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'A Bud to be Unfolded': At the Home and Colonial Training Institution, 1860–1861

In December 1859, Charlotte Mason left the northern seaboard town of Birkenhead for the bustling London metropolis to take the 1859 Queen's Scholarship examinations at the Home and Colonial Training College on Gray's Inn Road. Did a friend, A. Wilson, see her off at Liverpool station with a book and a lunch basket, as a signed volume in her collection might suggest?¹ The orphaned pupil-teacher had successfully passed over five years of teaching experience with girls and infants. Fearful of new challenges, excessive scrutiny of her work and the competitiveness of colleagues, Charlotte would absorb the Ho and Co's Pestalozzian mission to teach poor children while succumbing to the 'serious illness' that would circumscribe her later lifestyle. The evangelical influence of the training master, Robert Dunning (1805–1892), would be a treasured possession.

Eliza Mason's guest house was near the Ho and Co, and yet there is no record of contact between the half-sisters-in-law. Charlotte allegedly lost touch with her half-sisters and their families – even Huldah Jane, who had surely known her from infancy. Charlotte probably knew little of the circumstances of her birth before wedlock and her parents' marriage, or even the reasons for their separation.

The highly regarded Home and Colonial Infant School Society's Training Institution was one of the earliest and largest but not 'the first and only' training college in the country, as Essex Cholmondeley averred.² Founded in 1836 as a mixed Anglican foundation, but unattached to a diocese, the college was now training women. In 1857 there were 11 voluntary training colleges for schoolmistresses serving 4,199 student teachers; by 1860 there were 35 colleges for men and women.³ In 1860, the Ho and Co was selected for a special report by the Committee of Council which praised

the excellence of the system where it is thoroughly carried out. Here no material improvement is to be expected, no point of importance

has been neglected, no principle overlooked, no practical application has been untried. Managers and officers, lecturers and teachers have steadily co-operated in the work of forming practical and intelligent teachers.⁴

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi was a deeply religious Swiss educational reformer. His innovatory writings on early childhood education and teacher training influenced the English infant school movement.⁵ Pestalozzi opened schools for poor children and his Yverdun training college (1805–1825). Impressed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's widely read novel, *Émile* (1762), he published educational treatises in a series of letters, suggesting that by reducing knowledge to its basic elements, anyone could teach children by means of developmentally ordered exercises. He rejected Rousseau's rationalism; for Pestalozzi, religion was a matter for the heart, not the head. Love was the key. Although his school education, like Charlotte's, had been rooted in Protestant Christianity, he followed Rousseau in showing that children should begin by learning from the natural world. Early Enlightenment philosophers from Francis Bacon (1561–1626) to the Czech John Amos Comenius (1592–1670), who subsequently impressed Charlotte, had opened up a new rational spirit of scientific enquiry, discerning the natural laws of intellectual, physical and moral development to guide education. Pestalozzi was writing *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children* (1801) while Wordsworth was composing *The Prelude* (begun in 1798), 'dedicated to Nature's Self and the things that teach as Nature teaches', as they faced the nineteenth century with a new reverence for innocent young children.⁶

The Revd Charles Mayo (1792–1846), an Oxford classical scholar, spent a year from 1818 to 1819 as chaplain to a party of British youths studying at Yverdun. Initially critical of observed contradictions and experimentation, he gradually perceived the beauty and harmony of Pestalozzi's method and brought it to England. Mayo ran Pestalozzian schools for the higher classes at Epsom and Cheam from 1821 until his death. His sister, Elizabeth Mayo (1793–1865), shared his enthusiasm and part of the teaching. Developing their own version of Pestalozzian method, they produced influential textbooks, including Miss Mayo's *Lessons on Objects* (1831), *Model Lessons for Infant Schools* (1848–50) and *On Religious Instruction* (1849).⁷

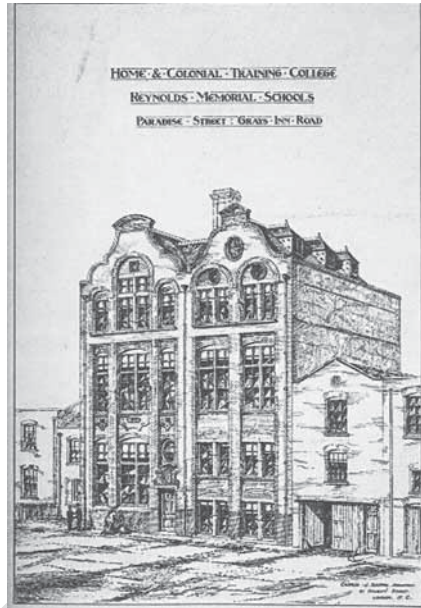
John Stuckey Reynolds (1791–1874), a retired Treasury civil servant and banker who had opened infant schools in London, met Charles and Elizabeth Mayo. They inspired him with Pestalozzi's educational principles. Reynolds invited Charles Mayo to join the committee launching the Home and Colonial Infant School Society's new training institution. From 1 June 1836, Miss Mayo, the first woman employed to train teachers in England, taught three students in Southampton Street. By 1837, the committee had promptly established the institution in extensive premises on Gray's Inn

Road. Queen Victoria graciously became the Society's first patron.⁸ By 1838, model and practising schools for about 600 children were opened in the densely populated St Pancras neighbourhood. Miss Mayo, a dynamic presence, led the educational department in Charlotte's time. As treasurer, John Reynolds visited the Home and Colonial Training College daily in 1860, 'regarded virtually as the principal'.⁹

The voluntary British infant school movement exercised a beneficial influence upon National Society elementary schools, dominated by repetitive instruction in galleries.¹⁰ The Ho and Co endeavoured to incorporate Pestalozzian individualism within

formal schooling. The debate turned on whether children were qualitatively different from adults or merely smaller and less experienced. The Ho and Co's Christian evangelical, Pestalozzian ideal of blending behavioural and moral habit training, considered necessary for lower-class children, with the progressive naturalism derived from a pre-evolutionary concept of developmental stages, was easier to uphold in principle than in practice. Compromise proved necessary in the early infant schools. Pressure from parents induced the utopian reformer Robert Owen (1771–1858) to start reading lessons in his infant school at an earlier age than planned. The Mayos were criticised for promoting mechanical interpretations of the free spirit underlying Pestalozzian principles.¹¹ Rote learning, which fostered order and discipline, would take a greater hold during thirty years of 'payment by results' (1862–1890). The enduring question was how to educate all children without excessive cost.

The abstract core of the Swiss educationist's philosophy was *Anschauung*, meaning 'the immediate experience of objects or situations'.¹² This was crystallised into the 'object lesson' taught at the Holy Trinity infant school in Charlotte's time. The aim was to develop the 'faculties' by means of progressive physical and sensory impressions through sight, touch, smell and hearing. Charlotte would subsequently maintain that training the faculties separately emphasised the *method* of learning at the expense of *knowledge*. Applying an individualist method, based on the intimate



The Home and Colonial Training College in early days.

ambience of Gertrude's kitchen, to noisy galleries packed with poor children easily diverted the pupils from imaginatively describing chosen objects such as leaves, a piece of glass or a bat into a droning, mechanical repetition of names, numbers and attributes. The submissiveness instilled into their pupils under the watchword 'Holiness unto the Lord', promoted by the 'earnest inculcation of pure evangelical truth', may have discouraged Ho and Co graduates from falling into Pestalozzi's temptation of delivering a sudden cuff to the ears of recalcitrants, but at the price of attentive interest to the scrutinised object.¹³ Ho and Co staff earnestly endeavoured to awaken their students' grasp of the harmonising principles underlying Pestalozzian practice, notwithstanding the difficulties.

He stimulated the pupil to use his own efforts in the acquisition of knowledge, and thus secured the assimilation of the knowledge acquired so that it really became his own; but beyond this and involving this, he distinguished between instruction and education, propounding that the latter must proceed on the principle of organic development. 'A child', said Pestalozzi, 'is not like a mineral, which increases only by a process of mechanical accretion. He is like a plant which grows by the continual expansion of those organs which lie folded in the germ. He is a *bud to be unfolded*. Every leaf must be expanded, and each must fit into its place. So must the teacher keep in view the organic development of all the pupil's faculties, moral, intellectual and physical, not singly, but simultaneously and harmoniously. The great means of moral development is love. A teacher must be a parent to his scholars, not a martinet; for moral education does not consist in preventing immoral actions, but in cultivating dispositions, forming principles, and establishing habits. The great means of intellectual education is to teach by things and realities, rather than by words and signs. Take nature for the school manual. Let the first lesson lead the scholar to observe with accuracy; the second to express his observations with correctness. The cultivation of the senses and bodily powers is essential to that complete system of education which secures, not mere skill in the accomplishments of a school, but fitness for the duties of life.'¹⁴

Charlotte Mason, a small, thin young woman with piercing blue-grey eyes and hair 'the darkest possible shade of brown, verging on black', believed she would be nineteen on 1 January 1860.¹⁵ Since 1854 she had passed five sets of annual pupil-teacher examinations and practical teaching tests before the HMI's. Entry to the Ho and Co depended upon gaining the Queen's Scholarship.

The HMI's held the annual Queen's Scholarship examination at the colleges under inspection. Although it was open to any suitable applicant over eighteen, pupil-teachers had the best chance of passing. As mistress, Miss Stevens must have certified that Charlotte had successfully completed

her apprenticeship and was expected to pass the examinations. Undoubtedly recommended by Miss Stevens, Charlotte's choice of the Ho and Co was assuredly determined by the institution's justifiably high reputation. All female candidates sat the same examinations.

The Committee of Council's minute of 24 April 1857 decreed that applicants from infant schools were only eligible for the second-class Queen's Scholarship worth £17, presumably because of the lower academic standard. As shown by her subsequent certificate, Charlotte applied for the usual two-year course rather than the new one-year infant school teachers' course initiated by the Ho and Co. She was not classed as an infant-school pupil-teacher.¹⁶ First-class scholars were awarded an additional £3 personal allowance. Men received a higher rate; their first-class scholarship was worth £23 per annum with a £4 personal allowance. Although the basic £17 Queen's Scholarship was lower than the final pupil-teacher stipend, government grants funded the full cost of board, lodging and laundry at the Ho and Co. With her living expenses covered, Charlotte only needed clothes and books, such as Thomas Girtin's *Physiology*. In 1860, the Ho and Co admitted 124 Queen's Scholars, receiving a government maintenance grant of £2,357 for their upkeep, which contributed a quarter of the total cost.¹⁷

Ho and Co officers probably asked first-year students to look after nervous candidates during examination week. Selina Healey (1839–1911), a journeyman baker's daughter from Hammersmith, was three years older than Charlotte. She may have introduced Charlotte to Elizabeth Pendlebury (1841–1930), a pupil-teacher from St Thomas's National School, Preston, later Mrs Groveham and destined to be Charlotte's life-long friend. Selina gained a first class in both annual examinations, with a prize for drawing competency in her final year. We may imagine that the tremulous charm of the dark-haired, blue-eyed, vulnerable Irish orphan girl touched her heart.¹⁸

Anne Clough, the sister of the poet Arthur Hugh Clough (1819–1861), had taken up teaching after her father's businesses failed. During the winter of 1849, she visited London and tried her hand at teaching very unruly and energetic children at the Borough Road school before spending time in the Ho and Co schools. She recorded,

I found the classes [at the Home and Colonial] very interesting. The teachers and the pupil-teachers were mostly very pleasant, and they all seem happy and comfortable together. Mr Dunning the head master is a good kind of man apparently, but rather over religious. The school is much stronger that way than at the Boro' Road. I should fancy the teachers had not so much in them, nor so much mechanical knowledge as the Boro' Road people, but they understand things better, and that from their lesson [the children] would acquire a greater love for information.¹⁹

When Miss Clough sought a teacher for her Ambleside school, Eller How, opened in 1852, perhaps she asked Mr Dunning, by then the College's training master, to recommend a student. Selina Healey joined Miss Clough's school in 1861, taking it over in 1862 when the latter left Ambleside to live with her widowed sister-in-law.²⁰ The Ho and Co committee had

sought for a training master and were so happy to find in Mr Dunning a man ready to grasp, and to hold firm the principles they were all labouring to inculcate. The teachers sent forth from the Institution were of acknowledged superiority.²¹

First, Charlotte had to win a Queen's Scholarship. Each of the nine daunting examinations lasted three hours. Useful summaries from *The Pupil Teacher* would undoubtedly have helped. Geography questions included, 'Describe the river system of Great Britain' or 'Write a short history of Hindustan, its most striking natural features, variances of climate, political divisions and productions.' A history question asked, 'How was Ireland governed until the completion of the legislative Union?' Or, 'Write out from British History any narrative which you think would interest children aged 8 to 10 years on one of the following points: a) courageous perseverance under difficulties; b) readiness to suffer on the side believed to be right; c) uncertainty of fortune.' Religious knowledge included the Old and New Testaments and the Catechism. After years of dynamic sermons by Dr Baylee and his curates, Charlotte was well versed in the Bible and Christian doctrine. She would have been able to 'Write out a short account of the book of Ruth', 'Quote a text from the New Testament to prove the existence of angels, and mention some occasions on which they have appeared', 'Write out some of the texts in which the Holy Ghost is promised and state the offices attributed to him', or 'Give a short account of the institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, with the circumstances connected with it'. The question 'Give reasons for infant baptism and explain why the Church of England requires god-parents' might have perplexed a Friend's daughter who may have 'slipped through the net'.

There was no literature paper. Well attuned to grammar, Charlotte faced questions on paraphrasing and the correction of ungrammatical sentences that 'violated the rules', such as 'the slate was broke when you give it me.' 'Define the term "parenthesis", parse fully, and explain the syntax of the words: "it being withal the greatest perfection of our nature and the noblest privilege to do so."' Music questions included, 'Write down the diatonic major scale on the treble staff, in two positions, with the names of the notes and repeat in the bass.' A hard question, if Charlotte could not play the piano. For the taxing drawing exam, free hand sketching of an object and geometric measurements were two of the five tests. Neither Charlotte nor Lizzie passed drawing.

The arithmetic paper offered puzzling conundrums reminiscent of The Gough, such as 'If 18 horses eat 37 quarters, 7 bush. 3 pks of corn in 45 days, in what time will 50 horses eat 25 quarters?' After drumming it into her pupils for years, Charlotte could have recited the table of weights and measures backwards. As the boys took Euclid, algebra and geometry, they were excused the domestic economy paper. Here, varied questions included, 'Describe, step by step, the process of washing, ironing and drying. Mention common faults and give practical rules.' Or, 'Explain the methods you would adopt for teaching needlework to thirty girls aged from 7 to 14 years and explain the meaning of and use of the following: hemming, sewing, felling, running, gathering, whipping, stitching, back-stitching and herring-boning. Add illustrations.'

Female candidates were asked what was meant by a 'drain'. 'Why is a house unhealthy if it has no drains or is near to open ones?' Or, 'What is vaccination? What is the object of it?' Or, 'Name the most common vegetable and mineral poisons. What course would you adopt in the case of a person who had taken poison?' A telling question directed at working-class life asked, 'What is to be said for and against the mother going out to work? Illustrate your answer by money reckonings.'

On school management, all candidates were asked how they would arrange a class in parallel desks and to discuss their advantages and defects. Or, 'Explain your method of obtaining silence in a gallery, and recalling (from time to time) the inattentive to order.' There were questions about poor ventilation, teaching reading and writing, as well as organising the day: 'What registers and time tables are necessary for a school of 100, with two pupil-teachers, and how many classes should there be?' and 'What games can you play at and, if necessary, teach?' Charlotte and her fellow applicants must have been shattered when the nine exams were over; they had covered vast ground.²²

In 1858, the Revd F.C. Cook, HMI for women's training colleges, was concerned about the shortage of trained teachers in National Schools. He wanted to ensure that eligible applicants who received training did not 'wastefully leave the course of life for which they have been specially educated'.²³ Yet by 1860, when Cook was reporting on the Ho and Co for the Committee of Council, he fretted over the high cost of funded Queen's Scholars and the obstacles preventing privately-funded higher-class students from being trained, as their 'habits and qualifications would make their admission desirable'.²⁴ At the end of 1860, the total cost of running the Ho and Co was £8,140 7s 8d for that year.²⁵

Competition was stiff. Charlotte showed sterling courage in facing up to the ordeal. At Christmas 1859, a total of 159 Church of England female candidates obtained a first-class Queen's Scholarship; only 14 were not pupil-teachers. Second-class scholarships were awarded to 275 female candidates; 33 of these were privately funded.

In the list of second-class Church of England Queen's Scholars, published for all to see in *The Pupil Teacher* and class lists, Lizzie Pendlebury gained 70th place, above Charlotte's position of 141. Listed as National School pupil-teachers, their second-class scholarship was not, therefore, due to infant school pupil-teacher status. Did that 71-place gap subtly influence Charlotte's relationship with her friend and other more successful colleagues, although 134 women were behind her and 9 not placed?²⁶ As Cook sought a higher proportion of private students, the flexible Home and Colonial Training College accepted those who had passed the exams creditably; they saved on cost and raised the cultural *tone* of the institution.²⁷

In 1860, Charlotte's year, the Ho and Co accommodated 140 first- and second-year students; 121 were Queen's Scholars and 19 privately funded. Successful candidates were listed in order of merit. Did this determine their places at the table and in the dormitories, as at the Borough Road College (founded in 1804)? In view of Charlotte's strong antipathy to competition, this seems likely.²⁸

On 25 March 1860, the quarter day known as 'Lady Day' (the Feast of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary), Cook reported that there were 124 Queen's Scholars and 16 others in residence at the Ho and Co; 83 Queen's Scholars and 16 non-government funded students had left.²⁹ It is not known where Charlotte stayed awaiting admission, unless she had to return to Holy Trinity School. More fortunate, Lizzie Pendlebury came from a settled Preston family. Her father, Jeremiah, aged 44, was a millwright. Ann, her mother, was 39 when Lizzie left for London at just 18. In 1860, Lizzie's older sister Mary was 20, her younger sister Ann was 13 and her brother Richard was 10. Her maternal grandfather lived with the family.³⁰

The non-government students, 'qualifying to become governesses and teachers for private families and superior schools', lived in a separate house 'a little distance from the Institution', attending for classes and teaching practice with their designated governess. The training of middle-class women had been recommended by Mrs Frances Buss, Frances Mary's mother.³¹ No doubt this select group was better fed and more smartly dressed than the Queen's Scholars; their families had paid for their tuition, board and residence. Glimpses of these privileged ladies probably aroused mixed feelings in Charlotte and her fellow students.

Frances Widdowson has described the Spartan life at the training colleges, borne out by Spencer's experiences at Borough Road in 1892.³² Charlotte probably boarded with Lizzie at 11-17 St Chad's Row, in one of the Ho and Co's Georgian houses. By 1861, Lizzie was living there with fifty-one fellow students. Harriet Williams, aged fifty, was the superintendent head of the household; five Ho and Co schoolmistresses lived in the block with two superintendents in charge of the schools, two cooks, four housemaids



*The children's playground at the
Home and Colonial Training College.*

and one kitchen maid. The junior chaplain lived next door at 18 St Chad's Row.³³ Women students were usually expected to undertake strenuous domestic chores to prepare them to run a schoolhouse and instruct future pupils in housecraft. With cooks and maids in residence at St Chad's Row, Ho and Co women doubtless had more time for study, exercise and rest than students at smaller colleges.

Cook's report, describing Charlotte's year, noted that the Ho and Co dormitories were spacious and airy. Curtains may have protected the students' privacy in place of stuffy, wooden-partitioned cubicles. There was space for a single bed, a small chest of drawers, a wash-basin and chair. The day began early with study before prayers and breakfast. Classes took up most of the day; the students prepared the next day's work in the large classroom, supervised by a governess. They only returned to their sleeping quarters at specified times.

To ease the students' highly structured sixteen-hour day, Cook allocated four hours for exercise, recreation and household chores. There were eight hours for lectures and lessons, including school observations and practice teaching, needlework and music, leaving two hours for private study. The three meals took up two hours, leaving eight hours for sleep.

There was no garden apart from the school playground. The previous year, Cook had boldly advised shortening the lectures to allow more time for walks and relaxation, recommending two daily walks of three quarters

of an hour rather than one hour's exercise. He regretted that 'owing to the conditions of the property in that crowded locality, the students have not sufficient opportunities for exercise and recreation on the premises or in the immediate neighbourhood.'³⁴

St Bartholomew's Chapel on Gray's Inn Road, built in 1811, was consecrated as the district church by the Rt Revd A.C. Tait (1811–1882), Bishop of London, on 13 February 1860. The Revd E. Garbutt had been the evangelical vicar since 1849.³⁵ The students probably attended Sunday morning services but were free in the afternoons. Lottie and Lizzie may have met William Huston (1811–1880) at church. A Protestant bachelor in his fifties from Kilrea in Londonderry, he was a Scripture reader, or verger. Lizzie recalled his friendly invitations to Kentish Town:

Mr Huston – very much attached. Dear old man seemed to live for others. Chose ½ dozen girls to come to tea. She kept up her acquaintance with him, 'a charming friend for eternity'.³⁶

Did Charlotte, the needy orphan, reach out for a spiritual father figure? She wrote to Mr Huston after leaving London. Although he addressed two letters to Charlotte as 'My dear niece', there is no evidence that they were related. Sally, later Dr Coleman's wife, Charlotte's other longstanding friend, may have joined the tea parties.

In 1859, Cook commissioned Dr J. Pidduck MD, the College physician since 1839, to investigate the students' health and wellbeing. Dr Pidduck examined the 1860 'freshers', including Charlotte, twice: at admission and at the end of the year. He recommended less animal food and more fruits and vegetables, which he had found effective in improving children's health in a servants' school. The students' daily diet was solid and plain. No jam, fresh fruit or vegetables appeared on the menu. Breakfast consisted of bread and butter with tea or coffee. The main meal was dinner; on Sundays, cold salt beef or pork and fruit pies were provided. On other days there were meat pies, roast or boiled beef or mutton. Irish stews appeared from Wednesday to Saturday with bread pudding on Tuesdays. Rice pudding followed the main course daily, except for treacle puddings on Thursdays. Tea was served with bread and butter and cake. There was no mention of supper; maybe the students retired early to get their eight hours sleep.³⁷

Reviewing the effect of mental training upon the students' bodily health, Dr Pidduck thought it a mistake

to suppose that a large amount of bodily exercise is needful to counteract the effects of mental labour; the truth is that persons whose minds are much exercised do not require and cannot bear a great deal of bodily fatigue. I have seen more injury to the health from very long walks on Saturday afternoon and Sunday than from study during the week.

Moderately exercising the arms and upper body in 'pure air' was 'undoubtedly conducive to health'. While deploring the dangers of poor ventilation, he was opposed to opening windows over the hot water pipes lining the classroom walls, claiming the incoming cold air could cause catarrhal and rheumatic complaints by preventing the expulsion of stale air. 'No plan has been devised that is equal to an open fire and wide fireplace.'

Formerly the practice was to send persons in delicate health to be trained under the erroneous impression that the duty of a schoolmistress was comparatively light and, therefore, suitable for delicate and even deformed young persons. Experience has corrected this error in judgement and proved that a strong sound constitution is requisite to form an efficient teacher.

Pupil-teachers, inured to scholastic discipline, coped better with the mental training required. Dr Pidduck discovered that thirteen students out of seventy-nine who were initially marked 'not strong' were rated as 'strong and in good health' after three months of training. Was Charlotte one of these? As most pupil-teachers came from poor homes, the plentiful food built up their physical strength.

However, excessive mental effort might engender 'erethism', a state of abnormal mental excitement of the nervous system. Symptoms ranged from an inordinate appetite for food to headaches, enteric irritation, stomach pain, 'gastro-blurred' sight and other visual problems and various neuralgic affections. 'Rest and a little medical discipline' effected a cure. When previously healthy students suffered from nervous dispositions, Pidduck concluded that cephalic, thoracic or gastro-enteric irritation was caused by mental anxiety because of family circumstances or fears of examination failure.

Students with intractable physical diseases, such as tuberculosis, would be dismissed from College. Recognising psychological causation, Dr Pidduck accepted that women could study hard and teach well without ill effects. He made no reference to 'overpressure'. Government incentives encouraging women to work hard for their qualifications led to healthier states of body and mind; there were fewer 'disorders of female health and their concomitant hysteria'.³⁸ A little wholesome neglect was proving effective.

The Ho and Co training master was Robert Dunning (1805–1892). There were two chaplains. The Revd James Joyce Evans was both secretary and general superintendent; he also lectured on religious subjects. The other chaplain, Mr Fleming, taught history and teaching. Of the six governesses, two trained prospective infant schoolmistresses. Seven lecturers taught arithmetic, geography, history, domestic economy, natural history, penmanship and drawing, while eleven teachers were

employed in the model and practising schools under Miss Mayo's watchful eye. The Revd J.G.C. Fussell, who inspected the Ho and Co in 1859 with Cook, found that

The students receive excellent instruction in all subjects. Due care is taken to give them clear and scientific instruction in the principles of education, as regards the formation of character, the development of the faculties and the systematic communication of necessary and useful information. The students are thoroughly grounded in all elementary branches of knowledge and the results of written examinations have been entirely satisfactory for some years. The system of professional training is remarkably complete and efficient.³⁹

Born in Ayrshire in Scotland, Robert Dunning lived in Islington with his wife and daughters. He had taught infants in Belfast in 1839 before he was appointed headmaster of the Home and Colonial Training College's model school by the time Miss Clough made her approving visit in 1849.⁴⁰ A very experienced training master and master of method, he was one of the permanent fixtures on the staff, writing occasional articles for the Ho and Co's educational paper. Meticulously supervising their work, he knew all his young women students well. By 1860, Mr Hassell was assisting Mr Dunning in the training department.

Cook and Fussell inspected the Ho and Co in July and October 1860. They found the managers had spared no expense in supplying everything the students needed for their training. While deploring the congested streets, Cook saw the advantage of proximity to numerous local poor children who could attend the Ho and Co schools. The model schools were always open to the general public. There were five model classes for infants under eight years and three or four classes for infants and juveniles, taught by a mistress and pupil-teacher in one large room, as in country village schools. The older children aged twelve to fifteen were taught in the model school to

begin to seek knowledge from books . . . not as recitations, but by getting information which will enable them to answer any question put by the teacher on the subject. In each juvenile section they are accustomed to reproduce in writing the lessons they receive. Morally, they are thrown, to a great extent, on their own responsibility, and accustomed to self-government.

Only second-year students practised in the model schools, where the older children were encouraged to develop habits of attention and independent study. First-year students started in the practising schools, which included four infant galleries and six juvenile classes spread over five separate rooms. Local children were initially admitted to the practising schools. As most of their lessons were given by the student teachers, progress was slower than

in the model schools, although they shared the same lesson plans. Jones explained that the aim for infants was 'not to communicate knowledge, but to form good impressions and correct habits . . . to cultivate attention, the power of accurate expression, and, by storing the mind with ideas suitable to the infantine period of life, to lay the foundation for future progress'. Diligence, good conduct and punctual attendance enabled practising school children to upgrade to the model school on quarter day. In each school, the children's work was subject to intense scrutiny.⁴¹

Fussell described the five steps in the students' two-year training course, rigorously supervised by Mr Dunning. Inbuilt criticism fostered progress at each stage of the daunting work programme. During Step One, from Lady Day to Midsummer 1860, the first-years were lectured on the necessity and advantage of training and shown how the full range of elementary subjects, such as reading and numbers, were to be taught according to the Ho and Co's Pestalozzian method. They then observed a model lesson delivered in the model school, followed by close observation of at least eighteen further lessons on all subjects, noting the steps taken to teach the subjects effectively. Mr Dunning was invariably present to explain the principles upon which each lesson was founded. The full notes each student had to make of her observations were entered into a journal which was then scrutinised by Mr Dunning and his assistants, who made any necessary revisions.

After studying model lesson 'sketches' (plans) on each subject, the students had to write their own lesson sketch along the same lines, to be examined and revised by Mr Dunning and his team. In class 'the faults and excellencies' in each student's record were criticised in turn by the student group, a tough ordeal for anxious students such as Charlotte. There were lecture courses on general teaching, such as the difference between gallery and class instruction, the art of questioning and sketch writing and lessons on all elementary subjects.

At Step Two, lasting six months, the challenges increased with the first important step in practical training. Observation was replaced by six months of teaching in the practising schools for three quarters of an hour on three days a week, exactly reproducing the lessons learnt at Step One. While gaining practical teaching experience under supervision, the students had to concentrate very hard to remember everything they had been taught. Mr Dunning, Mr Hassell, the three practising schools mistresses and the governesses of their class supervised these lessons. They wrote reports on the successes and failures of each student. At the following class, Mr Dunning discussed errors of method with the whole group.⁴²

As Charlotte struggled with the intense, if outwardly benign, scrutiny of her practice before confident first-class fellow students, she manifested symptoms of illness. Lizzie recalled these bouts: 'So brave – wake up put all away – Kate Webster, Miss Mason, wishing to be with her at any time.'

Was Charlotte afflicted by the nervous states described by Dr Pidduck? Catherine Webster, aged twenty-four, was the youngest of the three housemaids at St Chad's Row. Did she look after Charlotte with Lizzie, soothing her into sleep? Splitting headaches or indigestion would have been worrying; hyperventilation or palpitations might have been perceived as insipient heart disease.

Charlotte passed the first-year examinations. She was intelligent; the lectures and training had been exceedingly thorough. The class lists have been lost, but none of the Ho and Co students failed. A delighted Cook reported that the results had exceeded all expectations and justified the present system of elementary teacher training.⁴³ Charlotte must also have passed the first two steps in practical teaching. Yet Lizzie recalled that Charlotte was 'too delicate for the work. . . . Too ill to take the certificate – could have taken it well enough. She was advised to leave after about a year.'⁴⁴ Later she allegedly recalled that Charlotte spent her holidays in College as she had no relations. If true, isolation and anxiety would have made her holidays very dreary, with only Kate Webster for company.⁴⁵

At Step Three, in the fourth quarter of the year, from January to Lady Day 1861, those who had passed Step Two class teaching and the infant school teaching had to give lessons on all elementary subjects to be fully criticised by their colleagues, under Mr Dunning's supervision. During the Step Two teaching practice, Cooke observed that the students' lessons were

remarkable for good arrangement, happy illustration and a clear perception of what children would hear with interest and retain with advantage. The cultivation of the faculties and the inculcation of sound principles both of thought and feeling are rightly held more important than the information which is, however, of intrinsic and practical value.

He was especially delighted with the natural history lessons.

Each student had to prepare a private half-hour lesson to be criticised by a training officer. Then every student had to devise between twelve and fourteen separate sketches of private half-hour lessons, corrected by Mr Dunning, Mr Coghlan, a professor in the art of teaching, or Mr Hassell. If they were dissatisfied, the student had to re-write the sketch to be re-checked *before* delivering the lesson. The training in the art of writing effective lesson plans was extremely thorough.⁴⁶

Mr Dunning, who had successfully trained young women teachers for many years, was caught off guard by our heroine's distress in flunking a Step Three ordeal. An experienced pupil-teacher, did she balk at her fellow students' criticisms? Although it would have been inappropriate to see her in person, Mr Dunning felt obliged to respond to her acute distress. Tears could be harbingers of disease.

Friday Afternoon

My Dear Miss Mason

I was very sorry indeed this morning when I found that giving a lesson was too much for you. When I saw you first I was exceedingly pleased thinking you were better and strong and not nervous in giving a criticism. Indeed, I felt as if you had lost all fear of me as a critic and regarded me as a friendly genius sitting there to do you a good turn. But oh you naughty girl – it was your own spirit and resolution that would not give way even before disease – that would discharge a duty at whatever it might cost you. You must not attempt another. I shall not let Mr Hassell approach you any more. You can teach well and need only only [*sic*] to study our principles. I liked your lesson much. I trust the good Lord will spare your life and permit you to work in his vineyard a while here. If however his sovereign will – to depart and escape this world and its snares wd. be more for your real and eternal happiness. Do not you love the Saviour, dear Miss Mason and so to behold his face will be glorious. I hope yr affliction does not lead you to repine. You may be young in years but rich in experience and to suffer perfects more and faster than to do. Thus you are brought to be more like the Saviour. May the Lord's presence be with you in all the riches of his power and love and give you when the summons comes an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom, which is a kingdom of glory, not of suffering. . . . [This section of the letter has been cut out.]

I could not leave comfortably without scribbling this note. I was so grieved.

Affectionately R. Dunning⁴⁷

Mr Dunning was shaken by Charlotte's reaction. At first unsure what was wrong, he concluded Charlotte was dangerously ill. His letter, written in the expectation that she was not long for this world, may have shocked Charlotte to the core, although she may have escaped many classes through illness. Rising to teach an elementary subject to her fellow students, Charlotte manifested perturbing symptoms; perhaps she fainted or wept. Mr Dunning had already lost two daughters and was gloomily pessimistic about signs of disease in women, convinced that Charlotte might die young.

In the cut-out section of this letter, Mr Dunning may have intimated that Charlotte might have to leave the Home and Colonial Training College at Lady Day. Those too ill to finish the course were required to go. Study was still regarded by some, notably Mr Dunning, as injurious to women. Mr Dunning's precious letter, retained for life, set Charlotte apart as a

special person, an unfolded bud, whose sufferings had brought her closer to her Saviour. His 'over religious' assumption that the patient suffering her mother had endured led to perfection would haunt Charlotte all her days.

Charlotte missed Step Four, which involved three weeks of intensive observation and reporting on the teaching in the model schools, followed by the final certificate exam. In the first quarter of 1862, she would miss the final step, Step Five, which included first assisting and then running one of the nine small practising schools under the supervision of a mistress, lectures on the mental and moral constitution of children, the professional training of pupil-teachers and school organisation and much further study.

The Committee of Council insisted on ensuring value for the monetary outlay on Queen's Scholarships. Lingen's letter to the HMIs on 2 June 1856 directed that the renewal of a student's Queen's Scholarship for the second year depended upon the principal's confirmation that the first year had been successfully passed *and* that the second year would be completed to the Ho and Co's high standard.⁴⁸ No doubt a conference was held between Mr Dunning, the governess, Dr Pidduck and the principal to decide Charlotte's future. With the thoughtful care they showed towards all their students, they may have considered the detrimental effects of urban congestion and study upon her health, her orphan status and Mr Dunning's assurance that she could teach well.

The kindly Ho and Co officers found her a post at a well-established infant school with Ho and Co connections in Sussex. Leaving her friends behind on Lady Day 1861, Charlotte travelled to Worthing as the new mistress of the William Davidson Infantine School in the Broadwater parish district.