abandonment found for instance in the Grimm’s tale *Hansel and Gretel*. Contrary to Hansel and Gretel, however, the Turkey and Blue-Eyes do not overcome the threats facing them. The girls’ story is not one of departure and return, but one of confinement both inside and outside. And as a result of this enclosure, their story is not one of individual growth.

¹²¹ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), p. 145

¹²² Ségur, *Les Petites Filles modèles*, p. 197.

¹²³ Pipet, p. 49.

The exclusion of the child from the group sometimes follows a caring rationale. In *Little Men*, Mrs and Mr Bhaer realise that Dan has failed to integrate fully with their community, and is a threat to the moral safety of the others. He incites the boys to try smoking and, as a result, they set one of the rooms on fire. The Bhaers feel that they have no choice but to banish Dan from Plumfield, fearing that his influence might contaminate the other boys further. Mr Bhaer explains: ‘I cannot have my boys hurt by your bad example [...] so you can say goodbye to them all’ (83).¹²⁴ Banishment, says Prairat, is only effective if the social group is concerned.¹²⁵ In Mr Bhaer’s eyes, this spatial exclusion is a moral obligation, applied for the safety of the community, which takes precedence over the salvation of Dan because he endangers the moral stability of Plumfield. But his banishment is not simply a way of shutting Dan out of the group: it is also a way of locking the other children further away from society and its potential corruption. It therefore follows both protective and preventative rationales. The fact that Dan is excluded after introducing smoking to the circle of boys is significant. As Sophie Heywood notes, in the nineteenth century, smoking signified entrance into manhood.¹²⁶ Dan, the inherent outsider and the rebel, brings with him the dangers and temptations of modern society away from the surveillance of well-meaning adults and the confines of home.

Finally, in *What Katy Did*, exclusion takes place without any visible adult intervention. At the beginning of the novel, Katy’s dreams revolve around distancing herself from her family. But her ambitions are not acceptable and she is shut away from the others. For Lois Keith, ‘[p]aralysis metaphorically denotes [...] losing one’s place in the world, being cut off and separate, no longer a complete human being.’¹²⁷ Katy’s paralysis banishes her from the hustle and bustle of the world. At the same time, and almost paradoxically, it progressively brings her closer to the members of her family. With girls, notes Popiel, exclusion highlights the fact that they are rarely separated from family life: ‘the very emphasis on a girl’s separation from others as a punishment reveals a dynamic in which women were

¹²⁴ Prairat, p. 63.

¹²⁵ ‘La punition-bannissement n’est réellement intense que si, au-delà de la personne lésée, le groupe dans son ensemble s’est senti mis en cause.’ [Banishment as a punishment is only powerful if, beyond the individual being punished, the group as a whole is concerned.] Prairat, p. 77.

¹²⁶ Sophie Heywood, p. 76.

¹²⁷ Keith, p. 22.

expected to play a social role'.¹²⁸ Shutting Katy out from her community is used to instil in her the desire to become a positive role model for her siblings. While excluded, Katy learns that she can only find meaning through her attachments to others. Exclusion strips her of her bonds and connections. Her loneliness teaches her that she will only be happy caring for others: 'This is the defining state of womanhood: loving relationships with other people.'¹²⁹ For Bashford and Strange, at the same time as they exclude, isolation procedures aim at the inclusion of individuals and at their normalisation.¹³⁰ In *What Katy Did*, as in all our texts, shutting characters out is fundamentally an effective way of shutting them back in.

Conclusion

Whether inside or outside, characters end up enclosed, either locked in or locked out, or both. Punitive space is therefore a dynamic experience that can happen anywhere, anytime. This is the way in which young characters in the texts we have examined experience the world organised by adult characters and writers. Following a panoptical rationale, young characters are surrounded, their movements, thoughts and actions always perceptible to adults. This panoptical representation of punitive space suggests a realisation on the part of our authors that space, like nineteenth-century prisons, could be used to educate, to provoke repentance and reform. None of our texts affords readers a critical outlook on the prison system, its validity or efficacy. The carceral benefits the community by punishing criminals who breach society's values and endanger its stability. Some texts, mostly American, suggest that the philanthropic concern for the plight of inmates is extended to children and they invite readers to empathise with prisoners, although without forgetting that these men are outcasts. The prison is thus a highly educative tool, its function and meaning extending further than carceral walls. Other forms of spatial punishment are also represented in these texts, through the confinement and exclusion of young characters. The authors we examine use inner and outer spaces to convey characters' desires as well as their feelings of security or oppression. Indeed, the

¹²⁸ Popiel, p. 133.

¹²⁹ Keith, p. 88.

¹³⁰ Bashford and Strange, p. 7.

familiar universe of the child, as well as the desired world of nature, are often presented as ambivalent spaces, both sheltering and punitive.

Confinement is very frequent – it appears in almost every text – and is sometimes presented as a direct alternative to corporal punishment. The confinement of the child can be physical or metaphorical, extending to the child’s future expectations and to the frustration of his or her desires. Through confinement, the child is taught to self-regulate his or her own freedom. From adult characters’ point of view, confinement is used for the protection of children; however, some authors are aware that this rationale also has limits. In *Little Men*, Alcott exposes the ambivalence of the protective domestic realm with a short story: ‘Once there was a poor woman who had three or four little children, and she used to lock them in her room when she went out to work to keep them safe.’ (97) But by the time the woman comes back, she finds the children crying after they managed to injure themselves indoors. Alcott addresses both young and adult readers to suggest that confining the child may not be as simple as it seems and that children may not always be protected by being kept away from the outside world. Alcott, however, indicates that it is crucial to show sympathy for children’s desire to seek knowledge for themselves. Indeed, empathy with children’s desire for freedom is a pedagogical principle appreciated at the time, as some of the contemporary reviews of Alcott’s novel show: ‘personal sympathy with children, in all their life, even their pranks and good-natured mischief, is the first condition of acquiring influence over them, and hence is the first condition of any true and good government in school and family.’¹³¹

Exclusion is perhaps less frequent than confinement in our texts, or a result of it; however, it always has a dramatic effect on young characters, who cannot bear the idea of being abandoned and separated from their loved ones. Exclusion, banishment and separation are not simply about teaching characters (and readers) the value of self-control. They also have powerful emotional implications. When isolated, child characters – particularly in English children’s stories – immediately miss the company of adults. This could reflect these writers’ awareness of children’s

¹³¹ Lyman Abbott, *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* (August 1871) in Lyon Clark, *Louisa May Alcott: The Contemporary Reviews*, p. 147.

deepest fears, but may also convey adults' own insecurities and anxieties at the idea of separation. Foucault, note Bashford and Strange, considered that 'exclusionary practices linked, and mutually defined, the isolated and the isolators'.¹³² Exclusion is therefore deployed to represent and express the complexities of entangled adult-child relationships. It suggests that the realms of childhood and adulthood are never fully separated.

Young characters are always ready to risk punishment in order to fill themselves with experiences and knowledge beyond the confines of home. Authors show their understanding of children's desires, although not all adult-characters share this empathetic outlook. Young characters' desires are often thwarted and they must find ways to accept a restricted form of freedom. However, this is not always purely oppressive, but is sometimes presented as a form of collaboration between the child and the adult. Authors suggest that punishment, and the use of space to punish, come not only from the adults' desire to control children's movements, but also from their fears and anxieties, which are sometimes triggered by society's conventions. In particular, girls must learn to appreciate the environment that they feel imprisons them. The gender differences between female and male characters that we have touched upon in this chapter will be developed further in Chapter Three. As we shall see, girls' pain linked to punishment is represented as a far more vicarious experience than boys', whatever their national identity.

¹³² Bashford and Strange, p. 8.

Chapter Three

Pain and Pleasure

Administered by an authority for an offence against a rule, punishment is intended to provoke suffering or at least unpleasantness; it is a form of ‘manipulated’ pain¹ directed not only at the offender, but also passing on a message to society. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault argued that in the old punitive system, based on public executions, punishment was directed not simply at the guilty person, but also at the education of potentially guilty others, the observers:

Cette lisible leçon, ce recodage rituel, il faut les répéter aussi souvent que possible ; que les châtiments soient une école plutôt qu’une fête ; un livre ouvert plutôt qu’une cérémonie. La durée qui rend le châtiment efficace pour le coupable est utile aussi pour les spectateurs. [...] Peine secrète, peine à demi perdue. Il faudrait que dans les lieux où elle s’exécute les enfants puissent venir ; ils y feraient leurs classes civiques.²

This legible lesson, this ritual recoding, must be repeated as often as possible; the punishments must be a school rather than a festival; an ever-open book rather than a ceremony. The duration that makes the punishment effective for the guilty is also useful for the spectators. [...] A secret punishment is a punishment half wasted. Children should be able to come to the places where the penalty is being carried out; there they will attend classes in civic.

According to Foucault,³ in eighteenth-century Western societies the exhibition of violence evolved into a more privatised and internalised form of punishment. For Javier Moscoso, who, as mentioned in the introduction, argues that the history of pain is also a history of emotions, this movement participated in a new protection of sensitivity, in particular for the witnesses of public executions: ‘In the new culture of sensitivity the signs of pain must avoid any excess of expressivity.’⁴

¹ See H. L. A. Hart’s and Falcón y Tella’s definitions of pain reviewed in Chapter One.

² Foucault, p. 111.

³ See also Pieter Spierenburg, *The Spectacle of Suffering: Executions and the Evolution of Repression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

⁴ Moscoso, p. 64. When it came to criminals, voices emerged denouncing public executions, their ineffectiveness and, significantly, their damaging effect on the sensibility of the public. In the Preface to *Le Dernier Jour d’un Condamné* (1829), Victor Hugo wrote: ‘Nous nions que le spectacle des supplices produise

The texts comprising our corpus participate in this evolution, but also challenge it. If, in earlier didactic books for children, the spectacle of pain could perhaps be considered as a ‘class in civics’ – analogous to public hangings intended to deter onlookers – this is not exactly the case in our texts. On the one hand, the spectacle of bodily pain has not disappeared, and our writers seem to acknowledge that pain has a magnetic force, which has the potential to attract spectators, and therefore readers. But cruelty and brutal violence are also overtly condemned, mocked or implicitly criticised; physical pain and deterrence are thus not the essential constituents of the punishments administered. This chapter will argue that, in the texts comprising our corpus, pain and its spectacle participate in the double imperatives of children’s literature at the time, to instruct and delight. In these texts, pain and pleasure, the two poles of human feelings and emotions, are fundamentally entwined. Rather than mutually exclusive, they complete and enhance each other. Penny Brown has observed the thrill in the violent scenes of some early didactic tales.⁵ Similarly, Francis Marcoin noticed the links between pain, pleasure and education in *Les Méaventures de Jean-Paul Choppart*, a text where ‘[l]a visée éducative justifie une certaine complaisance à donner des coups, marquant par là que tout texte édifiant doit passer par des malheurs, qui sans doute ne sont pas sans réjouir l’enfant lecteur.’⁶ [the intention to instruct helps to justify the tendency to resort to beatings, suggesting that for a text to be edifying it must also include misfortunes, which certainly will delight the child reader.] Marcoin describes Denoyer’s novel as both ‘éducatif et anti-éducatif’ [educative and anti-educative]. But is enjoyment found simply in a voyeuristic pleasure to see others being hurt?

The authors we examine show an awareness that pain can also be a pivotal narrative element that can drive plots and increase sympathy for victims, which may help readers to identify with them. These writers also offer a critical reflection on the role of pain and suggest that some forms are more valid than others. Therefore,

l’effet qu’on en attend. Loin d’édifier le peuple, il le démoralise, et ruine en lui toute sensibilité, partant toute vertu.’ [We refuse to accept that the sight of executions has the effect you think. Far from edifying people it demoralises them, destroys any higher feelings they have, and consequently any morals.] Victor Hugo, *Le Dernier Jour d’un condamné: Préface de 1832* (Paris: Folio, 2000) p. 164. The preventative education of potentially guilty others, through the display of violence, was called into question.

⁵ Penny Brown, ‘The different faces of pain in early children’s literature’ in *La Douleur: Beauté ou Laideur*, L’ULL Crític, 9–10 (Lleida: Edicions de la Universitat de Lleida, 2005).

⁶ Francis Marcoin, ‘Les Aventures de Jean-Paul Choppart de Louis Desnoyer: Le premier feuilleton-roman’, *Revue de Littérature Comparée*, 304 (2002), 431–443.

the representation of bodily pain is sometimes used to promote other forms of discipline, which instruct young characters and readers about the values of self-control. On the one hand, the shift away from the body to the mind of the child, from deterrence towards internal reform, demonstrates, on the part of writers, a concern for children's (and parents') sensitivities. On the other hand, these more moderate forms of punishment also involve some level of suffering. They too involve manipulated pain. Therefore the spectacle of pain remains a key component of our texts but the pains represented are complex in their shapes and roles.

This chapter will begin by examining the representation of pain, asking to what extent the child's body is the site of discipline. When not physical, what other forms of suffering are being deployed? We will show that young characters do not have equal levels of physical sensibility, and that the performance of pain is not the same for girl and boy characters. If characters show more restraint or more reaction, what are the implications for readers? Are they invited to identify or sympathise with them? We shall see that narrative voice and focalization sometimes require empathy from readers, but not systematically. We will then turn to the pleasurable aspects of painful punishment. In particular, we will examine the magnetic quality of punitive actions, which seem to attract characters. Punishment can be witnessed by other characters in the narratives, while at the same time being directed at readers. The theatrical aspect of punishment makes it both engaging and educational, a double function particularly notable in the representation of public trials. But can the spectacle of punishment also create reading pleasure? Woven into the fabric of narratives, punishment is used to create a repetitive pattern that triggers suspense and anticipation. Building on the tradition of earlier texts, where punishment was often a key ingredient, writers deftly integrate punishment into their plots to create dynamic and pleasurable narratives, full of gaps and suspense. Finally, punishment can also be a source of vicarious empowerment by giving agency to characters and letting them avenge themselves, dodge or escape punishments. In particular, when the roles of punisher and victim are reversed, the spectacle of adults' pain can be a source of delightful and thrilling empowerment. Yet are all characters empowered equally? What can the level of agency granted to characters facing punishment tell us about constructions of gender in childhood?

The representation of violence remains a key component for the majority of our texts. In French texts, physical violence is performed at home by a parental or guardian figure, at school (*Petit Diable*, *Poil de Carotte*) and also in prison in *Les Frères Kip*. In English texts, corporal punishment is frequently administered at school (*Kind Little Edmund*), and, although not actually applied in other English texts, it nonetheless appears as a threat in *Wonderland*, *The Land of Lost Toys* and, arguably, in *The New Mother*. Only in our American corpus is physical punishment less systematic. It is absent from *What Katy Did* and only used as a threat in *A Little Princess*.⁷ However, corporal sanctions appear as an ordinary fact of children's lives both at home and in school in *Tom Sawyer*, and they are even occasionally used as part of progressive and experimental discipline in *Little Men*.

Indeed, *Little Men* presents only a few episodes of bodily violence. One of them appears in the early section of the novel, when Mr Bhaer recounts how he was punished as a child:

When I was a little lad I used to tell lies! Ach! What fibs they were, and my old grandmother cured me of it how, do you think? My parents had talked, and cried, and punished, but still did I forget as you. Then said the dear old grandmother, "I shall help you to remember, and put a check on this unruly part," with that she drew out my tongue and snipped the end with her scissors till the blood ran. That was terrible, you may believe, but it did me much good, because I was sore for days, and every word I said came so slowly that I had time to think. (48)

In this passage, corporal punishment is presented as a last resort (everything else failed to cure the child of his habit of lying). Furthermore, bodily harm is implicitly justified because it is analogous to the crime committed and had a lasting effect, therefore benefiting the child. Contrary to Mr Bhaer's parents' attempts (which were perhaps corporal, the text does not clarify this point), the "superiority" of the grandmother's sanction lies in the fact that it provoked a pain that lasted 'for days', suggesting that this punishment, because it gave Mr Bhaer time to think about his crime, was also partly psychological. This episode concerns not one of the children in *Little Men*, but is an adult's childhood memory. Although Mr Bhaer approves of

⁷ Miss Minchin threatens to whip one of the pupils, Lottie, but the punishment is not applied: "She ought to be whipped," Miss Minchin proclaimed. "You SHALL be whipped, you naughty child!" (30).

it, he does not use similar methods to punish children in his school, suggesting an evolution away from bodily pain.

This generational distance with corporal chastisement is not, however, found in other texts with boy characters, who are regularly the recipients of harsh violence. As we saw in Chapter One, corporal punishment was a traditional mode of punishment in schools, notably in British public schools where caning was employed for a long time. In our texts, the physical chastisement of boys is administered at school across all three nations. In *Kind Little Edmund*, the schoolmaster frequently canes Edmund for ‘untruthfulness’ (145), talking back (‘vexacious argumentative habits’ (155)) and challenging his authority. *Tom Sawyer* is not caned but whipped in class by Mr. Dobbins. After Tom confesses to being late for talking to Huckleberry Finn on his way to school, the schoolmaster orders: “No mere ferule will answer for this offence. Take off your jacket.” (50) We also find numerous episodes of corporal punishment at school in *Petit Diable*. Halfway through the novel, Charles is sent to Fairy’s Hall, a grim boarding school inspired by Ségur’s reading of Dickens, notably *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839) where corporal punishments are the norm. At Fairy’s Hall, the boys are at the mercy of their educators, whom they have nicknamed ‘les oppresseurs’ (1198) [the oppressors].⁸ Corrections vary, but what the children fear the most are corporal sanctions. Boxear, the supervisor in charge of the pupils’ study times, lists punishments in order of their harshness: “Trois punitions pour les trois méfaits ; total, neuf punitions terribles, surtout la dernière ; neuf jours de cachot, neuf jours d’abstinence, neuf jours de fouet.” (1204) [Three punishments for the three misdeeds; that’s a total of nine terrible punishments, especially the last one: nine days of solitary confinement, nine days of privations, nine days of whipping.] The whip, regarded as the harshest and supreme correction, is employed to combat rebellious threats, in particular for the pupils who refuse to submit to adults’ authority.

⁸The comtesse offers a frightening and cynical picture of boarding schools, but not everyone shared this vision. Sophie Heywood relates how the comtesse’s editor at Hachette, Emile Templier, when reading the manuscript at first ‘objected fiercely to Ségur’s critique of such an important national institution, and told her the book contravened the Civil Code. Her wry response explained that she had transferred the action to Scotland, “where”, she said, “they allow everything”.’ Sophie Heywood, p. 110.

In these texts, the protagonists are experts at withstanding physical pain. Contrary to Mr Bhaer in *Little Men*, who does not hesitate to describe his pain ('it was terrible', 'I was sore for days'), boys tend to restrain or hide their feelings during episodes of bodily harm. If they have an emotional reaction to pain, it is suggested rather than explicitly depicted. This apparent resistance to pain is used, in part, to suggest that corporal punishment is unsuccessful, thus reinforcing contemporary discourses in favour of more modern and psychological forms of discipline. It also contributes to the presentation of boy characters as outstanding heroes and helps readers to identify with them. But the emotional reaction of characters partakes in the meaning of texts, allowing readers to "read" into them. So what happens when characters' emotions are absent?

Literary theory, outlines Keith Oatley, distinguishes between identification and sympathy as two different psychological processes created by the reading of fictional narrative. The process of identification concerns the adoption of the objectives of the characters, 'outcomes of actions are evaluated in relation to the protagonists' goals'.⁹ With sympathy, 'writers offer patterns of events of the kind that cause emotions' and 'the reader attributes emotions to story characters and experiences sympathetic emotions toward these characters'.¹⁰ Resistance to pain gives male protagonists admirable features as adults fail to break their will. Boy characters' objectives, during episodes of physical pain, are often to challenge adults' authority and to prove themselves equal or superior to them. The representation of their punishment therefore triggers identification with these resistant figures, yet, on the other hand, because their emotional reactions are not communicated, it is difficult for readers to fully sympathise with them. Boys' resistance to pain also creates a distance from readers, which allows the latter to interrogate adults' attitudes safely, without experiencing characters' pains, even vicariously, since they are not depicted.

In *Kind Little Edmund*, the master's caning has no effect on Edmund who, as soon as he is beaten, plays truant again, thus echoing the educator Lyman Cobb who observed: 'Flogging for truancy is the greatest cause of truancy. [...] Very soon

⁹ Keith Oatley, 'Why Fiction May Be Twice as True as Fact: Fiction as Cognitive and Emotional Simulation', *Review of General Psychology*, 3.2 (1999), 101–117 (p. 114).

¹⁰ Oatley, p. 114.

after, he wishes to be absent or to be late at school.¹¹ Caning is therefore not only ineffective, but also harmful as it is presented as a cause of disobedience. What is more, says Cobb, when a child plays truant and receives a corporal sanction, he or she will evaluate ‘the difference between the anticipated *pleasure* and the *pain* which he will suffer from the flogging’.¹² The pleasure of disobedience can be higher than the suffering linked to corporal sanctions. Equally, Tom and Charles find much pleasure in their wrongdoings (talking to Huck Finn, playing tricks on the teachers at Fairy’s Hall) and no mention is ever made of their pain when they are physically punished. Tom forgets his punishment very quickly. After being whipped for being late at school, he is ordered to sit with the girls. Instead of feeling humiliated, Tom feels delight at the idea of being beside Becky, relishing ‘the dread pleasure that lay in his high good fortune’ (50). Contrary to the schoolmaster’s intentions, Tom’s punishment turns into pleasure, inducing neither guilt nor shame in him, and suggesting the utter inefficacy of corporal sanctions.

As for Charles, his lack of reaction to corporal sanctions exasperates his punisher, Boxear, who beats him on his first day at Fairy’s Hall: “Voilà comment nous venons à bout des beaux parleurs (il lui tire les cheveux) ; des raisonneurs (il lui donne des claques) ; des insubordonnés (ils lui donne des coups de règles) ; des révolutionnaires (il lui donne des coups de fouet).” (1194) [Let me show you how we deal with smooth talkers like you (he pulls Charles’ hair); argumentative children (he slaps him); insubordinate children (he strikes him with his ruler); revolutionaries (he whips him).] Boxear is surprised to find that Charles does not express any emotions when hurt: “il ne sera pas facile à réduire [...] pas une larme, pas une plainte !” (1194). [This one won’t be easy to break [...] no tears, no cries!] The text within brackets resembles theatrical directions, as if Charles punishment was a spectacle and the protagonist an actor who did not really experience pain. Boxear whips Charles, ‘le forçat à se coucher à terre, et commença à le déshabiller pour lui faire sentir la dureté du fouet qu’il tenait à la main.’ (1195) [he forced him to lie on the ground and began to undress him to make him feel the harshness of the whip he held in his hand] But the boy is protected by two devil’s heads he had made to

¹¹ Cobb, p. 43.

¹² Cobb, p. 43.

frighten his guardian, and which are still attached to his buttocks. As a result, he comes out of his punishment 'triumphant' (1195). [triumphant] These devil heads, symbol of his wit and of what adults perceive as his devilish cunningness, enable him to resist the pain unjustly imposed on him. To reinforce this, the narrative voice repeatedly outlines Charles's cleverness and superiority to adults.

Indeed, these three boy protagonists not only resist pain but also defy adults' power based on their physical superiority and position of authority. In *Kind Little Edmund*, the boy's resistance to pain symbolises an epistemic conflict with the schoolmaster. Edmund is attracted by the world of the imagination and wants to discover things outside school:

Edmund loved to find things out about things. Perhaps you will think that in that case he was constant in his attendance at school, since there, if anywhere, we may learn whatever there is to be learned. But Edmund did not want to learn things: he wanted to find things out, which is quite different. (141)

The schoolmaster believes only in objective and 'sensible' thinking, like Mr. Gradgrind in Charles Dickens's *Hard Times* (1854). Every time Edmund tells the school of his discoveries, 'he was caned for untruthfulness' (145). Edmund tries to prove the veracity of his stories by showing a burn he received when trying to light the cockatrice's fire, but the master dismisses his evidence. Instead, he sees in Edmund's burn a proof that the boy played with fire, metaphorically and literally. Having thus established Edmund's proclivity for mischief, he 'caned Edmund harder than ever.' (145) By contrasting the master's thinking to Edmund's subjective interpretations of reality, Nesbit suggests that the pleasure of the cockatrice's true tales exceeds the pain of corporal punishment – just as Lyman Cobb had suggested, the child evaluates whether pleasure is superior to pain. The tale creates a dynamic tension between literature, as the protected space of epistemic and pleasurable discoveries, and the controlling world of adults.

This resistance to punitive pain is also used to demarcate the boy protagonist from the other children, facilitating readers' identification with him. As much as his inquisitiveness and fearlessness, what makes Edmund an extraordinary character is his ability to endure these daily trials. Edmund is the only boy actually caned during

the course of the text. The narrator ironically remarks that other pupils do not dare to disagree with the master: 'all the class said the same, for they had more sense than to argue with a person who carried a cane' (155). The narrator briefly shifts the focalization usually directed through Edmund onto the other pupils, who share one unified perspective. By suggesting their common fear, Edmund stands out from them, making readers' identification with him seem natural. Like Edmund, Tom's insensibility to pain sets him apart from the other pupils, notably the younger ones who 'spent their days in terror and suffering' of the master's ferule (125). The narrator's voice plays a major role in outlining boys' immunity from pain and insists on Tom's lack of reaction when flogged: 'Tom took his whipping and went back to his seat not at all broken hearted' (122). Similarly, Charles' resistance also leads him to a battle with the adults at school, making him stand out as a leader. He spends his time at Fairy's Hall enjoying himself and using the adults' fears of mystical creatures to his advantage. Like Edmund, he stands out from the rest of the pupils at school and becomes 'l'objet de leur admiration et de leur espérance' (1195). [the object of their admiration and hopes]

When boys' corporal punishment is illustrated, it is not unusual for their facial features to be concealed, reinforcing the idea that boys can or should withhold emotion and tears. This absence of facial reaction also makes it more difficult for readers to attribute meaning to their experiences and to sympathise with them. Javier Moscoso remarks that '[f]acial expressions are perhaps the first and most basic way of knowing a person's state of mind but these visual features or the lack thereof, must be relocated within the cultural framework that created them, and which makes them simultaneously possible and meaningful.'¹³ In the illustration below of Tom being whipped by the schoolmaster, his back, which will receive the blows, is turned towards the readers. The pain is therefore suggested by focusing on the part of the body that is about to suffer, by the physical strength of the schoolmaster, who appears much taller than Tom, by the thickness of the punitive instrument, and by Tom's crouched position. However, the boy's face is invisible and his emotions are withheld. The caption ('Result of Tom's truthfulness') suggests with irony the unfairness of the whipping, and recalls the character of Edmund in

¹³ Moscoso, p. 10.

Nesbit's tale, who is also regularly caned for 'untruthfulness' – when he is in fact telling the truth.



Fig. 3.1. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Chapter VI.*
True Williams (1876)

Similarly, in the illustration below, showing Charles being whipped by Mme Mac'Miche, the boy's facial expressions are concealed.



Fig. 3.2. *Un Bon Petit Diable, Chapter IV: Le fouet. Le parafouet.* Horace Castell (1865)

As with Tom's crouched position, the representation of the child's body suggests some level of pain. Charles' head is buried in his hands, in a gesture that could suggest despair or hurt, however no tears are visible. The boy's pain is also indicated by the sympathising cat on the left-hand

side of the image. But the animal's sadness is the grief of an external observer, not of the boy being punished. In the text, Charles does not express any pain. Mme Mac'Miche 'le saisit par l'oreille [...] le jeta à terre et lui donna le fouet en règle, au point d'endommager sa culotte, déjà en mauvais état. Charles supporta cette rude correction sans proférer une plainte.' (1154) [Mme Mac'Miche grabbed him by the ear [...] threw him on the ground and whipped him properly, so much that it damaged his trousers, which were already threadbare. Charles bore this punishment without complaining once.] Again, as the boy does not express any emotions, punishment appears fruitless. Only later, in the privacy of his bedroom, will Charles finally give in to cries. But his tears are described as tears of anger and humiliation, not pain. Ségur suggests that, instead of having a positive impact on Charles, physical abuse provokes only rage and his desire to take revenge.

In the illustration on the previous page, the intensity of Mme Mac'Miche's raised arm, stretching far behind her back, conveys fierceness and fanaticism. Her bent position and the way she lifts Charles' clothes communicate a feeling of sadistic pleasure, which is absent from the text that accompanies the illustration although it is suggested earlier in the novel, when Charles tells Juliette: "Tu sais que ma cousine est heureuse quand elle me fait du mal." (1134) [You know how my cousin is happy when she hurts me.] In *Petit Diable*, Ségur creates adult characters who unambiguously wish to hurt children and she implicitly condemns adults who find a sense of satisfaction in subjugating vulnerable children, as the verb 'abuser' indicates in the following sentence: 'elle profita de cette docilité si nouvelle pour abuser de sa force et de son autorité ; elle le jeta à terre et lui donna le fouet.' (1154) [she abused this sudden docility to exercise her strength and authority: she threw Charles on the ground and whipped him.] Yet Mme Mac'Miche's face is also concealed, her emotions impenetrable.

We find the same suggestion of sadistic pleasure in an episode from *Poil de Carotte*.¹⁴ The protagonist and his friend Mathilde have organised a pretend wedding,

¹⁴ This is a rare episode of corporal punishment in *Poil de Carotte*. Corporal punishment is not often described, rather it is often evoked as a threat or fear: 'Pour l'encourager définitivement, sa mère lui promet une gifle' (8) [To bring him up to scratch, his mother promises him a clout.]; 'il se laisserait rouer de coups, plutôt que d'être agréable à sa mère.' (67) [He would rather be beaten black and blue than to do something to please his

of which Mme Lepic does not approve. She rushes to scold her son and ‘casse une rouette dont elle ôte les feuilles et garde les épines.’ (87) [tears off a branch, stripping it of leaves but keeping the thorns.] The attention given to the thorns suggests the deliberate intention to hurt more than necessary, for the twig alone would have provided sufficient pain. This is reflected in the illustration below, where the thorns are also shown.

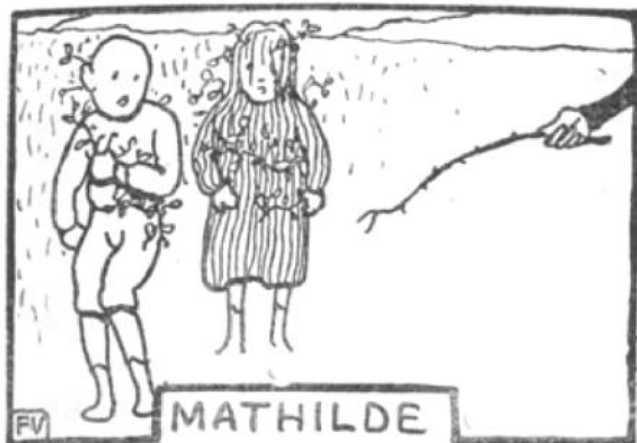


Fig. 3.3. *Poil de Carotte*, Chapter: *Mathilde*. Francisque Poulbot (1907)

Mme Lepic’s body is kept outside the frame, and the focus is instead on the thorns and the children staring at them. The child’s pain is implied rather than depicted. *Poil de Carotte*’s face is visible – this is before he is whipped – and his facial features are difficult to interpret. They suggest surprise as much as fear.

Not all punishers take sadistic pleasure in the application of corporal sanctions. On the contrary, quite frequently, no depictions or suggestions of their emotions are available. For instance, when Mr. Dobbins beats Tom, the narrator focuses on the schoolmaster’s arm rather than on his intentions or feelings: ‘[t]he master’s arm performed until it was tired and the stock of switches notably diminished.’ (50) The emphasis placed on the adult’s arm, to an extent, takes the adult’s intention away from the actual punitive action, as if the arm was detached from the schoolmaster’s mind. Similarly, when Tom is physically punished at home, the narrator ironically describes how Aunt Polly’s ‘potent palm’ is regularly ‘uplifted to strike again’ (26), as

mother.]; ‘Elle dit que la nature de Félix est si susceptible qu’on n’en ferait rien avec des coups et qu’ils s’appliquent mieux à la mienne.’ (82) [She says Felix has so susceptible a nature that beating is no good for him and that it suits me better.]

if her palm acted of its own free will. The absence of emotions in adult characters and the emphasis placed on their body or an instrument, suggests, to some extent, that their actions are mechanical. This aspect features quite strongly at Fairy's Hall in *Petit Diable*. There, the bellman is in charge of applying corporal sanctions. Both deaf and dumb, he is an insensitive character whose lack of emotions is a result of his deafness. Hated by the pupils, and ironically called 'le père fouetteur' (1205) [the whipper father/bogeyman], the bellman has no redeeming qualities that would make him in any way sympathetic to the readers. But, as opposed to the master Old Nick and Boxear, he does not have any evil intentions either. Just as readers need to have access to characters' emotions to envisage their pains and to sympathise with them, Ségur suggests that adults tend to empathise with children's suffering if they have access to the latter's feelings. The bellman's sensory impairment means that he cannot empathise with the children he hurts:

Ne pouvant être attendri par les cris qu'il n'entendait pas, ni corrompu par les promesses, ni effrayé par les menaces, il s'acquittait de son ministère avec une dureté et même une cruauté qui le faisait haïr des élèves et apprécier des maîtres. (1196)

Because he could not be moved by the screams of the children, which he could not hear, corrupted by their promises or frightened by their threats, he carried out his duty with harshness, even cruelty, and was hated by the pupils but appreciated by the teachers.

Empathy is a weakness that may compromise the effectiveness of sanctions. The bellman's disability also allows him to be harsher than other adults, even the other punishers at Fairy's Hall. The teachers at the school value him because he can enforce a level of punishment they could never reach and, as a result, the pupils are terrorised by him. With this character, Ségur implies that cruelty to children is a difficult task that requires emotional numbness. The dehumanised bellman appears as a mechanical punisher, reminiscent of the satirical machine appearing in Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*.¹⁵

¹⁵ The mechanisms of punishment also evoke the hook-nosed Mrs. Bedonebyasyouid in Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies; A Fairy Tale for a Land Baby* (1863) as well as, perhaps, Charles Dickens's criticism of utilitarianism in Victorian society in *Hard Times* and the fear that children would become the casualty of it.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Fig. 3.4. 'Facétie, estampe : *Machine à vapeur pour la correction célérifère des petites filles et des petits garçons.*' Hand-coloured etching. Hennin, (1820–1821)¹⁶

Similarly to the bellman, who performs punishment as a duty for other teachers in the school, this imaginary machine takes the responsibility of punishment away from parents. In the above print, the children are in fear of the mechanical arms approaching them, just like the pupils at Fairy's Hall are terrified by the bellman. They are begging their parents to save them but the machine, like the bellman, cannot be moved by their cries. Adults' mechanical void makes the representation of punishment more complex and ambivalent; if adults are acting mechanically, they are simply performing an educational duty and not intentionally hurting children.

These mechanical features appear in other titles too. In *The Land of Lost Toys*, the punishers are animated toys. The soulless objects take control and power over their old owner; they become judges and potential executioners, incapable of empathy, but desiring only revenge. The punishments they suggest are analogous to Aunt Penelope's crimes when she was a child, which helps distance the punitive act even further from any form of human authority. As noted by Foucault 'by assuming the form of a natural sequence, punishment does not appear as the arbitrary effect of a

¹⁶ <<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84143382>> [accessed 22.12.2014].

human power [...]. In analogical punishment, the power that punishes is hidden.¹⁷ In some texts, the mechanical aspect of the adult punisher is particularly frightening. Hence, in *The New Mother*, the mother sent to punish the two girls is devoid of sensory functions (she is blind and never speaks) and emotionless. However, she is a terrifying figure because the fear and the distress of the two girls are made clear to readers.

Some authors suggest that adults' claims to avoid yielding to their emotions so as to perform their punitive duty are deceptive. This is implied in *Poil de Carotte*, when Renard's protagonist kills an old cat (he believes the meat will attract crayfish). The scene evokes a cold-hearted professional criminal:

Poil de Carotte n'est pas un débutant. Il a tué des oiseaux sauvages, des animaux domestiques, un chien, pour son propre plaisir ou pour le compte d'autrui. Il sait comment on procède, et que si la bête a la vie dure, il faut se dépêcher, s'exciter, rager, risquer, au besoin, une lutte corps à corps. Sinon, des accès de fausse sensibilité nous surprennent. (75)

Carrots is no beginner. He has killed wild birds, domestic animals, a dog, either for his own pleasure or at the behest of others. He knows how it should be done, and that if the animal is obstinate one must hurry and get into a passion and risk, if necessary, a struggle to the death. Otherwise a wave of false sentiment sweeps over us.

The last sentence, using the pronoun 'nous', is ambiguous. It is unclear whether this is Poil de Carotte speaking or if, perhaps, it echoes adults' discourses when punishing children. Poil de Carotte seems to have internalised this discourse and reproduces the cruelty he suffers on smaller creatures. He also gratuitously attacks a mole, but the animal refuses to die: 'Il la ramasse, l'injurie et change de méthode. Rouge, les larmes aux yeux, il crache sur la taupe et la jette de toutes ses forces, à bout portant, contre la pierre.' (22) [he picks it up, calls it every name he can think of, and changes his tactics. With flushed cheeks and tears in his eyes, he spits on the mole and hurls it point-blank at the stone.] The narrator does not offer any explanations for these episodes. The focalization is narrowly centred on the

¹⁷ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 105. Analogous punishments correspond to an early way of thinking about punishment. As Foucault explains, eighteenth-century reformists such as Beccaria first envisaged punishment in terms of analogy. If a criminal committed a crime, he had to endure an analogous suffering. The idea was not simply that the punishment should be proportionate to the crime, but that it was a strong deterrent. These thinkers considered that if punishments were presented as analogous, they would seem naturally deserved rather than imposed by human authority. As with natural sanctions, criminals had brought punishment on themselves.

protagonist's experience, and he does not seem to understand his urge to kill. In these episodes, Renard counterbalances the image of the victimised child with a more complex one of an oppressed victim becoming victimiser. Renard famously wrote about the ferocious nature of children:

L'enfant, Victor Hugo et bien d'autres l'ont vu ange. C'est féroce et infernal qu'il faut le voir. D'ailleurs la littérature sur l'enfant ne peut être renouvelée que si l'on se place à ce point de vue. [...] L'enfant est un petit animal nécessaire. Un chat est plus humain. Non l'enfant qui fait des mots, mais celui qui sort ses griffes dans tout ce qu'il rencontre de tendre.¹⁸

Victor Hugo and many others have taken children for angels. But their nature is ferocious and devilish. It is only from this perspective that writing about children can be renewed. [...] Children are like small necessary animals. Cats are more human than children. I am not referring to children who talk, but to children who scratch anything tender that gets close to them.

If the child is a little animal, then adults will try to break him in. In turn, however, the child attacks smaller animals. Indeed, Poil de Carotte's mother likes to portray him as ruthless and taking pleasure in animals' suffering. For instance, she gives him the task of killing the wild birds his father brings from hunting. The process revolts Poil de Carotte so he kills them as rapidly as possible, two birds in one go, but his family prefers to interpret this as proof of his viciousness.¹⁹

Twain also suggests that adults' discourses about the application of corporal punishment are deceitful and raise questions about the meaning and validity of punitive pain. In the passage below, the adult seem to demonstrate more compassion for the pain of an animal than for that of the child. After Tom gives his own medicine to Peter, Aunt Polly's cat, and the medicine disagrees terribly with Peter, Aunt Polly demands an explanation. Tom replies that he has treated the cat just as he was being treated; if pain is good for him then it should be good for Peter too. Tom ingeniously associates the medicine with the corporal punishment Aunt Polly regularly administers and the idea that pain is used to cure the child from (moral) illnesses:

¹⁸Jules Renard, *Journal 1887–1910* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1990), pp.18–19 (18 février 1890).

¹⁹Today, research demonstrates that the infliction of cruelty against animals can be used for the diagnosis of childhood disorders and the result of physical violence. Clifton Flynn, 'Exploring the Link Between Corporal Punishment and Children's Cruelty to Animals', *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 61.4 (1999), 971–981. This study, however, is only partial and focuses on the effect of corporal punishment on boys when applied by male adults.

“Now, sir, what did you want to treat that poor dumb beast so, for?”
 “I done it out of pity for him—because he hadn’t any aunt.”
 “Hadn’t any aunt!—You numskull. What has that got to do with it?”
 “Heaps. Because if he’d had one she’d a burnt him out herself! She’d a roasted his bowels out of him ‘thout any more feeling than if he was a human!”
 Aunt Polly felt a sudden pang of remorse. This was putting the thing in a new light; what was cruelty to a cat might be cruelty to a boy too. She began to soften; she felt sorry. Her eyes watered a little, and she put her hand on Tom’s head’. [...]
 “Oh, go’ long with you, Tom, before you aggravate me again. And you try and see if you can’t be a good boy, for once, and you needn’t take any more medicine.” (81–82)²⁰

Aunt Polly is able for a moment to perceive Tom’s pain and to see her own attitude as cruel. Yet this moment is only brief. According to Stahl, this episode suggests that ‘children and adults are subject to the same temperamental impulses, hypocrisies, and contradictions.’²¹ However, Aunt Polly’s contradictions have more weight than Tom’s qualms and the passage also implies that, although defiant, the child is not the adult’s equal. While Tom’s aunt accepts her nephew’s lesson and learns for a moment to see punishment through his perspective, she eventually returns to physical violence, from which she finds it impossible to depart completely. To an extent, physical punishment is treated like the issue of race in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*; although showing many moments of sympathy, Aunt Polly struggles to develop full moral compassion for Tom.

As opposed to boys, girl characters are never indifferent to corporal punishment in our texts. In *Little Men*, corporal sanctions trigger emotions, even in the punisher. Like Mr Bhaer, who told the children about an episode of corporal punishment in his own childhood, Mrs Bhaer recounts a time when she was whipped by her mother:

“I turned round and said, “Well, you are mad yourself, and ought to be whipped as much as me.” She looked at me a minute, then her anger all died out, and she said, as if ashamed, “[...] Forgive me, dear, and let us try to help one another in a better way.” I never forgot it, and it did me more good than a dozen rods.” (156)

²⁰ In his autobiographical writings, Twain explains how he had deliberately fed pain-killer to his own mother’s cat, but the autobiographical account of the event makes no mention of a similar dialogue with his mother. Mark Twain, *Autobiographical Writings* (London: Penguin Books, 2012), pp. 65–66.

²¹ Stahl (1996), p. 170. For David Macleod, nineteenth-century American popular culture ‘commonly treated punishment of children as a joke.’ Authors, including Mark Twain, he claims, transformed whipping into humorous episodes. Macleod, p. 57.

Her mother's reaction and ability to recognise her wrongdoing are very modern. So is the suggestion that child and adult can work collaboratively to help one another, instead of acting like enemies. Jo's rebellion, although she knew that she was in the wrong, suggests how, as a child, she understood that her body belonged to her and that bodily pain was never justified. She was therefore treated as an equal by her mother, who asked for her forgiveness.

However, Jo Bhaer's revolt in the face of bodily pain is unusual for a girl character in our corpus. Although girls are rarely beaten, the threat of corporal punishment appears in several titles and provokes in the girls fear and distress. In *Tom Sawyer*, Becky is terrified at the idea of being whipped after she tore a page from Mr. Dobbins's secret book, a medical volume he keeps locked away: "I'll be whipped, and I never was whipped in school!" Tom finds it difficult to understand her reaction: "What a curious kind of a fool a girl is. Never been licked in school! What's a licking! That's just like a girl — they're so thin-skinned and chicken hearted." (121) In a chivalric movement, he decides to take Becky's whipping, receiving 'without an outcry the most merciless flaying that even Mr. Dobbins had ever administered.' (123) Tom's lack of reaction to pain attests to his masculine superiority, while Becky's sensitivity and fear of physical chastisement are a token of her delicate femininity. This gender difference with regard to children's tolerance of pain is also striking in *Poil de Carotte*. When Mme Lepic arrives at Poil de Carotte and Mathilde's pretend wedding, Poil de Carotte defies his mother's beatings. Pretending not to be hurt, he tells her: "Qu'est-ce que ça fait, pourvu qu'on rigole !" (88) [What does it matter, so long as one has a fling!]. Mathilde, on the contrary, is terrified at the idea of being punished by her own mother and cries: 'ma maman va me battre', [my mamma will beat me]. Poil de Carotte, mocking the discourse of adults, corrects her: "Corriger ; on dit corriger, comme pour les devoirs de vacances.' (87) [Correct you; one says correct, as for a holiday task.] He renders explicit to Mathilde, and to readers, that he is not blind to adults' real motives: punishment is supposedly used to improve children, like an extra-curricular activity. Like Twain, Renard suggests that although some children can be defiant to adults' coercive attitudes and see through the meanings that adults attribute to pain, they are nonetheless not fully equal to them since they cannot always avoid being beaten.

Sensitivity and a proclivity to pain are common in titles with a female protagonist. Some girls do not receive corporal sanctions applied by adults, yet they suffer physically in other ways as retribution for their wrongdoings. In *What Katy Did*, pain is used as a pedagogical instrument for the improvement of Katy's morality. On Valentine's day, Katy receives a poem from her cousin Helen, who also suffers from a disability and is the epitome of the selfless feminine ideal. In this poem, Helen posits pain and love as key pedagogical tools. In order to grow, Katy must first attend the School of Pain then progress to the classroom of Love. The poem suggests that Katy's predicaments are not accidental but the result of divine intervention and her pain is an instrument to good. The repetition of the word 'pain' at the end of each stanza insists on the ordinariness of the girl's suffering. As in *Kind Little Edmund*, *Tom Sawyer* and *Petit Diable*, pain seems like a normal component of the pupil's life. However, unlike her male counterparts, Katy must not ignore her suffering; instead, she must discover how to yield to it and use it to improve herself. The poem provides meaning and purpose to Katy's pain, which seems arbitrary and unjust to her:

I used to go to a bright school
Where Youth and Frolic taught in turn;
But idle scholar that I was,
I liked to play, I would not learn;
So the Great Teacher did ordain
That I should try the School of Pain.

One of the infant class I am
With little, easy lessons, set
In a great book; the higher class
Have harder ones than I, and yet
I find mine hard, and can't restrain
My tears while studying thus with Pain.

There are two teachers in the school,
One has a gentle voice and low,
And smiles upon her scholars, as
She softly passes to and fro.
Her name is Love; 'tis very plain
She shuns the sharper teacher, Pain.

Or so I sometimes think; and then,
At other times, they meet and kiss,
And look so strangely like, that I

Am puzzled to tell how it is,
Or whence the change which makes it vain
To guess if it be – Love or Pain.

They tell me if I study well,
And learn my lessons, I shall be
Moved upward to that higher class
Where dear Love teaches constantly;
And I work hard, in hopes to gain
Reward, and get away from Pain.

Yet Pain is sometimes kind, and helps
Me on when I am very dull;
I thank him often in my heart;
But Love is far more beautiful;
Under her tender, gentle reign
I must learn faster than of Pain.

So I will do my very best,
Nor chide the clock, nor call it slow;
That when the Teacher calls me up
To see if I am fit to go,
I may to Love's high class attain,
And bid a sweet good-by to Pain.

In the first stanza, pain is explicitly proffered as a punishment, implying that Katy's misfortune was not accidental. The poem suggests that pain is in the control of the sufferer, who has a choice between two paths. Cousin Helen uses the metaphor of the classroom to represent this choice. Katy will only be able to move to the higher class, with Love as a teacher, if she is able to submit to pain and learn from it. The metaphor of the classroom gives a solemn connotation to pain. Pain is therefore only a transition, leading to a higher state. Like a rite of passage, pain marks an important stage in Katy's learning life that will enable her to reach a place of selflessness where she can give herself to others, love and be loved. At the end of the poem, the narrator has internalised the idea that she must endure pain in order to develop and be accepted by others, asserting that 'Pain is sometimes kind [...] I thank him often in my heart'.

Whereas the punishment of Charles, Edmund and Tom had an air of defiance, requiring very little sympathy from readers, Katy's story of pain is like a textbook that unequivocally communicates to readers (both Katy and child readers outside the book) how they should feel and what they should do. Katy's suffering is made

explicit in the poem, as well as in the rest of the novel. Significantly, the poem is written in the first person, expressing Katy's emotions on her behalf. While early on in the narrative, Katy dreamt of doing something 'grand' and wrote tales for her siblings, she is now the passive reader of her own moral story. She has been stripped of her creativity and has lost her own voice. Similarly, the readers of *What Katy Did* are told how to interpret pain and it is suggested that one learns more from yielding to it than from attempting to 'restrain' one's tears. This conveys the opposite message from texts with male protagonists. Therefore, Katy's experience demands more maturity and empathy from readers, who can experience her pain in a vicarious manner.

Katy is not the only girl character who must yield to pain to improve. Hortense Dufour notes that in Ségur's world, girls' pain is a nineteenth-century aristocratic code: 'Pour s'accomplir, la petite fille doit souffrir.'²² [To become accomplished, the little girl must suffer.] In *Les Malheurs*, pain is always the result of Sophie's own wrongdoings and she is the agent of her misfortunes. Like Katy, Sophie is brought up so as to internalise the discourses on the benefits of pain. She is even invited to admire those who harm themselves. When her friend Élisabeth scrapes her own arm to punish herself after hurting her maid (Élisabeth wants to feel the pain she has inflicted on her servant), this is presented as a 'beautiful' gesture, worthy of Sophie's appreciation.²³

Although pain is highly present in texts with a female protagonist, it is rarely the result of corporal sanctions. Even Sophie, who is continuously punished, is whipped only once by her mother and because she committed a double offence (stealing and lying). As opposed to Charles' floggings, the description is brief, unadorned and not illustrated. It is not witnessed by anyone, since Mme de Réan takes Sophie away to a

²² Dufour, p. 289.

²³ In her *Bible d'une grand-mère*, the grandmother explains to the children that self-mortification of the body is necessary so as to expiate their faults and avoid harsher punishments after their death:

“Valentine: Et pourquoi punir son corps ? [...]

Grand'Mère: Si tu ne le punis pas, le bon Dieu le punira après ta mort, et bien plus sévèrement que tu ne l'aurais puni toi-même. Ainsi, il vaut mieux se mortifier pendant qu'on vit, pour que le bon Dieu n'ait plus à punir après la mort.”

[Valentine: “Why punish the body? [...]”

Grandmother: “If you do not punish it, God will after your death, far more severely than you would have yourself. Therefore, it is preferable to mortify our flesh when we are alive, so that God does not have to do it after our death.”] Comtesse de Ségur, *Bible d'une grand-mère, Nouveau Testament* (Paris: Editions Dominique Martin Morin, 1976), p. 35.

private room: ‘Sans rien dire, elle prit Sophie et la fouetta comme elle ne l’avait jamais fouettée. Sophie eut beau crier, demander grâce, elle reçut le fouet de la bonne manière, et il faut avouer qu’elle le méritait.’ (336–337) [Without a word, she took hold of Sophie and whipped her as never before. However much Sophie cried and begged for mercy, she was whipped all the same in the proper way, and admittedly she deserved it.] However, although brief, the scene conveys the idea that pain, if justly administered, can have a profound effect on the girl character. Sophie’s pain is controlled and has an educative value, absent from Mme Mac’Miche’s ferocious floggings, even if the latter deceitfully calls the whip ‘le meilleur moyen d’éducation’ (1156). [the best education system] Like Mr Bhaer’s grandmother, Mme de Réan’s whipping is used as a very last resort, which allows the narrator to approve of it and helps readers to accept it too. As opposed to boy characters, Sophie is profoundly affected by her punishment, to the extent that she will later reproduce its logic on smaller creatures. When the family cat, Beau-Minon, tries to catch birds up a tree, Sophie does not hesitate to whip him, applying ‘de grands coups de verges’ (331) [swinging the rod] in order to correct him. Just as Sophie had internalised the logic of confinement and applied it to a squirrel that she imprisoned, as we saw in the previous chapter, she has assimilated the idea that pain is an effective mode of punishment. The message could seem to be that it is as absurd to whip children for “natural” acts of misbehaviour, but when Sophie is whipped by her mother the narrator is more condoning than critical.

As the differences between Mme MacMiche and Mme de Réan suggest, the attitude of the punisher is crucial to how pain is presented. While corporal punishment is not overwhelmingly present in *Les Malheurs*, it is frequent in *Les Petites Filles modèles*. Sophie’s stepmother, Mme Fichini, calls the whip ‘le meilleur des maîtres’.²⁴ [the best master] However, it is so frequently and arbitrarily applied that it does not have positive results on Sophie. One day, as she is expecting Mme de Fleurville’s punishment, Sophie remarks: ‘Quelle punition va-t-elle m’infliger ? [...] Ah ! Bah ! elle me fouettera. Ma belle-mère m’a tellement fouettée que j’y suis habituée.’ (195) [What punishment will she impose on me? [...] Ha well! She will

²⁴Séguir, *Les Petites Filles modèles*, p. 152.

whip me. My stepmother has whipped me so many times that I am well used to it.] She has become so used to being hurt that it has no more effect.

In a notorious scene, which has contributed to Ségur's sadistic reputation, which we mentioned in the introduction, Mme Fichini savagely beats Sophie for having damaged her clothes.



Fig. 3.5. *Les Petites Filles modèles*, Chapter VIII *Les Hérissons*. Bertall (1857)

As with the illustrations of the floggings of Charles and Tom, Mme Fichini's arm is raised and suspended in the air, suggesting her intention to inflict pain. Yet, as opposed to Charles and Tom, Sophie's lower body is naked, and readers can immediately imagine the marks that the whip will leave on her skin.²⁵ The text is also explicit: 'criant, courant et sautant par excès de souffrance, le corps rayé et rougi par la verge dont les débris gisaient à terre.'²⁶ [screaming, running and jumping in extreme pain. Her body was red and lacerated, and bits of the rod lay on the floor.] Readers can share Sophie's pain and the narrator directly provokes much sympathy by portraying her as a suffering victim. Unlike her male counterparts, Sophie's pain is also conveyed through her facial expression, which is not concealed.

Placed at the centre of the picture, Sophie's terror and hurt are palpable. Around her are the other young characters witnessing the scene. They also look terrified, suggesting that corporal punishment is here condemned. On the right, Mme de Fleurville attempts to reason with Sophie's stepmother, suggesting that this level of violence is excessive. A model of temperance, Mme de Fleurville rejects corporal

²⁵ When Mme Mac'Miche whips Charles, she threatens to take off his short trousers, underneath his tartan, but does not do it. In the illustration (Fig. 3.2.), he is supposedly still wearing them, although this is not necessarily obvious to the eye.

²⁶ Ségur, *Les Petites Filles modèles*, p. 152.

punishment, declaring to Sophie: ‘je ne fouette jamais’.²⁷ [I never whip] The narrator also condemns Mme Fichini’s educational method, calling her a bad mother (‘mauvaise mère’) and finding her punishment too strict (‘une répression trop sévère’).²⁸ [too strict a form of repression] In Ségur’s work, notes Dufour, women who resort often to whipping are common, ‘vulgar’ women,²⁹ outside the aristocratic world. As we saw in the first chapter, corporal punishment was falling out of favour among the French upper classes.³⁰

In Ségur’s educational system, moderate educators turn to less somatic forms of correction. In the case of Sophie, these punishments include shame, humiliation and reproach, which have a profound effect on her. The fear of being reprimanded has such an impact that Sophie is ready to endure pain in order to avoid being scolded. On one occasion, when giving a piece of bread to her pony, gluttonous Sophie tries to keep a piece for herself and holds the bread so awkwardly that the pony bites her finger. Dreading her mother’s rebuke, the four-year-old girl stays quiet and hides her bleeding finger: ‘[l]e doigt de Sophie saignait si fort que le sang coulait à terre. [...] Sophie cacha sa main enveloppée sous son tablier, et la maman ne vit rien.’ (293) [Sophie’s finger bled so much that there were drops of blood on the floor. [...] Sophie wrapped her hand in her pinafore to hide it, and her mamma did not notice anything.]

Psychological punishments, notably through humiliation and shame, are frequent in *Les Malheurs*; they are also painful and effective corrections. After Sophie steals some items and lies, she is forced to stand in a corner.³¹ Her humiliation is supposed to make her feel ashamed in front of others, notably the servants who call her a thief. In the illustration below, Castelli shows Sophie in the corner, a large sheet of paper attached to her back with the word ‘thief’ written on it in large letters for the servants (and the readers) to see.

²⁷ Ségur, *Les Petites Filles modèles*, p. 191.

²⁸ Ségur, *Les Petites Filles modèles*, p. 153.

²⁹ Dufour, p. 286.

³⁰ Michelle Perrot, p. 159.

³¹ As we saw in Chapter Two, corners are highly ambivalent spaces. The image of Sophie evokes misbehaving pupils who, in the context of schools, were for a long time chastised and stigmatised by being sent to a corner wearing a dunce cap. The French children’s writer Daniel Pennac evokes them in his book on the figure of the school dunce in *Chagrin d’école* (2007).



Fig. 3.6. *Les Malheurs de Sophie*, Chapter XVIII: *La boîte à ouvrage*. Castelli (1858)

Sophie's punishments often involve being mocked. After she has cut a bee into pieces, her mother forces her to wear the pieces around her neck for everyone to see, "jusqu'à ce qu'ils tombent en poussière." (288) [until they crumble into dust] When she cuts her eyebrows, believing they will grow thicker, Sophie must draw lines with charcoal to replace them. During episodes of psychological pain, Mme de Réan's direct intervention is minimal. Sophie's punishment is to be laughed at by anyone who sees her: 'Toutes les personnes qui la voyaient riaient aux éclats.' (292) [everyone would burst out laughing at the sight of her] In the following illustration, Sophie is surrounded by the mocking faces of those closest to her: her parents, her cousin Paul and the servants.



Fig. 3.7. *Les Malheurs de Sophie*, Chapter VIII: *Les sourcils coupés*. Castelli (1858)

Sophie's face, although not in the middle of the picture, is nonetheless presented as the centre of everyone else's attention. Thus, humiliation functions as a spectacle where the hurt of the child takes centre stage. On another occasion, to curl her hair, Sophie stands under a drain. She rushes back in to dry herself and meets her mother, who laughs scornfully at her, calling her 'ridicule' (290). Sophie is forced to stay "les cheveux en l'air, la robe trempée, afin que votre papa et votre cousin Paul voient vos belles inventions." (290) [your hair standing up straight on your head and your dress drenched for your papa and your cousin Paul to see your fine inventions.]

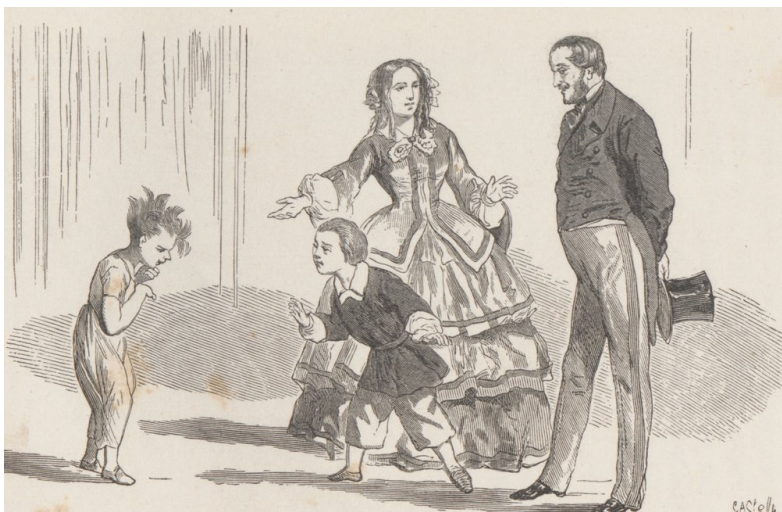


Fig. 3.8. *Les Malheurs de Sophie*, Chapter VII: *Les cheveux mouillés*. Castelli (1858)

Paradoxically, by altering her appearance in order to conform to feminine standards (thicker eyebrows and curly hair), Sophie has spoiled her girlhood and the mockery emerges from the loss of her feminine features. In the illustration above, the gestures of the family indicate their excitement. At first, everyone finds in her ‘un air risible’. [a laughable appearance] But her cousin Paul and her father are progressively pained for her. They ask Sophie’s mother to let her go to her room: “‘ma tante, je vous en prie, pardonnez-lui’”, [I beg you my aunt, forgive her] pleads Paul, while Sophie’s father “‘demande grâce’” (290). [asks for mercy for her] In the illustration, Sophie’s crouched body suggests the idea of shame and pain, which is made available to the other characters and to readers. In an interesting parental dynamic, her mother agrees only to please her husband, and Sophie spends the evening alone in her room. Like the Queen in *Wonderland*, the mother behaves as a supreme ruler over other members of the family.

In French titles, painful humiliation is not limited to girls. Poil de Carotte is often mocked and made to feel ashamed in front of others. When his mother discovers lice in his hair, she decides to punish him and sends him outside: ‘emporte ta cuvette et va l’exposer sur le mur du jardin. Il faut que tout le village défile devant, pour ta confusion.’ (65) [you can take that basin and go and put it on show on the garden wall. When the whole village has been past, perhaps you’ll be sorry.] Suggesting that the boy did wrong (lice were associated with a lack of hygiene), his humiliation is intended to provoke remorse. The external gaze of others (neighbours) helps to internalise discipline. Significantly, the bucket is placed on the threshold of the domestic sphere, the garden wall, accentuating the boy’s sense of confinement, which we discussed in the previous chapter. However, as opposed to Sophie, it is not evident whether Poil de Carotte feels pain. When a neighbour stops and commiserates with him, the boy rejects her compassion: ‘Mêlez-vous de vos affaires et laissez-moi tranquille.’ (65) [Mind your own business, and leave me alone.] Renard creates contradictory feelings in readers who are at first made to empathise with the boy’s misery, then led to believe that he is not suffering.

A general pattern emerges across all three nations with regard to the demonstration of pain, with boy characters being less inclined to express their emotions. Girl characters are made to yield to pain, both physical and psychological, and, contrary to male protagonists, they do not stand out from other characters for their ability to defy adults' violence. Similarly, adult characters who chastise boys are often themselves devoid of emotion. However, Renard shows the opacity of adults' discourses and, although his character is devoid of emotion, this does not mean that punishment is without consequences. Violence against children creates a vicious circle whereby the child victim inexorably wants to cause pain to others, unable to escape or explain his own brutality against smaller creatures. Whether Renard intended this or not, his text is very progressive, and indicates how deeply children are affected by physical pain, even when they do not acknowledge it.

The spectacle of pain

As we have seen in the previous section, the representation and suggestion of pain has an impact on readers' identification or sympathy with young characters. This representation is very much conceived as a form of spectacle, to be observed by external onlookers. For Moscoso, '[t]he experience of harm has its actors, plot, stage, costumes, props, scenography, and its audience.'³² Some of our texts were also conceived for the theatre. Renard not only adapted *Poil de Carotte* into a play in 1900, but the fragmented original text itself has many theatrical aspects. One of the later chapters, *Coup de théâtre*, is entirely conceived as a play, divided into five scenes, with stage directions. Significantly, the chapter opens with Mme Lepic threatening to slap her son: 'Sa main droite recule comme pour prendre son élan' (93). [She draws back her right hand as though to strike] Conversely, prior to being a novel, *A Little Princess* went from a short novella to a three-act drama. Burnett decided to rework it into a longer novel as a result of it being highly successful.

Other texts, although not conceived for the theatre, have strong theatrical qualities. Harvey Darton notes about Ewing's stories that '[o]ne might almost call

³² Moscoso, p. 2.

the construction of her scenes theatrical, in fact, because she had a considerable gift of dramatic vision'.³³ In *The New Mother*, the monstrous punitive mother announces her arrival with three loud knocks on the cottage's door, as if indicating the commencement of a theatre play. Charles Dodgson was an avid theatre-goer and theatrical effects can also be found in Carroll's text. In particular, at the Duchess's house, the rendering of the poem 'Speak roughly to your little boy' (an alteration of 'Speak Gently' by David Bates (1849)) turns into a dramatic performance. The Duchess violently shakes her child at the end of each line to accompany her song, as with a pair of castanets. The cook and the infant merrily join in for the chorus, while Alice and the readers are the spectators of this oddly comical violence. This dramatic excess is echoed in the cook's violent gestures. To an extent, the theatrical aspects of the narrative provide distance from the violence of the episode, protecting readers' sensibilities. For Susina, Carroll did not radically depart from the didactic literature he imitates, but was 'critical of the manner and the excessive amounts of didacticism'.³⁴ Similarly, the exaggerated performance of the Duchess is a form of theatrical burlesque, making fun of parental punitive threats and practices.

Many of the authors in our corpus are aware of the theatrical qualities of punishment, of how it can attract and amuse spectators (and readers). Poil de Carotte, for instance, is often punished in front of his sister and brother, who are delighted to witness his misery. When he is whipped for organising his pretend wedding to Mathilde, his brother Félix wants to watch the scene and he makes sure that he can see everything: 'Il s'enfuit au bout du pré. Il est à l'abri et peut voir.' (87) [He flees to the other side of the meadow, where he can hide and watch.] Later, when Poil de Carotte challenges his mother, '[g]rand frère Félix se croit au spectacle. Il ne céderait sa place à personne.' (112) [Felix enjoys it as much as a play. He wouldn't give up his seat to anyone.] After Poil de Carotte has wet his bed, Mme Lepic decides to feed him a soup in which she has added some of his urine. She calls his siblings to watch the scene: 'À son chevet, grand frère Félix et sœur Ernestine observent Poil de Carotte d'un air sournois, prêts à éclater de rire au

³³ Harvey Darton, *Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life*, 3rd edn (London: The British Library, 1982), p. 285.

³⁴ 'Kingsley and Carroll both satirize what they consider excessive moralizing in other children's books, while simultaneously promoting middle-class ideology in their children's own texts.' Jan Susina, *The Place of Lewis Carroll in Children's Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 39.

premier signal. [...] Par avance, ils s’amusent des grimaces futures. On aurait dû inviter quelques voisins.’ (13) [At his bedside Felix and Ernestine watch with an artful air, ready at the first sight to burst out laughing. [...] They smirk in anticipation. Some of the neighbours should have been called in.] The children regret that the audience is not larger, which would perhaps have enhanced their experience. In these scenes, the narrator’s detached voice resembles stage directions, neutral, objective and distant. One of the first illustrations of the novel, reproduced below, depicts this episode. Poil de Carotte’s family is assembled around him, all of them ostensibly smiling at the idea of the child’s punishment. While the readers share their knowledge, Poil de Carotte is oblivious to his abuse. The three standing characters form a wall as if enclosing the child who, keeping his head low, looks even more like a sentenced victim.



Fig. 3.9. *Poil de Carotte*, Chapter: *Sauf votre respect*. Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen (1895). This is one of the first two illustrations accompanying the serialised publication of *Poil de Carotte* in the periodical *Gil Blas*.

The pleasure shown by Poil de Carotte’s siblings (in the image above, they are ostensibly smiling) evokes the enjoyment of crowds at public executions, which we find in other books. In *Les Frères Kip*, the crowd gathers in the early hours on the day of the two brothers’ planned execution – they have initially been sentenced to death and are then granted a reprieve. In *Tom Sawyer*, punishment is often a moment of public festivity. When Injun Joe is buried near the mouth of the cave where he

was found dead, ‘people flocked there in boats and wagons [...] and confessed that they had had almost as satisfactory a time at the funeral as they could have had at the hanging.’ (187) The pleasure of watching punishment also occurs at school, and Mr. Dobbins’s classroom is like a stage used for the performance of corporal punishment for the delight of pupils. Beatings are welcomed with a ‘titter’ or the ‘peppering fire of giggles from the whole school’ (52), and they seem to be intended for ‘the whole school to enjoy’. (54) The schoolmaster knows this and collaborates in the performance. He tiptoes behind the boys and ‘contemplated a good part of the performance before he contributed his bit of variety to it.’ (54) For Jerry Griswold, in *Tom Sawyer* ‘we enter the Theatre of feelings and see, for the most part, a comedy that [...] pokes fun at the pallid sufferers of earlier American Children’s Literature, the aggrieved child’.³⁵ But the delight of direct onlookers suggests to readers that corporal punishment can be amusing and does not always have to be taken seriously. Tom’s lack of reaction, the master’s emotional void and the schoolboys’ enjoyment all contribute to the desacralisation of punishment.

In *Little Men*, Louisa May Alcott also deftly suggests that the pain of others is an irresistible spectacle. In Chapter Four, Mr Bhaer uses an innovative punitive technique whereby the role of the punishing adult and the punished child are reversed. Young Nat is thus forced to whip Mr Bhaer’s hand with a ruler for having lied. Outside the room where this unusual punishment takes place stands Tommy, who cannot help but sneak a look at the scene through the window. He ‘beheld a sight that quite bewildered him’ (49). The narrator describes how Tommy’s ‘heart beat fast at the sight’ (50) and how he cannot look elsewhere: ‘he nearly tumbled down the bank, but saved himself, and hung on to the window ledge, staring in with eyes as round as the stuffed owl’s on the chimney piece.’ (50) Tommy is the focalizer of the scene and sees everything through half-closed blinds, a detail that adds a theatrical quality to the passage. His emotions are a mixture of excitement and solemnity. Yet it is not the spectacle of physical pain which is the focus of the text, but instead its impact on the young characters’ imagination. Tommy, who witnessed everything, rushes to the others pupils to share what he saw, ‘looking so excited’. Alcott suggests that the spectacle of punishment generates a powerful

³⁵ Jerry Griswold, *Audacious Kids: Coming of Age in America’s Classic Children’s Books* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 155.

chain of reaction, a domino effect: first it affects participants, then direct observers and finally external witnesses by proxy, echoing the great potential power of books on children.

The theatricality of punishment is at its apex in the numerous trial scenes that can be found in our corpus. Trials, even more than punishment, allow authors to share the excitement of a public performance, while protecting readers' sensitivity, acting upon their imagination instead. Trials, like public scenes of punishment, are also interesting for the alignment of their audience: not only are there direct witnesses within the book, but there are also external witnesses (readers). The fictional audience is often large or clamorous. In *Les Frères Kip*, the narrator dwells on the size of the mob in the courtroom: 'Il y eut foule à l'intérieur de la salle, foule dans les rues avoisinantes.' (316) [The courtroom was crowded, and so were the neighbouring streets.] Yet child readers are not driven to identify with the audience, which is portrayed as menacing: '[d]es cris de vengeance accueillirent les accusés dès leur sortie de la prison.' (316)³⁶ [as soon as they left the prison, the accused were met with cries of vengeance.] Readers are instead led to empathise with the emotions of the brothers being judged. Similarly, those attending the trial in *The Land of Lost Toys* also express their anger and desire for revenge. The trial concludes the framed narrative and it is a highly dramatic moment. Aunt Penelope's old toys are the spectators and the accused prisoner 'at the bar' (34) is the main protagonist and narrator, Aunt Penelope herself. Accused of negligence towards her old toys, the latter want 'revenge'. The intensity of the episode is mostly generated by the thrill of the audience: 'There was a great deal of excitement' (34). As in *Les Frères Kip*, they are a menacing raging mob. In *Tom Sawyer* too, the trial of Muff Potter is a very public affair. The audience's reaction is passionate as well; as they wait for the trial to begin, they are captivated: 'details and accompanying delays worked up an atmosphere of preparation that was as impressive as it was fascinating.' (136) As the

³⁶ Verne criticises the mob's desire to see the brothers punished, and his critique is underpinned by nationalistic ideology, as we have seen in Chapter Two. Later, the narrator comments: 'on sait combien chez les races saxonnes comme chez les races latines, ces supplices provoquent d'irrésistibles et malsaines curiosités. Si, d'après les lois anglaises, la pendaison des condamnés n'est pas faite en place publique, mais seulement en présence de personnes désignées, c'est déjà un progrès. Toutefois la foule ne s'en amasse pas moins aux abords de la prison.' (342) [it is a well-known fact that the Anglo-Saxon and Latin races have an irresistible and unhealthy attraction to these types of torture. Under British law, hanging does not take place in public but is attended only by designated people, and this is already progress. Crowds still gather around the prison nonetheless.]

trial takes place, the audience's frustration grows when Muff Potter's lawyer fails to cross-examine witnesses: 'The perplexity and dissatisfaction of the house expressed itself in murmurs' (137).

Alice is also very excited when she finds herself in a courtroom. At the start, she is only a passive observer, and so are the readers who witness everything through Alice's experience and opinions. Alice finds intellectual satisfaction in watching the trial and has a sense of pride in what she knows about the proceedings: 'she was quite pleased to find that she knew the name of nearly everything there.' (95). Yet quickly she becomes bored and wishes for the trial to end so that she can enjoy the refreshments, seeking entertainment and pleasure. However, when several witnesses are being called, and the White Rabbit fumbles over his list prompting a little bit of suspense, Alice is again 'very curious to see what the next witness would be like' (101). Her interest grows when the court begins to debate the issue of the prisoner's culpability. This question fascinates her and her first direct contribution is linked to the demonstration of guilt: 'It doesn't prove anything of the sort!' (105), she declares when the King and the Queen try to demonstrate the knave's responsibility. Alice rebels against the absurdity of their reasoning,³⁷ and the trial's outcome cannot be anything other than unsatisfactory to her since the punishment does not fit the crime.³⁸

Although trials are exciting and entertaining, their verdicts can be frightening, even if they are rarely actualised. In *Les Frères Kip*, the verdict attracts the crowd: '[l]e public afflua aussitôt, s'étouffant, s'écrasant, au milieu d'une rumeur et d'une agitation portées à leur comble.' (328) [instantly people gathered, suffocating and crushing each other, amidst a peak of clamour and turmoil.] When the brothers are sentenced to death, some people in the audience clap as if in a theatre. The narrator draws on the brothers' emotions to create a bond of sympathy with readers and guide them to reflect on the notions of guilt and unfair punishment. In the end, a

³⁷The King and the Queen claim that an unsigned letter incriminates the Knave, precisely because it is unsigned: 'You *must* have meant some mischief, or else you'd have signed your name like an honest man.' (105)

³⁸Critics looking at the interactions between law and literature have paid particular attention to the trial scene in *Wonderland*. For Richard Posner, although the trial in *Wonderland* is exaggerated, it does generate 'effective satire', because its elements relate to real trials. Posner, p. 70.

plea for a reprieve is accepted: the two brothers' death penalty is not applied and they are instead sent to Port-Arthur.

In *Wonderland*, the trial's process is disorientating. The King wants the jury to consider their verdict before they have heard the witnesses and the Queen's demands ('sentence first—verdict afterwards' (107)) seem absurd to Alice. The Queen wants to see Alice's head cut off but, like all her other threats, this is not actualised. While the King and the Queen may seem aggressive, they do not perform any punishments. As Kiera Vaclavik notes, 'even the violent, hard-talking Queen of Hearts and the Duchess are impotent and ridiculous rather than truly evil or dangerous'.³⁹ The Gryphon explains to Alice that when punishments are imaginary, they are amusing and should not be feared. While the Queen is running around threatening to cut off people's heads and, as if realising that Alice 'had felt quite unhappy at the number of executions the Queen had ordered' (81), the Gryphon reassures Alice:

The Gryphon sat up and rubbed its eyes: then it watched the Queen till she was out of sight: then it chuckled. "What fun!" said the Gryphon, half to itself, half to Alice.

"What is the fun?" said Alice.

"Why, she," said the Gryphon. "It's all her fancy, that: they never execute nobody, you know. Come on!" (82)

Similarly, in *Tom Sawyer*, Muff Potter's punishment does not take place (he faced the death penalty). Tom reveals that the true criminal was Injun Joe. Tom plays a central role in helping to clear Muff Potter of his accusation and finds himself at the centre of the trial stage. In a dramatic moment, the boy is called to the bar: '[a] puzzled amazement awoke in every face [...]. Every eye fastened itself with wondering interest upon Tom'. (137) In *The Land of Lost Toys* too, the toys' sentences pronounced at Aunt Penelope's trial are frightening but they are not realised. Based on the idea of analogous punishments, each punishment reflects one of the crimes Aunt Penelope committed against the toys. The suggested measures are extreme: 'to be burnt like a Guy Fawkes', 'die of thirst', '[s]aw off her legs', '[t]ake her to pieces' and '[t]hrow her into the dust hole' (34–36). Some of the punishments are so terrible that Aunt Penelope prefers not to name them: 'Terrible

³⁹ Vaclavik, p. 47.

sentences were passed, which I either failed to hear through the clamour then, or have forgotten now.' (39) By omitting them and not providing details, she protects her audience's sensitivity.⁴⁰

In *Wonderland*, although threats are never actualised, the trial still communicates an atmosphere of oppression and unfair justice. The Dormouse for instance is thrown out of court, ordered to be 'suppressed' and pinched. In *The Land of Lost Toys*, the trial, most particularly the verdict, is not reassuring. While the trial is public, the final sentence is conducted in private. For Jeffrey Polet, '[w]hile in former times the determination of guilt took place in private and the punishment itself was public, we live in a world where determinations of guilt are public and punishment private.'⁴¹ Aunt Penelope is taken away and punished in private by her oldest toy, her doll Rosa, who makes her feel neglected. While this punishment may seem respectful of the audience's sensibility, in comparison with the threats of the other toys, it is in fact based on the very idea of insensibility. Rosa ignores Aunt Penelope's needs and lets her suffer emotionally instead of physically. Therefore, the threats uttered at the trial would perhaps have had less impact than Rosa's insensitive neglect, which appears as parents' ultimate and most distressful punishment, as we shall see in more detail in the next chapter.

With trials, the determination of guilt, the notions of innocence, culpability and fairness run through many texts. In *Les Frères Kip*, readers are aware of the brothers' innocence and the narrator insists on the injustice of their sentence. As they await their execution, the narrative voice emphasises the fact that they are about to be condemned for a crime they did not commit. In *Wonderland*, the motifs of the court of justice and fairness are introduced early on with the mouse's emblematic poem. In it, Old Fury tells the mouse 'Let us both go to law: I will prosecute you' (28). The mouse notes that there is no jury and no judge, to which Fury replies he will be the jury. The poem ends with the threat of death and tackles the notion of unfair and arbitrary punishment, a theme that runs through the rest of the framed narrative.

⁴⁰ Ewing's depiction of the toys, at first alluring, then becoming terrifying, is evocative of the Land of Toys in Collodi's *The Adventures of Pinocchio*. In the Land of Toys, Pinocchio first spends his time having fun, but when he is transformed into a donkey and sold to a circus manager, his life becomes one of punishment and mistreatment. As an animal, he is regularly whipped in order to 'school' him, a metaphor that evokes the view that children's will needs to be broken.

⁴¹ Polet, p. 208.

Trials are closely tied into the educational and moral underpinning of the texts. They had been used to induce a sense of right and wrong in schools, during educational mock judicial proceedings, as Myra Glenn notes: ‘a child accused of theft was placed under “arrest” and judged by his peers. School monitors were the jury, and the whole proceeding ran like a criminal court [...] the “guilty” child burst into tears and confessed his crime.’⁴² Such trials appeared in early children’s books to teach young readers how to become law-abiding citizens. Even Alice explains that she is familiar with a court of justice because she has ‘read about them in books, and she was quite pleased to find that she knew the name of nearly everything there’ (95). Trials can be found, for instance, in a late eighteenth-century English book for children, *Juvenile Trials for Robbing Orchards, Telling Fibs, And Other Heinous Crimes* (1786), whose frontispiece is reproduced below.⁴³

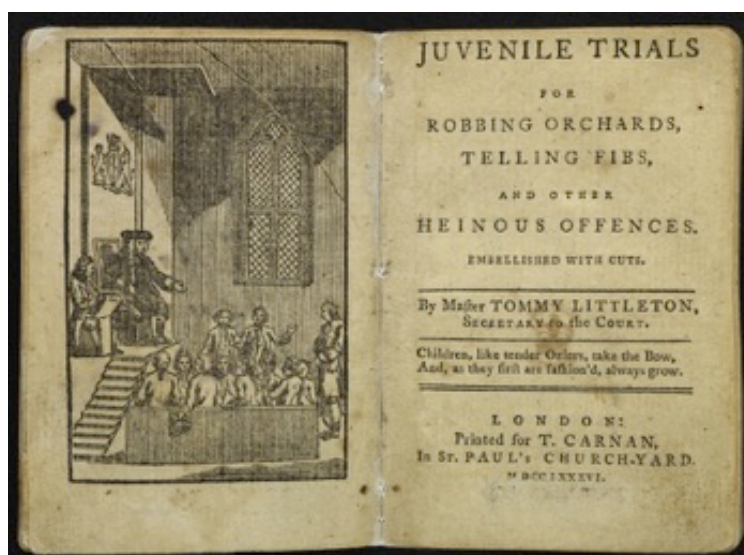


Fig. 3.10. *Juvenile Trials for Robbing Orchards, Telling Fibs, And Other Heinous Crimes* (1786)

The illustration above has many similarities to the illustration of the trial in *Wonderland*. Both images appear as frontispieces and, in the image above, the judge sits on a raised platform, with a coat of arms behind him, like the King and the Queen in Tenniel’s illustration reproduced on the following page. The King is wearing a judge’s wig, like the judge above, while the White Rabbit is placed in the same position as the herald above.

⁴² Glenn, p. 143.

⁴³ Matthew White, ‘Juvenile crime in the 19th century’ <<http://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/juvenile-crime-in-the-19th-century>> [accessed 11.02.2014].



Fig. 3.11. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*,
Frontispiece, John Tenniel (1865)

However, Tenniel's illustration contains more peculiar details than the illustration of the juvenile trials. Instead of children, the jury comprises the various animal creatures that Alice has met in *Wonderland*, as if her encounters and adventures have culminated in this final discussion about guilt. 'Trials' theatrical qualities meant that they could be used to instil a sense of morality and justice by making children actively participate in the delivery of verdicts and sentences, perhaps to vicariously experience the feelings of those accused. There is something very progressive about such endeavours. As the judges are children, they must comprehend the moral obligations and rationales of those judging. However, this may also help to reinforce the validity of moral rules and the authority of those delivering the sentences, and therefore of parents. In *Tom Sanyer*, the children have fully integrated the moral logic of trials and when Tom is walking down the street one day, 'he found Jim Hollis acting as judge in a juvenile court that was trying a cat for murder, in the presence of her victim, a bird.' (133)⁴⁴ In our texts, the spectacle of punitive justice, violence and pain testifies to authors' desire to entertain readers while reinforcing moral values and also making them consider notions of fairness.

⁴⁴ Just like Sophie, who decides to punish Beau-Minon for attacking birds, Tom has integrated adults' punitive logic.

Punishment is used not only to engage readers morally, but also to provide reading pleasure by participating in the narrative drive. In our texts, punitive episodes are essential elements of the plot, building tension and intensifying suspense. Making punishment entertaining can have an immediate appeal for adult purchasers and publishers; stories can convey moral values without being dull and putting off their readers, thus guaranteeing their consumption. Children sometimes dread boredom so much that adults use it as a form of punishment. Linda Pollock reports a note from a girl who grew up in the 1870s, explaining how her mother, when she wanted to punish her children, would send them to the hairdresser because she knew they would get bored.⁴⁵ Our authors are keenly aware of how much boredom can affect readers and understand that it should be avoided. Like Alice, young readers could easily reject a book if they did not find it exciting. Although Alice has nothing to do on the riverbank, she discards her sister's book because it has no pictures or conversations. Instead, she uses imaginary adventures to avoid monotony: 'it seemed quite dull and stupid for life to go on in the common way.' (15) The thrilling sensations that come with extraordinary events, even if they are not always pleasant, are preferable to the ordinariness of daily realities. The theme of boredom re-emerges at the end of the framing narrative when Alice's sister closes her eyes and tries to imagine herself in Wonderland, 'though she knew she had but to open them again, and all would change to dull reality' (110). Charles too knows well that fictional adventures can alleviate boredom and withholds them in order to punish his guardian. To entertain her, he reads aloud Dicken's *Nicholas Nickleby*: 'je ne lui ferai pas la lecture pendant ce temps, elle s'ennuiera, elle n'aura pas la fin de Nicolas Nickleby'. (1134) [I will not read to her; she will get bored and will never know the end of *Nicholas Nickleby*.]

References to monotony and tediousness, in general and with regard to punishment, also appear in other titles, indicating how crucial this issue was for our writers. In Alcott's *Jo's Boys*, convicts prick their ears during Sunday service when someone makes a speech, 'for any change in their monotonous life was welcome.'

⁴⁵ Pollock, p. 191.

(410) Criminals must also endure boredom as a symbolic punishment for their transgression. Injun Joe not only suffers from thirst and starvation, but also ‘hacked that place in order to be doing something—in order to pass the weary time—in order to employ his tortured faculties.’ (186) Boredom is a recurring theme in *Tom Sawyer* and Tom associates it with the deprivation of his liberty. At school he longs ‘to be free, or else to have something of interest to do to pass the dreary time.’ (53) Tom himself is celebrated for his entertaining stories; even if they are transgressions of the community’s rules, they alleviate the daily monotony. ‘His behaviour is not only tolerated but appreciated, because he provides entertainment, relief from boredom’, notes Robert Paul Lamb.⁴⁶ Lamb also remarks that ‘society scapegoats transgressors [...], yet without transgressors everyone would die of boredom.’⁴⁷ One of *Little Men*’s reviewers observed that readers take pleasure in vicarious transgressions or being ‘a little heretic by proxy’: ‘we are delighted with the liberties which we do not venture to imitate. Safe within the pale of propriety, we delight in seeing others commit a trespass upon guarded ground. [...] this is a delightful titillation to the conventional or timid reader, and shall we grudge them their gratification?’⁴⁸ Contemporary reviewers were therefore aware of readers’ desires to see characters take liberties and go beyond the limits normally imposed on readers by their parents. Alcott acknowledges the pleasures of transgression with ‘The Naughty Kitty-mouse’, a fictional character created by the children. It orders them to commit exciting transgressions and they obey with a ‘fearful pleasure’ (94). The name they choose for their imaginary character indicates how naughtiness participates in entertainment and can be the source of pleasurable games. Similarly, the village girl in *The New Mother* explains that transgressions are attractive because they are varied and break the monotony of good behaviour: ‘The pleasure of goodness centres in itself; the pleasures of naughtiness are many and varied.’ (82)

While authors felt it was their duty to morally educate their readers, they also realised that readers would not accept lessons about discipline and moral values if they found them tedious. Judy Simon writes, ‘[w]hile writers for children after 1850 may have moved away from the overt didacticism characteristic of previous

⁴⁶ Lamb, p. 477.

⁴⁷ Lamb, p. 477.

⁴⁸ “Little Men” *The Independent* (29 June 1871), in Lyon Clark, *Louisa May Alcott: The Contemporary Reviews*, p. 145.

decades, many were nevertheless highly conscious of their obligations to edify the audience, whether composed of solitary child readers or family groups.⁴⁹ Even Lewis Carroll, despite being generally portrayed as the father of a literature that guaranteed excitement and liberated readers from dull admonishments, did not radically depart from didactic literature but was instead critical of its heavy-handedness. As Susina notes, the Duchess is not amusing because she finds a moral, but because she finds a moral in everything, showing how an excess of didactic lessons becomes ridiculous and loses its effect on the child. Authors felt a responsibility to make moralistic stories attractive but they also realised that they should ‘sugar-coat’ their stories in order to retain readers’ attention. Intended didacticism does not need to be entirely concealed; readers will accept it as long as they are also entertained. In *The Land of Lost Toys*, Sam and Dot accept that Aunt Penelope’s stories have ‘a moral wrapped up in them, like the motto in a cracker-bonbon; but it was quite in the inside, so to speak, and there was abundance of smart paper and sugar-plums.’ (14) This is the lesson that Katy Carr learns when she tries to write stories. Her siblings are regularly forced to listen to Katy’s family journal, *The Sunday Visitor*, which always begins with ‘a dull little piece of the kind which grown people call an editorial, about “neatness”, or “Obedience”, or “Punctuality”.’ (30) Eventually, they ‘carried off the whole edition, and poked it into the kitchen fire, where they watched it burn with a mixture of fear and delight which was comical to witness.’ (30) The burning of Katy’s journal is symbolic; the children are applying a form of censorship on books created for them. Coolidge is acknowledging readers’ levels of influence on authors’ craft.

Acts of transgression are only one plot element used to provoke readers’ excitement, another being acts of punishment. But if pleasure can be found in transgression, because it ‘exceeds boundaries or exceeds limits’,⁵⁰ how can punishment entertain, when it reinforces limits? And if boredom can be used to punish, how can punishment relieve readers from it? This is the problem raised by Ségur when Sophie and her cousin Paul debate whether obedience is more boring than punishment. Sophie complains: ‘c’est si ennuyeux d’obéir!’ [Being obedient is

⁴⁹ Judy Simons, ‘Gender roles in children’s fiction’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Children’s Literature*, 1st edn, ed. by M. O. Grenby and Andrea Immel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 146. *Cambridge Companions Online*. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CCOL9780521868198.016>> [accessed 17.01.2014].

⁵⁰ Chris Jenks, *Transgression* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 7.

so tiresome!] Paul retorts: ‘C’est bien plus ennuyeux d’être puni.’ (354) [It is far more tiresome to be punished.] Ségur plays with the double meaning of *ennuyeux* in French, meaning both dull and upsetting. Like boredom, punishment is tiresome because it makes demands on readers, forcing them to think about moral issues.

Yet pleasure can emerge from the repetitive pattern of transgressions and punishments. In ‘Pleasure and Genre’, Perry Nodelman argues that repetition can be a source of pleasure.⁵¹ Speaking of the ‘variational form’ of children’s stories, the repetitive patterns that can be found from one text to another, Nodelman notes: ‘Children’s books tend to be constructed in terms of episodes that can be read as rejugglings of the same or similar components. [...] Variational form seems most significantly to be a question of delaying closure or of avoiding its implications.’⁵² For Nodelman, there is pleasure in this almost ritualistic repetition. In real life we may learn from our mistakes, whereas ‘in each book about Curious George, George gets into trouble and learns, in theory, not to be so curious. [...] And in children’s book after children’s book, characters get into trouble and learn wisdom from it’.⁵³ While Nodelman speaks of this repetitive movement within series, a similar motion occurs within the texts themselves, providing readers with a seemingly endless recurrence of transgressions and sanctions. Thus, in a peculiar way, punishment within narratives acts in a manner contrary to the punishments that fictional characters suffer; instead of frustrating children’s desires, it tries to satisfy them. The constant interaction between sanctions and the violations of moral imperatives or social standards therefore brings energy to the narrative. The very promise of punishment elicits reading enjoyment.

While authors may deny any form of plot organisation in their stories, the repetition of transgressions creates a pattern and prompts readers’ anticipation. Like one of the children at Plumfield, readers read with ‘eagerness to see what came next in the story’ (45). Porter Abbott describes narrative as ‘an art of the opening and

⁵¹ Perry Nodelman, ‘Pleasure and Genre: Speculations on the Characteristics of Children’s Fiction’, *Children’s Literature*, 28 (2000), 1–14 (p. 12). However, this does not mean that repetition is not also instructive, as suggested by Foucault who, as we saw earlier in this chapter, wrote that the spectacle of punishment used to act as a class in civic: ‘Cette lisible leçon, ce recodage rituel, il faut les répéter aussi souvent que possible’.

[This legible lesson, this ritual recoding, must be repeated as often as possible] Foucault, p. 111.

⁵² Nodelman, p. 12.

⁵³ Nodelman, p. 6.

closing of gaps’, and ‘in those gaps lie whole worlds that the art of narrative invites us either to actualize or leave as possibilities.’⁵⁴ Punishment creates gaps and influences the structure of the plot by participating in what Roland Barthes calls the hermeneutic and proairetic codes of the narrative.⁵⁵ While readers know that punishment is likely to occur, or can at least be expected, following a transgression, major questions still arise throughout the narrative: why will punishment take place (type of transgression)? When will it take place (not always at the end)? And how will it take place? Transgressions create suspense and readers constantly have to anticipate the punishments to come. ‘The management of plot [...] is among other things the management of suspense, which in turn generates the energy that draws us through any well-constructed narrative.’⁵⁶

The repetition of crime and punishment, it seems, was particularly strong in American fiction for children in the nineteenth century. According to Scott MacLeod, ‘[u]ntil the Civil War, practically all American children’s fiction built on a theme of transgression and expiation’.⁵⁷ One of Louisa May Alcott’s contemporary reviewers also argued that the desire to transgress belonged to the American character: ‘in the American mind there is a growing taste for unconventional expression — for sentiments, characters, situations that approach, or that boldly overstep, for at least a little distance, the hazardous limits of the proprieties.’⁵⁸ I would argue that acts of transgression also appeal to writers because they create tension and potently suggest risk and danger. Transgressions carry with them the assurance of repercussions; readers get a sense that characters are doomed to be punished, therefore contributing to a feeling of security and order that the characters’ many transgressions challenge. The most adventurous characters are those who dare to place themselves in the most dangerous situations, in other words exposing themselves to harsher punishments.

⁵⁴ Porter Abbott, ‘Story, plot, and narration’, *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, 1st edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 44 and 49. *Cambridge Companions Online* <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521856965.003>> [accessed 03.03.2014].

⁵⁵ Roland Barthes, *S/Z* in *Oeuvres Complètes*, vol. 2 (1966–1973) (Paris: Seuil, 1994).

⁵⁶ Abbott, p. 40.

⁵⁷ Scott MacLeod, *American Childhood*, p. 75.

⁵⁸ ‘Little Men’, *The Independent* (29 June 1871), in Lyon Clark, *Louisa May Alcott: The Contemporary Reviews*, p. 145.

Several of our American titles are organised around the repetition of transgressions and punishments, even though authors may pretend they do not follow a specific structure. This is the claim made by Mark Twain, in his note at the start of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*: ‘Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot.’⁵⁹ This opening warning, however, implies that punishments do not drive readers away; on the contrary, they entice them. Similarly the narrator in *Little Men* asserts that ‘there is no particular plan to this story, except to describe a few scenes in the life at Plumfield for the amusement of certain little persons’ (93). In reality, the continuous conflict between the desire to disobey and the knowledge that disobedience will be punished gives shape and structure to the narrative. The children’s transgressions and punishments seem at times like digressions, or what Peter Brooks would call ‘detours’, but they are the very engines of the novel, which advances towards the children’s moral progress. The repetition of transgressions and punishments characterises Dan, the ‘lawless’ boy, who ‘had no thought of obeying, and soon transgressed again’ (74). Alcott likes to entwine transgressions and punishment into the text, without signalling them at the start. Instead, they seem to unfold naturally from the children’s games being narrated. Yet the narrator’s voice outlines them and suggests that they will be followed by the appropriate disciplinary measure: ‘I regret to say that Nat sometimes told lies [...] it is not right, and everybody knows it’ (48); ‘an unexpected and decidedly alarming event upset all the plans, and banished Dan from Plumfield’ (72). When they are not woven into the main narrative, acts of transgression and punishment are announced by one of the adult characters, who often reminisce about their childhood: “‘I was a naughty little girl, I am sorry to say’”, claims Mrs Bhaer (111). Similarly, it is not unusual for chapters to conclude on the lesson learned from the punishment.

The structure of *Tom Sawyer* is one of crime and punishment. Not only is the narrative based on Tom’s transgressions and sanctions, but it is interwoven with the story of Injun Joe’s crime. This story begins with the murder of Dr. Robinson, which triggers suspense and precipitates the wrongful punishment of Muff Potter.

⁵⁹ Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, p. 2.

The fact that Injun Joe escapes punishment, while Potter faces the death penalty, hangs over Tom's conscience. The story of Injun Joe's running away, escaping without being punished, becomes entangled with Tom's story, and mirrors the latter's own ability to circumvent punishment. The different levels of transgression and punishment run parallel with each other, and throw readers into a constant game of questioning and guessing the final outcome. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Injun Joe's crimes and the promise of his punishment create a pattern that mirrors the plot of Tom's boyish misdemeanours. The cave and its enclosure stand not only for Injun Joe's ultimate penalty but also, to an extent, for Tom's symbolic punishment – carrying the underpinning message that Tom needs to learn the limits of transgression, otherwise he may turn into the wrong type of criminal. After Tom denounces Injun Joe in court and becomes the town's 'glittering hero', the narrator includes the following ironic warning: 'There were some that believed he would be President, yet, if he escaped hanging.' (140)

This repetitive element can also be found in non-American titles. *Les Frères Kip* is shaped around the tension between guilt and punishment. The level of transgression is very high, even if the brothers are not guilty of the crime. The narrator suggests the gravity of the murder by showing its effect on the population, speaking of 'la désolation générale' [the general desolation] and describing the procession following the coffin and the pain of the deceased captain's family (215–216). However, the hermeneutic code of suspense is not triggered until the incarceration of the two brothers. Readers know who the true murderers are all along. This is crucial, because the curiosity of readers focuses then on the brothers' unfair condemnation. What is withheld and progressively revealed is the level of punishment that the brothers will suffer, and whether they will ever be acquitted. Punishment delays the resolution of the plot. The imprisonment of the brothers and their difficulties in escaping the island hamper their desire (and readers') to see justice prevail.

In *Les Malheurs*, the repetitive structure of crime and punishment is also employed, it participates in the narrative drive and it is made explicit to readers. However, Sophie Heywood remarks that the structure of the book results in a certain level of dissatisfaction:

It all feels oddly unsatisfactory, because the episodic structure of the book promises that Sophie will mend her ways by the end as the grandma did in the book's dedication. But this is not the case. The story ends instead on a cliff-hanger; readers are told to ask their mothers to buy *Les Petites Filles modèles* and *Les Vacances* to find out what happens next to Sophie.⁶⁰

I would argue, nonetheless, that satisfaction is achieved before the end of the narrative, occurring repeatedly at the conclusion of each chapter, although, as we shall see, it is true that the narrative does not lead to the moral progress that it promises. Each chapter is overtly organised around a new episode of transgression and punishment. The narrator often begins by outlining which of Sophie's faults will be punished: 'Sophie était étourdie [...] Voici ce qui lui arriva' (280); 'Sophie était coquette [...] voici ce qu'elle imagina de plus malheureux' (289); 'Sophie était gourmande' (295). [Sophie was forgetful [...] Here is what happened to her; Sophie was vain [...] here is her most unfortunate idea; Sophie was greedy] In Chapter XIII, the narrator summarises the structure of the book: 'Sophie n'était pas très obéissante, nous l'avons vu dans les histoires que nous venons de lire ; elle aurait dû être corrigée, mais elle ne l'était pas encore : aussi lui arriva-t-il bien d'autres malheurs.' (310)⁶¹ [Sophie was not very obedient, as can be seen in the stories we have just read. She should have been reformed, but had not yet been, and so she suffered many more misfortunes.] The book's title reflects this pattern; the expression 'malheurs' refers both to Sophie's general misbehaviour ('ce qu'elle imagina de plus malheureux' [her most unfortunate ideas]) and her endless ensuing punishments or misfortunes. This ceaseless series of misdemeanours could call into question the efficacy of Mme de Réan's discipline but Sophie's punishments exist more to engage readers and instruct them, than to really improve Sophie herself. Readers know that Sophie will disobey and be punished, but what remains an unknown quantity is the detail of her transgressions and sanctions. Ségur's creative talent lies in constantly devising new and unexpected events. It is crucial that Sophie does not commit the same mistake twice or receive the same sanctions. The repetitive pattern of transgression and punishment also reflects the Catholic belief

⁶⁰ Sophie Heywood, pp. 63–64.

⁶¹ Ségur's critics have commented on the regular structure of her stories, 'un schéma récurrent' [a recurring pattern], according to Isabelle Papieau whereby disobedience to an order leads to a sanction for the misdeed through authority and constraint, and to a just desert punishment, which will help the child to make amends and to be forgiven. Papieau, p. 28.

that salvation is an arduous process with many steps, which can only be attained through an enduring period of good work. Grace is lessened by sins (and can be completely lost), therefore to maintain grace, Sophie must continuously improve.

With each new transgression, Ségur deftly introduces gaps and questions. If Sophie's faults are exposed at the start of the chapter, her punishments are not easily inferred. Ségur sometimes even delays Sophie's punishment. In Chapter IV, *Les petits poissons*, Sophie cuts up her mother's fishes but it seems that she might escape punishment. She waits anxiously for her mother, 'elle l'entend parler haut comme si elle grondait [...]. Sophie tremble [...] mais tout se calme, elle n'entend plus rien.' (281) [she can hear her speak loudly as if she was scolding someone [...]. Sophie starts shaking [...] but everything quiets down and she cannot hear anything anymore.] The halt in the narrative has three effects: slowing down the narrative progress evolving towards Sophie's punishment, playing with the readers' expectations and reinforcing Sophie's remorse. Sophie's mother eventually understands that Sophie is guilty, yet the latter escapes her sanction because she confesses her crime and is forgiven. Because in *Les Malheurs*, as in *Les Frères Kip*, readers know who has done what, the narrator's voice is crucial in creating suspense by suggesting questions to readers. In Chapter XII, *Le thé*, Sophie decides to offer tea to her friends. "Que mettrais-je dans ma théière, dans mon sucrier et dans mon pot à crème ?'", Sophie asks her maid (306). [What will I put in my tea pot, my sugar pot and my cream pot?] After the maid refuses to give Sophie the necessary ingredients, Sophie 'resta pensive ; petit à petit son visage s'éclaircit, elle avait une idée ; nous allons voir si l'idée était bonne.' (306) [Sophie thought for a little while. Her face slowly lit up, she had a new idea. We shall see whether it was a good one.] Well-used to the transgression-punishment pattern, readers can guess that the outcome will not be good. Nonetheless Ségur tries to retain some elements of surprise: what is Sophie about to do? How is she going to misbehave? How will she eventually be punished? Through interventions, the narrator encourages readers to assess Sophie's actions, trying to make them critical pedagogues. In *Little Men*, the extradiegetic narrator remarks that granting children a 'brief respite [...] gave them

time to think the matter over, to wonder what the penalty would be' (76). This is precisely what Ségur does with her readers.

Mid-way through the narrative, Sophie's faults come to a halt. Chapter XIX, *L'âne*, unexpectedly begins differently from other chapters:

Sophie avait été très sage depuis quinze jours ; elle n'avait pas fait une seule grosse faute ; Paul disait qu'elle ne s'était pas mise en colère depuis longtemps ; la bonne disait qu'elle était devenue obéissante. La maman trouvait qu'elle n'était plus ni gourmande, ni menteuse, ni paresseuse, elle voulait récompenser Sophie, mais elle ne savait pas ce qui pourrait lui faire plaisir. (338)

Sophie had been good for a couple of weeks. She had not once misbehaved seriously, Paul remarked that she had not been angry for a long time, and the maid observed how she had become obedient. Noticing that Sophie was no longer greedy, deceitful or lazy, her mother wanted to reward her, but she did not know what would make Sophie happy.

The narrator misleads readers into thinking that the episode will end with a more mature Sophie, as promised in the book's dedication. In reality, however, the chapter begins with the same opening and follows the same repetitive pattern as the other chapters, except that, this time, Ségur replaces punishments with rewards. At first, the narrator relates Sophie's evolution, having finally improved her character. In the above passage, the focalization shifts rapidly between the extra-diegetic narrator, Paul, the maid and the mother, accentuating the impression that a considerable and sustainable change in Sophie's behaviour is about to take place. Although she is not fully corrected yet, everything seems to indicate that she has matured, giving the impression that the chapter is teleologically constructed towards Sophie's development. Yet the chapter is lengthy, the outcome delayed, leaving open the possibility that Sophie might still misbehave. In an unexpected twist, Sophie suddenly commits a new offence and, to top it all, lies about it. While throughout the book the narrator implies that Sophie's maturity will eventually prevail, Ségur uses the narrative trajectory to suggest that the child's development is not a linear progress. It may also have unexpected kinks.

The repetitive patterns between transgression and punishment do not only trigger gaps and suspense. I would argue that they can satisfy readers' desire to find an overarching meaning in narratives. Often, although not in *Les Malheurs*, the

movements between transgression, punishment and escape create a sense that young characters are moving from innocence to maturity. Even in *Les Malheurs*, the repetitive motion that characterises the narrative structure is used for the fulfilment of expectations, suspense and enjoyment, and also proffers to readers a deeper pedagogical reflection on the nature of childhood, as we just saw. ‘Plots are not simply organizing structures, they are also intentional structures, goal-oriented and forward-moving’, notes Brooks.⁶²

Pleasure can therefore be found in the forward movement of plots, in the characters’ quest for understanding and in the communication of meaning that we find in many of our narratives. The movement from childhood to maturity is often presented in terms of abandoning children’s desires. The desire for discovery and meaning runs through several of our texts and, having suffered many punishments and miseries, children are usually integrated into adults’ society by the end of the story. Tom’s captivity in and escape from the cave has led to the admiration of everyone in St Petersburg. Sara Crewe’s story ends on the theme of understanding; she has gained through her adult-inflicted miseries a comprehension of the world in which she lives with the little beggar girl she had fed once (‘Sara felt as if she understood’ (187)); this understanding is shared with other children (and readers). Charles’s lessons lead him to become a moral and pious husband. The brothers Kip have succeeded in their quest to demonstrate their innocence. Dan has reintegrated into the community of Plumfield and now abides by its rules. Alice too is driven by an insatiable curiosity, but it seems that this can never be satisfied because everything around her is ‘curiouser and curiouser’ (16). However, although in *Wonderland* meaning is withheld from Alice, the framing narrative provides some form of resolution to readers. Significantly, it concludes with Alice, having matured into a grown woman, imparting her adventures to her own children. Some stories, however, such as *Poil de Carotte* and *Kind Little Edmund*, offer more ambiguous conclusions.⁶³ Readers are communicated a tangled vision of the child – striving for emancipation yet oppressed, resisting but unsuccessfully. Edmund’s truancy and his

⁶² Brooks, p. 12.

⁶³ Manlove notes about Ewing’s characters more generally that they rarely show a spiritual development: ‘she is not cut out for a writer of fantastic Bildungsromanen. [...] Certainly her characters do gain and learn from their experiences, but the gaining and learning usually have little to do with transformation.’ C. N. Manlove, *The Impulse of Fantasy Literature* (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1983), p. 55.

desire to make new discoveries by stepping outside the town's boundaries are systematically thwarted by the master's punishments. Edmund is not allowed full emotional development and the archetypal pattern of the child's departure and return is frustrated. Although he still wants to 'learn some more of the things that other people don't know', he has become old and still has not managed to open the door that the cockatrice has locked. The interconnectedness of transgressions and punishment in our plots provides readers with a certain way to speak about and understand the world. While the frustration of young characters' desires is a crucial theme in our texts, authors seem reluctant to frustrate their reader's desires.⁶⁴ The employment of punishment also gives readers critical tools to think about child-adult relationships and, at times, even to judge adults and give (some) characters a certain level of agency.

Punishment and the empowerment of the child character

The repetitive movement between transgression and punishment that we explored in the previous section is rendered even more complex when young characters try to escape or circumvent sanctions, transforming punishment into a form of exciting adventure or exploit. But can the spectacle of punishment empower young characters? In this section, I argue that some authors suggest that children can use punishment as a source of subversion to challenge adults' authority. In particular, the idea of a punisher being punished is an irresistible source of amusement and emancipation. For instance, Alice cannot help but let out 'a little scream of laughter' when the White Rabbit tells her that the Duchess boxed the Queen's ears (73). Other authors have experimented with this idea, moving it to another level by completely reversing the roles of the punisher and the victim. Some adult characters are even humiliated by children in public.

In *Tom Sawyer*, the punishment of adults is a running theme through the first half of the novel. The children are endlessly plotting their revenge against their

⁶⁴ The frustration of personal desires may be the direct objective of punishment. Hence, Patrick Pipet observes about Sophie's constant sanctioning and punishment: 'L'objectif visé est donc de l'écoeurer de son propre désir, de la décourager de désirer.' [Therefore, the aim is to sicken her with her own desire, to discourage her from having any desires.] Pipet, p. 60.

schoolmaster, but '[t]he retribution that followed every vengeful success was so sweeping and majestic that the boys always retired from the field badly worsted.' (125) The lexical field suggests a continuous battle with the schoolmaster and, eventually, the pupils work out a scheme that will leave them feeling avenged. The scene takes place on Examination day, in front of all the town's dignitaries and parents. The children are gathered in a garret and, during the master's presentation, they ingeniously steal his wig: 'down through the scuttle came a cat, suspended around the haunches by a string [...] she grabbed his wig with her desperate claws, clung to it and was snatched up into the garret in an instant [...] how the light did blaze abroad the master's bald pate' (129–130). In the illustration below, only one child's hand is visible, the rest of the children hiding away. The focus is placed instead on Mr. Dobbins's humiliation, visible both to the audience in the classroom and to readers.



Fig. 3.12. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Chapter XXI. True Williams (1876)

In *Poil de Carotte* too, the adult punisher is embarrassed in front of an audience. When Poil de Carotte refuses to obey his mother, the latter feels humiliated and calls her other children to witness Poil de Carotte's rebellion. Passers-by stop to

watch, and her humiliation becomes a public affair. Suddenly, she finds herself in Poil de Carotte's earlier position and exclaims: "Puisque c'est la fin du monde renversé, dit Mme Lepic, atterrée, je ne m'en mêle plus. Je me retire." (112) ["Since the whole world seems to have gone topsy-turvy", says Madame Lepic, quite dumfounded, "I wash my hands of the affair."] Although Poil de Carotte is 'surpris de s'affermir en face du danger' (112) [surprised to find himself grown stronger in the face of danger], his resistance is an act of carnivalesque defiance, where the roles of the punisher and the punished are reversed.

The carnivalesque quality of children's rebellion and of adults' punishment runs through other titles. Maria Nikolajeva notes that it is not uncommon to find it in realistic texts, and this is the case in our corpus, particularly in *Petit Diable*.⁶⁵ Charles plays pranks continuously on adults and rejoices in seeing Mme Mac'Miche being terrified by his tricks: "De quoi ris-tu, petit Satan?" she asks. [Why are you laughing, little devil?] "De la frayeur que je vous inspire", replies Charles (1180) [Because you are frightened by me] The order of authority is turned upside down and the readers, who are encouraged to identify with the main protagonists, can rejoice too and feel superior to Mme Mac'Miche. Charles' pranks always take place with the connivance of readers, who know all the details of his elaborate tricks well in advance, having access to his reasoning and preparations.

At Fairy's Hall, the carnivalesque is further exploited, and the punishment of punishers takes on the tone of public festivities. When the other pupils express their fear of being punished because of his mischiefs, Charles reminds them that he has dramatically improved their lives:

« Trois jours de sommeil prolongés,
 « La fin des persécutions du méchant chat,
 « Enfin un bon dîner et le spectacle des fureurs du vieux Old Nick et de ses amis. (1205)

Three days of lying in,
 No more persecution from the mean cat,
 Last, a hearty dinner and the spectacle of Old Nick and his friends in a rage.

⁶⁵ 'Carnival is as much pertinent to the so-called realistic stories as it is to fantasy, even though the fictive child is empowered in a different manner'. Nikolajeva, *Power, Voice and Subjectivity in Literature for Young Readers*, p. 52.

The list comprises all the elements vital to the children's well-being: sleep, no persecutions, food and entertainment. Most importantly, the source of the children's enjoyment lies in adults' miseries, as if the dwindling of their own oppression could only emerge from the chastisement of their punishers. And indeed, adults' punishments and suffering are the main source of comedy. Although dreading potential retributions, nothing brings more pleasure to the children than seeing adults being publicly humiliated. When Old Nick accuses the pupils of making their teachers' life miserable, '[u]n sourire de satisfaction se manifeste dans tout l'auditoire.' (1203) [the audience, satisfied, is visibly all smiles.] Charles' ultimate prank involves placing glue where their oppressors usually sit. Seeing the schoolmaster unable to get up is the apotheosis of Charles' wit, and provokes both delight and terror in the children watching the scene: 'quelles ne furent pas la terreur apparente et la jouissance intérieure des enfants, quand ils trouvèrent Old Nick aussi incapable de quitter son fauteuil' (1206). [the children's apparent terror and inner delight were at their utmost when they found Old Nick glued to his seat as well] Like the children, readers will anticipate the repercussions that may await them, and at the same time rejoice in the satisfaction of seeing cruel characters suffering. Pleasure comes from the retributive aspect of punishment, and the sense of just desserts, a satisfaction for readers who have been led to sympathise with the victimised children and to identify with Charles.

The adults finally leave their trousers on their chairs and 'les enfants se précipitèrent aux fenêtres ; un spectacle étrange excita leur gaieté.' (1207) [the children rushed to the windows, where a strange spectacle delighted them even more.] In the illustration on the following page, laughing children have crowded up at the windows and doors, while the men are hustled in the middle of the yard, with only their shirts to cover up their naked legs. The scene resembles a street performance. The children's figures are only sketched, their individual features disappearing into one imprecise crowd; as in the illustration of Mr. Dobbins's physical humiliation in *Tom Sawyer* (Fig. 3.12), the emphasis is placed on the ridiculousness of the adults' bodies, desperately trying to conceal their nakedness.



Fig. 3.13. *Un Bon Petit Diable*,
 Chapter XIII: *Enquête. Derniers*
terribles procédés de Charles.
 Horace Castelli (1865)

The triumph of the children and the humiliation of the adults challenge the latter's authority. Old Nick is aware of this and wants to see the culprits punished, otherwise 'viendrait un jour où les enfants, perdant toute crainte, toute retenue, exerceraient des représailles terribles, maltraiteraient les surveillants et lui-même.' (1209) [the day would come when, no longer scared or restrained, children would retaliate without measure, manhandling their supervisors and him too.] The destabilising of order is unsettling for adults. In *Poil de Carotte*, the humiliation of Mme Lepic is 'si grave qu'elle perd ses moyens' [so serious that she loses her resources]; she succumbs first to 'une rage intérieure' [an inward rage] but must eventually capitulate and leave (112) (although Renard closes the chapter with a warning to readers that more might come: 'Provisoirement, l'affaire en reste là' (113) [There, for the time being, the matter rests]. In *Petit Diable*, adults want to tame children and make them submissive. When Mme Mac'Miche first enquires about the school, recommending that they use physical force to subdue Charles, the schoolmaster replies: "nous vous rendrons le vôtre docile comme un agneau." (1185) [we will return yours as gentle as a lamb] However, Ségur denounces rather than defends the comparison of the child to an animal that needs to be broken.

Eventually, the master agrees to let Charles go because 'tu es trop dangereux dans ma maison ! Tu as trop d'invention, d'imagination, de volonté, d'audace !' (1211) [You are a danger for my school! You are too inventive, imaginative, headstrong and audacious!] Charles' tricks are not mere childish pranks, they are a path to rebellion. Like Edmund, Charles possesses qualities lacking in the adult characters,

and which the latter are keen to suppress: wit, imagination, bravery and leadership. The illustration below shows Charles' propensity to revolt and his dangerous capacity to lead an uprising. The classroom has been turned upside down in an atmosphere of exaggerated chaos, with pupils throwing books in the air and walking over one another.



Fig. 3.14. *Un Bon Petit Diable, Chapter X: Dernier exploit de Charles*. Horace Castelli (1865)

Castelli's illustration comically evokes Eugène Delacroix's painting *La Liberté guidant le peuple*.



Fig. 3.15. *Eugène Delacroix, La Liberté guidant le peuple* (1830)

Holding a flag, Charles is standing in the same pose as Liberty in Delacroix's painting. Both embody revolt as well as victory. In Delacroix's painting, the street

boy raises a gun. In Castelli's image too, one of the boys brandishes a weapon but here it is a 'martinet' [small cat o' nine tails]. Charles is presented as an allegorical figure leading the children to freedom, but instead of walking over a pyramidal mountain of fallen bodies, the pupils are instead climbing over the prone figure of Boxear, and it is them who are gathered in a pyramidal shape. Like Liberty, Charles turns back towards the pupils, guiding them in the direction of freedom. In both works, the crowd is progressing towards the public.⁶⁶

In this illustration, as in the rest of the boarding school episodes, Ségur uses Charles' anti-authoritarian streak for the purpose of comedy and the defiance of a secular institution. The reference to Delacroix's painting is not incidental in a French context of many revolutions and uprisings and of the ensuing secularisation of education. Sophie Heywood shows that Ségur's lampooning of school authority reflected her disapproval of the lack of religion in schools in France at the time of her writing. In 1861, a few years before the publication of *Petit Diable*, her son Gaston de Ségur, a French bishop, had written a tract entitled *La révolution expliquée aux jeunes gens*, where Europe was presented as threatened 'by ruthless 'enemies' (secret societies of revolutionaries, freemasons, and Protestants) all targeting the youth in order to put into action their fiendish plans to destroy the Church and inaugurate the rule of Satan.'⁶⁷ The techniques used to save the soul of Ségur's own little devil symbolise the methods that must be used to save Catholic France from social unrest and secularisation (Jean Macé's ideas on compulsory state schools were opposed by Catholics). Crucially, although children have innate goodness, this can lead them in the direction of the barricades if it is not channelled properly. Therefore, Charles' defiance of power is only acceptable because it takes place in a secular context. As Nikolajeva remarks, carnivalesque and power inversion usually take place only 'on certain conditions and for a limited time'.⁶⁸ In later chapters, Charles does eventually conform to moral values and his evangelisation prevails as

⁶⁶ Ségolène Le Men establishes the emergence of the theme of the 'enfant terrible' in children's literature in France with the publication of Desnoyer's *Jean-Paul Choppart* in 1832 and links it to Delacroix's representation of the barricades. Ségolène Le Men, 'De Jean-Paul Choppart à Struwwelpeter : L'invention de l'enfant terrible dans le livre illustré', *Revue des Sciences Humaines* 99.225 (1992), 45–59 (p. 53).

⁶⁷ Heywood, p. 74. Another title in which Ségur presented school as the arena of rebellion is *Les Deux Nigauds* (1863).

⁶⁸ Nikolajeva, *Power, Voice and Subjectivity in Literature for Young Readers*, p. 10.

the devout and pious Juliette leads him on the path of religious goodness, as we shall see in more detail in the next chapter.

The above illustration by Castelli also brings pleasure by ridiculing the body of an adult. As we have seen, this is a key element in the humiliation of Mr. Dobbins and of the teachers at Fairy's Hall. For Roderick McGillis, '[c]hildren's humour depends largely on the body. [...] Slapstick, caricature, parody, the grotesque, ridicule and the improbable in human predicaments concern the body'.⁶⁹ Our authors often deride adults' bodies in order to expose their vices, cruelty and stupidity. Children find humour, and perhaps reassurance, in adults' loss of physical control, or in children regaining control over their own bodies. In *Poil de Carotte*, when pupils are having their ears boxed by the school director, they try to dodge the blows so as to destabilise the adult, as if the loss of physical balance suggests a depletion of the director's authority: 'L'habileté pour l'élève visé consiste à prévoir le coup et à se baisser, et le directeur se déséquilibre, au rire étouffé de tous.' (59) [Skill on the boy's part consists in anticipating the blow and ducking, so that the Principal loses his balance, to the suppressed laughter of all.] The child's bodily agility contrasts with the adult's loss of balance.

Adults' punishments and suffering are often comically exaggerated, in particular those of Mme Mac'Miche. Her physical hideousness is used to create burlesque episodes, with many illustrations reinforcing her grotesqueness. In an early passage, which we already examined in Chapter Two, Charles is locked in a dark 'cabinet'. When his guardian opens the door, Charles plays dead and, as she approaches, he violently kicks her as if suffering from convulsions. Mme Mac'Miche loses her false teeth and Betty, the maid who witnesses the scene, 'fut prise d'un rire convulsif qui augmentait à chaque coup de pied que recevait la cousine et à chaque cri qu'elle poussait' (1138). [had a fit of laughter, which increased with every blow that the cousin received and with every scream she uttered] In the first illustration on the following page (Fig 3.16), Charles and his guardian resemble a pair of acrobats, with Charles standing on his hands and Mme Mac'Miche thrown in the air. Ségur plays

⁶⁹ McGillis, p. 258.

with the motif of topsy-turvy confusion, and Betty embodies the delight of the spectator.



Fig. 3.16. *Un Bon Petit Diable*,
Chapter I: Les fées. Horace
Castelli (1865)

As the series of illustrations below shows, Horace Castelli frequently chose to represent Mme Mac'Miche in a reversed position or, like Poil de Carotte's schoolmaster, losing her balance.



Fig. 3.17. *Un Bon Petit Diable*,
*Chapter III: Une affaire
criminelle*. Horace Castelli
(1865)



Fig. 3.18. *Un Bon Petit Diable*,
*Chapter III: Une affaire
criminelle*. Horace Castelli
(1865)



Fig. 3.19. *Un Bon Petit Diable*, Chapter VIII: *Succès complet*. Horace Castelli (1865)

Furthermore, Mme Mac'Miche's exaggerated physical deformities in these illustrations evoke the female punishers of *Wonderland*. The Duchess and the Queen are as ugly and threatening as Charles' guardian. For Jean Perrot, such profusion of grotesqueness represents the authority and violence of adults towards children.⁷⁰ But a major difference is that Alice does not challenge the Queen's authority until the end of the framed narrative, while from the first chapter 'Charles Mac Lance, même martyrisé, s'en donne à cœur joie de brutaliser sa marâtre'.⁷¹ [Charles Mac lance, even when abused, takes great pleasure in attacking his cruel cousin] Similarly, Sophie never gets a chance to punish her punisher, not even the cruel Mme Fichini in *Les Petites Filles Modèles*.⁷² In *The New Mother*, the girls try to combat the monstrous new mother who has come to take over their cottage, but they are forced to run away. Girls are rarely given the opportunity to punish adults; instead, most of them must learn from their own mistakes and repent. Girl and boy characters are therefore not given the same level of autonomy when it comes to avenging themselves.

What is more, in the case of boy characters, punishment brings excitement and empowerment because it contains the possibility of escape, but the same does not apply to narratives with a girl protagonist. Escape is pivotal to the intensity of *Les Frères Kip*, where it is used to prompt suspense. In the early descriptions of the penitentiary, the narrative voice already emphasises the difficulty of escape, planting in readers' minds the possibility of evasion, yet at the same time presenting it as a

⁷⁰ Jean Perrot, p. 150.

⁷¹ Dufour, p. 286. I have translated the term 'marâtre' as cruel cousin, although *marâtre* literally means a bad mother and is often used to refer to a cruel stepmother.

⁷² In *Le Général Dourakine*, the mother of the Russian children is also beaten. Initially, the comtesse wanted the scene to take place in front of the young children, but her editor insisted that the children left the room. Papieau, p. 28.

formidable risk, a near impossibility. The narrator outlines how the prisoners' treatment and confinement naturally trigger their desire to break free: 'une telle existence devait faire naître chez les convicts le furieux désir de s'évader.' (355) [such a life would trigger the prisoners' fierce desire to escape.] Prisoners can only escape by sea. The chances of success are slim, the perils numerous, and any attempts to flee will be punished severely:

lorsque les fugitifs étaient repris dans les forêts de la presqu'île, c'était ce cat qui les châtiât devant tout le personnel du pénitencier. Le fouet à neuf branches, manié par un bras vigoureux, cinglait les reins du patient mis à nu, et sillonnait de zébrures les chairs transformées en une sorte de boue sanglante. (355)

when the fugitives were caught in the woods of the peninsula, they were punished in front of the whole prison staff with the cat. This whip with nine tails, administered by a strong arm, would lash the naked patient's lower back and lacerate his flesh into a shapeless and bloody muck.

Although quite explicit, these are the only frightening and vivid details given to suggest the harsh punishments one can expect. Verne seems to be seeking a balance between triggering tension and protecting readers' sensibilities.

The brothers' escape is covered at length from Chapter X to Chapter XIII, although only one chapter (XIII) narrates the brothers' precise moment of escape ('*L'Évasion*' [The break-out]). The preceding chapters build up different elements leading to the characters' freedom. Initially, they have no intention of running away, convinced that their innocence will prevail. However, two Irish political prisoners also incarcerated at Port-Arthur are planning to get away by sea, with the help of external accomplices. The brothers become embroiled in their plans and manage to escape with them. Chapter X provides numerous details about the Irish men's preparations. More than an artful enterprise, their evasion is organised with scientific rigour and military precision. Chapters XI and XII bring more tension and suspense. These chapters concentrate on the many dangers the men are likely to encounter if they do escape the penitentiary. The island is clearly an inhospitable and unfamiliar place. These two chapters, as well as Chapter XIII, offer a sense of adventure, which has been missing from the chapters describing the trial and the brothers' confinement. The fugitives must avoid the watching guards and their ferocious dogs, deal with a wild environment, and make perilous decisions. Their

escape seems hopeless until the very last moment, when they all arrive safely on the ship that has come to rescue them.

Escaping punishment helps boy characters to discover or develop their resourcefulness and acquire a certain degree of autonomy. But while children do find resourcefulness in themselves, they often also benefit from the discreet help of an adult, or use pre-acquired skills; therefore, their autonomy is not absolute, more a collaborative effort shared with adults when they try to evade punishment. Charles develops wonderful creativity in dodging punishments, but he does not do this all on his own. Betty's unobtrusive presence and help constantly support his inventiveness. For instance, to protect him from his guardian's flogging, she sews leather protection inside his trousers. Knowing that Mme Mac'Miche will discover the subterfuge and remove Charles' trousers in order to hurt him, Charles then decides to attach two devil heads to his bare buttocks in the hope of terrifying his guardian.



Fig. 3.20. *Un Bon Petit Diable*, Chapter VIII: *Succès complet*. Horace Castelli (1865)

Although the illustration does not show Betty's presence, the latter actively participates in this amusing ruse: “nous allons découper deux têtes de diables dans du papier noir, nous ferons des cornes et une grande langue rouge ; nous aurons de la colle, et tu colleras les têtes sur ma peau” (1171). [we are going to cut two devils' heads out of black paper, we will draw horns and a red tongue. We will need glue

and you will stick the heads onto my skin] Although this is Charles' idea, and he is ordering Betty, the repetition of the pronoun 'nous' suggests that this is nonetheless a collaborative ploy. Betty's contribution is not limited to practicalities. She is also invited to enjoy the stratagem: "quand ma cousine voudra me battre, je la laisserai m'arracher ma culotte, et tu juges de sa frayeur quand elle verra ces deux têtes." [when my cousin tries to whip me, I will let her rip my trousers. Wait and see her fright when she discovers these two heads.] (1170) Betty, already delighted by their artifice, bursts out laughing. The episode terrifies Mme Mac'Miche and leaves Charles feeling triumphant.

Throughout the narrative, Charles also proves himself a great escape artist. In the opening scene of the novel, he is sentenced to stay an hour in a locked cabinet. He tries running away but the door is firmly locked. A few minutes later, Betty enters and lets him out through the window, once again providing help. Chapter III also opens with an escape scene. Mme Mac'Miche has locked Charles up again and he runs away by breaking the window: 'Charles saisit une pincette, donna un coup sec dans un des carreaux de la porte qui était vitrée, et engagea sa tête et ses épaules dans le carreau cassé ; il passa après de grands efforts et en se faisant plusieurs petites coupures aux mains et épaules.' (1147) [Charles took a little pair of tongs and cracked one of the panes on the glass door. Then, he put his head and shoulders through the broken pane. He managed to get through with great effort, grazing his hands and shoulders in the process.] Finally, Charles escapes from Fairy's Hall with shrewdness, tricking the schoolmaster. All along, Betty is a discreet presence but she no longer provides direct assistance, as if Charles has achieved a greater level of autonomy.

Escape is often presented as a game, and the humour it generates counterbalances the disciplinary threats of adult characters. *Tom Sawyer* opens with Tom escaping after being threatened with punishment for eating jam: 'the lad fled, on the instant scrambled up the high-fence and disappeared over it.' (12). In the illustration on the following page, Tom escapes from his punishment by tricking his aunt and climbing over the fence. Aunt Polly is left beguiled, holding her beating stick in the air,

unable to perform her punishment. The caption, ‘Aunt Polly beguiled’, suggests Tom’s superiority and cleverness.



Fig. 3.21. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Chapter I.* True Williams (1876)

Later, Aunt Polly forces Tom to whitewash ‘thirty yards of board fence nine feet high’ (18) outside the house. While painting, Tom cannot help but think of escape and ‘the free boys’ who ‘would come tripping along on all sorts of delicious expeditions’, and he tries to find a way to ‘buy so much as half an hour of pure freedom.’ (19) He manages to do this by giving the illusion to his friends that painting the fence is an exciting activity. Tom is a beguiler, an artist, an entertainer (later, he wants to become a clown), and he gives his ‘brush with reluctance in his face but alacrity in his heart’ (21). But his subterfuges are built upon a deep understanding of adults’ rules, which he has learned to circumvent.

Tom’s autonomy and capacity to escape are significantly greater than Becky’s. When the two of them find themselves locked underground in the cave, Becky becomes helpless and passively relies on Tom’s cleverness to find a way out. In the illustration below, showing the children emerging from the cave, Tom is standing upright in the position of a discoverer looking to the horizon. Becky is following him, her body still half hidden in the ground, clinging on to Tom’s hand for support.



Fig. 3.22. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Chapter XXXII. True Williams (1876)

Following the cave episode, Tom and Becky return home but only Tom is admired and earns the respect of the community. Celebrated as a hero, he narrates their story, lying ‘upon a sofa with an eager auditory about him and told the history of the wonderful adventure’ (183). As for Becky, she takes to her bed. For Robert Lamb, the two children ‘mature by becoming fixed in nineteenth-century gender roles: Becky takes to her bedroom while Tom becomes the subject of a Horatio Alger-like biographical sketch and, in the Judge’s opinion, a proper candidate for the military academy or law school.’⁷³

Becky’s lack of agency in her own escape is echoed by other female characters in our corpus, where the theme of the fence also appears. In an early episode of *What Katy Did*, Katy climbs over a fence. Chapter Three, *The Day of Scrapes*, opens on a typically chaotic morning for Katy. Her bonnet string is loose and needs mending, which Aunt Izzie does rapidly while lecturing her niece. Katy is late for school, and this puts her in a reckless mood. The narrator warns: ‘A day begun in this manner is pretty sure to end badly, as most of us know’ (20). At recess, Katy’s loose bonnet flies over the fence, into the neighbouring school. Katy wants to get it back, even if this means stepping into the enemy’s yard, so she ‘seized the fence, and with one bold leap vaulted into Miss Miller’s yard.’ (21) She grabs her bonnet and already ‘had gained the top of the fence [...] with a shriek of triumph and fright, she herself plunged headlong into the midst’ of her friends (21–22). Katy is celebrated and ‘made to tell her story over and over again’ (22), narrating her exploit just like Tom. But the comparison ends there, for Katy is not allowed to relish in her victory.

⁷³Lamb, p. 478.

Whereas Judge Thatcher ‘conceived a great opinion of Tom’ for getting his daughter out of the cave, Katy’s brief sense of empowerment cannot last. The narrator warns of the negative effects that too much praise and pride may have: ‘Katy, what with the excitement of her adventure and of being praised and petted by the big girls, grew perfectly reckless, and hardly knew what she said or did.’ (22) Following her success, Katy leads the girls into a game that turns the classroom upside down, and Katy is punished. The episode, although seemingly minor, is significant because it mirrors the overarching structure of the novel: Katy’s crossing of the fence symbolises the way in which her restlessness challenges the community’s boundaries. As she trespasses social borders, she feels ashamed and must learn to reform; she will only find empowerment through faith and by dedicating herself to others. Katy may learn to become more confident as long as this also benefits others.

Painful emotional experiences are a rite of passage through which girls become more mature individuals. In *Les Malheurs* the motif of the fence is used to communicate an overtly religious message and offers a polarised vision of moral choices.⁷⁴ After Sophie has secretly eaten preserved fruits, she dreams of a fence that separates her from a beautiful garden: ‘Elle rêva qu’elle était près d’un jardin dont elle était séparée par une barrière ; ce jardin était rempli de fleurs et de fruits qui semblaient délicieux.’ (324) [She dreamt that she was standing next to a garden separated by a fence; this garden was full of flowers and delicious-looking fruit.] Sophie must choose between two paths. One path leads to the beautiful garden, and it is smooth and attractive. But her good angel warns her that the fruits in this garden are bitter and poisonous, and tries to keep her back. The narrator clearly explains: ‘Ce jardin était le jardin du mal.’ (324–25) [It was the garden of evil.] Sophie does not listen and refuses to take the rough path that leads to the ‘jardin du bien’ [garden of good]. However, realising her mistake, she runs back to the fence and sees her caring angel waiting for her. Like the image of the prison, as we saw in Chapter Two, the fence represents Sophie’s internalisation of moral rules. And like the School of Pain and Love in *What Katy Did*, the unpleasant path can be good for the child, in particular for girls. For Michel Legrain the message is clear: ‘Dieu punit

⁷⁴ For further comments on the function of the fence see Pipet, pp. 36–53.

les méchants et impose des épreuves aux justes en leur demandant de ne pas s'écarter du droit chemin.⁷⁵ [God punishes naughty children and tests the good ones by asking them not to stray from the proper path.] The little girl has strayed and lost the path of goodness; she must be brought back to the right side of the fence.

The moral dilemma Sophie faces is not unlike Alice's desire to enter the 'loveliest garden you ever saw' (12). In *Wonderland*, the garden represents the frustration of Alice's desires. Alice, like Sophie, sees a beautiful garden and wants to get there but her efforts are constantly thwarted. Although the garden seems beautiful from afar, when she finally reaches it, nothing is as she had imagined. Alice penetrates a world dominated by rudeness, exclusion and threats of punishment. She is granted a certain level of self-reliance, making decisions by herself, and she escapes tricky situations but not necessarily on her own. Her autonomy is relative. For instance, when she first encounters the Queen in the rose garden, the two of them quickly get into a heated discussion about the identity of three gardeners:

“How should I know?, said Alice, surprised at her own courage. “It's no business of *mine*.”

The Queen turned crimson with fury, and, after glaring at her for a moment like a wild beast, began screaming “ “Off with her head! Off with ——”

“Nonsense!” said Alice, very loudly and decidedly, and the Queen was silent.

The King laid his hand upon her arm, and timidly said “Consider, my dear: she is only a child!” (72)

Although Alice manages to silence the Queen, authoritatively calling her threats nonsensical, she is saved thanks to the King's intervention. Yet this passage is also highly ambiguous. Alice is spared her punishment because she is 'only' a child, however in her conversation with the Queen she behaves with maturity while the Queen throws tantrums. Alice is progressively able to silence the Queen's outbursts but her self-affirmation is often enmeshed with gender-defining duties. For instance, she offers to protect the gardeners, who she assumes could be the Queen's children: 'she could not tell whether they were gardeners, or soldiers, or courtiers, or three of her [the Queen] own children.' (72) The gardeners run to Alice and she hides them inside a flowerpot. On one hand, Alice is treated like a child, requiring the

⁷⁵ Michel Legrain, *La comtesse de Ségur. Mots, silences et stéréotypes* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2011), p. 69.

intervention of the King to avoid punishment, on the other she helps others to escape punishment and takes on a motherly role towards them.

Some female characters are able to defend themselves and resist punishment. In *A Little Princess*, Sara, in appearance, manages to dodge adults' exploitation and manipulated pains thanks to her intelligence. Gubar remarks that Burnett did not hesitate to position her characters at the heart of adults' society, characterising 'the child inside and outside the book as a literate, educated subject who is fully conversant with the values, conventions, and cultural artifacts of the civilized world'.⁷⁶ Sara proves herself equal, even superior, to the adults surrounding her at Miss Minchin's school. Part of her punishment is to see her position reversed in the classroom and to be humiliated, for instance by wearing clothes too small for her. At first a pupil, she becomes a teacher, a servant and an outcast to her friends. However, thanks to her previously acquired knowledge, Sara is able to regain some power and to find pleasure in teaching. While she does not physically run away, she is able to engage in fantasy and literature, finding solace in her creativity. She transforms her room, her life, her daily humiliations and imagines her evasion. Hence the 'prisoner in the other cell' (the scullery maid Becky) pleads to Sara: "Tell me some more, please, miss—tell me about the subt'ranan passage we've dug under the walls." (161)

Sara's escape is also symbolised by the alteration in her mind of the attic into a prison. As we have seen in Chapter Two, the attic becomes a place of salvation for Sara. Burnett does not exactly exploit the trope of escape, rather of escapism. Sara's friends secretly come to visit her and, as she tells them stories, the attic now turns into a space of adventure both for the storyteller (Sara) and for her audience. The girls' sense of adventure comes from the risks they take and the possibility of punishment: 'it was a perilous thing for Ermengarde and Lottie to make pilgrimages to the attic.' (90) Every time Ermengarde comes up, she becomes 'a sort of escaped prisoner herself' (89), escaping the oppression of daily life under Miss Minchin's discipline. Yet Sara is not granted much agency and self-reliance when it comes to real physical evasion. While Gubar considers that she does eventually manage to

⁷⁶ Gubar, p. 6.

escape,⁷⁷ Sara is not really an active agent in her own departure. Her release only takes place thanks to the intervention of a benevolent male character, her neighbour, who takes pity on Sara, and sends goods and furniture to make her attic more pleasant. His Indian servant carries them through her window at night. Her benefactor therefore enters her space, eventually becoming her actual rescuer. Like a prisoner, Sara thinks of freedom when looking through her window but she never attempts to physically flee her imprisonment, never seeks any form of adventure other than through her mind. While she is superior to adults thanks to her cleverness and manners, she is not endowed with the same level of autonomy as Tom or Charles, who would probably have escaped from the attic half way through the novel to run outside. At the end of the story, Sara's 'escape' follows a movement that sees her leaving Miss Minchin's school to go back into the domestic; she is adopted by her father's friend, Carrisford. Mavis Reimer notes that Sara's role as a daughter of the empire is to transform the brutal and brutalised male friend of her father into a healthy and benevolent surrogate father.⁷⁸

However, the child's limited autonomy is not simply a reflection of gender differences. It also seems generally stronger in English titles, as if the idea of revolt and revolution was more palatable to French and American audiences. Strich remarks that Alice, like all British people, controls her anger more easily than Sophie does and seems less impulsive than Ségur's characters.⁷⁹ Similarly, Clifford and Nesbit do not offer confident views of the child's ability to escape adults' unfair treatment. The girls in *The New Mother* are unable to escape, and Edmund's only possibility for escape is through the realm of the imagination, represented by the cave and the cockatrice. C. N. Manlove notes that Nesbit always tries to reduce the frightening aspect of the supernatural by blending it into the familiar: 'she often uses a technique which could loosely be called 'metaphoric' in its blending of the

⁷⁷ Gubar, p. 36.

⁷⁸ 'Sara succeeds in fixing her 'Indian gentleman' through her remarkable ability to tell stories; in particular, to construct the narrative of a family in which she wishes to participate.' Mavis Reimer, 'Traditions of the school story', in *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Literature*, 1st edn, ed. by M. O. Grenby and Andrea Immel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 217. *Cambridge Companions Online* <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CCOL9780521868198.013>> [accessed 24.02.2014].

⁷⁹ 'Alice, en bonne britannique, réfrène plus facilement son courroux que Sophie. Alice paraît moins impulsive que les enfants mis en scène par la comtesse de Ségur.' [Being truly British, Alice can contain her anger more easily than Sophie. She seems less impulsive than the children created by the comtesse de Ségur.] Strich, pp. 60–61.

potentially frightening with the familiar.⁸⁰ But I would argue that, in this tale, she does the opposite. Similarly, the other English writers in our corpus use fantasy to alleviate the frightening aspects of the familiar, which children cannot fully escape. For some characters, like Edmund, the imaginary is a refuge. In *The New Mother*, it helps to take some of the attention away from the girls' real and profoundly distressing punishment, their abandonment. Similarly, in *Wonderland*, fantasy helps to alleviate and lessen the disturbing aspects of many of Alice's adventures. Although terrifying, the mouse's tale, her encounter with the puppy, her confinement in the White Rabbit's house, the Duchess's treatment of her infant and the constant threats of the Queen do not seem to affect Alice in the long term as she travels through Wonderland. And in *The Land of Lost Toys*, the fantastic elements of the tale are associated with children's enjoyment, that is with the toys, whose 'sole object [...] was to give pleasure and amusement' (34). Yet, often in our English texts, what is linked with entertainment and the imaginary also becomes menacing. Fantastic elements are employed to help characters (and readers) confront and reconcile the ambiguities of punitive adults. At the same time, it is a means of desensitising readers to the idea of pain and to protect their sensibilities.

Conclusion

This chapter argued that the literary representation of physical pain is not necessarily about deterring young readers from misbehaving. The representation of arbitrary corporal punishment is deployed in our texts more often to condemn violence against children than to advocate the use of physical pain as an effective means of discipline. Instead, the spectacle of punishment, both physical and psychological, also participates in the desire to entertain readers, while still educating them. Punitive episodes can actively engage readers, and our writers acknowledge in their books the magnetic force that draws children to witness the punishment of their peers. Furthermore, when episodes of punishment are varied, they have the potential to be far more effective than abstract rules; they can mark readers' conscience by amusing them while deftly reinforcing moral norms that would

⁸⁰ Manlove, p. 60.

otherwise remain theoretical. Reading pleasure does not preclude morality. In our texts, the repetitions of transgressions and punishment are a creative and recreational form of communicating with the child reader, a form of language.

Characters' experiences, performance and resistance to pain reveal acute gender imbalances. The affective experiences of pain vary between male and female characters, making the relationship with pleasure a different one for readers. We also note that male heroes are the subjects rather than the objects of punishment, allowing them to demonstrate a certain level of strength and wit. The punishment of girl protagonists, on the other hand, often reveals less resistant figures. Girl characters often watch their own punishment passively while boys – who show more resistance, often through silent disobedience – sometimes manage to escape or subvert punishment. Boy characters tend to be more self-reliant and adventurous than young girl characters, who must learn to enjoy the confines of home. Girls develop some form of independence, but only until a certain age. John Jervis notes about transgression and childhood, 'there is a link here with modern ideologies of individualism, as though self-realization needs transgression to shore up its own self-confidence: how can I be sure of my distinctiveness, with a sense of myself as different, unless I affirm this through elements of deviance from the norm?'⁸¹ Although girl and boy characters both transgress, girls are less inclined to dodge their punishments, and therefore to affirm their distinctive identity. They not only fear physical pain, but also suffer more psychological pains. While many texts grapple with the notion of deserved punishment and the determination of guilt, it is mostly female characters who experience shame and humiliation, with the exception of Poil de Carotte. But the latter pretends not to be affected. Therefore, all three nations demonstrate similar gender imbalances.

However, even when boys can escape punishment or reverse the roles of the punisher and the victim, this is always temporary. Young male characters too must eventually come to accept adults' rules. In our texts, children are adults' collaborators during punishment in the sense that they eventually conform and

⁸¹ John Jervis, *Transgressing the Modern* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 4. Jervis continues: 'This has contributed to the invention of 'youth' as a period almost of 'licensed' transgression, in which 'getting one's kicks' comes to exist on a knife-edge between the permitted and the proscribed. This self-realization calls on the experience of the limit, demands limits in order to overthrow them, or at least engage in a vicarious experience of them.'

decide to actively transform themselves. Yet this is not achieved through the application of painful sanctions but through another form of discipline, which affects not only children but also adults. As we shall see in the next chapter, love and the fear of hurting others are effective means of discipline, which are shared between children and adults.

Chapter Four

Ruling by Love or Ruling by Fear?

As we saw in Chapter One, the texts comprising our corpus were produced in the context of increasingly sentimental discourses advising parents to discipline children through more tender means. Lyman Cobb asserted that '[a]ll parents should endeavour always to govern their children or pupils by love rather than by fear.'¹ Similarly, love was one of the main tenets behind Bronson Alcott's educational experiments at Temple School: 'Kindness and affection must form a primary element of [the educator's] character. It is these which will awaken kindred emotions in the children, and become the chief power of his influence.'² But did this call for love over fear preclude any forms of negative sanction? Should adults punish at all? Could love be a punitive instrument too? Indeed, Peter Stearns argues that, as guilt replaced physical harshness in the nineteenth century, '[c]hildren must be brought to see that bad behaviour brought temporary deprivations of love, until, willing to admit their guilt, they became open to reform and a return to the family circle.'³

The cult of childhood and the emphasis on the protection of children do not automatically imply a straight path in the disappearance of violence and fear. The increasing focus on love or tenderness did not exclude harsh discipline, as Penny Brown has observed.⁴ Instead, in *For Your Own Good*, a provocative investigation of how adults abuse children through conventional and accepted childrearing techniques, Alice Miller argues that the painful chastisement of children was for a long time (and can still be) interpreted as proof of parents' affection, presented as

¹ Cobb, p. 103.

² Bronson Alcott, p. 20.

³ Stearns, *Anxious Parents: A History of Modern Childrearing in America*, p. 59.

⁴ Penny Brown notes how 'in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, tenderness and affection were not seen as incompatible with firm, even harsh, discipline.' Penny Brown, "CANDIDATES FOR MY FRIENDSHIP" or How Madame de Genlis and Mary Wollstonecraft Sought to Regulate the Affections and Form the Mind to Truth and Goodness?, *New Comparison*, 20 (1995), 46–60 (p. 52).

an instrument used for children's benefit.⁵ The link between pain and love was not limited to the punishment of children. In the late nineteenth century, the question emerged of how physical pain could be compatible with the idea of divine love: 'Christians persistently tried to read pain as the work and desire of a caring God who wanted the best for humankind and saved them from wrongdoing by the sharp infliction of pain'.⁶ Parental protective rationales, notes Lucy Bending, could be expanded to all forms of human suffering: 'Theologians worried by the harshness of such punitive infliction of pain sought ways of making it more palatable, a favourite justification being that of God's analogical relationship to parents who chastise their child for its own sake.'⁷ In this loving pedagogy, love can be a reward for good behaviour but, conversely and concomitantly, adults can threaten to withdraw their love as a punishment.

Miller contends that this hypocritical 'black pedagogy' was intended to suit parental needs while aiming to induce conformity and obedience in children. If love is made conditional, it will influence children's feelings and behaviour. Myra Glenn concurs that '[b]onds of affection [...] were ultimately means to an end. They encouraged children to internalize the values of their teachers and parents.'⁸ Similarly, in 'Sparing the Rod', Richard Brodhead argues that the nineteenth century's greater focus on family love resulted in the development of a 'discipline intimacy', which aimed at the 'inward colonization' of the child.⁹ According to Brodhead, discipline through love was a strategic, conscious and intentional sentimentalisation of the bonds of affection motivated by the wish to see rules being internalised by children, rather than overtly imposed through harsh sanctions.¹⁰ As we saw in the introduction, Zornado notes a similar pattern in children's literature, arguing that these texts reflect a world where children who do not conform are annihilated: 'Sometimes the annihilation is literal, taking the form of severe physical

⁵ The writings of Alice Miller have been applied to the study of children's texts by other scholars. See for instance Melissa Gross, 'Prisoners of Childhood? Child Abuse and the Development of Heroes and Monsters in *Ender's Game*', *Children's Literature in Education*, 38 (2007), pp. 115–126.

⁶ Lucy Bending, *The Representation of Bodily Pain in Late Nineteenth-Century English Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 6 and p. 241.

⁷ Bending, p. 45.

⁸ Glenn, p. 139.

⁹ Brodhead, p. 73.

¹⁰ Brodhead, p. 71.

abuse or abandonment, but more often than not it is metaphorical, taking the form of the withdrawal of the parent's love and attention.¹¹

But are all acts of influence repressive and amounting to an intentional form of colonisation? Did adults not struggle with the ambiguous interactions between love and discipline? This chapter will argue that some Golden Age authors used children's texts to explore the difficulties linked to child rearing. They did not polarise adults and children but instead presented the anxieties that arise from loving someone and reflected on the responsibilities that accompany discipline. In their desire to portray forms of punishment that appear caring and child-centred, these authors presented complex adult characters and invited readers to sympathise with the latter's emotions. Rather than taking sides, some writers required their readers to respect the difficult position of the caring adult, while at the same time defending the rights of children. Yet, although love can be presented as a shared emotion between adults and children, we will see that love does not leave characters unaffected.

The purpose of this chapter is to unpick the ways in which loving disciplines are illustrated and exemplified in our texts, and to show that the adults' love represented in these narratives, even when grounded in the best moral intentions, is often manipulative. We will first examine how love can be used as a punishment in itself, deployed as a form of reward or posited as conditional. But what is the effect of the threat of love withdrawal on young characters and what message do these manipulative relationships convey to readers? Is love fully shared between adults and children? Following this, we will see how benevolent adult characters express their pain at punishing children, and in a reversed movement, use their own suffering to provoke remorse in children. Hurting loved ones is often used as a punitive threat and becomes a form of 'manipulated pain', thus a punishment. Women, who tend to express their pain more vividly, appear as ambiguous characters, both loving yet manipulating their love to punish children. Finally, intricately intertwined in adults' emotions are their explanations for punishing children. Love is posited as a justification for the use of discipline, including corporal sanctions. Punishment is presented as essential to their welfare, both

¹¹ Zornado, p. 105.

physical and moral. But what are the narrative implications of this other layer of punishment, as an instrument of love and moral good? And are these explications/justifications evidence of a lack of authority or, perhaps, a greater respect for characters' (and readers') sensitivities?

Love withdrawal

The idea that love can be a manipulative tool employed to affect the behaviour of children permeates our narratives. In *Tom Sawyer*, love and fear work in tandem at school. The demonstration of affection by female teachers, for the benefit of parents visiting St. Petersburg's school, is used as a reward, whereas children who misbehave are 'warned' supposedly of punishments to come. Love and punishment are therefore two complementary, yet opposite, instruments available to the educator. On the school open day, for instance, the narrator describes how '[t]he young lady teachers "showed off" — bending sweetly over pupils that were lately being boxed, lifting pretty warning fingers at bad little boys and patting good ones lovingly' (34). This attitude is presented as fake and hypocritical, and amounts more to a performance than genuine affection. The application of love as a reward is furthermore dependent on gender, as male teachers resort to corporal sanctions: 'The young gentlemen teachers "showed off" with small scoldings and other little displays of authority and fine attention to discipline' (34–35).

In *Tom Sawyer*, love is also presented as a positive sanction for good behaviour in domestic contexts. Huck Finn is rewarded with adult affection after he has proven himself useful to the community (he helped to save the widow Douglas from Injun Joe's plan to kill her). The widow 'heaped so many compliments and so much gratitude' that she announces her decision to adopt Huck and provide all the duties of a parent: 'the widow said she meant to give Huck a home under her roof and have him educated; and that when she could spare the money she would start him in business in a modest way' (196). Huck is accepted and adopted not because he needs a family, but because he now deserves to be looked after. Love, in other words, needs to be earned.

The idea that love is a form of recompense is nowhere expressed as clearly as in *What Katy Did*. Here love is not presented in polarised terms with punishment and pain, but in complementary terms. After her accident, Katy finds it difficult to understand that she must behave well in order to get better (both morally and physically). If she does, she will earn more love from those around her. To help Katy grasp the full implications of this idea, her cousin Helen writes her a poem for St Valentine's day entitled 'In School' (which we already examined in Chapter Three). Permeating the poem is the crucial notion that Katy deserves to be punished and that she will now need to work hard to earn her reward. This process is for Katy's benefit, and her pain is presented as the work of a caring divine authority, 'the Great Teacher'. Katy's pain was 'ordained', suggesting that it was not accidental but organised by God to teach her a lesson:

I used to go to a bright school
Where Youth and Frolic taught in turn;
But idle scholar that I was,
I liked to play, I would not learn;
So the Great Teacher did ordain
That I should try the School of Pain (125–126)

Katy's incentive, her reward, is to earn the love of others by transforming herself and emulating her cousin Helen. The first person pronoun helps both Katy and readers to identify with the narrator of the poem, Helen, whom Katy admires. The metaphor of the classroom also brings an element familiar to readers.

They tell me if I study well,
And learn my lessons, I shall be
Moved upward to that higher class
Where dear Love teaches constantly;
And I work hard, in hopes to gain
Reward, and get away from Pain. (126–127)

The notion of reward is associated with love and directly placed in opposition with pain. In another stanza, the poem suggests that love and pain are so close together that they could be confused.

Or so I sometimes think; and then,
At other times, they meet and kiss,
And look so strangely like, that I
Am puzzled to tell how it is,
Or whence the change which makes it vain

To guess if it be – Love or Pain. (127)

The proximity of the last two words on the same line at the end of the stanza reinforces the message that one should not regard them as mutually exclusive but rather as inseparable. Consequently, pain should not be feared since it is the result of care and attention.

Also implied, however, is the idea that love can be lost. If she does not suffer and work enough at improving herself, Katy will not be rewarded with love. She must therefore be an assiduous moral scholar. The rest of the narrative illustrates this very idea, associating the notion of pain with recompense, praise and salvation. After Katy decides to take up her studies again, Mr. Berger compliments her: ““You take more pain than you used [...] if to hurt the back make you study, it would be well that some of my young ladies shall do the same.”” (129) When her aunt dies, Katy must take on more work and start running the house from her bed. Katy’s efforts succeed in transforming her into the epitome of the loving mother, characterised by her devotion to others. Her reward is to be loved in return. ‘This is’, notes Lois Keith, ‘the defining state of womanhood: loving relationships with other people’.¹² The narrative ends when Katy has become adored by everyone, ‘evidently the centre and the sun’ of her family (159). As the narrative closes, cousin Helen observes ‘the changes in Katy’s own face; the gentle expression of her eyes; the womanly look, the pleasant voice, the politeness, the tact in advising others without seeming to advise.’ (159–160) Helen, who was earlier the author of the poem, is here the focalizer. The theme of love as reward is broached not by the external narrator, but by a character internal to the narrative, who loves and cares for Katy, giving the theme of reward a genuine tone of solicitude.

Yet if love can be a positive sanction, it can also easily be twisted into a negative one. As the example of Katy shows, if love can be earned, why could it not also be taken away? Contrary to Cobb’s assertion, ruling by love does not eliminate fear. Authors are aware of children’s fear of losing someone, as the recurrence of the theme of emotional separation in our narratives demonstrates. In *Les Frères Kip*, the harshest punishment for the two brothers is not forced labour, imprisonment or the

¹² Keith, p. 88.

threat of floggings, but separation from each other: ‘Ah ! quel adoucissement à tant de misères, si, à ce moment, il leur eût été permis de se rencontrer, de se reposer l’un auprès de l’autre’ (354). [How much less their misery had they, at this moment, been allowed to be together and rest side by side] Similarly, in *Kind Little Edmund*, the protagonist is not afraid of being caned, but cannot bear the idea of losing his beloved grandmother. Even Tom Sawyer knows the effect of separation when he goes to Jackson’s island with Huck and Joe. What was a game of *Robinsonnade* turns into painful feelings of homesickness and the boys quickly suffer from the absence of their relatives.

Therefore, the flip side of love as reward is that love is also conditional. Young characters are profoundly distressed by the idea of being divested of their right to be loved. Love withdrawal, parents withholding their affection if children act in a manner they disapprove, already figured in British children’s books of the Romantic era. It was an instrument employed predominantly by women characters, according to Katie Trumpener, who analyses the pressure placed on young scholar characters to learn to read, write and excel at their studies: ‘Determined to draw reluctant children across the threshold of literacy, female teachers sometimes resort to force, breaking the child’s spirit or threatening the withdrawal of love or pedagogic attention.’¹³ Love withdrawal, one form of punishment among a combination of sanctions, suggests that parental love is subject to the behaviour of children.

But in order for the temporary deprivation of love to be an effective educational technique, the adult’s affection needs to be authentic. To see how this process works, it is helpful to consider a situation where false love is being used. In *A Little Princess*, affection is granted to Sara upon monetary conditions. Miss Minchin purports to care for Sara exclusively because of her social status and the advantages she brings to the school. As a result, her affection can rapidly be withdrawn. When

¹³ Katie Trumpener, ‘The making of child readers’ in *The Cambridge History of English Romantic Literature*, ed. by James Chandler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 572–573. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521790079.026>> [accessed 02.11.2014]. The fear of disappointing parents and educators can also be found in French eighteenth-century texts. Penny Brown notes about the relationship between the children and their mother, in Mme de Genlis’s *Les Veillées du château ou Cours de Morale à l’usage des enfants* (1784): ‘Their greatest dread is her displeasure and the most feared punishment is exclusion from the evening story sessions. The privilege of participating and hence learning thus becomes synonymous with the desire to please their mother and earn her love.’ Brown, “‘CANDIDATES FOR MY FRIENDSHIP’”, p. 51.

it is revealed that Sara's father has died and left his daughter a pauper, Miss Minchin's attitude immediately alters: 'Miss Minchin had never looked quite so still and hard as she did when Sara came to her' (65). This form of conditional love is overtly condemned by the narrator but, more importantly, it has no effect on Sara, precisely because it is not genuine. Sara does not miss Miss Minchin's fake marks of affection; she only misses the genuine love of her father. When at the end of the novel, Sara's wealth is revealed, Miss Minchin returns to the discourse of love and pretends to be acting for the child's own good: "I have not spoiled you, perhaps [...] but you know that your papa was pleased with your progress. And — ahem! — I have always been fond of you. [...] You ought to have known it, said she; "but children, unfortunately, never know what is best for them.'" (177) Miss Minchin's selfishness and hypocrisy are clear to everyone, not only to readers and Sara, who have always been aware of them, but also to the other characters witnessing the scene. This closing passage offers readers the enjoyment of seeing Miss Minchin's insincere affection being rejected. As in *Tom Sawyer*, the female teacher is presented as profoundly deceptive and manipulative, contradicting any expectations that female educators will act lovingly because of their gender.

The love of adults, both male and female, is presented as authentic in *Little Men*. The novel shows readers what there is to gain from discipline based on love and tenderness, as the reviews published at the time indicate. One reviewer commented that it was no wonder that Dan was 'subdued in an atmosphere where love held license in subjection',¹⁴ while another remarked that the 'omnipotent' love in the novel would act on readers: 'there cannot be a boy or a girl anywhere whom this story would not make better, braver, tenderer, more useful and more loving'.¹⁵ However, these reviewers fail to outline that love is also given only under specific conditions and that the children, like Nan, 'wanted much love, and tried hard to win it' (162).

Conditional love is a pivotal element upon which the equilibrium of the small community rests and is outlined from the very start of the narrative. When Nat

¹⁴The Overland Monthly (September 1871), in Lyon Clark, *Louisa May Alcott: The Contemporary Reviews*, p. 153.

¹⁵"Little Men", *Boston Daily Advertiser* (29 June 1871), in Lyon Clark, *Louisa May Alcott: The Contemporary Reviews*, p. 144.

arrives at Plumfield, Mrs Bhaer introduces him to the rules regulating the school's daily life, which seems relaxed and delightful. Boys are even allowed a fifteen-minute pillow fight once a week, although only on the condition that they behave well. On Sunday, boys must learn simple lessons, but "lessons more important than any taught in school. [...] to be good, and to love to be good. It is hard work sometimes, I know well; but we all help one another, and so we get on." (29) The pronoun 'we' indicates that love and discipline are shared efforts between the children and the adults, a collaboration. Jo Bhaer then shows Nat notebooks where she keeps comments about each pupil, and links the power of literacy and stories to the rules at Plumfield:

I have a page for each boy. I keep a little account of how he gets on through the week, and Sunday night I show him the record. If it is bad I am sorry and disappointed, if it is good I am glad and proud; but, whichever it is, the boys know I want to help them, and they try to do their best for love of me and Father Bhaer. (29)

Mrs Bhaer asserts that her love is not an enduring gift, but one granted under specific conditions. The most important one is that the child must learn to love goodness for itself. This creates a distance with the authority of adults and makes norms less visible. According to Lyman Cobb, this is crucial because children can appropriately integrate the rules they must obey, without ever expecting their educator's 'disapprobation' or unkindness. For Cobb, the love of goodness is a logical substitute to traditional forms of discipline, and he sophistically announces: 'Does not the good man do right because he LOVES goodness?'¹⁶ This love of virtuousness becomes a bond between the adult and the child, creating a relationship of trust. There is, according to Cobb, no room for fear since the child never expects the adult to be dissatisfied.

Yet, although children do not fear their educators, they are scared to disappoint them, as is the case in *Little Men*. After Mrs Bhaer shows Nat the books she keeps about children, the latter worries that others will discover what is written about him. Mrs Bhaer reassures him: "I call this my conscience book; and only you and I will ever know what is to be written." (30) By contrast with Mrs. Darling in J. M. Barrie's *Peter and Wendy* (1911) who metaphorically rummages through her children's

¹⁶Cobb, p. 106.

mind to tidy and reorganise their moral values while they are asleep, here the adult and the child share access to his conscience. It is accessible to both of them equally, although through the writing of books that Mrs Bhaer keeps, thus through her interpretation of Nat's behaviour. *Little Men* suggests that love justifies adults' access into and surveillance of children's inner feelings and thoughts, and influence over their moral lives. Mrs Bhaer then adds: "Whether you will be pleased or ashamed to read it next Sunday depends on yourself." (30) Both of them share access to Nat's conscience, yet only he is responsible for his actions. Although Mrs Bhaer does not explicitly say in front of whom he should feel ashamed, it is clear to Nat; he immediately wants to demonstrate his desire to make his new guardian 'glad and proud', rather than 'sorry and disappointed' (30).

Admittedly, Alcott does not really provide her readers with instruments to exercise their own emotional faculties or to think critically about the norms put forth, and although the child's feelings are taken into consideration, there are not many options available to characters. The objective of Mrs Bhaer's book is to ensure that pupils learn to love and respect rules. One inevitably wonders what the consequences are for children who fail to do so. The answer to this question is provided with Dan, the lawless boy that the Bhaers find difficult to tame. Dan's example shows that if children fail to comply, they cannot stay at Plumfield, which signifies that the love of the adults is effectively withdrawn. After Dan organises a bullfight in a field, Mr Bhaer does not send him away immediately, but instead holds the following conversation: 'I want everybody and everything to be happy here, to love and trust, and serve us, as we try to love and trust and serve them faithfully and willingly. [...] But you have disappointed us in that, and we are sorry, for we hoped to make you quite one of us. Shall we try again?' (78) Dan shows contrition and agrees to try to improve, 'more tamed by kindness than he would have been by the good whipping' (78) This is perhaps more effective, but Dan's change is short-lived. The educator's love can be stretched, but it is not unconditional. After failing again and leading the other boys to smoke and drink, Dan experiences the implications of conditional love. As we saw in Chapter Two, he is eventually banished from the community: 'you have been many times forgiven, and yet it does no good', says Franz Bhaer (83). Later in the novel, when he eventually returns, Dan is pardoned

and given another chance but only because he shows the willingness to change. Although the Bhaers love him, they can decide to withdraw any form of affection and kindness until they have achieved their goal.

Jo and Franz Bhaer are not the only adults threatening to withdraw love as a punishment. *The Land of Lost Toys*, *The New Mother* and Ségur's titles also tackle this issue. The notion of love withdrawal is at the heart of the protagonists' punishments in different ways. *The Land of Lost Toys* contains a subtext about reciprocal affection that subtly progresses towards the notion of love withdrawal, while *The New Mother* shows the harrowing effects of the loss of maternal affection on children. Ségur's titles show an evolution from a discipline based on fear in *Les Malheurs*, to one founded on love in *Petit Diable*. Yet at the heart of both novels lies the threat of losing the affection of loved ones. Significantly, in *The Land of Lost Toys*, the toy elected to be Aunt Penelope's executioner is the most loving one: her doll Rosa, a toy traditionally associated with girls' acquisition of motherly behaviour and which can also be used for the surveillance of girls and the internalisation of morals, as demonstrated by scholars of doll literature.¹⁷ Rosa is solicitous and takes a protective role among the toys' community. Addressing everyone with kind words, calling them 'my dears', she is 'well-beloved' by the other toys and she calls Aunt Penelope 'my love' (42). However, as Aunt Penelope's punishment begins, Rosa finds fault with her attitude and tries to correct the way she walks ('turn your heels well out, and bring your toes together' (40)). She refuses to care for her, offering neither food nor clothes, forces Aunt Penelope to drink make-believe tea and does not provide her with a nightdress because she does not like needlework. Finally, she sends Aunt Penelope to bed: 'You must go to bed, my dear. I've got other things to do, and I can't leave you lying about.' (41) The lesson for children, both inside and outside the text, is that neglecting to behave according to adults' rules (here looking after one's own possessions) will lead to being neglected in return.

In *Les Malheurs*, most episodes are based on the idea that love needs to be earned, which triggers endless fear; Sophie knows she must always work harder to gain the affection of her mother and constantly dreads disappointing her. Because of the

¹⁷ See for instance Eugenia Gonzalez's examination of disciplinary surveillance in nineteenth-century doll stories. Gonzalez, pp. 33–57.

repetitive structure of transgressions and punishments as well as the lack of closure, which we examined in Chapter Three, readers get the sense that Sophie's corrections are never enough. Every time she earns her mother's approbation, she seems to lose it again. Those around Sophie manipulate her feelings and threaten to take away their affection, at least temporarily. She can only regain it through deep remorse. When she steals the contents of a sewing box in Chapter VIII (*La boîte à ouvrage*), the other characters find it difficult to forgive her. Even her maid, usually more indulgent, is 'indignée' [shocked]. Similarly, '[q]uand le bon Paul apprit ce qu'avait fait Sophie, il en fut si indigné qu'il fut huit jours sans vouloir aller chez elle.' (337) [when the good Paul was told what Sophie had done, he was so shocked that he refused to see her for eight days.] Paul makes it a condition of his return that Sophie becomes more honest and never steals again. Finally, 'Sophie pleura encore, supplia sa maman de lui pardonner. La maman finit par y consentir' (337). [Sophie wept some more and begged her mamma to forgive her, which she eventually agreed to do.]

Whereas fear is still a powerful tool in Sophie's development, in *Petit Diable* love takes a more preeminent place in the educational system of adult characters. Sophie is either scared of her mother or of God.¹⁸ In *Les Malheurs*, the story revolved around the authority of a frightening ubiquitous God or adult. However, the comtesse's vision of child and adult relationships evolved with her religious feelings. As Catholic visions of childhood moved away from fear, the comtesse 'conceptualised her ideas on the upbringing of children as both 'modern' and Catholic. For her it was based on the new theology centred upon love, and an explicit rejection of the old emphasis on fear.'¹⁹ In *Petit Diable*, Juliette's educational methods are closer to Cobb's loving principles than Mme de Réan's in *Les Malheurs*. The novel concludes on the following intervention from the narrator: 'Nous terminons l'histoire du *Bon Petit Diable* en faisant observer combien la bonté, la piété et la douceur sont des moyens puissants pour corriger les défauts qui semblent être

¹⁸ After Sophie burns her shoes by walking over whitewash, Mme de Réan tells her daughter that she will not punish her; the fear she experienced was already God's punishment. The idea that God can see what parents cannot witness was also used to intimidate the children sent to *La Paternelle* in Mettray, the section reserved for the children of wealthy parents that we examined in Chapter One. In *La Paternelle*, the following motto appeared above each cell: 'Dieu me voit' [God can see me]. See Mongin, p. 18.

¹⁹ Sophie Heywood, p. 47.

les plus incorrigibles.’ (1292) [We shall conclude the story of the *Good Little Devil* by noting that goodness, piety and gentleness are powerful means to reform faults, even the ones that seem the most incorrigible.] Early in the narrative, the love of Juliette seems absolute and perennial, her affection all-encompassing to the extent that it gives Charles value in the eyes of others, as if the love of the pious and irreproachable Juliette could vouch for his own goodness. The juge de paix admits: “‘Tant mieux pour toi si Juliette t’aime ; cela prouve que tu vaux mieux que ce que je pensais.’” (1213) [Good for you if Juliette loves you, it shows that you are worth more than I thought.]

The illustration below, which appears early in the novel, conveys the affection that the child and the adult share. Marianne, Juliette’s sister, stands stoutly and protectively over them. She has just come home, leaving the door open. This scene is strikingly similar to an image which appears early in *The New Mother*, where mother and daughters are tenderly looking at and hugging each other.



Fig. 4.1. *Un Bon Petit Diable*, Chapter IV: *Le fouet. Le para fouet*. Horace Castelli (1865)



Fig. 4.2. *The New Mother*, ‘Then she kissed them’. Dorothy Tennant (1882)

In both images, the characters form a circle, which nothing seems able to disturb, and their eyes are turned upon one another. In the first section of *The New Mother*, as in *Petit Diable*, the relationships between the two girls and their mother are defined

by their intense mutual affection. Their bond is nuclear, seems permanent and is reflected in the care with which they look after their cottage. The mother's affection is emphasised with direct speech when she calls her daughters 'Dear children', 'my sweet', 'my dear little Turkey' (79), 'my dear children', 'my dear child' (80) and through the voice of the narrator ("said in a loving voice" (79); 'the dear mother' (79)). This is reinforced with the description of physical signs of her affection (when she finds them crying, she 'held out her arms, and the Turkey, getting up from her chair, ran swiftly into them' (79)).

However, both images above also suggest that the love depicted can be endangered and is perhaps ephemeral. Behind the characters, an open door adds a disquieting note to these idyllic pictures, attracting the viewer's attention away from the loving scenes. In the illustration from *The New Mother*, the view of the outside world is suggestive of the girls' ensuing transgressions. In *Petit Diable*, Charles's bodily attitude – his crouched posture gives the impression that he is imploring Juliette – suggests his fear that he could lose his beloved cousin's affection. And indeed, as the narrative develops in *Petit Diable*, it becomes clear that Juliette's love is a well-crafted educational device that aims at correcting Charles's turbulent nature and at changing him into a well-meaning child. While in *Les Malheurs*, love needs to be constantly earned or regained, in *Petit Diable* love is already granted, but it must be preserved through a pious and diligent moral progression. Juliette tells Charles that if he does not eventually change through her loving discipline, this will signify that he does not love her enough. She clearly states her intentions to transform Charles through reciprocal affection: "Je croyais si fermement qu'il m'aimait, et que, par cette affection, je l'amènerais à bien faire!" (1248) [I was so sure that he loved me and that my affection would lead him down the proper path!] Juliette often reveals her calculations: "Il a un excellent cœur! Avec de l'amitié on fait de lui ce qu'on veut." (1256) [He has a heart of gold! One can get him to do anything through friendship.] The use of the pronoun 'on' [one] suggests that anyone could manipulate Charles, if they showed him enough love. Charles also learns how to conform to moral expectations by emulating Juliette, 'dont la bonne influence se manifestait chaque jour davantage.' (1250) [whose positive influence was more

evident every day.] Thus, his education takes the path of a shared emotional journey.

Juliette's love, embedded in her faith, has a strong religious intent: "Puisque tu m'aimes, tu m'écouteras, et quand je parviendrai à te faire aimer le bon Dieu, tu l'écouteras lui aussi" (1248). [Since you love me, you will listen to me, and when I get you to love God, you will listen to him as well] Like Sophie, Charles may lose grace if he does not work hard at deserving it, and he can only do this by being worthy of Juliette's love. Simultaneously, it is with tenderness that Juliette may transform the child's behaviour. Charles not only needs to be corrected, reformed and transformed, he also needs to be reborn in order to be enduringly loved by Juliette. One of the last chapters, entitled *Le vieux Charles reparaît et disparaît pour toujours* [Old Charles reappears and disappears forever], tells of Charles's final changes: he is more amiable, more docile, attentive to others' needs and excels at his religious education. The last point is of crucial importance, since this deepens Juliette's affection: 'il fit sa première communion avec une ferveur qui pénétra le cœur de Juliette [...] et qui augmenta sa confiance en Charles et l'affection si vive qu'elle lui portait.' (1258) [he applied himself with such fervour to his first communion that Juliette was deeply touched [...] and the trust she had in him and her deep affection for him only increased.] Charles must love God to be loved in return by Juliette. The latter gets a sense of personal reward in seeing her educational endeavours succeed: 'Elle aimait d'autant plus les belles qualités qu'elle voyait grandir en lui, qu'elle aidait tous les jours et sans cesse à leur développement' (1258). [She appreciated the beautiful qualities that flourished in him all the more that she herself contributed to their growth day after day without fail] The successful progress of Charles and his love of God are indivisible, even if at the start he acts out of love for Juliette rather than for God: "Fais-le pour moi, puisque tu ne veux pas le faire pour le bon Dieu", pleads Juliette (1143). [Do this for me, since you will not do it for God] Her actions are a form of intercession in order to save Charles.

As in *Petit Diable*, the mother in Clifford's story explains to her daughters that they may lose her affection if they misbehave. But as opposed to other texts, where love withdrawal is a risk or only temporary, in *The New Mother* it becomes very real and permanent. For Anita Moss, this tale 'taps deeply into any child's worst terrors—the fear of losing one's mother and the anxiety that terrible transformations will occur, that what is beloved and familiar will somehow, inexplicably become strange and terrifying.'²⁰ This ambiguous tale appears to be about the extent of motherly love but in reality it tackles the effects of lost love. As the story unfolds, the mother's affection evolves and becomes conditional. When the girls ask their mother why they should not disobey her, she gives them a lesson about how one should love and the value of authentic love: "if one loves well [...] one's love is stronger than all bad feelings in one, and conquers them. And this is the test whether love be real or false, unkindness and wickedness have no power over it." (80). Behaving in a 'naughty' way will therefore be interpreted as proof that they do not truly love her (80). Consequently, the girls must act not directly for the love of goodness, but rather out of love for their mother. In other words, the love for their mother is used as an instrument to induce self-control. The behaviour of the children proves their love or lack of it. But her discourses fail to convince the two girls. She will eventually have to resort to an external punisher when her emotional influence fails to be effective.

As an ultimate resort, the mother threatens to abandon her daughters forever if they continue to rebel: "I should have to go away and leave you". (80) The mother promises that she will only apply this extreme punishment if they are 'really, really naughty' (80); however she does not explain what this means precisely. When the girls start misbehaving, throwing and crashing things around the cottage, 'the mother became really angry' but the girls 'instead of crying and being sorry at her anger they laughed for joy' (82). The mother's anger is not enough to stop them and she begins the progressive withdrawal of her love. The narrator no longer evokes any physical affection. As the mothers start to distance herself, the girls cannot help but express their attachment, terrified at the idea that they might lose her: 'they clung to their own mother, and kissed her fondly' (80). When she is no longer able

²⁰ Moss, p. 57.

to endure her daughters' misbehaviour, 'she did not scold them like she had the day before or send them to bed, but she just broke down and cried' (83). Until their mother is effectively gone, the girls do not fully comprehend the implications of their actions or realise that they will lose her love. It is only when they find themselves alone in the cottage that they understand what has happened and consider the implications of their mother's departure: 'I am sure we shall die if she doesn't come back' (87). Without their mother's love, the girls cannot survive, implies Clifford, and indeed, the girls turn into roaming shadows, metaphorically dying of emotional deprivation. Without love, everyone, adult and child, is in pain.

The moral dilemma presented to the girls echoes a passage from Lyman Cobb's book. Cobb imagines that two boys are encouraged to steal apples from their neighbour's garden. One boy refuses out of fear of his mother (who whips him), the second out of love for his mother (who would be grieved by her son's mischief). Cobb concludes that the boy acting out of love will find more firmness in resisting the temptation to sin.²¹ But Cobb's theoretical assumptions do not envisage a third possibility, which Clifford suggests. What if children do not grasp how their desires can hurt adults' feelings and thus damage their love for them? What if children do not comprehend the principle of reciprocal love which Cobb so strongly insists upon? Contrary to Cobb's claims, the mother's reproaches are not enough to make her daughters stop misbehaving and start loving goodness. Clifford suggests that children may not be responsive to discipline through love, no matter how hard the adult tries to induce it. The girls utterly fail to understand why they should put their mother's demands before their own selfish desires. When the mother explains that if one loves someone else, they cannot make them unhappy, the girls retort: "We don't know what you mean [...] we do love you; but we want to be naughty" (80). They fail to appreciate the significance of other-centeredness upon which discipline through love relies. Maria Nikolajeva notes that '[t]o love someone implies willingness and ability to sacrifice some of one's own happiness to achieve happiness for the object of one's love. Love thus also demands empathy, that is,

²¹ Cobb, p. 106.

understanding of other people's emotions and goals'.²² But Clifford shows that children are not always able to understand the principle of empathy and that they are supposed to do things they do not want to do. To an extent, the child is responsible for the failure of loving disciplines. In *Little Men*, Dan does not put the happiness of the community before his own desires and Jo Bhaer's gentle approach does not stop him from misbehaving. In *Les Malheurs*, in spite of Sophie fears of disappointing her loved ones, she repeatedly misbehaves.

These texts therefore show the limits of theories on the effectiveness of love, revealing that practice is far more complex than pedagogical theory. Because they do not know how to love others empathetically, children deserve to see love taken away. But could it not seem reasonable to readers that one could love and be naughty at the same time? One could also argue that the girls' mother is incapable of understanding her daughters' point of view, of grasping what pushes them to be naughty. Although her departure is presented as a demonstration of her selfless love, her abandonment indicates her failure to understand her children's desires and to sacrifice her own happiness by staying and bearing her unruly daughters. *The New Mother* thus appears not as an apology of the discipline through love, but rather as a suggestive metaphor of the impossibility of intergenerational love, and offers an insight into adults' difficult position.

Furthermore, children learn that discipline through love is also a form of discipline through fear. As we have seen, Sophie dreads others' rejection and Charles is terrified at the idea of losing Juliette's affection. In Clifford's text, when love fails it is replaced by fear, which turns into terror when the new mother eventually arrives. Even though the new mother does not chastise the two girls, they are nonetheless terrified.²³ When she tries to enter the cottage, the lexical field of panic dominates

²² Maria Nikolajeva, 'Guilt, empathy and the ethical potential of children's literature', *Barnboken Journal of Children's Literature Research*, 35 (2012), p. 4

<<http://coaction.lib.sfu.ca/index.php/clr/article/viewFile/18081/22284>> [accessed 14.07.2014].

²³ Some critics have offered feminist readings of this tale, locating its meaning in the sexual tensions it invokes. Anna Krugovy Silver, 'The Didactic Carnavalesque in Lucy Lane Clifford's "The New Mother"', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 40.4 (2000), 727-743. Anna Krugovoy Silver notes how Clifford creates 'frightening supernatural scenarios in which monsters teach obedient little girls manners and morals.' Clifford's tale has also been compared to Neil Gaiman's 'postfeminine fairytales' *Coraline* (2002) and *The Mirror Mask* (2006), for its disquieting resonance. Kate McNally, Elizabeth Parson and Neerah Sawers, 'The Other Mother: Neil Gaiman's Postfeminist Fairytales', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 4.33 (2008), 371-389. Silver furthermore remarks that the tale has terrified readers ever since it was published, and Naomi Wood reports the powerful effect that this terrifying tale had on generations of children. Wood, p. 292. In

the narrative: ‘in fear and trembling Blue-Eyes put her back against the door’, and ‘Turkey’s heart sank and her cheek turned pale’ (89). They shriek when the new mother gives ‘a fearful blow’ on the door with her wooden tail (89). Beyond the ‘phallic assertion’ of this gesture,²⁴ the blow may also signify the corporal chastisement that the children dread and adults’ potential violence. The sense of terror is further generated by the stark contrast between the terrifying monster, emotionally barren and almost lifeless, and the loving but deserting mother. Emotions are evoked through characters’ fears of what may happen to them, suggesting to readers further possible suffering. The narrator never tries to attenuate the sense of dread that permeates the ending, instead insisting on ‘the cold, dreary days and the long dark nights’ (90). The girls creep close to the house ‘with beating hearts’ (90). The end of the narrative suggests that the two girls will live in fear forever, leaving readers with a lingering sense of unease.

Love withdrawal is a powerful tool precisely because it can profoundly affect young characters. However, some characters struggle to reveal their emotions when they fear to disappoint adults’ expectations and lose their love. This point is vividly illustrated in *Poil de Carotte*. The character’s difficulties in understanding his own feelings permeate the tone of the narrative voice, ostensibly detached and naïve, keeping his emotional reactions at a distance. When his parents are visiting him at boarding school, Poil de Carotte is torn between the joy of seeing them and his inability to communicate his affection, in particular to his father: “‘Si je reste trois mois loin de mes parents, j’ai une grosse envie de les voir. Je me promets de bondir à leur cou comme un jeune chien ; Nous nous mangerons de caresses. Mais les voici, et ils me glacent.’” (52) [If I am away from my parents for three months, I simply long to see them. I promise myself that I’ll jump at their necks like a puppy. We’ll gobble each other up with kisses. But then they come and freeze me up.] For a moment, he believes that his father is distant, and becomes terribly anxious that he may no longer love him: “‘Est-ce que mon papa ne m’aimerait plus, se dit-il. Je l’ai vu embrasser grand frère Félix. Il s’abandonnait au lieu de se retirer. Pourquoi m’évite-il ? Veut-on me rendre jaloux ? Régulièrement je me fais cette remarque.’”

Don't Tell the Grown-Ups, Alison Lurie dedicates a few chapters to the study of Lucy Lane Clifford, entitled ‘Tales of Terror’. Alison Lurie, *Don't Tell the Grown-Ups* (London: Bloomsbury, 1990), pp. 67–73.

²⁴ See Silver, pp. 732 and 734, and Wood p. 306.

(52). [“Is it that papa does not love me any more?” he wonders. “I’ve seen him kiss Felix. He lets himself go instead of drawing away. Why does he avoid me? Are they trying to make me jealous? Here’s a thing I keep noticing.”] Poil de Carotte eventually realises that he has misinterpreted his father’s attitude and his intense relief reveals the deep inner turmoil the idea of love withdrawal had provoked in him. While readers have access to the character’s internal conflict, their knowledge is restricted to those internal thoughts, limited to a mixed sense of confusion and sadness. Poil de Carotte feels emotionally manipulated by adults, suspecting them of trying to trigger his jealousy of his older brother, but he is not equipped to understand their motives. Readers have access to nothing but the boy’s raw sense of helplessness. The innocence in the narrator’s voice, as well as Poil de Carotte’s anguish, stand in stark contrast to his suspicion of his parents’ cold and calculating intentions. More than in other titles, the focus on Poil de Carotte’s naïve perspective implies that love can be a potential instrument to trigger anxiety and influence children.

Not all characters, however, are affected by adults’ manipulative loving discipline – some even reject or play with it. Huck Finn attempts to decline the widow’s protection, unsuccessfully, as he is conscious of the manipulations behind it. Tom Sawyer reveals himself expert at turning adults’ calculated love against them. Aunt Polly openly tells her nephew that she loves him: “Tom, Tom, I love you so, and you seem to try every way you can to break my old heart with your outrageousness.” (45) She is also aware that her affection is a potential weakness that could ruin her educational efforts. After wrongly whipping Tom for something that Sid had done, she cannot bring herself to admit her error and to ask for Tom’s forgiveness, afraid that he would use this against her:

her conscience reproached her, and she yearned to say something kind and loving; but she judged that this would be construed into a confession that she had been in the wrong, and discipline forbade that. So she kept silent and went around her affairs with a troubled heart. [...] [Tom] knew that in her heart his aunt was on her knees to him, and he was morosely gratified by the consciousness of it. He would hang out no signals, he would take no notice. He knew that a yearning glance fell upon him, now and then, through a film of tears, but he refused recognition of it. (26)

As often in the novel, the focalization keeps vacillating between the two protagonists. Free indirect speech is used especially between Aunt Polly's qualms and Tom's cunningness. It also requires an active participation from readers who are allowed to access thoughts that both characters refuse to articulate to each other. Their internal conflicts show how subjective the meaning of love is. Their perspectives seem less reliable by being next to each other, and make each character more ambiguous. Instead of confirming that love is a shared emotion, the movements between the two characters' inner thoughts suggest to readers that the discipline through love system is fraught.

Tom is thus aware of the advantage love gives him over his aunt. The germ of a sentimental and manipulative plan materialises in his mind, a plan that will enable him to avenge himself for all the wrongdoings he feels he has suffered:

He pictured himself lying sick unto death and his aunt bending over him beseeching one little forgiving word, but he would turn his face to the wall, and die with that word unsaid. Ah, how would she feel, then? And he pictured himself brought home from the river, dead, with his curls all wet, and his sore heart at rest. (26)

Until the episode of Jackson Island, Tom does not get the opportunity to put his plan into action and to play with his aunt's affection. Finally, he decides to leave St. Petersburg with Joe Harper and Huck Finn and to settle on Jackson Island. The three boys want 'to escape from hard usage and lack of sympathy at home by roaming abroad into the great world never to return' (83). Quickly they feel homesick and decide to organise their return, with the added pleasure of tricking their guardians into believing they have drowned. They can, then, magisterially turn up at their own funeral.

Tom is the mastermind behind this cunning scheme. While the boys are still on the island, Tom travels back to the village one night to find his aunt crying at home with Mrs. Harper. Tom realises that the women believe he and his acolytes are dead. He hides and listens to them quietly as they seem to genuinely regret all the punishments they ever gave the boys: "to think I went and whipped him for taking that cream [...] poor abused boy!" cries Joe's mother. Aunt Polly: "And God forgive me, I cracked Tom's head with my thimble, poor boy, poor dead boy." (96)

With exaggerated sentimentalism, Aunt Polly prays for Tom's soul 'with such measureless love in her words and her old trembling voice, that he was weltering in tears again, long before she was through.' (97) As the women become remorseful, Tom takes the full measure of the weaknesses in adults' love. When the boys turn up at their own funeral, they receive the best treatment they have ever enjoyed, with adults throwing themselves at them and Aunt Polly full of 'loving attentions' (109). But when Aunt Polly discovers that Tom had travelled back from the island at night and had not revealed to her that he was safe, she realises the extent of his manipulation and resorts to punishment again: "I've a notion to skin you alive!" (118) Tom admits to his sin, but reveals he had also given her a kiss while she was asleep, and manages to show that he is not lying. The kiss is a testimony to Tom's love ("Because I love you so" (119)), and when Aunt Polly realises her nephew truly did kiss her, she bursts into tears: "I could forgive the boy, now, if he'd committed a million sins!" (119) This thought is not available to Tom, but only to readers who are now in a position to understand how both characters can manipulate each other's affection. Readers also know that Aunt Polly, although she loves Tom, is not able to give him unconditional love.

Absolute unconditional love is therefore rare in our corpus; we find only one mention of it in *Kind Little Edmund*. Edmund's grandmother is the only adult who does not ask the protagonist to change, and loves him 'in spite' of what others condemn: 'she loved him very much, in spite of his inquiring mind, and hardly scolded him at all' (141). The narrator adds, as if to confirm that this attitude is exceptional: 'But, she was very kind and very old' (141). The stress on the conjunction 'But' placed before a comma, and the repetition of the adverb 'very' imply the oddity of her undemanding kindness. It can only be explained by her personality and age. Readers are given indirect help on how to interpret Edmund's relationship with adults, and on what to expect from adults themselves: very few will offer unconditional love. In all other titles with a young character, adults ask children to adapt to their expectations. Even Alice and Sara are not accepted for who they are and, as we shall see in the next section, Alice has internalised the logic of loving pedagogies. In *Petit Diable*, love eventually prevails and Charles is transformed, but in other texts, loving disciplines are not always successful.

However, if love withdrawal is not always fruitful, a more effective loving technique is found in manipulating children's fear of hurting others' feelings.

The fear of hurting others

As we have seen, love – even with the best of intentions – is often manipulative and an instrument used to discipline children. Thus, the personal desires and the personality of characters are sometimes oppressed or redirected and, as such, love becomes a form of punishment in itself. In particular, through dialogues, or indirect speech, adult characters use children's affection for others to trigger negative feelings, notably guilt, related to the fear of hurting loved ones. Anita Vangelisti and Rhonda Sprague remark that 'the negative feelings linked to guilt often prevent people from engaging in activities that deviate from social standards [...] this emotion can be used to exercise control or power relationships'.²⁵ For Maria Nikolajeva, guilt 'is omnipresent in fictional children's interactions with other people, adults as well as peers'.²⁶ The guilt linked to having hurt or fearing to hurt others is exploited in our texts where adult voices often stress the harm done to loved ones. Sophie feels sorry for hurting her cousin Paul and her mother underlines that the guilt she feels is her very punishment: 'Je n'ajouterais aucune réprimande ni aucune punition à celle que te fait subir ton cœur. Tu souffres du mal de Paul, et c'est ta punition'. (317) [I will add no reproach or punishment to the one inflicted by your own heart. You suffer to see Paul in pain; this is punishment enough.] The harm done to Paul becomes a shared emotion. Aunt Izzie also stresses Katy's bond to cousin Helen and plays with her fear of disappointing her: "I should think you'd be ashamed of yourself [...]. I think your cousin Helen will be surprised when she hears this." (86) As a result of Aunt Izzie's remonstrance, Katy 'felt very miserable; repentant, defiant, discontented, and sulky all at once.' (86) Katy's conflicting feelings suggest the complexity of the child's emotions, and make them appear realistic, affording readers the possibility of sympathising with Katy's

²⁵ Anita Vangelisti and Rhonda Sprague, 'Guilt and Hurt: Similarities, Distinctions, and Conversational Strategies' in *Handbook of Communication and Emotion: Research, Theory, Applications and Contexts*, ed. by Peter Andersen and Laura Guerrero (San Diego and London: Academic Press, 1998), p. 126.

²⁶ Maria Nikolajeva, 'Guilt, empathy and the ethical potential of children's literature', p. 2.

experience. Similarly, Katy experiences reciprocal grief when she pushes and hurts her sister. Again, the voice of the adult is used to provoke guilt in the child, based on Katy's emotional attachment to her sister. Charles also begins to change and to abide by Juliette's moral teachings because he wishes to avoid hurting her feelings.

In our corpus, young characters' feelings of guilt are often related to the pain of adults. We find a very clear example of this in *Little Men*. Nat is made to feel shameful and guilty for lying by hurting his beloved educator. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Mr Bhaer uses an unusual disciplinary technique to trigger these negative emotions and forces Nat to strike him with a ruler: “‘when you tell a lie I will not punish you, but you shall punish me. [...] You shall ferrule me in the good old-fashioned way; I seldom do it myself, but it makes you remember better to give me pain than to feel it yourself.’” (49) This technique may have been inspired by Bronson Alcott's experiments with non-corporal punishments. According to Glenn, Alcott had devised a way to induce guilt and shame similar to Mr Bhaer's technique: ‘He forced two persistently disobedient students to hit him as punishment for their own misbehaviour! Ashamed and mortified at having hit their respected and beloved schoolmaster, these boys burst into tears and promised to reform.’²⁷ For Cobb this technique was quite common in America, and he recommended it. Usually, the threat of having to whip one's educator was enough: ‘the appeal was wholly effectual. The child or pupil was entirely subdued. Neither was whipped.’²⁸ Mr Bhaer, however, forces Nat to go through with the punishment. The method is effective because the fear of hurting Mr Bhaer is stronger than the fear he would have of being whipped himself: ‘Mr Bhaer judged rightly, that love of him would be more powerful with Nat than fear for himself.’ (49) After the punishment, Nat hugs ‘the kind hand in both his own, laid his face down on it sobbing out in a passion of love, and shame, and penitence’ (50). Love is presented as a shared emotion and the child feels the suffering of the adult, increasing his guilt.

²⁷ Glenn, pp. 142–143. A reviewer of *Little Men* also notes: ‘Some of the peculiar modes of punishment used at Plumfield were really successfully tried, we think, in Mr. Alcott's school, which was so famous a quarter of a century or more ago, about which there are many delightful reminiscences’. ‘Little Men’ *Boston Daily Advertiser* (29 June 1871), in Lyon Clark, *Louisa May Alcott: The Contemporary Reviews*, p. 144. Another reviewer, however, considered that this method would not be so successful in real life: ‘Mr Bhaer's original method of compelling the guilty boy to inflict the flogging on the teacher would lose its moral effect if it were generally adopted.’ Lyman Abbott, *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (August 1871), in Lyon Clark, *Louisa May Alcott: The Contemporary Reviews*, p. 147.

²⁸ Cobb, p. 124.

Beverly Lyon Clark sees in this episode a form of empowerment: ‘by granting agency to the child, Alcott starts to question traditional sources of authority.’²⁹ Yet, although roles are reversed and the child becomes the punisher, his actions and emotions are still directed by the adult, contrary to the examples of role reversal examined in the previous chapter.

We note several other examples where guilt and hurt are strategically combined to discipline children’s behaviour. However, in most cases, it is women educators who reveal they are hurt by the behaviour of children. In the example above, Mr Bhaer does not express any pain, although the child knows he must experience it. Women educators display their emotions and grief more openly, whereas male characters are usually the carriers of solemn discourses. Paternal relationships, when based on love, are not complicated by inner conflicts even when it comes to discipline. Male figures often represent the ultimate authority, reflected in their social position: doctor (Dr Carr in *What Katy Did*), judge (Judge Thatcher in *Tom Sawyer*), lawyer (Mr Carmichael in *A Little Princess*). They do not deal with the day-to-day disciplining of the children. Other male characters are either emotionally distant (Sophie’s father) or often away from home (Poil de Carotte’s father). In the case of harsh schoolmasters (such as in *Kind Little Edmund* and *Tom Sawyer*), they also appear as aloof figures, devoid of moral emotions.

The burden of love and pain therefore lies with motherly figures, while rationality and solemnity are the domain of men. Women’s educative skills are often based on their access to emotions and this can prove to be a very effective tool to provoke a reaction in children and to manipulate their feelings. As we saw in Chapter One, several theorists, such as Locke and Durkheim, had advised that parents carry out punishments without ‘visible pleasure’; if it appeared to be a difficult process for the adult, punishment would be more effective.³⁰ Similarly, in our texts, female

²⁹ Beverly Lyon Clark, ‘Domesticating the School Story, Regendering a Genre: Alcott’s *Little Men*’, *New Literary History* 26.2 (1995), 323–342. Lyon Clark notes that Alcott indulges ‘in a kind of generational inversion – perhaps an indirect way of responding to her father’, but the review that she gathered in 2004 shows that this technique was commonly used, including by Alcott’s father. Lyon Clark, *Louisa May Alcott: The Contemporary Reviews*.

³⁰ Locke had stressed that parents should carry out punishment and severity without ‘visible pleasure’. Locke, p. 70. Later Durkheim expressed a similar idea and highlighted that adults should show displeasure when punishing children. Durkheim also recommended that ‘s’il ne faut pas punir par colère, il ne faut pas moins se garder de punir froidement.’ Durkheim, p. 230. [If we must not punish in anger, it is nonetheless necessary to guard against dispassionate punishment.]

educators express a strong displeasure when punishing children. They communicate their own suffering to young characters, making the consequences of the violation of rules even more vivid to readers than abstract discourses. They can see the harm inflicted on others and the implications of the young characters' actions.

Furthermore, because of the bonds of affection that link young characters to the adult harmed, readers can sympathise with adults' emotions, as well as young characters'.

In our texts, several female figures suggest that punishment is an exacting task, which they perform out of responsibility. In *The New Mother*, a great emphasis is placed on the mother's sorrow at the idea of performing her ultimate punishment, which is to leave them: 'while she spoke her eyes filled with tears, and a sob almost choked her' (80). When she leaves, 'the dear mother's heart ached, and her eyes filled with tears' (85). The girls call her back, and she turns, 'shook her head, and waved her handkerchief, all wet with tears, to the children at the window' (85). Similarly, in *Tom Sawyer*, Aunt Polly's affection for her nephew makes punishment an arduous task. In Chapter Three, we saw that Tom's pain is rarely available to readers. Aunt Polly, on the other hand, exposes her pangs of conscience and her anxieties through several monologues or indirect speeches. In the passage below, she blames Tom for her troubles.

[He]pears to know just how long he can torment me before I get my dander up, and he knows if he can make out to put me off for a minute or make me laugh, it's all down again and I can't hit him a lick. I ain't doing my duty by that boy, and that's the Lord's truth, goodness knows. Spare the rod and spile the child, as the Good Book says. I'm a laying up sin and suffering for us both, I know. He's full of the Old Scratch, but laws-a-me! He's my own dead sister's boy, poor thing, and I ain't got the heart to lash him, somehow. Everytime I let him off, my conscience does hurt me so, and every time I hit him my old heart most breaks. (12)

Aunt Polly believes she suffers more than Tom when she has to discipline him because she finds herself trapped in a moral dilemma. She will be grieved by punishing Tom, but if she does not correct him, she will eventually be punished for not doing her duty. Her pangs of conscience mean that whatever she does, she will suffer from her decision. And if she suffers for both of them, twice as much as Tom, then her intentions must be morally superior to Tom's selfish ways. In *Petit*

Diable too, Juliette often reiterates how her love for Charles is a wellspring of concerns: “‘j’avais si peur que tu fasses quelque chose de mal [...] quand tu offenses le bon Dieu, mon pauvre Charles, j’en éprouve une telle peine que je te ferais pitié si tu voyais le fond de mon cœur.’” (1215) [I was so worried you would do something wrong [...] when you offend God, my dear Charles, I am so aggrieved that you would feel sorry for me if you could see inside my heart.] Her two main sources of anxiety are Charles’ potential transgressions of society’s rules and his lack of religious devotion.

We saw in the previous section that, in *The New Mother*, the characters are not able to understand each other’s desires. However, they speak the same language of sorrow. The girls, just like their mother, ‘sobbed bitterly’ and they are deeply affected by her sadness: ‘their hearts ached when they saw how unhappy she looked’ (83). When their mother departs, the girls ‘cried bitterly as the mother had done, and yet they could not believe that she had gone.’ (85–86) They recognise their mother’s distress better than they had understood her discourses, and seem to comprehend the meaning of love by experiencing her pain. Pain enables the characters to convey to each other (and readers) the intensity of their attachment and redeems the girls’ self-centred attitude in the eyes of readers. The fear of hurting others is not simply used by adults as a way to discipline and manipulate children; it is also deployed by writers to reveal the complicated nature of love between adults and children.

Similarly, Juliette in *Petit Diable* and Aunt Polly in *Tom Sawyer* successfully manage to influence Charles’ and Tom’s hearts by expressing their own emotional difficulties. Tom is affected by his aunt’s pain. In particular, he cannot stand to see her cry because of him. When she discovers that he has been outside all night, and Tom comes down the following morning, ‘there was a silence and an air of solemnity that struck a chill to the culprit’s heart’ (73). Tom thinks he will be whipped for his mischief but to his surprise, his aunt only expresses disappointment and hurt: ‘Tom almost brightened in the hope that he was going to be flogged; but it was not. His aunt wept over him [...]. This was worse than a thousand whippings, and Tom’s heart was sorer than his body. He cried, he pleaded for forgiveness, promised reform over and over again’ (74). Because Tom has been established from

early on as an admirable character, able to resist physical pain, his guilt and sensibility at the idea of hurting his aunt's feelings are even more potent for readers. Through the description of his displeasure at hurting Aunt Polly, he appears a nuanced and complex figure. Similarly, Charles realises that the pain of the 'heart' is greater than bodily harm. He tells Juliette that with her he is more miserable than at Mme Mac'Miche's because 'chez elle c'était le corps qui souffrait, et ici c'est le cœur ; et j'aimerais mieux être battu par elle que grondé par toi.' (1250) [with her, my body suffered, but with you my heart aches, and I would prefer to be whipped by her than admonished by you.] Charles cannot stand the idea that he might be hurting Juliette's feelings: 'Quand il entendit Juliette exprimer des doutes sur la tendresse si vive et si reconnaissante qu'il lui portait, il devint pourpre. [...] "Je t'aime, tu sais que je t'aime et que tu ne peux pas, tu ne dois pas croire que je sois insensible à ton bonté, à ta douceur !"' (1248) [When he heard Juliette doubting the tenderness and gratitude he felt towards her, he blushed. [...] "I love you, you know I do and you must not, cannot believe that I am insensitive to your kindness and gentleness!"] The fear of hurting the person that he loves affects and influences him more than corporal sanctions. While he is allowed to conceal his physical pain from readers, the pain of his heart is fully shared with them. Charles acts out of love but also out of the fear of hurting Juliette: 'Il s'observa donc plus que par le passé, chercha à réprimer ses premiers mouvements qui pouvaient causer de la peine aux autres et surtout à Juliette.' (1250) [So he paid more attention than before to his behaviour, and tried to repress any gestures that could hurt others, especially Juliette.]

The insistence in both books on the boys' hearts (the 'culprit's heart' in *Tom Sawyer* and the pain of the 'cœur' [heart] in *Petit Diable*) is not insignificant. Inherited from the educational discourses of the Enlightenment period, which aimed at instructing both 'l'esprit et le cœur' [mind and heart],³¹ the heart represents the innate goodness that the adult wants to cultivate in the child or, in the case of Charles, rediscover. These episodes suggest conceptions of children as fundamentally good but not always able to develop their natural moral goodness, therefore presenting adult

³¹ See Penny Brown, 'Children of the Revolution – the Making of Young Citizens,' p. 207.

education and loving discipline as complementing children's inner qualities. Child and adult are educative partners. In *Petit Diable*, the dialogues between Juliette, the worldly-wise adult, and Charles, the inexperienced youth, also elicit a pedagogical sub-text. Ségur implicitly criticises the blind educational methods of Mme Mac'Miche who, by unjustly physically harming Charles, has changed him into a devilish child.³² As the title suggests (a good little devil), the novel relates Charles's discovery of his inborn virtuousness thanks to Juliette's love.

There is, furthermore, something very modern in these women's attitudes and in their willingness to share their emotions. Twain and Clifford, to an extent, meet Alcott and Ewing in their presentation of education as a shared enterprise and punishment as an attempt on the part of female adults to help children help themselves. By showing their own vulnerability, women educators reveal that punishment affects them and that it is a collaborative enterprise. But these motherly figures are also highly ambiguous characters, more so than their male counterparts. Their love for children is riddled with complexity. They are simultaneously loving, prone to anxiety and capable of manipulating children's emotions, as is the case of the female teachers in *Tom Sawyer*. They can provide care, but also neglect children, like the doll Rosa in *The Land of Lost Toys*. These women are able to inspire distress, sometimes terror in children. Isabelle Cani-Wanegffelen notes that Mme de Réan in *Les Malheurs de Sophie* represents 'toute l'ambiguïté de la mère réelle, sans doute aimante à sa manière, mais froide et trop dure.'³³ [the real mother in all her ambiguity: she is certainly loving in her own way, but distant and too harsh.] Mme de Réan evolves through the course of the narrative from an apparently caring figure to a more frightening one. In the first chapter, she tenderly repairs a doll Sophie has neglected, without punishing her daughter. Sophie takes her repaired doll away, singing: '*Vive maman ! / De baisers je la mange. / Vive maman ! / Elle est notre bon ange.*' (276) [Lovely mamma! / I devour her with kisses / Lovely mamma! / She is our protecting angel] In contrast, at the end of the text, Sophie confesses to her

³² Ségur, notes Malarte-Feldman, does not hesitate to 'put the blame for children's vices on the lack of parental guidance'. Malarte-Feldman, p. 136.

³³ Isabelle Cani-Wanegffelen, 'Où l'écrivain devance le psychologue Quel Amour d'enfant !: L'intuition littéraire d'un cas de pathologie familiale' in *Le Livre pour enfants : Regards critiques offerts à Isabelle Nièvres-Chevrel*, ed. by Cécile Bouaire (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2006), p. 52.

cousin Paul: ‘Oh ! Paul, j’ai peur de maman !’ (354) [Oh! Paul, I am scared of mama.]

In many texts, this ambiguity is created by introducing a second motherly character, who usually performs an opposite function from the main mother or female guardian. One provides love and affection, while the other carries the burden of punishment. Our texts offer varying degrees of this binary view of motherhood. Such a division of parental tasks is perhaps necessary to protect the sensibility of readers, who can more easily reconcile two sides of parenting that are otherwise seemingly conflicting. For Bruno Bettelheim, ‘all young children sometimes need to split the image of their parents into its benevolent and threatening aspects to feel fully sheltered by the first [...]’ Fairy tales, continues Bettelheim, ‘which contain good fairies who suddenly appear and help the child find happiness despite this “impostor” or “stepmother”, permit the child not to be destroyed by this “impostor”.’³⁴ By showing the problematic nature of some mothers or evil stepmothers, fairy tales show how angry feelings lead otherwise caring parents to hurt children they love. Just as the fear of hurting others is used to express the complexity of children’s love, this dichotomy is a way of communicating to readers the intricacy of parental love.

The New Mother provides the most striking and compelling portrayal of these motherly opposites. While the girls’ biological mother possesses all the attributes of a warm-hearted mother, her punitive double is her out-and-out opposite: silent, devoid of emotions, she appears heartless. Her body is not fully human as she drags a wooden tail behind her, a detail reminiscent of the Russian witch Baba Yaga. She acts as a punisher in absentia on behalf of the caring mother, whose palette of emotions only moves from love to pain. Clifford capitalises on the mother’s grief to portray her as a selfless character, putting her children’s needs first. The fact that she takes her youngest child away with her attests to her dedication to her family.

In *Les Malheurs*, the polarisation of motherly figures is not overly apparent and only emerges at times, particularly when Sophie is sent to her room by her mother. Her maid discreetly steps in and provides Sophie with care and food, taking the risk

³⁴ Bettelheim, p. 68.

of spoiling her.³⁵ These gestures suggest a sentimental solicitude, which contrasts with Mme de Réan's emotional distance, dictated by her educational obligations. Unsurprisingly, the words 'timide', 'timidement', 'avec timidité' frequently describe the way Sophie feels towards her mother, whom she fears. Fear is also established early on in *Petit Diable*, and characterises the relationship between Charles and his guardian to the point that it partly permeates his appearance: 'Il y avait, dans la physionomie et dans toute l'attitude de l'enfant, un mélange prononcé de crainte et de décision.' (1133) [There was, in the child's general appearance and demeanour, a marked sense of fear mixed with resolution.] Mme Mac'Miche represents the unaccomplished mother: selfish, devoid of sensitivity, she is unable to cater for Charles' needs. She stands in stark contrast to the tender and loving Juliette. Behind these two female characters lie not only opposite educational approaches, but also dissimilar maternal and feminine standards.

We also find maternal opposites in American titles, such as *What Katy Did* and *Tom Sawyer*. In *What Katy Did*, cousin Helen and Aunt Izzie approach motherly duties in very different ways. In *Tom Sawyer*, Tom is brought up not only by Aunt Polly, but also by his affectionate elder cousin Mary. In *A Little Princess* too, we find this dual mother system. Miss Minchin is harsh and emotionless, and while she becomes Sara's guardian after the girl's father dies, she never takes on a motherly attitude towards her. She is menacing and intimidating, which, while it does not frighten Sara, affects other children, notably Becky and Sara's closest friends. Fear is also intended for the implied reader, who is made to admire Sara for her courage in standing up to Miss Minchin's authoritarian ruling. Rather than the mother type, Miss Minchin is similar to other school authority figures appearing in our corpus, who are associated with punishment. She is, however, counterbalanced by her sister, Miss Amelia, 'the better-natured person of the two, but she never disobeyed Miss Minchin.' (13) Miss Amelia is constantly torn between the demands of her sister and her own emotions. When she and her sister fail to calm down one of the pupils, Miss Amelia cries whereas Miss Minchin threatens to whip the child. But Miss Amelia's kindness is not authentic enough to reach the child and her tenderness has

³⁵ The theme of the distant mother, supplanted by a more loving servant, reappears in other of Ségur's works, such as *François le bossu* (1864).

limits: “Poor darling,” she said one moment, [...] Then in quite another tone, “If you don’t stop, Lottie, I will shake you. Poor little angel! There—! You wicked, bad, detestable child, I will smack you! I will!” (30) Burnett shows that adults are bedevilled by conflicting emotions and sometimes do not have the capacity to overcome their internal battles. The real motherly figure in *A Little Princess* is Sara herself, who comes to help Miss Amelia and eventually manages to calm Lottie. She willingly offers to become her substitute mother: “I will be your mama [...] We will play that you are my little girl.” (34). For the rest of her time as a pupil, she looks after Lottie.

Similarly, Alice takes on a maternal role and acts as a female counterpart to the Duchess. In *Wonderland*, the polarisation of maternal figures complicates the representation of motherhood with regard to disciplinary duties. The Duchess does not represent maternal devotion, quite the opposite. She leaves her infant with Alice and runs ‘to play croquet’ like a carefree child. On one hand, *Wonderland* suggests that it is possible for a biological mother to prefer to seek enjoyment elsewhere than in motherhood, but on the other, motherly responsibilities are imposed on Alice. The Duchess tells her: ‘You may nurse it a bit, if you like it’ (55), but in reality Alice has no choice. Like Aunt Polly in *Tom Sawyer*, Alice is then confronted with a moral dilemma; she has a duty of care towards the infant, even if she does not want it: “‘Wouldn’t it be murder to leave it behind?’” (55) In *Wonderland*, Alice is being prepared for motherhood, a role she tries to resist. In Chapter V, the pigeon is convinced that Alice is looking for its eggs, whereas Alice is adamant she does not want any egg, symbolically rejecting any idea of maternity. Her sense of self-affirmation has developed by the time she wakes. However, as the framed narrative closes and Alice runs for her tea, her frustration and distress have vanished. Geer notes how in the closing frame of *Wonderland*, ‘Alice’s cheerful obedience to her sister’s request that she go in to tea also satisfies the adult’s desire that tales amuse children while teaching them compliance.’³⁶ In Alice’s sister’s mind, she has even matured into a grown woman, imparting her adventures to her own children.

³⁶ Jennifer Geer, “‘All sorts of pitfalls and surprises’”: Competing Views of Idealized Girlhood in Lewis Carroll’s Alice Books’, *Children’s Literature* 31 (2003), 1–24 (p. 6).

The only motherly figure who does not have a double is Poil de Carotte's mother. Instead, she is herself highly ambivalent, displaying kindness and concern for her son when in public, and persecuting him in private. On one occasion, Poil de Carotte must share his parents' bed and his mother pinches him when he snores. The boy awakens and the mother sings a lullaby, putting on a caring attitude for her husband: 'elle chantonne, à la manière des nourrices, un air de berceuse' (12) [she croons, as nurses do, a sort of Indian lullaby.] As in the Duchess's song in *Wonderland*, the tenderly sung lullaby contrasts with the violence of Poil de Carotte's mother's gestures and suggests the hypocrisy behind her motherly attitude. In another episode, the young boy wets his bed. Mme Lepic feigns sympathy: 'Mme Lepic se garde de s'emporter. Elle nettoie, calme, indulgente, maternelle.' (13) [Madame Lepic is careful not to lose her temper. She cleans things up as a calm, indulgent mother should.] Supposedly to spoil him, she brings him some soup, into which she has mixed some of his urine. As we have seen in Chapter Three, his siblings are present to enjoy his reaction when his mother reveals what she has done: "ma petite salissure, tu en as mangé, tu en as mangé, et de la tienne encore, de celle d'hier." (13) [There, you filthy little beast, you've had to eat it—eat it, do you hear?—some of your own too, from last night.] Poil de Carotte pretends that he knew, and his nonchalance disappoints his audience. If Mme Lepic demonstrates affection, it is usually for the benefit of others. In *L'hameçon*, Poil de Carotte is preparing fish, but forgets to remove a hook. When Mme Lepic comes to inspect his work, she hurts her finger and screams while M. Lepic tries to remove the hook with a knife, attracting the attention of neighbours. Poil de Carotte expects to be beaten, but instead his mother kisses him:

Mme Lepic se courbe. Il fait le geste habituel de s'abriter derrière son coude. Mais, généreuse, elle l'embrasse devant tout le monde. Il ne comprend plus. Il pleure à pleins yeux. [...]
 —Est-il bête? On jugerait qu'on l'égorge, dit Mme Lepic aux voisins attendris par sa bonté. [...]
 — Ah ! sur le moment, je l'aurais tué, si je ne l'aimais tant. (101)

Madame Lepic bends down. He instinctively makes as though to shelter behind his elbow. But in her generosity she kisses before them all. He no longer understands. He weeps wholeheartedly. [...]

"Isn't he silly?" One would think he was having his throat cut," says Madame Lepic to the neighbours, who are moved by her goodness. [...]

“Oh, at the time I could have murdered him if I didn’t love him so dearly.”

The idea that Poil de Carotte’s mother would have killed him, if she did not love him so much, reveals the same internal conflict that Miss Amelia experienced when trying to calm Lottie. Love and violence are never far from each other. But Mme Lepic’s loving qualities are fake and deceiving, and perhaps it is only the fact that she must pretend to love her son that stops her from hurting him. Poil de Carotte has learned to behave in the same way as his mother and pretends to be deeply affected by her pain: ‘stupéfait d’avoir échappé au châtement, [il] exagère encore son repentir, rend par la gorge des gémissements rauques’. (101) [dumfounded at having escaped punishment, [he] once more exaggerates his grief and utters hoarse groans.] The only way for him to foil his mother’s fraudulent behaviour is to purport to share her suffering. In front of others, both pretend to care for each other, knowing that this is the behaviour expected of them.

Eventually, in *Le mot de la fin*, Poil de Carotte reveals this hypocrisy and speaks openly to his father: “J’ai une mère. Cette mère ne m’aime pas et je ne l’aime pas.” (116) [I have a mother. That mother doesn’t love me and I don’t love her.] The naivety that has run through the narrative until this point suddenly drops. Poil de Carotte now seems able to see through adults’ duplicities. Michel Autrand describes him as a character ‘intérieurement révolté et conscient de ses droits’.³⁷ [inwardly revolted and aware of his rights] In this final chapter, Poil de Carotte is able to announce: ‘je voudrais me séparer de ma mère.’ (114) [I want to be separated from my mother.] With exaggerated affectation, he reveals that he had even attempted to kill himself. Death is presented as the amplified expression of the boy’s frustration and sense of confinement (as in *Tom Sawyer*); to live freely, he must detach himself from his mother. His father explains that it is impossible for him to reject Mme Lepic, as if the natural bonds between them are stronger than their lack of love. The last chapter, entitled *L’album de Poil de Carotte*, consists of brief paragraphs, similar to a chaotic collection of photographic snapshots, showing Mme Lepic’s dearth of affection: while she has many photographs of her two other children, she has none of Poil de Carotte. The chapter acts as a summary of the main theme of the novel, a textual album evoking the equivocal bonds between mother and son. Poil de

³⁷ Autrand, p. 72.

Carotte, in a sense, enables us to interrogate the underpinning message behind our other texts and their representations of child and adult characters' loving relationships. Are their expressions of love and suffering genuine? Is the child's fear of hurting others authentic? Behind the reality of their shared emotions, could there be a socially expected behaviour that young readers must also learn to reproduce? These questions are not raised in Alcott's, Clifford's and Ewing's texts, where readers are not afforded any doubts about the authenticity of adults' solicitude for children. On the other hand, in *Wonderland*, the Duchess does not pretend to love her child, and in *A Little Princess*, Miss Minchin's benevolence is always presented as affected. In these two texts, the protagonists, like Poil de Carotte, learn to assert themselves and reject the absurdity that other characters are willing to accept. However, in all texts, authors show the complexity of adults' emotions and the ways in which their messages of love are used as instruments to correct and reform children.

Explicating punishment

Perhaps because doubts could overshadow these messages, punitive actions are often explained and/or justified to young characters and implied readers, by narrators or adult characters, as if to validate them. This also reflects a general trend in disciplinary discourses whereby, according to Prairat, the act of punishing was progressively accompanied by more explanations.³⁸ As we saw in Chapter One, Locke emphasised the importance of reasoning for the instruction of children. Prairat also notes how Maria Edgeworth argued that punishment needed to be explained, arguing that '[w]henver punishments are not made intelligible, they are cruel; they give pain without producing any future advantage'.³⁹ Even to a very young child, one should always demonstrate that punishments are just.

³⁸ 'Revenir sur la transgression et ses conséquences, demander, écouter mais aussi expliquer ce que l'on refuse.' [Discussing again the transgression and its consequences, asking questions, listening but also explicating what is being refused to the child.] Eirick Prairat, 'Penser la sanction', *Revue française de pédagogie*, 127 (1999), 107–117 (p. 111).

³⁹ Maria Edgeworth and Richard Lovell Edgeworth, *Practical Education*, vol. 1 (London: J. Johnson, 1798), p. 231.

The time when punishment is explained also matters. In *A Lasting Relationship*, Pollock reports the following comments by Mary Hughes, recollecting her childhood in the 1870s: after she quarrelled with her brother, Mary's father 'became dreadfully serious, led me upstairs, and administered a whipping. Then he explained that it is as bad for a girl to cry for what she wants as for a boy to plant a blow.'⁴⁰ The idea of explanations taking place after punishments echoes the Queen's punitive threats in *Wonderland*. As we saw in Chapter One, the idea of punishing children before they realise they have done something wrong, or even before they do misbehave, was also criticised by Rousseau: 'quelques fois on le châtie avant qu'il puisse connaître ses fautes, ou plutôt en commettre. C'est ainsi qu'on verse de bonne heure dans son jeune cœur' [sometimes he is punished for faults before he is aware of them, or rather before they are committed. Thus early are the seeds of evil passions sown in his young heart.] Rousseau argues that this form of pedagogical thinking is counterproductive and the cause of children's wrongdoings. Rousseau's remark evokes the King and Queen's threats to sentence first and punish afterwards, and Hatta's imprisonment before he has committed his crime. Behind this absurd reasoning lies a criticism of adults' authority and educational methods. The Queen's pointless orders evoke an adult punishing a child without first explaining the reasons for the punishment, or before the child understands that s/he has done something wrong.⁴¹

If a punishment is explained afterwards, it may also seem unjust to the aggrieved child. For Edgeworth, what is important is to convey the 'justness' of the punishment. This validation, according to Edgeworth, resides in the idea that sanctions are in the best interests of individuals and society as a whole. In the case of criminals, notes Edgeworth, punishment fostered the good of society, whereas for children it safeguarded their happiness. Since the happiness of children and of society are inseparable, '[w]e immediately perceive the connexion between that happiness [children's], and obedience to all the laws on which the prosperity of

⁴⁰ Pollock, p. 192.

⁴¹ Donald Thomas remarks on the similarity between the Queen's threats and Keate, Headmaster of Eton (1809–34), who had a reputation for flogging first and letting pupils explain themselves afterwards, sometimes to find that they were not the victims he had been expecting. Thomas Donald, *Lewis Carroll: A Portrait with Background* (London: John Marry, 1996), p. 159.

society depends', argues Edgeworth.⁴² Therefore, punishment needs to be explained in terms of its overarching usefulness for children and the general good. Similarly, a century later, Durkheim favoured a system where the educator systematically clarified punishments to children. Like Edgeworth, Durkheim found justifications for punishment in the idea that it benefited children themselves as well as society more generally. In *Moral Education*, he argued: 'il faut que l'éducateur intervienne, et attache aux règles de la discipline des sanctions qui anticipent celles de la vie.'⁴³ [the educator must intervene and link to the rules of discipline sanctions that anticipate those later in life.] Consciously expanding the particular experience of the child to the general benefit of society, the role of the educator is to explicate to children how punishment is linked to the general good, so that it can reinforce moral rules in children's consciousness. Therefore, explanations show adults' solicitude for children and, at the same time, provide an effective form of control. As such, they are for everyone's good. If an act of transgression is left unpunished, it will reinforce the idea that rules can be violated, and damage children's morality.

In *Les Malheurs*, Mme de Réan always links in very clear terms Sophie's punishments to her transgressions and explains her punishments before they take place. Although the book can appear as a harsh assembly of punitive practices, each sanction is carefully explicated to the child and her transgressions are made clear. Explanations are not only presented as an indication of the solicitude of the educator but they are also posited as more efficient and/or effective than unexplained or unjust (or unjustified) harshness. Punitive actions must be complemented by words, a logic that has a significant impact on narratives. In *Poil de Carotte*, however, the sense of injustice emerges from the fact that, although the mother explains why she punishes her son, the latter is not always conscious of having committed an offence. While the mother interprets some of his actions as transgressions (having lice, wetting his bed), they are not viewed as such by the protagonist (and readers). Similarly, although the schoolmaster explains why he canes Edmund, there is a great discrepancy between these explanations and Edmund's actions. When Edmund tells the classroom of his discoveries, he is caned for 'untruthfulness' (145). And when he insists he is telling the truth, he is punished

⁴² Edgeworth, p. 229.

⁴³ Durkheim, p. 198.

for ‘vexacious argumentative habits’ (155). From early on, the narrator condemns these explications: ‘The master was ignorant and unbelieving’ (145); ‘This will show you what a prejudiced and ignorant man Edmund’s master was’ (155). Finally, when Edmund rushes back to school and warns everyone that a dragon is approaching, the master canes him more than ever: ‘He was caned for untruthfulness without any delay. His master was never one for postponing a duty.’ (146) The focalization moves briefly to the schoolmaster and there is a latent irony in the suggestion of his sense of righteousness and in his promptness to cane Edmund.

In a fictional context, a balance must also be found so that explanations do not compromise reading pleasure. In *Wonderland*, when the Mock Turtle asks Alice to explain herself before telling them her adventures, the Gryphon complains: “‘No, no! The adventures first, [...] explanations take such a dreadful time.’” (91) The Mock Turtle insists that a lack of explanation leads to confusion. The absence of explanations can also be presented as harmful to children and counter-productive. In *What Katy Did*, adults are held accountable for children’s moral progression and behaviour when they fail to provide explanations. The narrator openly condemns Aunt Izzie for omitting to tell Katy why she should not use the swing:

This was unwise of Aunt Izzie. It would have been better had she explained further. The truth was, that Alexander, in putting up the swing, had cracked one of the staples which fastened it to the roof. He meant to get a new one in the course of the day, and meantime, he had cautioned Miss Carr to let no one use the swing, because it was really not safe. If she had told this to the children all would have been all right; but Aunt Izzie’s theory was that young people must obey their elders without explanation. (84)

This informative passage interrupts the narrative and delays the progress of the action. However, the narrator deftly justifies this explicative halt by highlighting how Aunt Izzie’s lack of clarification was partly responsible for Katy’s transgression and punishment. It is in the interest of children – readers and characters alike – to know why certain actions are forbidden. Thanks to the narrator’s intervention, readers also find themselves more knowledgeable than the characters themselves. They have all the elements to understand, before Katy, why she should not climb on the swing. The Godlike narrator cleverly establishes itself as the voice of authenticity, siding directly with readers. The sentence starting with ‘The truth’ suggests that, while some adults refuse to reveal the reasons behind moral rules, the

narrator will speak with honesty. The narrator's openness makes readers its epistemological equals and collaborators. By suggesting that explanations are the best way to prevent children from committing mischiefs, Coolidge gives meaning and purpose to the role of children's texts, which must communicate honestly with readers.

In our texts, authors strive to find a balance between offering adventures and revealing their meaning, in particular with regard to episodes of punishment. Explanations are often blended inside the narrative through indirect free speech or dialogues. In *Little Men*, they are not always made available to readers or are kept short. In *The New Mother*, *Les Malheurs*, *Petit Diable* and *What Katy Did*, explanations are usually provided through dialogues and broken up by descriptions. For Elaine Ostry, these 'dialogues are part of a system of surveillance, in which the child's faults are scrutinized' and '[e]ven in Louisa May Alcott's liberal Plumfield, Jo Bhaer uses this system'.⁴⁴ Alcott is careful to limit explanations in order to preserve the effectiveness of punitive sanctions. When Mr Bhaer scolds the boys after he discovers that they have smoked, drunk and set their room on fire, the reader is only told: 'he talked long and earnestly to the assembled boys and ended by saying...?' (82). Mr Bhaer speaks with 'an air of mingled firmness and regret' (82), which, as we have seen, was recommended by some educationalists advocating against corporal punishment. Whereas the young characters must hear the lengthy explanations, readers are spared. The narrator notes how Jo Bhaer 'liked to have her penalties do their own work, and did not spoil the effect by too much moralising' (159). The emphasis is placed not on the moral message, but on the emotions felt by the characters so that readers can sympathise with them. Dan, for instance, tries to hide his sadness when he is sent away but he does not fully manage ('looking so sad that his heart smote him' (83)), while Mrs Bhaer has tears in her eyes (84). These omissions or shortcuts suggest that readers are thought capable of filling these moral gaps, and thus of working in a collaborative manner with the narrator. What is stressed, however, is the reciprocal love and affection between Dan and Jo Bhaer.

⁴⁴ Elaine Ostry, 'Magical Growth and Moral Lessons; or, How the Conduct Book Informed Victorian and Edwardian Children's Fantasy', *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 27.1 (2003), 27–56 (p. 30). Ostry remarks that many cautionary books in the early part of the nineteenth century include the term 'conversation' in their title. Ostry, note 5, p. 51.

If explanations are limited, the sense that punishment is applied for the benefit of children is nonetheless emphasised throughout the novel.

Striking the right balance between explanations and actions is therefore an exacting task, and narrative variation is as hard as parenting itself. Coolidge, like Alcott, is conscious that explanations may discourage and put off children. Cousin Helen tells Katy: “we never do people good by lecturing them; only by living their lives with them” (106). Feeling that she has lectured Katy, she apologises: “I did not mean to teach a sermon” (106). Coolidge is careful to ensure that readers do not feel preached at and uses dialogues to offer explanations. Through the course of the narrative both Helen and Katy’s father talk to Katy and clarify what is happening to her. Dr Carr talks in medical terms about Katy’s condition and the ways she can get better but Helen gives meaning to Katy’s suffering through dialogues, which imply that Katy’s pain is for her own good and that she must embrace it.

In another passage, Coolidge further suggests that stories without explanations are not effective and that readers are not interested in fictions that aim to influence their behaviour in too deceitful a way. In the passage below, Aunt Izzie cannot comprehend why the children like to play in the low, dark loft. To stop them, she invents cautionary tales. Phil, the youngest of the children, is the only impressionable one:

When she was young (a vague, far-off time, which none of her nieces and nephews believed in much), she had never had any of these queer notions about getting into holes and corners and poke-away places. [...] all she could do was to invent stories about children who had broken their bones in various dreadful ways by climbing posts and ladders. But these stories made no impression on any of the children except little Phil, and the self-willed brood kept on their ways, and climbed their spike as often as they liked. (42)

Here the narrator indirectly imparts the idea that explanations are in children’s best interest, not only as children but also as readers. Aunt Izzie’s understanding of children is based on ‘the good boys and girls in Sunday-school memoirs, who were the young people she liked best, and understood about.’ (3) But these children, suggests Coolidge, are unreal and transmute a thwarted view of childhood. ‘Invented’ stories will not hold readers’ attention. If Katy’s story was merely the tale of a young girl breaking her spine and her ensuing suffering, it would not attract

readers effectively. Instead, the narrative recounting Katy's accident also communicates the reasons for and the meaning of her pain. These comments on the effect of storytelling reflect a vision of the child reader as quite mature and sensible, and they explain why Coolidge finds it appropriate to incorporate many lengthy dialogues between Katy and adults about the meaning of her suffering.

It is important to distinguish between explanations and justifications. While both intend to make something clear, justifications aim at demonstrating the righteousness or reasonableness of a comment or action. As we saw above, Maria Edgeworth located the 'justness' of punishment in the fact that it benefited the child's overall happiness as well as society. It is not surprising that texts that deal with establishing the validity of punishment have so many court trials, which we analysed in Chapter Three. The idea that punishment is for children's benefit is one of the most common justifications found in our texts, bolstering the notion that punishment is an act of love and kindness. In *For Your Own Good*, as mentioned earlier, Miller demonstrates the prevalence of such justifications in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century discourses on child education, calling them 'poisonous pedagogies': 'along with corporal punishment there is a whole gamut of ingenious measures applied for the "child's own good" which are difficult for a child to comprehend.'⁴⁵ This pedagogy is also of a pervasive nature and is passed on from children who are punished to their own offspring later in life: 'When people who have been beaten or spanked as children attempt to play down the consequences by setting themselves up as examples, even claiming it was good for them, they are inevitably contributing to the continuation of cruelty'.⁴⁶

We find an illustration of this last point in *Little Men*. We saw in Chapter Three how Mr Bhaer recalls how, as a child, he was punished for lying by his grandmother, and how she cut the tip of his tongue with a pair of scissors. Mr Bhaer presents his punishment as beneficial ('it did me much good') and a gesture of love: 'Yet the dear grandmother was most kind to me in all things, and when she lay dying far away in Nuremberg, she prayed that little Fritz might love God and tell the truth.' (48) As an adult, Mr Bhaer uses reciprocal empathy, dwelling on his own experiences and

⁴⁵ Miller, p.17. Miller focuses particularly on German material.

⁴⁶ Miller, p. xviii.

mistakes, to pass on his message to Nat, who also has a tendency to lie, and to justify Nat's punishment. Interestingly, in Mr Bhaer's case, discussions with his parents had not stopped him lying ('My parents had talked, and cried, and punished'). In Nat's case too, gentle discussion is ineffective. Similarly, in *The New Mother*, the mother's explanations for her departure are not successful in preventing her daughters' misbehaviour. The two girls fail to understand her and the narrator notes that 'she seemed to be speaking rather to herself than to them.' (80) She nonetheless resorts to punishing them by leaving them, justifying her decision on love. When the explicating discourse fails, the adult can resort to punishment, but he or she must justify its fairness.

Parental affection is key to justify punishment. While Mr Bhaer's grandmother resorts to physical punishment, her gesture is nonetheless presented with the lexical field of love. Qualified as 'dear', she does not impose her sanction but kindly offers her assistance ('I shall help you'). Punishment is for the child's benefit exclusively. She has only the best intentions at heart, worries for the happiness of Mr Bhaer and even takes her worries to her deathbed. What matters most to her is her grandson's religious salvation. The latter is grateful for the punishment he received. 'Beatings,' notes Miller, 'which are only one form of mistreatment, are *always* degrading, because the child not only is unable to defend him- or herself but is also supposed to show gratitude and respect to the parents in return.'⁴⁷ Convinced of the goodness of punishment, Mr Bhaer perpetuates the violence he suffered against Nat: 'it did me much good'. As Brodhead argues, 'the discipline through love reveals itself a mechanism, in turn, not for the mitigation of authority but for the extension of its regulating hold.'⁴⁸ However, Mr Bhaer does not physically hurt Nat; he reverses the roles and acts on Nat's guilt instead, showing some form of progress in the application of punishment although not in the rationale behind it.

Adults are acutely convinced that it is their duty to punish children. Yet punishment is also a fraught and complex area for parents, who live on a knife-edge around children. According to Miller, the 'for your own good' justifications were often accompanied with an increased fear of the consequences of too much

⁴⁷ Miller, p. 17.

⁴⁸ Brodhead, p. 73.

permissiveness, a concern, as we saw in Chapter One, that accompanied the greater emphasis placed on the sentimental value of children. Some of our authors testify to adults' qualms about indulging and spoiling children. In *A Little Princess*, Sara is too good to be affected by too much attention; nonetheless, the narrator warns readers that '[i]f she had been a self-opinionated, domineering child, she might have become disagreeable enough to be unbearable through being so much indulged and flattered.' (27) In *Little Men* the potential spoiling effects of too much indulgence are introduced as a fundamental premise to the novel. Some children at Plumfield 'show plainly the effect of intelligent love and care' (21), while others 'had been spoiled by an over-indulgent mother' (25). In her tale *Wooden Tony* (1892), Clifford tells the story of a mother who worries about her son's idleness: '[W]hen his mother tried to make him useful he looked so frightened that at last she left him alone and let him do as he pleased. Gradually he grew to look quite stupid, as if his wits had gone a-wandering'. Tony's mother does not, however, like to hear from others that her son is useless or stupid, for she loves him dearly and believes that some day he will awaken. Yet she worries about his future: '[I]f thou art useless who will want thee?'⁴⁹ A lack of intervention can be perceived by parents as a form of neglect. In *Tom Sawyer*, Aunt Polly also fears to spoil her nephew, declaring: 'Spare the rod and spile the child, as the Good Book says'; 'I've got to do some of my duty by him, or I'll be the ruination of the child.' (12) Aunt Polly's thoughts, expressed through free indirect speech, are presented as deep moral convictions. Her love for her nephew is her intimate justification for his punishment. These inner certainties cannot be challenged because they are based on religious arguments. Yet in other cases she addresses Tom directly, demonstrating the need to also justify herself to Tom and suggesting her sense of guilt, perhaps doubt: "I was meaning for the best, Tom. And Tom, it *did* do you good" (81).

Similarly, *The New Mother* could be read as a tale about the effect of too much parental kindness, and adults' despair when faced with the tantrums of spoiled children. Clifford stretches the topic of adults' moral obligations to its utmost limits. The mother declares to her daughters that it is her duty to leave them in the care of another mother, a more forceful educator, if they fail to behave: "I will never go

⁴⁹ Lucy Lane Clifford, 'Wooden Tony' in *Victorian Fairy Tales: The Revolt of the Fairies and Elves*, ed. by Jack Zipes (New York and London: Methuen, 1987), p. 292.

unless [...] I am obliged” (80). Her desire to be with her children does not prevail over their moral edification, and abandoning them testifies to her love for them. The narrative voice is neutral and does not impose moralising comments, insisting instead on the emotional pain of the characters. The narrator asks the readers: ‘how could they bear to let their own mother go away, and a new one take her place?’ (80) The possessive adjective ‘own’ reinforces the girls’ guilt, whereas the mother’s decision to abandon her daughters is never questioned.

In *Les Malheurs*, the idea that punishments are for Sophie’s own good relies on the idea that Mme de Réan knows what will benefit her daughter. As Bending notes, ‘those things which the child cannot understand will become clear to the adult. Pain may seem pointless, but as the child grows into adulthood and understanding, it will see pain’s purpose and value its efficacy.’⁵⁰ Mme de Réan tells Sophie: “ne raisonne pas tant et tais-toi. Je sais mieux que toi ce qui peut te faire mal ou non.” (278) [Don’t argue so much and stop talking. I know better what may hurt you.] She also claims: “Je sais tout mademoiselle” (351). [I know everything, mademoiselle] And if she does not know something, God will inform her. When Sophie cuts her mother’s little fishes into pieces (she wants to prepare a dish), Mme de Réan does not realise that Sophie is guilty until the latter admits her crime. Mme de Réan announces: “si j’avais appris par hasard, c’est-à-dire par la permission de Dieu [...] ce que tu viens de me raconter, je t’aurais punie sans pitié et avec sévérité.” (283) [Had I happened to learn by chance, in other words through God’s will [...] what you have just told me, I would have severely punished you without pity.] With God on the side of the adult, the child has little chance of escape.⁵¹ As the story progresses, the children are increasingly aware of this parental omniscience: “toutes les fois que tu as voulu cacher quelque chose à ma tante, elle l’a toujours su tout de même” (348). [Whenever you tried to hide something from my aunt, she found out about it all the same] Berasategui notes that in *Les Malheurs* ‘la puissance parentale

⁵⁰ Bending, p. 46.

⁵¹ For Dufour, parental omniscience also comes from the limited space in which the girl is allowed to move: ‘[l]a petite fille n’a le droit qu’à des parcours bien précis. [...] La petite fille est surveillée sans même le savoir.’ [the little girl is only allowed very specific routes. [...] The little girl is observed without her knowledge.] Dufour, p. 289.

est totale : le père et plus encore la mère voient tout, savent tout et régissent tout.⁵² [parents are omnipotent; the father, but even more so the mother, can see, know and control everything.] Older and more experienced, the adult necessarily knows better. When Sophie wants to try and touch whitewash, her mother tells her: ‘Tu crois cela, parce que tu es une petite fille ; mais, moi qui suis grande, je sais que la chaux brûle.’ (278) [You believe this because you are a child. As an adult, I know that whitewash will burn you.] Mme de Réan’s harsh education is an expression of her love and solicitude. On this occasion, Sophie’s mother seems to be acting in accordance with Lyman Cobb’s principles of discipline through love:

Suppose the mother wishes to call her little child from the tea-kettle to which it is going. Would it not be better to say to it, “My dear, do not go there, I fear you will be *scalded* or *burnt*,” than to say as many mothers do, “Come away from there, or I will *whip* you?” In the former case, a mother’s LOVE and affection would be united with the command; and, in the latter, an appeal would be made simply to the child’s fear of suffering *pain*.⁵³

In some texts, the idea that punishment is for children’s own good is parodied and condemned. In *Kind Little Edmund*, the schoolmaster claims to be fulfilling his duty towards the child when he canes Edmund, and orders him to copy seven hundred times the following lines: ‘*Lying is very wrong, and liars must be caned. It is all for their own good*’ (146). This statement, divided into three equally brief segments, resembles a spurious syllogism. It is impossible to deduce the third segment as a logical conclusion from the first two unrelated segments. Instead, the modal ‘must’ (‘liars must be caned’), which suggests a moral obligation, outlines and derides the arbitrary prescriptiveness of the schoolmaster’s reasoning. By doing so, the narrator enables readers to “read between the lines” of adults’ pedagogical and hypocritical critiques. *Kind Little Edmund* thus offers a critical look at adults’ claims to be acting in the best interests of children, and provides readers with tools to be critical themselves of such claims.

The contradictions around the justifications for punishment are humorously reflected in the Duchess’s lullaby:

⁵² Maïalen Berasategui, *La comtesse de Ségur ou l’art discret de la subversion* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2011), p. 153.

⁵³ Cobb, p. 107.

*“Speak roughly to your little boy,
And beat him when he sneezes:
He only does it to annoy,
Because he knows it teases.”*

CHORUS

(in which the cook and the baby joined:—
“Wow! Wow! Wow!”) (54)

While the tone of the Duchess is jocular, the message contains the same ambiguity and absurdity as the Queen’s threats to punish first and sentence afterwards, and the same suggestion of adults’ unfairness as in *Kind Little Edmund* or *Poil de Carotte*. The Duchess’s lullaby is inspired by the mid-century American poem ‘Speak gently’,⁵⁴ which exhorts parents to ‘rule by love [rather] than fear’ (the words are also the same as those used by Cobb in *The Evil Tendencies of Corporal Punishment*). The reasoning underpinning the Duchess’s message is reminiscent of the ‘poisonous’ pedagogy described by Alice Miller, who quotes a passage from *Some Thoughts on the Education of Children* by the eighteenth-century German philosopher J. G. Krüger. In this passage, Krüger explains that striking a child can be justified if parental authority is being challenged:

if he does harm in order to offend you, in short, if he insists on having his own way:

*Then whip him well till he cries so:
Ob No, Papa, ob no!*

[...] The blows you administer should not be merely playful ones but should convince him that you are his master. Therefore, you must not desist until he does what he previously refused out of wickedness to do.⁵⁵

The child’s cries (*Ob No, Papa, ob no!*) strangely evoke the chorus in the Duchess’s lullaby (“Wow, Wow, Wow!”). But more fundamentally, both Krüger and the Duchess seem to see the child as having fundamentally mischievous tendencies and a propensity for insubordination. In Carroll’s text, the child is only an infant, yet the mother believes it is intentionally testing her with an uncontrollable reflex, which heightens the absurdity of her thinking. In Krüger’s text, corporal violence is aimed at persuading the child of parental supremacy. In both cases, although with varying degrees of preposterousness, it is the parents’ interpretation of the children’s act that leads them to believe that punishment is necessary. Similarly, in Carroll’s lullaby, the child has internalised the idea of adults’ superior authority and is

⁵⁴ Originally credited to G. W. Langford, it was probably written by the American Dave Bates around 1850.

⁵⁵ Quoted in Miller, p. 15.

complicit with it. It sings along with the Duchess, no longer crying but chanting, as if celebrating its mother's violence. The Duchess has control over her own child. Like the Queen, she is the ultimate authority figure deciding why and how her child may be punished — even if this is unreasonable. By distorting this poem as well as the Duchess's caring gestures and physiognomy, Carroll is ultimately showing the limits of the discipline through love system that educators such as Cobb supported so wholeheartedly. The intense emotional bonds between authority figures and their child-subjects can easily become arbitrary. In *Through the Looking-Glass*, the White Queen also asserts that punishment is intended to 'bettering' the child: "Were you ever punished?" "Only for faults", said Alice. "And you were the better for it, I know!" the Queen said triumphantly.⁵⁶ Instead of focusing on the offence committed, this pedagogical thinking focuses on the outcome of punishment and the fact that the child does not misbehave again, learning to self-discipline her- or himself.

Ostry remarks that 'Carroll mocks the dialogic structure and content of the conduct book', and she regards this satirical distance as the indication that 'Carroll's heroine develops greater independence of thought than her predecessors'.⁵⁷ However, Alice has internalised the discipline through love that the Duchess's lullaby mocks. When Alice takes the infant away, after the Duchess entrusts it to her, she unconsciously tries to force the child to adopt social rules and manners that she brought with her to Wonderland: "Don't grunt," said Alice; "that's not at all a proper way of expressing yourself." (55) Alice struggles to tolerate the infant's unpleasant imperfections. The latter only turns into a pig after Alice scolds it, as if its metamorphosis was the concretisation of Alice's disgust. Alice is dreaming, and this is all the result of her own imagination. In her dream, Alice is therefore not only sheltering the child but also moulding and regulating its behaviour. In *Through the Looking-Glass* Alice has further internalised loving rationales. When the book opens, Dinah is washing her kittens. The narrator observes how the white kitten tolerates her mother's inconvenient care, 'no doubt feeling that it was all meant for its good.' (121) Alice is the focalizer and the one who interprets Dinah's action according to a reasoning she has internalised.

⁵⁶ Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, p. 172.

⁵⁷ Ostry, p. 35.

Like Alice, Charles becomes an advocate of the ‘for your own good’ pedagogy but he also employs it to prove himself equal to adults. As we saw in Chapter Two, when the novel opens, Mme Mac’Miche pretends that she beats Charles to protect him from a life of crime, claiming: “‘Il finira par la prison et la corde, si je ne parviens pas à le corriger.’” (1133) [He will be sent to prison or hanged if I don’t manage to straighten him out.] Charles, however, is shrewder than his guardian and well aware of the ambiguities that the term ‘corriger’ carries. Charles plays with adults’ logic and asks why only children should be corrected. If correcting signifies improving the behaviour of misbehaving people, then Mme Mac’Miche would benefit from it even more: “‘puisque ma cousine trouve que maltraiter c’est me corriger et me rendre meilleur, elle doit penser de même pour elle, qui est cent fois plus méchante que je ne le suis.’” (1157) [since my cousin believes that brutalising someone is the same thing as correcting and improving them, she must consider this applies to her as well, who is much nastier than me.] Ségur shows to readers the limits of these pedagogies, and demonstrates how adults can use them hypocritically. She suggests that not all adults are equal and what matters is the honesty behind their discourses. In the later chapters of *Petit Diable*, Charles is finally transformed thanks to the care and kindness of the devoted Juliette. He has learned to control himself better. Charles’s transformation means that he has also learned to control his desire for retribution. After being whipped by Mme Mac’Miche, ‘au point d’endommager sa culotte’ (1154) [to the point of damaging his trousers], he manages to contain his desire to avenge himself by thinking of Juliette’s loving advice: ‘le souvenir de sa douceur a fait passer ma colère’ (1155). [the memory of her kindness helped to dissipate my anger] As we saw earlier, *Petit Diable* suggests an evolution in Ségur’s books, from a loving but still fearful discipline in *Les Malheurs*, to a discipline through love very similar to Cobb’s theories. Yet in both cases, through fearful and loving disciplines, the goal is the same as in other titles: the child learns to comply with adults’ needs and rules, and to internalise these rules. The differences concern the effectiveness of these two methods.

Conclusion

Although authors often condemned the use of violence and fear, and found in loving pedagogies a more gentle and effective means of correction, many young protagonists are still scared of parental figures, most notably in our French corpus. Two French motherly figures are particularly intimidating, Mme de Réan and Mme Lepic. In English titles, several maternal figures are highly ambiguous, notably in *Wonderland* and *The New Mother*. Even Edmund is afraid of a motherly figure; the only character who induces fear in him is a female dragon, mother of a baby-drackling. In contrast, female guardians in our American titles are rarely associated with fear. Jo Bhaer is loving, reassuring and motherly towards all the children. Aunt Polly and Aunt Izzie in *What Katy Did* and *Tom Sawyer* are both associated with discipline but do not induce fear in the children. In the previous chapter, we noted that American authors presented punishment in a realistic tone. This is often accompanied by explanations, and in the case of *Tom Sawyer*, with irony too. Yet fear remains an important constituent of these narratives too. Instead of fearing adults themselves, children might dread losing their affection, disappointing or hurting them. Adults' discourses are used to induce this very fear of disappointing and hurting. Therefore ruling by love implicitly means ruling by fear.

Yet in loving disciplines adult and child characters are often 'intimate' collaborators, in the sense that they are able to share each other's feelings and perspectives – although, significantly, only female characters tend to reveal their emotions to young characters. In turn, readers have access to adults' perspectives and are prompted to collaborate in giving meaning to the representation of punishment. Adult characters' desire to rule by love rather than fear testifies to writers' advocacy of a form of punishment that aims not only to correct children's behaviour but also to respect them by avoiding harm. Punishment is therefore presented as a difficult responsibility, which honest and protective adults' perform out of duty, not pleasure. Fundamentally, writers prove that they can be the partners of children, siding with their perspectives, without leading an open war against parents, whose point of view is also envisaged.

Readers are not often encouraged to read against the notion that sanctions are administered for children's own good. In particular when adults' intentions are presented as genuine and honest, their sense of moral obligation is not challenged, giving discipline through love, in spite of its failures, the force of an indisputable truth. Nonetheless, a few authors do question the effectiveness of this loving discipline, and suggest ways to challenge it. These authors show that adults' affection can also be fake, deceptive or simply complex, leading adults to suffer from internal conflicts. Irony, the distance of narrative voice and shifts in focalization can be used to reveal the ambiguities at the heart of discipline through love. The focus on love, no matter how ambiguous and complex, passes on a key message to readers: that relationships are to be valued and can educate the child more effectively than physical pain. The act of storytelling is also conceived for children's own good and as an expression of writers' concern for children. Sophie Heywood notes about Ségur: "The overwhelming insistence on writing as a selfless exercise that she engaged in only for the good of her grandchildren was an important fiction not only for her public but also for herself."⁵⁸ There is a similar sense of selflessness when authors advocate or parody loving disciplines and when they expose their implications not only for adults in general, but for children's writers, who must find a way to integrate them with their desire to amuse and entertain their readers. The insistence of showing the adults' side of punishment can give children's texts a complex empathising richness. The modernity of these texts lies in their attempts to make us see punishment in terms of collaboration, and, as we shall see in the conclusion, this complexity is still apparent in some narratives today.

⁵⁸ Sophie Heywood, p. 161.

Conclusion

This study has examined the implications of punishment in works of literature intended primarily for the instruction and entertainment of a young readership. Similarities and differences between these works have emerged in terms of the setting of punitive practices, the use of the body as a site for punishment, the gendering of pain and the emotional involvement of adult characters. This has helped to nuance the understanding of coercive aspects of the representation of punishment in texts intended for child readers. Punishment does impact on the young characters' development and is a 'means of influence', to use Bronson Alcott's expression:

the faithful observer will recognise in the universal fondness of children for stories and pictures, a ready universal means of influence. [...] To them the story is intellectual play. It is amusement in which their own enjoyments, their pleasures and their pains, are continued and represented in the persons of others.¹

As in earlier texts, punishment remains a key ingredient in the construction of narratives and plays a fundamental role in their fabric. Yet, as opposed to earlier narratives for young readers, punishment is also used for the amusement of young readers and to engage them albeit in complex ways. Punishment is more than a recreational tool; it also invites readers to question the norms and the accepted disciplinary rules of the "real" world. This indicates the serious consideration that these writers were giving to their readers' moral capacities.

As we have seen, the representation of the prison suggests the internalisation of discipline (*Les Malheurs*) but it is also envisaged as a pedagogical tool to educate readers about notions of fairness, culpability or benevolence (*Wonderland, Les Frères Kip, What Katy Did, Tom Sawyer*). In some texts, both functions are deftly entwined. Confinement is marked by ambivalence and ambiguities that also serve to reveal, while preserving readers' sensibilities, the deep pressures on the ideal family prevalent at the time and the sometimes dark reality of intergenerational relationships. The confinement of children follows an educative rationale: the intention is to protect children and improve their behaviour. But it can be used

¹ Amos Bronson Alcott, 'Observations on the Principles and Methods of Infant Instruction' in *Essays on Education (1830–1862)* (Gainesville, Florida: Scholars' Fascimile & Reprints, 1960), p. 14.

arbitrarily (*Poil de Carotte*, *Petit Diable*) and, through characters' perceptions, protective places become spaces of captivity and frustration (*What Katy Did*). The emphasis placed on the emotional ties that should unite a successful family, especially mothers, is therefore complicated.

Punishment is also used to promote gendered visions of children's confidence, empowerment and autonomy from adults. As comparisons between texts with male and female protagonists (especially Sophie and Katy) have shown, the expectations placed on girls to yield to pain suggest that their transgressions are a more serious matter than "boyish" misbehaviours. However, even in the case of boys who are resistant to pain, authors only grant them empowerment as long as they eventually conform to adults' authority and rules. Differences also emerge in terms of literary genre. American and French texts are both realistic in their treatment of disciplinary pain, with some American texts showing more originality (in particular *Little Men*). Our English texts employ fantasy to examine harsh discipline and its effect on characters. Nonetheless, all the texts considered in this study present messages articulated around very real issues. The realm of fantasy may create some distance, but it does not spare characters from punishments or from being confronted with the violence or arbitrariness of adults.

Pain also affords readers a doubly vicarious experience. Instead of solely identifying with the sufferings of young protagonists (when their pain is made visible to readers), readers are also required to empathise with adults' inner turmoil and emotions. The transfer of the child's bodily pain onto the caring adult who suffers emotionally renders physical punishment more complex. However, some authors do not hesitate to show adults' failings, presenting some of them as grotesque figures with a proclivity towards anger or selfishness (*Petit Diable*, *Kind Little Edmund*). This research has brought to light how punishment in children's texts is neither purely didactic nor purely entertaining, but a complex narrative instrument, which enables writers to reflect on adults' envelopment in educational norms. Therefore these texts are not mere depictions of children's reactions to punishment and they are more than a means of influencing readers. They are attempts to reach out to children and to find ways to show that discipline is ultimately beneficial. Narrators are neither on the side of adults, nor conspiring with

child characters against adults, but trying to make them collaborators in life and in education. Children's literature becomes a space where writers can express adults' doubts and anxieties, and attempt to give meaning to practices that, they feel, constantly need justification. I would agree with Ann Scott Macleod that 'to point out connections between an anxious, unsettled society and a didactic, moralizing literature for children is not to suggest that the literature was nothing more than an effort at "social control". It was that, of course, but it had other qualities as well.'² Narrators and adult characters speak with honesty, although sometimes through the means of metaphors, and show that punishment is a difficult task to perform, constrained by social norms. To an extent, they seek young readers' approval and absolution for the fact that adults can be harsh with them, and try to convince them of adults' good intentions. In this sense, these authors present punishment as a collaborative enterprise where adults and children are not separated but bound together.

This thesis's corpus comprises texts from Western countries sharing many historical similarities and a good deal of coherence. The study of French, English and American texts suggests that the sense that discipline was not an easy task was widespread. The examination of these texts therefore contributes to our understanding of family private life and parental attitudes in the West. Although distinctive features emerge, there is a need to explore variations more explicitly through comparative analyses of not only Western texts but also world literature. Such comparative study of texts for children could be very fruitful for the study of the representation of punishment and its narrative implications. Texts from more disparate regions would help make a greater contribution to the field of children's geographies.

Comparative research should also extend to current representations of punishment in children's texts. As mentioned at the start of this study, punishment, its efficacy, benefits and ethical justifications, continue to be a catalyst for the same moral debates that we have noted in our texts. These similarities do not mean that our understanding of punishment has not progressed. Recent research focuses on analysing the effects of corporal punishment. Significantly, some important research

² Scott MacLeod, 'Bad Boys: Tom Bailey and Tom Sawyer', in *American Childhood*, p. 97.

is being undertaken in Western countries where corporal punishment can be both legally tolerated and condemned, notably the United States. Elizabeth Gershoff, from Texas University, demonstrates the lasting harmful effects of corporal punishment.³ Today nineteen States, mostly southern, still recognise the validity of corporal punishment, and paddling is sometimes used in schools. But voices against its application, validity and efficacy are also commonly heard. They reveal that, just as in the texts we have considered, punishment is viewed as a burden placed on the authority figure: ‘Corporal punishment does nothing but expose the teacher to liability’ stated Gayle Fallon, the president of the union that represents teachers in the Houston Independent School District, where a ban was passed in 2001.⁴ Most recently, discussions of whether spanking amounts to child abuse were prompted, notably in America, by the publication of parental manuals recommending the use of the rod,⁵ as well as evidence of parents severely spanking their children – such as images showing the marks across the body of the four-year-old son of the American football player, Adrian Anderson, who had whipped him with a tree branch. Although Anderson was charged with felony child-abuse, many expressed the opinion that spanking is a rightful form of discipline that improves children’s behaviour.

Today, children’s wellbeing is a field where contradictory discourses co-exist very strongly, especially, notes Hannah Anglin-Jaffe, ‘in the educational interventions that claim to ‘empower’ the child through asserting greater control and surveillance over their lives.’⁶ Significantly, the dilemma between ruling by love rather than fear has not disappeared from our consciousness with regard to the education of children. In *A Good Childhood*, Richard Layard and Judy Dunn remark:

Researchers have studied the effects of each style of parenting upon the way in which children develop. They agree that the style of parenting that is

³ Elizabeth Thompson Gershoff, ‘Corporal Punishment by Parents and Associated Child Behaviors and Experiences: A Meta-Analytic and Theoretical Review’, *Psychological Bulletin*, 128.4 (2002), 539–579; Murray A. Straus, ‘Discipline and Deviance: Physical Punishment of Children and Violence and Other Crime in Adulthood’, *Social Problems*, 38.2 (1991), 134–154; Flynn, 971–981.

⁴ Mark Colette, *Houston Chronicle*, 14 November 2014.
<<http://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/education/article/Texas-holds-tight-to-tradition-on-corporal-5893764.php#photo-7179360>> [accessed 14.05.2015]

⁵ Notably *To Train Up a Child* (1994) by Christian fundamentalists Michael and Debi Pearl.

⁶ Hannah Anglin-Jaffe, ‘Reading the ‘Happy Child’: Normative Discourse in Wellbeing Education’, in *Children in Culture, Revisited: Further Approaches to Childhood*, ed. by Karin Lesnik-Oberstein (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 75.

loving and yet firm [...] is the most effective in terms of children's outcomes and well-being. In this approach boundaries are explained, in the context of a warm, loving relationship. This aim is not to secure compliance by fear. Children eventually internalizes the parent's response, and act so as to please their own 'better selves'.⁷

There is a wealth of parental manuals such as this that tackle the very anxieties that emerge from the texts we have examined. In *Unconditional Parenting*, the educationalist Alfie Kohn defines conditional love as a form of affection 'which means that children must earn it by acting in ways we deem appropriate, or by performing up to our standards.'⁸ Kohn has written widely about the question of punishment in the hope of reshaping parental attitudes, notably with his book *Punished by Rewards*. An examination of these manuals also reveals that the metaphors used to talk about the level of autonomy and freedom of children have not changed. Hence, the link between education and the prison has not disappeared. Thus, in *Love and Power: How to raise Competent, Confident Children*, parents are advised:

If you cannot bear to spank the baby for dangerous behaviour, use the system of warnings described earlier and put him in "jail". The playpen serves rather well for this function. Keep the toys out of the playpen and primarily use it as a form of punishment.⁹

Punishment and disciplinary issues invade popular culture. Many television programmes provide educational advice to parents on how to deal with disobedient children. They reveal how adults' anxieties over their role have not dwindled. One recent programme in England, *Born Naughty?*, plays with and challenges the early conceptions of children as innately evil. These conceptions still profoundly inhabit Western consciousness. They underpin and drive, for instance, the best-selling novel *We Need to Talk About Kevin* (2003) by the American author Lionel Shriver. Told from the point of view of the mother of a child who has committed a school massacre, the novel pivots on ingrained parental doubts and parents' guilt over their responsibility for their children's moral development.

The comparison of texts from the past with more recent and contemporary material could be very valuable in revealing patterns and changes that would further

⁷ Judy Dunn and Richard Layard, *A Good Childhood: Searching for Values in a Competitive Age* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), p. 17.

⁸ Alfie Kohn, *Unconditional Parenting: Moving from Rewards and Punishments to Love and Reason* (New York: Atria Books, 2005), p. 11.

⁹ Glenn Austin, *Love and Power: How to Raise Competent, Confident Children* (New York: John Wiley, 1998), p. 149.

our understanding of the history of childhood. Contemporary works for children are produced in a context where more autonomy and agency is granted to children. Significantly, this autonomy and agency is enshrined in the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) to which all Western countries are party except for the United States. The fact that the latter have not yet ratified the convention, yet helped to draft it, could provide an interesting context for further research on the ambiguities of parental attitudes, which combine both the desire to protect and the fear of seeing adults' authority subverted. Comparisons between contemporary texts and works from the past would also enable us to understand further to what extent our attitudes have changed with regard to the question of moral ascendancy at the heart of intergenerational relationships. Exciting research could also emerge from the analysis of the reception of past texts dealing with punishment by a contemporary readership. This would raise important questions about how today's children and adults feel with regard to their disciplinary heritage and how well these books fit within our current lives. Recently, Jacqueline Wilson published a modern version of *What Katy Did* (2015), in which Katy's injury is not her fault. She does not learn to passively yield to pain but takes more control over her life and disability. How do contemporary adults who are against corporal punishment feel about popular "classics" advocating it? Do parents feel the need to explain to children the illustration of Peter being flogged by Benjamin Bunny's father in *The Tale of Benjamin Bunny*? Do parents condemn the scene? Do they censor it in any way? Beatrix Potter's tale, published in 1904, is still widely read today by a multigenerational readership, popular amongst young readers who are often read to by their parents.

Equally, the evocation of punishment in contemporary literature for children and young adults has not stopped, quite the opposite. In a recent picture book, the French author Olivier Douzou mixes the genre of the fairy tale with realist features to interrogate adults' authority and the border between correction and violence. *Le Conte du prince en deux, ou l'histoire d'une mémorable fessée* (2005) opens with a street survey asking parents and children their opinion on spanking. The text unfolds with a framed narrative recounting the tale of a prince who was spanked so forcefully by the king that he was split into two halves. One half became docile while the other

ended up so unruly that it was confined and isolated into a tower. Recent publications, such as *Ketchup Clouds* by Annabel Pitcher (2012) or *Story of Crime and Punishment* (2005, 2014) also reveal how the themes of crime, guilt and repentance are frequently used to entice readers. Today's authors experiment with content and form to deal with many more aspects related to punishment. In *Ketchup Clouds*, the young English narrator writes letters to an American prisoner on death row. She opens her heart about a crime for which she was never punished and confesses the guilt that consumes her, hoping to find a sympathetic ear in this fellow criminal and to vicariously expiate for her crime through his experience of confinement. Similarly, the recounting of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel, adapted for children by A. B. Yehoshua, dwells on the notion of guilt, repentance, penance and the need for punishment.

Other works show how the theme of imprisonment, which emerged strongly in our texts, has not disappeared with time. The fascination with the prison world is treated with humour in *Al Capone does my Shirts* by Gennifer Choldenko (2002), a novel set against the backdrop of the maximum-security prison on Alcatraz Island. Other texts place their young protagonists directly in institutional confinement. The evocation of the prison for educational and correctional purposes resonates with contemporary works of fiction for children and young adults, such as Louis Sachar's famous novel *Holes* (1998) and *The Panopticon* by Jenni Fagan (2012). These books, in different ways, tackle the issue of juvenile delinquency. The protagonists find themselves locked in correctional centres that aim to better them. Both evoke Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*. In Fagan's book, a watchtower bears heavily on the protagonist's consciousness, who tries to avoid its relentless scrutiny. In *Holes*, the juvenile camp where the delinquents must dig holes has no walls, like the Mettray colony described by Foucault.

The dominance of the prison as the chief form of punishment in our societies is a reality to which children's literature is not impervious. In fact, new types of picture book and titles for early readers have emerged, initially in the United States. These books aim to explain to their young readers why their (usually) male parent has been sent to prison, how he will be treated and the implications for their relationship. Contemporary titles provide rich avenues for future research into the trends and

changes in children's literature, which, as this study has tried to demonstrate, is fascinated by the impact of rules on children's and adults' lives.

Indeed, this research has highlighted that the literary representation of the frustration of children's desires does not simply show adults' intention to deter, mould or correct children's behaviour; it also conveys adults' desire to express their own anxieties concerning their moral obligation to influence children. The authors we have considered use children's texts to progress towards the softening of intergenerational conflicts and opened creative avenues in literature to deal with such struggles. As the success of Tsiolkas's novel *The Slap* suggests, their account of the expectations placed on adults but also their representation of adults' shortcomings, anxieties and inner debates, demonstrate a high degree of self-reflection regarding the influence of storytelling that still resonates with us today.

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