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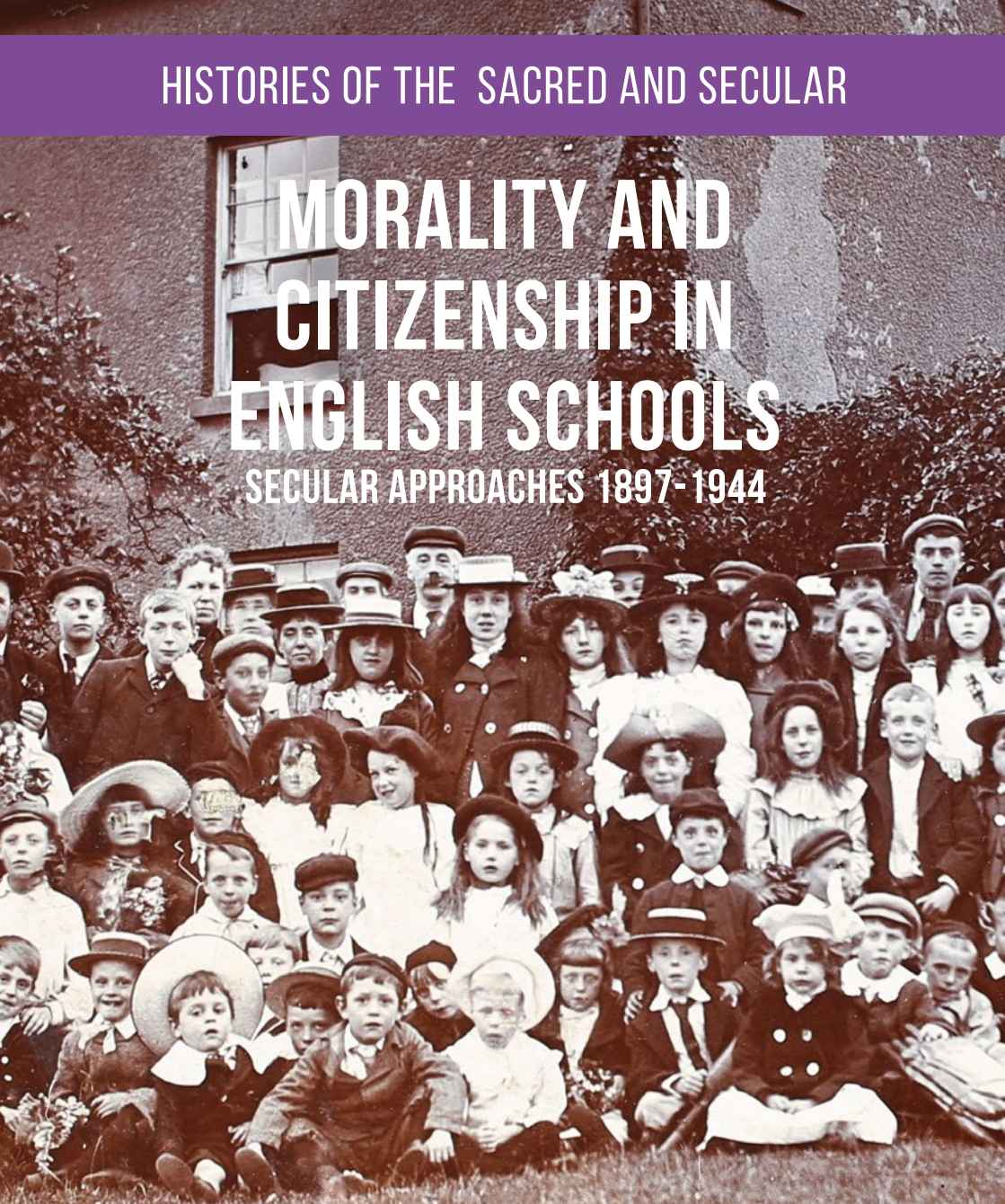

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Morality and Citizenship in English Schools

Secular Approaches, 1897–1944

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The research for this book has taken me to many libraries and archives. The many staff members that I have met have invariably been helpful in response to my queries and requests, have worked hard to help me to access difficult sources, and have generously shared their knowledge of their collections. Particular thanks must go to those that I have made the greatest

use of: the Manuscript reading room and main reading rooms of the Bodleian Library, Oxford; the Newsroom in the British Library, St Pancras (where I have encountered staff who previously helped me at Colindale); and the special collections and archives section at the British Library of Political and Economic Science. I have also enjoyed my visits to the Alternatives to Religion Library at Conway Hall; Bishopsgate Institute Library; the National Archives at Kew; and Lambeth Palace Library in London. Research visits have also taken me to the Greater Manchester County Record Office and John Rylands Library, Manchester; the National Libraries of Wales and Scotland; and the Universities of Strathclyde, Sussex and Keele. Financial support from the Oxford Brookes University Faulty of Humanities and Social Sciences research fund has helped finance a number of these visits, and has also provided me with some relief from my teaching load in the crucial final months. Without this additional support this book would not have been completed.

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men in my household, two quite young and one (a little) older. They have been the most affected by the work that has gone into this text, and have provided me with distraction, entertainment and happiness along the way.

Contents

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABP	Papers of Sir Arthur Bryant
AEC	Association for Education in Citizenship
BHA	British Humanist Association
BHAA	British Humanist Association Archive
BLPES	British Library of Political and Economic Science
BSP	Brian Simon Papers
CELP	Civic Education League Papers
CEWC	Council for Education in World Citizenship
DfE	Department for Education
EPC	English Positivist Committee
ESC	*Ethical Societies' Chronicle*
ESP	Papers and Correspondence of Sir Ernest Simon of Wythenshawe
EW	*Ethical World*
FSMP	Papers of Francis Sydney Marvin
IMEC	International Moral Education Congress
IOP	India Office Papers, British Library
LEA	Local Education Authority
LEC	Leicester Education Committee
LNU	League of Nations Union
LPS	London Positivist Society
LPSP	London Positivist Society Papers
LSB	Leicester School Board
LSS	Leicester Secular Society
MELQ/ MILQ	*Moral Education League Quarterly/Moral Instruction League Quarterly*
MIL	Moral Instruction League

MOA	Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex
NSS	National Secular Society
PGP	Sir Patrick Geddes Papers
PR	*Positivist Review*
REC	Religion and Ethics Committee, League of Nations Union
RLLR	Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
RLNU	Records of the League of Nations Union
SEL	Secular Education League
SPES	South Place Ethical Society
SPMR	*South Place Monthly Record*
TNA	The National Archive
UES	Union of Ethical Societies

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

A photograph pasted into Leicester Secular Society's (LSS's) photograph album depicts a group of over 70 children, and 12 adults, on what appears to be a Sunday School outing to the countryside. The handwritten annotation in the photograph album locates this image as 'At Ulverscroft, July 1902'. The property in the background might well have been one of the three Gimson family summer retreats in the parish that Ernest Gimson (brother of Sidney Gimson, then LSS President) decorated in his customary Arts and Crafts style. The party are all smartly dressed and are posed in a formal group. The majority, toddlers, teenagers, and adults, are wearing hats. A few of the children seem to be smiling; most of the group are not. Adults in the photo are named with arrows, but none of the children are. Just left of centre of the back row, wearing a cap and recognisable from his customary thick moustache, is Frederick James Gould, who was Secretary and Organiser of LSS at the time and will prove a central figure in several of the educational initiatives that I will address. I have taken this image as my starting point, and chosen it for the front cover, for two reasons. Firstly, I was struck by how respectable the group looked; it could be any Sunday School outing. But as Secular Society members, this group were different in important ways that will become apparent. Secondly, I wanted to emphasise the importance of secularist organisations, individuals and ideas in shaping the particular approaches to the teaching of moral education and citizenship in schools which will be described in this book.[1]

These secularist approaches sit within a much broader discourse about the purposes of schooling. Schools, it was argued, should not only impart

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academic knowledge, but also instil the knowledge, values and behaviours that would prepare pupils for their future lives as adult citizens. This discourse pre-dates, and indeed post-dates, the 1897–1944 time frame of my analysis. But in the first half of the twentieth century there appears to have been among educators a sense of urgency, emanating from a sense of 'considerable social and cultural upheaval'.[2] Commentators at the turn of the twentieth century feared that rapid urbanisation and industrialisation (and consequent population movement and concentration), a loss of religious faith, and the changing role of the State, would have negative consequences for both the cohesion and the moral condition of society. With these changes, it was argued, there was no guarantee that families and churches would remain the effective agents of moralisation that they had been in the past. This much was evidenced by the apparently demoralised and demotivated concentration of the urban poor in slums, and 'outbreaks' of juvenile delinquency, as well as foppish decadence and a rubbishing of traditional cultural mores higher up the social scale.[3] By the interwar years, such concerns were supplemented by others relating to a rapidly expanding electorate, reconfigured international geopolitical configurations in the aftermath of the First World War, and, by the mid-1930s, the rise of totalitarian regimes overseas. Effective means were needed, it was argued, to promote international goodwill and understanding, and also to revitalise parliamentary democracy.[4]

All of these concerns were thought to require an educational response. Many and varied attempts to promote desirable values and behaviours among the young emerged during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Contemporaries were concerned to develop 'character', and instil forms of militarism, patriotism and purity. Much effort was directed at the school, which provided an almost unrivalled opportunity to reach a captive audience of the young obliged to attend for several hours a day, at least five days a week, for much of the year. Considerable scholarly attention, too, has been focused on this institution. The development of 'character' has been examined as a by-product of the school ethos and the everyday relationships and interactions between teachers and taught.[5] Opportunities to convey messages about nation, empire, race, class and gender through syllabus and examination design and school textbooks and reading books have received considerable attention.[6] Other research has considered themes of imperialism, masculinity and even militarism in organised games and special events such as Empire Day.[7] But formative influences outside schools, for example youth organisations, and the reading materials and other consumer

products that found their way into homes, were deemed important by contemporaries, and have been noted also by subsequent scholars.[8] By the interwar years, this repertoire was directed towards internationalist aims and a strengthening of democracy, though these new agendas tended to supplement rather than supplant earlier goals.[9]

Christian influences infused many of these activities, organisations and texts. This is obviously true of religious instruction lessons, which were valued for their contribution to individuals' moral development, and to a virtuous and cohesive society.[10] Other educational endeavours, too, within and beyond schools, had their Christian elements. The Band of Hope encouraged the young readers of its periodical to develop appropriate emotions, such as hope, love and joy, with reference to God. Every Boy Scout, according to a formulation drawn up in 1909, should 'belong to some religious denomination and attend its services'. And Christian figures were frequently held up as role models in teaching texts.[11] Between 1897 and 1944, however, secularists (attached to groupings like the National Secular Society (NSS), the Ethical Movement, and the Positivists, or individual agnostics without such affiliations) suggested alternatives. A Christian moral code, they argued, would not meet the needs of either individuals or a broader community of English citizens in a changing, increasingly complex world. It also failed to cater for the growing number who did not profess a Christian faith. They aimed to offer what they variously labelled a non-theological, secular, human, or humanist alternative which would be accessible to all, whatever their views on Christianity or indeed any world religion. Just as much as Christians, secularists wanted to promote their version of moral behaviour in schools, and to shape the values and culture of the English citizen in their own image. In addition, they wanted to influence the teaching in schools in order to gain the full inclusion of non-believers into the community of citizens, whether of the locality, the nation, or the world. The educators considered in this book, at least those openly linked with freethought organisations, witnessed secularist colleagues struggling to rent premises for meetings, and themselves faced limitations on employment duties, and being passed over when applying for jobs. They wanted a better deal for non-believers in the future. Secularists therefore worked through pressure groups and local educational authorities in order to publicise their arguments. The relatively decentralised nature of the English education system provided them, as it did with other lobbies, with an opportunity to influence what was taught in schools.

Secularist approaches to moral education and citizenship in English schools have not to date received the sustained attention that has been accorded to dominant Christian approaches or some of the alternative pedagogical models noted already. But such attention, I suggest, is warranted. The secularist perspective was, undoubtedly, a minority one at the time examined, but it is worthy of detailed examination. Firstly, minority perspectives are important as part of a complete picture of early twentieth-century educational debates. There is no ideologically inspired aim of giving secularist perspectives more air time. But I hope to present a more rounded, detailed and textured picture of morality and citizenship in schools in the early twentieth century than is offered when secularist perspectives are absent or downplayed. Secondly, these secularist perspectives could influence the dominant Christian ones in different ways. They required a response, which in itself required Christian views to be reconsidered. That reconsideration could, on occasion, lead to concessions and adaptation, or it could lead to a restatement of the status quo. At times, too, secularist proposals could stimulate the development of new programmes and materials for use in schools. Where the response was one of silence, this could be interpreted in different ways. Was it a lack of awareness of secularist views behind the proposals? Or was it an assumption that secularist perspectives lacked any significance? Or that if ignored these alternative proposals would simply go away? Thirdly, these early twentieth-century debates have present-day implications. As my conclusion will reveal, current discussions of values, citizenship and the place of religion in schooling in the present reiterate themes that emerged in the period covered by this book. These earlier debates, then, were antecedents of present-day ones. Secularist perspectives might have represented a minority at the time. But in the present, when the number who define themselves as Christians in Britain is, according to some investigations, being eclipsed by those who claim to have no religion, they are no longer minority ones. An understanding of earlier developments therefore becomes imperative.[12]

I therefore offer a series of interconnected case studies which span a 47-year period from 1897 to 1944. In 1897 the Moral Instruction League (MIL) was formed, the first pressure group to operate at a national level to promote and disseminate secularist approaches to teaching morality and citizenship in schools. 1944 is significant mainly because of that year's Education Act, which legislated, for the first time, for compulsory religious instruction and daily acts of worship, constituting an important change in the educational landscape in which secularists operated. Against a backdrop

of broader religious, educational and other societal developments, this book's approach is intended to enable an examination of continuity and change in secularists' ideas and methods, and the responses to them. Common threads are apparent, but there is also plenty of variation. The individuals and organisations included here (Frederick James Gould in Leicester, the MIL, Francis Sidney Marvin and Gould again within the LNU, and Ernest Simon and Eva Hubback in the Association for Education in Citizenship (AEC)) have all been examined in previous substantial studies, but individually.[13] They have also received briefer comments in other texts.[14] This book will be distinctive in drawing these individuals and organisations together in one place. It will also situate secularist educational endeavours within the wider thinking and activities of different forms of secularism that existed in the first half of the twentieth century. To this end I supplement an analysis of the publications of these individuals and groups with an examination of the publications and records of the different secularist organisations, and, where available, personal papers. I aim to address four key questions. How did these individuals and organisations promote secular forms of morality and citizenship in schools? What educational proposals did they offer? What institutional and intellectual resources did they draw on? And what responses did their efforts elicit from teachers and a wider Christian, secularist, and general public?

This study draws on insights from, and, I suggest, contributes to, historical research into education, and also into religion and secularism. For the history of education, it offers a full and long-term consideration of secularist approaches to the teaching of moral values and citizenship in schools. It also contributes to debates about the relative importance of schools and other agencies in reconstructing histories of education. Stephanie Olsen, for example, quite rightly calls for scholars to attend not only to formal schooling but also to 'informal channels of learning' represented by influential voluntary youth groups and the periodicals they produced.[15] But it is also important to explore the intersection between schooling and other agencies and educational spaces. The educators I examine included classroom teachers, inspectors, and college principals who looked to ideas and networks outside their day jobs in order to generate and disseminate proposals intended to improve the education offered within schools. This project also sits, I suggest, within a vast historiography which examines the place of religion in English/British society (depending on the study) which is discussed in some detail in Chapter 2. Secularist groups and perspectives have not been prominent in these scholarly debates. Yet the case studies of educational activism here

enable us to move away from a narrow focus on secularist organisational activity, in a manner parallel to that suggested in recent social histories of religion. They show that secularists aimed to influence a wider society and culture beyond the relatively small, committed cadre of activists. They indicate the significance, too, of agnostics not attached to secularist bodies. And they highlight interactions between Christianity and secularism, not seeing the two as separate, but in dialogue with and influencing one another, another theme in recent historiography.[16] More broadly, secularist educational proposals also connect with recent insights from within a vast historiography which interrogates what has been variously labelled as citizenship, national identity, and national character (all concepts that are subject to debate). Recent contributions have emphasised local and international dimensions of citizenship, as well as national ones (Tom Hulme and Helen McCarthy). They have acknowledged the formative influence of schooling and other educational activity (Hulme, McCarthy and Benjamin Lammers), and have investigated how far and in what way religion shaped individual experiences and societal debates (Lammers and Matthew Grimley). Secularists' educational proposals speak to all of these considerations.[17]

It is important, at this juncture, to discuss some methodological and conceptual matters. Firstly, I will clarify some of my decisions about terminology. I have linked morality and citizenship in the title, and in the discussions that follow, because this is exactly what the individuals and groups examined in this book did. Concepts of morality, moral instruction (set lessons or conversations 'definitely directed to moral subjects') and moral education (denoting a wider range of pedagogical approaches within and beyond the school) were more prominent in the first three case studies.[18] The concept of citizenship was more prominent in the final two cases studies. The proposals examined emphasised the ties between the individual and a 'definitely organised community' (most frequently but not only the nation state), and the responsibilities and obligations that arose from these ties. These ties were, frequently, framed by educators in social and cultural, as much as political and legal, terms.[19] The shift in terminology seems to reflect a shift in dominant educational priorities and wider public discourse, with an emphasis on personal morality at the start of the twentieth century being replaced by the interwar years with a focus on civic morality and citizenship.[20] But morality and citizenship were closely linked through all the case studies. The wording of the title and subtitle of an early MIL publication, *Our Future Citizens; Or, How is Character Cultivated in Board Schools?*, demonstrates this

connection. Secularist educators' interest in shaping individual morality in schools was always premised on what this meant for a wider community of citizens. On the other hand, for Gould and Marvin in the League of Nations Union (LNU) and for Simon and Hubback in the AEC, citizenship, of the 'world' and of the democratic State, depended on the values, attitudes and behaviour of individuals.

The prominence of idealism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with its symbiotic linking of the individual and the wider community, appears to be relevant here. An individual was fulfilled only, in this view, through membership of a wider community. And the State was obliged to intervene in the lives of the individuals of which it was comprised. Idealism's popularity as a philosophy, and as a stimulus to social activism, is widely held to have originated with T. H. Green and his Balliol College students in the 1860s and 1870s. But idealism, José Harris has argued, from the 1870s and up to the First World War, came to influence thinking about social policy in many areas, including education. It proved attractive to a wide range of thinkers of different political and religious persuasions. And even as interest in idealist metaphysics declined in the interwar years, policy continued to be a framed in a 'broadly idealist' way. The varied constituencies influenced by idealism, however, Watson notes, could disagree over policy questions.[21] The wider community referenced in scholarly discussions of idealism has most frequently been the State at national level. But recent research has also recognised idealism's focus on the municipal community, of relevance here in Chapters 3 and 7.[22] Moreover, I suggest the continued emphasis on links between the individual and a wider community in the interwar years could also be applied to international community of the world citizen (see Chapter 6). The lack of explicit reference to T. H. Green or idealism on the part of some of the educators examined in this book should be noted. But the wider intellectual context in which they operated might explain why secularist educators, and others discussing or responding to their proposals, were apparently so ready to move between, to connect, and at times almost to conflate, individual morality and citizenship.

My use of 'secularist' as a collective label is intended to include *Secularists* with a capital S (members of the NSS) but also members of the Ethical Movement, Positivists, and other, smaller, organised freethought groupings. This much is standard usage among historians. Also, I include in my definition agnostics such as Simon and Hubback who did not associate themselves with such organisations, but promoted educational proposals resting on a human or social morality. 'Secular' is a more elegant term, but

would not work because, as will be discussed later, some of those I am looking at saw themselves as 'religious', though not 'theological'. Another possible label, 'humanist', was used by some Positivists and ethicists in the 1920s (defined as 'faith in man' or 'humanity'), and a little earlier for a few activists.[23] But it had little currency before this time, and was not often used in NSS circles, even in the interwar years. Humanism is, moreover, now typically associated in organisational terms with the British Humanist Association formed in the 1960s.

Finally, I need to explain my decision to focus on England rather than Britain, already noted as a point of difference between other historical studies. I have taken my lead primarily from my sources. The groups and individuals examined were considerably more active in England than elsewhere in Britain, perhaps because of their own English roots. And their references to 'the nation' were, as was typical of the period, frequently Anglo-centric in focus.[24] They rarely considered the different meanings that might be ascribed to citizenship in educational contexts in the different home nations. This would be a subject worthy of detailed analysis, but it is one which, given the limitations of my primary sources on this count, and also lack of space, must lie beyond the scope of this book.

Some key methodological points also require elaboration. Firstly, my case studies have been selected for the insights they provide into different time periods, different levels of activity (local, national and international), and links to different forms of secularism. Case studies can provide an accessible route for navigating what can be highly complex, and sometimes abstract debates. They provide a depth of insight into people, networks, activities and ideas. Yet this strategy brings the danger of selectivity (there are many smaller pressure groups and moral education programmes not captured here) and a lack of continuity.[25] The interconnectedness of these case studies might go some way towards addressing the continuity issue. Core activists appear in several chapters; notably Gould, but others too. The same is true for the different secularist groupings. Secondly, I want to comment on the prominence given to biography and autobiography; of organisations and of individuals. I am interested in historians' use of biographical and autobiographical material as a resource for marginalised histories, for example with reference to women and minority ethnic and linguistic groups.[26] Might the minority of secularists benefit from a use of similar resources? In my interest in what motivated, brought together, and, sometimes, separated activists there are elements too of a prosopographical agenda (loosely defined). However, I make no claims to having attempted any extensive

or detailed prosopographical analysis.[27] Thirdly, with the emphasis being firmly on questions of religion and secularism, other markers of identity and social division such as gender, class and race have not received the same attention. Yet all these markers intersect with my core themes, and they are discussed at appropriate points throughout the text.

My main sources, noted briefly above, consist of the records and publications of relevant pressure groups, and personal papers and biographical publications related to key activists. These have been contextualised through the records and publications of the various secularist bodies, and relevant government bodies (local, national and colonial). Contemporary educational and religious periodical publications and the national and local press have also been consulted. The availability of primary source material for key pressure groups and activists has been variable. The LNU's full records, for example, contrast with the scattered and incomplete sources available for the MIL. Extensive collections of personal correspondence survive for Marvin and Simon. For others we must rely on published or unpublished autobiographies and biographical collections; unfortunately, given his centrality in several chapters, this is true for Gould.[28] These differences in source availability, inevitably, affect the foregoing analysis. Furthermore, the sources available, overall, restrict us by and large to the message that the activists and educators wanted to convey, and, to a lesser extent, how it was received and responded to by correspondents and readers. For Leicester, we also gain some insights into the attitudes of local citizens, an advantage of a highly localised case study. We know rather less about the views of teachers in schools (beyond the few who contributed to discussions in the press, or even, in Mass Observation data, the interested minority who responded to a survey). We know little, overall, about how secularist proposals worked out in practice. Moreover, pupils' responses and reactions to the secularist moral codes and civic values that they were exposed to have proven almost impossible to trace. We are restricted to very occasional references to pupils' views and experiences, from an adult perspective, in reports and the periodical press.[29]

Chapter 2, immediately following the introduction, provides a contextual discussion of key themes; namely religion, secularism, and educational endeavours. This discussion is intended to anchor, and situate, the case studies that follow. The first of these, in Chapter 3, examines the promotion of moral instruction at the local level, taking the example of Gould in Leicester, between 1899 and 1910. Gould was based at LSS for most of this time, but also made use of other secularist and political networks.

Ideological and personal tensions emerged as he navigated this complex municipal and organisational terrain. Chapter 4 considers the MIL and its campaigns from 1897 to 1919, with a particular focus on its links to and interactions with the Ethical Movement and other secularist groups, as well as Christian responses. Secularists had the capacity to unite through a pressure group in order to achieve educational goals, but also expressed differences of opinion about strategies and underpinning ideals. Chapter 5 examines three examples of international communication between the 1890s and 1914, facilitated, in different ways, by the Ethical Movement. Proposals for moral instruction and/or moral education were disseminated widely. But the Ethical Movement's goal of teaching based on a universal and synoptic morality proved difficult to achieve, with challenges posed by varying political and cultural contexts and differing religious views. Chapter 6 considers the interwar years, when citizenship became the core concept in educational proposals. International considerations were important again, as Marvin and Gould worked through the LNU to develop a Positivist-flavoured version of world-citizenship. But they were a minority within a predominantly Christian organisation. Chapter 7 moves away from organised freethought to individual agnostics. Simon and Hubback, through the AEC, aimed to promote their humanist version of a democratic citizen in schools and other educational settings alongside the Christian approaches offered by others. However, by 1944 Christian versions of democratic citizenship won through in the form of that year's education act and its provisions for compulsory acts of worship and religious instruction. Secularists were critical but failed to coordinate a large-scale public campaign. In Chapter 8, elements of continuity and change in the foregoing studies are drawn together in a conclusion. Here I also look forward to educational developments from the 1960s to the present. Secularists and Christians remain important lobbies in debates over how best to promote morality and citizenship in schools; and their early twentieth century proposals and experiences have resonance today.

Taken together, the case studies show that secularist campaigners, between 1897 and 1944, contributed to public debate about the role that schools could play in shaping individual behaviour and societal values. Secularist perspectives were invoked and publicised in municipal, national and international spheres. Campaigners did not achieve all that they wanted to. But they had some influence on policy discussions, and on educational practice. And where they did not inspire agreement, they demanded a response; even silence constituted a response of some form. These

campaigns were one of the ways in which secularists reached beyond the members of their organised groups or to individual agnostics, and ensured that their ideas had some purchase (albeit sometimes partial) with a wider public. Yet secularists clearly did not present a united front at all times. Ultimately, and notwithstanding their place within ongoing educational and societal debates, secularists were unable to do much to dent what appear to have been majority views about the importance of a Christian foundation for individual morality and English citizenship. But, for reasons noted already, it is important to study their attempts to do so.

Notes

1. Photograph, 'At Ulverscroft, July 1902', Leicester Secular Society (LSS) Photograph Album *c.*1890–1959, 10D/68/13, Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
2. B. Beaven and J. Griffiths (2008) 'Creating the Exemplary Citizens: the Changing Notion of Citizenship in Britain 1870–1939', *Contemporary British History*, 22:2, 203–25, p. 203.
3. J. Romein (1978) *The Watershed of Two Eras. Europe in 1900*, trans. A. J. Pomerans (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press). Many historical studies address turn of the twentieth century moral concerns, including S. Koven (*c.*2004) *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press); J. Gillis (1975) 'The Evolution of Juvenile Delinquency in England 1890–1914', *Past and Present*, 67, 57–72; H. Hendrick (1990) *Images of Youth. Age, Class and the Male Youth Problem, 1880–1920* (Oxford: Clarendon Press); G. Searle (1971) *The Quest for National Efficiency: a Study in British Politics and Political Thought, 1899–1914* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971); G. Stedman Jones (1971) *Outcast London: a Study in the Relationship between Classes in Victorian Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).
4. B. J. Elliott (1977) 'The League of Nations Union and History Teaching in England: a Study in Benevolent Bias', *History of Education*, 6:2, 131–41; R. J. K. Freathy (2008) 'The Triumph of Religious Education for Citizenship in English Schools, 1935–1949', *History of Education*, 37:2, 295–316; H. McCarthy (2011) *The British People and the League of Nations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).

5. N. Roberts (2004) 'Character in the Mind. Citizenship, Education and Psychology in Britain', *History of Education*, 33:2, 177–97.
6. For example, D. Cannadine, J. Keating and N. Sheldon (2011) *The Right Kind of History* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan); V. Chancellor (1970) *History for their Masters* (Bath: Adams & Dart); F. J. Glendenning (1974) 'Attitudes to Colonialism and Race in British and French History Schoolbooks', *History of Education*, 3:2, 57–72; S. Heathorn (2000) *For Home, Country and Race: Constructing Gender, Class and Englishness in the Elementary School, 1880–1914* (Toronto: Toronto University Press); S. Heathorn (1995) '"Let us Remember that we, too, are English": Constructions of Citizenship and National Identity in English Elementary School Reading Books, 1880–1914', *Victorian Studies*, 38:3, 395–427; P. Horn (1989) 'English Elementary Education and the Growth of the Imperial Ideal: 1880–1914' in J. A. Mangan (ed.) *Benefits Bestowed? Education and British Imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), pp. 25–37; W. E. Marsden (2001) *The School Textbook: Geography, History and Social Studies* (London: Woburn Press), pp. 77–81, 149–55; P. Yeandle (2015) *Citizenship, Nation, Empire: the Politics of History Teaching in England, 1870–1930* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).
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29. See Chapter 8 on this point.

CHAPTER 2

Religion, Secularism and Education

In 1900 Frederick James Gould stood as an independent candidate for election to Leicester School Board, calling for the introduction of moral instruction lessons in schools. In his election campaign he stressed his credentials in the form of his experience of many years of elementary school teaching, and also of devising and giving moral lessons in the Sunday Schools of secularist bodies, circulating a sample lesson to electors. Moral instruction lessons, he suggested, would be more effective than the existing religious instruction lessons in educating citizens, but the Bible and other sacred texts could be drawn on to illustrate moral virtues. Gould was working for the Leicester Secular Society (LSS) at this time, but he emphasised the support of Christians as well as secularist figures. This example, to which we return in Chapter 3, is offered here to illustrate the way in which secularists' efforts to promote moral education and citizenship in schools sit at an intersection of wider currents within the history of early twentieth-century England. Gould's activities and campaign strategies were shaped by relationships between Christians and secularists, acting both as individuals and within organisations. They were also influenced by the role of Christianity, and secularist alternatives, in educational policy-making and shaping the school curriculum. And they speak to broader contemporary debates about morality and citizenship both within and beyond schools. Similar observations could be made of the other educational initiatives discussed in this book. The complexity of these cross-currents makes it important to provide some empirical and theoretical context, and to situate

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the detailed case studies presented here within wider historiographical discussions.

This chapter will be divided into three main sections. First, I will consider a history of Christianity in early twentieth-century England, considering some of the historiographical debates. Earlier accounts posited a process of secularisation, tied to processes of modernisation and urbanisation, which was well underway by the late nineteenth century. More recent research, however, has pointed to the institutional strength and cultural significance of Christianity right up to the 1960s and, for some scholars, to a longer-term resilience of Christian narratives and experiences even beyond this date. Secondly, attention will be devoted to a parallel and interrelated history of the secular. This could take the form of individual doubt, or of the various secularist organisations that were established as alternatives to organised Christianity from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards. Three major groupings, the National Secular Society (NSS), the Positivists and the Ethical Movement, were of particular significance to the case studies that follow and they will be discussed in some detail. These organisations had different historical and ideological roots, but the differences were complicated by their overlapping membership, and also by permeable boundaries with liberal Christianity. Thirdly, and drawing on the earlier discussions of Christianity and secularism as context, I consider, against the backdrop of wider Christian and secularist developments, the involvement of Christians and secularists in educational activities, both within their own organisations and within more general formal schooling. It is hoped that the ideas and proposals of secularist activists, and the responses they generated, will be contextualised through the background discussion offered here.

Religion

'The slum child is never under a higher influence except during school hours', claimed an editorial in the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* in 1901. 'They never hear a hymn or a prayer, or the name of God except in oaths. Why marvel that their conduct in dark alleys is too foul for description, and that the language they use in the streets is a horror to decent ears?'[1] This comment highlights a common theme in the discussions of the early twentieth century, that of declining Christian observance, particularly among a seemingly unchurched population in the poorest urban areas. Others, however, noted problems across the social spectrum. In 1939, Maurice Leonard

Jacks bemoaned a 'secular age', characterised by materialism, relative values and hedonism, which was affecting the whole population.[2] Equally strong claims were made about the continued strength of the Christian foundations of good character and English national identity. 'The sense of duty so characteristic of Englishmen', argued Reverend Dymott in 1902, 'which had found expression in Nelson's famous signal at Trafalgar is largely the result of the impress that three hundred years of the Church Catechism has left.'[3] In the interwar years the effect a broader Protestantism was frequently evoked. Symbols common to Anglicans and Nonconformists became prominent, including the English Bible, which, according to an editorial in *The Times* in 1938, had 'contributed, as no other force has done in a like degree, to what is best in the national character'.[4]

These commentators were not disinterested observers, however: they were influenced, first, by trends as they appeared at a particular point in time, and, secondly, by their own ideas about the sort of influence that religion should have on English people and institutions. Thus, the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* and others making similar claims perceived the social evils and immoral conduct that they described as a consequence of a lack of institutional provision and also a lack of Christian beliefs and practices in the slum-home. The unspoken comparators, partly imaginary ones, were the home outside the poorest urban districts, and a time when religious belief was prevalent both in all geographical areas and across the social spectrum. Such arguments, moreover, could reinforce the claims of particular interest groups; in the case of the *Daily Gazette* and M. L. Jacks the relevant groups were pushing for more, and better, religious education in schools. The *Birmingham Daily Gazette* supported the 'Church Party' on the city's School Board, which in 1901, having secured a majority for the first time since 1874, was campaigning to strengthen provision for religious instruction in the city's elementary schools.[5] M. L. Jacks, too, towards the end of the interwar years, was one of a group of Christian educators who identified the problems of a 'secular age'. Such commentators, in different ways, touch on the complex links between individual emotions and behaviour, national culture, Christian doctrine, and education that are explored throughout this chapter.

I would suggest that historians have, also, been similarly influenced by their own ideas about religion, the cultural influences that surround them, and also the way that long-term institutional and ideological trends appear to be going at a particular point of time. A theory of secularisation, developed by sociologists in the 1960s, suggests a unidirectional and irreversible

trend, an inescapable side-effect of modernity, with its processes of industrialisation, urbanisation, and of the 'rationalisation' of thinking.[6] Many historians from the 1970s onwards had argued that such processes were well underway in Britain and elsewhere in Europe by the end of the nineteenth century and that they continued throughout the twentieth century. Steve Bruce still argues along these lines, but he now finds himself in a minority.[7] A number of scholars have claimed in recent years that Britain, alongside other European countries, could in many respects have been described as 'Christian' until the 1960s, when both institutional adherence and the cultural significance of Christianity started to decline rapidly.[8] Some have gone further, suggesting that there is no single long-term story of growth and decline to tell, and that we should focus instead on 'religious change' as a constant, for society, institutions and individuals.[9] In this vein David Nash notes the 'surprising longevity of Christian ideals and portrayals, sometimes beyond traditionally studied religious forms', which have been used by individuals to 'mould and explain their lives'. Religion and associated beliefs are not, in this view, culturally inescapable or hard-wired into human consciousness; rather they change and adapt over time. There is a continual dialogue between religious and secular narratives and practices, with the two shaping one another, and there is also an interaction between religious motifs and other social forces. Individuals can make use of ideals and ideas, and act on them, in a dynamic way, adopting and then neglecting lines of thought, and entering and leaving religious bodies or pressure groups in ways that suit their individual purposes. These are useful insights that help to capture the continuities and changes that can be seen in individuals' ideas and organisational affiliations, and in the ongoing dialogues between different secularists, and between secularists and Christians, in the case studies that follow.[10]

Primary sources of the period offer illumination as to the extent and nature of Christian commitment and ideas in the early twentieth century, but not always a consistent picture. Even the 'hard' evidence of church attendance, membership and rites of passage statistics is methodologically complex and its implications have been debated.[11] Only a few headlines can be noted here. Aggregate church attendance declined slowly from about the 1880s. Similarly, aggregate church membership in England declined slowly as a percentage of total population, from a peak in England in 1904–05. Both declined more rapidly from the 1960s. These figures, however, mask denominational, geographical and gender differences and smaller peaks and troughs over time. Anglican Easter Day communicant figures were very

similar in 1939 and 1960, whilst estimated Roman Catholic membership rose in numbers (if not in terms of the proportion of the population) up to the 1970s. Nonconformist membership, in decline since about 1900, picked up a little during the 1920s and 1930s. Moreover, although these figures suggest that the urban poor were not as 'un-churched' as some commentators had feared, membership and attendance were generally, though not always, lower in urban than in rural areas. And women, typically but not always, formed a higher proportion of church members and attenders than men. Participation in Christian rites of passage remained high throughout the period.[12]

Christianity, according to the 'softer' evidence of oral history and biography, also suffused thinking, personal morality and domestic ritual among those who did not attend church, at least up to the mid-twentieth century. This group frequently noted personal Christian beliefs of some form, many mentioned saying prayers or reading the Bible in the home, sending children to Sunday School, and participating in Christian rites of passage such as baptism and marriage.[13] Most children would also have come into contact with Christian doctrine and practices through religious instruction and assemblies in school, as will be explored further below, and, for the poor, through charitable provision. Medical missions offered either free or cheap health care. Those attending would be read to from the Bible, or attend an informal service or prayer meeting, before receiving medical treatment.[14] The infamous East End gangster Arthur Harding was born and brought up in extreme poverty in the Nichol, a notorious London slum. He recalled attending Sunday School at the local Ragged School Mission in order to be eligible for free breakfasts. In a 'large hall', with walls decorated with 'pictures of the Biblical episodes in the story of the Cross', local children would gather at 8 a.m. for a 'short service of thanksgiving', eat bread and drink milk, and then go to school.[15] Such manifestations of engagement with religion might have represented a vague and partial religious commitment, as some contemporaries feared, or, alternatively, a vibrant popular religion at least partly outside the formal auspices of church or chapel services and membership identified by later historians.[16] The result in either case was that a sizeable proportion of English children, whether or not they or their parents actually attended church, were socialised into Christian ideas, symbols, and rituals during this period.

Claims about England being a 'Christian' nation also tapped into a broader 'interrelationship between political attitudes, ecclesiastical allegiances and cultural traditions'.[17] Christianity, and specifically Protestantism, was viewed as

the basis of English political and legal institutions, and associational culture, and featured as a recognisable symbol of Englishness within film and poetry.[18] Churches aimed to act in the social and political spheres as agents of the common Christianity upon which the national community was founded. At the start of the period covered by this book, denominations battled over the form this intervention should take, in the educational sphere, as will be discussed later, and also on other issues such as the need for an established church.[19] Yet assumptions that duty to God required activism in local and national politics and in voluntary work, in order to help those in need and combat vice and sin, crossed denominational lines. By the interwar years, Grimley suggests, the decline in Nonconformity as an oppositional political force linked to a single party allowed a narrative of common Protestantism to develop, which could underpin ecumenical activity in a number of spheres. Christian commentators thus emphasised elements of shared religious traditions, such as the English Bible, and a tradition of English tolerance which allowed the voluntarism of Nonconformity to thrive alongside the religion of the State. These were invoked as an inspiration to combine in response to challenges within English society (the National Strike, the Great Depression, and the Abdication Crisis to name a few), and as the 1930s progressed, also against the secular totalitarian ideologies that were gaining hold overseas. The Anglican Church, in particular, with its links to the State at many levels, was able to emphasise such a common narrative, but also to present itself as the institution uniquely able to lead and unite the people in varied sociopolitical spheres.[20]

A rhetoric of Christianity being integral to English national identity and culture became increasingly prominent during the 1930s,[21] and was strengthened further during the early 1940s under wartime conditions. Christianity was frequently presented as a force for unity in the face of totalitarian threat, a common source of spiritual strength and inspiration in difficult times. A variant of providentialism pervaded wartime texts, whereby allied successes were attributed to the action of the Divine will, and also the ability that the English possessed to respond to divine guidance. The church as a symbol of Englishness appeared so frequently in popular literature, photography and film that it became something of a cliché. For secularist commentators, the repeated references to Christian civilisation over the airwaves excluded thousands of non-Christians throughout the British Empire who were fighting for the allied cause. Yet intellectuals who professed no clear Christian faith themselves apparently saw no problem in using metaphors of Christian faith, crusade, religion and divinity when

discussing the condition and needs of English society.[22] All this points to a complicated relationship between a cultural script of Christian, or at least religious, endeavour, and individuals' religious views and practices at this time. Mass Observation suggested, on the basis of 1940s survey data, that there were relatively few who were very religious, and very few who were not religious at all (religion, nearly always, meaning Christianity). The majority exhibited a 'broad and uninterested tolerance' of religion, deeming it unthreatening to anyone but believers, and useful in maintaining discipline.[23] For many in this central category being religious was not necessarily linked to church-going, or to the formal doctrinal beliefs of different denominations. Instead, it was favoured as an effective moral framework through which the young could be trained to behave well, partly because most people had experienced no alternative in their own upbringing and education.[24]

Secularism

Not everyone accepted the notion that Christianity provided the foundations of individual morality and a more diffuse 'Englishness'. Throughout the period commentators pointed to an unquantified, and probably unquantifiable, portion of the population who were agnostic or atheist, or simply not interested in religion. The perceived lack of religious engagement among the urban poor has already been noted. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards contemporaries also identified what was variously labelled a 'crisis of faith', or 'honest doubt', amongst the educated middle class and elite, linked to modernist biblical criticism, evolutionary Biology and allied intellectual developments (though some, Timothy Larsen notes, after their experience of doubt, 'returned to the Christian faith').[25] An increasingly secular ethic of middle-class public service was also apparent from the mid-nineteenth century; Beatrice Webb suggested that for many the impulse for their activism transferred 'from God to man'.[26] By the 1920s, it was common for public figures to make no attempt to hide their agnostic or atheist views. Examples include scholars (Gilbert Murray, Bertrand Russell, and G. M. Trevelyan), novelists (Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, and E. M. Forster), literary pundits (George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells) and politicians (H. A. L. Fisher, R. B. Haldane).[27] Beyond these examples of individual non-believers, a plethora of organisations, collectively known as 'organised freethought',[28] sought to offer non-Christians an alternative associational, intellectual and, in some cases, spiritual life to that offered by the Christian churches. They were united by

the negative assumption that supernatural religion was erroneous, and by the positive belief in the power of men to shape their world and determine their futures. But they differed in terms of their clientele and their attitudes to and relationship with organised religion.[29] These groups sparked a strong public reaction, often negative, out of proportion to their size, and had an impact on public and intellectual debate outside the small circle of members. This was true in particular of the Secularists, Positivists and the Ethical Movement.

Secularism was the first of these movements to emerge on British soil in the 1840s. It was organisationally and ideologically rooted in Owenite radicalism, and activists, frequently from a skilled artisan background, sought to expose and challenge the intellectual faults of Christianity and the exclusion of non-Christians from full social rights.[30] Many Secularists, Susan Budd suggests, had rejected orthodox beliefs on intellectual grounds, and on an ethic based on personal autonomy and liberty; this might explain the dominance of autodidact approaches to learning and rationalist individualism in Secularist culture.[31] The NSS was founded in 1866 and reached a peak of about 3792 paid-up members in 1884—the figures are a little uncertain—at the height of Charles Bradlaugh's campaigns to take up a seat in Parliament without swearing a biblical oath. Thereafter, the numbers declined steadily to an estimated 700 in 1948.[32] Local branches were established throughout England, but they were concentrated in London and the urban conurbations of the Midlands, North West and North East.[33] Some of these lasted for less than three years, others, like Leicester for considerably longer (from 1851, with only a few years interruption, to the present day). Indeed, as Leicester demonstrates, local branches could develop their own distinctive traditions and cultures, and could buck national trends in terms of membership and their attitudes towards, and relationships with, local Christians.[34] Beyond the immediate membership of these societies, leading Secularists attained a wider intellectual and cultural influence. Michael Rechtenwald notes that in the mid-eighteenth century George Jacob Holyoake forged connections with 'middle-class radicals and budding scientific naturalists', including Thomas Huxley, Herbert Spencer, and John Tyndall. Holyoake's respectable version of secularism was to serve as a source for the scientific naturalists' religious views, which Huxley was later to label as 'agnosticism'. Bradlaugh's hard-line atheism and public advocacy of population control undoubtedly alienated some would-be fellow travellers or allies, but his fight to enter Parliament stimulated wider public debate on issues of religious tests and oaths.[35]

The Positivist Political and Social Union was founded in London in 1867. A 'specific, compact community with a marked religious bent', it was one of a number of bodies founded internationally but retaining links with the parent body in France. Positivism was a complete and precise system of social and historical thought, based on the 'the definite dogmas and formulae of Comte'.[36] Positivists in England devised a clear political programme of support for trade unions and a critique of aggressive imperial subjugation. Furthermore, through Comte's Religion of Humanity, they offered ritual and worship and an alternative belief system to the mainly middle-class professional group who attended its meetings.[37] Positivism was demanding for its adherents, requiring careful study of Comte's writings, an understanding of numerous 'technical terms', and a commitment to moral leadership within and beyond the Positivist community. Official lists suggest a very small cohort of formal members, with a peak of not much more than 200 during the 1890s.[38] Even among this small number, however, there was a tension between those who wanted to emphasise 'the spread of Positivist philosophy & sociology' and those who wanted to emphasise the ritualistic elements attached to the Religion of Humanity, reflecting divisions in France. There was a schism between the two groupings in 1877–8, the ritualists led by Richard Congreve settling at Chapel Street and the non-ritualists led by Frederic Harrison at Newton Hall. Harrison's description of the former group as an 'obscure sect mumbling Catholic rites in a sordid hole' conveys a sense of the bitter feelings involved in the schism.[39] The split body recombined in 1916 based at Chapel Street, in no small part owing to the pressures of declining membership and finances. Chapel Street headquarters closed altogether in 1934, leaving an informal committee administering the remaining funds as the only London-based remnant of Positivist organisation. 'The few surviving members', long-term activist Professor Cecil Desch argued, had been 'content to preach Comtism, ignoring all that has happened since 1857'. Positivist thought, however, continued to inspire adherents beyond this date, and some regional centres, such as the Church of Humanity in Liverpool, lasted until after the Second World War.[40]

Notwithstanding its small organisation base, Positivism, according to T. R. Wright, achieved a wide cultural and intellectual influence, through the writings of prominent sympathisers who were interested in Comte's ideas, even if they did not subscribe to all of them. These included authors (George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, and George Gissing) and academics (Patrick Geddes and Gilbert Murray).[41] Murray, for example, stopped short of full

commitment to Comtean doctrine, but found in Positivism 'an escape from cruel superstition and at the same time a fairly clear explanation and justification of the moral law and the ultimate duty of man'. In his youth he had occasionally attended Richard Congreve's Sunday services with his aunt, and he was exposed to Comte via his school and university friend Francis Sidney Marvin. He subscribed to and occasionally contributed to *Positivist Review*, appreciating the manner in which important subjects were 'religiously and frankly treated by thinkers . . . free from superstition'.[42] Beyond such close sympathisers, a wider circle of social reformers, including Sidney and Beatrice Webb and Shena Simon, were drawn to the rhetoric of a 'Religion of Humanity'. However, they were not involved with organised Positivism and were far from seeing themselves as disciples of Comte.[43]

The Ethical Movement, which emerged in London in the late 1880s, also attracted an educated middle-class clientele and, more than Secularists and Positivists, a female one too. Modelled on the New York Society for Ethical Culture inaugurated by Felix Adler in 1876, but also emerging out of the liberal theism of South Place chapel in London, the Ethical Movement incorporated elements of philosophical idealism, the transcendentalism of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and social activism. Many members were left-leaning in their politics. But no clear political programme was devised other than requiring a certain economic standard to ensure the full moral development of all citizens; the Movement, aiming to include all under the 'Ethical Ideal', wanted to avoid alienating potential sympathisers.[44] There was no formal national body but, instead, a loose umbrella organisation, the Union of Ethical Societies (UES, later Ethical Union), founded in 1896, to which individual societies could affiliate. 46 of 74 ethical societies founded between 1893 and 1927 did so, and were joined by other non-Christian groups such as Labour Churches and Socialist Sunday Schools. Membership peaked at 2000 in 1912, before starting to decline during the First World War. Attendance at meetings could considerably exceed numbers of full members. South Place was prominent among those that did not affiliate to the UES, and followed a different trajectory in its membership, with an increase in the ten years preceding 1939.[45] English ethicists were connected with their counterparts in the USA and other European countries, through an International Union of Ethical Societies, established in 1896, which met in congress every few years.[46] These international links proved significant in developments discussed in Chapter 5. Like the Positivists, the Ethical Movement attracted prominent sympathisers, including Murray, who gave the 1915 annual Moncure Conway Lecture at South Place and was elected

president of the Ethical Union in 1929.[47] And beyond overt sympathisers in England, activists claimed that a 'large' number agreed with the Movement's 'fundamental attitude to life and religion'.[48]

Positivists and ethicists aimed to work with Christians and to build on the best of Christianity, alongside other religions, but to offer what they saw as a superior spiritual alternative. In this aim they fitted within a broader early-twentieth-century trend that also encompassed theosophy and ideas of a spiritual afterlife. 'Theology' (belief in a supernatural being) would be superseded by different and more inclusive forms of 'religion', the Religion of Humanity for Positivists and for ethicists the Ethical Ideal. These would build on, and incorporate, older religious forms.[49] In order to attend to members' spiritual needs, Positivists and ethicists devised forms of worship, usually with music of some form (often hymn singing), and a discourse. Some groups, such as Stanton Coit's ethical church in Bayswater, London, and the Churches of Humanity in London, Newcastle, and Liverpool, developed elaborate rituals. Other Positivists and ethicists preferred simpler forms of observance.[50]

Attempts to define 'religion' are peppered liberally through Positivist and ethicist texts. From a Positivist perspective, Marvin, paraphrasing Frederic Harrison, suggested 'a state of general harmony, within and without, between man and his fellows, between man and the earth'. F. J. Gould aimed at a definition that would suit all freethinkers and traditional theological faiths: 'religion is Recognition of the claims of the Larger Life, and continual Service of it'. 'Religion' appeared in the statements of aims of a number of ethical societies. For the London Ethical Society in the late 1880s it was 'the purification and elevation of the ideal of Human Life', for the West London Ethical Society in 1901 'allegiance to an object to which supreme devotion must be regarded as due' and for the Ethical Union in 1920 'the love of goodness and its fulfilment in the life of the world'.[51] In these definitions, awe, wonder, communal experience, and devotion to an ideal above the individual emerge as important elements, though they are phrased in various ways. This identification of religion not with belief in a God or an afterlife, but instead with a common system of beliefs and symbols, can also be seen in contemporary developments such as the 'religion of socialism' and the Labour Church.[52] But perspectives could vary within as well as between secularist groupings. Within the Ethical Movement, Coit saw religion as a force of social cohesion, emphasising a 'bond of religious union' associated with 'devotion to the good'. For others, the personal solace that their 'religion' provided was more important.[53] And Positivists and ethicists were

quick to point out where their religious conceptions diverged. Positivists identified as their object of devotion the 'Great Being' of Humanity, incorporating all people past and present. The Religion of Humanity, for H. Gordon Jones, was grounded in a living, human, community, whereas the Ethical Ideal lacked such grounding and was, instead, 'cosmic', ethereal and abstract. However, for Professor J. H. Muirhead, one of the idealist philosophers of London Ethical Society, it was Positivists who were missing out. By not looking beyond humanity, they failed to recognise that humans were part of a larger 'universe of greatness, beauty, power, and goodness'.[54]

Such notions of religion without theology were, for many Secularists, 'useless or misleading', to use Sidney Gimson's words.[55] Secular rationalism was, in this view, incompatible with religion as a mode of thought and a guide to behaviour.[56] No transcendent or sacred category of communal experience was necessary. Secularists, however, differed on how far they would cooperate with or seek common ground with Christians in order to achieve particular goals. Of the most prominent nineteenth-century leaders, Holyoake advocated working with Christians in order to achieve desirable social goals. Bradlaugh resisted such cooperation, and suggested instead a focus on critiquing Christianity in Secularist propaganda campaigns. Their arguments continued to shape the responses of the movement nationally, and in local societies, into the twentieth century.[57]

All these groups, I suggest, were part of the range of 'partnerships, fraternities, groups, and congregations' constituting civil society. Civil society, José Harris has argued, sat between the family and local community and the national State. But it could be 'locally variable and culturally specific' in form and accommodating of different views of societal needs and how they should be achieved.[58] Within such a framework, secularists, at the local level, aimed to offer activities and welfare provision that shaped the lives of their members in concrete ways. Beyond this, they intended to shape public opinion and inform local and national government policy through their activity both on the platform and in print. Positivists backed trade unions in the 1870s, at the time a controversial stance. They attacked British imperialism and supported self-determinacy among subjugated peoples in the *Positivist Review*. They stopped short, however, of supporting violence as a means of achieving workers' and subjugated peoples' rights, as this could threaten the social unity and order that were so central to Comtean doctrine. Positivists also critiqued campaigns for women's suffrage as challenging Comte's

suggestion that women should be long-term educators of their children in the home. Some female Positivists, however, were arguing by the 1920s that any 'artificial apportioning to women of their "sphere"' should be abandoned.[59] The NSS campaigned against Christian dominance of ideas and institutions on a number of fronts, including membership of Parliament, blasphemy laws, church support for military action in the South African War, and, of course, schooling.[60] There were a few prominent female NSS activists and lecturers, including Harriet Law and Annie Besant, who attained fame and notoriety beyond Secularist circles. They operated, however, in an organisation 'dominated by men at every level'. The NSS leadership counselled against the organisation taking an official position on women's political and legal advancement, or on birth control, leaving these as matters for the consciences of individual members.[61] Ethical Movement members and sympathisers pronounced on numerous matters of social policy through pamphlets, books, speeches, and, after 1898, the pages of *Ethical World*, which was, Ian MacKillop suggests, 'militant in the comprehensiveness of its analysis … there were no matters which could not be brought to the bar of ethics'. But themes of women, empire and education were dominant and were returned to again and again. There was support for women's suffrage, not as a single issue but as an integral part of women's role in family and community life. In common with the other secularist bodies, the Ethical Movement contributed to a wider left-wing critique of aggressive imperial aggrandisement, though not necessarily of the idea of empire itself which, some ethicists argued, could operate benevolently. A typical Secularist criticism of Christian dominance of education was supplemented with an emphasis on the importance of morality in schools; the importance of this distinction will become evident later.[62]

In these different ways, secularist groups intervened in questions of social import, aiming to attain an influence beyond the confines of their membership. An editorial comment in *Ethical World*, which could have applied to all the main freethought groups, noted 'almost endless opportunities … both on the platform and in the press for advocacy', but difficulty in finding activists who did not have other paid work or associational commitments.[63] Yet these other commitments could work to secularists' advantage, providing alternative channels of influence. As well as the secularist-shaped pressure groups like the Moral Instruction League (MIL), secularists worked with and through existing political institutions, as, for example, in the case of Gould with the Leicester School Board and Town Council discussed in Chapter 3. They also operated as individuals within larger voluntary

associations to promote their own secular approach (as Gould and Marvin did within the League of Nations Union (LNU)). Through these various means, secularists aimed, over the long term, to shape English society in their own image and to extend the benefits of their ideas and programmes to all. Their intent was, no less than it was for Christians, a colonising one. The power and reach of secularism can be assessed through such interventions in public discourse, and their reception. The long-term educational campaigns discussed in this book may not have achieved all that activists desired, but they had some impact on public policy and teachers' professional practice, and on ongoing debates.

Secularists in the first half of the twentieth century valued these somewhat diffuse and nebulous educational and societal influences, as well as more traditional organisational markers of membership and branches. The NSS Executive, for example, suggested in 1927 that the ideas it stood for were 'gaining a hold on the public mind', and in 1941 claimed that its influence should not be measured in numbers but in its 'hastening a little the onward march of humanity'.[64] This interpretation differs somewhat with John Eros' arguments about secularist growth and decline. In the mid to late nineteenth century, he suggests, secularist movements acted as 'agents furnishing surrogates of religion and as builders of human communities', at a time when a clash between traditional religion and a 'scientific world view' became a 'political issue'. This function was, however, 'transitory', and by the early twentieth century the claims of modern socialism and nationalism to be the basis of new communities were proving more attractive.[65] I suggest, instead, that secularist bodies' wider social influence was not just about building communities, but was considerably more diffuse and complex in nature. This influence operated through dialogue with Christian and other political and ideological claims, and through collaboration with a range of different organisations. Thus understood, secularists' influence lasted considerably longer than Eros claims.

Interventions into wider social matters were underpinned by ideas about desirable moral choices and behaviour, and how these could be developed. The key secularist groupings shared a common view of morality as something separate from a God or other 'supernatural' belief, shaping individual behaviour but determined according to societal needs. Yet the emphases of the main groups differed. The Secularist ethical code deemed individuals responsible for the world and its well-being. It was to be independent of any notion of a God and future heavenly reward, and instead based on the needs of society in the present, with those needs determined and analysed by

observation, reason and discussion.[66] For Charles Watts, writing in 1900, all should 'do what is possible to alleviate human woe and so assist human progress'. Charles Gorham in 1902 argued that Secularist morality should have as its basis 'the rational nature of man', as its object 'the benefit of the community', and as its sanction 'experience'. It would lay stress on the intellect, and would be modified in the light of new knowledge. This he contrasted with 'Theistic' morality, which was immutable, relied on supernatural authority, and emphasised 'emotional feeling'.[67] Yet emotions could not be dismissed altogether; reason, George Foote suggested, could show 'how to reach our object' but it was feeling that decided 'what object we try to reach'.[68] For the small group of English Positivists, following the dictates of Comte, the ultimate aim of morality was the service of Humanity (capitalised to emphasise its significance). The needs and freedom of the individual were of less importance. Moreover, notwithstanding a framework of Comtean laws of unity and progress, Humanity evolved over time. So morality was context-sensitive, 'responsive to the conditions of time and place', 'characteristic of mankind in its endless evolution', and, by implication, subject to change.[69]

The very title of the 'Ethical Movement' indicates just how central morality was to its ideas and activities. Promoting the study of morality, the pursuit of the 'moral life' and emphasising ethical elements of everyday existence are common threads in the statements of aims produced by different ethical societies.[70] Ethicists proposed a universal and synoptic morality, international in its scope, resting on purely 'human' sanctions, and 'apart from theological and metaphysical considerations'. This would prove sufficient for a rule of life, as a core around which individuals of all faiths or none could combine and cooperate. Such a vision depended on the premise that ethics could be deemed somehow independent of religious or political contexts. However, even within the Ethical Movement, there were different views as to how far morality was an individual or a social matter. At the First International Moral Education Congress in 1908, Coit emphasised the 'organic spiritual unity of human beings in society' and the influence of society's 'corporate life and thought'. Professor Muirhead, however, deemed the 'inward side of the moral life' an essential component of a 'complete morality'.[71]

While the major secularist groups emphasised their differences, they were also capable of common action, and the boundaries between them were permeable. Key activists from the three groups lectured and wrote for the others. Gould remained a long-term member, and an active one, of all three,

working with different groupings to achieve his wider goals. *Ethical World* carried regular advertisements for events run by the other bodies. Coit called for the various freethought groups to federate under the UES. They would not lose their individuality, he claimed, but combining would give them 'new life and vitality' and, given their limited size and funds, would enable a level of public impact greater than that possible for any group acting on its own. Positivists and Secularists who he approached in this vein, however, resisted his overtures.[72] Such resistance did not preclude joint activity. Positivists and ethicists, in particular, overlapped in membership, and, although they frequently noted their differences in print, they held joint meetings on an approximately annual basis from the 1890s and, later, joined together in ventures such as the Conference of Modern religious thinkers in the 1920s.[73] The links with Secularists were less close. But in 1900 *Ethical World* expressed sympathy with the NSS's predicament when it had to move from its London premises because it was deemed an undesirable co-tenant by others renting space in the same building; 'Christian persecution has not ceased to be'. Shared freethought roots and an ongoing challenge of Christian dominance in many spheres were thus emphasised.[74] Boundaries were also permeable between these groups and radical Christians, particularly Unitarians and others calling themselves 'modernists'. Renegade Unitarians founded the Labour Church and LSS, and South Place Ethical Society was for many years a congregation of 'advanced' Unitarians before it moved towards a clearly ethicist basis. The Ethical Movement, in particular, attracted a number of ex-Unitarians, and others left the movement to become Unitarians (Harrold Johnson, as Chapter 4 will show, did both; he started as a Unitarian preacher, then worked for the Ethical Movement for about 15 years before returning to the Unitarian fold).[75] Such movement fits within E. R. Wickham's description of a wider blurring of boundaries between the secular and the religious in early twentieth-century England. There were, he suggests, no 'sharp lines between fidelity and infidelity'. The secular-minded exhibited a 'Christian colouration', and practising Christians demonstrated 'secular characteristics'.[76]

Given these blurred boundaries, it is unsurprising that in the early twentieth century secularists of different persuasions developed their own narratives of growth and decline, which were tied up with narratives of the growth and decline of the Christian religion. They referred frequently to the decline of Christianity in numbers and also in terms of ideological coherence and influence. This was welcomed as ushering in a better

world, free from theological superstition, allowing the flourishing of a society shaped by human reason. For both ethicists and Positivists, the 'death' of Christianity, to use Malcolm Quin's formulation, allowed alternative and superior religious forms to emerge.[77] Such arguments were not unproblematic, however. There was a degree of wishful thinking in such claims, as suggested by the discussion earlier in this chapter. And if there was a declining interest in Christianity, this could, one Positivist noted in 1925, represent a declining interest in religious and philosophical matters more generally, which would also be detrimental to the secularist cause.[78] Yet, at the same time, secularists highlighted the continued dominance of Christian lobbies, as exemplified in the NSS's need to move premises. In the educational sphere, too, secularists argued that their freedom of choice on matters of religion would be compromised if advocates of compulsory religious education in schools in the early 1940s got their way.[79] Whether convinced of the decline or the power of Christianity, many were, by the 1920s, concerned with the need to strengthen their own bodies. Some advocated a broadening of propaganda as the way to achieve organisational growth, but this was not a solution that all were happy with. Some NSS members, in the tradition of Bradlaugh, resisted watering down the Secularist message. And Harrison suggested of Positivism that 'when it passed into party politics & the emotions of the half-educated, it could not be permanent'. Ethicists debated such points as they pertained to moral instruction in schools; this will become apparent in later chapters.[80] Ultimately, secularists were ambivalent about the nature of the trends of growth and decline of the religious and the secular that they identified, the impact of the identified trends on their own cause, and the best way to respond.

Agnostic or atheist individuals outside these groupings might not have had the same associational life or organisational voice, but they similarly drew on their views on religion in their attempts to influence public policy. They often had a level of public prominence rare amongst activists in secularist groups, whether through titles, literary reputation, political involvement, or wealth. They could, like Murray, act in concord with or on behalf of secularist bodies. Or they could, like the Association for Education in Citizenship (AEC) founders Ernest Simon and Eva Hubback, pursue their agnostic or, to use their own phrase, 'humanist' agendas without establishing any such links. Such individuals were, it seems, less interested in challenging Christian dominance in social and educational spheres than in ensuring a space for all alternatives, including their own. Their approach received short shrift from within organised freethought.

One activist in the 1940s, for example, criticised the 'nice individualists' who were unwilling to 'join with others' and give 'public expression to their ideas'.[81] Yet Simon and Hubback, it appears, deemed their goal of educating democratic citizens more important than defining a single set of ideological underpinnings, Christian or humanist, and they focused their propaganda accordingly. They also did speak out publicly on social matters, as Chapter 7 will demonstrate, but using other networks and means.

Education

Church involvement in education in England can be dated back many centuries, at least for the minority who were educated through monasteries, and the earliest grammar schools (established from the sixth century). On a small scale from about 1600 and on a much larger scale after 1800, through the British Society for Nonconformists and the Anglican National Society, churches also built, funded and ran elementary schools for the masses. As State control of elementary education increased during the nineteenth century, churches sought to influence emerging mechanisms of regulation and inspection whilst retaining their long-standing influence on building, funding, and curriculum. Debates over educational legislation in Parliament, and School Board/Education Committee elections, were opportunities for the different churches to influence educational policy-making nationally and locally, and were flashpoints for conflicts. The different denominations fought to achieve what they deemed appropriate Christian influence within elementary schools. Disagreements focused particularly on the form of religious instruction. Anglicans argued for a confessional approach centred on the Catechism, and Nonconformists for Bible reading without denominational gloss.[82] Roman Catholics demanded, as one commentator put it, that in schools for Catholic children 'the teachers, the teaching, and the atmosphere' should all be Catholic.[83] This picture is complicated further by the intradenominational differences highlighted by Sacks.[84]

In the day-to-day life of elementary schools, by the turn of the twentieth century, Christian influences were filtered through the religious instruction lesson, and also through the texts read and activities undertaken throughout the school day. In voluntary (Church) schools there was, typically, regular contact with the local church and its representatives, through clergy visiting the school or through pupils visiting the church.[85] Even in the board school system it was not uncommon to find clergy or other church workers closely

involved in regular school life. They were members of School Boards and school management committees. They interviewed staff, gave religious instruction and distributed certificates at prize-giving days. They secured access to school rooms for confirmation candidates and Sunday Schools.[86] On occasion, school visits by clergy or church services for pupils could be used as opportunities to teach pupils about particular moral virtues, such as resisting temptation and kindness to children, with explicit links to Christian doctrine.[87] Religious influences in Catholic schools were, it seems, even more pervasive. Ex-pupils describe a teaching staff recruited from religious orders, and physical surroundings dominated by statues and other Catholic iconography. Assemblies, prayers, Catechism, and religious instruction lessons, taken together, meant exposure to Catholic religious teaching several times within a school day.[88]

Secondary schools were typically subject to considerably less central government control than elementary schools at this time, and were frequently privately funded. Here, the influence of Christian denominations can be seen in schools' religious foundations, most often Anglican, the appointment of clergymen among headmasters, the almost ubiquitous school chapel, and regular assemblies and prayers.[89] The religious atmosphere of the school could encompass the refined Anglican Christian community of Rugby School following the traditions established by Thomas Arnold and also the broad, inclusive and internationalist Christianity promoted at Badminton School, where a dual-use chapel and school hall was used as a space for visitors of other faiths.[90] Scripture lessons were, apparently, common, though they could suffer from being assigned to teachers who lacked training in the subject, and, in the upper forms, from examination pressures diverting attention to other subjects.[91]

It was claimed, repeatedly, in educational policy debates from the 1870s to the 1940s, that religious instruction in schools alone could provide the Christian foundations necessary for appropriate behaviour among the citizens of the future. A widespread perception that Christian influences were absent from poor homes and communities , whatever the empirical data that we now have on religious observance and belief in the early twentieth century suggests, has already been noted. This was accompanied by a perception, also not always accurate, that elementary schools provided mainly for the poor. As a consequence, great importance was attached to the religious training offered by schools, and the form that it should take; this helps explains the intensity of conflicts over the 'religious issue' at the turn of the twentieth century.[92] In the 1920s and 1930s, however, most

denominations, as an example of broader ecumenical trends, worked together to construct revised syllabuses of religious instruction that would be appropriate for all Christians. Roman Catholics were, typically, less enthusiastic. Such activity has been viewed as evidence of an increasingly professional religious education community, who would bury differences in order to combine resources and expertise, devising educationally and developmentally appropriate material, and aiming to improve teachers' practice.[93] Those involved in this community could, moreover, present the high-quality universal religious education they were developing as the cure for social evils and a stimulus for individual improvement and social unity, in what was a fundamentally Christian country. In this way, they tapped into broader discourses of a Christian national character.[94] And, given the context of plans to extend secondary education provision which developed during in the interwar years, their proposals were increasingly presented as applicable to secondary as well as elementary schools. There was not, however, a complete cessation of hostilities, and tensions could flare up from time to time, particularly when new legislation was discussed. These occurrences were typically presented by educational journalists as retrogressive, and a brake on educational progress.[95]

Yet developments within schooling up to and during the early twentieth century could also challenge the prominence of Christianity. The central government assumed more responsibility for funding, overseeing and administering elementary educational provision through the 1862 Revised Code, the 1870 Education Act and subsequent legislation. This had the potential to limit the power and influence of religious bodies. Such developments, for William Marsden, constituted part of a 'secularisation process' in education, involving an 'unleashing of the meritocracy' and a challenge to an older, less flexible, social order tied up with Christian belief and affiliation. They led, for Stephen Platten, to the established church becoming, by the early twentieth century, 'a very junior partner in the nation's schools'. Peter Gordon and Dennis Lawton highlight, instead, a 'secularisation of the curriculum', attempts to introduce moral instruction at the turn of the twentieth century being an example of this tendency.[96] The religious clauses of major education legislation might have received considerable attention, at least up to 1944, but this was disproportionate to the amount of time devoted to religious instruction and observance during the school day (possibly with the exception of Catholic schools). As an increasing number of additional subjects were added to school timetables, both elementary and secondary, there was, *de facto*, less time to devote to teaching religion. Even advocates of Christian teaching acknowledged that

in practice it was not always a priority. Religious instruction lessons could be omitted owing to pressure to focus elsewhere under the inspection and examinations regimes pertaining to elementary and secondary schools respectively.[97]

The active shaping of the education of English citizens was a goal for secularists just as much as it was for their Christian counterparts. They offered educational provision for their own adult members, comprising lectures, classes, discussion groups, and libraries for self-directed reading. Some activists also became involved in the educational provision for adults organised by other bodies, such as the Workers' Educational Association, and the settlements established to provide education and rational recreation in poor urban districts.[98] For children, the freethought organisations recognised the potential instructional and moral benefits of the Sunday School, utilised by Christians for such purposes on a massive scale from the late 1700s. Secularist Sunday Schools were derived from their Owenite predecessors. They combined the development of 'useful knowledge' (hence the scientific veneer of the curriculum) with an emphasis on morality; in fact, there was tension at times over the proper balance to be attained between these elements. But morality was considered important enough for prominent Secularists to produce materials like secular hymn books and collections of moral tales for use in the movement's Sunday Schools.[99] The Sunday Schools of the Ethical Movement provided an immediate precedent for both the work of Gould in Leicester and also that of the MIL. Not all ethical societies established Sunday Schools, with the London Ethical Society preferring philosophical discussion groups for adults. But Sunday Schools were a prominent part of the 'missionary activity' of the East London Ethical Society, and others in poor areas. Moral instruction was a central component of the ethical Sunday School curriculum. The use of these Sunday Schools as spaces to experiment with techniques and materials which were then proposed as suitable for elementary schools will be discussed in the following chapters. Positivists, by and large, do not appear to have organised their own Sunday Schools, with the exception of Gould's short-lived group in Leicester between 1908 and 1910. Chapel Street did, however, open its own elementary school in 1872, an establishment which lasted for five years.[100]

Secularists were also keen to influence mainstream schooling. They sought places on School Boards and Local Education Authorities (LEAs). The 'plumping' system used at School Board elections, whereby all votes could be assigned to a single candidate, enabled minorities, including

secularists, to attain positions of some influence in the local community. NSS candidates were put forward and elected from the early 1870s onwards, typically on a platform of a purely secular education. With only one or two members on most boards, however, and, typically, a lack of money at a time when money mattered in local politics, the majority had little power or influence. LEAs after 1902 allowed for comparable local representation, but there were fewer of them than there had been School Boards. So Gould's successes, albeit limited, in Leicester, discussed in Chapter 3, were more than many of his counterparts achieved. A further strategy which emerged towards the turn of the twentieth century was for secularists to combine into pressure groups, along with other broadly radical organisational and political groupings, in an attempt to influence government policy, both locally and nationally, and teaching in schools. The MIL and Secular Education League, formed in 1897 and 1907 respectively, are examples of such groups in which secularists were dominant.[101] In the interwar years secularists became involved in other major pressure groups such as the LNU, through which they were able to promote their distinctive perspective as part of a larger offer. Marvin and Gould sought, through this body, to influence the teaching in schools in order to bring it closer to their Positivist ideas of social progress and human unity. Beyond this, of course, or in some cases alongside pressure group involvement, the professional roles of a number of secularists as classroom teachers or inspectors had the potential to influence the day-to-day practice in schools, unfortunately in subtle and imperceptible ways that it is almost impossible to trace.

Challenging the dominance of organised religion, in the educational sphere as in others, was a key goal for secularists involved in local educational politics or pressure group activity. But different secularists challenged this dominance in different ways. Typically, NSS activists wanted any form of 'religion' or sacred text such as the Bible out of the picture altogether. Religious observance and ideas should, they suggested, be a private matter, and not supported by State funding in schools. There were exceptions, like Arthur Moss, who argued whilst on the London School Board that the children of freethinkers needed to know something about what their parents were seeking to challenge.[102] But for most Secularists, core arguments against any Christian influences in State-funded and administered education remained remarkably consistent over time, with an emphasis on the disadvantage to secularist ideals and interests. Ecumenical efforts to develop religious instruction syllabuses in the interwar years, for instance, were challenged because 'Christian interests only' were considered.[103] Ethicists and Positivists also challenged undue Christian

dominance in the governance and content of schooling. But they would work together with Christians in order to promote common ideals which would include people of any or no theological faith. The AEC's founders, operating outside these secularist groups, instead attempted to appeal to all by providing both 'humanist' and 'religious' approaches to education for citizenship.

Secularist educators aimed to add to the existing repertoire of efforts to form citizens in schools. The desire to improve on what was already going on was partly a case of not wanting organised religion dominating the field. The arguments put forward against religious instruction being an effective or adequate approach to the moral formation of pupils, with an emphasis on their duties as future citizens, will be rehearsed in subsequent chapters. And the more subtle Christian influences in other approaches from teaching texts to Boy Scouts have been noted in the Introduction. But it was also felt that the existing repertoire was insufficient on intellectual and pedagogical grounds. Secularists argued that religious instruction, existing timetabled lessons, especially history, organised games, special occasions like Empire Day, extra-curricular activities, or the formative influence of the general 'character' or 'tone' of the school and day-to-day interactions within school community, individually or combined, would not achieve the focus or the range required. Direct 'moral' or 'civic' instruction of some form, it was argued, was needed. Or, in the case of Marvin's approach to history teaching and the AEC's recommended reformulation of civics and social science, the content and teaching of existing subjects had to be slanted in a new way in order to create citizens, of the world and of a democracy respectively. So some of the proposals outlined in this book were challenged not only because of the stance on religion which underpinned them. They could introduce new, potentially controversial, material into the classroom, which teachers might not have been used to dealing with. Secularists' suggestions for prescribed content and instructional approaches, seemingly, challenged widespread practice in schools, Board of Education traditions, and new theories of pedagogy and child psychology. All of these emphasised indirect more than direct approaches, and fashionable educational theories also stressed self-expression on the part of the child. Secularist proposals, then, were resisted not only on religious grounds, but also because they challenged both new educational wisdom and the status quo.

Conclusion

In the first half of the twentieth century, religious and secularist ideas and organisations featured in English life in complex, varied and dynamic ways. The discussion in this chapter draws, necessarily selectively, on the vast historiography relating to Christianity and its place in society, touching on organisational observance, individual beliefs and broader cultural narratives. Generally, my interpretation here supports arguments in recent scholarship about the continued dominance of Christian organisations and ideas in early twentieth-century England, challenging earlier narratives of secularisation. I also argue, however, that contemporaries varied in their understanding of what an apparently widespread support for retaining Christian observance and ideals actually meant; serious commitment and a powerful cultural script, legal and institutional bias in favour of Christians above other groups, or apathy and an absence of alternatives. I also note some challenges. Secularist organisations aimed to provide ideological and associational alternatives to organised Christianity for non-believers. More broadly, they aimed to promote the moral improvement of individuals and societal reform. And individual agnostics or atheists could pursue such aims outside of an organisational framework. Finally, I have aimed to discuss the ways in which, and the extent to which, Christian and secularist ideas and organisations sought to shape educational endeavour, both within and beyond the school. Churches aimed to provide for what they deemed a proper education for children in schools. Sometimes they worked together; at other times they challenged each other, or were challenged by other educational priorities. Secularists attempted to do much the same, drawing on the educational repertoires of their own organisations, and on opportunities to influence policy and practice through municipal activism and pressure group activity. Their educational endeavours form an immediate context for what follows.

The case studies outlined in the following chapters can now be situated within a landscape of the religious and secular, which informed individual thought and activities, associational life within and outside organised Christianity, and broad scripts of 'English' culture and identity. The approaches to the teaching of morality and citizenship that secularists proposed, examined in the following chapters, were shaped both within and by this landscape. Secularists sought to influence policy-making at the national and local level, broader public opinion, and teachers in schools. Ideas were discussed, and proposals were developed and tested, through local, national and international

organisations and networks. In turn, the proposals encompassed citizenship in its local, national and international dimensions, and the moral codes that individuals were to draw on as members of these different, but overlapping, communities. Returning to the example of Gould in Leicester offered at the start of the chapter, the particular circumstances of schooling in the town, and of local municipal politics and radical associational life, as well as Gould's own biography, ideals, and networks, had a bearing on his educational activism there. This will be considered next.

Notes

1. *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 30 March 1901, Birmingham School Board Newspaper Cuttings Scrapbook December 1900–May 1901, SB/B/1/11/12, Birmingham Archives and Heritage Service.
2. M. L. Jacks (1939) *God in Education* (London: Rich & Cowan), pp. 5–7. Jacks (1894–1964) was Fellow and Dean of Wadham College 1919–22, Headmaster of Mill Hill School 1922–37 and Director of Oxford University Department of Education 1938–57.
3. Rev. Dymott, Letter to the Editor, *School Guardian*, 20 September 1902, 744–5.
4. 'The English Bible', *The Times*, 18 June 1938, p. 15.
5. Birmingham was, from 1874 until 1901, one of the very few School Boards not to have compulsory religious instruction lessons in its board schools.
6. B. Wilson (1966) *Religion in a Secular Society* (London: C. A. Watts) offers a classic statement.
7. O. Chadwick (1990) *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press); A. D. Gilbert (1980) *The Making of Post-Christian Britain* (London: Longman); H. McLeod (1974) *Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City* (London: Croom Helm); S. Bruce (2002) *God is Dead: Secularization in the West* (Oxford: Blackwell); S. Bruce (2011) *Secularization: In Defence of an Unfashionable Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
8. C. Brown (2009) *The Death of Christian Britain*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge); H. McLeod (2007) *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); H. McLeod and W. Ustof (eds) (2003) *The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe, 1750–2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Green acknowledges the significance of the 1960s, but suggests a weakening of the cultural and political significance of Christianity between 1920 and 1960. S. J. D. Green (2011) *The Passing of Protestant England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), especially Chapter 2.

9. J. C. D. Clark (2012) 'Secularization and Modernization: the Failure of a "Grand Narrative"', *Historical Journal*, 55:1, 161–94; J. Cox (2010) 'Towards Eliminating the Concept of Secularisation: a Progress Report' in C. Brown and M. Snape (eds) *Secularisation in the Christian World: Essays in Honour of Hugh McLeod* (London: Ashgate), pp. 13–26; J. Morris (2012) 'Secularization and Religious Experience: Arguments in the Historiography of Modern British Religion', *Historical Journal*, 55:1, 195–219; D. Nash (2004) 'Reconnecting Religion with Social and Cultural History: Secularization's Failure as a Master Narrative', *Cultural and Social History*, 1:3, 302–25; D. Nash (2013) *Christian Ideals in British Culture: Stories of Belief* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
10. Nash, *Christian Ideals*, pp. 3, 22; J. Seed (2014) '"Secular" and "Religious": Historical Perspectives', *Social History*, 39:1, 3–13.
11. For the complexity of available statistics see C. Field (2013) '"The Faith Society"? Quantifying Religious Belonging in Edwardian Britain, 1901–1914', *Journal of Religious History*, 37:1, 39–63.
12. On such trends, see R. Currie, L. Horsley, A. D. Gilbert (1977) *Churches and Churchgoers: Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles Since 1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press); Brown, *Death of Christian Britain*, Chapter 7; C. Brown (2006) *Religion and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Harlow: Pearson), pp. 25–36; and P. Brierley (2000) 'Religion' in A. H. Halsey and J. Webb (eds) *Twentieth Century British Social Trends* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press), pp. 650–74.
13. Brown, *Death of Christian Britain*, pp. 140–4; H. McLeod (1996) *Religion and Society in England, 1850–1914* (Basingstoke: Macmillan), pp. 73–82; S. Williams (1999) *Religious Belief and Popular Culture in Southwark, c.1880–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), Chapters 3–6. See also Mass Observation (1947) *Puzzled People: A Study in Popular Attitudes to Religion, Ethics, Progress and Politics*, 2009 edn (London: Faber & Faber).
14. K. Heasman (1964) 'The Medical Mission and the Care of the Sick Poor in Nineteenth-Century England', *The Historical Journal*, 7:2,

230–45; E. Ross (2010) 'Missionaries and Jews in Soho: "Strangers within Our Gates"', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 15:2, 226–38.

15. A. Harding, *My Apprenticeship to Crime*, Chapter 1, pp. 23–5, http://www.bishopsgate.org.uk/Library/Archives-Online/My-Apprenticeship-to-Crime/Chapters-1-10, date accessed 19 February 2016.
16. K. Robbins (1993) *History, Religion and Identity in Modern Britain* (London: Hambledon), p. 122; Mass Observation, *Puzzled People*, pp. 88–9, 139–44; Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*.
17. Robbins, *History, Religion and Identity*, p. 85.
18. B. Sacks (1961) *The Religious Issue in the State Schools of England and Wales, 1902–1914* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press), pp. 114–16, 124–5; Robbins, *History, Religion and Identity*, pp. 90–1; M. Grimley (2007) 'The Religion of Englishness: Puritanism, Providentialism and National Character', *Journal of British Studies*, 46:4, 884–906, pp. 888–90; J. Wolffe (1994) *God and Greater Britain: Religion and National Life in Britain and Ireland 1843–1945* (London: Routledge), pp. 123–212.
19. D. W. Bebbington (1982) *The Nonconformist Conscience* (London: George Allen & Unwin), Chapters 2 and 7; S. Koss (1975) *Nonconformity in Modern British Politics* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books), Chapters 1–6.
20. Grimley, 'Religion of Englishness', pp. 891–2, 897–900; M. Grimley (2004) *Citizenship, Community and the Church of England: Liberal Anglican Theories of the State Between the Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 13–16, 173–84. On ecumenical activity in the 1920s and 1930s more generally, see A. Hastings (2001) *A History of English Christianity 1920–2000* (London: SCM Press), pp. 208–20, 300–8 and on Nonconformity and its divided political allegiances in the interwar years see Robbins, *History, Religion and Identity*, pp. 149–60.
21. Hastings, *History of English Christianity*, p. 289.
22. Robbins, *History, Religion and Identity*, pp. 195–213; Grimley, 'Religion of Englishness', pp. 904, 885; S. Parker (2005) *Faith on the Home Front: Aspects of Church Life and Popular Religion in Birmingham 1939–1945* (Oxford and Bern: Peter Lang),

pp. 79–84; H. Brown, Letter to the Editor, *South Place Monthly Record (SPMR)*, June 1942, p. 14.

23. File Report (FR) 2017 'Report on Religious Instruction in Schools', pp. 9–10, SxMOA1/1/9/2/7; FR 1994 'Interim Report on Religious Instruction in Schools', January 1944, p. 84, SxMOA1/1/9/1/5, Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex (MOA).
24. FR 2017 'Report on Religious Instruction in Schools', pp. 9–10; FR 1994 'Interim Report on Religious Instruction in Schools', pp. 88–9.
25. McLeod, *Religion and Society in England*, pp. 179–96; T. Larsen (2006) *Crisis of Doubt: Honest Faith in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. vii.
26. B. Webb (1926) *My Apprenticeship*, 1979 edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p 143. See also S. Collini (2006) *Public Moralists: Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain 1850–1930*, reissued (Oxford: Oxford University Press); H. R. Murphy (1955) 'The Ethical Revolt against Christian Orthodoxy in Early Victorian England', *American Historical Review*, 60:4, 800–17.
27. Hastings, *History of English Christianity*, pp. 222–3.
28. W. S. Smith (1967) *The London Heretics, 1870–1914* (London: Constable) indicates the variety of organisations.
29. S. Budd (1977) *Varieties of Unbelief. Atheists and Agnostics in English Society, 1850–1960* (London: Heinemann), pp. 8–9.
30. For an overview, see E. Royle (1974) *Victorian Infidels: the Origins of the British Secularist Movement, 1791–1866* (Manchester: Manchester University Press); E. Royle (1980) *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans: Popular Freethought in Britain, 1866–1915* (Manchester: Manchester University Press); Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 10–123.
31. Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 12–13.
32. Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, p. 134; Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, p. 101.
33. Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, pp. 335, 337 identifies 58 groups in London and 202 groups elsewhere between 1866 and 1915.
34. On Leicester Secular Society, see D. Nash (1992) *Secularism, Art and Freedom* (Leicester: Leicester University Press).

35. M. Rechtenwald (2013) 'Secularism and the Culture of Nineteenth-Century Scientific Naturalism', *British Journal for the History of* Science, 46:2, 231–54, quote at p. 231; Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, pp. 23–32, 250–9.
36. W. Simon (1964) 'Auguste Comte's English Disciples', *Victorian Studies*, 8:2, 161–72, p. 161; F. Harrison to F. S. Marvin, 11 November 1893, MS.Eng.Lett.e.108, fols. 125–6, Papers of Francis Sidney Marvin (hereafter FSMP), Western Manuscripts, Bodleian Library, Oxford.
37. For an overview, see T. R. Wright (1986) *The Religion of Humanity: the Impact of Comtean Positivism on Victorian Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); J. E. McGee (1931) *A Crusade for Humanity: The History of Organised Positivism in England* (London: Watts & Co.); Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 190–99; Simon, 'Auguste Comte's English Disciples'; R. Harrison (1965) *Before the Socialists* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), pp. 251–342.
38. F. J. Gould, 'Positivist Propaganda', June 1919, Pamphlets and reports by F. J. Gould, LPS/4/3, London Positivist Society Papers (hereafter LPSP), British Library of Political and Economic Science (BLPES); Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 191, 198–9; Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, p. 5. (Membership figures relate to the London bodies only.)
39. Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, Chapter 3; Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 193–8; Simon, 'Auguste Comte's English Disciples', pp. 166–70. Quotation in F. Harrison to F. S. Marvin, 11 December 1911, MS.Eng.Lett.c.260, fols. 155–6, FSMP.
40. Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, pp. 240–60; Simon, 'Auguste Comte's English Disciples', pp. 170–2; C. Desch to F. S. Marvin, 14 January 1928, MS.Eng.Lett.d.264, fol. 92, FSMP.
41. Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, Chapter 5, pp. 260–72.
42. G. Murray (1960) 'Autobiographical Fragment' in J. Smith and A. Toynbee (eds) *Gilbert Murray: An Unfinished Autobiography* (London: George Allen & Unwin), pp. 23–103, p. 83; Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, pp. 270–2; G. Murray to F. S. Marvin, 22 March 1896, MS.Eng.Lett.e.110, fols. 56–7, FSMP.
43. Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, pp. 269–70; J. Martin (2003) 'Shena D. Simon and English Education Policy: Inside/Out?', *History of Education*, 32:5, 477–84, p. 478; A. Kid (1996) 'The

State and Moral Progress: The Webb's Case for Social Reform, c. 1905 to 1940', *Twentieth Century British History*, 7:2, 189–205, p. 190; J. Simon (1986) *Shena Simon: Feminist and Educationist*, private printing, Chapter II, pp. 14–15, 7SDS/6/4, Papers of Lady Simon of Wythenshawe, The Women's Library, BLPES.

44. For overviews, see I. D. MacKillop (1986) *The British Ethical Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); G. Spiller (*c.*1934) *The Ethical Movement in Great Britain* (London: Farleigh Press); Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 188–264.
45. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 114–15; Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, p. 249; *SPMR*, February 1939, p. 15.
46. H. Friess (1981) *Felix Adler and Ethical Culture: Memories and Studies*, ed. F. Weingartner (New York: Columbia University Press), pp. 116–19.
47. 'Gilbert Murray: Obituary', *SPMR*, August 1957, pp. 7–10; Annual Congress 23 March 1929, Union of Ethical Societies (UES) Congress Minute Books 1913–1946, Congress Minutes and Papers BHA/1/1, British Humanist Association Archive (BHAA), Bishopsgate Institute.
48. For example, H. Snell quoted in *SPMR*, March 1941, p. 13.
49. For example, H. Snell (1936) 'The Religion of To-day and To-morrow' in Various, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Ethical Movement 1876–1926* (New York, London: D. Appleton and Company), pp. 205–9, at pp. 205–6; H. G. Jones, 'The Sociological Value of Christianity', *Positivist Review (PR)*, January 1913, 15–22, p. 21.
50. Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, pp. 73–101, 249–60; MacKillop, *British Ethical Societies*, Chapter 4; Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 232–40.
51. FS Marvin, 'The Positive Aspect of Religion', *PR*, April 1913, 87–90, p. 89; *Ethical World (EW)*, July 1917 p. 108 (capitals in original); Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 6, 73, 101.
52. See S. Yeo (1977) 'A New Life: The Religion of Socialism in Britain, 1883–1896', *History Workshop Journal*, 4:1, 5–56; F. Reid (1966) 'Socialist Sunday Schools in Britain, 1892–1939', *International Review of Social History*, 11:1, 18–47; K. S. Inglis (1958) 'The Labour Church Movement', *International Review of Social History*, 3:3, 445–60; M. Bevir (1999) 'The Labour Church

Movement, 1891–1902', *Journal of British Studies*, 38:2, 217–45. Robbins, *History, Religion and Identity*, pp. 209–13 also notes agnostics using religious terminology in the late 1930s and 1940s.

53. S. Coit (1890) 'The Ethical Movement Defined' in *Religious Systems of the World* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co), pp. 538–44, p. 538; *EW*, 9 April 1898, p. 238.
54. H. Gordon Jones, 'Positivism and its Ethical Critics', *PR*, July 1911, pp. 155–60, p. 156; *EW*, January 1923, pp. 9–10.
55. Sidney Gimson, *Random Recollections of the Leicester Secular Society, Part 2, May 1935*, pp. 24–5, 10D68/19, Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (RLLR). Gimson was President of LSS for nearly all of the period 1882–1938.
56. *Freethinker*, 6 September 1908, p. 568.
57. See Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, pp. 114–21; Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 35–52 and Chapter 3 here for LSS's views.
58. J. Harris (2003) 'Introduction: Civil Society in British History: Paradigm or Peculiarity?' in J. Harris (ed.) *Civil Society in British History: Ideas, Identities, Institutions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 1–12, at pp. 2, 10. Secularists are omitted from the groupings that Harris identifies.
59. Harrison, *Before the Socialists*, pp. 251–342; Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, pp. 241–2; Annual Meeting 12 April 1924, LPS Minutes of Committee December 1916–November 1925, LPS/1/7, LPSP.
60. Royle, *Radicals Secularists and Republicans*, Chapter 3, pp. 211–13; D. S. Nash (c.2002) 'Taming the God of Battles: Secular and Moral Critiques of the South African War' in G. Cuthbertson, A. Grundling and M.-L. Suttie (eds) *Writing a Wider War* (Athens and Cape Town: Ohio University Press, David Philip), pp. 266–86.
61. L. Schwartz (2013) *Infidel Feminism: Secularism, Religion and Women's Emancipation, England 1830–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press); E. Royle, 'Review of *Infidel Feminism* (review no. 1477)', http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1477, date accessed 12 April 2016; Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, pp. 248, 258.

62. MacKillop, *British Ethical Societies*, pp. 147–73 (quotes at pp. 147, 149); B. Porter (1968) *Critics of Empire* (London, New York: Macmillan, St Martin's Press), pp. 156–206.
63. *EW*, 15 September 1908, p. 89.
64. Executive Annual Reports, *Freethinker*, 3 June 1927, 357–8, 15 June 1941, 278–80 (quote at p. 280).
65. J. Eros (1954) 'The Rise of Organized Freethought in Mid-Victorian Britain', *Sociological Review*, 2:1, 98–120, pp. 116–18.
66. Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 26–7.
67. C. Watts, 'A Substitute for Christianity', *Freethinker*, 2 December 1900, 755–6; C. Gorham, 'Agnostic and Theistic Views of Morality', *Agnostic Annual*, 1902, 48–55 (quotes at pp. 48, 51).
68. G. W. Foote, 'Why Live a Moral Life?', *Freethinker*, 11 November 1894, cited in J. Herrick (1982) *Vision and Realism: A Hundred Years of the Freethinker* (London: G. W. Foote & Co.), p. 32.
69. F. J. Gould (1917) *British Education after the War* (London: Watts & Co.), p. 23.
70. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 1–8, 99–103.
71. S. Coit (1909) 'The Ethical Uses of the Bible in Schools' in G. Spiller (ed.) *Papers on Moral Education Communicated to the First International Moral Education Congress* (London: David Nutt), pp. 157–9; Anon (1908) *Record of Proceedings of the First International Moral Education Congress* (London: David Nutt), p. 47.
72. *EW*, 3 May 1902, pp. 137–8; S. Gimson, *Random Recollections, Part 2*, pp. 12–13; 27 October[?] 1911, LPS Minutes of Committee October 1910–November 1916, LPS/1/6, LPSP.
73. Such developments are discussed in Chapter 6.
74. *EW*, 21 April 1900, p. 254.
75. Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 16–18, 73–4, 85–6, 218, 248.
76. E. R. Wickham (1969) *Church and People in an Industrial City* (London: Lutterworth), p. 188.
77. For example, Jones, 'The Sociological Value of Christianity'; M. Quin, 'The Death of Christianity', *PR*, October 1924, 186–90; Snell, 'The Religion of To-day and To-morrow'.
78. Annual Meeting, 4 April 1925, LPS Minutes of Committee December 1916–November 1925.
79. See conclusion of Chapter 7 on the Secular Education League's campaigns in the 1940s; *PR*, September 1918, p. 214.

80. F. Harrison to F. S. Marvin, 17 August 1916, MS.Eng.Lett.c.263, fols. 209–10, FSMP. For Ethical Movement discussions, see Chapters 4 and 5.
81. *SPMR*, March 1941, p. 13.
82. See, for example, M. Cruickshank (1963) *Church and State in English Education: 1870 to the Present Day* (London: Macmillan); McLeod, *Religion and Society*, pp. 82–3; J. Murphy (c.1971) *Church, State and Schools in Britain, 1800–1970* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul).
83. S. Smith, 'A Further Danger for Our Schools', *The Month*, December 1906, 601–18, p. 601.
84. Sacks, *Religious Issue*
85. See P. Silver and H. Silver (1974) *The Education of the Poor. The History of a National School 1824–1974* (London, Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul); J. T. Smith (2009) *A Victorian Class Conflict? Schoolteaching and the Parson, Priest and Minister, 1837–1902* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press).
86. Smith, *Victorian Class Conflict*, pp. 166–70.
87. S. Wright (2006) 'The Struggle for Moral Education in English Elementary Schools 1879–1918' (PhD thesis, Oxford Brookes University), p. 223.
88. I. Roberts (2008) *Telling Tales Out of School* (Seaton Burn: Northern Heritage Publishing), pp. 185, 198.
89. McLeod, *Religion and Society*, pp. 83, 111.
90. T. Copley (2002) *Black Tom: Arnold of Rugby* (London: Continuum); C. Watkins (2007) 'Inventing International Citizenship: Badminton School and the Progressive Tradition between the Wars', *History of Education*, 36:3, 315–38, pp. 326–30.
91. Board of Education (1938) *Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education* (London: HMSO), pp. 210–11.
92. S. Platten (1975) 'The Conflict over the Control of Elementary Education 1870–1902 and its Effect upon the Life and Influence of the Church', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 23:3, 276–302, pp. 288–91; Sacks, *Religious Issue*, pp. 114–27; C. Cannon (1964) 'The Influence of Religion on Educational Policy, 1902–1944', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 12:2, 143–60, pp. 149–52. On the varied social composition of elementary schools in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Silver and Silver, *Education of the Poor*, pp. 113–19; W. Marsden

(1991) *Educating the Respectable: A Study of the Fleet Road Board School, Hampstead, 1879–1903* (London: Woburn Press).

93. R. J. K. Freathy (2008) 'The Triumph of Religious Education for Citizenship in English Schools, 1935–1949', *History of Education*, 37:2, 295–316.
94. Cannon, 'Influence of Religion', pp. 149–52.
95. For example, F. Peaker, '"The Strife is O'er"'. End of Sixty-year-old Controversy', *The Schoolmaster*, 14 May 1936, pp. 849, 874.
96. Marsden, *Educating the Respectable*, p. xv; Platten, 'Conflict over the Control of Elementary Education', p. 300; P. Gordon and D. Lawton (1978) *Curriculum Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London: Hodder & Stoughton), pp. 62, 99.
97. The variable nature and quality of religious instruction in elementary schools was noted both by proponents and critics: see, for example, Dymott, Letter to the Editor and Gould's comments in Chapter 3. For secondary schools, see *Educational Outlook*, Summer 1934, p. 76; Board of Education, *Report of the Consultative Committee*, pp. 207–8.
98. Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, pp. 53–7, 63–8, 117–18; Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, pp. 316–20; Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 245–6; Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, pp. 108–9; MacKillop, *British Ethical Societies*, pp. 91–8, 103–6, 138–9.
99. Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, pp. 320–4; Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, pp. 112–13; D. Tribe (1967) *100 Years of Freethought* (London: Elek), p. 197. On Christian Sunday schools, see T. W. Laquer (1976) *Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780–1850* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press); T. R. Tholfsen (1980) 'Moral Education in the Victorian Sunday School', *History of Education Quarterly*, 20, 77–99.
100. MacKillop, *British Ethical Societies*, pp. 81–98, 138–9; Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 203, 246; McGee, *Crusade for Humanity*, p. 207, 60.
101. Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, pp. 308–13; MacKillop, *British Ethical Societies*, pp. 162–73; H. Snell (1936) *Men, Movements and Myself* (London: J. M. Dent), pp. 175–6. See Chapter 4 on the MIL and secularist involvement.
102. Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, p. 311.
103. *Freethinker*, 7 June 1925, pp. 357–8.

CHAPTER 3

Moral Instruction in the Provinces: F. J. Gould in Leicester

In April 1899 Frederick James Gould moved from London, where he had lived for 20 years, to Leicester to work as Organiser for that town's Secular Society. He was to remain in this post for nine years, and to return to London in 1910, after two further years in Leicester. During these 11 years, in addition to his Secular Society work, he campaigned, first as an elected member of the School Board, and, after 1903, the Town Council, on a number of educational issues. His particular focus was on secular moral instruction that, in no small part as a result of his efforts on the School Board, was introduced into local elementary schools. Gould's views and actions were not always popular. Local teachers and others favoured alternative approaches to moral teaching, and criticised his stance on Christianity. Furthermore, his relationship with Leicester Secularists was a complicated one. Resentments emerged because of the sweeping changes he introduced within the Secular Society, the time and energy he devoted to educational work, and his increasing commitment to Positivism. Gould's time at Leicester Secular Society (LSS) has been the subject of detailed examination by David Nash. Gould's involvement in municipal politics has been referenced in Angela Gill's account of the Leicester School Board, and his educational activity in Leicester has been mentioned briefly by R.N. Bérard and Kevin Manton.[1] This chapter aims, to a greater extent than is found in these accounts, to draw together Gould's Secular Society and municipal political activity, and to see both as part of a broader set of activities relating to moral education and citizenship in schools. It explores the way in which Gould's experience of working with different secularists

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and Christians, and his encounters with their ideas, influenced his proposals for moral instruction at this time. I also examine the ways in which attitudes to Christianity and secularism on the part of others affected their reaction to Gould and his proposals.

Others sought, and achieved, election to a School Board on a platform of secular moral instruction in 1900–01, including Mr Arthur Grindley in Plymouth and two labour representatives in Huddersfield.[2] Over the next few years they were joined by other candidates. However, the availability of full records from LSS and Leicester's educational bodies and Gould's many publications, and also Gould's connection with other developments discussed in this book, render his time in Leicester a particularly valuable case study of moral instruction within one local socio-economic, ideological and associational context. Examining moral instruction in Leicester enables a consideration of broad religious attitudes and currents of educational thought as evidenced in local debates, some of which, as will be shown in Chapter 4, played out on the national stage. A case study of this nature also allows a scrutiny of individual relationships within secularist bodies, and, through the person of Gould, the links and the tensions between Secularism, the Ethical Movement and, particularly, Positivism. Notwithstanding the shared currents of thought which will be traced through Chapter 4, in some respects the promotion and implementation of moral instruction in Leicester was atypical. Alongside national and international networks and movements, individual and localised factors were influential too.

'The Life Story of a Humanist' in 'A Radical Town'[3]

F. J. Gould was born in Brighton on 19 December 1855, and was the youngest of three children. The family moved to London just a few weeks after his birth. There they lived in a number of 'shabby genteel' homes, with his mother, Julia Wilson, taking on dress-making work to supplement the meagre and unpredictable income that his father, William James Gould, earned as an opera singer. Gould was educated first at an 'Academy' above a stable by Gray's Inn Road, and then, from the age of nine, as a chorister at St George's Chapel, Windsor. At the age of 13 he went to live in Chenies, Buckinghamshire, in the household of Reverend Russell who, as the chaplain of St George's Chapel, had taken Gould under his wing. Gould attended Chenies village school and from 1871 he started to teach there, first as a pupil-teacher, before moving, in the mid-1870s, to Great Missenden. He was a fervent evangelical Christian in his early years of

teaching: in later years he recalled teaching at Sunday School, praying several times a day, and reading through theological material 'in a kind of devout fury'. He aimed, in his school teaching, 'to link the heavenly Christ … to science, literature, geography, everything'. However, from the mid-1870s onwards, he started to question his faith. Increasingly, he found his position in a church school untenable, and in 1879 he moved to London, where he was employed as assistant master at Turin Street School in Bethnal Green, 'facing a class of three-score London boys, many of them ill-clad and ill-fed'.[4] As a 'raging and tearing radical', he quickly forged links with other rationalists, freethinkers and socialists. Gould attended meetings in support of Charles Bradlaugh's parliamentary campaign in 1881. The same year he heard Frederic Harrison, then leader of the Newton Hall Positivists, speak on 'The New Social System'; 'no other event of the period left a deeper mark on my sympathies', he wrote later, possibly with the benefit of hindsight. Gould gained experience as an author, penning contributions 'of the destructive order of criticism' in Secularist periodicals. He also spent many Sundays 'lecturing at all sorts of obscure halls in London, with occasional visits to Leicester and Birmingham', first visiting Leicester Secular Hall in June 1883.[5]

In 1887 Gould gave a lecture to Hackney Secular Society with the title 'A Word in Favour of Modern Christianity'; this, he suggests, marked the beginning of a move to a constructive rather than destructive form of Secularism.[6] However, he continued to write inflammatory pieces for the Secularist press, which in 1888 came to the attention of Reverend Diggle, the Chair of the London School Board. The leaders of the London School Board felt that he could not give instruction on the Bible whilst at the same time criticising it in his writings. Gould was consequently transferred to another school, Northey Street in Limehouse, where the headmaster gave Bible instruction every morning in his place. In this situation, Gould wrote, he felt 'a foreign body'; 'I kept on fraternal terms with my half-dozen fellow teachers, but I was *in* the school, not *of* it'. In 1891 he applied to resume Bible teaching, but his request was not granted. Gould notes the support of prominent figures, some outside secularist circles. For example, J. Allanson Picton, previously a radical Congregationalist minister and member of the London School Board (1870–79) and by this time MP for Leicester, mentioned his case in a House of Commons debate in November 1888. The Broad Church Anglican Reverend Stewart Headlam and the Unitarian Reverend W. Copeland Bowie supported him in his negotiations with London School Board in 1891. He was accused, however, of 'dishonourable'

motives by Annie Besant of the National Secular Society (NSS), perhaps a foretaste of NSS resistance to an ethical use of the Bible that was to emerge a few years later within the Moral Instruction League (MIL).[7]

Gould was troubled by many aspects of elementary schooling at this time. He taught large classes, sometimes of more than 80 pupils.[8] From 1862 to 1895, the era of payment-by-results, schools were awarded part of their government grant on the basis of individual pupils' performance in the '3 Rs' (reading, writing and arithmetic) when tested by Her Majesty's Inspectorate at the school's annual examination. Gould condemned this 'hard and mechanical system', which led to 'cramming, caning, scolding', and 'keeping-in' after school-hours'.[9] He began to use the time outside his day job to learn about alternative educational approaches. In March 1889 he attended a lecture given by John Trevor (later to be the founder of the Labour Churches) on secular moral instruction in French primary schools, and was 'deeply interested'. Also in the small audience on this occasion was Stanton Coit, who was then lecturing at South Place Ethical Society. In early 1890, Gould was part of a small group, which also included Gustav Spiller and C. J. Pollard, and was assisted by Coit, that founded the East London Ethical Society. He ran a Sunday School there for about 60 children. Here, he was free of the restrictions of the 'cramming-den of the Board School'. He found an 'experimental field for humanist ideas' and a space to develop his narrative method of 'story-telling on themes of personal and social conduct', drawing on historical and biographical exemplars, an approach which he was to elaborate over subsequent years. Gould also took his Sunday School pupils on outings to places of social and historical interest, including museums, Westminster Abbey, the Tower of London and Epping Forest, to '[open] up glimpses of a brighter scenery beyond the East-end dullness'.[10] In 1896, invited by Coit to cooperate officially in the Ethical Movement as a paid worker, he 'escaped from the School Board'. Gould then spent three years teaching at ethical Sunday Schools, lecturing, writing, and helping to establish the Union of Ethical Societies and the MIL. During this period he devised schemes of moral instruction, started publishing specimen lessons in *Ethical World*, and wrote books (two containing non-theological versions of selected Bible stories, and the first part of his four-volume *Children's Book of Moral Lessons*).[11]

When Gould started to work as Organiser for LSS in 1899, he arrived in a town of over 200,000 inhabitants, which had experienced the rapid population growth, spatial expansion and population movement that was common in the large towns and cities of Victorian England.[12] Gould noted that

in Leicester 'the ill-clad' were 'far less frequent' than they had been in East London where he 'often enough saw humanity in rags', but he also observed that there were pockets of extreme deprivation.[13] An elite of Nonconformist, Liberal family dynasties intermarried, owned the largest local manufacturing firms, engaged in philanthropic and charity work, and dominated municipal politics.[14] A local economy centred on small to medium-sized workshops and, by the turn of the twentieth century, small factories also meant the presence of a large number of self-regulating, independent, skilled and semi-skilled workers. This facilitated a distinctive organisational culture, and radicalism in politics, initially in the form of 'Radical, Chartist, and Owenite elements'. From the 1870s these groups were joined by socialist societies and unions and a Leicester branch of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) was formed in 1894.[15]

A thriving secular society was also part of the town's radical organisational scene, and a larger arena of Secularist activism in the Midlands.[16] The LSS was formed in 1851, according to early documents.[17] Established by a breakaway group from Leicester's Unitarian Great Meeting, it ran sporadically throughout the 1850s and 1860s, and, following a 'revival' in 1867, became the longest-running Secularist group outside London.[18] Gould described the membership when he arrived as a group of about 200, the majority 'intelligent but quite uncultivated', including 'nobody with a University degree, and nobody [with] a carriage, except Philip Wright'. His comment captures the range of members; a core of skilled artisans, and, increasingly, women and white-collar workers, alongside a few representatives of local industrial dynasties.[19] The Gimson and Wright families, both listed by Freer as part of the town's elite of Liberal manufacturing dynasties, filled prominent Society roles, and provided a foothold in municipal politics, links to other local causes, and also funding.[20] In 1881 a purpose-built Secular Hall opened on Humberstone Gate, with seating for 600, paid for in no small part by Gimson and Wright family monies. A permanent home enhanced LSS's local visibility, respectability and stature, whilst providing a space for members to meet and maintain something akin to a congregational life of regular Sunday meetings and rational recreation.[21]

Leicester Secularists' approach to Christians and Christianity contrasted with the belligerent tactics adopted by the national movement at the time. Ministers of religion, as part of an open platform strategy, spoke at LSS meetings from the 1880s. A bust of Jesus was placed at the front of the new Secular Hall in 1881, alongside figures of Thomas Paine, Voltaire, Robert

Owen and Aristotle. Including Jesus was, according to Sidney Gimson, the idea of his father Josiah, who saw Jesus as a secular teacher.[22] Leicester Secularists' approach chimed with that of George Jacob Holyoake, who came to be a long-term friend of Josiah Gimson and visited on several occasions during the 1880s and 1890s. Other Secularists were less impressed, with one, after visiting in 1886, castigating LSS for signing 'a peace treaty with Christians'.[23] It would be wrong, however, to overstate the sympathy between Secularists and Christians in the town. Local clerics expressed outrage at the bust of Jesus being placed alongside freethinkers on the front of the new Secular Hall. More than twenty years later, in 1907, reactions among local Christians to a Secularist body in their midst remained mixed. The Mayor of Leicester opened the Secular Society's Chrysanthemum Bazaar, a very public demonstration of Secularist inclusion in the urban community. However, when Gould stood as a candidate in the Town Council elections that year, representatives of Leicester's clergy encouraged electors not to vote for 'one who did not believe in God'. Their actions, Gould suggested, implied that Secularists were not deserving of representation.[24]

LSS's open platform allowed the expression of varied political views. Lecturers from the 1880s included individualists and socialists.[25] Leicester's Secularists also became familiar with the Positivist and Ethical Movement currents that were becoming increasingly significant within wider freethought. From the early 1880s, a small group of Positivist sympathisers among members, named by Gould as Messrs Berry, Findley and Quin, put together LSS's first book of non-Christian hymns and also ran the Sunday School. During the 1890s key Ethical Movement figures, including Moncure Conway and Stanton Coit, lectured at LSS.[26] This eclectic mix of visitors sat within a culture of informal education, of which voluntary attendance at lectures was a central part, and which encouraged questioning of even important visitors. 'Agnostic seekers from a range of backgrounds' were welcomed, but anyone could be interrogated and criticised.[27]

LSS, with its range of activities, its local standing and networks, and its free platform, might well have appealed to someone like Gould as an accommodating ideological home and community. It would also have offered potential as a base from which to experiment with, and secure the wider application of, his educational ideas. LSS absorbed much of Gould's time and energy whilst in Leicester. Appointed as Organiser at a salary of £156 per annum, he was involved in the 'organisation and reorganisation' of LSS's internal affairs, publicised its activities locally, and also acted as a

'pastor' to the Secularist community. His activities included 'preparing operettas, painting scenery, organising three bazaars', 'visiting the sick', and 'officiating at funeral ceremonies'.[28] Gould was not content to limit his activities in Leicester to the LSS, however. He contributed numerous letters and articles to local and secularist papers, and produced several volumes on moral lessons.[29] He also started and edited for two years a small monthly paper, the *Leicester Reasoner*, which he claimed, '[expressed], in a general way, but not necessarily in every detail, the opinions and aims of the Leicester Secular Society'.[30] With its regular School Board and Education Committee reports and a 'for the children' column including moral lessons, however, it perhaps represented the personal opinions of Gould himself more than the LSS more generally. This is emblematic of the tensions between Gould's interface with a broad public and his role within LSS, which would emerge repeatedly during his time in Leicester.

'The Universal Objector': Leicester School Board and Education Committee

Gould, with his background, was bound to devote time to educational activities within LSS. Sidney Gimson described the Sunday School as 'flourishing' under his guidance. In 1900 Gould established a Guild for Young People, in which he led 'earnest young folk' in reading novels and discussing social, political, economic or religious questions. Through the Sunday School and the Guild, Gould developed an interconnected 'ethical ladder' of classes taught by 11 adults, based on a curriculum of 'a variety of types of ethical lessons' which Gould did much to shape, if not to dictate it in its entirety.[31] These classes, inevitably, became experimental opportunities for different forms of moral instruction. Providing for adult members proved more difficult. He established a number of formal classes, but in an organisation with a strong autodidact culture and a preference for informal approaches to education, they were not usually well attended. He settled for a broad range of lectures on varied topics, including biography, the moral instruction of children and his School Board work; in Gould's hands, these became an informal moral education for his adult listeners.[32]

Gould also wanted to influence Leicester's schools. In 1900 he announced his intention to stand for election as an independent candidate on the town's School Board. The School Board had been governed by a Liberal majority for almost the entirety of its existence (with the exception

of the first Board of 1871–74, when an independent candidate held the balance of power). But substantial Church representation was retained throughout these years. There were a handful of working-class representatives, initially on the Liberal slate, and from the mid-1890s as independent and ILP candidates.[33] The Liberals, apparently, tried, without success, to persuade Gould not to stand. In his autobiography he described a meeting at which Alexander Baines, Chair of the Board, 'a pleasant, white-haired, Congregationalist', and Dr Bennett, Vice-Chair and 'one of the most expert geologists in the Midlands', explained that he would divide the Liberal vote to the benefit of the Church. And LSS had already committed to sponsoring its Vice President, John Potter, as a Liberal candidate. It was decided that Gould would not be officially put forward by LSS but would be 'granted permission to stand', and would be referred to at LSS meetings as 'representing the Society's principles'.[34]

Gould was not deterred by these obstacles and he began an intensive and carefully planned publicity campaign of public meetings and pamphleteering. A band of helpers distributed 30,000 copies of his address to burgesses around the town.[35] He advertised the support of national and local figures, both secularist and Christian: Positivist leader Frederic Harrison, John Page Hopps (local Unitarian), and J. Allanson Picton. His first campaign meeting was chaired by Rev. W. Whitaker of the Free Christian Church.[36] Moral instruction was the centrepiece of Gould's election programme. He presented a scheme to Leicester's electors, including qualities such as self-respect, temperance, courage, perseverance, truthfulness, kindness/manners, sympathy for suffering, work and duty, and 'Society and State', illustrated by a sample lesson. Gould's lessons, by this time, took the format that he was to use for years. A selected moral quality was illustrated by appropriate stories from myths, fables, poetry and even the sacred texts of different religions (with theological and doctrinal references removed). Such teaching, he suggested, should replace religious instruction lessons because 'no one benefitted from the religious compromise of 30 years ago'. In this argument Gould was part of a wider body of religious and political opinion that criticised the 1870 settlement, as will be shown in Chapter 4.[37] This was a carefully orchestrated campaign that combined self-promotion with an emphasis on the common good and local priorities. Gould criticised religious divisions whilst emphasising his own friendly relations with Christians as well as secularists of different persuasions. He made enough of an impact for other candidates to respond to his proposals, with several

referring in their campaign addresses to the importance of moral training and the moral condition of pupils in the schools, even if they still wanted to retain religious instruction.[38] Commentary in the local press indicates a balance of views. Gould was criticised for 'making religious strife where none exists', requiring the community to pay for an election which the main parties would be willing to forego, and depriving children of religious instruction which 'most parents' deemed 'vital and indispensable'. But he was valued as an experienced teacher who would, perhaps in contrast to other candidates, 'know something about educational matters'.[39]

There was nothing unique about Gould's proposals. Burton on Trent, Birmingham and Huddersfield School Boards had all introduced some form of moral instruction lessons, in 1878, 1879 and 1889, respectively. Individuals, including William Jolly and, as already noted, J. Allanson Picton in the 1870s, had also suggested that morals could be taught effectively in schools without recourse to a Christian foundation, though there is no indication that they cooperated with one another.[40] From 1897, this localised activity was supplemented by the activities of the MIL on a national level that Gould had been involved in before moving to Leicester. Indeed Gould's framing of his election proposals and, later, his proposal to Leicester School Board that moral instruction lessons should replace religious instruction lessons mirrored the formulations then used by the MIL. This was, moreover, not the first time systematic moral instruction had been proposed by a member of the Leicester School Board. Henry Payne, ILP candidate in 1897, argued for 'abolishing theological teaching and substituting for it systematic moral instruction'. It was perhaps no coincidence that the ILP in London was one of the bodies involved in forming the MIL at that time. But Payne, without any allies on the Board and operating from the relatively weak organisational base of an ILP branch that was only three years old, was unable to press the matter.[41] In his campaign, Gould appears to have made very little, if any, reference to such previous and parallel activity. He might not have known much about earlier School Board and individual initiatives at this time,[42] or about the efforts of Henry Payne. But this was clearly not the case with the MIL. Gould, ever the careful strategist, might have wanted to draw attention to his own track record and publications, or have considered downplaying wider trends as the best way to enhance his credibility in a local educational arena. His writings are not revealing on this point.

Gould, described as 'secretary and author', came second in the poll, with 15,699 votes, beaten only by James Coward, a 'Clerk in Holy Orders'.[43]

The cumulative voting system, which allowed electors to give all their votes to one candidate, could work to the benefit of independent candidates such as Gould.[44] John Potter was not returned, but he was subsequently co-opted onto the Board in March 1901 following the resignation of another member.[45] Gould soon made his presence felt. By the end of 1901 he had suggested that boys at the industrial school were unduly pressurised into joining the armed forces upon leaving, had called for the removal of 'undignified' pictorial advertisements from schools, and had condemned the Board's school management system as 'perfunctory and useless'.[46] His challenges to the status quo were unpopular for some; Gould was labelled the 'universal objector'. For others, however, they had value in drawing out 'some very interesting information', and '[elucidating] … both popular and unpopular views.'[47]

Gould's first foray into the subject of moral instruction occurred in April 1901, when he questioned how far teachers' ability to give ethical teaching was considered when they were appointed. 'A man might be a most virtuous person', he argued, 'and yet be unable to talk clearly and logically to children on important subjects.'[48] But he waited until he had visited all 29 elementary schools in the town and observed the religious instruction given in each before introducing a motion in favour of moral instruction at the Board's October 1901 meeting:

> That an enquiry be held into the present scope and method of the moral instruction given in schools under the Board in connection with the Bible reading, and that a scheme be prepared with the object of 1) rendering the moral instruction more systematic and 2) strengthening the moral element in the school training generally.

This proposal was seconded by Mr Chitham, a Conservative wine merchant and Church Party member, support which, Gould claimed, was 'quite unexpected'. The Chair moved an amendment, proposing that the School Management Committee be instructed to consider the advisability of including a course of moral lessons, but that 'no alteration be made in the present scheme of Bible reading'. Of the 13 Board members present, eight voted for the amendment, which was therefore carried.[49]

Introducing his motion, Gould stated that moral teaching was his chief concern, and that what happened to Bible reading was of secondary importance. He hoped that those who disagreed with some of his suggestions would agree 'that the end of education was, or should be, the training of

character, and the production of the spirit and practice of good citizenship.' He wanted, therefore, to systematise the moral training given in schools. Other areas of teaching, he argued, had been systematised to very good effect, and moral teaching would similarly benefit from systematic treatment. He then reported on his visits to Leicester's 29 elementary schools between January and September that year. He found that the religious instruction lessons were often not systematic, and could suffer from 'a want of uniformity and interest' and an 'inferior … tone and quality' from an ethical point of view. He suggested that the Board introduce a scheme, including 'fundamental and moral ideas' which reveal his socialist and internationalist leanings:

> self-respect, self-control, truth and truthfulness, kindness, duty and honour, industry, mutual dependence of various orders of society, the nature of the social organism, the general idea of justice, the work of the State, citizenship, co-operation, international peace, and the relation of nature and art to morality.

Gould concluded by outlining other changes he wanted to see in the elementary schools: the removal of the Bible as a textbook, more emphasis in history teaching upon 'the social life of the people, their moral progress, their industrial history', and excursions to places of social and historical interest. 'An education conducted on these methods and with these aims', he claimed, would raise a generation with 'more truthfulness in its business dealings, more self-respect in its amusements, more generosity in its conduct towards the poor and the overburdened and the unemployed, and more justice in its economics and in its international relations.'[50]

Discussion at the October Board meeting and in the local press suggests widespread support for Gould's emphasis on the moral reform of pupils in schools. A letter to the *Leicester Pioneer* in October 1901 noted 'sympathy with the desire to impart moral instruction to budding youth'. The suggestion that schools were not doing enough already was questioned, however. At the Board meeting Alexander Baines argued that the regulations for Bible reading were framed so as to ensure that moral elements were adequately covered. Mr Waddington stated that teachers 'took every chance of inculcating little moral precepts in the general routine of their work'. Mr Chitham of the Church Party, who seconded Gould's resolution, instead suggested that despite teachers' best efforts 'there was not that definite moral teaching that one would like to see' and John Potter claimed

that lessons could be 'given in a haphazard sort of way'.[51] Gould's proposal that moral instruction lessons replace religious instruction was subject to widespread criticism. He was castigated for opening 'the floodgates of religious controversy'; and Baines' amendment was supported by many commentators for this reason. It was argued that a Christian foundation for morality was necessary. Roman Catholic School Board member Father Hawkins objected to Gould's 'desire, either expressed or implied, to abolish any reference almost to Almighty God'. For Miss Gimson, a Church Party member, 'moral teaching sprang . . . naturally out of the Bible'. Critics also questioned Gould's judgements of the religious lessons he observed in schools. Dr Bennett suggested that teachers should not be judged solely on the strength of one visit to each school. Mr Waddington, another ex-teacher, argued that differences of opinion among parents and managers made it very hard for teachers to give good scripture lessons. And, according to one correspondent in the local press, Gould only found defects in the religious teaching because he was looking for them.[52] Gould, however, pointed out that he was the only Board member who had heard religious instruction lessons being given in each school.

Gould described the outcome of the October 1901 Board meeting as a U-turn on the part of the School Board majority: 'Though the Liberals had made out at the time of the election that the Bible and morality must go together, yet they had agreed that some moral lessons could be given without the Bible!'[53] Though not all Gould asked for, this was a notable achievement. Similar attempts in 1902 to secure provision for moral instruction in Bristol, West Ham, Bradford and Farsley had all failed (though another attempt in Bradford in 1903 was successful).[54] Several reasons can be suggested for Gould's success. First, he was a skilled strategist, as demonstrated by his carefully orchestrated election campaign, and his visiting the town's elementary schools before introducing his motion on the Board. Secondly, as an independent Board member he held the casting vote. He used this both in favour of the status quo (ensuring, for example, the re-election of Bennett and Baines as Vice-Chair and Chair in December 1900) and against the major Church and Liberal groupings (getting Roman Catholic member Father Hawkins elected to the Industrial Schools Committee in early 1901). Fellow Board members had good reason to appease him by seeking to meet at least some of his requests. Thirdly, there was an appetite in Leicester for improving the moral condition of children in schools. Precedents had been set. Alexander Baines claimed during the October 1901 meeting that some years previously he had wanted lessons

from Hackwood's moral instruction text to be included in the secular teaching in the Board's schools, but, at a time when individual classes and children were being examined, 'there was no time to be given to it'.[55] Discussions in late 1900, both in the press and on the School Board, about young people's poor behaviour on the streets and just what schools could do to improve their moral condition indicate a degree of local concern, even if framed in narrower terms than Gould's all-encompassing syllabus.[56] Fourthly, LSS, as already noted, enjoyed a degree of respectability and influence in the town which might explain why Gould was, as he put it, treated with 'courtesy and fairness' by the local press during his first year on the Board.[57]

Henry Major, Leicester School Board Inspector from 1877, and author of 'all sorts of "schemes" for reforming and remodelling the instruction given in schools', was tasked with developing the moral instruction syllabus. Major's efforts were discussed and approved by a subcommittee of the School Management Committee, and all parts were published by the end of 1902.[58] Henry Major was a Christian but 'broad-minded', according to Sidney Gimson; he had lectured at the Secular Society. When introducing the scheme to teachers, Major noted the importance of moral instruction and hailed Gould's intervention. Gould, for his part, praised Major's efforts on the syllabus: '[he] has understood the promise and potency of the new ethical method, and he has framed the course of lessons in the spirit of a true educationalist'.[59] He was less positive about the School Board's circular to schools that accompanied the syllabus. This circular identified moral instruction as 'an addition to, and supplementary of, definite 'Religious instruction"; for Gould, this created two competing moral systems in schools. It also suggested as the main source of illustrations regular reading texts and school life; Gould emphasised the importance of poetic, historical and 'cosmopolitan' biographical content too.[60]

When the School Board was replaced by the Education Committee of the Town Council in 1903, Gould once again sought election, as an independent candidate for Newton Ward. His publicity material emphasised his success in promoting moral instruction. He promised to campaign for 'secular education as the only way out of the religious difficulty', and also to work for improved housing, sanitation, cheap allotments and tram fares, better streetlighting, and municipal hospitals. LSS raised funds for his campaign, but he was unsuccessful.[61] He tried again the following year, now as an ILP candidate for Castle Ward, one of Leicester's inner working-class districts, against a Conservative publican. His election

flyer, once again, contained a moral lesson. Supported by what was by then one of the largest ILP branches in the country, and with his teetotalism probably winning him some Nonconformist votes, he was returned.[62] In 1907 he stood again for election in Castle Ward, his letter to electors calling for 'sound training in manners and civic duties'. Supporters of Gould's Liberal opponent sent a leaflet to electors in which they (falsely) associated Gould with controversial views on the monarchy, theology and marriage expressed by Belfort Bax, who had lectured at the Secular Hall on 20 October. Despite some local criticism of such 'underhand tactics' lowering the tone of public life, attempts to clear Gould's name did not succeed.[63] Gould later described this flaring of religious tensions at election time as a 'political (Liberal) sentiment' rather than a deep antagonism towards his secularist views.[64] In 1908, Gould stood again as candidate, this time for Wyggeston Ward, another inner, working-class, district. Although three local vicars issued a letter to electors urging 'those who believe in God and religion' to vote against him, he was elected once again.[65]

Gould served on the Town Council at a time when Labour representation was increasing, from seven out of 48 members in 1904 to 13 in 1910. Moral instruction now formed part of a wider programme of moral and material reform which addressed many aspects of children's and adults' life in the town. Gould's programme attracted praise from a group of Anglican clergy who described his work for the unemployed, feeding and housing the poor, and care for children as representing 'the cause of Christ'.[66] He developed these proposals together with his fellow Labour councillors; this group met once a month, with Gould acting as secretary.[67] Gould was cultivating links with Labour allies at a time when the MIL was having only limited success in its political forays with this party, perhaps reflecting the importance of personal connections, and the distinctive flavour of radicalism in Leicester. On the Education Committee itself, Gould, supported by ILP colleagues, campaigned against the compulsory vaccination of teachers,[68] for school visits to places of educational interest (a 'concrete supplement to moral instruction'),[69] and for the feeding of schoolchildren by public money.[70] Gould also continued to visit schools regularly, and argued for processes on public bodies to be more democratic, calling for assistant as well as headteachers to be represented at a yearly conference with the Education Committee.[71]

In Gould's eyes, any issue could become a moral one. He felt, for example, that school meals should be provided through public funds because the community was 'morally responsible' for the 'involved social

conditions which people were suffering', which led to children being underfed. Fees for evening continuation classes should be abolished 'because all education which tended to the improvement of the people's character should be provided free at the public expense'.[72] Moral instruction remained at the core of Gould's election platform in these years, as his campaign literature reveals. Yet he made no further attempts on the Education Committee to alter the settlement arrived at in 1901 or the syllabus developed thereafter. His strategy instead was, with the support of his ILP colleagues, to promote a fully *secular* education system, with moral instruction as an important component. On the Education Committee itself, moral instruction was contained within his three unsuccessful motions in favour of purely secular education in elementary schools, in 1905, 1907 and 1909.[73] On 26 June 1905, Gould, speaking in support of his motion, argued that the present system of religious instruction was divisive, drawing 'a sinister line' between council and voluntary schools. Instead, he advocated 'adequate provision for the moral training of the children, daily and systematically'. He drew attention to the preface of the 1904 Code and noted that 'many educational authorities were giving increased attention to this subject'; this contrasts with his lack of reference to wider developments in 1901.[74] Responses to Gould's proposals echoed themes familiar from local debates in relation to moral instruction on the School Board. 'Those who care one jot for the Christian religion will be thankful to have it lifted out of the region of strife', wrote one correspondent in the local press. Gould was, on the other hand, accused of unnecessarily stirring up controversy, and of going against the wishes of the majority who, 'if their views could be ascertained', would want moral teaching on a Christian basis.[75]

Throughout this period, Gould wrote numerous letters to local papers, reminding a wider public of the importance of a secular education, and moral instruction in particular, and referring them to the efforts of the MIL.[76] He obtained some positive responses, but also came under increasing criticism, as his repeated efforts bore no fruit. He was deemed 'out of touch with the majority of electors, enabled to invest his own distinctive and unpopular views on religion, education and other subjects with a weight out of proportion to his representative significance'. The rejection of his third resolution on secular education was interpreted as a sign that his arguments carried no weight with locals: 'Jews, Roman Catholics, Anglicans, the majority of Nonconformists, and many who belong to none of the great orders, desire that the moral code on which they desire

their children's education to be based is that found in the Bible.' It was 'a waste of time to keep on urging the matter'.[77]

By this time, too, negative views on the impact and effectiveness of moral instruction lessons within Leicester's schools were beginning to emerge. According to Henry Major's 1905 and 1906 inspection reports on moral instruction lessons, some pupils and teachers liked the lessons as a break in their routine, and the lessons, when given well, could be 'an auxiliary to maintenance of school discipline'. But other headteachers felt that moral lessons had been of no benefit, and, because they required substantial 'powers of expression' and a wide 'outlook on human conduct', had been difficult for young teachers.[78] On 15 February 1909, at the annual conference between headteachers and the Education Committee which Gould and his Labour colleagues had campaigned to establish, it was requested that the regulations on moral instruction be rescinded. Arguments echoed some of the criticisms of Gould's resolution back in 1901:

> The daily moral training in school, based as far as possible on the incidents of school life, is productive of more benefit than the weekly formal lessons at present required to be given. So much depends on the character and conduct of the teachers, who ask that they might be allowed to treat the subject in their own way.

The Education Committee decided not to alter the regulations but would 'consider any further definite statement' on the subject; there is no evidence that a further statement emerged, at least while Gould remained in Leicester.[79] Gould would have been aware of these views, and might also, through his visits to Leicester's schools, have witnessed some of these problems himself. As early as November 1902, Gould had suggested that 'under present conditions' one lesson a week was enough. 'To give a good moral lesson entails more thought and care than giving a Bible lesson', he argued, and teachers needed to 'become familiar with the method of reasoning on conduct without appeals to theological sanctions' before more lessons could be introduced. In 1910 he acknowledged that 'teachers did not receive [moral instruction] cordially' and questioned the value of 'rapid political furtherance of moral-instruction codes': 'Unless the heart and imagination of parents and teachers are quickened by the idea of ethical education, no amount of official directions will avail.'[80]

Gould might also have been a little chastened by the controversy that arose over one of his texts. Early reviews for his *Children's Book of Moral*

Lessons were largely positive, with one in *The Board Teacher*, for instance, noting the 'impress of the practical teacher' throughout, and the possibilities for using it 'with the Bible lessons, or in addition to them'.[81] However, in Autumn 1905, Church lobbies in the West Riding of Yorkshire and Cheshire campaigned for its removal as a text for moral instruction lessons in local schools, generating much correspondence in the local papers.[82] One lesson in particular, on 'Differences of Opinion' (Series I), was singled out for comment. In the second of two lessons on this subject, Gould discussed questions of religion explicitly, a rare occurrence in a moral instruction book. He presented a tableau of adherents of different religions, accompanied by a secularist, and called on pupils to 'salute' them all. He included a famously controversial secularist text in George Lessing's parable of the ring. There was also, perhaps, implied criticism of parental views: 'At home your mother or your father may tell you which of all these religions they like the best. But . . . I will tell you . . . that the people of different religions ought to respect each other, just as we have done when we saluted them all.'[83] Some correspondents in the *Yorkshire Post* deemed the lesson 'an attack upon Christianity' which '[sneered] at the Bible, Christ, Church and home, and religion'. The teaching of equal respect for different religious beliefs was 'a deliberate attempt to deprive Christian children of their highest and most precious birthright'.[84] Others, however, praised the 'catholic and broadly tolerant' argument that children should 'honour all good men alike', on the grounds that it would lead to the better treatment of people of different creeds.[85] The Cheshire campaign led to the book being removed from that authority's list of moral instruction texts. But there was no evidence that it was withdrawn in Yorkshire, and a number of LEAs with continued to use, or subsequently adopted, this and other texts by Gould.[86]

Secularist and Positivist

At the same time as encountering these obstacles to the furtherance of his educational proposals, Gould was also experiencing increasing tensions within LSS. Members could not have failed to admire either his organisational abilities or his work rate. But his hold on finances left much to be desired. Also, his efforts to produce a cohesive and respectable Secular Society led him to push for a two-tier membership policy (with full membership for those who adhered fully to LSS's views, and a lower status of associate membership for others), and to limit the sale of alcohol in the LSS club building. With these changes he restricted some of the freedoms that

LSS members held dear.[87] At the same time, his municipal commitments took him away from LSS, and from his original brief. He was, by and large, able to justify to his fellow Secularists such commitments while successful in his campaigns. But failures at election time, and in securing secular education on the Education Committee, led to a questioning of the value of these activities. Shortly after he was elected to the Town Council in 1904 Gould felt the need to justify his municipal work to LSS's Committee. He acknowledged that it took up considerable time, with meetings on an almost daily basis, and took him beyond his stated remit as Organiser. He argued, however, that by 'constantly appearing among the business and public men of Leicester' he would 'quietly and effectively remind them of our existence, our claims and our views'; the question of whether he represented LSS views or his own has been noted already.[88]

Gould undoubtedly had sincere reasons for involving himself so fully in municipal work. He desired to make the best use of his experience and abilities, and to render secularism a constructive force within Leicester which could improve the wider urban community. In something akin to a secularist version of the civic gospel of Birmingham's Nonconformist elite, he claimed that secularists should devote themselves to practical politics, taking up appropriate 'civic duties' and recognising the 'call to municipal and national service'.[89] Yet in following such an ethic of service he gained valuable experience and publicity which he was able to turn to his own ends. Gould might have overemphasised the importance of his own municipal work for LSS's standing in the town. He failed to acknowledge that other members, most notably Josiah and Sidney Gimson, had also, albeit with less self-publicity, combined their work for LSS with municipal commitments. There was, however, some inconsistency on the part of LSS members, who would accept the municipal activity of the Gimsons as an expression of being good Leicester citizens, but would not extend this understanding to Gould.

Work with Ethical Movement friends in promoting moral instruction took Gould beyond Leicester's Secularists and municipal bodies, physically and metaphorically. He wrote pamphlets, spoke at public meetings in London, gave occasional demonstration and criticism lessons in connection with the MIL, and published sample moral instruction lessons in *Ethical World*.[90] Ethical Movement friends, for their part, wrote in *Ethical World* about Gould's promotion of moral instruction and secular education in Leicester, often as an example for others to follow.[91] They also wrote about his activities within LSS, particularly where they were thought to support moral instruction in some way; Gould's Guild for Young People was hailed

as a field of experiment for moral instruction with secondary school pupils.[92] Gould's efforts to work with fellow moral instruction enthusiasts and to reach teachers beyond Leicester paid dividends. He was the subject of a biographical piece in the periodical *School* in 1905, was invited on to the committee of the International Inquiry into moral education established in 1906, and in 1908 gave a high-profile demonstration lesson at the First International Moral Education Congress (IMEC) in London.[93] Yet for Leicester's Secularists, whatever their views on Gould's approach to moral instruction, this activity must have represented yet another drain on his time.

More significant, perhaps, were fears about what he was doing to the internal ideological life of LSS itself. Gould wrote in *Ethical World* that he wanted to make LSS more 'constructive', noting 'destructive' tendencies among some Society members. This was a false dichotomy according to Sidney Gimson.[94] By 1905, Gould had moved towards an explicitly Positivist understanding of what Secularism could achieve. Writing for a Rationalist and Secularist audience, he claimed that through Positivism older theological beliefs and prejudices would be replaced by new ideals and social sympathies; 'the moral future of civilisation' would be shaped by 'Comte's genius'. However, the value of Comte's suggestions lay 'in their spirit and the principles of their construction rather than in their precision of detail'.[95] Gould had progressed towards this position over a number of years. In his autobiography he wrote that he kept abreast of the propaganda of the Positivists at Newton Hall. As early as 1897, he noted Positivist influences in his *Plan* for moral instruction. In 1902 he embarked on a close study of all Auguste Comte's works, and 'while perpetually re-shaping his views' to a 'Twentieth Century outlook', became 'deeply convinced that he, better than any other man, had marked out certain essentials of the moral reorganisation of society.'[96] Throughout his time in Leicester, Gould corresponded with Positivists in London,[97] and arranged for Positivists to lecture at LSS (Malcolm Quin, F. S. Marvin, S. H. Swinny and Cecil Desch).[98] From 1905 he wrote articles, particularly but not only on educational matters, for *Positivist Review*,[99] and spoke at Sunday evening meetings in London.[100] Gould's approach to Positivism was a distinctly populist one. In 1905 and 1908 he wrote short pamphlets about Positivism, *The Religion that Fulfils* and *A Catechism of Religion and the Social Life*, both intended for the general public.[101] In his writings Gould positioned himself as an ex-teacher and municipal councillor aware of the realities of life in schools. He stressed, repeatedly, the need to work with social and educational institutions as they

were rather than stick too rigidly to Comte's doctrines.[102] In this he differed from some other Positivists who were apt to judge existing arrangements for failing to match Comte's ideals.[103]

All this was a lot for Leicester's Secularists to take. They had been accustomed since the 1880s to having a few Positivist sympathisers in their midst, but Gould's prominent position within LSS and the town might have rendered his views particularly problematic. In his autobiography, he recounted a tense conversation in January 1908, with Sidney Gimson saying 'You can hardly expect us to turn our Secular Society and Hall into a Positivist Society and Labour Church'. Later that month it was agreed at LSS's general meeting that Gould would send in a formal notice to resign, and that his work would cease on 30 April.[104] He was now free to form a Positivist Society, which he did, with two LSS members (Dunn and Scott) and 'other subscribers' agreeing to finance his stipend. The group developed a routine of Sunday meetings with ritual and hymns, Gould's lectures on a range of topics (including the humanist religion, education, labour, history and biography), a children's class, and a small weekly evening class for adults. A 'faithful nucleus' attended, Gould noted, but numbers were never large, occasionally 60, more often 20.[105]

At his final meeting with the Secular Society on 22 April 1908 Gould was thanked for 'the manner in which [he had] fulfilled his duties as Secretary and Organiser and also of the many additional valuable services rendered by him both to the Society and to the town at large'. Gould presented this as an amicable parting and a natural progression: 'I dissented from no word in the Society's programme; but . . . I obeyed an urge towards other fields.'[106] Yet his favoured LSS projects, including the choir and the Guild, had run into difficulties by the time he left,[107] suggesting that Gould's heart was elsewhere, that he was finding it increasingly difficult to secure the cooperation of other LSS members, or perhaps both. His departure was marked by a civilised farewell tea, but it is likely that some LSS members would not have been sorry to see him go. Over the next two years, Gould was occupied with his small Positivist group, the odd lecture at the Secular Society, his ongoing municipal commitments, and, increasingly, work for the MIL.[108] Gould joined the MIL's Executive Committee in 1908, travelling regularly from Leicester to London to attend meetings. By November 1909 what had been occasional demonstration lessons had become considerably more frequent events.[109] Gould was offered a paid position as demonstrator, which he accepted subject to the promise of a 'modest income' for a minimum of two years.[110] In April 1910 Gould moved back to London with his wife and two

children, and took up his demonstrator role. The family settled in Woodfield Avenue, Ealing, part of Brentham Garden Suburb. Planned on the basis of secular ideals (one of the roads was named Holyoake Walk), Brentham would undoubtedly have been an attractive community for Gould to base himself in as he embarked on a new phase in his educational activities.[111]

Conclusion

F. J. Gould left Leicester in 1910, apparently with mixed feelings: 'I have loved the busy, shoe-making, democratic, redbrick, cleanly town of Simon de Montfort, and part from it with a wistful lingering.' He left his mark on the town, as moral instruction lessons were experienced by thousands of elementary school pupils. But he noted little 'enthusiasm' for his 'platform message', an assessment borne out by the sources examined.[112] With teachers rebelling openly against his cherished scheme, criticisms of his record of achievement among LSS members, and ultimately the limited success of his experimental Positivist group, it was time to go. Gould's efforts to remain visible and active among moral instructors on a national stage, through his publications and occasional work for the MIL, were for LSS a drain on his time and energy. These efforts ensured, however, that Gould was not pursuing his agenda in a vacuum and could link what was happening in Leicester to national developments. And they paid off for Gould himself in the form of the invitation to become paid demonstrator for the MIL.

It is hard to tell what Gould hoped to achieve in Leicester when he went. Did he go there to develop, and reform, LSS into a constructive and inclusive movement, drawing on the ideas of the Ethical Movement and, perhaps even a little in 1899, Positivism? Did he aim, from the start, to test out his favoured educational project, developed on a small scale in ethical Sunday Schools, in the larger arena of the town's elementary schools, and to involve himself in municipal politics in order to promote an ambitious programme of moral and material reform? Secularists and others in Leicester must have had mixed feelings about Gould's abilities and personality. His work rate was phenomenal, but he was apt to expect others to match his efforts. And it appears that he was not always sensitive to the effect that he and his actions might have on others. He worked hard for the good of LSS and the wider civic community of Leicester, but also gained publicity for himself. Being a visitor from London, he brought experience, insights and

contacts. But perhaps he did not fit easily within LSS's existing culture, or within the town's pattern of associational, cultural and political life.

Gould's efforts to promote moral instruction in Leicester left a legacy within and beyond the town, but one that is difficult to evaluate. The lessons that he was instrumental in securing in the school curriculum were given between 1901 and some date between 1912 and 1929 (the precise end point is not clear).[113] But three attempts to move from this position to a wholly secular education failed entirely. Nonetheless, Gould, with his ILP colleagues, made it difficult for the declining Liberal majority to stick to business as usual. He required a local public to consider the viability secular moral teaching, to question the place and conduct of religious instruction in schools, and to pay attention to ethical components of a number of educational and other municipal issues. For moral instructors elsewhere, Gould showed that something could happen through local activism, thus helping to shape the focus of MIL propaganda, as explored further in Chapter 4. Other local authorities adopted the 'Leicester syllabus', including Bradford in 1903, Bexhill on Sea in 1904 and Margate in 1905.[114] Leicester Education Committee, moreover, involved itself in significant events related to moral instruction nationally, appointing Councillor North to the advisory Council for the International Inquiry in 1907, and sending Miss Roberts to the IMEC in London in 1908. It is not clear whether Gould had any direct role in these discussions or decisions.[115]

Gould believed public interest in, and debate about, municipal affairs to be essential for a healthy democracy. His outspoken contributions at School Board and Education Committee meetings, his many letters and articles in the local press, and his frequent speeches at the Secular Hall and on other local platforms, aimed to generate this sort of interest and debate. But they also advertised his work. Gould had to acknowledge difficulties with his cherished scheme, and that some teachers did not appreciate, or struggled to implement, his favoured approach. He also had to recognise that his views and proposals did not appeal to all at LSS. But he gained experience as an author, and speaker, and of working with people of different political and religious traditions and ideas, which was to prove valuable to him over subsequent years. He was to be a key figure in the national and international developments that are considered next.

Notes

1. D. S. Nash (1992) *Secularism, Art and Freedom* (Leicester: Leicester University Press), especially pp. 61–73, 102–4, 113–22; D. S. Nash (1991) 'F. J. Gould and the Leicester Secular Society: A Positivist Commonwealth in Edwardian Politics', *Midland History*, 16:1, 126–40; A. Gill (1968) 'The Leicester School Board 1871–1903' in B. Simon (ed.) *Education in Leicestershire 1540–1940* (Leicester: Leicester University Press), pp. 156–77, pp. 158–60, 165, 168; R. N. Bérard (1987) 'Frederick James Gould and the Transformation of Moral Education', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 35:3, 233–47, pp. 235–6; K. Manton (2001) '"Filling Bellies and Brains"': The Educational and Political Thought of Frederick James Gould, *History of Education*, 30:3, 2001, 273–90, pp. 281–2.
2. *Ethical World (EW)*, 2 February 1901, pp. 70–1; G. Spiller (*c.*1934) *The Ethical Movement in Great Britain* (London: Farleigh Press), p. 126.
3. F. J. Gould (1923) *The Life Story of a Humanist* (London: Watts & Co.); M. Quin (1924) *Memoirs of a Positivist* (London: G. Allen & Unwin), p. 26.
4. Gould, *Life Story*, Chapters 1–8 (for quotes in the text pp. 5, 27, 32, 4).
5. Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 45, 49, 55–6, 51, 63, 60.
6. See Chapter 2 on different approaches.
7. Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 63–70; Stephen C. Orchard (2004) 'Picton, James Allanson (1832–1910)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, http://www.oxforddnb.com.oxfordbrookes.idm.oclc.org/view/article/35527, date accessed 3 June 2015; see also Hansard Parliamentary debates, Commons, 9 November 1888, col. 810.
8. Manton, 'Filling Bellies and Brains', pp. 284–5; F. J. Gould, 'A Teacher's Retrospect, 1871–1931', *Contemporary Review*, December 1931, 766–70, p. 766.
9. Gould, *Life Story*, p. 66; F. J. Gould (1928) *Past Seventy* (London: Watts & Co.).
10. Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 75–77.

11. Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 78–9; F. J. Gould (1895) *Tales from the Bible Told to my Daughter* (London: Watts & Co.); F. J. Gould (1898) *Tales from the New Testament* (London: Watts & Co.).
12. A population of 38,904 in 1831 rose to 95,364 by 1871 and 211,574 by 1901. The overall area of the town expanded over five times between 1870 and 1911 and expansion was accompanied by population movement, changes in the distribution of housing types, and changing and increasingly complex social groupings. Gill, 'Leicester School Board', pp. 156–7; R. M. Pritchard (1976) *Housing and the Spatial Structure of the City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 86.
13. F. J. Gould, 'The Betting-Ring and Three Visions', *Leicester Pioneer*, 19 October 1901, Leicester Secular Society (LSS) Newspaper Cuttings 1899–1902, 10D68/8, Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (RLLR). (See also G. L. Bernstein (1983) 'Liberalism and the Progressive Alliance in the Constituencies, 1900–1914: Three Case Studies', *Historical Journal*, 26:3, 617–40, pp. 629–30 on Leicester's economic condition.)
14. D. Freer (1977/78) 'The Dynasty-Builders of Victorian Leicester', *Transactions of the Leicester Archaeological and Historical Society*, 53, 42–54. The Liberals had an overall majority on the Town Council from 1836 to 1909 (Bernstein, 'Liberalism', p. 637).
15. B. Lancaster (1987) *Radicalism, Cooperation and Socialism: Leicester Working-Class Politics 1860–1906* (Leicester: Leicester University Press), pp. xix–xxi, 183–4; Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, pp. 28–9; Gould, *Life Story*, p. 84.
16. There were also active secular societies in Birmingham and Nottingham. Nash, 'F. J. Gould', p. 126.
17. S. Gimson, Letter to the Editor, *Freethinker*, 5 May 1918, p. 263.
18. F. J. Gould (1900) *History of Leicester Secular Society* (Leicester: Leicester Secular Society), pp. 9–11. Leicester Secular Society remains active to the present day, Leicester Secular Society—homepage, http://www.leicestersecularsociety.org.uk/, date accessed 3 June 2016.
19. Gould, *Life Story*, p. 85; F. J. Gould to F. S. Marvin, 14 April 1899, MS.Eng.Lett.d.254, fols. 123–4, Papers of Frank Sidney Marvin, Western Manuscripts, Bodleian Library (FSMP); Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, Chapter 5.

20. Freer, 'Dynasty Builders', pp. 43–4; M. Quin (1924) *Memoirs of a Positivist* (London: G. Allen & Unwin), p. 49. On the Gimsons' links to other organisations, such as Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society and the Domestic Mission, see S. Begley (2009) 'Voluntary Associations and the Civic Ideal in Leicester, 1870–1939' (PhD thesis, University of Leicester), pp. 158–62.
21. Gould, *History of Leicester Secular Society*, pp. 20–1; Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, p. 5.
22. Gould, *History of Leicester Secular Society*, pp. 30, 44; S. Gimson, *Random Recollections of the Leicester Secular Society, with Digressions*, *Part 1, 1932*, p. 7, 10D68/18, RLLR.
23. Robert Forder cited in E. Royle (1980) *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans: Popular Freethought in Britain, 1866–1915* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 139.
24. Gimson, *Random Recollections, Part 1*, p. 7; Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 104–7.
25. Gould, *History of Leicester Secular Society*, pp. 28–30; Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, pp. 234, 237.
26. Gould, *History of Leicester Secular Society*, pp. 34–5; Gould, *Life Story*, p. 89; Gimson, *Random Recollections, Part 1*, pp. 49–50. Malcolm Quin left Leicester for Newcastle in 1878 where in 1883 he established his own Church of Humanity (T. R. Wright (1983) 'Positively Catholic: Malcolm Quin's Church of Humanity in Newcastle upon Tyne', *Durham University Journal*, 75, 11–20).
27. Gould, *History of Leicester Secular Society*, pp. 29–30; Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, pp. 131, 137–8.
28. Gimson, *Random Recollections, Part 1*, pp. 51–3; Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 98–9; Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, pp. 56–7; *EW*, 15 February 1910, p. 23. This role had been taken on briefly by Harry Snell and Joseph McCabe during 1897 and 1898.
29. His moral lesson texts included F. J. Gould (1899–1907) *Children's Book of Moral Lessons. Series I–IV* (London: Watts & Co.); F. J. Gould (1906) *Life and Manners* (London: Swann Sonnenschein & Co.).
30. *Leicester Reasoner*, March 1901, p. 2.
31. S. Gimson, *Random Recollections of the Leicester Secular Society, with Digressions. Part 2*, 1935, pp. 1–2, 10D/68/19, RLLR; 23 May 1900, LSS Minute Book 1885–1902, 10D/68/3, RLLR; Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, pp. 113–16.

32. Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, pp. 116–19 and S. Gimson, *Random Recollections*, *Part 2*, pp. 1–2. For details of early lectures see *Leicester Free Press*, September 1899, *Leicester Pioneer*, n.d. (December 1901?), LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1899–1902; *EW*, 22 November 1902, p. 375.
33. Gill, 'Leicester School Board', pp. 163–5.
34. Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 92–3; 10 October, 7 November 1900, LSS Minute Book 1885–1902.
35. *Leicester Free Press*, 17 November 1900, Leicester School Board (LSB) Press Cuttings 1892–1900, 19D59/VII/320, RLLR; *Leicester Daily Post*, 15 November 1900, LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1899–1902; Gould, *Life Story*, p. 93; *Leicester Reasoner*, December 1901, p. 6.
36. Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 93–4; *Leicester Free Press*, 17 November 1900, LSB Press Cuttings 1892–1900.
37. *EW*, 20 October 1900, LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1899–1902; *Leicester Free Press*, 17 November 1900, LSB Press Cuttings 1892–1900.
38. *Leicester Free Press*, 1 December 1900, LSB Press Cuttings 1892–1900.
39. 'Eyes Open', Letter to the Editor, *Leicester Free Press*, 17 November 1900, *Leicester Daily Post*, 24 November 1900, LSB Press Cuttings 1892–1900; *Leicester Daily Post*, 11 November 1900, *Leicester Guardian*, 27 November 1900, LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1899–1902.
40. S. Wright (2006) 'The Struggle for Moral Education in English Elementary Schools 1879–1918' (PhD thesis, Oxford Brookes University), pp. 48–50.
41. 1897 School Board election flyer for Henry Payne, *Leicester Daily Post*, 17 November 1900, LSB Press Cuttings 1892–1900. According to Cox, these were 'lean years' for Leicester's ILP branch. D. Cox (1961) 'The Labour Party in Leicester: a Study in Branch Development', *International Review of Social History*, 6:2, 197–211, pp. 199–200.
42. Gould heard about moral instruction at Burton on Trent when he visited the town as a speaker in 1903, and the MIL did not find out about moral instruction in Huddersfield until 1905. However, Gould is very likely to have read about moral instruction in

Birmingham in *EW* in early 1900 (*EW*, 21 November 1903, pp. 371–2, 27 May 1905, p. 166, 27 January 1900, p. 58).

43. Votes for triennial election to Leicester School Board, 3 December 1900, LSB Minutes 1899–1903, 19D59/VI/10, RLLR.
44. Gill, 'Leicester School Board', pp. 157–8.
45. 4 March 1901, LSB Minutes 1899–1903.
46. 14 February 1901, 6 May 1901, 3 June 1901, LSB Minutes 1899–1903.
47. *Leicester Pioneer*, n.d. (December 1901?); *Leicester Free Press*, 8 February 1902, LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1899–1902. The *Pioneer* was a left-leaning periodical which Gould helped launch, with others, in 1901 (Gould, *Life Story*, p. 91).
48. 1 April 1901, LSB Minutes 1899–1903; *Leicester Reasoner*, May 1901, p. 2.
49. 7 October 1901, LSB Minutes 1899–1903; *Leicester Reasoner*, November 1901, p. 3.
50. The discussion at the School Board meeting of 7 October 1901 was reported in detail in the local press (e.g., *Leicester Daily Post*, 8 October 1901, LSB Press Cuttings 1901–03, 19D59/VII/321, RLLR). F. J. Gould, 'An Agnostic's Tour through the Leicester Board Schools', *Agnostic Annual*, 1902, 37–42 describes his visits to schools.
51. *Leicester Pioneer*, 12 October 1901, LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1899–1902; *Leicester Daily Post*, 8 October 1901.
52. *Leicester Free Press*, n.d. (October 1901); Letter from 'One among the million', *Leicester Free Press*, 19 October 1901, LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1899–1902; *Leicester Daily Post*, 8 October 1901; *Leicester Reasoner*, November 1901, p. 2.
53. A Year on the School Board, c. December 1901, *Leicester Pioneer*, LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1899–1902.
54. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 127.
55. Gould, *Life Story*, p. 94; *Leicester Daily Post*, 8 December 1901. Baines was presumably referring to F. W. Hackwood (1883) *Notes of Lessons on Moral Subjects* (London: Nelson) which was adopted by Birmingham School Board and a time before the allocation of school funding on the basis of individual pupil examinations was abandoned in 1895.
56. 12 November 1900, 26 November 1900, LSB School Management Committee Minutes 1899–1901, 19D59/VI/19, RLLR;

Leicester Daily Post, 19 November 1900, LSB Press Cuttings 1892–1900.

57. *Leicester Reasoner*, May 1901, p. 2.
58. *Leicester Guardian*, 27 June 1903, LSB Press Cuttings 1903–08, 19D59/VII/322, RLLR ; 14 October 1901, 10 February 1902, 24 February 1902, 7 July 1902, 21 July 1902, 13 October 1902, 27 October 1902, 10 November 1902, LSB School Management Committee Minutes 1901–03, 19D59/VI/20, RLLR.
59. Gimson, *Random Recollections, Part 1*, p. 51; *EW*, 22 March 1902, p. 95, 5 April 1902, p. 109.
60. *EW*, 24 May 1902, p. 163.
61. F. J. Gould, Letter to the burgesses of Newton Ward, 26 October 1903; Flyer for 1903 municipal election. LSS Scrapbook of Printed Material 1873–1908, 10D68/6, RLLR; On Gould's wider programme of reform see Manton, 'Filling Bellies and Brains', pp. 281–2, 290.
62. F. J. Gould, Flyer for 1904 municipal election, LSS Printed Material 1873–1908; *Freethinker*, 13 November 1904, p. 780; Gould, *Life Story*, p. 101; Cox, 'Labour Party', pp. 199, 207.
63. F. J. Gould, Letter to the electors of Castle Ward, October 1907, LSS Printed Material 1873–1908; Gould, *Life Story*, p. 104. For local press discussion, see LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1906–08, 10D68/11, RLLR.
64. *EW*, 15 February 1910, p. 23. Religious issues similarly flared up at election times on the School Board (Gill, 'Leicester School Board', p. 163).
65. Gould, *Life Story*, p. 105, Gimson, *Random Recollections, Part 2,* pp. 22–3. For election campaign materials, see LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1906–08 and LSS Printed Material 1873–1908.
66. Gould, *Life Story*, p. 106.
67. Bernstein, 'Liberalism', p. 637; Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 101–2; *EW*, 15 February 1910, p. 23.
68. 24 July 1905, 26 February 1906, 26 March 1906, Leicester Education Committee (LEC) Minutes 1904–1906, 19D59/VII/29, RLLR.
69. 23 October 1905, 26 March 1906, LEC Minutes 1904–1906; *EW*, 21 October 1905, p. 331.
70. 25 September 1905, 22 July 1907, 10 September 1907, 22 February 1909, LEC Minutes 1904–1906, 1906–08, 1908–11,

19D59/VII/29–31, RLLR; 20 February 1905, 3 July 1905, LEC Elementary Schools Sub-Committee Minutes 1903–05, 1905–07, 19D59/VII/34–35, RLLR.

71. *EW*, 15 February 1910, p. 23; 22 October 1906, 25 January 1909, 24 January 1910, LEC Minutes 1906–08, 1908–11.
72. *School Government Chronicle*, 14 September 1907, pp. 219–21; 5 October 1907, pp. 276–7.
73. 22 May 1905, 26 June 1905, 27 May 1907, 22 July 1907, 22 February 1909, LEC Minutes 1904–1906, 1906–08, 1908–11.
74. Report of LEC meeting, 27 June 1905, source not identified, LSS Scrapbook of Newspaper Cuttings 1903–06, 10D68/10, RLLR.
75. E. J. H., Letter (source and date not identified), Letter 24 June 1905, source not identified; 'The Religious Difficulty in Leicester', *Leicester Daily Post*, 27 June 1905, all LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1903–06.
76. Letters by Gould published in local papers from 1904 to 1907 which referred to moral instruction are pasted in LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1903–06 and 1906–08.
77. *Leicester Daily Post*, 2 November 1907, LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1906–08; Education Notes by Alpha, *Leicester Daily Post*, 24 February 1909, LEC Press Cuttings 1908–09, 19D59/VII/323, RLLR.
78. 16 October 1905, 20 November 1905, 23 November 1908, 7 December 1908, LEC Elementary Schools Sub-Committee Minutes 1905–07 and 1907–09 (19D59/VII/36, RLLR). The 1905 and 1906 reports were summarised in *EW*, 2 December 1905, and H. Johnson (1908) *Moral Instruction in Elementary Schools in England and Wales* (London: David Nutt) pp. 28–9 respectively.
79. 15 February 1909, LEC Elementary Schools Sub-Committee Minutes 1907–09; 24 May 1909, LEC Minutes 1908–11.
80. *Leicester Reasoner*, November 1902, p. 2; *EW*, 15 February 1910, p. 23.
81. Review reprinted in *EW*, 16 December 1899, p. 800.
82. *Yorkshire Post*, 28 October 1905; *Yorkshire Post*, n.d. (October 1905), *Manchester Daily Dispatch*, 14 November 1905, Account of Cheshire Education Committee monthly meeting November 1905, no source or date (all LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1903–06); A. Maitland Wood, Letter to the Editor, *The Times*, November

4, 1905, p. 6. West Riding and Cheshire LEAs had introduced moral instruction lessons for all schools, church and council, in 1904 and 1905 respectively (Johnson, *Moral Instruction*, pp. 12–13, 45–6).

83. Gould, *Children's Book of Moral Lessons, I.*, pp. 157–61 (p. 159 for quote).
84. Captain Mars, *Yorkshire Post*, 4 November 1905, J. Midgley, *Yorkshire Post*, 14 November 1905, LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1903–06.
85. Progressive Churchman, *Yorkshire Post*, 4 November 1905, J. W. Poynter, *Yorkshire Post*, 11 November 1905, Thos. M. Watt, *Yorkshire Post*, 19 November 1905, LSS Newspaper Cuttings 1903–06.
86. Johnson, *Moral Instruction*, pp. 12–13, 45–6 (8 LEAs reported using Gould's texts, not specifying which, or this book specifically (pp. 8, 10, 17, 19, 30, 35–6)).
87. *EW*, 15 February 1910, p. 23; Gimson, *Random Recollections*, *Part 2*, pp. 5–7; Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, pp. 64, 67–8; 10 April 1901, 2 October 1901, 26 March 1902, LSS Minute Book 1885–1902.
88. 16 November 1904, LSS Minute Book 1902–1943, 10D/68/4, RLLR.
89. F. J. Gould, 'The New Secularism', *Agnostic Annual*, 1903, 14–19, p. 19. On Birmingham's civic gospel see A. Briggs (1968) *Victorian Cities* (London: Penguin Books), pp. 184–240.
90. *EW*, 21 June 1902, pp. 198–9, 11 October 1902, p. 327, 29 November 1902, pp. 380–1, 26 September 1903, p. 309, 6 February 1904, p. 45, 1 October 1904, p. 318. See Chapters 4 and 5 for more on Gould and the MIL. His sample lessons published in periodicals often re-appeared in book form.
91. *EW*, 17 November 1900, p. 743, 8 December 1900, p. 777, 15 February 1902, pp. 51–2, 6 December 1902, p. 391, 11 June 1904, p. 187, 3 June 1905, p. 171, 15 July 1905, pp. 219–20.
92. *EW*, 10 May 1902, p. 151.
93. 'Our Leaders XXI.—Mr. F. J. Gould', *School*, September 1905, 86–7. See Chapter 5 on the International Inquiry and the First International Moral Education Congress.
94. *EW*, 15 February 1910, p. 23, 15 March 1910, p. 46.
95. Gould, 'New Secularism', pp. 17–18; F. J. Gould, 'An Appreciation of Comte', *Agnostic Annual*, 1905, 57–63, pp. 57, 61.

96. F. J. Gould to F. S. Marvin, 27 July 1897, MS.Eng.Lett.d.253, fols. 91–92, FSMP; F. J. Gould (1987) *A Plan of Moral Instruction Adopted by the Moral Instruction League* (London: MIL, 1897); Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 79, 93, 90.
97. Gould wrote a number of letters to Marvin during his time in Leicester (FSMP).
98. Quin, *Memoirs of a Positivist*, p. 100; Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, p. 135.
99. The first of these was F. J. Gould, 'Positivism and the Elementary School System', *Positivist Review* (henceforward *PR*), August 1905, pp. 173–7.
100. 4 November 1905, 27 November 1908, Minutes of Committee May 1905–October 1910, LPS 1/5, London Positivist Society Papers, British Library of Political and Economic Science.
101. F. J. Gould (1905) *The Religion that Fulfils* (London: Watts & Co.); F. J. Gould (1908) *A Catechism of Religion and the Social Life* (London: Watts & Co.).
102. Gould, 'Positivism and the Elementary School System', p. 174; F. J. Gould, 'The Proletarian Mother and Education', *PR*, April 1907, 76–80, p. 76.
103. See S. H. Swinny's comparison of Gould's and Quin's approaches to educational matters. 'Paragraphs', *PR*, January 1906, p. 22.
104. Gould, *Life Story*, p. 108; 29 January 1908, LSS Minute Book 1902–1943.
105. Letter from A. F. Dunn and W. H. Scott appended to 29 January 1908 General Committee Meeting, LSS Minute Book 1902–1943; Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 109–10; F. J. Gould to F. S. Marvin, 1 June 1908, MS.Eng.Lett.d.259, fol. 111, FSMP.
106. 22 April 1908, LSS Minute Book 1902–1943; Gould, *Life Story*, p. 108.
107. 15 November 1905, 10 January 1906, LSS Minute Book 1902–1943.
108. 8 April 1908, Notice of public lectures January–April 1910, LSS Minute Book 1902–1943.
109. *EW*, 15 November 1909, p. 173; *Moral Education League Quarterly (MELQ)*, 13, 1 April 1908, pp. 3–4 (Gould, apparently, acted as Chairman of the Executive for some of 1908 (*EW*, 15 January 1909, p. 7)).
110. *MELQ*, 19, 1 January 1910, p. 3, 20, 1 April 1910, pp. 1–3.

111. Brentham Garden Suburb, 'Brentham Lives: Frederick James Gould 1855–1938', https://brenthamgs.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/bl_gould-fj.pdf, date accessed 2 June 2016.
112. *EW*, 15 February 1910, p. 23; Gould, *Life Story*, p. 112.
113. LEC (1912) *Report on the Work of the Education Committee from the Appointed Day of 1st July 1903 to the 9th November 1912*, p. 12, 19D/59/VII/472/i, RLLR indicates that lessons were still being given at this time. Gould wrote in 1929 that 'the plan was carried out for several years', suggesting that lessons had been dropped by then (F. J. Gould (1929) *Moral Education. A Chapter from the Story of Schools in England and Wales* (London: Watts & Co.), p. 6).
114. Johnson, *Moral Instruction*, pp. xii, 8–9, 30. West Bromwich also, apparently used 'Leicester text books' for its moral instruction lessons (*EW*, 10 March 1906, p. 78).
115. 7 January 1907, 7 September 1908, 19 October 1908, LEC Elementary School Sub-Committee Minutes, 1905–07 and 1907–09.

CHAPTER 4

The Moral Instruction League, 1897–1919

On 7 December 1897, members of the Social Democratic Foundation, the Independent Labour Party, various trade unions, the National Secular Society (NSS), the Union of Ethical Societies (UES), and other 'progressive bodies', met at St Martin's Town Hall, London.[1] The result of this meeting was the formation of the Moral Instruction League (MIL), which aimed to promote non-theological moral instruction in the nation's schools. The MIL has been described by later historians as 'an odd collectivity of teachers, writers, politicians, and free-lance intellectuals', and, more positively, as 'the socially responsible, advanced thinkers of their day'.[2] Although by no means the only organisation during these years to promote moral teaching of some form or another in English schools, the MIL was distinctive for its nationwide focus, and the breadth and ambition of its educational programme, compared with other bodies which focused on narrower interests such as sex education or loyalty to empire. It was, moreover, dominated by secularists who used it as a vehicle to promote, within English schools, their own views on morality and citizenship. The MIL tried to convince national and local government, training colleges, teachers in schools, and a broader public, of the benefits of the educational programme it proposed. It presented itself as being open to people of 'all theologies and of none' who wanted to ensure more effective provision for moral education in the country's schools.[3] However, secularists, and the Ethical Movement in particular, shaped the MIL's ideas and pedagogical approach and provided ideological and organisational resources.

S. Wright, *Morality and Citizenship in English Schools*,
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The pressure group activities of the MIL have been documented carefully by Gustav Spiller in his history of the Ethical Movement, and discussed in later research by R. J. W. Selleck, R. N. Bérard and F. H. Hilliard.[4] Instead, this chapter will consider in detail how religious and secular ideas and activists shaped the MIL's proposals, and also responses to the MIL and its proposals on the part of politicians, teachers, churchmen and a wider public. Working through the MIL, secularists, and ethicists in particular, were able to influence public debate, and, to some extent, educational policy and classroom practice. Ultimately, however, they were unable to accomplish all of their objectives. The MIL's aim of appealing to all people, whatever their religious persuasion, proved impossible to achieve.

Promoting Non-theological Moral Instruction

The MIL emerged initially out of a localised and immediate need, that of canvassing candidates for the 1897 London School Board election,[5] and evolved into an organisation that campaigned to introduce secular moral instruction lessons into elementary schools across England and Wales. It aimed to influence Local Education Authorities (LEAs), the Board of Education, and teacher training colleges. It also developed educational materials for use in schools (its graduated syllabuses of moral instruction and handbooks for teachers) and devised rudimentary mechanisms for professional development for teachers on the ground, including demonstration lessons offered by F. J. Gould. Pamphlets, lectures, and a steady stream of letters, articles and announcements in the national and educational press, publicised its programme.[6]

On 19 July 1897, 55 delegates from 'various societies interested in the education of the working classes', including the Social Democratic Foundation, the Independent Labour Party, the UES, the NSS and trade unions, met at Holborn Town Hall, London. Frederic Harrison, the Positivist leader, took the chair. The meeting established a Moral Instruction School Board Election Conference, with the aim of persuading candidates for the School Board election in London later that year to campaign for the introduction of non-theological moral instruction, in place of religious instruction, in the capital's schools.[7] The Conference met a few times in the ensuing months, and decided that a permanent and national organisation should be established to promote non-theological moral instruction in schools throughout the country. To this end it convened the meeting on 7 December at which the MIL was founded.

The MIL's 'Object', agreed at its first formal business meeting on 26 January 1898, was 'to substitute systematic non-theological moral instruction for the present religious teaching in all State schools, and to make character the chief aim of school life'. By 1902 the demand that religious lessons should be replaced had gone. This change enabled the MIL, in the opinion of activists and other commentators, to extend its influence among teachers and policy-makers.[8] Approval of its efforts was, according to the writer of 'Educational Notes' in *The Times*, 'implied, if not expressed' by the Board of Education.[9] The Board's *Codes of Regulations for Elementary Schools* of 1904 and 1906 and its 1905 *Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers* suggested support for the MIL's aims. However, a persistent campaign of lobbying, letters, deputations of prominent parliamentary supporters like William Collins and G. P. Gooch, and a House of Commons debate aimed at changing legislative and administrative provisions, failed to persuade the Board to commit to compulsory moral instruction lessons. The choice of approach was left to individual LEAs. By 1908 'over one hundred' of the 327 LEAs had 'taken some definite action in providing for moral instruction in their schools', with about 60 of these offering 'more or less systematic moral instruction'. The MIL was also involved in international activities at this time, with representatives on an International Inquiry into moral instruction between 1906 and 1908, and at the First International Moral Education Congress (IMEC) held in London in 1908 (see Chapter 5).[10]

A change of name to the Moral Education League in 1909 signalled a focus on curriculum development and a move away from high-profile central government campaigns, although the MIL continued to lobby, albeit less persistently, for legislative and administrative reform. This led to fewer column inches in the national and educational press, but did not immediately result in a decline in the number of subscribers or funds from subscriptions, which peaked in 1912, the last year for which full figures are available, at 757 and £811.15s.0d. respectively.[11] In 1911, members included 'Catholics, Anglicans, Nonconformists, Jews, Unitarians, Ethicists, Rationalists, Positivists, Hindus, Mahommedans, Parsees, Buddhists'. Politically, they encompassed 'Conservatives, Liberals and Socialists' and, occupationally, 'University Professors; Members of Parliament; representatives of the leading professions … and social reformers'. In addition to Britain, 17 other nations were represented.[12] International links became increasingly important. Gould, as the MIL's demonstrator from 1910 to 1915, toured the USA and India giving demonstration lessons. And moral

instruction leagues, ostensibly modelled on the English MIL, were established in France, Germany and India.[13]

The MIL became frustrated that, despite its persistent lobbying, the Board of Education refused to compel schools to provide for non-theological moral instruction. The Board's position might have, as the MIL implied, emerged from a degree of conservatism in policy-making circles, a desire not to break with long-standing education department tradition, whereby moral education was envisaged as necessarily having a Christian basis.[14] This position was also influenced by a more recent strategy of devolving decision-making to the local level, which was typical of central government methods of this era in many policy areas, and which, the Board of Education suggested, would ultimately benefit pupils. As the president of the Board, C. P. Trevelyan, put it to a MIL deputation in 1913, this sort of freedom in schools ensured a vitality that could be smothered by over-regulation.[15]

Along with many other organisations, the MIL struggled during the First World War with staff shortages, limited office space, and straitened finances. This situation was exacerbated by problems since 1913 of poor management and a decline in income, if Gould's comments expressed in a private letter are to be believed. At this time it broadened its activities to incorporate civics, adult education, regional surveys and other educational tools of the emergent discipline of sociology. With further name changes to the Civic and Moral Education League in 1916 and the Civic Education League in 1919, this shift in emphasis was confirmed. The name change in 1919 accompanied a formal merger with another body (the Schools Personal Service Association) and a change in constitution. The MIL as it had been was, literally, no more.[16] In 1924 its activities became subsumed into the work of the civics teaching department at Le Play House, home of the Sociological Society and kindred bodies.[17]

The MIL promoted moral instruction, which it defined as set lessons or conversations 'definitely directed to moral subjects', as the best way to approach moral training in schools, at least until after 1914 when a broader programme of civic education was devised. Moral instruction, the MIL argued, was the most appropriate educational method for stimulating the use of intellect and judgement that truly moral conduct required, and should be delivered through a thorough, systematic and graded programme.[18] This argument was out of kilter with fashionable educational theories of the time which emphasised children's self-development and the moral development that occurred through other school activities

and day-to-day interactions in the school. Two professors, J. J. Findlay of the University of Manchester in England, and John Dewey across the Atlantic, were among the most prominent critics of the MIL's direct instruction approach.[19] The MIL did not claim that moral instruction lessons alone would provide an adequate moral training. It recognised the importance of the wider morally educative influences of the school, the family, and other agencies, but argued that in the absence of moral instruction lessons any moral training would be incomplete.[20]

From its inception the MIL emphasised the links between individual morality and civic virtue. A 1900 pamphlet was entitled *Our Future Citizens*. And in 1904 local supporters in Manchester wanted moral instruction to be appreciated as a 'citizen's question'.[21] The modern State, the MIL argued, needed effective moral instruction in its schools. 'The formation of personal good character is the condition … of good citizenship' wrote Gould in an MIL pamphlet in 1913. The modern State had 'developed a highly complex demand upon the citizen's devotion'. This required it to work through its schools, in order to '[form] the habits, and [construct] the ideals, of the citizenship on which its very existence depends'.[22] Such an emphasis on reforming individual character as the basis of a unified national community was not unique. It echoed the long-standing views of Christian educators, and old republican traditions of civic virtue. It also reflected the arguments of philosophical idealism, which, as noted already, were popular and influential at the time.[23] More controversial was a focus on 'the strictly human reasons for good conduct', rather than sanctions deriving from God. The MIL assumed a body of 'great fundamental moral principles common to humanity' which would be 'acceptable to people of all theologies or none'. It declared itself concerned only with 'issues of character and conduct in their psychological and sociological aspects', the question of 'supernatural sanctions and relationships' being outside its scope.[24] The influence of typical Ethical Movement views of a universal and synoptic morality, independent of religious belief, is evident.

The components of this shared body of morality can be found in the MIL's *Graduated Syllabus*, and related teachers' handbooks. The *Syllabus* covered an extensive range of desirable moral qualities, which rarely deviated far from standard Judaeo-Christian morality except in the omission of reference to God, and were expressed as a series of abstract nouns. Teaching for the lower standards (Infants to Standard II) focused on personal traits, such as kindliness, truthfulness and self-control, but framed to embody the notion of duty towards others, they could form the basis of civic virtue.

Children in the middle standards (III to V) were deemed able to discuss social themes like justice, humanity and patriotism. More complex and potentially controversial subjects, such as cooperation, peace and war, ownership, and ideals, were reserved for the oldest pupils in standards VI and VII.[25]

Much of the content for students up to Standard V was uncontentious and did not deviate far from other teaching texts of the period. Taking the theme of patriotism, for example, students were encouraged to recognise positive national characteristics such as freedom of thought and action, and democracy, and to serve their country. Famous exemplars of patriotic virtue, nearly all men, included English, rather than British, historical and military leaders (Wellington, Nelson, Alfred the Great and General Gordon) alongside a few international figures (Joan of Arc and Washington) found in other teaching texts of the time. Added to these was a greater than typical reference to patriotism in the day-to-day lives of a general population, including workers, thinkers, and women in the home. The themes of the lessons for older pupils, and the handbooks designed to accompany these lessons, contained more controversial material. A. J. Waldegrave, in his 1912 text for Standard VII pupils, *Lessons in Citizenship*, critiqued capitalist inequality and the inappropriate exercise of superior social standing. In this way he revealed his left-leaning politics; he was, in addition to being an MIL and Ethical Movement activist, involved with the Labour Church. Gould, in the final book of his *Children's Book of Moral Lessons* series (aimed at children at the older end of the 10–14 range), portrayed Irish and Indian claims for self-rule as a legitimate form of patriotic expression, reflecting a broader secularist and left-wing ambivalence about imperial expansion. Religious matters were only rarely discussed explicitly in these texts. When they were, as the commentary on one of Gould's books in Chapter 3 has shown, considerable controversy could ensue.[26]

Of 'All Theologies and of None'?[27]

More than any other secularist body, it was the Ethical Movement that influenced and shaped the MIL, providing it with personnel, organisational networks for promotion and recruitment, and the core of its educational programme. The UES, in keeping with emerging international Ethical Movement priorities, invested time, effort and resources into the promotion of moral education. Following a decision at its Annual Congress in May 1897, the UES convened the first meeting of the School Board Election

Conference in July 1897, and the UES's proposals were to form the basis of election work in the different metropolitan divisions.[28] The UES's journal, *Ethical World*, frequently carried articles about moral education, and, for most of the period 1903 to 1914, a regular column on the MIL and its activities. This coverage contrasts with the occasional references to the MIL in other secularist periodicals. In the early years the Ethical Movement provided the MIL with most of its Executive Committee, and many of its members. Zola Vallance and Charles E. Hooper (secretaries for 1897–1900 and 1900–01, respectively) were Ethical Movement activists. Stanton Coit (secretary 1901–02 and then president until 1908), Gould (Executive Committee member before 1899 and from 1908 to 1910 and demonstrator, 1910–15), Harrold Johnson (secretary, 1902–13), and Spiller (Executive Committee member with particular responsibility for international activities) were all, at some point during the late 1890s and early 1900s, full-time workers for the UES.[29] Alexander Farquharson, secretary from 1913, does not appear to have worked for the Ethical Movement in the same way, perhaps an indication that these early links were weakening, but still wrote about the MIL, albeit less frequently than his predecessor, in *Ethical World*.[30]

The MIL felt that the efficacy of its favoured approach had been proven within the educational programmes of secularist bodies. Forms of non-theological moral instruction had been used by Secularists and Positivists within their Sunday Schools, and also in the Socialist Sunday Schools attached to the Labour Church.[31] However, of the main secularist bodies, the Ethical Movement was the most consistent advocate for non-theological moral instruction, and had the strongest influence on the programme the MIL devised. From the 1880s, Ethical Movement activists in the USA and in England promoted the 'systematic Ethical Instruction' of both children and adults. Felix Adler's 1892 text *The Moral Instruction of Children*, discussed in Chapter 5, was described by the MIL as 'the pioneer work from which our modern moral education movement has sprung'.[32] The Sunday Schools of the ethical societies established in England in the 1890s, in particular, provided an important field of experiment for the MIL as a whole, as they had done for Gould as an individual. Free from the constraints of timetabling and inspection that elementary school teachers had to face, Gould, Spiller, Coit, Vallance and others who later worked within the MIL were able to develop their educational ideas and test some of the teaching aids which were, under MIL auspices, adapted and put forward for adoption in schools. The UES's fortnightly specimen moral lessons from the late 1890s also enabled teachers to see, and criticise, the

demonstrating teachers' approaches.[33] As was true of Gould in Leicester, programmes of moral lessons introduced between 1878 and 1889 by Burton on Trent, Birmingham and Huddersfield School Boards were not viewed as an influence. Indeed, the MIL it appears did not know about these programmes until after 1900; its metropolitan origins probably leading to a lack of knowledge, early on, of developments outside London.[34]

The Ethical Movement and its organisational resources and networks were used to further the cause of the MIL. Over the years, in the pages of *Ethical World*, ethicist readers were encouraged to attend events, donate money, and assist the MIL in reaching a broader public by distributing pamphlets and posters, lobbying local meetings of educational associations, trades councils and the like, voting for appropriate candidates in School Board and Council elections, and, later, providing spaces for Gould's demonstration lessons. Sheffield, Liverpool, Nelson and Merthyr ethical societies all coordinated campaigns to persuade their LEAs to introduce moral instruction lessons. Other ethical societies were encouraged to follow their lead.[35]

Supporters were also recruited from other secularist groups. For example, the NSS was encouraged to send representatives to the first School Board Election Conference meeting in July 1897. It was not easy to achieve a peaceful coexistence between Ethical Movement and NSS personnel. The NSS claimed that Secularist representatives were outnumbered by ethicist and socialist delegates who were determined to fill the seats on the Election Conference's Council. Things did not improve with the formation of the MIL. Again feeling outnumbered on what it saw as an Ethical Movement-dominated Executive Committee, and becoming increasingly alienated by the MIL's emerging stance on the Bible in schools, in 1899 the NSS severed its formal organisational affiliation with the MIL.[36] Some Secularists, however, did remain as individual members. Among the Positivists, Harrison chaired the July 1897 School Board Election Conference meeting; this happened as the result of Gould's 'insistent suggestion', or so Gould claimed. Harrison himself suggested that Positivists could go along with the MIL's advocacy of moral instruction without theology 'if . . . not pushed too far', pointing out that Comte's educational ideals were not being met in full. Other leading Positivists were less enthusiastic. S. H. Swinny, for example, noted in 1898 the difficulty of accommodating the divergent interests involved. Two years later, he warned that moral lessons could potentially become an instrument for undesirable majority views such as lust for empire (his remarks were made during the South African War).[37]

Notwithstanding these qualms, MIL outputs and activities were given some Positivist flavour through the input of Gould.[38]

From very early on, too, the MIL courted the support of Christians, particularly those of a progressive persuasion. Its early allies included J. Allanson Picton, one-time Congregationalist preacher and Leicester MP, who spoke at the inaugural meeting of the MIL in December 1897. Picton had for many years opposed religious instruction in State schools. Whilst a member of the first London School Board he had voted against Bible reading in the city's elementary schools, and had campaigned, albeit unsuccessfully, for the Board to consider systematic moral instruction instead. As noted in Chapter 3 he had also, in the late 1880s, supported Gould's arguments for a secular approach to Bible reading in the House of Commons.[39] The radical Unitarian minister the Reverend John Page Hopps, who had been an advocate of secular education during his time as a member of Glasgow School Board in the 1870s, took the chair at the meeting of the School Board Election Conference held on 13 October 1897, and spoke at the MIL's inaugural meeting two months later (Hopps also supported Gould in Leicester in his School Board campaign, as noted in Chapter 3).[40] The MIL also drew on Christian supporters for its central government propaganda. Johnson, as secretary, spoke at a meeting of the Nonconformist Committee of Members of Parliament, a cross-party group of nearly 200 established in 1906 to look into matters of interest to Nonconformity, in order to 'state the case for the MIL' in relation to the Liberal Party's Education Bill of 1908. Anglican and Roman Catholic support in Parliament was less common but did exist, with the MIL reporting that three Roman Catholic MPs had backed its parliamentary campaigns to influence the 1906 *Code*.[41]

The MIL's changing Objects and ever-increasing range of propagandist strategies bear witness to its desire to win over a broad cross-section of supporters. The first Object, which held that moral instruction lessons should replace religious instruction in State schools, has been discussed already. It is likely that the removal of the reference to religious instruction in the object in 1902 was in part a response to Gould's successful compromise at Leicester. Not all involved in the MIL supported such a change. H. H. Quilter, member of the MIL's Council, and later HM Inspector for Schools, suggested that the MIL should avoid following Gould's lead in order to gain short-term concessions as it would, in the longer term, be '[playing] into the hands of [its] opponents'. 'The clerical party', he warned, would, 'at a moment when we are off our guard, stop "all that

nonsense about morals" and revert to the previous state of affairs'.[42] The MIL's propaganda also moved away from its initial metropolitan focus to a nationwide one, targeting both the Board of Education and individual LEAs in order to change educational policy and practice across the country.[43] At one stage there were plans for 'branches all over the country' in order to stimulate activity at the local level, but only one local branch seems to have been formed (in Manchester in 1903). By 1909–10 the MIL had moved to a system of Local Honorary Secretaries in Britain and overseas.[44] In 1909, the Object was changed again, being rephrased as: 'to urge the introduction of systematic Moral and Civic Instruction into all schools, and to make the formation of character the chief aim of school life'. The phrase 'non-theological' was moved from the 'Object' to the infrequently quoted 'Basis', effectively reducing its prominence in the MIL's publicity material. This change, Johnson suggested, would enable the MIL to approach 'theological bodies with better prospect of securing their co-operation'. But a non-theological mode of working was to be retained, as it facilitated a focus on 'that common ground upon which, at least to a very considerable extent, we can all co-operate'. He did not envisage a significant change of educational programme, and moral instruction lessons remained at the core of the MIL's proposals. He did note, however, the possibility of ranging more widely as and when the opportunity arose.[45]

Despite these apparent concessions to a broader audience, the MIL continued over the years to claim that religious instruction lessons were inadequate for the purposes of moral instruction. In early publications, such arguments were phrased in strong terms; a 1900 pamphlet, for example, outlined 'the grounds on which we condemn the present Bible teaching in Board Schools'.[46] Later comments were more tactful, but remained unfavourable. Over the years the MIL was remarkably consistent in its criticisms of religious instruction. Firstly, it argued, the ongoing and bitter conflict between Christian denominations over the administration of schooling, and, in particular, over religious instruction, led to a neglect of important educational matters, including moral education. An alternative was required. The churches, remarked Sir Charles Warren in his address to the MIL's Annual Meeting in 1907, fought over 'shadowy religious questions … unintelligible to many of us', whilst losing their grip on the 'substance, the inculcation of the duties of citizenship'. Secondly, given the option that parents had under the conscience clause to withdraw their children from religious teaching, there was no guarantee that religious instruction lessons could provide the moral foundations that the State

required in all of the rising generation.[47] Thirdly, the MIL suggested that religious instruction lessons, based as they were on the Bible, gave 'no knowledge' of moral subjects relating to hygiene and physique, industry, or civic life in a modern democracy, all of which were important at the turn of the twentieth century. The validity of such arguments about the relevance of the Bible was admitted even by some Christian educators.[48] Fourthly, and reflecting views already encountered in Chapter 3, the MIL claimed that opportunities for moral instruction within religious lessons were all too frequently missed, and, when they were taken up, could lose their value by being 'scattered through a mass of theology and legend'.[49]

The rationale for basing moral instruction in schools on a 'human' or 'social' morality similarly remained consistent over time. Morality, argued the MIL, was an essential quality of human society, and did not depend on the will of God. A human or social sanction could afford a strong motive for moral behaviour. As Professor J. S. Mackenzie, president of the MIL, 1908–16, put it: 'a child may be able to see and understand the hatefulness of a mean action and the nobility of a heroic one without having any definite theory as to the ultimate significance of good and evil'.[50] Taking the will of God as the basis for morality was also deemed philosophically inconsistent and divisive. Spiller, speaking at the IMEC in 1908, argued that 'the will of the deity cannot be the ground of morality' as men judge 'the deity of one religion to be good and of another to be bad'. Harrison, at the inaugural meeting of the School Board Election Conference, suggested that 'there was no such thing as common Christianity, for there were a hundred or more variations of the Christian ideal'.[51] Because of such disagreements, the argument continued, the common core of morality to be taught in State schools could not have a Christian basis. Not only were there different Christian denominations to accommodate, but also people of different faiths or those who had no belief in a divine being at all. This was particularly important if one was looking to the schools in imperial territories overseas which, as F. H. Hayward, Inspector of Schools for London County Council 1905–37, noted '[embraced] far more Hindus and Mohamedans than Christians'.[52]

Liberally minded Nonconformists and Anglicans supported the MIL's claims for non-theological moral instruction having a place in the school curriculum. The Unitarian Reverend Charles Peace, who proposed the formation of a Manchester branch of the MIL in November 1903, claimed that the MIL made possible 'an escape from the heated controversies' raging over religious teaching in schools. And 'a goodly number of

Unitarians' attended the MIL's public meeting in November 1902.[53] The Reverend Hugh B. Chapman, chaplain at the Savoy, was a prominent Anglican supporter who invited Gould to give three demonstration lessons in his chapel between 1909 and 1911. Chapman wrote in the *Quarterly* in April 1912 that he saw in the MIL's proposals a way of counteracting the 'clerical rut' that dominated the training of the young in schools. He argued that virtue could be taught independently from the different dogmas or creeds which he deemed 'different means to the same end'.[54] Others, who designated themselves as 'modern' and 'enlightened' Christians, saw the MIL's proposals as compatible with their vision of a progressive, adaptive and inclusive Christianity. In this vein, one correspondent in the *Manchester Guardian* wrote in 1906 that 'The Moral Instruction League', in attempting to include different faiths, 'has not come to destroy ... but to fulfil'.[55]

The MIL's commentary on the divisive effects of interdenominational rivalry over the control of schools and over religious instruction appealed to a body of educators which crossed religious and party boundaries. Its proposals spoke to a long-standing tradition of Nonconformist educational thought and activism, evident in the debates about compulsory schooling in the late 1860s–early 1870s, and again in the years around the 1902 Education Act, notably in the passive resistance campaign against State funding of denominational schools.[56] The secular solution also attracted some prominent Anglican supporters, including W. Stewart Headlam (whose views were cited by the MIL in support of its cause), and many, although not all, trade unionists.[57] At the same time, Liberal and Labour Party voices suggested that limiting teaching to 'pure morality', to use the words of the Liberal leader Henry Campbell-Bannerman in 1902, was preferable to an ongoing religious difficulty. Such a view, according to Johnson, attracted considerable support in the 'new parliament' after the landslide Liberal election victory of 1906.[58] And, as discussions in the educational press show, teachers and administrators felt that squabbling clergy intervening in educational matters undermined their freedom as professionals, and diverted attention and resources from important matters.[59]

Widespread criticism of interdenominational fighting in the educational sphere, however, did not always translate into support for the MIL. The MIL bemoaned the lack of commitment from 'Labour-men'. Even when their leaders Philip Snowden and Keir Hardie were speaking at one of the MIL's public meetings in 1904, few were in attendance. And some Labour supporters objected to the MIL's proposal to make moral

instruction compulsory. By doing so, argued Mr Harley, a London delegate at the Independent Labour Party's Annual Conference in 1904, it was 'just as sectional as the religious party', enforcing its version of moral training on the majority whether or not they agreed with it.[60] Moreover, many sympathisers saw moral instruction operating alongside rather than instead of religious teaching. Augustine Birrell, speaking in the House of Commons on 28 May 1906 about his intentions for the next Education Code, stated that children should be taught the 'elements of morality'. He 'did not think for a moment that morality could only be taught upon a theological basis' and was 'quite sure that it could be taught, with spirit and with force, apart from such basis.' In the same speech, however, he made it clear that 'morality ... was [not] any substitute for religion'. The MIL quoted in its publicity the first part of Birrell's comment, but not the second.[61]

The emergence of syllabuses encompassing both religious and moral instruction illustrates well the partial manner in which the MIL's proposals could be adopted or accommodated. Some school boards devised simple schemes in the years around the turn of the twentieth century, simply listing Bible passages and the moral qualities they might illustrate.[62] But more complex schemes later emerged as a direct response to the MIL's educational proposals and materials. Canon E. R. Bernard's 1907 *Scheme of Moral Instruction*, devised for Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education, was a particularly elaborate example, running to 56 pages. This scheme aimed to 'encourage and facilitate *systematic* moral teaching during the time set apart for religious instruction', drawing its principles and illustrations from the Bible. It related such teaching to belief in 'God ... the power of prayer, and in judgment to come', which alone was 'the sufficient foundation of moral instruction'.[63] Such developments had both positive and negative implications for the MIL. On the one hand, syllabuses like Bernard's represented evidence for cooperation between religious and secular bodies, steps towards 'a truce ... on behalf of the moral welfare of the child'. Religious educators could learn from secularists and adopt some of their suggestions; this demonstrated the impact and validity of the MIL's proposals. On the other hand, these schemes effectively destroyed 'one of [the MIL's] most useful targets in public propaganda', the lack of ethically framed religious lessons, whilst offering a competitor model likely to be more appealing to many Christian teachers.[64]

Overall, the MIL's partial criticism of, and partial accommodation of, Christian perspectives had ambiguous implications. The MIL made effective use of ongoing debates, meetings, School Board and Education

Committee elections, and attempts to introduce and amend legislation in Parliament, as opportunities for propaganda. It timed its public meetings, delegations to the Board of Education, pamphlets, and letters to newspapers and to politicians, to capture moments when the religious difficulty was at the forefront of public and political attention. The reference, during its 14th Annual Meeting in 1912, to an increase in support at a time when the religious difficulty was not in the public eye is telling.[65] However, by linking its campaigning with moments of religious controversy it laid itself open, notwithstanding the changes in its Object, to charges of attacking revealed religion on the part of critics who were sensitive to any potential threat to their faith and its place in schools.[66] There are strong indications of widespread caution regarding the MIL and its proposals on the grounds of its attitude to Christianity, enough to contradict Spiller's claim that 'no appreciable volume of complaint made itself heard'.[67]

Criticism came from clerics, members of Parliament, university professors, teachers and a wide range of concerned correspondents in the national, local and educational press. The MIL's links to secularist groups, and in particular the Ethical Movement, were noted by some.[68] It was, however, its advocacy of non-theological moral teaching which drew the most attention. A Christian foundation for moral teaching, critics argued, was essential if this teaching was to form the basis of good citizenship. The MIL's system of moral teaching was therefore deemed incomplete as it missed out the most important set of moral duties. A hostile editorial in the *School Guardian* put it as follows: 'We want taught to Christian children all through their school lives, not only 'What is my duty towards my neighbour?' … but something far beyond that, viz. 'What is my duty towards God?'". 'All moral teaching, to be moral, must be based on the Commandments', wrote the diocesan inspector George Richardson in a letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, 'and not on some backward standard raised by any man.'[69] Christian teaching, moreover, provided the ultimate moral exemplar in Jesus Christ. The 'virtuous men and women' in the MIL's schemes were no substitute, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, told the church school educators and supporters gathered at the Annual Meeting of the National Society in 1903. The MIL celebrated the publicity value of such high profile criticism: 'it is an occasion for congratulation that ... our rubbish … [is] examined and presented in quotation to one of the most powerful societies of the church'.[70] Christianity, with its promise of future reward and threat of future punishment, would also motivate pupils to resist temptation and forego individual benefit for the common good.[71] Only

Christian sanctions would 'excite the sympathy and satisfy the reason of the pupil', argued an editorial in *The Teacher* in 1905. The MIL's scheme, this editorial suggested, was, despite claims of neutrality on religious matters, damaging to Christian teaching. '[Turning] religious faith and worship out of doors' and '[disregarding] anything which is not of the earth' would 'get very much the effect of a direct attack upon what is above and beyond.'.[72] The MIL argued in relation to such suggestions that its intentions had been misunderstood. In 1906, Johnson wrote that its proposals were 'non-theological' but 'in no sense anti-theological'.[73] And, despite protests from some early members, it did not call for the Bible to be removed from schools.

Reference was also made to the Christian basis of English (or British, depending on the speaker and context) society and civilisation. 'Our nation has risen to its present position as distinctly a Christian nation, and it is only by the Bible that a Christian nation will proceed to prosperity in the future', claimed the Conservative MP for Glasgow Mr Robert Duncan during a debate on moral instruction in the House of Commons initiated on behalf of the MIL in March 1909. Critics repeatedly invoked the convictions of a much wider public. As part of the same debate in 1909, C. McArthur, Conservative MP for Liverpool, suggested that the 'Christian people' of the country would not be satisfied with 'anything short of the teaching of Christian morality in schools'. Not only the churches but the 'entire nation' would resist attempts to replace this with a 'morality of common sense'.[74] Some secularists, however, queried the depth of feeling behind such views. The Positivist E. S. Beesly claimed that 'if purely secular education at the public expenses were established this year ... not a single seat would be affected at the next general election'.[75]

It is almost impossible to ascertain how prevalent such attitudes were among teachers. The MIL claimed, and probably with some accuracy, that Gould's demonstration lessons did much to convince many teachers who observed them of the possibilities of moral instruction on a non-theological basis. Gould, however, in his reports in the MIL's *Quarterly*, noted criticisms of the MIL's 'non-theological' approach from teachers attending his lessons.[76] Walter Runciman, then president of the Board of Education, argued during the moral instruction debate in the House of Commons in 1909 that teachers would not want to separate moral instruction from religion because they were 'inspired by it and [taught] through it'.[77] In the absence of direct evidence it is very difficult to establish in any representative way the views of either teachers or the general public with regard

to this matter. Nonetheless, given the propensity for even non-churchgoers to assert a Christian basis for moral behaviour and the importance of religious teaching in schools,[78] it seems likely that many, if not 'England' as a whole, favoured Christian moral teaching over non-theological moral instruction. The MIL, however, felt that fears of a reaction could be exaggerated, and that they were being used as an excuse by the Board of Education for inaction: 'deeper issues are shirked by the state [*sic*]', wrote Johnson in 1909.[79] There might have been some truth in this charge. The Board's policy enabled it to avoid aggravating powerful religious lobbies, as well as teachers on the ground (if Runciman's assessment was accurate). However, the MIL perhaps did not take as seriously as it might have done the Board's claims, noted already, that devolving decision-making to the local level gave teachers greater freedom and, ultimately, benefitted pupils.

An Ethical Religion?

Some of these Christian critics would have been surprised at just how deeply matters of religion divided activists within the MIL. The MIL's relationship to religion was a matter of dispute from the time of its formation. Some wanted to align promotion of moral instruction with religion, or, rather, a particular understanding of religion. The MIL's choice of terminology ('non-theological' rather than 'non-religious') was significant and contentious. The reference point here is ethicist and Positivist understandings of religion, resting on a distinction between 'religion' and 'theology'. A similar form of distinction was also noted by some radical Christians.[80] Drawing on such understandings, it was claimed in the MIL's *Quarterly* that moral instruction could create a 'religious spirit' which should pervade the whole curriculum in schools. This 'religious spirit' could 'spring as holy and undefiled from lay and secular sources as from priests and Churches'. In a talk to the College of Preceptors in 1907, Johnson outlined what this 'religious spirit' might be, for promoters of a non-theological moral instruction. He did so in terms suggesting an affinity with biblical messages and Christian spiritual experiences:

> We know something of the meaning of awe, something of the meaning of reverence, something of the mystery and obligatoriness of that commanding moral imperative which at times thunders like the prophet's 'Thus saith the Lord' … We know something of the passion and the devotion of human service. We love the Beautiful and the True no less than we love the Good …

> Is it not possible that we may yet all come to see that thoughts such as these are religious thoughts, and that even though God is not named, He is nevertheless there?[81]

Not all would have gone as far as this final point, and the historian, with the benefit of hindsight, can perhaps see hints of future developments in Johnson's thinking. However, an understanding of the MIL's work as religious in intent was, it seems, shared by many Ethical Movement supporters. For Coit, for example, morality should be taught as a religion, adding to the social sanction the sanction of 'supreme reverence or worship, the sanction of the sublimity, yea, the divinity, of the moral law itself.'[82]

Secular Society members, by and large, rejected such ideas of an equivalent religion. For Sydney Gimson of Leicester Secular Society a religion without theology was 'useless or misleading'. With reference to moral instruction specifically, one correspondent in the *Freethinker* argued that 'all instruction is necessarily secular . . . [it is] not possible to bridge over the chasm between that knowledge which deals with the demonstrable facts of life and that faith which has nothing to do therewith'.[83] Ethical Movement understandings of religion, with their references to awe, reverence, feelings in the heart and so on, were at odds with this view. They also proved difficult to grasp for a wider non-secularist audience, one that was unfamiliar with internal secularist debates and terminology. For many outside organised freethought, religion was thought to require a belief in God. When Johnson gave his talk to the College of Preceptors in 1907, one respondent from the floor 'was not quite sure as to what the MIL meant by religion', and saw as inconsistent Johnson's advocacy of the Bible as a source for moral instruction without making any mention of 'the name of God'.[84]

The MIL's attitude to the Bible, alluded to by the speaker at the College of Preceptors, was a matter of conflict from the MIL's inception. Ethical Movement members, influenced by Adler and other ethicist educators, argued that the Bible should be allowed in schools as a text of moral instruction. NSS members argued that it should not be allowed, but the ethicist view won out. At a meeting on 19 July 1898, convened to discuss this matter, it was decided that the MIL would recommend that no book, including the Bible, should be placed in children's hands as the basis of moral instruction, but that teachers should be free to use the Bible, as they were to use any other books, as a source of illustrations and maxims for moral lessons if they so wished.[85] This recommendation was based on a

particular use of the Bible, as an 'ethical, literary and historical source', and 'without calling for any distinctive religious beliefs and opinions'.[86]

It is useful to rehearse in detail the arguments raised on both sides. Some saw this as a matter of strategy: 'Why should we raise unnecessary opposition? It is more important to get systematic moral instruction into the schools than the Bible out, and if the former is attained the latter will be much easier', wrote one correspondent in the *Freethinker* in August 1898.[87] Others saw merits in the Bible as a text for moral instruction as long as it was used in an appropriate, non-theological, manner. In 1898 Gould claimed that teachers would benefit from accessing as wide a range of sources as possible to illustrate their moral lessons: these could include mythology, biography and history as well as the Bible and the sacred texts of other religions. Gould, it should be remembered, as an elementary school teacher in London, had requested that even as a secularist he should give the daily Bible lesson, and by the time the MIL was founded he had written books of Bible stories with the theological elements removed. Vallance, then Secretary of the MIL, also wrote of the Bible's educational benefits and argued against '[depriving] teacher and child of the use of one of the richest and most poetic of the world's collections of social and moral experience.'[88] For Coit, at the IMEC in 1908, studying the Bible would enable the child to learn about 'the growth of justice through the long centuries of nation's struggles', and would encourage 'discipline in concrete reasoning'. This sort of approach to the Bible was akin to that advocated by some liberal Nonconformists, who were influenced by modernist criticism. Dr John Clifford, a Baptist minister, president of the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches (1898–99) and leader of the passive resistance campaign in the wake of the 1902 Education Act, for example, argued that stories in the Bible could awaken the humanitarian impulse and other valuable ethical qualities, but that for the purposes of school teaching theological material should be eschewed.[89]

Equally strong arguments were offered on the other side, particularly by NSS members. Charles Cohen, one of the early MIL Executive Committee members, suggested in 1898 that the MIL should condemn the use of the Bible in schools. Strategically, this would send out a clear message to Christian educators, and also appease valuable Secularist supporters.[90] Matters came to a head in 1899 and the NSS terminated its formal organisational affiliation with the MIL. The explanation given to the NSS Annual Conference for this action was as follows: 'The Bible was placed in the school for religious reasons', and its retention in schools was 'opposed

to the principle of secular education'. George W. Foote, then NSS president, elaborated on this position in an editorial comment in the *Freethinker*. The Bible, as 'a religious book', had no place in the schools of the State, because the State should have nothing to do with religion. The Churches, on the other hand, wanted to 'keep the Bible in the schools for the sake of manufacturing customers'.[91] The NSS was to find the Secular Education League (1907–*c.*1964), with its more exclusive focus on political campaigns for secular education, an easier ally, although it was one which had no more impact on the education system than had the MIL.[92] However, despite the attitude of the leaders of the national body, some important local Secularists accepted the MIL's position. These included George Payne, leader of Manchester Secular Society from the early 1880s, who supported the MIL for many years, not least by stimulating debate through the correspondence columns of the *Manchester Guardian*.[93]

Non-theological moral instruction as defined by the MIL also became unacceptable to some of its long-standing activists, most notably Johnson. Johnson was a graduate of London University, and studied in Leipzig and the Sorbonne before training as a Unitarian minister at Harris Manchester College, Oxford. From 1897 to 1899 he was minister at the Waverley Road Church, Small Heath, Birmingham, before he started to work for the Ethical Movement and the MIL. Johnson made use of his many connections in publicising the MIL. It is likely, though no firm evidence has been found, that he continued to use his Unitarian networks to secure the support of figures such as the Reverend John Page Hopps, Charles Peace in Manchester, and others who attended the MIL's public meetings. Through his investigations of the system of *morale laïque* in France, however, under the auspices of the International Inquiry between 1906 and 1908,[94] Johnson came to doubt whether moral instruction without a Christian foundation was possible. In 1913 he resigned as secretary of the MIL, as a result of 'certain developments in his religious views'. According to Gould, writing as temporary secretary in June 1913 before Farquharson took over that office in September, Johnson had come to feel that 'education, in the complete sense of the term, needed richer and deeper sources of inspiration than were afforded by the merely civic basis'.[95] Upon leaving the MIL Johnson became a Unitarian minister, first in Evesham, and then moving to Cross Street Chapel in Manchester in 1919.[96] Here, perhaps building on his skills as a publicist developed during his time with the MIL, he introduced the popular 'Wayside pulpit' outside the chapel upon which an attention-grabbing sentence could be seen by passers-by.

The boundaries between the Ethical Movement and Unitarianism were permeable, and Johnson was by no means the only person to move between the two.[97] Still, his change of heart was resented by some of the early Ethical Movement activists within the MIL. Spiller's retrospective description of what happened strikes an unusually bitter tone in an otherwise balanced account: 'the League's future was irredeemably compromised … the fire and fervour of the pioneering reformer had departed from the League, a vague and impotent idealism taking its place'. Gould was more forgiving: Johnson, he wrote in 1929, 'had captained the League with a remarkable and admirable enthusiasm … he had pursued this purpose with a sweet reasonableness which reduced sectarian murmurs nearly to silence'.[98] These assessments, I suggest, reflect Spiller's and Gould's different ideological commitments and loyalties. Spiller, it appears, continued to remain entirely committed to the Ethical Movement, and seems to have felt aggrieved by Johnson's departure from the MIL's early ideological and organisational roots. Gould, on the other hand, identified increasingly with Positivism, and, perhaps by virtue of this new allegiance, was able to take a more tolerant, and detached, view.

Farquharson, Johnson's successor, was a former secondary school teacher, and, by the time he was appointed secretary, had been on the Council of the MIL for several years. He, like others involved in the MIL, saw moral education (or at least the civic-slanted version he favoured) as a solution to the religious difficulty in schools, and perceived limits to what the churches could do in easing social ills.[99] Unlike his predecessors, he appears not to have been a core Ethical Movement activist. He was, his personal correspondence suggests, an agnostic, but he desired not to foist his views on religion on others.[100] Farquharson suggested that controversy over religion took attention away from the real business of the MIL's educational work. He wrote in 1919, on behalf of the MIL's Executive, that the word 'Moral' should be removed from the MIL's title because it led to 'interminable explanations' that moral did not mean 'anti-religious'. There are signs that this strategy paid off. The *Schoolmaster*, for example, commented in 1926 that the 'organised supporters of moral education' had by then 'completely cleansed their movement from the suspicion, at one time inspired by the eccentricities of injudicious adherents, that their objectives might be irreligious'.[101]

The Civic Education League was, as already noted, constitutionally a new body, but its Executive Committee in 1920 contained MIL activists and supporters of long standing, including Professor J. H. Muirhead and

Waldegrave.[102] Other early activists, however, like Gould and Spiller, were no longer involved. The Civic Education League did not, as Gould and Spiller's retrospective accounts suggest, fade quickly into obscurity. By the end of 1920 it was, according to insiders, bringing new people and an energy to the activities at its new home of Le Play House, the Sociological Society's premises. However, work with schools and colleges rapidly decreased in importance, and, by 1925, merited only a couple of sentences in the Le Play House programme: readers were encouraged to direct any queries to Miss E. M. White.[103] After 1919, then, the MIL, in its new incarnation, was embarking on a new phase of activity which was not unimportant, but lies beyond the scope of this book.[104]

Conclusion

The MIL provided secularists with a vehicle through which they could stimulate contemporary educational debate and, to a lesser extent, influence educational policy. The MIL was able to attract, or at least attract the attention of, a broad constituency of contemporaries who wanted to improve moral education within English schools. Its achievements were short of what activists wanted but there is truth in one contemporary's assessment that its influence on educational policy and public debate was 'out of all proportion with [its] modest resources'.[105] Ultimately, however, appealing to a range of interested parties proved a double-edged sword. Noting the different priorities of the varied constituencies involved at the start, a report in the *Freethinker* questioned whether such a body could 'do much good, or even hold together'.[106] The organisation did hold together. Despite the relatively early departure of NSS representatives, and ongoing criticisms from Christian apologists, a broad-based movement continued, and influenced educationalists throughout England and overseas, for over 20 years.

Yet there was prescience in the NSS's early assessment. The MIL's wide-ranging membership and sympathisers gave the organisation a public voice. But it proved difficult to define a programme and strategy that was both popular and coherent. It was impossible to please everyone, of all religious persuasions or none; not all secularists, and certainly not all Christians. For the NSS, the MIL's efforts to accommodate Christians led it to adopt measures relating to religious instruction and the Bible that were inconsistent with a purely secular education in schools. Some Christians sympathised with the MIL's emphasis on ethical imperatives and, if not in favour of an

entirely ethical and historical reading of the Bible, supported a liberal and questioning one. 'The real line of cleavage', wrote one of these Christian sympathisers, lay not between denominations, or between Christians and secularists, but 'between the forwards and backwards religious thought in all parts of the Church'.[107] There were, however, many Christians who found it impossible to support an educational programme which lacked a clearly Christian moral framework, or an organisation with secularist origins. The MIL's insistence on a purely human morality clashed with widespread perceptions of what was required in terms of individual attitudes and behaviour, and civic virtue, in what many saw as a Christian country. And for others, including some secularists, calling for State endorsement of its own ethical system, while individual citizens objected to it, some argued, was equivalent to calling for the State endorsement of a religion to which the MIL objected so strongly.[108] The universal social morality that ethicist founders and supporters of the MIL held so dear proved elusive.

Spiller devoted a whole chapter to the MIL in his history of the Ethical Movement because it 'not only sprang out of the Ethical Movement, but represented one of its outstanding interests'.[109] Ethicists, working through the MIL, collaborated with Christians and other secularists to achieve their aims. But they retained a sense of ownership. Johnson expressed this tension in his moral education column in *Ethical World* in 1913. While acknowledging a debt of gratitude to the Ethical Movement for the MIL's educational ideas, organisational resources and personnel, he argued that 'the MIL's independence of the organised Ethical Movement, and its consequent appeal to more varied sections of the nation and of humanity' had been instrumental in its success.[110] The MIL provided a means by which the Ethical Movement could reach beyond its limited membership in order to achieve its educational and social goals. In order to achieve these broader goals, the MIL tended to publicise its wide remit rather than its ethicist interests and input. Yet ethicists were, arguably, willing to play down their involvement because they knew that, behind the scenes, the MIL was firmly in ethicist hands and running on ethicist lines. This does not mean, as we have seen, that all ethicists agreed on the details of strategy. It is perhaps significant that early activists such as Gould and Spiller felt that the MIL declined when it moved away from these roots. Such tensions over ownership and public profile applied not only to the national sphere, but also to attempts to promote moral education internationally, which are discussed in Chapter 5.

Notes

1. F. J. Gould (1929) *Moral Education: A Chapter from the Story of Schools in England and Wales* (London: Watts & Co.), p. 2; *Freethinker*, 12 December 1897, p. 793.
2. R. N. Bérard (1984) 'The Movement for Moral Instruction in Great Britain: The Moral Instruction League and its Successors', *Fides et Historia*, 16:2, 55–73, p. 56; P. Mazumdar (1992) *Eugenics, Human Genetics and Human Failings: The English Society, its Sources and its Critics in Britain* (London: Routledge), p. 25.
3. Moral Instruction League (MIL) (c.1903), *The Moral Instruction League* (London: MIL), p. 1.
4. G. Spiller (c.1934) *The Ethical Movement in Great Britain* (London: Farleigh Press), Chapter 9; Bérard, 'Movement for Moral Instruction', p. 56; F. H. Hilliard (1961) 'The Moral Instruction League 1879–1919', *Durham Research Review*, 12, 53–63; R. J. W. Selleck (1968) *The New Education, 1870–1914* (London: Pitman), Chapter 10. See also S. Wright (2006) 'The Struggle for Moral Education in English Elementary Schools' (PhD thesis, Oxford Brookes University), Chapter 2. There are brief references to the MIL in S. Budd (1977) *Varieties of Unbelief: Atheists and Agnostics in English Society, 1850–1960* (London: Heinemann), pp. 245–6; P. Gordon and D. Lawton (1978) *Curriculum Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London: Hodder and Stoughton), pp. 98–106; I. D. MacKillop (1986) *The British Ethical Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 165–73; Mazumdar, *Eugenics, Human Genetics and Human Failings*, pp. 24–9; E. Royle (1980) *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans: Popular Freethought in Britain, 1866–1915* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), pp. 314–16; B. Sacks (1961) *The Religious Issue in the State Schools of England and Wales, 1902–1914* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press), pp. 139–40.
5. F. Low, 'A Plea for Moral Instruction', *Journal of Education*, August 1897, 481–2; Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 124.
6. See Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 124–46.
7. Low, 'A Plea for Moral Instruction'; Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 124.
8. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 152–3; Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 4; *The Headteacher*, 15 July 1907, p. 53.
9. 'Educational Notes', *The Times*, 2 November 1905, p. 10.

10. H. Johnson (1908) *Moral Instruction in Elementary Schools in England and Wales* (London: David Nutt), p. xi. On international activities see Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 149–50 and discussion in Chap. 5.
11. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 151. About 1000 members were estimated in January 1914 (*Moral Education League Quarterly* (*MELQ*), 35, 1 January 1914, p. 1).
12. *Ethical World* (*EW*), 15 March 1911, p. 45 and Annual Report for 1911 cited in Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 151.
13. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 149–50.
14. *EW*, 15 September 1909, p. 14; Wright, 'Struggle for Moral Education', p. 38.
15. Selleck, *New Education*, p. 313; *MELQ*, 33, 1 July 1913, pp. 5–6.
16. F. J. Gould to Mrs Geddes, 18 February 1915, MSS.10582.f.75, Papers of Sir Patrick Geddes, National Library of Scotland; MIL (1919) *The Future of the Civic and Moral Education League*, Circular M.30 (London: MIL).
17. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 152; MacKillop, *British Ethical Societies*, pp. 168–9.
18. F. J. Gould (*c.*1897) *A Plan of Moral Instruction Adopted by the Moral Instruction League* (London: MIL), pp. 3, 14–15; MIL (1900) *Our Future Citizens* (London: MIL), pp. 6–7; F. J. Gould (1913) *Moral Instruction: Its Theory and Practice* (London: Longmans, Green & Co.), pp. 32–7.
19. 'Moral Education in the Schools', *Educational Times*, 1 November 1907, 486–91, pp. 488–9; F. J. Gould (1923) *The Life Story of a Humanist* (London: Watts & Co.), pp. 153–4.
20. Gould, *Plan of Moral Instruction*, p. 3; A. J. Waldegrave (1904) *A Teacher's Handbook of Moral Lessons* (London: Swann Sonnenschein & Co.), pp. v–vi.
21. MIL, *Our Future Citizens*; G. Payne, Letter to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 3 October 1904, p. 4.
22. F. J. Gould (1913) *A National Need: The Civic Spirit in Education* (London: MIL), pp. 3–4, 8, 10.
23. J. T. Smith (2002) 'The Beginnings of Citizenship Education in England', *History of Education Society Bulletin*, 69, 6–16, pp. 6–9; J. Harris (2003) 'From Richard Hooker to Harold Laski: Changing Perceptions of Civil Society in British Political Thought' in J. Harris (ed.) *Civil Society in British History: Ideas, Identities,*

Institutions (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 13–37, pp. 23–4. On philosophical idealism see Chap. 1.

24. MIL, *Our Future Citizens*, pp. 8–9; MIL, *Moral Instruction League*, p. 1; Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 154.
25. MIL (1902) *A Graduated Syllabus for Moral Instruction and Training in Citizenship for Elementary Schools* (London: MIL). Elementary school standards were not entirely age-bound, but most pupils in Infants to Standard II would have been about 4–9 years old, 9–12 years old in Standards III to V, and 12–14 years old in Standards VI to VII.
26. S. Wright (2009) '"Our Future Citizens": Values in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Moral Instruction Books', *History of Education and Children's Literature*, 4, 157–77. A. J. Waldegrave was one-time Secretary of the Labour Church Union. Rev. D. F. Summers (1958) 'The Labour Church and Allied Movements of the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries' (PhD thesis, Edinburgh University) contains a long appendix of correspondence between Waldegrave and the author.
27. MIL, *Moral Instruction League*, p. 1.
28. *The Times*, 20 July 1897, p. 5; 29 July 1897, p. 9; Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 124.
29. *EW*, 18 February 1905, p. 51; Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 111, 116, 124; and Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 77–9.
30. *EW*, 15 October 1913, p. 157; 1 February 1915, p. 30; 1 May 1915, p. 75; 1 July 1915, pp. 109–10; 1 August 1915, pp. 124–5; 1 September 1915, pp. 141–2; 1 December 1915, p. 183; 1 January 1916, pp. 12–13.
31. See Chap. 2 and F. Reid (1966) 'Socialist Sunday Schools in Britain, 1892–1939', *International Review of Social History*, 11:1, 18–47.
32. London Ethical Society Leaflet, c.1886, Religion and Philosophy: Printed and Published Material, T–GED /11/3/13, Sir Patrick Geddes Papers, Strathclyde University Archives; *MELQ*, 24, 1 April 1911, p. 5.
33. MIL, *Our Future Citizens*, p. 4; *EW*, 10 May 1902, p. 151, 15 September 1911, p. 140.
34. Ethicists were aware of moral instruction in Birmingham by 1900, in Burton by 1903, and Huddersfield by 1905 (*EW*, 27 January 1900, p. 58; 21 November 1903, pp. 371–2; 27 May 1905, p. 166).

35. *EW*, 4 June 1904, p. 80; 11 June 1904, p. 189; 2 July 1904, p. 211; 15 October 1904, p. 333. There is no evidence in Johnson, *Moral Instruction* or *EW* that these campaigns were successful.
36. *Freethinker*, 8 August 1897, p. 505; 17 October 1897, p. 666; 9 January 1898, p. 28; 31 July 1898, pp. 484–5; 28 May 1899, p. 347; 9 July 1899, p. 445.
37. *Freethinker*, 25 July 1897, p. 473; F. J. Gould to F. S. Marvin, 27 July 1897, MS.Eng.Lett.d.253, fols. 191–2, Papers of Francis Sydney Marvin, Western Manuscripts, Bodleian Library; F. Harrison, 'Ethical Education', *Positivist Review (PR)*, September 1897, 163–6, pp. 165–6; S. H. Swinny, 'Paragraphs', *PR*, February 1898, pp. 29–30; S. H. Swinny, 'Some Educational Dangers', *PR*, September 1900, 156–8.
38. R. Handescombe, 'The Moral Education League', *PR*, May 1913, 115–16, p. 116. See Chaps. 3 and 6 on Gould and Positivism.
39. *Freethinker*, 12 December 1897, p. 793; J. A. Picton (1901) *The Bible in School: a Question of Ethics* (London: Watts & Co.), pp. 74–5.
40. *The Times*, 14 October 1897, p. 8; R. K. Webb (2004) 'Hopps, John Page (1834–1911)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/49458, date accessed 22 February 2013. By the time the MIL was founded Hopps was no longer at a Unitarian chapel but at the Free Church in Croydon.
41. *Moral Instruction League Quarterly* (henceforward *MILQ*), 15, 1 January 1909, p. 3; 8, 1 January 1907, p. 6; H. Johnson, 'Moral Instruction and the Education Bill', 21 November 1908, Social Pamphlets R188675, The John Rylands Library, University of Manchester.
42. *EW*, 19 October 1901, p. 561.
43. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 127–40.
44. *EW*, 2 May 1903 p. 139; *Manchester Guardian*, 18 November 1903, p. 8; *MELQ*, 18, 1 October 1909, p. 15; 19, 1 January 1910, pp. 4–5.
45. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 153–4; *MELQ*, 16, 1 April 1909, p. 13; *EW*, 15 February 1909, p. 30.
46. MIL, *Our Future Citizens*, p.10.
47. C. Warren, 'Moral Training in Public Elementary Schools', *Journal of Education*, May 1907, 354–6, p. 356; MIL (c.1907) *To All*

Interested in Moral and Civic Education in Schools (London: MIL), p. 2; A. Farquharson, Letter to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 23 December 1913, p. 6.

48. MIL, *Our Future Citizens*, pp. 10, 13; *Manchester Guardian*, 4 February 1909, p. 5.
49. 'Proposed Moral Instruction Amendment to Education Bill, 1 April 1908', Social Pamphlets R188451, The John Rylands Library; Johnson, 'Moral Instruction and the Education Bill'; Gould, *Plan of Moral Instruction*, p. 2.
50. MIL, *Our Future Citizens*, pp. 8–9; *EW*, 15 October 1908, p. 74. J. S. Mackenzie was professor of Logic and Philosophy at University College, Cardiff 1895–1915, retiring in 1916. J. W. Scott (2004) 'Mackenzie, John Stuart (1860–1935)', rev. Mark J. Schofield, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, January 2012, Oxford University Press, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34753, date accessed 6 March 2013.
51. Secretary of the International Union of Ethical Societies (1909) 'The State and Theological Moral Education' in G. Spiller (ed.) *Papers on Moral Education Communicated to the First International Moral Education Congress*, 2nd edn (London: David Nutt), pp. 183–6, p. 185; *The Times*, 20 July 1897, p. 5.
52. F. H. Hayward (1917) 'Preface' in F. J. Gould *British Education after the War* (London: Watts & Co.), p. xi. Hayward was made a vice president in 1906 and elected on to the MIL Executive Committee in 1907 (*MILQ*, 6, 1 July 1906, p. 8; 9, 1 April 1907, p. 3).
53. *Manchester Guardian*, 18 November 1903, p. 8; *EW*, 6 December 1902, p. 391.
54. *MELQ*, 19, 1 January 1910, pp. 1–2; 21, 1 July 1910, pp. 2–4; 27, 1 January 1912, pp. 4–5; 28, 1 April 1912, pp. 1–3.
55. C. Heap, Letter to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 26 March 1906, p. 4; Twentieth-Century Christian, Letter to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 24 March 1906, p. 14.
56. See D. R. Pugh (1990) 'English Nonconformity, Education and Passive Resistance, 1903–6', *History of Education*, 19:4, 355–73.
57. *Manchester Guardian*, 4 February 1909, p. 5; *Freethinker*, 11 October 1908, p. 643.

58. *Manchester Guardian*, 10 September 1903, p. 12; 6 April 1904, p. 6; H. Johnson, Letter to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 15 February 1906, p. 4.
59. Such views are referred to in 'Moral Instruction. Folly in High Places', *The Teacher*, 2 December 1905, 1143–4; 'Moral Instruction. The Opportunity of the Secularist', *The Teacher*, 9 December 1905, 1169–70 and 'Moral Instruction. Nabal amongst Educationists', *The Teacher*, 16 December 1905, 1193–4.
60. *EW*, 27 February 1904, p. 69; *Manchester Guardian*, 6 April 1904, p. 6.
61. Hansard Parliamentary Debates, Commons, 28 May 1906, cols. 130–1; *MILQ*, 8, 1 January 1907, p. 3.
62. See Colne School Board (1900) *Scheme of Scriptural and Moral Instruction* (Colne: J Duckworth), SBCO 3/1, Lancashire Record Office.
63. E. R. Bernard (ed.) (1907) *A Scheme of Moral Instruction for Teachers in Public Elementary Schools* (London: John Davis), pp. 3–4, 6, 1585/313, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre. Johnson, *Moral Instruction*, pp. 1–6, 9, 11–16, 18, 21, 29, 33, identifies 12 LEAs using schemes of moral and religious instruction.
64. *MILQ*, 11, 1 October 1907, pp. 3–4; Bérard, 'Movement for Moral Instruction', p. 67.
65. *MELQ*, 28, 1 April 1912, pp. 3–5.
66. For example, Sir Henry Craik's comments in Hansard Parliamentary Debates, Commons, 16 March 1909, col. 1023.
67. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 146.
68. For example, S. Smith, 'A Further Danger for our Schools', *The Month*, December 1906, 601–18, pp. 603, 606.
69. 'Moral Education and its Foundations', *School Guardian*, 355–6, p. 356 (The *School Guardian* was the National Society's periodical, representing Anglican interests in elementary schooling); G. Richardson, Letter to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 23 March 1906, p. 4.
70. *School Guardian*, 13 June 1903, p. 500; *EW*, 20 June 1903, pp. 193–4.
71. *School Guardian*, 27 April 1907, p. 370; Smith, 'A Further Danger for our Schools', p. 613.
72. 'Moral Instruction. The Opportunity of the Secularist', p. 1170.

73. H. Johnson, Letter to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 27 March 1906, p. 4.
74. Hansard Parliamentary Debates, Commons, 16 March 1909, cols. 1013, 1010–11.
75. *PR*, June 1906, p. 142.
76. *MELQ*, 24, 1 April 1911, pp. 4–5; 33, 1 July 1913, pp. 6–8; 38, 1 October 1914, p. 7. See also Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 118–19.
77. Hansard Parliamentary Debates, Commons, 16 March 1909, col. 1026.
78. See Chap. 2.
79. *EW*, 15 September 1909, p. 141. See also *MILQ* 8, 1 January 1907, p. 14; 12, 1 January 1908, p. 2.
80. See the Rev. J. Page Hopps' suggestions on terminology at the meeting of the School Board Election Conference which he chaired in October 1897. *The Times*, 14 October 1897, p. 8. Ethical Movement and Positivist understandings of religion are discussed in Chap. 2.
81. *MILQ*, 11, 1 October 1907, pp. 3–4; 'Moral Education in the Schools', *Educational Times*, 1 November 1907, 486–91, pp. 486, 490.
82. *EW*, 2 June 1906, pp. 169–70.
83. S. Gimson, *Random Recollections of the Leicester Secular Society, with Digressions. Part 2*, 1935, pp. 24–5, 10D/68/19, Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland; *Freethinker*, 28 November 1897, p. 765.
84. 'Moral Education in the Schools', pp. 490–1.
85. Report for 1898 cited in Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 125.
86. 'Proposed Moral Instruction amendment to Education Bill'; R. Race, Letter to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 10 October 1904, p. 10.
87. *Freethinker*, 14 August 1898, p. 525.
88. *Freethinker*, 14 August 1898, p. 515; 9 July 1899, p. 445.
89. S. Coit (1909) 'The Ethical Use of the Bible in Schools' in G. Spiller (ed.) *Papers on Moral Education*, pp. 157–9, p. 159. John Clifford's position is outlined in Sacks, *Religious Issue*, p. 125.
90. *Freethinker*, 31 July 1898, pp. 484–5.
91. *Freethinker*, 28 May 1899, p. 347; 9 July 1899, p. 445.
92. J. Herrick (1982) *Vision and Realism: A Hundred Years of the Freethinker* (London: G. W. Foote & Co.), p. 40; Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, pp. 315–16.

93. Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans*, pp. 30, 60–1; *Manchester Guardian*, 21 March 1911, p. 5. It is not clear whether Payne was involved in the local 'branch' of the MIL established in 1903 (his name is not listed in an account of the inaugural meeting in *Manchester Guardian*, 18 November 1903, p. 8).
94. H. Johnson (1908) 'Moral Instruction and Training in France' in M. Sadler (ed.) *Moral Instruction and Training in Schools. Report of an International Inquiry. Volume II* (London: Longmans, Green & Co.), pp. 1–50.
95. *MELQ*, 33, 1 July 1913, p. 6; *EW*, 15 June 1913, p. 92.
96. Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 4.
97. See Chap. 2, also Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, pp. 16–18, 218.
98. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 153–4; Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 13.
99. *EW*, 15 June 1913, p. 92; 1 February 1915, p. 30; 1 July 1915, pp. 109–10.
100. For example, A. Farquharson to K. Bradley, 4 December 1906, Correspondence from Alexander Farquharson to Kate Bradley GB172/LP/13/1/5, Civic Education League Papers, The Sociological Review Archive (CELP), Special Collections & Archives, University of Keele.
101. MIL, *Future of the Civic and Moral Education League*; *The Schoolmaster*, 3 September 1926, pp. 305–6.
102. Notice of Monthly meeting of the Executive Committee, 6 April 1920, Civic Education League Executive Committee Minutes GB172/LP/3/1/1, CELP.
103. Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 18; Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 155–6; L. Mumford to P. Geddes, 3 December 1920, in F. G. Novak Jr. (ed.) (1995) *Lewis Mumford and Patrick Geddes: the Correspondence* (London: Routledge), p. 81; LePlay House Programme, Spring 1925, p. 6, LePlay House Meetings and Flyers 1922–29 GB172/LP/5/3/7, CELP.
104. On the Civic Education League after 1919 see P. Brett (2012) 'Citizenship Education in England in the Shadow of the Great War', *Citizenship Teaching & Learning*, 8:1, 55–74 and D. Evans (1986) 'Le Play House and the Regional Survey Movement in British Sociology' (MPhil thesis, City of Birmingham Polytechnic/CNAA), Chapters 4–5, http://www.dfte.co.uk/ios/index.htm, date accessed 28 January 2016.
105. Smith, 'A Further Danger for our Schools', p. 606.

106. *Freethinker*, 8 August 1897, p. 505.
107. F. Daustini Cremer, Letter to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 10 February 1909, p. 3.
108. *Manchester Guardian*, 30 September 1908, p. 6.
109. Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, p. 156.
110. *EW*, 15 June 1913, p. 92.

CHAPTER 5

International Dimensions of Moral Education, 1892–1914

Secularist promoters of moral instruction in English schools saw themselves working towards a goal that had international relevance. Writing in its *Quarterly* newsletter in 1912, Harrold Johnson, the Secretary of the Moral Instruction League (MIL), saw 'something universal' in what he termed the moral instruction 'movement' that appealed 'not only to one country, but to all'.[1] International dimensions of moral education, which included but went well beyond the MIL, will be considered in some detail in this chapter. As with the MIL, the Ethical Movement, more than any other branch of organised freethought, stimulated and shaped this activity.

The decades around the turn of the twentieth century saw unprecedented levels of intellectual exchange between individuals from different countries concerned with educational reform. Cheap printing meant that books, pamphlets and journals could be disseminated widely, while advances in railway travel and shipping made it possible for individuals to travel, and to discuss and exchange ideas. There was an exponential increase in the number of international meetings and congresses among

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S. Wright, *Morality and Citizenship in English Schools*,
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educationalists, which contributed in important ways to the formation of academic disciplines and advances in educational research.[2] Educational networks, however, intersected with other philanthropic and religious ones. The Ethical Movement's activity can be situated in this intermeshing of different networks and overlapping of educational with other commitments.[3] Ethical Movement activists in different countries shared an ideological commitment to the Ethical Ideal, which meant practical commitment to moral improvement through educational means, for those within the Ethical Movement and for society as a whole.[4] To achieve this, activists within the Movement linked up through individual friendships and working relationships, and more formal organisational mechanisms. In this way the Ethical Movement provided them with resources that they could work with in order to influence others beyond its boundaries, shaping debate and informing practice in schools in England and elsewhere. Activists were able to reach a broad constituency of educators, but, in order to achieve their wider educational goals, they played down the Ethical Movement's organisational contribution. This presented something of a dilemma for activists, the implications of which will be explored further.

Three moments of international communication associated with the Ethical Movement between 1892 and 1914 will be considered in detail.[5] First, Felix Adler, founder of the first ethical society in New York in 1876, published *The Moral Instruction of Children* in 1892. This volume was influential among Ethical Movement activists in England, including those later involved in the MIL. Second, the Ethical Movement was also involved, between 1906 and 1908, in an International Inquiry into moral instruction and training in schools, and in organising and publicising the First International Moral Education Congress (IMEC) which was held in London in 1908. Finally, Frederick James Gould, in his capacity as demonstrator for the MIL, conducted three lecture tours between 1911 and 1914, two in the USA and one in India. These three moments illustrate the different ways in which, at different times and in different contexts, the Ethical Movement could provide the ideological foundations for educational programmes and activities, and facilitate the meeting of like-minded people and the exchange and movement of ideas and practices across national boundaries. But these meetings and exchanges, as will be established, were not without their difficulties.

Atlantic Crossings: *The Moral Instruction of Children* to the Moral Instruction League (1892–97)

Felix Adler (1851–1933) was a highly educated Jew from a Rabbinic family who, in 1876, left his synagogue and set up the first Ethical Culture Society in New York City. This became the model for similar societies established in other American cities, and during the 1880s ethical societies were also established in England and other European countries. As early as 1883, Adler was writing about the need for non-theological moral instruction and over the ensuing years he developed a programme for the students in his school in New York. Stanton Coit's crossing of the Atlantic in 1887 ensured that Adler's ideas were to be disseminated in England. Coit was born in Columbus, Ohio in 1857. The son of a spiritualist mother, his religious upbringing was never conventional. He first heard of Adler and the Ethical Culture Movement from a fellow student whilst studying at Amherst College, Massachusetts in 1880. In 1881 he started to work with Adler in New York, continuing his studies at Columbia College in that city, before a period of doctoral study in Berlin. He moved to London in 1887, working first at South Place Ethical Society and then, during the 1890s, helping to set up other ethical societies in the capital, and in 1896 the Union of Ethical Societies (UES).[6] In all of his activities he brought with him his mentor's emphasis on moral instruction. This coincided with an emerging interest among left-leaning secularists in the capital. In 1889, for example, as noted already in Chapter 3, John Trevor, then a Unitarian minister and later founder of the Labour Church, gave a talk on moral instruction in French schools which was attended by both Coit and Gould.[7] It is unlikely to have been difficult for Coit to persuade Gould, and others of a similar frame of mind, of the value of his mentor's views on education.

Adler's own activities in the early 1890s would have fuelled further interest in England. Most important among these was the publication of his *Moral Instruction of Children*. In this book, developed from a series of lectures delivered in the School of Applied Ethics in 1891 in Plymouth, Massachusetts, Adler outlined the scheme of moral instruction in his Working Men's School (known after 1895 as the Ethical Culture School) in New York. He proposed a graduated programme of moral lessons for students aged six to 14 or 15, and suggested fairy tales, fables, the Bible and Greek mythology as key sources of illustration.[8] Themes to be covered were classified into 'self-regarding duties' (such as temperance, acquiring knowledge and perseverance in studies, control of feelings), duties 'which

we owe to all men' (specifically justice and charity), and 'special social duties' relating to the family, employment, citizenship, friendship and religious fellowship. The moral teaching given at a particular age (infancy, childhood and youth) was shaped so as to cover the most important duties of that period.[9] Adler argued that a scheme of 'unsectarian moral teaching' like his was 'neither irreligious nor anti-religious'. It rested on 'purely educational grounds with which the religious bias of the educator has nothing whatever to do'. It was, he suggested, the only fair approach to inculcating moral truths in the USA where there was no state religion, and, therefore, 'in the eyes of the state [*sic*], all shades of belief and disbelief [were] on a par'.[10]

Adler was also able to publicise his ideas among English ethicists during his European tours in 1891 and 1892. While in England in May and June 1892, for example, he lectured on moral instruction, among other topics, at the London Ethical Society. A talk by the movement's founder would, most likely, have attracted ethicists from other societies in the capital, possibly including those later involved in the UES and the MIL. Adler's visits to England, according to his biographer Horace Friess, were less about imparting 'his own style of Ethical Culture', which was more suited to the US context in which he operated than the English one, than they were an opportunity for him to learn about English customs and culture. Still, it is likely that his personal contact with ethicists here provided an additional channel for the influence of his educational programme.[11]

Perhaps because of his unique position as the founding father of the Ethical Movement, and his direct association with Coit, Adler's *Moral Instruction of Children*, more than any other text, shaped the English Ethical Movement's programme of moral instruction that was promoted in the nation's schools by the MIL. MIL activists commented on the foundational status of Adler's work, stating in 1911, for example, that 'in the work of Dr Felix Adler . . . our modern Moral Education Movement had its rise'.[12] The handful of home-grown moral instruction books and syllabuses, mentioned in Chapters 3 and 4, were not noted in this way.[13] The MIL's programme outlined in Chapter 4 shows a clear affinity with Adler's educational vision, with its non-theological basis, and its graduated syllabus focused on personal and then broader social and civic duties, drawing on a range of illustrative material, including sacred texts. However, Adler's scheme was devised for a privately organised school in New York, initially free but admitting fee-paying students from 1890. Was it possible for the

educational ideas behind it to cross the Atlantic and be generalised successfully to all English elementary schools, as the MIL desired?

In 1908, Adler, at the IMEC, was again offering his wisdom to an English audience. By this time he had achieved considerable academic prestige, having been appointed professor of Political and Social Ethics at Columbia University in 1902. He expressed doubts over whether schemes of moral instruction like his could be extended rapidly, when teachers, and the wider population, lacked adequate preparation.[14] This was but one small part of the international communication which took place that year at the IMEC and through the report of the International Inquiry.

'World-Wide Interest'[15]: The *Report of the International Inquiry* and the First International Moral Education Congress, 1908

In the years after 1900, governments in a number of European countries were placing renewed emphasis, through different means (including educational legislation, administrative provisions, and official manuals and textbooks), on moral education in their schools.[16] The autumn of 1908 was something of a high point in international communication, face-to-face and in print, among those interested in the subject. It saw the publication of the two-volume *Report* of a prominent International Inquiry into moral training in schools in October. And from 26 to 30 September the First International Moral Education Congress was held in London. The Inquiry and the Congress engaged many prominent educationalists of the time, and received considerable attention from the national and educational press.

The *Report* of the International Inquiry was the outcome of two years' work. The Inquiry was chaired by Michael Sadler, who had been in charge of the Board of Education's Office of Special Inquiries and Reports 1895–1903, and in 1903 was appointed professor of the History and Administration of Education at the University of Manchester. By the time the Inquiry commenced he had gained a reputation for his ability to oversee impartial inquiries into educational problems, and also for his international expertise.[17] Sadler outlined the Inquiry's methods in the introduction to the two-volume *Report*. Initial steps were taken by a 'few men' interested in moral education who met at a private conference in London in summer 1906. The group disagreed on how moral education should be conducted, and what should be its ideological basis, but agreed on the need for full and

open discussion and carefully sifted information. A 'Provisional Committee' was formed consisting of Sadler, two Congregationalist ministers (the Reverends Dr J. B. Paton and J. Brierley), the journalist and newspaper editor W. T. Stead (the first meeting apparently took place at his house), Harrold Johnson, and Mr J. H. Yoxall MP of the National Union of Teachers.[18] A British Advisory Council was also formed, consisting of 'some 900 members, representative of almost every shade of political and religious thought and almost all forms of educational experience'. At the Advisory Council's first meeting in February 1907 an Executive Committee of 30 persons was appointed. This 'widely representative body' consisted of the original Provisional Committee supplemented by two bishops, three ministers of religion, Mr J. Allanson Picton, Gould, and other 'leading representatives of the educational world'.[19]

The Executive Committee prepared a list of topics, invited communications from members of the Advisory Council, received oral evidence from selected witnesses, and commissioned expert investigators to observe and prepare reports on moral instruction and training in the UK, France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the USA. Coverage was uneven, perhaps reflecting the Inquiry's origins. The first volume ('The United Kingdom') contained 33 chapters, whilst the 24 chapters of the second volume ('Foreign and Colonial') covered the British Empire and other countries. And there were disagreements among those involved over how to interpret international findings, and over what evidence to include in the final report, as correspondence published in *The Times* about chapters on France and Germany reveals.[20] Still, reviews in the English press after publication were, generally, favourable and praised the wealth of information the *Report* contained.

A number of secularists were involved with the Inquiry in one way or another. F. S. Marvin, for example, was asked by a member of the Inquiry's Committee to support a cause which he was 'interested in' by identifying schools in Yorkshire (Marvin's inspectorial district at the time) which were 'making efforts in direct moral instruction apart from religious instruction'. The appropriate expert investigator could then arrange visits.[21] Ethicists appear to have been involved to a greater extent, although sources can be a little sketchy (and inconsistent) about details. It is unclear, for instance, whether the first 'private conference' in 1906 was initiated by Johnson and Gustav Spiller, or by Stead who issued the original invitation to meetings at his house in London.[22] It is also not clear whether Johnson and Spiller, at this early stage, were self-motivated or directed via official Ethical

Movement channels. Still, the Inquiry's Executive Committee, and the overlapping list of expert investigators, included what seems to be a disproportionate number of Ethical Movement members compared with those attached to other religious or secularist bodies: Sophie Bryant, Headmistress of North London Collegiate School, and J. H. Muirhead, professor of Philosophy at the University of Birmingham, and both long-standing members of the London Ethical Society, Gould, Frank Herbert Hayward, and Johnson.[23] In Sadler's introduction, however, as with the bulk of the media discussion, it is difficult to detect a distinctive Ethical Movement contribution. Even when individuals like Spiller and Johnson or organisations like the MIL were mentioned, their connection to the Ethical Movement was not. In response to a question at the first Advisory Council meeting in 1907, Sadler was careful to point out that the Inquiry was fully independent of *any* organisation. In particular, it was not under the auspices of the MIL; rather, the MIL 'in common with other organisations' had been invited to co-operate in the Inquiry.[24]

The First IMEC, according to Spiller, had a 'practical object', 'that of improving the Moral Education offered in schools'.[25] It was a large and high-profile affair, with 21 governments officially represented, along with over 30 universities and over 100 educational associations. At the start of the Congress the King's statement of support and welcome was read out. Over 150 papers were presented and over 1400 tickets were sold, the participants and audience consisting of teachers, public reformers, philanthropists, politicians and clergy. Sadler saw this level of interest as remarkable in a year in which London had already hosted ten other international congresses. The MIL's urging of 'the supreme importance of effective moral and civic education in all schools', he suggested, had 'prepared English opinion to welcome such a gathering, and had disposed the newspapers to attach due importance to its deliberations'.[26] The IMEC's programme was not lacking in either range or ambition. Among the themes covered were types of schools, character building by discipline and influence, the relation of religious education to moral instruction, systematic moral instruction, the teaching of special moral subjects, the relation of moral education to 'education under other aspects', and biology and moral education.[27] The educational and national papers were generally positive in their assessment of the organisation, the programme, the quality and range of contributions, and the importance of what the Congress was trying to achieve. Criticisms within this largely favourable commentary focused on the lack of time for contributions from the floor, the limited practical guidance for the

practising teacher, and the programme attempting to cover too much ground.[28] However, some writing in the religious and secularist papers, whose contributions will be discussed further below, were less than satisfied.

Writing in the *International Journal of Ethics*, Sadler suggested that 'the idea of . . . [the] Congress, and the determination to hold one, came in the first place to prominent workers in the International Union of Ethical Societies' (the body which connected ethical societies and individual ethicists in different countries).[29] For the Congress, unlike the International Inquiry, there is clear evidence of sanction and direction through official Ethical Movement channels. The idea of the IMEC seems to have emerged at the 1906 International Congress of Ethical Societies, which took place at Eisenach, Germany, from 30 June to 3 July. Delegates from Austria, England, Germany, the USA and Japan approved a constitution of the International Union, appointed Spiller as International Secretary, and appointed a subcommittee, which included Johnson and Spiller, 'to deal with Moral Instruction internationally'. The moral instruction subcommittee decided to organise an international congress, with Spiller in charge of planning. There is no evidence that other plans, such as establishing an international bureau and a permanent journal of moral education, came to fruition.[30]

In 1907 invitations were sent out, under the auspices of the International Union of Ethical Societies, to educationalists throughout Europe to join the Congress General Committee. In early 1908 an Executive Committee was formed 'consisting mainly of persons residing in London'.[31] Under Spiller's direction, the Congress was advertised extensively in the English press: for example, through letters from the Executive Committee to *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian* over the summer of 1908. Thousands of invitations were sent, often by Spiller himself, to educationalists and government representatives both in the UK and overseas.[32] The IMEC was promoted in the various secularist periodicals,[33] but particularly among Ethical Movement members. Spiller wrote regularly in *Ethical World*, and would also have reached some ethicist readers through the MIL's *Quarterly*.[34] Readers were encouraged to attend the Congress. They were asked to assist the organisers with donations of money and practical help in various forms, including addressing envelopes, answering queries, and providing accommodation for delegates. Spiller also worked through formal Ethical Movement channels. He approached the Council of the UES for assistance, pointing to the 'immense significance of the occasion' and observing that 'nothing the Ethical Movement had ever done could compare with it in

magnitude and importance'. He requested that the Council organise a body of voluntary helpers to assist the Congress Executive Committee with clerical work, hospitality and advertising tickets. Individual ethical societies were encouraged to interest their members in the Congress. And those based in London were also called on to celebrate a Moral Education Sunday on 20 September, just before the IMEC took place, along with other chapels, churches and synagogues in the city.[35]

Educationalists among the members of the Ethical Movement provided academic oversight and input. Sophie Bryant was chair of the Congress Executive Committee. Johnson, and Professors Muirhead and J. S. Mackenzie, were committee members. Coit, Hayward, G. P. Gooch, Spiller, J. S. Mackenzie, A. J. Waldegrave and Gould were among the English ethicists contributing papers and Gould also conducted a demonstration lesson. International representatives of the Ethical Movement present at the Congress included moral instructors of long standing: for example, Professor Wilhelm Foerster of Berlin, president of the German Union of Ethical Societies and Vice-President of the Congress General Committee. Ferdinand Buisson, who, as Director of Primary Education (1879–99), was involved in introducing a system of secular moral instruction (*morale laïque*) into French schools in the 1880s, was adopted as an honorary ethicist because of his 'sympathy with our aims'.[36] The decision was taken to make the most of the presence of these and others, and to hold an 'International Ethical Conference' immediately after the Congress finished on 30 September and 1 October.[37]

However, many Executive Committee members, speakers and members of the audience were not attached to or connected with the Ethical Movement in any way. As reports in *Ethical World* pointed out, the IMEC was supported by representatives of education from many countries, universities and teachers' organisations, irrespective of religion or political party. Sadler described a spirit of 'intense sincerity, combined with forbearance and mutual respect . . . of reverence and of respectful regard for the convictions of others'.[38] The aim of fostering dialogue on a wide basis, in this view, was achieved. Crucial to this was the Ethical Movement's decision not to claim ownership of the event. *Ethical World* and the *MILQ* proclaimed the Movement's contributions to ethicists and sympathisers. But publicity materials aimed at a wider audience highlighted, instead, the 'representative' nature of the gathering, and its 'catholic' spirit.[39] This reticence might explain the limited reference to the Ethical Movement in much of the press coverage.

There are, however, grounds to question how far the IMEC achieved its aims of being fully representative of different constituencies and views. Gould, writing more than 20 years later, hints at a gender imbalance in the audience. He described 'crowds of eager faces, mostly women's'. Sadler, on the other hand, writing much nearer the time, suggested there was 'no serious disproportion between the two sexes'.[40] Women were also prominent among speakers, contributing more than a third of speeches at the Congress (as recorded in the *Record of the Proceedings*), a relatively high proportion for the time.[41] More serious, perhaps, were the suggestions of alienation on religious grounds, which featured in both the Christian and secularist press. An editorial in the Anglican *Church Times* in July 1908 suggested that readers should regard the Congress with caution, as its programme contained 'writers and thinkers who refuse to find their ethics in religious sanctions'.[42] Roman Catholic commentators after the event were ambivalent, noting that the IMEC attracted delegates 'of all shades of religious and political opinion'. But there was, they suggested, an over-representation of freethinkers, and especially ethicists, particularly among the international delegates. Catholics, on the other hand, were underrepresented, their numbers 'gravely disproportionate to the work done for moral education in the Catholic Church'. The Reverend Sydney Smith understood a 'reluctance' among his co-religionists to engage in a venture 'whose ulterior purposes they suspected', but regretted the missed opportunity of contributing Catholic perspectives. Having given a paper himself, he suggested that his co-religionists' fears were largely ungrounded. The IMEC had offered a genuine welcome to speakers of all different religious and philosophical persuasions, and the Catholics present were given an 'amicable and even cordial reception'.[43]

Several commentaries focused on one session, on 'The Relation of Religious to Moral Education'. An Anglican view was offered in the *Church Times*. It was suggested that the secularists present at this session did not give those in favour of a Christian approach to moral education a fair hearing: 'the enemies of religious education gathered in force and enjoyed themselves immensely'.[44] Secularists felt equally hard done by. Charles Cohen and George Foote attended the Congress as official National Secular Society representatives. They bemoaned the attitude of the clergy who, they argued, tried to dominate discussions in this particular session, but were conspicuously absent from much of the rest of the gathering. They also suggested that this session was chaired in a partial manner by the Reverend Dr Gow, Headmaster of Westminster School, who gave the floor to clerics

but tried to silence those who favoured a secular system of education. Like the Roman Catholic commentators, Cohen and Foote noted the contributions of foreign secularist delegates, particularly Buisson's arguments in favour of moral instruction on a secular basis in French schools, but saw these as a helpful counterbalance to dominant Christian viewpoints. Ultimately, they argued, along lines familiar from their criticisms of the MIL noted in the previous chapter, that the Congress, by treating morality as both 'a purely social product and a supernatural endowment', was supporting 'two wholly irreconcilable positions'. By admitting any discussion of 'religion' in connection with morality, they felt, the organisers 'played into the hands of the clericals'.[45] Some Positivists were similarly ambivalent. S. H. Swinny, the official Positivist delegate at the conference, assessed contributions to the IMEC primarily on the basis of how they treated or how they related to Positivist ideals. He criticised the organisers for trying to promote a 'placid make-believe in moral harmony' which the discussions during the Monday morning session belied.

This sort of commentary suggests that it might have been difficult at times to maintain the respectful and constructive spirit desired by the IMEC organisers. A telling report in the *Manchester Guardian* of discussions about the use of the Bible in schools noted 'an apparent antagonism between the ethical lecturer [Coit] and the Canon [Glazebrook of Ely] which seemed unjustified by their actual statements'. For the author, this antagonism emanated from Coit's adherence to a 'primitive and outgrown Comtism'; Coit, of course, would not have accepted Comtism as a label for his views.[46] The representatives of different Christian and secularist bodies looked to the Congress for the advance of the interests and ideas of their own organisations, and were critical when they found it lacking.

Within the Ethical Movement itself, descriptions of the IMEC as a whole, and the session on religion and moral education in particular, emphasised the ability to find common ground.[47] There was debate, however, about what to make of the Movement's contribution. Johnson outlined the dilemma faced by the organisers: 'either to hold a Congress which should be confined to members of and sympathisers with the International Ethical Union, or to hold a Congress that should be in the fullest and widest sense representative'.[48] In deciding upon the latter course, according to discussions in *Ethical World*, the Ethical Movement 'purposefully obscured its name': 'To us the work is the main thing, and not the advertisement which its success brings.' This strategy, arguably, enabled the IMEC to attract a wide cross-section of interested parties, including many

Christians. Even without direct advertisement it was anticipated that the event would benefit the Movement as a whole by '[securing] . . . many new friends and much credit', and ensuring that 'public opinion generally' would '[welcome] the ideas of the Ethical Movement'. Other ethicists, however, felt that the Movement's contribution should have been publicised more clearly.[49]

It is important to consider who the 'international' in the IMEC and the Inquiry included, and in what ways. There were claims about 'world-wide interest' in the problems of moral education and delegates from 'all parts of the Globe'.[50] But the main focus of both the Inquiry and the Congress was on what were designated 'Western' or 'civilised' countries: Britain and other European countries, the USA, Canada, Australia, and, although not 'Western', Japan.[51] The India Office noted the European focus of most of the papers in the preliminary advertisements for the IMEC, and saw this as a reason not to appoint an official national government delegate to attend, although some state governments were represented.[52] India, however, became significant in later developments, as did, once again, the USA.

'A New Kind of Missionary'[53]: Frederick James Gould in the USA and India 1911–14

As the MIL's Demonstrator, Gould travelled throughout Britain. Between 1911 and 1914, however, this position also took him overseas, an indication of growing recognition of his work among international educationalists at this time. His demonstration lesson at the IMEC in 1908 had been attended by international visitors. His books, along with the MIL's *Graduated Syllabus* and other texts, were being used in a number of countries and had been translated into different languages.[54] Gould's tours of the USA and India between 1911 and 1914 offered the MIL the opportunity to disseminate its version of non-theological moral instruction on a world-wide stage, and to demonstrate to educators on the ground that it could work in different national and cultural contexts. Gould's personal views and activities were, as already noted, by this stage linked more with the Positivists than any other freethought group. Still, Ethical Movement personnel, activities, and networks more than anything else facilitated and shaped this international aspect of his moral education work.

Gould's first visit to the USA in July and August 1911 was organised through the American Ethical Union. The Ethical Movement did not

organise Gould's second American tour from September 1913 to April 1914 or Gould's tour of India in January and February 1913. But the Movement's previous activities in connection with the MIL and IMEC had helped to open up the channels of communication and to stimulate the interest in moral education that made these later tours possible. The tours were, moreover, consistent with the International Ethical Union's ongoing aim of developing moral instruction leagues in 'all civilised countries'.[55] Gould was not the only activist who crossed the Atlantic in connection with the Ethical Movement. Coit's move to England in 1887 and Adler's European tours in 1891–92 have been mentioned already. In the early years of the twentieth century, there was movement again, but in the opposite direction. Horace Bridges worked with Coit in London from 1904, before moving to Chicago in 1911 to lead the ethical society in that city. George O'Dell, who had been executive secretary of the West London Ethical Society 1907–13 and chair of the Council of the UES 1909–11, went to St Louis and Philadelphia in 1913.[56] The MIL's *Quarterly* and the moral education column in *Ethical World* carried news about publications and conferences related to moral instruction in America.[57] Reference was made on a number of occasions between 1908 and 1913 to the possible, or probable, building up of an American moral instruction league, after preliminary steps were taken at the annual meeting of the American Ethical Union in 1907.[58] The *Report* of the International Inquiry and IMEC of 1908, as well as Spiller's report produced in 1909 for the International Union of Ethical Societies, provided further information.[59]

In 1911 Gould was invited on a two-month demonstration tour under the auspices of the American Ethical Union, planned by Mrs Garlin Spencer. He arrived in New York on 25 May, and sailed back to England on 22 July. He visited New England and the Mid-Western states, spending time in New York, Philadelphia, Rhode Island, Brooklyn, Boston, Geneva, Chicago, Madison and Chautauqua, and attending a total of 51 meetings (48 demonstration lessons and three conferences). He taught in schools, normal schools (training colleges), universities, drawing rooms, chapels, and a synagogue. Class sizes ranged from five 'on an excessively hot day in Madison' to 500 at a grammar school in Boston. As far as possible, Gould's demonstration lessons followed the model he used in England, whereby he gave a lesson to a class before an audience of teachers or other interested adults, before dismissing the students and inviting comment and questions from the adults present. There was much contact with American ethicists. His tour included a visit to the Ethical Culture School

in New York, where he conversed with Adler, observed a moral lesson, and gave demonstrations himself. He taught in the rooms of the Philadelphia Ethical Society, and also in Madison, Wisconsin at the Summer School of the American Ethical Union, where his sessions, apparently, 'began well, steadily increased in attendance, and closed with an audience which taxed the capacity of the hall.'[60]

Gould described his travels in some detail in the MIL's *Quarterly*, with outlines of his demonstration activities, vivid pen portraits of the places he visited, and also his general impressions of American social and political life.[61] He commented on differences between the American and English educational and social contexts. He noted the absence of the 'religious difficulty' in American schools, which allowed for discussion 'unmarred by controversial feeling'. He was struck by the multinational and multiracial make-up of the nation's inhabitants which, he argued, required schools to '[train] heterogenous populations in social sympathy'. A mixed population was not, however, an obstacle to his work: 'The children, though including miscellaneous nationalities and occasionally coloured girls and boys, display the same characteristics as the British types, and I quite readily entered into friendly relations.'[62] Looking back at the tour as a whole, Gould claimed that 'teachers, professors, the general public, and the children, all gave me the pleasantest reception'. He predicted, on the basis of the interest in moral education that he had seen on his travels, that 'a preliminary step' would soon be taken towards forming an organised moral education movement in the USA.[63]

Mrs Garlin Spencer was fulsome in her praise of Gould's visit, stating that he had 'made a profound impression in the United States'. There was no one on the moral education platform there, she argued, who had done 'so much to show the teachers practical and helpful ways of dealing with children in this line of education'. She was glad to have him as 'a link between the workers in Great Britain and those here'. She noted requests for Gould to embark on another, longer, visit as soon as possible.[64] It was two years, however, before Gould returned to the USA, in September 1913, for a seven-month tour. This second visit was organised by Dr Frank Chapman Sharp, professor of Philosophy at the University of Wisconsin, with the help of the University's Extension Department. Gould had met F. C. Sharp during his first tour of America in 1911, and recalled sitting with a group of young farmers, listening to one of his extension lectures on Hobbes and Locke.[65] Gould sailed from Liverpool on 25 September 1913 and arrived in New York on 2 October. His lecturing duties started

on 6 October at Kenosha High School, Wisconsin, and finished in Washington, DC on 24 April 1914. He visited 32 cities, in nine states (Kentucky, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, and Washington, DC). He gave 292 demonstration lessons and lectures, often before audiences of several hundred, again in schools, normal schools, universities, and the Sunday Schools of a number of chapels and churches. Ethical Movement contacts were maintained, with Gould teaching at the Ethical Culture School in New York, and at the Sunday Schools of the Ethical Societies in St Louis and Brooklyn. His five days in Winnetka, Illinois, in December 1913 were organised by Mr Edwin Fecheimer, who was both chair of the Winnetka Board of Education and president of Chicago Ethical Society.[66] Gould worked with F. C. Sharp to produce a syllabus of moral and civic instruction for use in American elementary schools, covering eight grades and 300 lesson topics.[67]

In his travel reports Gould noted, again, a generally positive reception, the absence of the 'religious difficulty', and the pleasures of teaching a multinational and multiracial population. Mass immigration to America in the nineteenth century was, he argued, 'the most wonderful event in the history of the United States', and schools, he argued, would be the main instrument for amalgamating the varieties of population into a 'new America'. He was less positive about the racial divisions he encountered in Baltimore, a 'southern city in temperament' which 'more or less willingly' maintained social barriers between white and 'African' [*sic*]. In educational terms this meant separate schools and training colleges for 'coloured' and 'European' (white) pupils and teachers respectively, with the white institutions having far superior facilities. He was invited to visit both white and coloured schools, and saw this as 'a small but notable indication of progress'. Occasional comments, however, suggest difficulties in transferring his model of demonstration lessons to the US context. Gould wrote that 'discussion was not a strong point with American audiences': he admitted that even when he invited comments and questions a number of his meetings broke up as soon as his lesson closed.[68] His methods were also attacked by four eminent professors of education, including John Dewey, before a large audience at Columbia University, on the grounds that he did not offer adequate opportunities for pupils' self-expression immediately after the instruction given. Gould replied that a pupil's 'response' might not emerge till years after the instruction.[69]

F. C. Sharp, writing towards the end of Gould's visit, described the tour as 'extraordinarily successful'. Moral instruction lessons were being

introduced in 'a large number of cities', and Sharp and Gould's syllabus was being ordered from many cities which Gould had visited. This, Sharp suggested, would represent 'the real beginning of the moral instruction work on a large scale and in a systematic way in the United States'.[70] Despite this enthusiasm, the hope expressed by the MIL and some US ethicists that Gould's tours would help establish a States-wide moral instruction movement was not to be realised.

India, a British colony with many faiths within its borders, was a very different proposition. Gould was originally invited to go to India for two months by the Government of Bombay in early 1912. But this would have been only a few months after his first tour of the USA, so his visit was postponed till early 1913.[71] On 20 December 1912, he set sail for India on the P&O steamer *SS Arabia* for a six-week tour of demonstration lessons during January and February 1913, arriving in Bombay on 10 January and commencing his tour a few days later. He visited the main cities of the Presidency: Bombay, Belgaum, Dharwar, Poona, Karachi, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Surat.[72] Gould also received an invitation to visit Baroda, outside the Bombay Presidency, from His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwar. In 1908 The Maharaja of Baroda had requested the MIL's *Graduated Syllabus* and books for circulation in local schools, and three years later he had arranged for the translation of *Youth's Noble Path* into two vernaculars, Mahrati and Gujarati. In recognition of this activity he was made a Vice President of the MIL.[73] William H. Sharp, Director of Public Instruction for Bombay, and, according to Gould, 'a shrewd, statesmanlike man; official in habits, but philosophic in view', organised the tour and accompanied Gould for much of it.[74] Between 1910 and 1912, Gould had given a number of demonstration lessons before Indian and Anglo-Indian audiences. Yet this experience could not have prepared him fully for teaching in India itself. Aware of the novelty of this venture, Gould wrote to F. S. Marvin before sailing to India, asking about contacts among inspectors and others in the Bombay Presidency who he could arrange to meet. Johnson was similarly aware that in India Gould would find a very different culture and political situation from those he had encountered before; 'the universality of our instruction and methods could not be more effectively put to the test.'[75]

Gould's tour built on previous MIL activity in India. It is hard to establish when this activity started, but as early as 1904 Johnson was noting 'evidence of serious consideration' of questions of moral education there. In a country where government schools were purely secular, there was

concern, as there had been since the 1880s, about the implications of the absence of religious instruction. Educators were looking for alternative approaches to moral training.[76] In 1908 a number of Indian educationalists attended the IMEC. These included representatives of the British governments of Assam, Eastern Bengal, Ceylon, Madras and Poona, and of the universities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Others attended not as official representatives but in an individual capacity, including W. H, Sharp, who witnessed Gould's demonstration lesson.[77] The same year, the Mysore Government introduced moral and religious instruction for 30 minutes a day and approved the use of the MIL's books in government schools.[78] In 1910 an 'important conference' on moral and religious education took place in Bombay, presided over by the Governor, 'who spoke in high terms of the work of the League'.[79] The Government of India itself noted the importance of moral education as an issue to be considered under the remit of the national Education Department, but left individual presidencies to establish their own policies, within limits designated in order to protect religious freedoms. The government, however, would watch any experiments 'with interest'.[80]

The MIL monitored developments and claimed, with some truth but also perhaps a little wishful thinking, that much of this activity was a result of its propaganda. It also made arrangements with a Madras publisher for the distribution of its publications within India.[81] In April 1911 *Youth's Noble Path*, Gould's collection of moral instruction lessons aimed at an Indian audience, was published to capitalise on this interest, and the book reached India in mid-May. Gould drew on Hindu, Jain, Muslim, Parsee and Buddhist poetry and scriptures to illustrate his lessons. He intended 'to treat every religious faith and every form of religious practice … with equal respect' and to provide 'a common moral basis of character-training' which would 'offer a happy means of bringing the minds of East and West into closer spiritual union'.[82] Gould prepared the book carefully over a period of two years. He was given access to specialist material at the libraries of the India Office and the Royal Asiatic Society. Lessons were trialled in a Government High School in Mysore and by Gould himself before Indian and Anglo-Indian audiences in London. Draft chapters were given to Indian educationalists based in the UK and in India, including prominent representatives of Hindu and Muslim communities, with a request for advice as to their suitability prior to publication.[83] By 1913 there were indications of some impact. *Youth's Noble Path* had been placed on the prescribed list of readings by the University of Calcutta and the

Government of Bengal. A portion of the text was used in the State Paper 'A Collection of Moral Extracts' that the Bombay government issued to teachers in its Anglo-vernacular schools.[84] The author of the State Paper had seen Gould give demonstration lessons in London and had, apparently, persuaded the Bombay Education Department to invite Gould to visit India in person.[85]

St George Lane Fox Pitt, Honorary Treasurer of the MIL, travelled to India in February 1911 hoping to '[organise] Indian opinion on the spot' before Gould's book came out. He remained in the country for several months, spending much of his time in Bombay but also visiting other major cities, lecturing, writing and meeting Indian educationalists. An Indian moral instruction league was formed while he was there. In addition to Fox Pitt, its committee included Mr Bhabha (former Inspector General of Education in Mysore who was responsible for introducing moral instruction into government schools there) and, as chair, Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, Vice Chancellor of the University of Bombay. Both were already members of the English MIL.[86] The MIL presented this sort of activity as something the imperial centre could do for the benefit of its colony: 'We have given India political unity. Might not we now . . . [make] possible for her a moral unity?' When in India, however, Gould took care to reassure audiences that his was not a colonialist enterprise. He was there not because India was in special need of 'ethical enlightenment' from the imperial power, but because she was, along with many other nations, interested in a problem of 'world-wide importance'.[87]

Once again, Gould provided vivid descriptions of his travels and activities for readers at home.[88] The 'temples, bullock-carts, naked little lads, pot-bearing women, yellow-capped policemen, and shiny-hatted Parsees with umbrellas' that he saw were 'familiar . . . from many a picture and kinema show'.[89] He was clearly enthralled, however, by the novelty and interest of his surroundings. Gould's tour consisted of 22 public meetings. He gave demonstration lessons before Hindu, Moslem (*sic*) and Parsee audiences. These lessons were 'substantially the same as those given in England' (which were usually aimed at an age group of 10–14). Because the pupils attending had to be fluent in English, however, many of his classes consisted of older children from English-speaking high schools. He also observed some lessons given by Indian teachers. Gould was keenly aware of the importance of social and cultural differences, but described a common basis of humanity: 'The same heart beats in every human breast'.[90] He noted objections very similar to those raised in response to his

demonstration lessons at home: an overcrowded timetable, the potential dullness of systematic ethics, and the troublesome relationship between morality and religion. He claimed to have checked with his audiences that he had not offended their religious scruples, noting only one challenge from a Hindu about his description of part of the *Mahabharata*; on this occasion another audience member asserted that Gould's interpretation was correct.[91]

Gould learned much about social conditions on the subcontinent. He saw the low status and salaries of teachers in India compared with England as an obstacle to their professional organisation and development. The physical and material facilities in schools reminded him of those in England 40 or 50 years previously: 'the long desks, the slates, the old-fashioned charts, the cheap wall-pictures, and the obsoleteness of the buildings'. He described the widespread practice of 'child-marriage' with uneasiness, noting that many of the high school boys he taught were married. He observed the harsh treatment of the 'Untouchables', suggesting, however, that the caste system which gave rise to this sort of treatment was a 'rigid and ultra-logical methodising of the divisions that characterise civilisation in the West as well as the East'. He also reflected on the implications of the political situation in India for moral instruction: 'The political conditions of India, where popular government is only at the faint initial stage, make the growth of the civic sense slow and difficult.' Having observed some moral lessons, he described the 'much-too-moralistic habit of the Eastern teacher', as evidenced by the tendency among some to close the lesson by singing, in unison, some religious verse on the theme just considered. Such habits were, however, he suggested, tempered by a 'dramatic instinct', and he conceded that Western teachers could be equally moralistic but 'in a less poetic form'. Gould was impressed at the quality and intensity of the discussions among teachers that accompanied his tour: 'Nowhere ... have I heard moral education discussed more strenuously or more intelligently debated.' In contrast with his US experience, he was, on 'several occasions', 'plied with questions and criticisms for more than an hour', and detained by teachers 'even after ... [leaving] the platform'. He found the children he taught apt to use words of 'a bookish quality', but 'as ready to seize moral issues as young people in Great Britain and the United States'.[92]

Gould set sail from Bombay on 22 March. Before leaving, he submitted a report to the presidency's education authorities. His main recommendations were for at least one moral instruction lesson a week in all schools under government control, facilities for training teachers in giving moral

instruction, and the formation of a consultative committee to consider the question of moral instruction in the presidency's schools. The Bombay government claimed to be happy with the overall tenor of Gould's report. It promised to consider forming a consultative committee (in fact, one was established the following year), and to include moral instruction in the curricula of vernacular and secondary training colleges. It also '[recognised] the great interest aroused in the subject of moral instruction' by Gould's demonstration lessons in the presidency, and appreciated the 'general stimulus which his earnestness and zeal' had provided. Nonetheless, the government exercised caution. Moral instruction was to be limited initially to primary schools where vernacular teachers already practised the subject; other teachers and schools were to be encouraged to take it up gradually. In secondary schools, moral instruction was only to be given by those teachers who had attended Gould's demonstration lessons. Gould wrote that he supported the Bombay government's 'tentative measure' as it would be 'unwise to push upon unqualified and unwilling teachers the responsibilities of training young consciences' (perhaps he was thinking back to his Leicester experiences here). 'I have every reason to be satisfied with the result of my excursion to the East,' he claimed.[93]

Conclusion

The Ethical Movement, from 1892 to 1914, facilitated communication which led to important educational initiatives reaching well beyond the confines of secularist circles. Ethical Movement networks allowed for the discussion and dissemination of ideas and educational practices among ethicists, and also, through the activities that they organised, among a wider constituency of educators. In reaching this wider public, the Ethical Movement had, at times, to play down its involvement. Some members felt that this lost them valuable opportunities for publicity. Yet, as was found with the MIL in the previous chapter, playing down Ethical Movement involvement could pay dividends in facilitating engagement with a very wide public. It was hoped that this activity would encourage sympathy with ethicist ideals. To an extent, this might have been achieved. But, as earlier discussion has established in the English context, the Ethical Movement was one manifestation among politicians and social reformers of different political and ideological persuasions of a wider interest in the moral condition of society. The Ethical Movement, through its involvement in these moments of international communication, helped to stimulate a widespread interest

in moral education in schools. Yet the communication would not have had any impact unless there was public concern about moral education in the first place. Any influence on opinion did not, in any case, translate into long-term gains in Ethical Movement membership, which, as has already been noted, declined after 1912.[94] However, spaces for discussion and debate were established which had not existed previously. Thousands of teachers, university lecturers, social reformers, and policy-makers participated in the 1908 Congress, or read the *Report* of the International Inquiry, or encountered F. J. Gould during one of his demonstration lessons in the USA or India. The Ethical Movement might potentially, through these individuals, have influenced educational practices in schools throughout the world. But it is well-nigh impossible to discover what all but a few of them made of what they saw, read or heard.

Ethicist sources, naturally, tended to emphasise cooperation and a common agenda of trying to find effective means for schools to develop the morals of the rising generation against a backdrop of rapid social and ideological change. Cooperation, however, was not among equals, and the interests of different countries and different constituencies of educators within them were not entirely common. The internationalism of the *Report* and Congress of 1908 was largely confined to 'Western' or 'civilised' countries. And it proved difficult to attain a consensus among those present, with religion being a significant cause of division. Gould was not entirely successful in transferring his particular model of moral education from one institutional and cultural context to other very different settings. The experience of these moments of communication challenged the Ethical Movement's vision of a universal, synoptic morality, and also the idea that there could be a common understanding of moral education which transcended national boundaries. The universality of the methods of English moral educators was indeed put to the test, and, in some respects, was found wanting.

This international communication affected secularist activists in England in complex ways. The formative influence of Felix Adler's ideas and programme on ethicists associated with the MIL is clear. The relationship with the *Report* and IMEC in 1908 is more complex. The MIL was quick to cite evidence from both in order to support its domestic campaigns.[95] Yet the range of practices and views that were brought to light did little to change the MIL's educational programme. The impact on individual activists varied. Gustav Spiller, perhaps more than any other Ethical Movement and MIL activist, was at the centre of this communication. He remained committed to the programme of timetabled moral instruction lessons which

the MIL had advocated from the start. For Harrold Johnson, however, the evidence he encountered through his involvement in the International Inquiry led him to question his earlier commitment to moral instruction on a non-theological basis, and ultimately to resign from the MIL.[96] Gould, during his visits to the USA and India, was keenly aware of the varied social and cultural conditions that he encountered on his travels. He aimed to adapt his educational offer to fit the US and Indian contexts in the syllabus he produced with Professor Sharp and in *Youth's Noble Path* respectively, though we should remember the difficulties of transfer that he alluded to. Yet Gould's core approach of narrative teaching remained very much the same, as it would in the interwar years in connection with the League of Nations Union, as Chapter 6 will show.

1914 is as good an end point as any for the sort of activity discussed here. The types of communication described did not cease entirely, and, in the case of the IMEC, they continued, after a wartime hiatus, till 1936. However, it becomes increasingly difficult to discern the influence of the Ethical Movement after 1914. The circumstances of the First World War inevitably limited what was possible in the way of travel and printing, and contact between enemy countries became particularly difficult. A new form of internationalism, however, emerged in the interwar years, with links to the newly created League of Nations. Again secularists identified an opportunity to influence the education in schools, but this time with a focus on creating citizens of the world, as the next chapter will show.

Notes

1. *Moral Education League Quarterly (MELQ)*, 30, 1 October 1912, p. 8.
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3. For example, S. Roberts (2009) 'Exhibiting Children at Risk: Child Art, International Exhibitions and Save the Children Fund in Vienna, 1919–1923', *Paedagogica Historica*, 45:1/2, 171–90; P. Cunningham (2001) 'Innovators, Networks and Structures:

Towards a Prosopography of Progressivism', *History of Education*, 30:5, 433–51.

4. See Chapter 2 on the ideas of the Ethical Movement.
5. These moments have been addressed briefly, in R. N. Bérard (1984) 'The Movement for Moral Instruction in Great Britain: The Moral Instruction League and its Successors', *Fides et Historia*, 16:, 55–73, pp. 57, 64–6; R. N. Bérard (1987) 'Frederick James Gould and the Transformation of Moral Education', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 35:3, 233–47, pp. 236, 243; F. H. Hilliard (1961) 'The Moral Instruction League 1879–1919', *Durham Research Review*, 12, 53–63, pp. 60–1.
6. H. Friess (1981) *Felix Adler and Ethical Culture: Memories and Studies* ed. F. Weingartner (New York: Columbia University Press), pp. 94–9; I. MacKillop (2004) 'Coit, Stanton George (1857–1944)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/47853, date accessed 15 April 2013; I. D. MacKillop (1986) *The British Ethical Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 99–107.
7. F. J. Gould (1923) *The Life Story of a Humanist* (London: Watts & Co.), pp. 75–6.
8. F. Adler (1892) *The Moral Instruction of Children* (London: Edward Arnold); Friess, *Felix Adler*, pp. 94–9.
9. Adler, *Moral Instruction*, Chapter 4.
10. Adler, *Moral Instruction*, pp. 3–5.
11. Friess, *Felix Adler*, pp. 111–15; Various (1926) *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Ethical Movement 1876–1926* (London: D. Appleton & Co.), p. 32.
12. *MELQ*, 25, 1 July 1911, p. 7.
13. S. Wright (2006) 'The Struggle for Moral Education in English Elementary Schools 1879–1918' (PhD thesis, Oxford Brookes University), pp. 49–50.
14. 'How Could the Ethical Efficiency of Education be Increased?' in M. Sadler (ed.) *Moral Instruction and Training in Schools: Report of an International Inquiry. Volume I* (London: Longmans, Green & Co.), 94–99 (Adler's comment at p. 99).
15. M. Sadler cited in Anon (1908) *Record of the Proceedings of the First International Moral Education Congress* (London: David Nutt), p. 17.

16. Anon, *Record of the Proceedings*, p. 3.
17. R. Lowe (2004) 'Sadler, Sir Michael Ernest (1861–1943)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, online edn, October 2007, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35905, date accessed 27 March 2013. The official title of the University of Manchester until 2004 was the Victoria University of Manchester. I will follow common usage in this book by referring to the University of Manchester.
18. Sadler, 'Introduction', pp. xviii–xxi.
19. *Moral Instruction League Quarterly (MILQ)*, 9, 1 April 1907, p. 5; 14, 1 October 1908, p. 2; see also Sadler, 'Introduction', pp. xviii–xxi. The Executive Committee was apparently extended to 44 members.
20. *The Times*, 19 September 1908, p. 10; 23 September 1908, p. 6; 26 September 1908, p. 8.
21. H. Herbert to F. S. Marvin, 29 May 1907, MS.Eng.Lett.d.258, fol. 81, Papers of Francis Sydney Marvin, Western Manuscripts, Bodleian Library.
22. Anon, *Record of the Proceedings*, p. 4; *MILQ*, 14, 1 October 1908, pp. 1–2.
23. F. J. Gould (1929) *Moral Education: A Chapter from the Story of Schools in England and Wales* (London: Watts & Co.), p. 11; *MILQ*, 9, 1 April 1907, pp. 4–5; *Ethical World (EW)*, 15 March 1907, p. 17. On Muirhead, see C. G. Robertson (2004) 'Muirhead, John Henry (1855–1940)', rev. P. Nicholson, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, online edn. January 2012, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35145, date accessed 17 April 2013.
24. *Manchester Guardian*, 6 February 1907, p. 8.
25. G. Spiller (ed.) (1909) *Papers on Moral Education Communicated to the First International Moral Education Congress*, 2nd edition (London: David Nutt), p. xxiii.
26. *EW*, 15 August 1908, p. 57; Anon, *Record of the Proceedings*, pp. 3–5; S. H. Swinny, 'The Moral Instruction Congress', *Positivist Review (PR)*, 1 November 1908, 250–5, p. 250; M. E. Sadler 'The International Congress on Moral Education', *International Journal of Ethics*, January 1909, 158–72, pp. 159–60, 158.
27. Anon, *Record of the Proceedings*, pp. 16–67.

28. For example, *Manchester Guardian*, 30 September 1908, p. 6; *Journal of Education*, November 1908, pp. 780–1.
29. Sadler, 'International Congress', p. 158; *Journal of Education*, 1 November 1908, p. 779.
30. *EW*, 15 March 1907, pp. 22–3; 15 October 1908, p. 75; Gould, *Moral Education*, pp. 11–12; Various, *Fiftieth Anniversary*, pp. 274–6; *MILQ*, 7, 1 October 1906, p. 8.
31. Anon, *Record of the Proceedings*, p. 4.
32. *The Times*, 3 June 1908, p. 18; 15 August 1908, p. 12; 22 August 1908, p. 7; *Manchester Guardian*, 28 August 1908, p. 8. File of Correspondence on the International Moral Education Congress 8 April 1908–21 September 1908, IOR/L/PJ/6/681/File 1326, India Office Papers (IOP), British Library, contains international invitations sent via imperial offices.
33. For example, *PR*, July 1908, pp. 163–4; August 1908, p. 190; *Freethinker*, 21 June 1908, p. 397; 20 September 1908, p. 597.
34. *EW*, 15 April 1908, p. 29; 15 June 1908, p. 44; 15 August 1908, p. 57; 15 September 1908, pp. 65, 69; *MILQ*, 12, 1 January 1908, p. 8; 14, 1 October 1908, pp. 8–9.
35. 23 January 1908, 20 March 1908, 23 April 1908, 28 May 1908, 25 June 1908, Union of Ethical Societies (UES) Council Minutes 1904–1912, BHA/1/2/1, British Humanist Association Archive, Bishopsgate Institute; Anon, *Record of the Proceedings*, p. 5; *EW*, 15 September 1908, p. 69.
36. *EW*, 15 August 1908, p. 57; Anon, *Record of the Proceedings*, p. 7; Spiller (ed.), *Papers on Moral Education*, p. xvi; *MILQ*, 12, 1 January 1908, p. 8. On Buisson see P. Stock-Morton (1988) *Moral Education for a Secular Society* (Albany: State University of New York Press), especially pp. 90–103.
37. 28 May, 25 June, 9 July, 24 September 1908, UES Council Minutes 1904–1912; *EW*, 15 September 1908, p. 69.
38. *EW*, 15 August 1908, p. 57; 15 September 1911, p. 140; Sadler, 'International Congress', pp. 160–1.
39. Executive Committee to Director General of Education, India, 8 May 1908, File of Correspondence on the International Moral Education Congress.
40. Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 12; Sadler, 'International Congress', pp. 160–1.

41. Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 12; Sadler, 'International Congress', pp. 160–1; Anon, *Record of the Proceedings*, pp. 16–67.
42. *Church Times*, 31 July 1908, p. 135.
43. Rev. M. Maher (*c.*1908) *Some Factors in Moral Education: Moral Instruction* (Boston, MA: Mission Church Press), pp. 6–8; S. Smith, 'The Moral Education Congress', *The Month*, November 1908, 449–63, pp. 451–2.
44. *Church Times*, 2 October 1908, p. 409.
45. *Freethinker*, 4 October 1908, p. 633; 11 October 1908, pp. 642–3; 18 October 1908, pp. 658–9.
46. 31 July 1908, LPS Minutes of Committee May 1905–October 1910, LPS/1/5, London Positivist Society Papers, British Library of Political and Economic Science (hereafter LPSP); Swinny, 'The Moral Instruction Congress', p. 255; *Manchester Guardian*, 28 September 1908, p. 12.
47. *MILQ*, 15, 1 January 1909, pp. 1–3.
48. *EW*, 15 September 1911, p. 140.
49. *EW*, 15 September 1908 p. 65; 15 October 1908, p. 76.
50. *MELQ*, 35, 1 January 1914, pp. 3–4; Anon, *Record of the Proceedings*, p. 17.
51. Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 10; *School Guardian*, 3 October 1908, p. 1100. Following the provision for moral instruction in the 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education, Japan was held up as a fascinating example of what was possible by English moral educators, and featured in the second volume of Sadler's *Report*. On moral education in Japan, see S. D. Hoffman (1999) 'School Texts, the Written Word, and Political Indoctrination: A Review of Moral Education Curricula in Modern Japan (1886–1997)', *History of Education*, 28:1, 87–96.
52. G. Spiller to Under Secretary of State for India, 21 September 1908, Mr Giles to Sir Charles Lyall, 3 August 1908, Sir Charles Lyall to Mr Giles, 4 August 1908. File of Correspondence on the International Moral Education Congress.
53. *EW*, 15 December 1912, p. 189.
54. *MELQ*, 35, 1 January 1914, p. 4.
55. *EW*, 15 March 1907, pp. 22–3.
56. Various, *Fiftieth Anniversary*, pp. 151–5, 167–9.
57. *MELQ*, 25, 1 July 1911, p. 7; 30, 1 October 1912, p. 10; *EW*, 15 May 1912, p. 77.

58. *MILQ*, 10, 1 July 1907, p. 5; 12, 1 January 1908, p. 7; 26, 1 October 1911, p. 4; *EW*, 15 September 1911, p. 141; 15 January 1912, p. 11; 15 March 1912, pp. 43–4; MIL (c.1907) *To All Interested in Moral and Civic Education in Schools* (London: MIL), p. 1.
59. G. Spiller (1909) *Report on Moral Instruction* (London: Watts & Co.). This contained more information on practical developments on the ground than Sadler's *Report*, and emphasised non-theological moral instruction (as opposed to other approaches to moral education).
60. Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 18; *EW*, 15 March 1911, p. 45; 15 September 1911, p. 141; *MELQ*, 26, 1 October 1911, p. 3; 27, 1 January 1912, p. 5.
61. *MELQ*, 25, 1 July 1911, pp. 3–5; 26, 1 October 1911, pp. 3–4. See also the later account in Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 141–57, in which details of the two US tours are combined. Gould also wrote about his US tours for Positivist audiences (F. J. Gould, 'Impressions of America', *PR*, December 1911, 376–80; F. J. Gould, 'Among the American People', *PR*, March 1914, 58–63; F. J. Gould, 'Wisconsin', *PR*, April 1914, 73–8).
62. *MELQ*, 26, 1 October 1911, p. 4; 25, 1 July 1911, p. 4.
63. *MELQ*, 26, 1 October 1911, p. 3.
64. *MELQ*, 26, 1 October 1911, p. 7.
65. Gould, *Life Story*, p. 151.
66. *EW*, 15 July 1913, p. 109; 15 August 1913, p. 121; 15 November 1913, pp. 165–6; *MELQ*, 35, 1 January 1914, pp. 7–9; 36, 1 April 1914, pp. 6–11; 37, 1 July 1914, pp. 4–6; Gould, *Moral Education*, pp. 18–19.
67. *MELQ*, 36, 1 April 1914, pp. 6–7.
68. *MELQ*, 35, 1 January 1914, p. 8; *EW*, 15 November 1913, pp. 165–6, 15 December 1913, pp. 181–2.
69. Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 153–4.
70. *MELQ*, 37, 1 April 1914, p. 6.
71. *MELQ*, 26, 1 October 1911, pp. 5–6; 27, 1 January 1912, p. 7; 28, 1 April 1912, p. 6.
72. *MELQ*, 31, 1 January 1913, pp. 4–5.
73. G. Spiller (*c.*1934) *The Ethical Movement in Great Britain* (London: Farleigh Press), p. 150; *EW*, 15 June 1911, p. 108. The Maharaja was listed as a Vice President on the MIL's headed paper by 1912 (H. Johnson to P. Geddes, 24 April 1912, General Correspondence,

T–GED/9/1086, Sir Patrick Geddes Papers, Strathclyde University Archives (PGP)).

74. *EW*, 15 February 1913, pp. 18–19; Gould, *Life Story*, p. 127.
75. *MELQ*, 23, 1 January 1911, pp. 4–5; 24, 1 April 1911, pp. 4–5; 27, 1 January 1912, p. 5; F. J. Gould to F. S. Marvin, 22 September 1912, MS.Eng.Lett.c.261, fols. 177–8, FSMP; *EW*, 15 January 1913, p. 13.
76. *EW*, 2 January 1904, p. 3; H. Johnson (1911) 'Prefatory Note', in F. J. Gould, *Youth's Noble Path* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co.), p. v; *MELQ*, 18, 1 October 1909, pp. 1–4.
77. Anon, *Record of the Proceedings*, pp. 11–12; Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 15.
78. Johnson, 'Prefatory Note', p. vi; Spiller, *Ethical Movement*, pp. 149–50.
79. *EW*, 15 April 1913, p. 61.
80. *MELQ*, 24, 1 April 1911, p. 6; 32, 1 April 1913, p. 6; Response to question in the House of Commons on the introduction of religious and moral instruction into Mysore schools and colleges, 29 October 1908, IOR/L/PJ/6/901/File 3983, IOP.
81. *MELQ*, 16, 1 April 1909, p. 8; 18, 1 October 1909, p. 12; 19, 1 January 1910, p. 7; 21, 1 July 1910, pp. 6–7.
82. Gould, *Youth's Noble Path*, pp. xi–xii; Johnson, 'Prefatory Note', p. vii; *EW*, 15 February 1909, p. 23.
83. *MELQ*, 16, 1 April 1909, p. 9; 18, 1 October 1909, p. 12.
84. *MELQ*, 24, 1 April 1911, p. 7; 25, 1 July 1911, p. 6; 26, 1 October 1911, pp. 5–6; 27, 1 January 1912, p. 7; 30, 1 October 1912, pp. 9–10.
85. Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 15; Government of Bombay, Paper discussing Gould's demonstration tour and the Director of Public Instruction's response, 1913, IOR/L/PJ/6/1431/File 1044, IOP.
86. *MELQ*, 24, 1 April 1911, pp. 6–7; 25, 1 July 1911, p. 5; 26, 1 October 1911, p. 5; *EW*, 15 March 1911, p. 45; 15 July 1911, p.108.
87. *MELQ*, 24, 1 April 1911, p. 7; 32, 1 April 1913, p. 2.
88. *MELQ*, 32, 1 April 1913, pp. 1–5; *EW*, 15 February 1913, pp. 18–19. See also later account in Gould, *Life Story*, pp. 123–40 and F. J. Gould, 'A Teachers' Indian Pilgrimage', *PR*, April 1913, 78–82.

89. *EW*, 15 February 1913, pp. 18–19.
90. Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 15; *MELQ*, 32, 1 April 1913, pp. 3–4; Government of Bombay, Paper discussing Gould's demonstration tour; *EW*, 15 February 1913, pp. 18–19.
91. *MELQ*, 32, 1 April 1913, p. 2.
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93. Government of Bombay, Paper discussing Gould's demonstration tour; *MELQ*, 38, 1 October 1914, p. 5; *EW*, 15 August 1913, p. 124.
94. MacKillop, *British Ethical Societies*, p. 145.
95. For example, St G. Lane Fox Pitt, Letter to the Editor, *The Manchester Guardian*, 4 October 1908, p. 5.
96. See Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 6

The Positivist World Citizen: F. S. Marvin and F. J. Gould in the League of Nations Union, 1919–1939

Inspired by hopes for 'a new international morality' in the wake of the First World War,[1] many educators in England, like their counterparts elsewhere, became concerned with international as well as national dimensions of citizenship. The Education Committee of the League of Nations Union (LNU), formed in 1919, sought to create 'world citizens' of pupils in the country's schools, through teaching about the League of Nations itself, and, more broadly, about international affairs and life in other countries. For many LNU activists internationalism in schools should rest on Christian foundations. Some, however, including F. S. Marvin and F. J. Gould, thought otherwise. Marvin was a member of the LNU's Education Committee from 1919 to 1939, and promoted an internationalist approach to history teaching in schools. Gould, familiar from previous chapters, was never a full member of the Education Committee but worked for it touring the country giving League of Nations lessons, writing pamphlets for pupils and teachers, and editing the LNU's periodical for school pupils, *League News*. Marvin and Gould were, according to T. R. Wright, among the small group who 'shouldered the responsibility for the continuation of organised Positivism into the twentieth century'. They saw themselves as 'educators of society in general', and sought to extend the influence of Positivist ideas 'beyond the movement itself to the outside world'.[2] In a period of Positivist numerical and financial decline, they continued to be inspired by, and to seek to inspire others through, Positivist ideas.

Gould and Marvin's educational work in connection with the LNU, and its Positivist inspiration, will be the subject of this chapter. In some ways,

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Gould and Marvin are contrasting figures. The former, we know already, was a socialist, left elementary school at 14, and taught for 25 years in elementary schools before devoting his energies to moral instruction and the activities of the various freethought groups. The latter was a middle-class, public-schooled, university-educated Liberal who spent most of his professional life as an Inspector of Schools (1890–1924). They moved in different social and political circles. Yet they were united by their teetotalism, their reputation for immensely hard work, and, importantly, their common interest in education and Positivism; they corresponded and cooperated occasionally on these latter topics from 1899. After 1919, there is no indication in the sources of Gould and Marvin working closely together in an official capacity within the LNU, but they must have been in regular contact in connection with Positivist affairs. Both Marvin and Gould used the LNU as a means of disseminating a Positivist-inspired educational framework to a wide public. Only occasionally did they challenge in an explicit manner the Christian slant adopted by many associated with the LNU. Most of their energy was focused on presenting what they saw as a superior, Positivist-flavoured alternative to a wide audience of educators and pupils. This alternative emphasised the need to include all religions and all races in the world community that was emerging in connection with the League of Nations in a meaningful way. Their efforts did not meet with the negative response that greeted the more overt challenges of the MIL. But, on the other hand, the Positivist components of their ideas could, arguably, be quietly ignored.

Christianity, Secularism and the League of Nations Union

The LNU was formed on 8 November 1918, the amalgamation of two organisations formed during the First World War, the League of Nations Society and the League of Free Nations Association. Lord Grey, former foreign secretary, was president. It became one of the largest and most active among the League of Nations Societies established in member states, and one of the largest voluntary associations in interwar Britain, with a peak of 406,868 paid-up members in 1931.[3] Its objects were to 'secure the whole-hearted acceptance by the British people' of the newly-founded League of Nations, 'to foster mutual understanding, goodwill and habits of co-operation … between the peoples of different countries', and 'to

advocate the full development of the League of Nations' in such a way that it could 'guarantee the freedom of nations . . . maintain international order and finally liberate mankind from war and the effects of war'.[4] The LNU aimed to inspire across political boundaries, though the majority of members had Liberal or, to a lesser extent, socialist sympathies. It contained a minority of pure pacifists, who were against all war or the use of armed force under any circumstances. But the organisation as a whole was *pacificistic*. It favoured peace and arbitration, and political effort to avoid the waste and damage that inevitably came with war. But it recognised that the controlled use of armed force might sometimes be necessary in order to achieve these goals.[5] Activities were coordinated from the headquarters at 15 Grosvenor Square, in London's ambassadorial district, while local branches were established to mobilise public opinion on the ground and organise activities.

An Education Committee first met in December 1919 chaired by Dr C. W. Kimmins, Chief Inspector of Schools for the London County Council 1904–23, with 11 members, 'individuals personally chosen for their distinction in the practice or administration of education'. By 1929 there were 33 members, mostly nominated representatives from the major educational associations, and the Committee continued to grow during the 1930s.[6] From 1919 to 1939, the Education Committee promoted what contemporaries labelled League of Nations teaching, either within lessons or through extra-curricular activities, in British schools; much of its activity, in practice, was focused on England.[7] The Committee targeted different sites of educational activity, lobbying the Board of Education and Local Education Authorities, school governing bodies, training colleges and educational associations. It produced or commissioned texts and teaching aids to support curricular and extra-curricular activities, and organised conferences and lectures for teachers. It was also involved in transnational discussions within the committees of the League of Nations itself in Geneva, especially the International Committee of Intellectual Cooperation.[8] In 1932, the Board of Education reported that nearly all LEAs, with very few exceptions, encouraged League teaching of some form or another in their schools.[9] From the mid-1930s, however, a hostile international situation led to disillusionment with the League of Nations and, by extension, the LNU. By Autumn 1938, long-standing supporters were severing their links with the Education Committee because they objected to the foreign policy lobbying of the wider LNU.[10] The Education Committee was reconstituted from July 1939 as the Council for Education in World

Citizenship (CEWC), a self-governing body, but still ultimately responsible to the LNU Executive.[11]

The overarching aims of League of Nations teaching were, in the words of one activist, 'preventing war and promoting world unity'.[12] These were to be achieved by imparting information about the aims, machinery and activities of the League of Nations, and also by influencing school pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The Education Committee claimed to be interested not only in knowledge, but also in 'the training of character', seeking to teach 'the ethical principles of peace and of international co-operation upon which the League is based'. 'Knowledge alone without some change of feeling and purpose', it was argued, would 'not suffice to make international cooperation the normal method of conducting world affairs'. 'A sense of world citizenship' was required.[13] The LNU recognised that preparing boys and girls for citizenship was a long-accepted purpose of education. But the form of citizenship they advocated would be appropriate for the 'co-operative world … replacing the old anarchic order'. It would involve multiple loyalties, including, but also reaching beyond, the nation state; being a good English citizen, in this view, now also meant being a good world citizen too. It would develop in pupils 'a positive desire for international justice and a sense of world loyalty', and the recognition of 'a moral obligation towards every other being in the world, irrespective of colour, race or creed'.[14] Despite an emphasis on change, however, the LNU's version of world citizenship, framed by an educated elite among the victors of the First World War, fitted within existing ideological and power structures. It offered no fundamental challenge to commitment to nation state and empire; the LNU's stated intention was to supplement rather than undermine these existing loyalties.[15] It envisaged a hierarchy of nation states, as illustrated by the League of Nations' mandate system.

The LNU's version of world citizenship was, for many involved in the LNU, based on the Christian foundations that they believed inspired individual Britons in their lives and shaped national culture. Of the LNU's triumvirate of leaders, Lord Robert Cecil, president 1923–45, was a Tory and High Church Anglican, who wore a 'cross hanging from his waistcoat pocket' that revealed 'the religious basis of his political faiths'. Maxwell Garnett, general secretary 1920–38 and Congregationalist, wrote about the Christian basis of the League of Nations. The agnosticism of Gilbert Murray, vice-chairman and then chairman 1923–38, has already been noted.[16] Among the LNU's many committees, the Christian Organisations Committee, established in 1921, stood out as particularly active and influential.

It arranged activities and produced publications for all denominations; as such it was part of a wider pattern of ecumenical activity for internationalist purposes in the interwar years.[17] It targeted church leaders while also utilising the parish structure in order to reach out to a mass of worshippers on the ground. Nonconformists were the most enthusiastic. Anglican leaders were reluctant to commit at first, but by the late 1920s they promoted the League on prominent public occasions, with Cosmo Lang, then Archbishop of Canterbury, preaching about it at the Armistice Day service at St Paul's Cathedral in 1929. Considerably less success was achieved among Roman Catholics, many of whom felt that the League of Nations challenged the supremacy of the papacy in Rome.[18]

LNU publications frequently emphasised links between the League of Nations enterprise and Christian beliefs. The 'ethical truths' underlying the League of Nations covenant provided a rallying point for Christians throughout the British Empire. The process of 'world-reconstruction' that the League was attempting would only succeed if its foundations were laid on the 'Bedrock of Christianity'.[19] The League of Nations would bring the world closer to long-standing Christian ideals of world peace and a universal brotherhood of man, under the fatherhood of God, and would secure 'the practical application of Christ's teaching to world affairs'. And the international connections fostered by the League of Nations would aid evangelism and missionary endeavour.[20] Christians were compelled, therefore, to take a lead in supporting the League. In 1929 Cosmo Lang stated, in his Armistice Day address, that it was 'upon the citizens who bear the name of Christ' that the duty of supporting the League was 'most clearly laid'. In 1934 he stressed this duty in even stronger terms. The League of Nations was a step towards the God-willed goal of nations and individuals living together as one family, and Christians who did not support it were guilty of 'not only folly but sin'.[21]

Within the records of the Education Committee itself, however, explicit reference to the place of religion in relation to League of Nations teaching was rare. This reflects a relative lack of controversy about religious matters within educational debates more generally in the interwar years noted in Chapter 2. Notwithstanding this apparent lack of discussion, Christian ideas, symbols, rituals and personnel infused many of the educational activities organised under LNU auspices, and the publications it issued or advertised. In Lincoln in 1921, a demonstration 'on behalf of the League of Nations' involving 5000 children was organised by local Sunday Schools and the local LNU Junior Branch. This was an internationalist-flavoured

variation on the well-known ritual of the Sunday School parade. In 1934, schoolchildren in Peterborough attended another well-established event, the Empire Day meeting, on this occasion held at the cathedral and addressed by one of the LNU's chief speakers. In 1938 the Education Committee commissioned William Temple, then Archbishop of York, to write its annual Armistice Day message.[22] There are brief, but telling, Christian references within other texts aimed at children. 'If the world is to be a better place when you are grown up than it has been lately', wrote Lillian Dalton in a book for young children in 1924, 'it must be by all the children of our Father in Heaven learning to know and love each other better.' In Mrs J. Fallowes' *Peggy and the League of Nations*, Peggy asked her uncle why he had to travel to Geneva to work for the League of Nations. He replied: 'My Master [Jesus Christ] bids me work for the League of Nations and I must obey'.[23] The Education Committee, collectively, it appears, thought it acceptable and appropriate to demonstrate and celebrate an association with Christian organisations, individuals and buildings, and to publish and publicise texts that linked its internationalist aims explicitly with Christian ideals and duties.

There was also a place within the LNU for other faiths, and for secularist bodies, although a smaller and less powerful one than that available for Christians. The Religion and Ethics Committee (REC) was founded in 1923 to include Christians, other world faiths, spiritualists, theosophists and ethicists. It aimed to appeal 'to the adherents of all religions, and to the members of all races, to unite in the interests of universal righteousness, brotherhood and peace, in support of the League of Nations' on a basis 'irrespective of religious, racial or political differences'. These ideals were not dissimilar from those promoted by Christian Organisations Committee, but in this case they were deemed 'common to all religious and ethical systems and [to] form a natural basis for spiritual cooperation'. There was not the supposition of an all-encompassing, universal moral code envisaged by ethicists as underpinning moral instruction in schools. Instead, League policies should be subject to scrutiny according to the individual's religious or ethical beliefs.[24]

Still, the Union of Ethical Societies (UES) had a representative on the REC from 1921 until at least 1944. Despite early references to difficulties in securing adequate representation at the REC's public events, by the mid-1930s there were two Ethical Movement representatives on a committee of 21, a not insignificant number on a body intended to represent all faiths.[25] Ethicists demonstrated, in various ways, an ongoing interest in and

advocacy of the League of Nations. There are numerous discussions of the League and its activities in the *Ethical World* and its successor, the *Ethical Societies' Chronicle*. Many ethicists were involved with LNU branches in their local area, some ethical societies (including South Place and South London) set up their own LNU branches, and the UES became a corporate member of the LNU.[26] And Gustav Spiller, a leading member and already noted in connection with the Moral Instruction League, moved to Geneva and worked with the LNU's International Labour Office from 1920 to 1924.[27] There is no indication of significant formal Positivist and Secularist affiliation to the REC. Personal involvement in LNU branch activity was reported among National Secular Society (NSS) members.[28] The *Freethinker* carried commentary about the League and its affairs which tended to support the idea of a body that would maintain peace. But its effectiveness, it was suggested, would be limited by the continued power of the old guard of national governments and its reliance on external regulation; there should instead be a 'League of People', and free intercourse between individuals. Some form of organisational involvement was on the cards in 1937; this was resisted by some members.[29] Positivist interest was expressed through the discussion of the League of Nations and international affairs at meetings, and in the *Positivist Review*.[30] The LNU itself also benefited from Positivist support in the form of the educational activities of Marvin and Gould.

Creating a Living Past: F. S. Marvin

Frank Sidney Marvin was born in 1863 into a middle-class family in the northern suburbs of London. With Gilbert Murray, he attended Merchant Taylors School and then St John's College, Oxford, where he achieved a double first in Classics and a second class degree in Modern History.[31] He worked for three years as an elementary school teacher in Oxford and then in London. In 1890 he joined Her Majesty's Inspectorate as an inspector's assistant, encouraged by Frederic Harrison, who evidently acted as guide and mentor over the years.[32] Marvin was promoted to full inspector in 1892, the first elementary school teacher to attain this position and 12 years younger than any of his colleagues. He worked in Cornwall and London, and then in divisional inspector posts in the West Riding, the North East and the Midlands.[33] In 1904, he married Edith (née Deverell), a graduate of Somerville College, Oxford, who had joined his London staff in 1901, being one of just a handful of female inspectors at the time.[34] The

pair had three sons, Peter, Roger (who died in 1911) and Noel. Beyond his day job, Marvin lectured for adults via Oxford University extension and the Workers' Educational Association.[35] He also wrote books, first translations of *The Odyssey and The Iliad* aimed at children, with Miss Melian Stawell, and in 1913 the first of his general historical surveys, *The Living Past*. He grew frustrated that, despite his promotions, his knowledge and talents were not being sufficiently used. A final promotion to the grade of Staff Inspector with a focus on history and classics in secondary schools in 1919 went some way towards satisfying his ambitions, and enabled him to stay in the same place until he retired in 1924. His desire for more direct involvement in university work was only realised overseas, as Chair of History at the Egyptian University, Cairo for the 1929–30 academic year.[36]

Marvin's open espousal of Positivism did not seem to harm his career prospects within the inspectorate. It might have told against him when he applied, unsuccessfully, for a new role as a principal of Hartley College, Southampton, in 1912, if Murray judged the situation correctly. This setback did not dent Marvin's wholehearted commitment to the cause and he determined to be 'more clear-speaking … than ever'.[37] Marvin's first contact with Positivism is unclear. He apparently introduced Murray to Comte while at school. Marvin also founded a Comte Society at Oxford University, which Murray joined, but this group seems to have been more interested in studying Comte than in expounding Positivist doctrine.[38] By the late 1880s he was an active member of the London Positivist Society (LPS) at Newton Hall, a Committee member with particular oversight of the Young Men's Guild. Harrison saw him as one among very few Positivists of his generation with the philosophical training and intellectual ability needed to take the cause forward, but apt to devote too much energy to other causes (Marvin was also active in various London settlements and guilds at the time).[39] After 1890 Marvin's moves between districts made a committee role at Newton Hall impossible, but he did contribute to Harrison's *Calendar of Great Men*, published in 1892. In 1896 he returned to the LPS Committee when his inspectorial work brought him back to London.[40] Marvin also became a regular contributor to the *Positivist Review*, reviewing books and writing articles, some educational in their focus, others about a range of philosophical, political and religious topics. He remained a central actor within the Society throughout the 1920s, remaining on the Committee until he tendered his resignation in 1930. After 1935 he was involved informally with the English Positivist

Committee, helping to decide how remaining funds should be administered in the Positivist cause.[41]

Among those who knew him in his professional capacity as an inspector, Marvin was noted as an 'ardent Radical', a 'disciple of Comte', and, like Gould, an extremely hard worker and a teetotaller. He also gained a reputation for broadmindedness, in 1904–05 navigating a minefield of sensibilities in the West Yorkshire religious instruction court case while he was divisional inspector there.[42] This trait extended to his interpretations of Positivism and religious matters more generally. In *Positivist Review* in 1894, for example, he wondered whether a progressive Christian might hold to fundamental Positivist conceptions; E. S. Beesly, editor at the time, thought his arguments might upset some readers.[43] In other publications, over thirty years later, Marvin noted affinities between Comte's 'Grand Être, which is Humanity' and the 'Supreme Spiritual Reality that is God'. He felt, however, that the Christian conception of God as the creator of the universe could not be applied to Humanity.[44] Marvin also supported attempts to link with other secularist groups. He was involved, from the late 1890s, in joint Ethical Movement/Positivist meetings, and Ethical Movement-led events such as the Conference of Modern Religious Thinkers, which would have appealed to his desire to learn from the insights of different religions and philosophies.[45] He was keen to find ways of bringing Positivism to audiences beyond the converted. His proposals included Positivists lecturing for other bodies, a wider range of writers contributing to the *Positivist Review*, and distributing adverts for meetings in the roads around Chapel Street when the reunited Positivist body was established there in 1916.[46]

Marvin's activities and writings from the late 1890s suggest internationalist ideals of long standing. In 1897 he described the programme of summer exchanges for teachers in England and France which he helped organise as an 'augury for international friendship'. In 1901, in a manner which prefigures his later advocacy of the League of Nations, he discussed cooperation between nations and the organisational and ethical basis of an 'international community', which he saw predicted in Comte's writings.[47] After 1910, his book writing moved towards synthetic international historical surveys, in which he outlined his conception of history as the development and progress of an increasingly interconnected and united human race. In his first, and most successful, *The Living Past*, published in 1913 and going into four editions by 1920, Marvin emphasised a clear direction of historical development, 'the growth of a common humanity'.[48] The

chapter titles suggest a Comtean theory of historical development (The Childhood of the Race, The Middle Ages, The Rise of Modern Science). This was picked up by Harrison in his notice of the book in *Positivist Review*. Murray's notice in the same publication stated, however, that an 'ordinary reader' might not be able to 'detect that [Marvin] was a Positivist or that he was anything but a man of progressive sympathies and very sober judgement'.[49] Marvin was concerned that the book should be widely read, with the relatively low price of 3s. 6d. designed to make it 'popular', but also hoped it would be treated not as a 'mere school-book' but as a serious academic text.[50] *The Century of Hope* (1919) also achieved some fame. It focused on the nineteenth century and 'the chief centres of civilization in the West', from which emanated 'the growth of humanity in the world'. Again, even if Comte was not mentioned explicitly, references to humanity, growth, expansion and progress in chapter headings suggest a broadly Positivist framing. The final chapter on 'International Progress' detailed examples of international cooperation through the nineteenth century, culminating in the 'world-alliance for humanity and international law' that emerged in the League of Nations at the end of the First World War.[51] Marvin continued to publish history books during the interwar years, but sales figures were more modest.

Marvin found other avenues for disseminating his views. From 1915 until at least 1938 he organised an annual Unity summer school, each resulting in a published collection of essays which he edited.[52] During the First World War he was a member, along with Murray, of the League of Nations Society, and Marvin spoke to Positivists about the League of Nations itself once it was founded in 1918.[53] Not all Positivists were keen, however, with Harrison dismissing it as the work of 'rank pacifists and Revolutionaries'.[54] Alongside this activity, and notwithstanding his mentor's misgivings, Marvin found in the LNU Education Committee a means of promoting an internationally focused education that would both fit with his Positivist convictions and develop in pupils the qualities that they needed in an interdependent world. Marvin served on the Education Committee from 1919 to 1939, and, apparently, as vice president for some of this period. His links to the Inspectorate and Historical Association might have been considered of value; it is also possible that Murray pulled strings in the background.[55] Murray's open agnosticism, and support for the Positivists and Ethical Movement, has already been noted. He criticised, in private correspondence, the 'excessive, direct claim of Christianity or Christian beliefs to consider themselves as a world-wide basis for peace in a planet so full of men

who are not Christians'.[56] Marvin would undoubtedly have valued his friend espousing such views, given the power Murray held within the LNU.

Much of Marvin's Education Committee activity was associated with history teaching. He served on the Education Committee's historical subcommittee in the early 1920s, and again on its 'history panel' in the 1930s.[57] He spoke at educational conferences and meetings with teachers. He wrote on the subject in letters to the press and in the LNU's publications; for example, he contributed the history teaching appendix to the 1927 'Declaration' signed by the LNU and numerous educational associations.[58] Marvin reported to the Education Committee on his parallel activities with the Unity Summer Schools and the Historical Association, both of which he tried to steer towards the broad project of teaching history in such a manner that it both demonstrated and contributed towards international unity, and duly recognised the League of Nations.[59] He exercised executive control over the Unity Summer Schools, but in the Historical Association his was one of many voices and some colleagues resisted what they termed a 'propagandist' project.[60]

Marvin's vision of history as he expressed it on behalf of the LNU emphasised the Positivist themes of unity and progress. History, he suggested, should be 'taught from the point of view of the growing unity of mankind'.[61] As a tool for promoting 'the ideas of progress and humanity upon earth', it should tell the story of man's development from 'the lonely savage fighting for bare existence in his cave or in his jungle, knowing nothing of the rest of the world' to the 'world society in which we are now living'. Telling this story, Marvin argued, required an emphasis on the 'common benefactors of mankind, the great discoverers, the great healers, the heroes of art and invention and science'. The League of Nations was more the outcome of the historical tendencies revealed in such teaching than the result of political actions; its success was inevitable because it was backed by 'the forces of historic time'. Teaching about the League, therefore, as part of the history syllabus was both appropriate and necessary. Not only was it 'a great historic fact, the most important sequel of the war', but it also represented 'our newer conceptions both of civic and moral duty'.[62] Marvin thus picked up on long-standing arguments for history as a sound basis for 'training in citizenship', offering pupils 'enlightenment' and 'guidance for their lives', but turned these to internationalist ends.[63] He admitted that the history teaching he advocated was an ideological and moralising project. It entailed emphasising within the syllabus moments of international cooperation, which would 'incline the minds of learners to

international things and to a spirit of cooperation and peace'. Yet he was unwilling to accept accusations of undue political or ideological bias. He argued instead that the approach to history that he suggested would 'redress the unfairness' of an overwhelming emphasis on national interests, the military, and war in much of the history taught in schools to date which, he claimed, created 'a frame of mind which [treated] war and national antagonisms as a normal and inevitable state'. His suggestions, therefore, could serve, at the same time, 'the interests of peace and historical truth'.[64]

During the 1920s Marvin moved beyond the Western focus of his earlier writing and started to consider the relationship between Western races and their 'less progressive neighbours'.[65] Under the auspices of the LNU he visited India from October 1925 to May 1926, giving lectures in universities and showing the LNU's film (probably *The Star of Hope*) before 'popular audiences'. Returning 'full of ideas about relations of East & West, & relation of India to the LofN (*sic*)', he wrote these up in a book: *India and the West*.[66] Marvin was struck by the audiences' 'keen intellectual curiosity, their readiness to speak and question, their personal courtesy', just as Gould had been some 12 or 13 years earlier. He also noted their 'invariable nationalist fervour', something Gould did not mention. Marvin stressed India's 'intimate connexion with the West', with 'ties of culture and commerce', most recently cemented through the British Empire but dating back to ancient Greece. Such ties rendered her 'apt for international relationship' as envisaged under the League of Nations.[67] Marvin's writing shows sensitivity to local conditions, but also a model of international relations framed around the mores and achievements of the West. 'Civilization generally', he argued, had 'benefitted immeasurably' from Western expansion, and India, under the British Empire, could move towards full nationhood. He ended his book on a typically Positivist note: 'only as a factor in humanity has any nation either meaning or hope'.[68]

Marvin's was a clear message in favour of peace and international cooperation. It was located within a Positivist-inspired framework of historical development which emphasised the unity of humanity, with progress towards cooperation over time deemed a mark of civilisation. Fellow Positivist Society members saw the Comtean inspiration in his work, and his outputs as a means of getting their message through to a wide public. His Historical Association lectures were noted for their frequent references to Comte; it is possible that something similar happened when he spoke on behalf of the LNU.[69] At the same time, however, Marvin's ideas fitted within broader currents of educational thinking of the period; indeed,

specific Positivist references could easily have been missed by educational readers who were not versed in Comtean terminology or theory. A Positivist version of history had affinities with ideas about history teaching which were popular at the time well beyond Positivist circles. Marvin fitted broadly within the 'new history' that a number of historians promoted during the Edwardian and interwar years. Advocates aimed to move beyond wars, kings, high politics, and memorising facts and dates which, they argued, dominated many texts and syllabuses. They called, variously, for a history that included both the international and the local, considering all spheres of ideological, economic social and cultural life, through active and engaging pedagogical approaches.[70] Marvin's views also fitted within a broader advocacy, amongst historians, of interwar internationalist developments. Such developments were seen as the culmination of the long-term progress of civilisation. G. P. Gooch, an occasional correspondent of Marvin, and as already noted, supporter of the MIL in Parliament and the Ethical Movement more broadly, wrote in this vein. For Gooch, if history as a subject was to contribute to the education of citizens, it had to include such internationalist content.[71] Through his LNU activities, and also his inspectorial work and the Historical Association, Marvin would have been aware of, and indeed participated in, these developments. He was able to present his suggestions on behalf of the LNU as 'a gradual movement' rather than a 'Revolution'.[72]

A strong internationalist steer in history teaching, however, attracted a mixed reception. The NUT in *The Schoolmaster* was willing 'to take considerable risks' in the teaching of new content in history 'if the objective be to find a substitute for the tragedy of the war years'. Others saw dangers in a partial and propagandist version of history taught to a captive audience of pupils in school. HMI Jacks suggested in 1938 that in the LNU's proposals there was a danger of partial coverage; history was 'full of differences as well as ... unities.' HMI Allsopp argued that official support for the 'propaganda' of the LNU would, logically, require official support also for the propaganda of 'communists, Mosleyites, Nazis'. The 'very essence of democracy' was at stake.[73] By the late 1930s, with totalitarian regimes using their educational apparatus for explicitly political purposes, any suggestion of bias or propaganda could appear sinister. Writing in 1938, Marvin recognised the challenges of this context. But he remained adamant that his particular 'vision of man', as illustrated in the historical record, remained essentially true and would 'win its way'.[74] Still, the developing international situation led to a questioning of the viability, and desirability,

of the LNU's (and Marvin's) framing of historical study as a means of promoting internationalist ideas and behaviours in pupils. And, indirectly, Marvin's Positivist conviction that history teaching demonstrated the progress of humanity towards greater order and cooperation, and contributed to this process, was questioned too.

Marvin achieved a measure of professional recognition and success, but his personal life was not untroubled. Correspondence with his sister, Sophie, over many years suggests a difficult relationship with his father, and ongoing money troubles in the extended family, presenting a drain on his own resources. Neither does his marriage seem to have been an easy one. Tensions between the position of women in Positivist thinking and rituals and Edith's feminist and suffragist sympathies, and differences over other personal matters too, led to some form of separation by 1925.[75] By January 1941 Marvin was physically and mentally drained. He wrote from a nursing home, in visibly shaky writing, about entering 'an ill assorted marriage with . . . eyes open'. The Second World War had dashed his hopes for peace and international unity, leaving 'all humanity . . . hanging onto the abyss'. Marvin's son, Noel, concerned about his father's well-being, approached Murray in the hope of getting him some form of academic honour. But Murray's efforts came to nothing.[76] A physical recovery left Marvin more optimistic. His reviews and articles published in 1942 and 1943 presented the war as a temporary obstacle which would not hinder long-term human progress; overcoming it would lead to 'greater happiness for all'.[77]

Marvin died on 14 November 1943 of a heart attack.[78] He was described in his *Manchester Guardian* obituary as 'a faithful and devoted disciple of Auguste Comte', testimony to his open and public espousal of his Positivist commitments over many years.[79] His long-term, though in later years somewhat sporadic, involvement in the Positivist body gives credence to this assessment. He elaborated on Positivist themes in his writings until shortly before his death, though in later years less stridently than previously.[80] No Positivist publications remained to celebrate Marvin's contribution to the movement. His long-term ally Cecil Desch placed his obituary in the scientific journal *Nature* and described not a Positivist but 'a historian with a keen appreciation of the importance of scientific conceptions in the growth of society'.[81] Marvin was, his sons believed, in his final years 'modifying his views to include some more direct theism'. At his cremation at Golders Green on 19 November, Positivist colleague Desch 'spoke a few words'. He was 'assisted by' Marvin's 'free church friend', Reverend Britton.[82] The

alliance with Christianity which he started to envisage theoretically in some of his writings was symbolised in the marking of his death.

The League of Nations Spirit: F. J. Gould

When, in 1915, wartime constraints meant that the MIL could no longer pay for his demonstration work, F. J. Gould had to find alternative work and sources of income. Under the auspices of the Gould Committee, funded by donations from friends and supporters, he continued to give demonstration lessons, apparently to 'audiences as ready as ever'. Initially at least, however, finances were unpredictable and precarious.[83] 1919 was a year of transition, bringing new avenues of international work which he was to be involved in for some years, if not immediate financial security. He helped to resurrect the International Moral Education Congress (IMEC) project, which had necessarily been paused during the war, becoming secretary of its Executive Committee, a role which he held until 1927. As secretary he oversaw both the third conference in Geneva in 1922 and the fourth in Rome in 1926. He attended the remaining events in Paris (1930) and Krakow (1934) as a contributor and respected veteran.[84] In 1919, he also started to lecture and write about the League of Nations. This he continued to do, in connection with the LNU, until his death in 1938.

Gould remained involved in different freethought bodies. He was a member of the UES Council from 1914 to 1920, and in 1932 claimed still to be a member of several ethical societies. He wrote regularly for *Ethical World* and, less frequently, for its successor, *Ethical Societies' Chronicle*. And he continued to speak both at the meetings of individual ethical societies and at wider UES events; his final reported secularist engagement was at the UES annual conference in July 1937.[85] However, by this time his activities were most closely linked to the Positivists. Gould's small Positivist group in Leicester (1908–10) has already been noted. When he moved back to London in 1910 to work as demonstrator for the MIL he was granted full membership of LPS at Newton Hall.[86] He spoke frequently at the Society's meetings, and contributed often to the *Positivist Review*, writing on a wide range of educational, social and political subjects, as well as on the nature of Positivism itself. Marvin, who knew of Gould's financial insecurity when his MIL demonstration work came to an end, tried to secure him salaried work as organiser and preacher in 1916. This did not materialise. But the LPS offered an annual donation to the Gould Committee until at least 1929, and

helped to pay for the printing and distribution of his Positivist-themed publications.[87]

Even more than Marvin, Gould was committed to Positivism reaching a wide public, stressing the importance of principles rather than details and the need to adapt Comte's teachings to the needs and context of the present.[88] His pamphlets on Positivism and Comte were aimed at lay readers.[89] He devised strategies for 'Positivist propaganda' which were intended to draw attention to the Society and broaden its appeal.[90] When he took on the editorship of *Positivist Review* after S. H. Swinny's death in 1923, he was determined to attract new readers. He changed the title to *Humanity*, and included contributions from authors beyond the Positivist fold on a range of subjects.[91] These changes, however, did not bring in enough money to stop the publication folding in 1925. Gould became frustrated that others on the LPS Committee were not equally committed to sharing the Positivist message with 'the whole world' rather than just a 'small section' of converts, and resigned in 1926. After this date he continued to elaborate his own version of Positivism in his publications and, indirectly, through his work for the LNU.[92]

When it emerged, the League of Nations fitted with Gould's existing activities and interests, as it did with those of Marvin. He had used international exemplars of moral virtue in his publications for many years, and he was interested in learning about other cultures, as evidenced during his international demonstration tours. For many years, too, prior to the First World War, Gould was committed to pacifist causes.[93] However, after his son Julian volunteered for the army and died in action in France in 1917, he was concerned that 'mere pacifism' might represent 'a sickly desire to protect life … even if honour and justice rot'. He committed instead to arbitration. In 1918 he joined and started to write for the International Arbitration League which had, after initial hesitation, come out in favour of the First World War (and against 'militarism' and the 'German crime in Belgium').[94] The League of Nations was, for Gould, an opportunity to further these long-term interests. It also enabled him to pursue a strategy which he recommended for all Positivists, to work through significant public institutions in order to realise the advance of Positivist ideals. There was, for Gould, in its emphasis on 'cooperation and conciliation' among all 'Organised Peoples' a harmony with the Religion of Humanity.[95]

Gould was not one of the well-connected academics, educational administrators or representatives of teachers' organisations who made up the mainstream of the LNU Education Committee. He was never, in fact, a

full Committee member, despite his regular writing and lecturing activity on behalf of the Committee between 1921 and 1938.[96] He had joined the LNU by June 1920, seeing in it a 'spiritual support' to the official League of Nations, which would alert the general public to their responsibility to aid the League and to consider difficult questions of nationality and race. In November that year he gave his first 'League story-talk', under Gould Committee auspices, to the boy pupils of Earleywood School in Ascot, and published a pamphlet of lesson notes at his own expense. By the middle of 1921 he was reporting to the Education Committee about this work.[97] It is possible that Marvin brought him to the notice of other Education Committee members, including Murray, who would have been in a position to garner support for Gould if necessary; definite evidence about the sequence of events is lacking.[98] By 1929 Gould had given story-talks in 'more than three hundred' schools across the country, mainly elementary and some secondary, to thousands of pupils and teachers. He noted a decline in requests for his 'outside help' by this time; this he welcomed as a sign that League teaching was becoming embedded in the regular life of schools. He might also have welcomed a break from regular travel given his advancing years, although he did not say this directly.[99] The LNU noted enthusiastic reports from schools, and Gould's ability to capture pupils' interest. His lessons, it was recognised, could convince sceptics that interesting and effective teaching about the League of Nations was possible.[100]

Gould also wrote for the Education Committee, producing pamphlets about the League for use in schools.[101] From 1924 to 1938 he edited and wrote most of the content for *League News*, a newsletter for pupils aged 11–14, issued three times a year; he had published a first edition himself, and the Education Committee agreed to take it on, offering Gould payment for the purpose.[102] The eight pages of *League News* contained details on the history of the League and its member states and its recent activities, illustrated with photographs, pictures and maps, and, on the final two pages, LNU news. Gould felt that his 'little paper', with a circulation of 30,000–35,000, and its ability, in three issues a year, to capture and reflect the rapidly changing world of the League of Nations and international affairs, had 'far more influence' than a longer book might have achieved.[103] He was also proud of its 'all humanist' approach to religious matters; it '[treated] World Faiths and Moral Movements with equal respect'.[104]

The narrative method he adopted in earlier years informed Gould's approach to League teaching. The faiths, literature, art, industry and

folklore of peoples of various lands were presented so their inhabitants 'lived as fellow human beings before the young readers'. Pupils' understanding of the work of the League of Nations would thereby be embedded in the 'environment, traditions, and ideals' of each country. He selected historical exemplars of qualities required in international citizens, such as tolerance, sympathy, international understanding, revealing 'the essential likeness in the souls of men all the world over'.[105] Such an approach, Gould felt, would inspire these qualities in pupils, and a desire to support the work of the League, while presenting ample opportunities for discussing ethical concepts. Gould, like Marvin, framed his suggestions in Positivist terms. He advocated teaching 'the phases of evolution from primitive times till modern'; the League of Nations itself would then fit as a 'natural factor' within a conception of 'past and present humanity'. 'Improvement, or progress', he suggested, was the 'law of all things human', and helping the world to 'make progress' was therefore part of a citizen's duty.[106]

To a greater extent than Marvin, and in a more explicit manner, Gould touched in his teaching on questions of religion which were often intertwined with questions of nation and race. He recommended using the historical example of the prophet Mohamed welcoming negroes to illustrate friendship between Arabs and Africans, and to show that the League of Nations was 'more than a covenant of whites'. And, drawing on an example he was familiar with, India, he argued that teachers relating the legends and poetry of non-Christian religions would 'create in young British hearts and minds a vivid sympathy for such revelations of the Indian soul – Hindu, Moslem, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi'. The 'spiritual understanding' thus developed would in turn facilitate political dialogue between nations. But discussion of doctrine should be avoided.[107] Gould typically started issues of *League News* with one to two pages on a chosen country, describing features of its history and culture, with illustrative photographs or drawings, before moving on to its place within the League of Nations. He devoted space to non-European, non-White, non-Christian members on the grounds that they were too often ignored. The first two pages of the February 1935 edition, under the heading 'Entry of the Kingdom of Afghanistan', carried a story about the kindness of a young tribal Afghan boy returning a stray mule to its owners at the nearby English army base. This was followed by description of the country's geographical features, industries, social conditions and religious beliefs. Only after this background

did Gould move on to Afghanistan's entry, in 1934, into the League of Nations and the warm welcome received from other Islamic members.[108]

In his correspondence Gould also questioned, more explicitly than in his publications, dominant Christian framings of LNU activity and international unity. In a letter to the *Middlesex Times* he criticised the Christian emphasis within the LNU, including common branch practices such as church services. The moral basis of the League, he argued, lay in the 'ethical consciousness of all mankind' which included 'all types of faith, and also . . . people who have no theological beliefs'. Such a basis, he argued, was threatened by 'theological elements' which might provoke 'habits of intellectual divergence that . . . contribute to the spirit of war'.[109] In 1926, he was unhappy when 'Lent' rather than 'Spring' appeared, without his consent, on an issue of *League News*. Lent was a 'sectarian term', inappropriate for an organisation which should be '*above* all sects'. He felt that the REC could do much to aid a multi-faith and ideological understanding, but his suggestion of a pamphlet containing expressions of 'peace, goodwill and unity' from the literatures of different world religions and secularist movements was not adopted.[110]

It is difficult to gauge how others responded to Gould's views. A number of his suggestions were not actually taken up by the LNU, but the reasons for this are unclear. Taking reactions to *League News* as an example, negative comments were not framed in terms of ideology, but focused instead on appropriateness for intended readers, layout and design, and the balance between LNU-related and other content. Reading between the lines, some might not have liked Gould's distinctive writing style.[111] But there was also praise. 'My children like it very much' wrote one teacher in 1927. Headteachers in the West Riding of Yorkshire reported that geography, history, scripture and citizenship lessons were 'profoundly influenced by its contents'.[112] After Gould's death, A. G. Blackwood described *League News* as 'the best emanation from headquarters' which stimulated his 'zeal for the propagation of constructive international peace'. He could not recollect any 'lack of tact, thoughtfulness, or gracious understanding'.[113] Overall, in the sources, neither the LNU hierarchy nor Christian readers offered an explicit challenge to Gould's 'all-humanist' approach. It is not clear if this meant that Gould's stance was accepted as valid, or that, coming from an eccentric and aged educator on the margins of the LNU, his challenges could be tolerated and quietly ignored.

Gould never fully recovered from a bout of 'severe gastritis' in early 1937. His work rate slowed, but he gave his last 'story-talk' to 120 pupils in Harrow in September that year ('I could have told the same stories to any class all round the globe', he wrote). In 1938 he published his final book of non-theological moral tales for teachers' use. One of his final outings was a walk to the printers to deliver the February 1938 edition of *League News*.[114] Then bed-bound, after a few weeks' further illness he died on 6 April.[115] Like Marvin, he had reason to doubt, in his final years, whether his visions of moral teaching leading to individual and social reform, nationally and internationally, would be achieved. He did not live to see the outbreak of the Second World War. But the turn of international events towards the end of his lifetime raised serious questions about whether cooperation and arbitration, at least in the form enacted through the League of Nations, would prevail. He witnessed the end of the IMEC project, and a decline in membership, publications and other activities of the freethought organisations he had been involved in. F. H. Hayward, a close friend over many years, wrote of Gould fighting 'an apparently hopeless and almost unrecognised battle', though he recognised that failure was not a term that Gould, the Positivist convinced of the inevitability of human improvement, would use.[116] Gould's last writings expressed hope for the development and future of mankind. The League of Nations covenant, he argued, was just a document and its spirit would live on. Schooling, in its methods, buildings and access to opportunities across the social spectrum, had improved vastly on what he had found when he started out as a teacher. Improvements, he suggested, would continue.[117]

Gould's organisational ties to the various freethought bodies were by this stage considerably looser than they had once been.[118] Yet there were warm tributes in the few remaining freethought publications, with the exception of the *Freethinker*. A photograph was hung as a memorial in the South Place Ethical Society library at Conway Hall alongside the portraits 'of the honoured free-thought and ethical leaders', and the pared-down English Positivist Committee sent letters of sympathy to his wife and daughter.[119] Unlike Marvin, there is no suggestion that he was anything other than a 'humanist', to use his own terminology, to the last. And Gould, the Positivist 'world citizen', received tributes from his many and varied correspondents (freethinkers, Christians, teachers and others) around the globe.[120]

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the work of two figures, Francis Sidney Marvin and Frederick James Gould, at and beyond retirement age. Their educational, social and political backgrounds were very different, but both gained a reputation for sober living, hard work, and a tolerance for different views on religion and other ideological questions. As Positivists and educators, both were convinced of the potential of schools and schooling to transform individuals and society. They aimed, in particular, to develop the international understanding and activism required to achieve Comte's vision of a Religion of Humanity, and also to meet the demands of living in the new geopolitical configurations of the interwar years. Both worked within the LNU, but in different ways. Gould targeted 10–14-year-olds with a narrative presentation of different peoples and cultures and the activities of the League itself. Marvin offered a more abstract treatment of relevant historical developments, intellectual movements and political questions for an upper Secondary School and adult audience. Neither Gould nor Marvin could shape or control the LNU in the way that they could their other educational projects (the Unity schools for Marvin, the IMEC for Gould). They were ultimately small cogs in a big wheel.[121] But they could use the LNU's organisational networks and outputs to disseminate their Positivist-flavoured alternatives to prevailing ideals of an essentially Christian world citizen.

Marvin and Gould benefitted from, and also contributed to, an environment where, as Gilbert Murray put it, the 'spirit' of Positivism had 'got abroad and permeated other bodies'.[122] One of these other bodies might arguably have been the LNU. It is not clear whether the impetus for this development came from Positivism itself, or whether the interests of both Positivists and the LNU met in popular modes of thinking during the interwar years about educational ideals and priorities relating to the international sphere and the teaching of citizenship. Ultimately, however, their Positivist slant was not to prevail. Marvin's approach to history teaching met accusations of one-sidedness and undue bias. And Gould's 'all-humanist' take on world citizenship, although it did not receive the same explicit criticism, is unlikely to have had much influence within an organisation whose 'spiritual heartland' remained overwhelmingly Christian.[123]

This chapter marks the end, in the period covered by this volume, of the story of freethought organisations and those attached to them attempting to shape pupils' values and behaviours, and through these the values and

behaviours of wider society (and societies), in schools. However, from the mid-1930s and through the Second World War, secular versions of the citizen-pupil were pursued in other ways. Ernest Simon and Eva Hubback, although agnostic in their own beliefs, were not actively connected with an organised freethought alternative. They worked, through the Association for Education in Citizenship, to promote a religion-neutral, humane, rational and clear-thinking version of the good citizen in schools. The particular challenges they faced in the political and religious climate of the late 1930s and through the Second World War will be discussed in the next chapter.

Notes

1. M. Ceadel (1980) *Pacifism in Britain 1914–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. 2.
2. T. R. Wright (1986) *The Religion of Humanity: The Impact of Comtean Positivism on Victorian Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 122, 240.
3. A. C. F. Beales (1931) *The History of Peace* (London: G. Bell & Sons Ltd.), p. 322 (41 League of Nations societies were established by 1930); H. McCarthy (2011) *The British People and the League of Nations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 4.
4. League of Nations Union (LNU) (1926) *Annual Report for 1925* (London: LNU), p. 3.
5. Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain*, pp. 3–5.
6. 12 December 1919, 'The Work and Policy of the League of Nations Union and of its Education Committee', filed 21 November 1938, LNU Education Committee Minutes, Records of the League of Nations Union, British Library of Political and Economic Science (BLPES) (henceforward RLNU); LNU (1930) *Annual Report for 1929* (London: LNU), p. 49.
7. McCarthy, *British People*, pp. 4–5. The Education Committee also worked, to a lesser extent, with institutions of adult education and informal groups, and there was a British Universities League of Nations Society.
8. H. R. G. Greaves (1931) *The League Committees and World Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 111–38; E. Fuchs (2007) 'The Creation of New International Networks in Education: The League of Nations and Educational Organisations in the 1920s', *Paedagogica Historica*, 43:2, 199–209, pp. 201–7.

9. Board of Education (1932) *Report on the Instruction of the Young in the Aims and Achievements of the League of Nations* (London: HMSO), p. 7.
10. LNU Education Committee, 'Work and Policy'.
11. LNU (1940) *Annual Report for 1939* (London: LNU), p. 24; D. Heater (1984) *Peace through Education: The Contribution of the Council for Education in World Citizenship* (Lewes: Falmer Press), pp. 41–5.
12. S. Sherman, 'The League of Nations in the Schools', *Teachers World*, 5 February 1926, p. 927.
13. LNU Education Committee, 'Work and Policy', p. 6; LNU (1927) *Declaration Concerning the Schools of Britain and the Peace of the World* (London: LNU), p. 12.
14. LNU (1933) *League of Nations Union Year Book for 1933* (London: LNU), p. 25; LNU (1937) *League of Nations Union Year Book for 1937* (London: LNU), pp. 29–30; LNU (1936) *Junior Branches of the League of Nations Union* (London: LNU), p. 14.
15. McCarthy, *British People*, Chapter 5.
16. Salvador de Madariaga (1960) 'Gilbert Murray and the League', in J. Smith and A. Toynbee (eds) *Gilbert Murray: An Unfinished Autobiography* (London: George Allen & Unwin), pp. 176–97, p. 179; M. Garnett (c.1921) *Christianity and the League of Nations* (London: LNU), Publications 1921, LNU/7/2, RLNU.
17. D. Gorman (2010) 'Ecumenical Internationalism: Willoughby Dickinson, the League of Nations and the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 45:1, 51–73; D. Hudson (1969) *The Ecumenical Movement in World Affairs* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson), pp. 44–200.
18. D. S. Birn (1981) *The League of Nations Union, 1918–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), pp. 135–8; McCarthy, *British People*, pp. 79–102. Cosmo Lang's address was published as LNU (1929) *The Church, the League and the Union* (London: LNU).
19. Garnett, *Christianity and the League of Nations*, pp. 3, 5, 8.
20. S. H. Wingfield Digby, Letter to the Editor, *Headway*, March 1932, p. 59; LNU (1923) *To All Churchmen* (London: LNU), n. p., Publications 1923, LNU/7/3, RLNU; Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Winchester (1934) *The Commonwealth of Nations* (London: LNU), p. 3, Publications 1934, LNU/7/9, RLNU.

21. LNU, *The Church, the League and the Union*, pp. 7–8; LNU (c.1934) *Members of One Family: God's Will for Nations and Individuals* (London: LNU), n.p, Publications 1934.
22. 27 May 1921, LNU Education Committee Minutes; *LNU News Sheet*, July 1934, front cover; LNU (1938) *Armistice Day Message* (London: LNU).
23. L. Dalton (1924) *League of Nations Stories* (London: George G. Harrah), p. 16; Mrs J. Fallowes (1921) *Peggy and the League of Nations* (London: LNU), p. 14, Publications 1921.
24. LNU (*c.*1927) *Religion and Ethics Committee Promotional Pamphlet*, n.p, Publications 1927, LNU/7/5, RLNU.
25. 10 November 1921, 25 April 1929, Union of Ethical Societies (UES) Council Minutes 1912–1923 and 1923–1938, BHA/1/2/2–3; 50th Annual Report of the Ethical Union for the Year Ended December 31, 1944, UES Congress Minute Book 1913–1946, BHA/1/1/1, British Humanist Association Archive, Bishopsgate Institute (BHAA); LNU (1935) *League of Nations Union Year Book for 1935* (London: LNU), p. 76.
26. General Committee meeting 1 May 1935, South Place Ethical Society (SPES) Minute Book 1933–44, SPES/1/2/12, Records of South Place Ethical Society, Alternatives to Religion Library; *Ethical Societies' Chronicle (ESC)*, February 1927, p. 4, February 1932, p. 7.
27. V. Spiller (1940) *Gustave Spiller 1864–1940* (London: private printing), p. 12.
28. J. Reeves, 'Religion and the League of Nations', *Freethinker*, 3 June 1934, pp. 342–3.
29. For example, *Freethinker*, 5 January 1919, p. 2; 25 January 1920, pp. 49–50; 14 June 1936, pp. 381–2; 23 May 1937, 326–7, 330–1 at p. 331; 30 May 1937, 346–8, p. 348.
30. London Positivist Society (LPS), *Report for the Year 1920*, *Report for the Year 1921,* LPS Annual Reports 1915–23, LPS/1/16, London Positivist Society Papers, BLPES (LPSP). League-related articles in the *Positivist Review (PR)* include S. H. Swinny, 'A League of Nations', February 1918, 25–35; F. S. Marvin, 'History Teaching and a League of Nations', February 1919, 36–9; J. F. Green, 'Some Fallacies on the League of Nations', April 1920, 73–5; F. J. Gould, 'Towards the Universal Conscience', January 1923, 6–9.

31. Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, p. 24.
32. F. S. Marvin Curriculum Vitae, 4 November 1912, MS Gilbert Murray 160, fols. 63–71, Papers of Gilbert Murray, Western Manuscripts, Bodleian Library; F. Harrison to F. S. Marvin, 29 March 1890, 10 April 1890, 4 June 1890, MS.Eng.Lett.d.249, fols. 95–96, 109–12, 161–62, Papers of Frank Sydney Marvin, Western Manuscripts, Bodleian Library (henceforward FSMP).
33. F. S. Marvin to G. Murray, 31 January 1892, 9 March 1904, 5 June 1904, 30 July 1904, 8 April 1907, 17 April 1908, F. S. Marvin, Curriculum Vitae, 4 November 1912, F. S. Marvin to G. Murray, 2 September 1913, MS Gilbert Murray 160, fols. 2–4, 44–9, 54–5, 58–9, 63–71, 97–8; D. Lawton and P. Gordon (1987) *HMI* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), p. 158.
34. P. Gordon (1978) 'Edith Mary Deverell: An Early Woman Inspector', *History of Education Society Bulletin*, 22, 6–12; Lawton and Gordon, *HMI*, pp. 89–91.
35. M. Sadler to F. S. Marvin, 27 February 1892, MS.Eng.Lett.d.252, fol. 136b, FSMP; F. S. Marvin Curriculum Vitae, 4 November 1912.
36. F. S. Marvin to G. Murray, 8 November 1918, 14 March 1919, 27 May 1920, MS Gilbert Murray 160, fols. 99–100, 101–2, 106–7; 'Obituary: F. S. Marvin', *The Times*, 17 November 1943, p. 7.
37. F. S. Marvin to G. Murray, 9 January 1913, MS Gilbert Murray 160, fols. 81–2.
38. Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, p. 271; G. Murray, 'An Autobiographical Fragment' in *Gilbert Murray: An Unfinished Autobiography*, pp. 23–103, p. 83.
39. F. Harrison to F. S. Marvin, 10 April 1890, MS.Eng.Lett.d.249, fols. 109–12, FSMP; Wright, *Religion of Humanity*, p. 247.
40. F. Harrison to F. S. Marvin, 1 December 1896, MS.Eng.Lett. e.110, fols. 175–6, FSMP.
41. 3 January 1930, LPS Minute Book January 1926–May 1934, LPS/1/8, 17 November 1938, English Positivist Committee (EPC) Minute Book 14 November 1934–4 October 1951, LPS/1/9; F. J. Gould to D. Fincham, 23 April 1935, Correspondence of Donald Fincham c.1918–c.1949, LPS/2/15, fols. 11–12 (all LPSP).
42. Newspaper cutting c.1892, n.d. and source not given, MS.Eng. Misc.b.95, FSMP; Testimonials from E. W. Hobson and the

Bishop of Wakefield, 4 November 1912, MS Gilbert Murray 160, fols. 74, 77–8.

43. F. S. Marvin, 'Neo-Christianism', *PR*, September 1894, 167–70; E. S. Beesly to F. S. Marvin, 7 August 1894, MS.Eng.Lett.c.258, fols. 124–5, FSMP.
44. F. S. Marvin, 'Review: "The Sciences and Philosophy"', *Hibbert Journal*, 28:1, October 1929, 170–4, p. 173; F. S. Marvin, 'Review: "The Human Situation"', *Hibbert Journal*, 37:1, October 1938, 187–9, p. 188.
45. F. S. Marvin, 'Positivism and the Ethical Societies', *PR*, February 1901, 29–30; *Ethical World (EW)*, December 1921, pp. 156–9.
46. F. Harrison to F. S. Marvin, 8 February 1899, MS.Eng.Lett.d.254, fols. 86–7; S. H. Swinny to F. S. Marvin, 6 October 1918, MS.Eng. Lett.c.265, fols. 180–82, S. H. Swinny to F. S. Marvin, 25 November 1916, MS.Eng.Lett.c.263, fols. 242–3, FSMP.
47. F. S. Marvin, 'International Politics', *PR*, March 1901, 81–4; F. S. Marvin, 'An Educational Experiment', *PR*, November 1897, 199–203.
48. F. S. Marvin (1913) *The Living Past* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. vi.
49. F. Harrison, 'Historical Methods', *PR*, September 1913, 193–8, p. 197; G. Murray, 'The Living Past', *PR*, September 1913, 198–200, p. 199.
50. F. S. Marvin to G. Murray, 22 April 1913, MS Gilbert Murray 160, fols. 83–4. The LNU deemed *The Living Past* suitable for teachers and sixth-form pupils. LNU (1938) *History Teaching in Relation to World Citizenship* (London: LNU, 1938), p. 36.
51. F. S. Marvin (1919) *The Century of Hope* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), pp. iii–v.
52. F. S. Marvin to G. Murray, 8 September 1931, MS Gilbert Murray 160, fols. 110–11; 7 July 1938, EPC Minute Book 14 November 1934–4 October 1951.
53. S. H. Swinny to F. S. Marvin, 21 August 1918, MS.Eng.Lett. c.265, fol. 144, FSMP; LPS, *Report for the Year 1918, Report for the Year 1919, Report for the Year 1920, Report for the Year 1921*, LPS Annual Reports 1915–23.
54. F. Harrison to F. S. Marvin, Easter Monday 1919, MS.Eng.Lett. c.266, fol. 68, FSMP.

55. Historical Association (1955) *The Historical Association, 1906–56* (London: George Philip & Son, Limited), p. 13, http://www.history.org.uk/resources/general_resource_2032_56.html, date accessed 14 January 2015; *The Times*, 9 January 1925, p. 7. Marvin is identified as vice president of the Education Committee in *The Observer*, 6 January 1929, p. 19 but this role is not listed in LNU annual reports.
56. G. Murray to F. S. Marvin, 23 July 1894, MS.Eng.Lett.258, fol. 123, FSMP.
57. 24 September 1920, LNU Education Committee Minutes; LNU, *History Teaching*, p. 4.
58. 21 January 1921, 26 May 1922, 16 May 1923, 16 February 1928, LNU Education Committee Minutes; *Headway*, August 1925, p. 159; F. S. Marvin, Letters to the Editor, *The Times*, 11 July 1927, p. 10, 22 July 1927, p. 10; F. S. Marvin (1927) 'Appendix A: Notes on the International Aspects of History' in LNU, *Declaration Concerning the Schools of Britain*, 20–28.
59. 29 April 1921, 27 February 1925, LNU Education Committee Minutes; *Manchester Guardian*, 1 July 1922, p. 15.
60. 29 April 1921, LNU Education Committee Minutes; C. H. Firth to F. S. Marvin, 6 January 1919, MS.Eng.Lett.c.266, fols. 6–7, FSMP.
61. 'The League of Nations Union Summer School, 1920', *Headway*, September–October 1920, 23. (The 1920 Unity Summer School was organised in conjunction with the LNU.)
62. F. S. Marvin (1923) 'History and the League of Nations' in LNU, *The Study and Teaching of International Relations* (London: LNU), pp. 3–11, pp. 5–6, 4, 11; Marvin, 'Appendix A', p. 27.
63. *Journal of Education*, November 1925, p. 745. See Chapter 1 note 6 for references to history teaching and citizenship/morality in the early twentieth century.
64. F. S. Marvin, Letters to the Editor, *The Times*, 11 July 1927, p. 10; 22 July 1927, p. 10.
65. F. S. Marvin (1922) 'Preface' and 'Introductory: an Educational Problem' in F. S. Marvin (ed.) *Western Races and the World* (London: Humphrey Milford/Oxford University Press), p. 3.
66. F. S. Marvin to G. Murray, 27 June 1926, MS Gilbert Murray 1960, fol. 105.
67. F. S. Marvin (1927) *India and the West* (New York, London: Longmans, Green & Co.), pp. vii–viii, 161, 164.

68. Marvin, *India and the West*, pp. 170–1, 176.
69. C. Desch to F. S. Marvin, 15 June 1919, MS.Eng.Lett.c.266, fol. 103, FSMP; Historical Association, *The Historical Association, 1906–56*, p. 13.
70. For more on these approaches see, for example, McCarthy, *British People*, pp. 106–7; K. Myers (1999) 'National Identity, Citizenship and Education for Displacement: Spanish Refugee Children in Cambridge, 1937', *History of Education*, 28:3, 313–25, pp. 321–3.
71. For example, G. P. Gooch, 'History as Training for Citizenship', *The New Era*, April 1930, 67–70; G. P. Gooch (1933) *The Unity of Civilisation* (London: Ethical Union).
72. Marvin, 'Appendix A', p. 20.
73. *The Schoolmaster*, 14 July 1927, p. 64; HMI Mr. Jack, Memo, 30 November 1938, HMI Allsopp to W. R. Richardson, March 1939, League of Nations Union: Board of Education's comments on pamphlets on the teaching of History, Geography and Modern Languages 1938–39, ED/121/144, The National Archives.
74. F. S. Marvin (1938) *The New Vision of Man* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.), pp. 9–10.
75. F. S. Marvin to G. Murray, 30 July 1904, MS Gilbert Murray 160, fols. 48–9; F. Harrison to E. Deverell, 21 June 1904, MS. Eng.Lett.c.257, fols. 28–9, E. M. D. Marvin Papers (FSMP); E. Marvin to F. S. Marvin, 17 August 1909, MS.Eng.Lett.c.259, fols. 135–6; M. Murray to F. S. Marvin, 9 February 1925, MS.Eng. Lett.d.264, fol. 17, FSMP.
76. F. S. Marvin to G. Murray, 31 January 1941[?], N. Marvin to G. Murray, 29 March 1941, G. Murray to N. Marvin, 2 June 1941, MS Gilbert Murray 160, fols. 131, 137–8, 142.
77. For example, F. S. Marvin, 'The Fight for Humanity', *Contemporary Review*, February 1942, 103–5; F. S. Marvin, 'The Heritage of Man', *Contemporary Review*, November 1943, 292–6 (quote at p. 296).
78. F. S. Marvin death certificate, Death certificates and will extracts, LPS/5/1, LPSP.
79. 'Obituary: Mr F. S. Marvin', *Manchester Guardian*, 17 November 1943, p. 6. Positivism is also mentioned in his obituary in *The Times* (17 November 1943, p. 7).

80. For example: F. S. Marvin, 'The Calendar and its Reform', *Contemporary Review*, February 1938, 197–203; Marvin, 'The Heritage of Man'.
81. C. H. Desch, 'Mr F. S. Marvin', *Nature*, 8 January 1944, pp. 47–8.
82. N. Marvin to G. Murray, 19 November 1943, MS Gilbert Murray 160, fol. 150.
83. F. J. Gould (1929) *Moral Education: A Chapter from the Story of Schools in England and Wales* (London: Watts & Co.), pp. 18–19; F. J. Gould to F. S. Marvin, 20 March 1916, 27 March 1916, MS. Eng.Lett.263, fols. 62–3, 68, FSMP.
84. On Gould's work with the IMEC see F. H. Hayward and E. M. White (c.1941) *The Last Years of a Great Educationist* (Bungay: R. Clay & Co.), pp. 113–33 and F. J. Gould (1920) 'Appendix' in St. George Lane-Fox Pitt, *Free Will and Destiny* (London: Constable & Co., Ltd.), pp. 55–85.
85. 2 October 1920, 4 November 1920, UES Council Minutes 1912–1923; *ESC*, November 1932, p. 4, October 1937, pp. 5–6. (Gould's talks are recorded on lists of events in many issues of the *ESC*.)
86. 28 January 1910, Minutes of Committee May 1905–October 1910, LPS/1/5, LPSP.
87. S. H. Swinny to F.S. Marvin, 1 January 1916, 16 January 1916, 17 April 1916, 17 August 1916, MS.Eng.Lett.c.263, fols. 1–2, 17–18, 79–80, 178–80, FSM Papers; LPS, *Report for the Year 1917*; 29 January 1929, LPS Minute Book January 1926–May 1934.
88. For example, F. J. Gould to F. S. Marvin, 27 March 1916, MS.Eng. Lett.263, fol. 68, FSMP.
89. LPS, *Report for the Year 1916*; 25 May 1917, 29 January 1919, LPS Minutes of Committee December 1916–November 1925, LPS/1/7.
90. F. J. Gould, *Positivist Propaganda* (June 1919), F. J. Gould, *Chapel Street as a Centre of Positivist Propaganda* (21 March 1924), Pamphlets and reports by F. J. Gould, LPS/4/3, LPSP.
91. 2 November 1923, LPS Minutes of Committee December 1916–November 1925.
92. Annual Meetings 12 April 1924 and 4 April 1925, LPS Minutes of Committee December 1916–November 1925. Gould was a committee member 1916–18 and 1923–6 (LPS, *Report for the Year 1916, Report for the Year 1923,* LPS Annual Reports 1915–23). See Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 47–61 and 133–47 for his

later Positivist thinking and writing and his LNU activity respectively.

93. Gould was involved with the National Peace Council (F. J. Gould (1911) *The Peace Movement Among the Young* (London: National Peace Council)) and the short-lived Peace Scouts (*Moral Education League Quarterly*, 21, 1 July 1910, p. 4; 23, 1 January 1911, p. 4).
94. *EW*, December 1918, p. 183; Hayward and White, *Last Years*, p. 145; M. Ceadel (2000) *Semi-Detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 196–7, 434.
95. F. J. Gould, Letter to the Editor, *Middlesex County Times*, 25 April 1936 in Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 133–4.
96. Education Committee Minutes first refer to Gould's activity in 1921, and Gould was co-opted to the Committee briefly in the mid-1920s (24 June 1921, 29 February 1924, LNU Education Committee Minutes).
97. *EW*, April 1920, p. 55; June 1920, p. 87; Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 19.
98. The Education Committee also included Miss Melian Stawell, another of Marvin's long-standing collaborators. Murray attended one of Gould's demonstration lessons whilst undertaking wartime work for the Board of Education in 1917, for his account of the lesson see Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 63–4.
99. Gould, *Moral Education*, p. 19.
100. *Headway*, August 1921, p. 119, December 1921, p. 63. A demonstration lesson was showcased in the LNU's annual session at the Conference of Educational Associations in January 1926 (25 September 1925, LNU Education Committee Minutes).
101. F. J. Gould (1927) *Notes for Lessons, or Addresses, to Young People*, 6th edn (London: LNU); F. J. Gould (1921) *The Wonderful League* (London: LNU). Both leaflets ran to seven editions (Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 136–7).
102. Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 139, 143; 25 January 1924, LNU Education Committee Minutes; LNU, *Annual Report for 1925*, p. 13.
103. Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 70–2, 142, 264.
104. Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 140–1.
105. E. M. White, 'F. J. Gould, 1855–1938', *League News*, June 1938, pp. 1–2; Gould, *The Wonderful League*, p. 5; F. J. Gould (1927)

The League of Nations Spirit in the Schools (London: Watts & Co.), pp. 1, 10–11.

106. Gould, *League of Nations Spirit*, pp. 3, 2; Gould, *Wonderful League*, p. 15.
107. Gould, *Notes for Lessons*, pp. 4–5; Gould, *League of Nations Spirit*, pp. 8, 10–11.
108. *League News*, February 1935, pp. 1–2.
109. Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 140–1.
110. Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 139, 141–2.
111. For example, 21 November 1924, 27 February 1925, 26 June 1925, 25 September 1925, 28 June 1928, LNU Education Committee Minutes.
112. *Headway*, May 1927, LNU Supplement, p. iii; 8 December 1930, LNU Education Committee Minutes; *The Schoolmaster*, 5 December 1929, p. 944.
113. A. G. Blackwood, Letter to the Editor, *Headway*, August 1938, p. 159.
114. Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 261–2, 268; F. J. Gould (1938) *500 Short Stories for Teachers* (London: Harrap).
115. R. N. Bérard (2004) 'Gould, Frederick James (1855–1938)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, http://www.oxforddnb.com.oxfordbrookes.idm.oclc.org/view/article/38882, date accessed 26 March 2015.
116. F. H. Hayward (1938) *An Educational Failure* (London: Duckworth), postscript; 'Obituary: Frederick James Gould', *South Place Monthly Record (SPMR)*, May 1938, pp. 11–12.
117. See excerpts from Gould's correspondence 1937–8 in Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 253–69.
118. See Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 1–61 on his relationship with different freethought bodies from the late 1920s.
119. 'Obituary: Frederick James Gould', *SPMR*, May 1938, pp. 11–12; *ESC*, May 1938, p. 2; 29 March 1939, SPES Minute Book 1933–44; 7 July 1938, 17 November 1938, EPC Minute Book 14 November 1934–4 October 1951.
120. Hayward and White, *Last Years*, pp. 270–93.
121. Gould's death received a short notice in the LNU's main monthly publication (*Headway*, May 1938, p. 83) and there was a fuller obituary in *League News*, June 1938, pp. 1–2. Marvin received no such notice in LNU publications, but the LNU was much depleted

by late 1943, and his work for that body had ceased some four years before he died.

122. G. Murray to F. S. Marvin, 24 January 1936, MS.Eng.Lett.c.268, fol. 95, FSMP.
123. McCarthy, *British People*, p. 95.

CHAPTER 7

The Faith of the Democrat: The Association for Education in Citizenship, 1934–1944

International events of the mid-1930s prompted contemporaries to reconsider how to develop the qualities of the good citizen in the younger generation in English schools. As the preceding chapter demonstrates, educators and other enthusiasts, though in decreasing numbers by this time, invested their hopes in the international sphere, symbolised institutionally by the League of Nations. They aimed to preserve peace and to promote understanding between people in different countries. For others, however, the emergence and consolidation of totalitarian regimes overseas made it necessary to focus on revitalising citizenship within the parliamentary democracy. In this latter vein, Sir Ernest Simon and Eva Hubback founded the Association for Education in Citizenship (AEC) in 1934. Through this 'non-political and non-denominational' body,[1] they aimed to promote the knowledge and values that the citizen of a democracy would need in a range of educational settings: schools, universities, technical and adult education contexts and informal educational groups.

Underpinning these efforts was a view of the moral ideals required of the democratic citizen. Contemporaries debated the ideological foundation and stimulus of those ideals. This aspect of the AEC's work has been somewhat neglected in existing studies of the organisation, most of which have focused on pressure group activities.[2] The same is true of the brief references to the AEC in discussions of a longer-term 'history' of citizenship education or political education in England.[3] Rob Freathy's research, however, is a notable exception. He suggests that a tension between Christian and secular conceptions of democratic citizenship was a significant component of

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educational debates from the 1930s to the 1950s, and that the AEC played an important part in these debates.[4] Neither Simon nor Hubback appear to have been associated in an active way with the secularist bodies discussed so far, but, as the foregoing discussion reveals, they did not believe in a Christian God. Yet, in a manner typical of agnostics in the first half of the twentieth century, they were apt to use a language of religion, faith and belief in relation to their favoured ideals, in this case educating democratic citizens.[5] They proposed an educational approach that involved direct instruction in order to instil required knowledge, promote the moral qualities needed in a democratic citizen, and develop critical thinking. Religious approaches to citizenship education were not challenged explicitly, but received little attention in Simon and Hubback's early writing. Others linked with the AEC were unhappy with this omission. And later AEC publications contained more discussion of religion, specifically Christianity, as a strand of citizenship and stressed the importance of religious instruction as an approach to citizenship education. Indeed, public debate during the late 1930s, and especially during the Second World War, was increasingly to emphasise the Christian foundations of English citizenship, in contrast to the atheism of enemy regimes. Such views were ultimately enshrined in educational policy in the 1944 Education Act with its provision for compulsory religious instruction lessons and daily acts of worship. The 'faith of the democrat' proposed by the AEC's founders was unable to compete, in this context, with the Christian faith.

This chapter, whilst building on previous work, and particularly Rob Freathy's research, seeks to examine in more detail than earlier studies the founder members' ideas about religion, the place of secular and Christian perspectives on democratic citizenship within the AEC, and, through Mass Observation data, teachers' perspectives. The AEC stands out from my earlier case studies. Firstly, it takes our analysis beyond secularist groups and into a wider arena of thinking and social activism, not anchored in organised religion but also not in organised freethought. Secondly, while most of the leading activists in the other bodies discussed were male, the AEC stands out for having a female co-founder. This seems to reflect the milieu of the 1920s and 1930s, a time when an increasing proportion of left-oriented social reformers were female.[6] However, while substantial personal papers collections exist for Simon there is no equivalent collection for Hubback.[7] Thirdly, the AEC was able to draw on its founders' extremely wide-ranging contacts, within the educational world but also beyond it. The extent of Hubback's and Simon's other activities and interests might have

limited the time they could devote to the AEC, but it enabled them to make use of important contacts that carried weight both within and beyond the educational world. Fourthly, through Simon, the AEC had significant money and public stature behind it (even the LNU, although a mass movement, was perennially short of funds). A combination of all these factors enabled the AEC to interest, at least to an extent, individuals at the highest levels of the educational and political worlds of the time as well as a large number of teachers on the ground. However, the faith of the democrat envisaged by Simon and Hubback proved difficult to secure and sustain within a wartime organisational and cultural context.[8]

'My Religion': Ernest Simon and Eva Hubback

Ernest Simon was born in 1879 in Manchester. His father, Henry Simon, was a German émigré and industrialist who had moved to Manchester in 1860 and founded two successful engineering companies which later merged into the Simon Engineering group. As was typical for young people of his generation with a decent family income behind them, Ernest attended a public school (Rugby) and a Cambridge college (Pembroke) where he received a First for his final Engineering Tripos. He returned to his native Manchester, his father's death in 1899 requiring him to take on considerable responsibilities in the family firm at a young age, initially as chairman and later as governing director.[9] In 1912 he married Shena Simon (née Potter); Hubback, a mutual friend, had arranged the initial meeting between the two. Ernest and Shena had three children; two sons, Roger and Brian, born in 1913 and 1915 respectively, and a daughter Toni born in 1917 who died tragically from a rare form of childhood cancer in 1929.[10]

Over time, Simon acquired through his business sufficient wealth and freedom from day-to-day responsibilities to find other avenues of activity that he apparently pursued with considerable determination and energy. He became active in Manchester politics. As a Liberal member of Manchester City Council from 1911, he specialised in smoke abatement and matters of housing and urban planning more generally. He served as chair of its Housing Committee from 1919 to 1923 and championed (and helped fund) the development of Manchester Corporation's Wythenshawe Estate. He was also elected Lord Mayor in 1921. Simon also had ambitions on the national political scene. He was a founding member of the Liberal Summer School in 1921, and was elected Liberal MP for the Withington Division of Manchester in 1923–24 and 1929–31. Educational interests, before his

involvement in the AEC, were primarily in connection with the University of Manchester: he was elected a member of the Court and Council in 1915, a position he held except for a brief interlude until his death. With his prominent and often generous contributions to this wide range of causes, he was awarded a knighthood in 1932.[11] Simon saw himself as a progressive social reformer and he became dissatisfied with the caution of the parliamentary Liberal party. By the mid-1920s he was debating in his diary whether his aims of giving 'the best chance to every child' and removing 'the excessive inequalities of today' would best be achieved in connection with the Liberals, or with Labour. It was not until 1946 that he switched party, and in 1947 he entered the House of Lords as a Labour peer.[12] However, his concern about the social impact of class divisions within the education system and elsewhere did not stop him, in a manner typical of others with his educational and financial standing, seeing that his own sons were educated as he was in preparatory and public schools (albeit this time in progressive ones) and the ancient universities.[13]

With his money, business success and political activity, Simon was able to make influential contacts in Manchester and beyond. Unlike some of his upper middle-class peers he did not move away from his provincial roots,[14] but a flat in London undoubtedly helped him make connections beyond his native city. Many of his contacts were from a progressive elite, but as his AEC activity demonstrated, he also attracted some Conservative figures. Yet he did not see himself fully as part of the establishment. He felt that his scientific education marked him out as 'not quite a gentleman', at least at the time of his studies. His diary entries reveal some social awkwardness in his youth, perhaps related to a speech impediment that he had lessons to overcome in order to be able to speak in public, an essential skill given his political and social activist ambitions. He was aware that his German roots also had the potential to tell against him on the municipal political scene during the First World War, deciding at that time to 'lie low & be very careful'.[15] He could apparently be aloof, and some found him abrupt or rude. He worked incredibly hard, and expected others to do the same.[16] He was also, despite his love of democracy, somewhat elitist in his political aims. In his diary he wrote of seeking the 'approval of elect [*sic*] (& especially Webb)'; Simon and his wife were, at this time, associated with the Webbs and other Fabians. He was less interested in satisfying the 'vulgar herd' of the expanding electorate or even the 'reactionary majority' of fellow Manchester councillors.[17] At the same time his personal papers suggest affection for, and lavish generosity towards, friends like Hubback,[18] as well as

members of the close and extended family circle.[19] Within the AEC, too, he used humour in his dealings with others as a means of traversing potentially controversial territory. 'I hope that you will be successful in keeping our Bolshevik tendencies in order', he wrote in a letter to the highly Conservative Sir Arthur Bryant. And, notwithstanding his work rate and commitment to his reformist causes, he enjoyed food, wine, good company and the luxuries his wealth could allow, and made time for sport and outdoor exercise. He lacked, in this way, the puritanical streak of Marvin and Gould.[20]

A desire to 'do good', which he apparently shared with his wife, underscored Simon's considerable activity outside his business.[21] For neither was this ideal founded in the Christian faith. Both were agnostics of long standing, with their son Brian noting that 'no religious influences percolated the family'. Simon was, according to his friend and biographer Mary Stocks, very concerned with morals and being a good person, much in the tradition of the nineteenth-century agnostics who preceded him. Yet 'a God evoking obedience to the moral law by the prospect of post-mortem rewards and punishment seemed to him positively repellent', and failed to meet his demand that moral choices should be guided by factual evidence and intellectual rigour.[22] Simon wrote about his search for an alternative in a number of diary entries from the years 1910–14, all headed 'My religion'. 'My religion', he wrote in 1911, 'consists practically of the one fundamental assumption that it is worth while working for the general good. All details as to how are left purely to science to determine.' In 1912 he elaborated further his 'fundamental beliefs': a 'duty . . . to work for the common good'; and the need to aim for 'equal opportunity for all to attain the maximum development of faculty & desire'. This aim he attributed to the Webbs. Individual development, Simon suggested, was important but should be 'subordinate to the good of the community as a whole'. This 'religion' provided a lens through which Simon examined his own motives and the consequences of his decisions and actions, both in public life and in private life. These writings suggest a capacity for careful scrutiny and rational deliberation. At the same time, Simon's 'religion' involved 'meditation' and emotional preparation, which he deemed 'the equivalent of prayer'. It was necessary, he suggested, to 'get one's mind into the state in which its effective & lasting pleasure consists in the effort to carry out the ideals of the faith'. In this way, his 'belief' became 'steadily stronger' and 'a real support'.[23]

In his diary Simon outlined the intellectual ancestry for his ideas. The Webbs' *First and Last Things*, he wrote in 1911, 'almost three years ago

opened my agnostic eyes to need of very definite fundamental assumption as guide in life'.[24] J. S. Mill's 1874 essay *The Utility of Religion* matched 'almost exactly ... my idea of religion, but exceedingly well and logically put'. Other influences included three mid- to late-nineteenth-century biologists with a sideline in social and political theory (Thomas Huxley, Herbert Spencer, Ernst Haeckel); the first two of this trio, incidentally, had links with respectable secularism through their correspondence with George Jacob Holyoake. Philosopher and psychologist William James also contributed 'a little'.[25] Simon felt hampered by a lack of opportunity to discuss his ideas with like-minded people. The absence of obvious links with organised freethought has been noted already.[26] Few organisations existed in his native Manchester in the years that he was thinking about his 'religion', and the ones that did exist were, by this stage, not large.[27] Or perhaps Simon's social and educational background placed him above and outside the majority in such organisations. He fits Andrew Hasting's characterisation of intellectuals and politicians who, by the 1920s, were able to hold down prominent public functions without hiding their lack of Christian faith.[28] For such figures, religious bodies and ideas were not a danger to be fought, but were superfluous to their personal needs and their estimation of society's needs. In this context secularist organisations, also, were not needed.

Eva Hubback was born Eva Marian Spielman on 13 April 1886, the eldest of four children within a prosperous Jewish family in London. Her mother, Gertrude Spielman (née Raphael), was the daughter of a London stockbroker and bullion merchant. Her father, Meyer Spielman, knighted in 1928, was Inspector of Home Office Schools. Both were prominent members of the London Jewish elite.[29] Like Simon, Hubback was educated in a manner commensurate with the family's financial and social standing, attending Saint Felix School, Southwold, Suffolk, followed by a finishing school in Paris. In 1905 she went to Newnham College, Cambridge to study Economics. This was in opposition to family preferences, although they did not stop her from taking a degree. She achieved a First in 1908. By the time she went to Newnham, Hubback had ceased to be an observant Jew, although she did continue to enjoy participating in Jewish festivals at her mother's house.[30] While at Cambridge, she helped launch a branch of the Labour Party. She also joined the Fabian Society, where she first met David Hubback, her future husband. This marriage of a gentile and a Jewess, in August 1911, was not popular with either of their families. The Hubbacks moved to Manchester that year when David took up the position

of lecturer in Greek at the university. Through Eva's Newnham friend Edith Eckhardt, Ernest Simon's cousin, the pair were drawn into the Simon family circle. They had two daughters and one son, born in 1912, 1914 and 1916, respectively. In Autumn 1916 Hubback took on some temporary work as an economics lecturer at Newnham College, Cambridge, initially out of simple intellectual curiosity. After her husband died in 1917 whilst fighting in France, however, this work, her daughter suggests, became an economic necessity.[31]

A decade later, in 1927 Hubback became principal of Morley College in London, an institution noted at the time for its distinctive programmes of evening classes for adults. She retained this role until 1949. For her daughter, Hubback's outlook on education was shaped by her 'convictions about the paramount importance of service to the community' as the way to achieve 'a just and healthy society', convictions which she held with 'religious fervour'.[32] Hubback's own life embodied such service, and suggested a work rate and range of activity not unlike that of Simon. Beyond her paid work, she campaigned for better housing and economic conditions for families, improved legal rights for women, and informal civic education for adults. She was vice chair of the Family Endowment Society, and worked closely with Eleanor Rathbone on the National Council for Equal Citizenship, while her interest in population matters led her to become involved with the Eugenics Society.[33] Hubback also became involved in municipal party politics, standing unsuccessfully as a Labour candidate for Hendon Borough Council in 1932. She was elected Labour member for North Kensington on London County Council in 1946, but lost this seat at the next election just three years later.[34]

According to her daughter, Hubback believed 'that reason could save every situation'. Colleagues noted her ability to search for and gather information, although some queried how far she was able to deal effectively with the masses of data she sought and retained. In the presence of family and friends, she could be kind and humorous, but she was also over-intense, a little 'puritanical' and 'moralistic', and she was often regarded as lacking in tact in their dealings with others. Her inability to '[jolly] people along', AEC colleague B. A. Howard suggested, meant that she did not carry the weight in educational circles that she otherwise might have. Colleagues and family also noted something of a 'dictatorial' manner and 'domineering', or at the least 'emphatic', tendencies. It appears to have been very difficult to sway her from what she wanted to think or do.[35] Possibly her gender told against her given attitudes common at the time. In 1938, Will Spens, then

chair of the Board of Education Consultative Committee, wrote in an internal memo that although 'ES' was 'pretty sensible', 'Mrs H' was 'not at all' and had 'too much influence'. Michael Stewart, who worked closely with her on the AEC, commented, tellingly, that 'in those days ... unless you were a very domineering, downright woman, you just didn't get anywhere'.[36] On the other hand her 'inner vitality' and 'enormous energy' and her 'flood of ideas' were admired by those who knew her well and worked with her, as were managerial abilities.[37]

Hubback's agnosticism was, like Simon's, publicly known. Hubback, it appears, was also searching for her own version of, or equivalent to, a 'religion'. Sunday mornings in the Hubback household in the 1920s revolved around 'Sunday School', a form of 'ethical instruction' which included 'Bible stories told for children or books with a moral content', and the singing of 'simple hymns to her piano accompaniment'. For a short period the Hubback children were also sent to a Sunday afternoon children's meetings at the Friends' Meeting House in Hampstead, until they 'protested too strongly at moral instruction twice a day'. Reflecting on these Sunday rituals, Diana Hopkinson suggests that her mother 'must have felt a duty to give us some sort of substitute for the religious training she was unable to provide'.[38] What is striking here is the close parallel to the Sunday provision of the various secularist bodies, but conducted here on a private basis, apparently with little or no reference to other local families, and within the home.

The Association for Education in Citizenship

In December 1932, Simon gave a talk to Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society entitled 'Can Education Save Democracy?'. He bemoaned the political results of an 'incapacity for clear thinking', and called for education to 'teach us what it has never done before, to think straight and recognise our prejudices'. By this time he could draw on his political experiences as municipal councillor and MP, and his observations of class and community life on the Wythenshawe estate. He had developed some knowledge of educational matters deriving from his own work with the University of Manchester and also his wife's activities on the Manchester Education Committee and beyond, although, according to his daughter-in-law, he never attained 'full comprehension of the intricacies of the school system'.[39] In Simon's 1932 comments we can detect some of the impetus behind the Association for Education in Citizenship (AEC), which he and

Hubback founded in May 1934, taking on, respectively, the roles of chairman and honorary secretary. By this stage the emerging context of powerful dictatorships abroad gave the project an added urgency. The AEC's object, as outlined in 1934, was 'to advance the study of and training in citizenship', which included, first, 'training in the moral qualities necessary for the citizens in a democracy', secondly, 'the encouragement of clear thinking in everyday affairs', and thirdly, 'the acquisition of that knowledge of the modern world usually given by means of courses in history, geography, economics, citizenship, and public affairs'.[40] The form of citizenship described here represented 'an inclusive brand of secularised morality', defined by 'humane and democratic values', and its potential to be accessible to all. In this accessibility it contrasted with other contemporary and earlier discourses of citizenship that could exclude as well as include on the basis of religion and/or race.[41]

From its inception, the AEC's council included many high-profile names which 'carried weight in the educational world and indeed outside it'. Dr Cyril Norwood, Sir Percy Nunn, Mr Hugh Lyon of Rugby, Spencer Leeson of Winchester, and Sir Arthur Salter were deemed particularly worthy of mention in the *Journal of Education*. Other names overlapped with the world of internationalist education (G. P. Gooch, Gilbert Murray, Professor A. Zimmern) and the world of social reform (Eleanor Rathbone and Mrs Sidney Webb were both friends of the founders).[42] Major Conservative figures, too, were chosen in order to avoid accusations of progressive dominance: Bryant, criticised at the time for his pro-Fascist sympathies, was a symbolic concession to the AEC's all-party status.[43] Securing Henry Hadow, chair of the Board of Education Consultative Committee 1923–34, as the first president was something of a coup, and netting Stanley Baldwin, the former prime-minister, after Hadow's death in 1937 was no less impressive. It appears that Simon's standing and his and Hubback's varied and extensive experience of public and political work paid dividends.

During its early years, the AEC's programme developed very much as a product of Hubback's and Simon's combined thinking and activity, with Simon writing to Hubback 'you are my second mind'. Much planning of campaigns and formulating of ideas was apparently done when Hubback visited Hellsgarth, the Simons' property in the Lake District.[44] A wider inner circle, also including politically interested educators such as Howard, Mary Stocks and Michael Stewart, met informally for dinners at Simon's London flat. These discussions were written up, Fabian style, often by Howard. For Howard, the different backgrounds of the inner circle of

members brought benefits. Simon, the businessman, was able to '[allow] a discussion to roam … and [get] on finally to the exact point he wanted'. Hubback and Howard were practical teachers, a 'stabilising influence', offsetting some 'well-meaning' but 'rather cranky' AEC members who were 'anxious to push … along certain lines'. Beyond this, there was a large council, already mentioned, and a smaller executive committee with typical organisational processes of regular meetings and annual reports.[45] Initially giving its office address as Hubback's home, by the end of 1935 the AEC had its own premises in Victoria Street, London. In Spring 1937 Miss Brew, renowned for her work in Conservative political circles, was appointed as organising secretary, a public demonstration of the organisation's all-party credentials.[46] By 1939 the AEC had six subcommittees and seven local branches around the country, revealing its growing size and complexity, and also its advocacy of civic activism at a local level.[47] Its early membership was, according to Simon, 'almost entirely teachers'. By the late 1930s it had moved, like the League of Nations Union (LNU), to more formal representation of educational bodies.[48]

The AEC's core pressure group strategies were summarised by Hubback's daughter as 'the massing of informed opinion, the preparation of positive and practical schemes' and 'the assault on the strongholds of authority'. It aimed to influence educational institutions of different types (elementary and secondary schools, universities, technical colleges and adult education, informal study groups), campaigned for a greater recognition of education for citizenship on the part of policy makers at national and local levels, organised numerous events from local meetings to large national and international conferences, and issued publications. The years 1934–39 witnessed considerable activity on all these fronts, made possible by annual donations of about £500 from Simon and smaller sums from others, income from donations exceeding that from subscriptions.[49] Regional meetings and conferences for teachers and pupils were organised, often by local AEC branches. Higher-profile gatherings included the 'Future of Democracy' conference held at Ashridge in 1937, at which leading members of the three main political parties spoke from 'a platform from which party politics [was to] be entirely excluded'.[50] An Anglo-Scandinavian conference was planned for July 1938, but had to be cancelled because of the international situation as well as difficulties in finding a date mutually convenient for English and Scandinavian educators. Applications for a summer school the following year, which aimed to study 'successful democracy in Norway and Sweden', were far in excess of the accommodation available.[51]

The AEC also published books, pamphlets, and, after 1936, a newsletter, *The Citizen*. Three publications are particularly relevant for the purposes of my argument here. A substantial pamphlet, *Training for Citizenship*, was published in 1935. This was followed by a book for Oxford University Press, *Education for Citizenship in Secondary Schools*, published in 1936, and the elementary schools equivalent, published in 1939.[52] *Training for Citizenship* was co-written by Simon and Hubback, but involved a process of drafting and redrafting, drawing on feedback from AEC activists and other relevant experts. The secondary and elementary schools books combined contributions from Hubback, Simon and other key AEC members with chapters from practising teachers outlining what was already being done in schools. Both contained many examples of practical and innovative pedagogies, but these sat alongside arguments for direct instruction from the founders and, in particular, Hubback. This emphasis on 'direct' teaching could be unpopular;[53] such approaches were, one commentator suggested, 'commonly thought to involve indoctrination, and therefore [savoured] … of the propagandist methods of dictators'. Hubback was unapologetic on this count: 'If we argue that indoctrination of any creed is bad, then we are teaching that no indoctrination, i.e. liberty, is good … we are "indoctrinating" a belief in freedom.'[54]

The AEC, like many other organisations, struggled during the Second World War. The leaders were preoccupied, Simon with his work at the Ministry of Aircraft Production, Hubback with running Morley College with a depleted staff and bombed premises,[55] and also her ongoing campaigning for family allowances and preparatory information gathering for the Royal Commission on Population to which she submitted evidence in 1945.[56] Howard's London school was evacuated to Wales, leaving him 'right out of things' for three or four years. Wartime conditions also made it harder to meet and influence educational decision-makers, with representatives of the Board of Education, Local Education Authorities, and other educationalists being 'tired and fully immersed in the immediate practical problems'. AEC offices, too, suffered from bombing and the loss of the library. Inevitably, events were rescheduled or cancelled, and plans for several publications were 'put into cold storage'; the rationing of paper would not have helped.[57] Activity did not cease altogether, however. The AEC organised conferences for teachers and pupils and at least one summer school in Oxford. Publications included Hubback's pamphlet on informal study methods in around 1942. 'Training for citizenship', she argued in this pamphlet, was 'even more important in time of war … when the call for

service in a national cause and the need to face a common danger gives to citizenship a new significance.' Almost inevitably in the wartime context, she contrasted the 'British way' with the 'Nazi way'.[58]

The AEC, according to Stocks, 'made a significant impact on the educational world'. 'Throughout the whole range of education, social training and preparation for citizenship received far more serious attention than had been the case when the Association was founded', according to Hubback's biographer, her daughter.[59] It appears that the AEC's aims of improving democracy and an interest in citizenship were in tune, in some ways, with the zeitgeist, and they received a positive reception. Stewart suggested that with the rise of dictatorships overseas, the notion that 'democracy was going to have to fight for its life' was 'very much in the minds of anyone who thought politically at all'.[60] Board of Education publications, including the Spens and Norwood Reports of 1938 and 1943, started to make direct, if brief, references to citizenship education. And the Ministry of Education's 1949 pamphlet *Citizens Growing Up* acknowledged the AEC directly; Hubback was apparently consulted in the preparation of this document. The focus on citizens' obligations and public affairs in services' education during the war, and an increase in the teaching of civics and economic and social history in schools, were similarly attributed to the influence of the AEC's campaigns.[61] Whitmarsh, on the other hand, notes political impotence in government circles. This interpretation is supported, to an extent, by the equivocal comments about, and responses to, AEC overtures found in Board of Education files.[62] Indeed, in a situation parallel to that faced by the Moral Instruction League (MIL), policy-makers, teachers, and an interested public were broadly in sympathy with the AEC's arguments for the importance of education in citizenship at a time when democracy was threatened. But they were less keen on the focus on direct instruction, suggesting instead that it would be more effective to focus on what pupils could pick up from belonging to the school community, and the study of existing timetabled subjects.[63]

Christian and Humanist Democrats

A common aim of promoting democratic citizenship was complicated by divisions among members and supporters on pressing ideological matters. Party political differences came to the fore in behind-the-scenes discussions about the Ashridge conference in 1937. And, among core supporters, whilst G. P. Gooch held internationalist sympathies to be a vital component of

democratic citizenship, Bryant vehemently disagreed.[64] A further division, significant given the context of broader educational and societal debates of the time, was over how far the ideals of democratic citizenship should be, to use the terminology of AEC publications, either religious or humanist in nature. Discussions of these ideological foundations emerge most clearly in connection with developing the moral qualities of the democratic citizen. The ideal democratic citizen, Simon argued, in his section of *Training for Citizenship*, would have 'a deep concern for the good life of his fellows', a 'sense of social responsibility and the will to sink his own immediate interests and the interests of his class in the common good'. 'He' [*sic*] would 'do his full share in working for the community', would 'care intensely for freedom', and would also 'respect the individualities of others', tolerating 'opinions in conflict with his own'. These moral qualities had to be supplemented by intellectual qualities; 'habits of clear thinking' and 'knowledge of the world today' which would enable 'a sound judgement of public affairs'.[65] Hubback, in her section of the publication, focused on methods. It was not enough, she wrote, to rely on such values being 'picked up indirectly through the life of the school'. Instead, she advocated direct instruction, 'definite opportunities ... for discussing social and civic values and ideals as an aid to developing moral judgement', on the grounds that young people were 'intensely interested in problems of conduct'.[66]

Two observations suggest themselves here. Firstly, there are clear affinities between the moral qualities of the democratic citizen outlined here and Simon's 'religion', and what we know of Hubback's ethic of social service. Secondly, in Simon and Hubback's emphasis on a socially oriented morality and the efficacy of direct instruction, there is an affinity between the AEC's proposals and those of the MIL some twenty years earlier. Indeed, F. H. Hayward, writing in 1938, noted distinct similarities and also that the AEC's founders were apparently ignorant of the work of these earlier pioneers.[67] Yet developments in educational thinking over the intervening period are evident, too, for example, in references to emotions, sentiments, and remedial treatment in AEC documents which seem to reflect the increased prominence of concepts derived from child psychology and psychiatry by the 1930s.[68]

In the AEC's publications the founder members outlined 'religious' and 'humanist' approaches to developing the moral qualities of the citizen. Hubback described both in her section of *Training for Citizenship*. The 'religious tone of the school' as a whole, expressed through prayers, chapel, scripture lessons, literature and history, and in contacts between teachers

and children, could be utilised to good effect by 'those [teachers] who derive their conception of the love of man from the love of God'. Deriving civic duty from a religious faith could give the performance of that duty a 'sanction and force'. The humanist approach, 'based on the brotherhood of man', emphasised the 'duty to help one's fellows and to relieve suffering – whatever one may believe as to ultimate realities'. As to pedagogical suggestions 'the story of the development of man's moral nature' could be emphasised in the study of history and literature, while geography and languages could encourage 'a widening of sympathies for the needs and points of view of contemporary nations'.[69] Such a balance between religious and humanist approaches emerged out of an attempt to satisfy all who might be attracted to a 'non-denominational' body. But the very discussion of a humanist perspective, and its equal weighting alongside a religious one, was distinctive at the time and, most likely, reflected the founding members' religious views. Human experience as a sanction for moral rules and motivation for moral behaviour is very much along MIL and broader Ethical Movement lines. The reference to widened sympathies and other nations, however, is closer to the world citizenship ideals of the interwar years and, specifically, the LNU.[70]

Simon considered the ideological underpinnings of democratic citizenship in an article, 'The Faith of the Democrat', published in *The Citizen* in July 1937. He argued that democrats who believed in the importance of every individual should desire 'the good life' for all. He examined 'the religious, the humanist and the philosophers' views of life' as a possible means of understanding what the 'good life' was. The religious view was represented by Stanley Baldwin's address as prime minister before an audience of Empire Youth in May 1937, and the humanist view by Bertrand Russell's address given on behalf of the AEC at the Conference of Educational Associations in 1937. The philosophers' view of absolute values to be pursued in an ideal world was represented by Arthur Clutton-Brock's 1916 text *The Ultimate Belief*. Simon suggested that the philosophers' faith, being 'primarily self-regarding', was not right for the faith of the democrat. Christians and humanists, however, both insisted on 'love and active service of one's fellows', formulated in Christian terms as loving one's neighbour, and for Russell as 'a kindly feeling to mankind at large'. Simon did not state directly which of these he preferred. But the humanist view was 'admirably stated' by Russell while he offered no evaluative comment about the Christian view. This, alongside his agnostic beliefs, never hidden from the public, and the formulations of his own 'religion' in his diary, which readers of the

article are unlikely to have known about, suggests that his preference rested with the humanist view.[71]

Simon's own views are more explicit in comments made as part of the AEC's internal drafting and commenting processes. He challenged the notion that the idea of citizenship had to be a Christian one. In marginal notes on a draft pamphlet by Hubback on 'Adult Education in Citizenship' he referred to 'loss of religion and faith', 'historical progress when religion weak', and 'humanitarian revolutions'. And in a letter to a Mrs Sinclair he pointed to the existence of Ancient Greek, Roman and Jewish versions of citizenship alongside Christian ones. He also noted Christian tenets which he deemed unhelpful for promoting democratic citizenship, particularly the stress on a world to come and the value of suffering.[72] Some AEC activists supported such views. G. P. Gooch, for example, in his talk for the AEC at the Conference of Educational Associations in 1936, pointed to an 'ever-increasing recognition of the importance of our life here on earth, leaving the question of what is to happen after death for each individual to consider for himself'. The 'unseen world', he claimed, played a lesser role in shaping community life and the training of citizens.[73]

Others associated with the AEC, however, stressed that education of the democratic citizen must have Christian foundations. Bryant, commenting as a Council member on a pamphlet draft (which became *Training for Citizenship*), suggested that a reference to H. G. Wells and his international state in connection with being a good citizen should be deleted: 'most good Christians, and particularly Catholics, have as much quarrel with Wells as they have with Gibbon'. This reference was removed.[74] In the same round of comments, Sara Burstall, former headmistress of Manchester High School for Girls, argued that the pamphlet should contain something about a Christian basis for education for citizenship in order to 'remove the suspicion that our Assocn [sic] was Secularist'. Some of the Council would not agree with such a Christian basis, she noted, but others felt this was 'the right way', and these ideas must be included if the AEC was to have general appeal. Simon took this suggestion on board, and asked Burstall to draft some appropriate wording for the discussion of moral qualities in the methods section. He noted, however, his personal inclination 'not to say anything about it as the whole thing is necessarily so compressed'.[75] The balanced offer in the final published version of *Training for Citizenship*, therefore, appears to include more reference to Christianity than was originally intended by Simon and Hubback. It was a product of redrafting after consulting with respected AEC members.

Yet this balance was not enough to satisfy some AEC supporters and members. A review of the secondary school volume in the first issue *The Citizen* published in May 1936 was generally favourable except for noting a 'shyness of the fact that the roots of good citizenship dive down into faith'. Hubback's discussion of religious and humanist approaches only touched on 'fundamentals' that '[deserved] further development'. Four issues later, E. Addison Phillips, former headmistress of Clifton High School and former president of the Association of Headmistresses, criticised 'the omission of any attempt to speak of training for citizenship by religious education'. Christianity provided a powerful motive for the citizen, making a sense of duty 'a vital force', and offering 'constant reinforcement of spiritual strength'. Religious education in schools, she continued, both within classes and through school life more generally, would not compel pupils to believe in God but would ensure that the young were equipped with 'fundamental Christian ideas needed for them to retain a sense of values necessary to civilisation and moral growth'.[76] Spencer Lesson, headmaster of Winchester School and member of the AEC's Council, suggested in a lecture for the AEC in 1938 that the task of educating citizens in schools could be undertaken from a humanist perspective, or 'in the temper of those to whom Christ's command is everything'. He stressed, however, the benefits of the latter approach in defining and shaping a human family ('We are all children of one Father'), and in enlarging the horizons of citizenship 'beyond the bounds of one country and one commonwealth' to include 'Heaven' too. In a chapter in the AEC's elementary schools volume, C. T. Cumberbirch, principal of Hull Training College, similarly noted that both Christian and 'humanistic' approaches to training for citizenship would 'take the predominant sentiment and purpose away from the self'. But Christian approaches had additional value because they defined public service with reference to the 'transcendent Will, Authority and Love of God'. Much could be done, Cumberbirch suggested, through a carefully planned scripture syllabus.[77]

Perhaps the strongest expression within AEC literature of the efficacy of religious education in schools as a basis for citizenship emerged from the wartime activities of a local branch. In 1942 Louis Arnaud Reid, then professor of philosophy at Armstrong College, Newcastle, compiled a statement arising from a discussion involving six members of the Newcastle Branch. The group concluded that there should be a 'Christian education' in public schools. Objections were 'not widespread' either within schools or among a general public. There was no 'real clamour' for the teaching of

Buddhism, Islam and other religions, or of 'scientific humanism' (the latter, interestingly, grouped with non-Christian religions). 'In a democratic society', Reid argued, a minority of 'intellectuals' who objected to Christian teaching would have to give way to the majority view, and pupils would not be compelled to accept the Christian teaching that they received. The group also suggested that if there was to be religion in schools, it could not be 'confined to a minimum e.g. the lesson or the school service', but should affect 'everything – or most things – in the school'. In this way, for Reid, the school would become a 'Christian community', and creating Christian communities in schools was an opportunity to create a more Christian society. This aim he contrasted with an assumption which he thought common among education for citizenship enthusiasts, namely that the child should be taught to 'adapt ... to the community'. 'Re-creation' as well as 'adaptation', he argued, was needed, and 're-creation ... in accordance with the real and true purpose and nature of men as the child of God.'[78]

Some of these arguments are familiar: Christianity providing a motive for high standards of individual morality and service of others has been noted already in response to the MIL, and the brotherhood of man being associated with the fatherhood of God in connection with the LNU. Yet in these arguments we also see new developments: an increasingly strong association in public discourse between English citizenship and God's blessing and heavenly reward, and a professionalising religious education community arguing both for carefully developed interdenominational syllabuses of religious education, and religion permeating the whole school.[79] These wider developments were increasingly to receive recognition from policy-makers at the Board of Education. The 1943 Consultative Committee (Norwood) Report pointed to a 'genuine demand that there shall be an opportunity for religious education in all schools', and the 'general acceptance of Christian ethical standard as the highest known to man'. The Board of Education's White Paper on educational reconstruction published later that year, and drawing on Norwood's suggestions, noted:

> a very general wish, not confined to the representatives of the Churches [sic], that religious education should be given a more defined place in the life and work of the schools, springing from the desire to revive the spiritual and personal values in our society and in our national tradition.[80]

The Christian vision of education for citizenship was apparently gaining central government endorsement.

It is, however, difficult to establish how 'general' the wish for a religious education in all schools or the acceptance of Christian ethical standards referred to in these documents was. Some clues as to teacher perceptions at least can be gleaned from a Mass Observation survey about the religious instruction proposals in the 1943 White Paper. Mass Observation reports, and even the individual survey responses, should be interpreted with care. Scholars now tend not to see Mass Observation as a neutral observatory of popular views and experiences, but rather as 'a social movement with quasi-political objectives and an active and diverse following'.[81] And Mass Observation, in writing up the results, noted that questionnaire responses received (312 out of 1900 sent out to teachers in State-aided schools) were unlikely to represent all teachers, but rather those 'interested in the subject' and also the ones who could be reached under wartime conditions of teacher and school mobility.[82] Still, this survey offers a broad insight into teacher views that contrasts with the scattered references in newsletters and the educational press, and the silences in committee minutes and reports, noted elsewhere in this volume. Nine out of ten teachers responding to the survey wanted some form of religious instruction in schools. Of the one in ten who wanted no religious instruction, the majority were men; and most had no belief themselves. Mass Observation comments on these results suggested that wanting some form of religious instruction was not necessarily associated with any depth of religious belief. More prosaic motives were noted. Religious instruction was the only way that many people knew, from their own experience, of achieving basic discipline and discouraging misdemeanours in children. This interpretation references what had by then become a well-established theme in Mass Observation publications, declining faith 'in God or in Progress'.[83]

Individual questionnaire responses offer more detail. Many teachers who wanted religious instruction in schools noted its benefits in terms of individual moral development and a broader sense of citizenship, national and international. Notwithstanding Mass Observation's editorial spin in its reports, some of the grand aims of the Christian educators were indeed reflected in teacher comments. 'The firm foundation of character, the development of good citizenship, and the true knowledge of the joy of service to our fellow men, can only come if proper religious instruction is systematically and conscientiously carried out', argued the headmistress of an infants' school. According to a female teacher in a Church of England

girls' senior school (for pupils aged 11 and above), 'what we, who are God's people, believe and teach our children of Him, has a vital bearing not only on the future of our nation but of the whole world'. Some respondents pointed to Christian foundations for national traditions and cultural values, and argued on the basis of these foundations for teaching about the Christian religion only in schools. 'Our civilization in Britain and Europe has been largely influenced by Christianity', wrote a female secondary and preparatory school teacher. 'We are a Christian country', claimed another teacher who gave no identifying details. One female secondary teacher, however, noted other faiths in the British Empire; 'instruction in the main elements of the chief Faiths of the world ... would make for a better understanding of the Hindu & Arab world in which we as a nation have many interests and responsibilities'. Such teaching about world religions would offer, she suggested in a manner not dissimilar to Gould in his LNU publications, valuable insights into the 'cultural ideas which influence them'. In some written comments there was a complete elision of religion with morality: for example, 'it [religion] comes in nearly every lesson – a school does not fulfil its mission if it only teaches facts – moral training should permeate every subject in one way or another'. Here moral training was identified as religion, and religion as moral training, the two were identical, in a manner already familiar from responses to earlier proposals for non-theological moral instruction. But the more prosaic aims of achieving discipline that Mass Observation emphasised in its reports were also there. For example, one respondent noted that teachers could relate their Bible teaching to points of behaviour they wished to stress. Indeed, according to a female secondary school history teacher, the 'new interest in religious instruction' was 'partly ... due to folk who think religion keeps folk contented & law abiding'.[84]

The minority of teachers who argued against religious instruction claimed that it failed to place all citizens on an equal footing. One respondent deemed State support for religious worship and teaching in schools 'unfair to those denominations not provided for, to non-Christians, to non-believers'. A male secondary school teacher suggested that religion was 'a personal matter from which the State should be entirely disassociated'. A female secondary school history teacher felt, as a 'democrat', that decisions about religious teaching should lie with parents. She wanted 'an alternative class' for the children of agnostics and atheists such as drama, architecture or another cultural subject, instead of the current 'half-hearted "right of withdrawal"'. The contrast between this understanding of

the implications of democracy and democratic processes and that of Reid and his Newcastle colleagues is clear. In a manner parallel to the AEC's founder members, some teachers also emphasised that pupils should learn to think critically. Religious instruction was deemed inimical to this aim. For a science teacher in a girls' school, religious instruction induced 'muddled thinking' which would then be 'extended to things other than religion', leaving pupils 'quite incapable of being objective'. 'One aim of education is to arouse the critical faculty, the development of reason', suggested another respondent; 'religious instruction with its "faiths" and its assumptions has a fundamentally different aim'. Some who did not want religious instruction argued for some form of ethical teaching instead. A male university staff tutor recommended 'a simple form of teaching of the fundamental rules of toleration and relationships with others which must form the basis of any community'. A female elementary school teacher argued for an MIL-like programme of 'lessons in ethics' which would include 'stories of great men of all creeds or none, to illustrate the various virtues'. Children would be encouraged to draw upon this background and 'exercise similar virtues in their own everyday life'. Another respondent, however, suggested instead 'incidental moral instruction during school hours in order to develop social sense or the sense of citizenship'.[85]

Conclusion

Ernest Simon and Eva Hubback retained some of their original faith. Writing in 1955, Simon acknowledged that from the mid-1940s he lost touch with the AEC; he was fully occupied with his Labour peerage and as director of the BBC. But he looked back 'with pleasure' to doing a 'job of considerable importance' in the organisation's early years. And in his final years his interests, at least as represented in the House of Lords, were apparently dominated by educational concerns.[86] He died of a stroke on 3 October 1960, leaving considerable wealth.[87] Hubback, on the other hand, remained involved in AEC work alongside her job at Morley College and her activities on London County Council until her sudden death from an internal haemorrhage while in hospital in 1949. She remained interested in the ethical instruction of children, and in matters of philosophy, spirituality and religion. She purchased books for her grandson's library, including *The Bible to be Read as Literature* and *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. She herself read Indian mystical works, attended spiritualist séances, and questioned Christian friends on their beliefs.[88] Simon's

obituaries in *The Times* and *The Guardian* described him as an 'industrialist and idealist', and noted 'A long career in public service', respectively. Only the latter referred to a wrongly named 'Council for Education in Citizenship' alongside his business, university and BBC activities. Neither mentioned religion, either in the form of his personal agnosticism or his 'democratic faith'. Hubback's obituary referred to her interests in population and her educational work, at Morley College and on London County Council and with the 'Council for Training in Citizenship'.[89]

The AEC had more high-powered support and more money behind it than any organisation discussed up to this point. It benefitted from well-connected leaders with links into the worlds of party politics, suffrage campaigning, and housing reform, as well as education. Yet it still failed to achieve its aims of extensive central government recognition of education for citizenship and changing the school curriculum in order to ensure better coverage. It promoted knowledge of public affairs, and intellectual habits of clear thinking, but also democratic ideals. Promoting democratic ideals often led to discussions of ethics or moral development. This is the context in which questions of religion (usually meaning Christianity) and whether or not it was required for educating citizens in schools were most frequently considered. Simon's and Hubback's agnostic versions of 'religion' shaped their own 'humanist' approach to the formulation of democratic ideals. But they thought it important that the work of a non-denominational body like theirs should incorporate the Christian approaches that mattered to their colleagues too. The latter increasingly gained ground within the AEC, perhaps representing a 'hostile takeover' by Christian and Conservative Council members like Leeson, Norwood and Bryant as Whitmarsh implies, or alternatively, as Freathy suggests, reflecting wider developments in educational and public discourse.[90] And this wider discourse moved in a Christian direction. By 1944, the vast majority of speakers in House of Commons debates on educational reconstruction appeared to support a common Christianity as the basis educating citizens in schools (we could question, however, whether those speaking in debates were representative of all MPs). And a Christian basis for citizenship was given formal sanction in the Education Act of that year.[91]

Many teachers apparently shared the government's preference, but not all. The teachers' views collated by Mass Observation have much in common with the views about secular and Christian approaches to moral teaching expressed in the context of the MIL's campaigns 30–40 years earlier. Yet, in contrast to this earlier period, there is no conspicuous,

oppositional, pressure-group campaign. The AEC, incorporating as it did Christian as well as 'humanist' perspectives, was not the body to lead a campaign of this nature. Its campaigning energies, moreover, in the run-up to the 1944 Act, were devoted to securing a firmer place for social and environmental studies in the curriculum.[92] And the secularist bodies who had been active at earlier times were so organisationally depleted that they could not offer much in the way of effective coordination. Wartime proposals for compulsory religious education were nonetheless a matter for regular comment among freethinkers. W. B. Curry, in South Place's *Monthly Record*, for example, criticised the 'filleted Christianity' that would be the result of the compromises behind these proposals as 'neither a coherent nor an inspiring body of doctrine'. He rehearsed familiar Ethical Movement arguments for teaching based on a moral code that, as a 'social product', could be 'effectively believed irrespective of any religious sanction' and would reinforce a sense of 'common humanity'. 'Clericus' in the *Freethinker* offered typical National Secular Society (NSS) arguments, bemoaning 'a new attempt at ecclesiastical domination of the State', a supernaturally framed education, and the tacit neglect of the rights of minority groups.[93] The NSS called on parents to exercise their right to withdraw from religious instruction as a form of protest, but beyond comments and resolutions at annual conferences there is no evidence of coordinated propaganda.[94]

It was the Secular Education League (SEL) that came closest to an organised campaign against wartime proposals, and its activities and publications were advertised by the remaining secularist publications to their readers.[95] A pamphlet published in 1942 included signatories from within the university and educational establishment, including old agnostic allies like Gilbert Murray, but, interestingly, neither Hubback nor Simon. Advocates of statutory provision for religious instruction in schools, this pamphlet suggested, were seizing on the grave wartime situation, seeking to achieve their goals 'through panic at a time of national emergency'.[96] The SEL claimed that its propaganda campaigns at this time led to 'much interest' and the enrolling of 'many new members'. Overall, however, these campaigns seem to have done even less to challenge the general direction of government policy and the tenor of public opinion in the print media and on the airwaves than the early efforts of the MIL. Typical wartime struggles with finance and arranging meetings cannot have helped.[97] Whether the majority views cited represented genuine enthusiasm as religious educators argued, a widespread but rather non-committal acceptance of such views

(Mass Observation's reading), or the SEL's suggestion of a population caught unawares when preoccupied by other pressing matters, is impossible to determine. Moreover, these campaigns were concerned primarily with the impact that a state-sanctioned religion in schools would have on 'the freedom of opinion so long enjoyed' by parents and others.[98] The secularist critique of wartime religious education proposals had relatively little to say, other than the odd comment from ethicists, about the matters of morality and citizenship that concerned contemporary humanist critics and some teachers, and which have been the subject of this book. The analysis offered here has to have an end point, and identifying what that is to be is, inevitably, a somewhat arbitrary exercise. With the passing of a major Education Act, and the absence of a significant campaign for a secular alternative to the model of morality and citizenship embodied in that legislation, however, 1944 seems a fitting one.

Notes

1. *Manchester Guardian*, 17 May 1934, p. 20.
2. G. Whitmarsh (1972) 'Society and the School Curriculum: The Association for Education in Citizenship 1934–57' (MEd thesis, University of Birmingham); G. Whitmarsh (1974) 'The Politics of Political Education', *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 6:2, 133–42; S. Clarke (2007) 'The Trajectory of "Political Education" in English Schools: The Rise and Fall of Two Initiatives', *Citizenship Teaching and Learning*, 3:1, 3–16.
3. G. Batho (1990) 'The History of the Teaching of Civics and Citizenship in English Schools', *The Curriculum Journal*, 1:1, 91–100, p. 95; D. Heater (2001) 'The History of Citizenship Education in England', *Curriculum Journal*, 12:1, 103–23, pp. 106–7; D. Heater (2004) *A History of Education for Citizenship* (London: RoutledgeFalmer), pp. 95–7; B. Marsden (2001) 'Citizenship Education: Permeation or Pervasion? Some Historical Pointers' in D. Lambert and L. Machon (eds.) *Citizenship through Secondary Geography* (London: RoutledgeFalmer), pp. 11–30, pp. 11, 15, 21; J.T. Smith (2002) 'The Beginnings of Citizenship Education in England', *History of Education Society Bulletin*, 69, 6–16, p. 13.
4. R. J. K. Freathy (2008) 'The Triumph of Religious Education for Citizenship in English Schools, 1935–1949', *History of Education*, 37:2, 295–316; R. Freathy, 'Ecclesiastical and Religious Factors which Preserved Christian and Traditional Forms of Education for

Citizenship in English Schools, 1934–1944', *Oxford Review of Education*, 33:3, 367–77.

5. See Chapter 2.
6. K. Myers (1999) 'National Identity, Citizenship and Education for Displacement: Spanish Refugee Children in Cambridge, 1937', *History of Education*, 28:3, 313–25, p. 320.
7. Four folders of 'Hubback papers' 1924–45 (GB106/2/NUSEC/X3/1–4) in the Records of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, The Women's Library, British Library of Political and Economic Science (BLPES) contain no correspondence or autobiographical writing.
8. For a discussion of ideological and cultural challenges internationally, see M. Burleigh (2010) *Moral Combat: A History of World War II* (London: Harper Press).
9. 'Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe', *The Times*, 4 October 1960, p. 15; 'Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe', *The Guardian*, 4 October 1960, p. 4.
10. M. Stocks (1963) *Ernest Simon of Manchester* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 105; B. Jones (2004) 'Simon, Shena Dorothy, Lady Simon of Wythenshawe (1883–1972)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, online edn, May 2008, http://www.oxforddnb.com.oxfordbrookes.idm.oclc.org/view/article/46396, date accessed 21 January 2016.
11. 'Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe' (*The Times*); 'Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe' (*The Guardian*); Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, p. 69.
12. Diary entry from 1925, Typescript of Ernest Simon diary entries, SIM/5/1/3, Papers of Brian Simon, Newsam Library and Archives, UCL Institute of Education (henceforward BSP); 'Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe' (*The Times*).
13. Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, p. 80; B. Simon (1998) *A Life in Education* (London: Lawrence & Wishart), p. 2.
14. On this trend in the Edwardian and interwar years, see S. Gunn (2000) *The Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class: Ritual and Authority in the English Industrial City, 1840–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), pp. 187–97.
15. E. Simon to Dr Tizard, 8 November 1934, Correspondence: Education for Citizenship 1 June 1934–29 February 1936, GB127. M11.14/14; 4 January 1916, Diary 1914–18, Diaries 1907–44,

GB127.M11/11/5 addnl, Papers and Correspondence of Sir Ernest Simon of Wythenshawe, Greater Manchester County Record Office (hereafter ESP).

16. Such characteristics come through in his biography (Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, pp. 3, 107) and his obituaries ('Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe' (*The Times*); 'Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe' (*The Guardian*)).
17. Pages labelled 5–7 December 1911, Diary 1911; 4 January 1916, Diary 1914–18. On Ernest and Shena Simon's Fabian links, see Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, pp. 23–4 and J. Martin (2003) 'Shena D. Simon and English Education Policy: Inside/Out?', *History of Education*, 32:5, 477–84, p. 479.
18. B. Simon, 'Tony—Working Copy and Notes', pp. 53, 73, SIM/5/1/1, BSP; D. Hopkinson (1954) *Family Inheritance. A Life of Eva Hubback* (London: Staples Press), p. 122.
19. O. Eckhardt to S. Simon, 15 November 1963, File 'Mary Stocks "Ernest Simon of Manchester"', SIM/5/1/13, BSP; J. Simon (1986) *Shena Simon: Feminist and Educationist*, private printing, Chapter I pp. 22–3, 7SDS/6/4, Papers of Lady Simon of Wythenshawe, The Women's Library, BLPES.
20. E. Simon to A. Bryant, 27 November 1934, Association for Education in Citizenship 1934–36, BRYANT C/28, Papers of Sir Arthur Bryant, Liddell Hart Archive, King's College London (hereafter ABP); 'Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe' (*The Times*).
21. Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, p. 3; J. Martin and J. Goodman (2004) *Women and Education, 1800–1980: Educational Change and Personal Identities* (Basingstoke: Palgrave), pp. 118–40, pp. 118, 122.
22. [B.] Simon, 'Tony—Working Copy and Notes', p. 10; Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, pp. 19, 3.
23. Pages labelled 5–7 December 1911, Diary 1911; 10 July 1912, Diary 1912–14, Diaries 1907–44.
24. Pages labelled 5–7 December 1911, Diary 1911. For an emphasis on the moral components of the Webb's thought, see M. Bevir (2002) 'Sidney Webb: Utilitarianism, Positivism, and Social Democracy', *Journal of Modern History*, 74:2, 217–53 and A. Kid (1996) 'The State and Moral Progress: The Webbs' Case for Social Reform c. 1905 to 1940', *Twentieth Century British History*, 7:2, 189–205.
25. 29 August 1911, Diary 1911; 10 July 1912, Diary 1912–14; M. Rechtenwald (2013) 'Secularism and the Culture of

Nineteenth-Century Scientific Naturalism', *British Journal for the History of* Science, 46:2, 231–54.

26. Pages labelled 5–7 December 1911, Diary 1911.
27. A Manchester Ethical Society existed 1905–09, a Manchester branch of the National Secular Society *c.* 1866–1913, and a Manchester Positivist Society 1884–1900. G. Spiller (*c.*1934) *The Ethical Movement in Great Britain* (London: Farleigh Press), p. 114; E. Royle (1980) *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans: Popular Freethought in Britain, 1866–1915* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), pp. 59–61, 340; J. E. McGee (1931) *A Crusade for Humanity: The History of Organised Positivism in England* (London: Watts & Co.), pp. 180, 205.
28. A. Hastings (2001) *A History of English Christianity, 1920–2000* (London: SCM Press), pp. 222–3.
29. 'Obituary, Sir M. Spielman', *The Times*, 14 January 1936, p. 16.
30. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, pp. 28, 33, 38, 60, 123; J. Simon, *Shena Simon*, Chapter I p. 7a.
31. Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, p. 33; Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, pp. 38–48, 60–1, 70, 73, 78–84.
32. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, pp. 106, 175, 133. On citizenship as a long-term agenda at Morley College, see A. G. Poole (2011) 'The Citizens of Morley College', *Journal of British Studies*, 50:4, 840–62.
33. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, pp. 134, 160. For more on Hubback within these organisations, see S. Pedersen (2004) *Eleanor Rathbone and the Politics of Conscience* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), Chapter 10, pp. 210, 363–4; and C. Makepeace (2009) 'To What Extent was the Relationship Between Feminists and the Eugenics Movement a "Marriage of Convenience" in the Interwar Years?', *Journal of International Women's Studies,* 11:3, 66–80.
34. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, pp. 11, 164–6, 186.
35. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, pp. 20, 22, 50, 191; Interview with B. A. Howard 14 March 1978, 8/SUF/B/178, Interview with K. Gibberd, 14 March 1978, 8SUF/B/179, Interview with M. Stewart 29 March 1978, 8SUF/B/180, Oral Evidence on the Suffragette and Suffragist Movements 1974–1981 (8SUF), The Women's Library, BLPES.

36. W. Spens to M. G. Holmes, 28 February 1938, Association for Education in Citizenship 1937–39, ED/136/2, The National Archives; Interview with M. Stewart.
37. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, pp. 20, 191; Interview with B. A. Howard.
38. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, p. 99.
39. A. Olechnowicz (2000) 'Civic Leadership and Education for Democracy: The Simons and the Wythenshawe Estate', *Contemporary British History*, 14:1, 3–27; B. Beaven and J. Griffiths (2008) 'Creating the Exemplary Citizen: The Changing Notion of Citizenship in Britain 1970–1939', *Contemporary British History*, 22:2, 203–25, pp. 216–17; Martin, 'Shena D. Simon'; Martin and Goodman, *Women and Education*, pp. 118–40; J. Simon, *Shena Simon*, Introduction p. 10.
40. Education and Citizenship Supplement, *New Statesman and Nation*, 14 July 1934, 61–73, p. 63.
41. Myers, 'National Identity', pp. 323–4.
42. Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, p. 104; *Journal of Education*, September 1934, pp. 369–70; AEC Members of Council, 29 May 1934, BRYANT C/28.
43. A. Roberts (1994) *Eminent Churchillians* (London: Phoenix), Chapter 6.
44. Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, pp. 105–7.
45. Interview with B. A. Howard. Council processes are evident from papers and correspondence in Council member Arthur Bryant's AEC files covering 1934–36 and 1937–38 (BRYANT C/28 and C/92, ABP).
46. Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, p. 105; E. Hubback to A. Bryant, 31 October 1935, A. Bryant to E. Simon, 18 November 1936, 19 January 1937, E. Hubback to A. Bryant, 26 February 1937 (BRYANT C/28 and C/92).
47. By July 1939 there were subcommittees for bias and propaganda, elementary schools, technical institutions, organisation, training colleges, and examinations, and branches in Manchester, Tyneside, Birmingham, Bristol, London and Merseyside. *The Citizen*, 7, July 1938, pp. 3, 29–31; 10, July 1939, p. 2. A Yorkshire branch was founded during 1939 (Whitmarsh, 'Society and the School Curriculum', pp. 90–4). On the AEC as an expression of a vibrant culture of local, municipal civic activism, see T. Hulme (2015) 'Putting the

City Back into Citizenship: Civics Education and Local Government in Britain, 1918–45', *Twentieth Century British History*, 26:1, 26–51, pp. 39–47.

48. E. Simon to Dr W. W. Vaughan, 30 April 1935, Correspondence: Education for Citizenship 1 June 1934–29 February 1936, GB127. M11.14/14, ESP; AEC, 'Annual Report, 1938–39', *The Citizen*, 10, July 1939, 28–31, p. 29. Unfortunately, annual reports do not contain membership numbers, but a pamphlet enclosed within *The Citizen* 1936–37 sets the minimum annual subscription at 5s,
49. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, p. 130; Interview with B. A. Howard; AEC, 'Annual Report 1938–39'.
50. For example, there were a number of regional conferences on education for democracy in 1939 (*Manchester Guardian*, 27 January 1939, p. 3; Ashridge Conference pamphlet, 20 May 1937, BRYANT C/92).
51. *The Citizen*, 6, March 1938, p. 2; 7, July 1938, p. 2; 10, July 1939, p. 2.
52. E. Simon and E. Hubback (1935) *Training for Citizenship* (London: Oxford University Press); AEC (1936) *Education for Citizenship in Secondary Schools* (London: Oxford University Press); AEC (1939) *Education for Citizenship in Elementary Schools* (London: Oxford University Press).
53. For example, *The Schoolmaster*, 30 August 1934, p. 243, 9 December 1935, p. 934; W. Spens to M. G. Holmes, 28 February 1938, Association for Education in Citizenship 1937–39, ED/136/2.
54. A. E. Teale, 'Propaganda and Education', *The Citizen*, 5, November 1937, 4–7, p. 5; E. Hubback (1939) 'Politics in the School' in AEC, *Education for Citizenship in Elementary Schools*, 31–9, p. 37.
55. 'Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe' (*The Times*); Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, p. 151.
56. The extent of this activity is captured in Hubback's letters to *The Times* on family allowances (15 May 1940, p. 4; 4 March 1941, p. 5; 22 July 1941, p. 5, 23 June 1942, p. 5; 30 November 1943, p. 5; 12 April 1944, p. 5) and her file of evidence for the Royal Commission on population (GB/106/2/NUSEC/X3/4, Hubback Papers, Records of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship).
57. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, pp. 157–8; *Manchester Guardian*, 7 July 1943, p. 6.

58. *The Citizen*, 10 [*sic*], June 1940, p. 2; *Manchester Guardian*, 4 January 1944, p. 2; E. Hubback (c.1942) *The Making of Citizens* (London: AEC), pp. 1–2.
59. Stocks, *Ernest Simon*, p. 105; Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, p. 176.
60. Interview with M. Stewart. Discussions in the educational press reinforce the importance of this context: for example, *Journal of Education*, December 1936, pp. 781–2.
61. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, pp. 153, 176; Freathy, 'Ecclesiastical and Religious Factors', p. 369.
62. Whitmarsh, 'Society and the School Curriculum'; Whitmarsh, 'Politics of Political Education'; correspondence in file Association for Education in Citizenship 1937–39, ED/136/2.
63. For example, *The Schoolmaster*, 30 August 1934, p. 243.
64. On the Ashridge conference, see J. Stapleton (2005) 'Citizenship versus Patriotism in Twentieth-Century England', *Historical Journal*, 48:1, 151–78, pp. 168–9. On internationalism, see Bryant's marginal comments in a pamphlet draft appended to E. Hubback to A. Bryant, 6 December 1934, BRYANT C/28 and G. P. Gooch (1936) *Citizenship and History* (London: AEC), pp. 9–10.
65. E. Simon (1935) 'Part 1. The Case for Training for Citizenship in a Democratic State' in Simon and Hubback, *Training for Citizenship*, 7–16, p. 14.
66. E. Hubback (1935) 'Part 2. Methods of Training for Citizenship in a Democratic State' in Simon and Hubback, *Training for Citizenship*, 17–47, p. 21.
67. F. H. Hayward (1938) *An Educational Failure* (London: Duckworth), pp. 155–8, 257.
68. E. Hubback (1936) 'The Moral Approach' in AEC, *Education for Citizenship in Secondary Schools*, Chapter 4, p. 32; A. Greenough, 'Moral Training for Citizenship', *The Citizen*, 8, November 1938, 15–17, p. 15. On the influence of child psychology in discussion of children's moral development and in schooling by and at this time see N. Rose (1985) *The Psychological Complex* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul) and M. Thomson (2006) *Psychological Subjects. Identity, Culture, and Health in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press), Chapter 4.
69. Hubback, 'Part 2. Methods of Training', pp. 20–21.

70. See Chapter 6. Hubback was a member of the LNU Education Committee representing the AEC from 1936, and then the Council for Education in World Citizenship (CEWC). LNU (1936) *League of Nations Union Year Book for 1936* (London: LNU), p. 94; 7 June 1937, LNU Education Committee Minutes; 11 April 1940, CEWC Minutes, Records of the League of Nations Union, BLPES.
71. E. Simon, 'The Faith of the Democrat', *The Citizen*, 4, July 1937, 5–13.
72. 'Adult Education and Citizenship' draft pamphlet, E. Simon's marginal comments dated 13 September 1934, Notes in preparation for a book connected with Education for Citizenship, late 1930s, GB127.M11.17/1a (file also contains AEC correspondence), ESP.
73. Gooch, *Citizenship and History*, p. 4.
74. A. Bryant to E. Simon, 6 December 1934, E. Simon to A. Bryant, 21 December 1934, BRYANT C/28.
75. S. Burstall to E. Simon, 27 November 1934, E. Simon to S. Burstall, 28 November 1934, Correspondence Education for Citizenship 1 June 1934–29 February 1936, GB127.M11.14/14.
76. *The Citizen*, 1, May 1936, pp. 12–13; E. Addison Phillips, 'Training for Citizenship through Religious Instruction', *The Citizen*, 5, November 1937.
77. S. Leeson (1938) *Education in Citizenship* (London: AEC), p. 11; C. T. Cumberbirch (1936) 'Moral and Religious Education for Citizenship' in AEC, *Education for Citizenship in Elementary Schools*, 40–56, pp. 42–3.
78. Note L. Reid to W. Temple and memorandum on religious education, AEC Newcastle branch, July 1942, W. Temple 19: Education, 24 January–24 October 1942, fols 215–18, William Temple Papers, Lambeth Palace Library.
79. See brief discussion in Chapter 2, and, for more detail, Freathy. 'Triumph of Religious Education for Citizenship', Freathy, 'Ecclesiastical and Religious Factors'; C. Michell (1984) 'Some Themes in Christian Education c. 1935–60', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 6:2, 82–7; C. Cannon (1964) 'The Influence of Religion on Educational Policy, 1902–1944', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 12:2, 143–60, pp. 150–2.
80. Board of Education (1943) *Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools* (London: HMSO), pp. 84–5; Board of Education (1943) *Educational Reconstruction* (London: HMSO), p. 9.

81. P. Summerfield (1985) 'Mass-Observation: Social Research or Social Movement?', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 20:3, 439–52, p. 439; J. Hinton (2013) *The Mass Observers: A History, 1937–1949* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). Hinton does not mention the 1943–4 reports.
82. FR 2017 'Report on Religious Instruction in Schools', February 1944, p. 17, SxMOA1/1/9/2/7; FR 2014 'Teachers' Opinions on Religious Education in Schools, Further Report II', February 1944, p. 1, SxMOA1/1/9/2/4, Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex (MOA).
83. FR 2016 'Teachers' Opinions on Religious Education in Schools, Further Report III', February 1944, p. 6, SxMOA1/1/9/2/6, MOA; FR 2017 'Report on Religious Instruction in Schools', pp. 27–8, 9–10; FR 1994 'Interim Report on Religious Instruction in Schools', pp. 88–9; Hinton, *Mass Observers*, p. 317.
84. Individual teacher responses are collated in TC47 Religion 1937–49, Box 7: Questionnaires to teachers on religion in schools, 1943, SxMOA1/2/47/7/A, SxMOA1/2/47/7/B, SxMOA1/2/47/7/C, MOA.
85. TC47 Religion 1937–49, Box 7: Questionnaires to teachers on religion in schools, 1943, SxMOA1/2/47/7/A, SxMOA1/2/47/7/B, SxMOA1/2/47/7/C.
86. Lord Chorley, 'Lord Simon of Wythenshawe', *The Times*, 7 October 1960, p. 19; E. Simon to G. Barry, 13 July 1955, Personal interview files [Gordon Barry], GB127.M11/13, ESP.
87. *The Guardian*, 4 October 1960, p. 1. Apparently, Simon left £397,564 (*The Guardian*, 16 January 1961, p. 14).
88. 'Obituary: Mrs Eva M Hubback', *Manchester Guardian*, 16 July 1949, p. 5; Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, pp. 190, 155, 184.
89. 'Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe' (*The Times*); 'Obituary: Lord Simon of Wythenshawe' (*The Guardian*); 'Obituary: Mrs Eva M Hubback'.
90. Whitmarsh, 'Politics of Political Education'; Freathy. 'Triumph of Religious Education for Citizenship'; Freathy, 'Ecclesiastical and Religious Factors'.
91. Cannon, 'Influence of Religion', pp. 150–3.
92. Hopkinson, *Family Inheritance*, p. 157.

93. W. B. Curry, 'Some Thoughts on Religion in Education', *South Place Monthly Record (SPMR)*, February 1943, 2–3; Clericus, 'Religious Education', *Freethinker*, 1 March 1942, 96–7.
94. See Executive's Annual Reports, *Freethinker*, 7 June 1942, 236–8, 11 June 1944, 217, 220–1 at p. 220; NSS Annual Conference, *Freethinker*, 14 June 1942, 246–7, 27 June 1943, 258, 11 June 1944, 221–2.
95. For example, *SPMR*, February 1942, p. 13, July 1942, p. 13; *Freethinker*, 15 March 1942, p. 117; *Ethical Societies' Chronicle*, November 1941, pp. 1–2**,** January 1942, p. 2.
96. Secular Education League, *The Dangers Involved in State-aided and State-Controlled Religious Teaching*, n.p. attached to *SPMR*, December 1942.
97. 37th Annual Report of the Secular Education League 1943–44, p. 3 and Executive Meeting 7 July 1944, Secular Education League Minute Book 1943–1964, BHA/3/5/2, British Humanist Association Archive, Bishopsgate Institute.
98. Secular Education League, *Dangers Involved*.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

> The old loyalties, political, social, and religious have no longer the old compelling force. The decay which they are visibly undergoing may culminate in complete disintegration; it may, on the other hand, be the prelude to a new and better world order … If a new social order is going to emerge from the ruin of the old, education will have to play a dominant part in the task of creation.[1]

This view was expressed by W. B. Curry, of South Place Ethical Society, in May 1944. The references to 'old loyalties' collapsing, and the role of education in helping society to hold together and cope with rapid change, sound remarkably like commentators at the turn of the twentieth century. However, the 'better world order' seems to invoke visions of reconstruction after the Second World War.

Curry's words form a starting point for thinking about continuities and discontinuities in attempts to promote secular approaches to the teaching of morality and citizenship in schools between 1897 and 1944. Different freethought bodies, at different times, provided organisational and ideological resources. Leicester Secular Society was an anchor point for F. J. Gould as he campaigned on the town's School Board and Education Committee (Chapter 3). The English Ethical Movement was most significant for the MIL (Chapter 4), and in facilitating the international flow of people and ideas highlighted in Chapter 5. But other secularist bodies were involved, too, sometimes cooperating with and sometimes criticising Ethical Movement ideas and strategies. Positivist ideas and networks were particularly important for Gould and F. S. Marvin as they operated within the LNU

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(Chapter 6). Organised freethought, however, did not feature for Ernest Simon and Eva Hubback within the Association for Education in Citizenship (AEC) (Chapter 7). They drew instead on a broad-based agnosticism influenced by the Webbs, J. S. Mill and nineteenth-century natural scientists, and a range of political and social reform networks. These varied influences and networks operated at local, national and international levels. Across all these levels, secularists would unite for a common cause, but would also stress their divisions. And Christian responses were similarly divided into criticism, partial acquiescence, and partial or full co-operation.

Campaigners' focus shifted over time, notably from the emphasis on concepts of morality and moral education before the First World War, to the focus on citizenship and civic duty in the interwar years. This development, reflecting wider educational and sociopolitical discourse, was, however, a shift of emphasis rather than a complete shift of focus; morality and citizenship were closely linked throughout the period 1897 to 1944. Campaigning strategies also changed. The MIL was explicit in its critique of religious instruction in schools as a basis for teaching morality (although the forthright tone of its early pronouncements softened). Marvin and Gould's critique of a Christian-flavoured model of League of Nations teaching was, however, implicit. They concentrated their energies on offering a superior, 'all-humanist' alternative. And within the AEC Simon and Hubback, despite their personal preferences, provided a balanced offer which included Christian and humanist approaches to educating citizens, seeking to cater for all who worked for and might support that body. Early strategies were shaped at a time when the 'religious issue' frequently flared up in educational debates; this was one aspect of the interdenominational rivalry existing in a number of sociopolitical spheres. Secularists criticised this in-fighting as wasteful and divisive, but they also latched onto it as an opportunity to promote their cause. These battles had died down by the interwar years (though they did not disappear entirely) to allow for ecumenical cooperation in education and other areas and, increasingly, a broad narrative of a common Christianity as the basis of English national character. The offer of humanist alternatives was, perhaps, the most appropriate strategy for this context. Outright criticism might have been perceived as reigniting old controversies. And Christian critiques moved in a parallel manner from public condemnation of secularist proposals to quietly ignoring them. It was not until the narrative of a Christian English national character and a professionalising community of religious educators coalesced in proposals for compulsory religious instruction in schools from the late 1930s that a more

explicit secularist critique emerged again. By this point in time, however, secularist bodies were organisationally depleted and lacked campaigning might. And the pressure group activities of the Secular Education League were more about secularist freedoms than about morality and citizenship.

The educators considered in this book wanted to remain true to the secularist educational ideals that inspired them. But they also wanted their ideals to have as wide an impact as possible. In seeking that impact they adopted strategies that could potentially dilute the ideals that they held so dear. Decisions were taken at various times (noted in relation to the MIL, the First International Moral Education Congress in 1908, and also the AEC) to downplay secularist organisational input or the primacy of secularist ideas in order to influence a wider public. This was a dilemma that no one found an easy way to resolve. If there was willingness to keep quiet about secularist roots, and to adapt proposals in order to accommodate non-secularist interests, it was because secularists realised that they were among many contemporaries who wanted to develop in individual citizens values and behaviours that would strengthen and reinvigorate the wider civic community. Campaigners were willing to sacrifice some ideological purity in order to seize moments of potential influence. But this sacrifice was not without its personal and organisational costs.

Each case study presents a mixed record of achievement. Gould in Leicester was too Positivist for Leicester's Secularists, and too secular for Leicester's Christians. But he had some influence on the curriculum offered in the town's elementary schools. The MIL secured provision for moral instruction in the Education Code, which was of 'lasting value', according to Professor J. S. Mackenzie speaking in 1925.[2] More than one in six Local Education Authorities introduced systematic non-theological moral instruction; this was more than a fringe interest. And the MIL reached many more schools and teachers through its demonstration lessons and other events, and its syllabuses and handbooks. But the compulsory provision for moral instruction so desired never materialised, and, for the most part, what teachers and pupils did with and thought of the teaching and materials they accessed is not known. The Ethical Movement's international channels allowed for the advertisement and dissemination of secular approaches to moral instruction. Secular approaches crossed the Atlantic with Felix Adler. They were discussed in 1908, alongside other methods, at a congress which was international in scope but held in England, and in an international report which again had English origins. And they were presented, in India and the USA, through Gould's personal appearances during his lecture

tours. The Ethical Movement aimed to demonstrate that its approach to moral teaching, based on a universal moral code, would work in any context. But its programme was criticised on pedagogical and ideological grounds, by both Christians and other secularists. And transfer to different educational and cultural settings could be problematic. After the First World War, Gould and Marvin promoted their Positivist-flavoured version of world citizenship within the LNU. They reached large audiences; Gould through his League of Nations story-talks and issues of *League News*, and Marvin through his texts and suggestions for history teaching. But their enthusiasm for the League of Nation was not shared by all freethinkers. And within an organisation with a Christian 'spiritual core',[3] their version of world citizenship was, at best, a minority one, and, possibly, one which could be quietly ignored. By the mid-1930s, agnostic social reformers Simon and Hubback drew on influential political and educational networks in order to promote the education of democratic citizens in schools. Within the AEC, however, their humanist approach was presented alongside a Christian model preferred by some colleagues. The latter by the 1940s became dominant in public and policy discourse, and was endorsed by the Board of Education in the Education Act of 1944. Mass Observation questionnaires and secularist responses, however, show that Christian approaches to the education of citizens were not accepted by all.

Secularist campaigners' influence was frequently partial and diffuse. But their proposals did require a response, even if it was negative, or suggested (beyond a general agreement with broad aims) business as usual. The secularist perspectives that were put forward by campaigners influenced the framing of a broader debate about morality and citizenship in schools. To take what happened with the MIL as an example, Christian views were reformulated in response to a 'further danger'. And, on occasion, new teaching aids were devised, informed by the MIL's suggestions.[4] Long-standing NSS positions on the Bible and religion in schools also did not shift but had to be restated in response to the MIL. In both cases, part of what campaigners achieved was to confirm and reinforce for others their existing policies (against the use of the Bible in school under any circumstances for the NSS; against schemes of morality and citizenship omitting any reference to duty to God for Church lobbyists). Within the LNU, humanist perspectives were included among the mass of educational material issued, perhaps in an attempt to appease secularist campaigners, perhaps on the assumption that minority views would have little impact. Similar patterns emerged in relation to the other campaigns detailed here. Influence on policy and

curricular change is therefore only part of the story. The educational proposals and campaigns considered were part of an ongoing process, for Christians and secularists alike, of debating, shaping and adapting their ideas about how schools could best teach morality and citizenship to the pupils therein.

Activists included elementary school teachers (Gould); members of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (Marvin); college principals (Hubback); and businessmen and party political activists working on educational governance bodies as part of their wider philanthropic and civic activity (Simon). Other activists, and the rank and file of the organisations they represented, contained school and Sunday School teachers, ministers of religion, educational administrators, members of secularist bodies, and an interested general public; these were, of course, overlapping categories. Marvin, Hubback and Simon were university educated. Gould read widely but, beyond his pupil-teacher training, was largely self-taught. Activists, in reaching a wider public, made substantial use of networks outside secularism. Their favoured political networks were usually left-leaning ones. Labour links were important for Gould and Hubback, Liberal ones for Marvin and Simon, and MIL parliamentary lobbyists made use of both. Connections with Christian friends and supporters were used too, as were connections to a wide range of other reformist causes (pacifism and arbitration for Gould, housing, suffrage and eugenics with Simon and Hubback). This range of professional and educational experience, and political ideals and networks, was both an advantage and a disadvantage. It helped secularist educators achieve a broad-based influence, if only a partial one, for reasons already noted. But it made it difficult to develop intellectually coherent proposals that satisfied the varied interests of activists and supporters within campaigning groups. And activists could find themselves overworked, or with energies diverted elsewhere; this is particularly notable for Simon and Hubback but applied to others too.

Secularists operated at the intersection between schools and the ideals and approaches of other organisations or bodies of thinking; the relatively decentralised education system in England provided them with this space in which to campaign. Notwithstanding their mixed record of achievement, some, limited, gains in local and national government policy should be noted. And the syllabuses and texts they wrote, the talks they gave for teachers and pupils, and conferences, reports and contributions to the educational press got their proposals into schools and into wider educational debates. It would be wrong to give the impression that their proposals

were cordially received. The most common response was general acquiescence in the importance of morality and citizenship in schools, but less sympathy for either the secularist basis of their plans, or their educational methods which usually involved more direct instruction than was typically favoured. Still, these secularist perspectives add detail and texture to our knowledge of public debate and the ways in which pressure groups could seek to influence the school curriculum and teachers' practice in this period. The educational ideas and activities of secularist campaigners also contribute to a history of secularism that looks beyond freethought organisations themselves, and the intellectual ancestry of middle-class agnostics, to encompass a wider sphere of activity.

Important questions remain. Ultimately, there is a methodological challenge in ascertaining what secular approaches to moral education and citizenship meant for the majority of teachers and pupils involved. The minority of teachers whose letters were printed in periodicals, or whose views were reported in pressure group reports or LEA files, are very unlikely to be representative of all who were exposed to the schemes discussed. Pupils' views are even more difficult to discern, beyond rare comments about their enjoyment or lack thereof, usually filtered through the pen of an inspector or teacher. It is difficult to tell if the curriculum materials that found their way into schools were used or whether they sat on a shelf gathering dust. We do not know, for most teachers and pupils, how far they took on some the secularist values behind these proposals, or what they thought of the absence of Christianity. Might it have been the case that the struggles between secular and Christian perspectives that mattered so much to campaigners meant little to pupils and teachers in schools? Or might teachers and pupils have chosen not to discuss their views? Parallel questions could also be asked, to an extent, of other approaches to inculcating morality and citizenship in schools. But teacher and pupil views can be easier to access, for example in relation to the dressing up of Empire Day, to the almost ubiquitous religious instruction lessons, and to history teaching.[5] The limited reach of secular approaches to moral education, and possibly also their controversial nature, I suggest, makes it unlikely that similar commentary would be available.[6]

Taking 1944 as an end point, at least at the level of dominant sentiments in public discourse and national educational policy, it appears that Christian approaches to the teaching of morality and citizenship in schools emerged victorious. But secularists regrouped, and would, later, campaign again. During the 1960s, the period that Callum Brown and others have labelled

as the start of rapid decline in both Christian affiliation and institutional and cultural significance,[7] the NSS saw, for the first time in many years, an increase in membership and the number of branches. And when the Union of Ethical Societies and the Rationalist Press Association merged to form the British Humanist Association (BHA) in 1963, another freethought organisation was revitalised and experienced growth. It broke, however, with the past in losing the remaining vestiges of worship and religion that were so important to earlier Ethical Movement activists. The NSS and BHA campaigned during the 1960s and 1970s for changes in the school curriculum. They argued for abolishing religious instruction lessons altogether (especially the NSS), for introducing non-confessional and multi-faith religious education (especially the BHA), and for developing new approaches to moral education in schools (both). They seized on publicity and lobbying opportunities wherever possible, and achieved some concessions, for example in the shaping of revised religious instruction syllabuses. Some liberal Christians, too, were willing to support their arguments for different approaches to thinking about religion in schools. But the NSS and BHA 'failed to garner the levels of support required to fulfil their ultimate aims'.[8] This assessment reads very much like the mixed record from an earlier period.

Waves of immigration from the 1950s increasingly brought different races, cultures, languages and religious faiths within the bounds of English citizenship. By the 1970 and 1980s, educators were proposing multicultural education, subject to different definitions but typically with an emphasis on celebrating and incorporating different cultural identities, as the best way of catering for the varied groups now represented as English citizens within schools.[9] Their proposals were part of an international framework of policy development and discussion.[10] Such debates about the fairest way to accommodate different cultures and religious beliefs within schools had been foreshadowed in the period 1897–1944. Contemporaries perceived unprecedented diversity, population movement, and ideological change within England and elsewhere leading to a need to accommodate difference. And secularists, as Chapter 5 has shown, saw their proposals as having international import. Secularist educators had to grapple with what happened when a pedagogical model was transferred from one cultural, linguistic and religious context to another. They struggled to promote a meaningful comprehension of and sympathy for other cultures and faiths (including, of course, a lack of theological faith); to take one of Gould's examples from Chapter 6 they wanted pupils to understand the 'Indian

soul'.[11] And a unifying rhetoric of catering for all was complicated by a context of structural and cultural hierarchies, within and between nations.

Secularists continue to struggle to achieve a balance between catering for different cultures and promoting communal values. From 2002, English schools have been required to devote 5% of curriculum time to citizenship education. Following the 1998 report of the Advisory Group on Citizenship, citizenship education was to comprise a combination of social and moral responsibility, active community involvement and political literacy.[12] The Advisory Group was chaired by Professor Bernard Crick, who was active in the humanist movement for some 40 years until his death in 2008. Crick latterly served as the BHA's vice president, and participated in its campaigns against faith schools and other manifestations of Christianity in public institutions and civic life.[13] Citizenship education is still welcomed by the NSS as a way of teaching about 'diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding', in this way serving as a vehicle for community cohesion. And for the BHA it is a vital component of a broad-based curriculum that prepares pupils for adult life in a 'pluralist' society.[14]

More recently, the agenda has shifted. Questions have been raised over the status of citizenship education as a broad political education and forum for discussing democratic shared values. Non-statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) in November 2014 suggests a new policy focus. Schools are now required to actively promote 'Fundamental British Values' as part of pupils' Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education, the key values in question being 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs'.[15] Some Church of England lobbyists felt that the Christian commandment of 'love thy neighbour' should be included in the British values to be taught; the NSS responded that the 'golden rule' was a universal value, shared by all faiths and also non-religious worldviews.[16] Secularist organisations broadly welcomed the proposal to emphasise shared values. But they criticised the potential for a narrow and exclusive framing, with the NSS suggesting that these values were not only British and should instead be considered as part of a more 'outward looking' approach to teaching values as part of a broad-based and 'intercultural' education. And both the NSS and BHA argued that an educational context of faith-based schools and compulsory acts of collective worship would not encourage the tolerance and mutual respect that the DfE desires.[17]

As this comment illustrates, secularists have, to this day, seen religion in schools, at least as it is currently present in educational legislation, as a barrier to creating a tolerant and inclusive community of citizens. The BHA and NSS continue to campaign against faith schools and also for the compulsory daily act of worship of a predominantly Christian character to be replaced by 'inclusive school assemblies'. Religious education and religious studies syllabuses, they suggest, should be 'objective, fair and balanced' (to use the BHA's formulation), reflecting the diversity of religion and belief in the country and also including non-religious worldviews. The BHA also proposes a 'moral education of pupils across the curriculum, both formal and informal', that reflects 'shared human values', in order to prepare pupils for adult life in a pluralist society. It notes the need to challenge the 'still widespread assumption that morality depends on religious belief'. The NSS calls for 'a new programme of study that allows pupils to take a more objective and religiously neutral approach to the consideration of moral and ethical issues'.[18] These arguments sit within a wider call emanating not only from non-believers but also from representatives of faith groups for legal and institutional change in order to reflect the fact that Britain is no longer 'Christian'. Rather, it has a population increasingly diverse in its religious make-up and which also contains increasing numbers who profess no faith. Urgent action on these fronts was required, the report of the two-year Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life (published December 2015) suggested, at a time of 'unprecedented . . . religious confusion and tension'.[19] In November 2015, a high court judge ruled in favour of three families and the BHA who challenged the exclusion of non-religious worldviews from the new Religious Studies GCSE.[20] But according to DfE guidance published one month later, religious instruction should 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main Christian'. Non-religious worldviews could be covered at any time across the Key Stages and in other subjects; this would satisfy the High Court's judgement. Journalists were keen to point out the personal Christian faith of Nicky Morgan, who was then Secretary of State for Education, in this context.[21]

Very little additional commentary is needed to point out the affinities between the NSS and BHA positions today and those of secularists in the first half of the twentieth century. The arguments rehearsed by those who want Christian values and ideals in schools as the most appropriate preparation for adult citizenship in a predominantly Christian country also display remarkable continuity. Similarities in the structure of the education system

over the years might be relevant here, but we also need to consider the possible influence of organisational memories and traditions on the part of secularists and Christians. Thus, the dialogue, and at times the battle, between secular and Christian approaches to shaping English citizenship continues.

Notes

1. W. B. Curry, 'Some Thoughts on Modern Education in Relation to Life', *South Place Monthly Record*, May 1944, 2–3.
2. *Ethical Societies' Chronicle*, March 1925, p. 3.
3. H. McCarthy (2011) *The British People and the League of Nations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 94.
4. S. Smith, 'A Further Danger for Our Schools', *The Month*, December 1906, 601–18; E. R. Bernard (ed.) (1907) *A Scheme of Moral Instruction for Teachers in Public Elementary Schools* (London: John Davis), 1585/313, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre.
5. J. English (2006) 'Empire Day in Britain, 1904–1956', *Historical Journal*, 49:1, 247–76, pp. 249–53. For autobiographical testimonials about religious instruction and a Christian ethos in the school up to *c.*1944 see J. Burnett (1982) *Destiny Obscure: Autobiographies of Childhood, Education and Family from the 1820s to the 1920s* (London and New York: Routledge), pp. 201–5, 214; S. Humphries (1981) *Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working-Class Childhood and Youth 1889–1939* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), pp. 32–40; I. Roberts (2008) *Telling Tales Out of School* (Seaton Burn: Northern Heritage Publishing), pp. 185, 198. For views of history teachers and pupils in the interwar years, see questionnaire and interview data on the History in Education project website, http://www.history.ac.uk/history-in-education/index.html, date accessed 18 May 2016.
6. A preliminary trawl of working-class biographical material and oral history archives from the period has not to date yielded much evidence of pupils' perspectives. It is possible that a more detailed search, which would constitute a research project in itself, would be more productive.

7. For example, see C. Brown (2009) *The Death of Christian Britain*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge); H. McLeod (2007) *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
8. S. Budd (1977) *Varieties of Unbelief: Atheists and Agnostics in English Society, 1850–1960* (London: Heinemann), pp. 260–2; R. J. K. Freathy and S. Parker (2013) 'Secularists, Humanists and Religious Education: Religious Crisis and Curriculum Change in England, 1963–1975', *History of Education*, 42:2, 222–56 (quotation at p. 222). The Rationalist Press Association withdrew for technical legal reasons in 1967, leaving the BHA in the present day as constitutionally the same body as the Union of Ethical Societies formed in 1896 (BHA, 'Our History Since 1896', https://humanism.org.uk/about/our-history-since-1896/, date accessed 14 May 2016.
9. R. Race (2011) *Multiculturalism and Education* (London: Continuum), pp. 23–8.
10. M. Bashor (forthcoming, 2016/17) 'Evaluating Integrative Education Policies and the Origins of Multicultural Education Policies in the Atlantic World from 1941–1988' (PhD thesis, Oxford Brookes University).
11. F. J. Gould (1927) *The League of Nations Spirit in the Schools* (London: Watts & Co.), pp. 10–11.
12. Advisory Group on Citizenship (1998) *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools* (London: DfES/QCA), pp. 11–13, 40–1.
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