Re-inventing the Schoolmaster: Teacher Training in Early 19th-century London

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Abstract
This paper explores a piece of the puzzle that is central to the emergence of state education in the British Empire. Between 1810-1840, the British and Foreign School Society and the Anglican National Society both founded central teacher training schools in London. Both the National Society (NS) and the British and Foreign School Society (BFSS) were run by non-state actors who believed in the importance of religious education, the necessity of providing education to England's poor, and in the importance of preventing their rival from controlling education. Even though the monitorial system sought to mechanize and circumvent the role of the schoolmaster, in Britain pedagogical training and the professionalization developed precisely out of this moment. What happened between about 1810 and 1840 was nothing less than the invention of the modern British schoolteacher.

'Proper teachers cannot be expected to spring up like mushrooms' wrote Joseph Lancaster in his 1805 pamphlet, *A letter addressed to John Foster esq,* 'completely formed in a night, and well qualified for this most arduous undertaking'.[1] In the pamphlet, Lancaster laid out his plan for a new system of education for Ireland's poor children, perhaps appealing to John Foster because of his control, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, over Ireland's budget. Ensuring a supply of good teachers was 'the first object' since the schoolmaster was 'an office on which the national morals and the fate of empires depend'.[2] Lancaster's programme was ambitious, and conservative educationalists like Sarah Trimmer balked at his desire to promulgate his system across the empire, warning against the possibility of him 'render[ing] a project *permanent*'.[3] Trimmer's assessment

[1] Joseph Lancaster, *A Letter to John Foster, Esq., Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland, on the Best Means of Educating and Employing the Poor, in That Country* (London: Printed and sold by Darton and Harvey, 1805).
[2] Lancaster.
[3] Sarah Trimmer, *A Comparative View of the New Plan of Education Promulgated by Mr Joseph Lancaster*, n.d.

was shrewd and over the following decades this is precisely what Lancaster's supporters and competitors aimed to do.

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, reformers of all stripes positioned education as central to the changing realities arising out of Britain's rapidly expanding, industrial empire. Increased access to education was seen as simultaneously dangerous and miraculous, capable of both inciting revolutions and, in Britain's counter-revolutionary moment, preventing them by transforming pupils into grateful, industrious subjects. The reformers working on education projects across the British Empire competed with one another for state resources and control over an imagined centralised system they sought to build. Long before the passing of the 1870 Education Act that often serves as a starting point for historians of national education the fight to shape British imperial education coalesced in the 1810s around schoolmasters and schoolmistresses.

From 1810-40, the schoolmaster underwent a major transformation from an individual whose professional career was tied to a personal reputation to an accredited, trained professional representing a broader organisation. Why was the schoolmaster transformed? Why did accreditation supersede personal reputation as the measure of a good teacher? Fundamental to this transformation was the institutionalisation of teacher training, a shift which occurred across and connected imperial locales. This paper focuses on Britain's first teacher training institutions, which were born in London out of the competing efforts of the Anglican National Society (NS) and the Dissenting British and Foreign School Society (BFSS). By centring the schoolmaster-in-training, these societies aimed to entrench their religious and political visions for national and imperial education at the most local level. Both societies quickly came to see teacher training as the mechanism for achieving their desire to centralise their operations, enforce ideological compliance, and minimise expenditures. They converged on teacher training despite espousing radically different confessional commitments, with the NS advocating for strict adherence to Anglicanism, and the BFSS, a broadly non-denominational Protestantism.[4] In doing so, they identified and constructed the modern schoolmaster as the ideal agent of imperial policies and ideologies.

The first teacher training institutions developed out of the competition of private actors motivated by religious differences. Both the NS and BFSS were

[4] Anglicanism itself was in a moment of evolution and fragmentation but this is not the focus of this chapter, Anglican supporters of the National Society were also motivated by these internal pressures to push for a singular vision of religious doctrine and practice.

run by non-state actors who believed in the importance of religious education, the necessity of providing education to England's poor, and in the importance of preventing their rival from controlling education. Both operated on a monitorial model, designed to maintain order in a school while dramatically increasing the number of pupils. These two societies developed competing educational networks in which teachers, trained at their very similar training institutions, became the centres of their respective spheres of influence. In both cases, centralised teacher training was a way to circumvent the role of the independent schoolmaster. Though the rigid, mechanical monitorial system, which portrayed the schoolmaster as essentially a factory foreman, might seem antithetical to pedagogical ideals, this was the precise moment from which pedagogical training in Britain developed. Understanding the teacher-training model developed by this competition thus requires tracing the concurrent development of these societies from the last decades of the 18th century onwards.

Unlike the founders of these societies, whose colourful lives have received no shortage of scholarly attention, there has been no monograph in the last 50 years to focus on teacher training at these institutions, and none that has taken an imperial scope in the overall project.[5] Recently, work focused explicitly on colonial education has described these central schools to contextualise the monitorial moment in America, Canada, Australia, and India.[6] While much previous scholarship has been limited by a focus on the printed reports of these

[5] John Lawson and Harold Silver, *A Social History of Education in England* (London: Routledge, 2013); Carl F. Kaestle, *Joseph Lancaster and the Monitorial School Movement: A Documentary History*, Classics in Education, no. 47 (New York: Teachers College Press, 1973); Mora Dickson, *Teacher Extraordinary: Joseph Lancaster, 1778-1838* (Sussex, England: Book Guild, 1986).

[6] For more see, Rebecca Swartz, *Education and Empire: Children, Race and Humanitarianism in the British Settler Colonies, 1833-1880*, Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies Series (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Jana Tschurenev, *Empire, Civil Society, and the Beginnings of Colonial Education in India* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Helen May, *Empire Education and Indigenous Childhoods: Nineteenth-Century Missionary Infant Schools in Three British Colonies*, Ashgate Studies in Childhood, 1700 to the Present (Farnham, Surrey, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014); Gary McCulloch, 'Empires and Education: The British Empire', in *International Handbook of Comparative Education*, ed. Robert Cowen and Andreas M. Kazamias (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2009), 169–79; Lawson and Silver, *A Social History of Education in England*.
Swartz, working with case studies from western Australia, the Cape Colony, Natal, and the West Indies, argues convincingly that education reflected the constant dual goal in the colonies to provide a labour force and to civilise.

societies, the manuscript records reveal both a depth of imperial engagement and internal contestation.[7] A thorough engagement with the manuscript records of both the BFSS and the NS reveals details about the training institutions' operations from their inception, and the correspondence of key individuals helps differentiate the goals and priorities of the two societies. In particular, the local debates within these sources, connected to the broader narratives in pamphlets, newspapers, and parliamentary records, are essential for articulating the multi-scoped imperial process shaping teacher training in this period. Attention, both to the broader manuscript record and the imperial scale, reveals that discussions around state supported education centred on concerns about imperial subjects and broad societal shifts rather than narrowly national questions.

Though still focused on a later state-led development, Chris Bischof's work on the teaching profession in Britain has argued convincingly for the central role of teachers as imperial state agents both at home and abroad, beginning in 1846.[8] Bischof's work is a notable exception to the strong tendency in teaching and state education literature to begin accounts with the 1870 Education Act. The overwhelming focus on this landmark legislation, which mandated universal elementary education and represents a monumental increase in schooling provision, obscures the earlier developments that centered on training and funding teachers. My work takes on the earlier period and the origins of arguments for imperial education standards and the professionalisation of

[7] My work has been enriched by the scholarship of George Bartle, the longtime archivist of the British and Foreign School Society archive at Brunel University, and now by the work of Inge Dornan at the same institution. Dornan's work highlights the importance of the BFSS Borough Road College in the expansion of elementary education in the West Indies, though it does not address the role of the National Society or of the shift in pedagogy occasioned by their institutions. Inge Dornan, '"Book Don't Feed Our Children": Nonconformist Missionaries and the British and Foreign School Society in the Development of Elementary Education in the British West Indies before and after Emancipation', *Slavery & Abolition* 40, no. 1 (2 January 2019): 109–29; Inge Dornan, 'Conversion and Curriculum: Nonconformist Missionaries and the British and Foreign School Society in the British West Indies, Africa and India, 1800–50', *Studies in Church History* 55 (June 2019): 410–25. G.F. Bartle, *A History of Borough Road College* (Kettering, Northamptonshire: Dalkieth Place Limited, 1976).

[8] Christopher Bischof, *Teaching Britain: Elementary Teachers and the State of the Everyday, 1846-1906* (Oxford University Press, 2019). Bischof has highlighted the importance of the earlier 1846 Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education in prompting reforms in teacher-training not only in England but in Scotland as well, recognising the earlier period as one of flux and experimentation.

teachers. The earlier non-state-led education initiatives have been seen as separate from national education when, in fact, they served as its blueprint.

When the BFSS and the NS founded their central schools, they relied on the fame and personal reputations of their respective pedagogical partners, Lancaster and Andrew Bell. Both these men were, and remain, imposing names in education largely due to their competing claims to inventing the monitorial school system.[9] Both Lancaster and Bell argued that their system was the cheapest, simplest, and most replicable method of imparting elementary education. They also both exerted an outsized influence on the initial development of teacher training institutions. While some scholars have pointed to the pedagogical differences in their respective publications, but looking at the rules, timetables, and descriptions of the two central schools suggests that in practice, the systems operated similarly.

Bell was an Anglican reverend who took over the Madras male military asylum between 1789-96. He transformed it into a school on his own version of a monitorial system and used it as the case study for his educational treatise when he returned to England in 1797. The Madras school was neither an importation of an English school on Indian soil nor a genuine adaptation of any indigenous pedagogical practices and was instead a system designed by Bell to maintain his authority over the school. The asylum's students were children of white soldiers and Indian mothers. Bell aimed explicitly to separate the children in his school from their mothers' influence. The monitorial system Bell designed was also meant to reduce the cost and influence of Indian assistant teachers who previously taught at the asylum alongside the schoolmaster.[10] In 1797, after returning to England, Bell published an account of his school and methods, hoping to gain wealthy patrons and potential employers. Bell's manual *An Experiment in Education* was not recognised for its genius until after Lancaster established his albeit 'imperfectly copied' monitorial school 'clogged with many extraneous devices'.[11]

[9] François Jacquet-Francillon, *Naissances de l'école du peuple: 1815-1870* (Editions de l'Atelier, 1995), 117. Charles Démia, a 17th century French priest and educationalist, was already using "officers" and "prefects" in his schools for poor children. He also published treatises on his method.

[10] Rev. Andrew Bell, *An Experiment in Education, Made at the Male Asylum of Madras. Suggesting a System by Which a School Or Family May Teach Itself Under the Superintendance of the Master Or Parent. By the Reverend Dr. Andrew Bell, ...* (Cadell and Davies; and W. Creech, Edinburgh, 1797).

[11] Bell.

Lancaster had begun a school out of his father's attic in the 1790s. He moved to the eponymous Borough Road school after his propensity to freely admit children who could not pay fees quickly expanded the school roster beyond the attic's capacity. With hundreds of students in attendance, Lancaster began to train a few of his students as monitors to assist him and, in 1803, he published his method for teaching hundreds of students under one roof and one schoolmaster. Lancaster was constantly fundraising for his school and proselytising his method, which was commonly referred to as either the Lancastrian or British system.[12] In his 1803 *Improvements in Education*, Lancaster had referenced Bell's earlier guide in passing but claimed to have developed his method independently. According to Andrew Bell, it was following the success of Lancaster's treatise, that Bell was called upon by the Church of England to set up a 'complete specimen of the new system of education in its original simplicity and beauty'.[13] Ultimately, each treatise was popular enough to go through numerous editions and expansions over the following decades. Since various monitorial schools were based on a multitude of these texts as well as various syntheses there was no superlative model, but the central schools run by both Lancaster and Bell were set up in largely the same way.

The schoolmaster, who could oversee 1000 students at a time, ensured the proper management and functioning of the giant, open-floor plan schoolroom. In sub-divided sections of the school, smaller classes were taught by monitors not much older than their students. Joseph Lancaster wrote that all students could be divided into two categories: those who could read a given lesson and those who could not.[14] If a student could read the lesson, he could teach that lesson to others. Each lesson was conducted by students reciting their answers one after another in a prescribed order until the lesson was complete. If a student made an error, the next one would have to correct him, and so on until that portion of the lesson was corrected. In the frontispiece of Lancaster's book, a young boy is shown

[12] Adam Laats, *Mr. Lancaster's System* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2024).

[13] Rev. Andrew Bell, 'Rev. Andrew Bell to Robert Banks Jenkinson, Lord Liverpool. Memorandum on Dr.Bell's Madras System', 1816, Add MS 38564 ff.162, British Library.

[14] Joseph Lancaster, *The Lancasterian System of Education, with Improvements* (Published for the author, and sold only at the Lancasterian Institute, 1821); Joseph Lancaster, 'Pamphlet. New and Singular Improvement in the Mode of Tuition for Youth' (c 1833), BFSS/1/5/1/2/1/1/2, Brunel University Library; Joseph Lancaster (Founder of the Lancasterian System of Education.), *Instructions for Forming and Conducting a Society for the Education of the Children of the Labouring Classes of the People, According to the General Principles of the Lancasterian ... Plan ... Second Edition, with ... Additions*, 1810.

simultaneously examining the slates of multiple boys. The slates read ‘Long Live the King’.

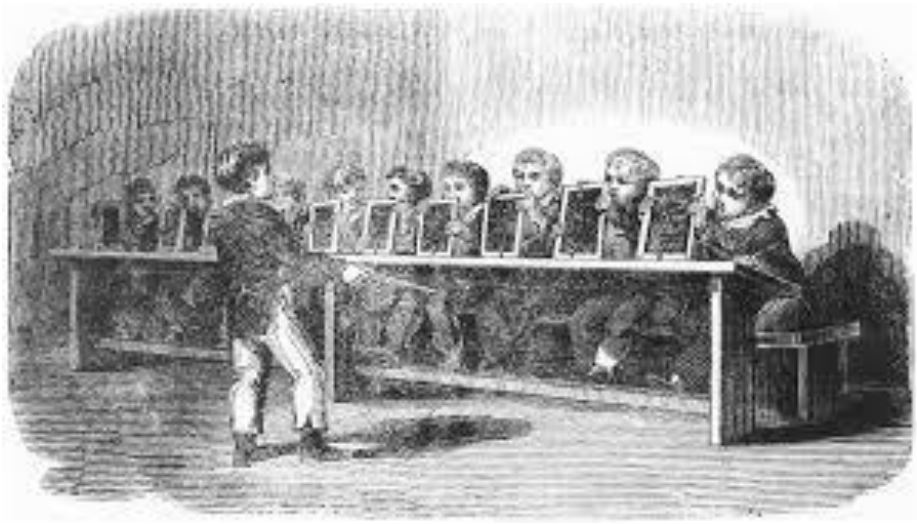

Figure 1: Frontispiece, Joseph Lancaster. *The British System of Education: Being a Complete Epitome of the Improvements and Inventions Practised at the Royal Free Schools, Borough-Road, Southwark*. London, Longman & Co, 1810.

Students were motivated by an elaborate system of merits and demerits, and progress was constantly assessed by inspections and competition, where ‘every boy is placed next to one who can do as well or better than himself: his business is to excel him […] if the boy who wears number 12 excels the boy wearing who wears number 11, he takes his place’.[15] The top student in each class received a merit ticket, a visible mark of honour one could wear like a medal. The girls’ classes functioned in much the same way, aside from the fact that the girls spent about half of their days practising needlework. Notices and records of the examinations held at London central schools on Bell and Lancaster’s systems point to analogous curricula, initially largely focused on reading, writing, and arithmetic. As the schools developed, the examinations demonstrated a wider breadth of education, predominantly for the older boys. In 1827, with Lord John Russell presiding, the advertisement promised that students would:

[15] Joseph Lancaster, *Improvements in Education, As It Respects the Industrious Classes of the Community*, 1st ed. (London: Darton and Harvey, 1803).

> Write from dictation, then some boys will show progress in maths, geometry, then geography, grammar, then the reading class questioned in scripture. Then the girls will exhibit their needlework, and the best writers their work, and then questioned on duties as servants, their knowledge of needlework and exercised in arithmetical tables, and then will read and be questioned on the holy scriptures.[16]

Both educators also stressed the importance of educating future teachers in their monitorial method at the central school. Lancaster stressed that teachers needed 'a knowledge of the theory of the system; secondly, a social, firm, kind manner of acting upon it, including the operation of their own good principles and character; thirdly a *practical acquaintance* with the system'.[17] Stressing the importance of teaching experience, Lancaster asked 'Do men learn to be good mechanics, designers, engineers, or chemists, by *mere* theory, or six weeks observation?'[18]

When establishing schools in England and especially the central school at which teachers were trained, Bell employed the same focus on repetition, competition between pupils, and attempts to employ social pressure as an alternative to corporal punishment. Subsequent publications of the two education treatises brought them closer and contemporary guides to setting up the schools use elements from each, differing only in the approach to religious instruction.[19] In subsequent publications outlining his system, Bell also began referring to his school assistants as 'monitors' and stressed 'emulation' of peers and monitors as a goal for students. Thus, while Frances Ferguson has made the argument that Bell's system fostered a stronger focus on the child as an individual, this difference was quickly eclipsed in practice.[20] In their detailed analysis of the

[16] British and Foreign School Society, 'Public Examination Notice 10/4/1827' (n.d.), BFSS/2/10, Brunel University Library.
[17] Lancaster, *The Lancasterian System of Education, with Improvements*.
[18] Lancaster.
[19] W. Buckwell, *A Small Manual ... to Assist Plain Country School Masters and Mistresses to Understand and to Adopt Dr. Bell's System of Instruction*, 1820; Nathaniel John Hollingsworth, Andrew Bell, and Joseph Lancaster, *An Address to the Public, in Recommendation of the Madras System of Education, as Invented and Practised by the Rev. Dr. Bell* (London: Printed by Law and Gilbert, 1812).
[20] Frances Ferguson, 'The Social Organization of Schools (around 1800)', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 56, no. 4 (2016): 823–43.

Kennington National School, Pamela and Harold Silver describe the school as functioning exactly like a Lancastrian monitorial school during this period.[21]

The distinction between the two societies' methods, then, was of concern to the founders' reputations, but not the motivation for the opposition of the BFSS and the NS. More than any procedural difference, the central divide between the two school models was their religious focus. Lancaster was a Quaker and insisted on the use of the Bible 'without note or comment' in his school. He argued that in this way no children would be excluded by insult to their peculiar Christian creeds.[22] The promoters and main funders of the Lancastrian system spanned a wide spectrum of dissenting beliefs which necessitated compromise in the religious instruction they promoted. Pragmatically, they believed that only a broadly Christian organisation would successfully attract poor children on a sufficient scale. Bell was an ordained Anglican minister who firmly advocated for the necessity of the schoolmaster elaborating on the principles of the established church as central to the educational project. He was supported explicitly by the Church of England, and though the NS founded on his system did not explicitly limit attendance to children of Anglican parents, they did maintain the importance of the catechism and attendance at an Anglican service on Sundays.[23]

Within the classroom, religious instruction in both systems was characterised by a call and response style of questioning. For example, the teacher or monitor would ask a question from the approved question book and the students would recite the appropriate answer. Lancaster based his scriptural

[21] Pamela Silver and Harold Silver, *The Education of the Poor: The History of the National School 1824-1974* (London: Routledge, 2007).

[22] 'no successful attempt can be made for the education of the poor unless schools should be open to the children of parents belonging to all religious persuasions and the plan of instruction be conducted upon such principles as may ensure that cooperation and union of professors of every Christian communion.' Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Minute Book 1811-1813' (28 May 1813), BFSS/1/1/1/1/3, Brunel University Library.

[23] 'That the committee are anxious to call the attention of the general committee to that last article, and particularly to that part of it, which requires instruction in our excellent liturgy and catechism and a consequent attendance on divine service on the lords day, as it is the unanimous and decided opinion of the members of the corresponding committee and they feel it their duty most strongly to declare that opinion, that if these instructions and this attendance be not absolutely required, the society will avowedly and directly abandon the great principles and ends on which the society is constituted.' 'National Society, 'Corresponding Committee Minutes Vol. 1' (9 January 1812), 13, NS/2/2/7/1, Lambeth Palace Library.

lessons on John Freame's *Scripture-Instruction* which posed questions such as 'What did the Prophet Isaiah say, concerning the coming of Christ?'. These were answered with a direct scriptural quotation, in this case Isaiah 9:6: 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given'[24] Frederic Iremonger's text, written for NS, includes questions such as 'Whom did God raise up from time to time? What did the prophets foretell?'. Students would respond 'Prophets foretold the coming of the messiahs. Isaiah was one of the most eminent of these prophets'.[25] These answers paraphrased Scripture rather than quoting directly and conformed to Anglican doctrine. On the other hand, Freame's text aimed explicitly to exclude anything that could be opposed on doctrinal grounds. While we cannot know to what extent individual teachers deviated from these guidelines, and thus how truly divergent the religious instruction in the schools proved, inspectors and visitors' testimonials demonstrate that students often memorised the answers without any awareness of the meanings of the sentences they recited.[26] While this was not the ideal level of religious engagement sought by educationalists, this method meant that the schoolmaster's adherence to the system and to the lessons particularly important. In either case, students needed to memorise the appropriate doctrine. The societies had to ensure they could guarantee schoolmasters' compliance.

A strong religious positionality, whether strictly Anglican or strictly non-denominational or dissenting was important because faith drove the bulk of educational funding. Philanthropists with a wide range of religious beliefs participated in a range of shared charitable projects and education was an increasingly popular area of charitable work. However, education funding was still generally demarcated along religious lines.[27] In the case of Lancaster, the BFSS was founded when some wealthy dissenters, William Allen, William Corston, and Joseph Fox, decided to join together to support Lancaster's

[24] John Freame, *Scripture-Instruction: Digested Into Several Sections, by Way of Question and Answer. In Order to Promite Piety and Virtue, and Discourage Vice and Immorality. With a Preface Relating to Education* (Assigns of J. Sowle, 1713).Joseph Lancaster, *The British System of Education: Being a Complete Epitome of the Improvements and Inventions Practised at the Royal Free Schools*, 1810, 14.

[25] Frederic Iremonger, *Questions for the Different Elementary Books Used in the National Schools*, 1833.

[26] National Society, 'March 3rd 1830, School Committee of the National Society, Vol. 5' (17 December 1824), 3, NS/2/2/2/1/5, Lambeth Palace Library.

[27] Elissa S. Itzkin, 'Bentham's Chrestomathia: Utilitarian Legacy to English Education', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 39, no. 2 (1978): 303–16.

education system in the 'full conviction of the incalculable benefits which not only this country but the civilised world' could derive from its expansion. They did so to save Lancaster's school society from bankruptcy as he was over £6000 in debt at the time. Their broad mission statement demonstrated their varied philanthropic interest and the need to attract a big tent of potential donors formed 'for the purpose of affording education, procuring employment, and as far as possible to furnish clothing to the children of the poorer subjects of King George III, and also to diffuse the providential discovery of vaccine inoculation'.[28] The stated initial purpose of the society reveals that founders' attitudes about the ultimate goals of their philanthropy. Many of the original founders of the BFSS were Quakers and funding was largely driven by religious networks. Within that, however, educationalists were also broadly social reformers interested in tackling the problem of urban poverty through providing food and clothing to children and public health measures like inoculations. The school was a space that allowed for an intersection of these goals. The committee solicited subscriptions and controlled the funds while Lancaster had 'full liberty' over the superintendence of education in all schools 'except where expenses are to be incurred'.[29]

Meanwhile, under the patronage of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Bell organised schools on his system first at the parochial schools of Whitechapel and Lambeth and then at the Royal Military Asylum. In 1811, top Anglican officials and various noble benefactors founded the NS explicitly 'founded on the idea of making the national religion the foundation of national education'.[30] Lancaster's London school had been established first and though several schools on each model were being set up, according to the Mayor, 'Mr. Lancaster's system greatly prevail[ed]'.[31] The Society believed that Lancaster's schools would 'alienate the minds of the people from it [the established church] and [would] prove fatal to the church and to the state itself'.[32] If the NS prevailed instead, they believed there would be 'no occasion for new schemes, or new machines, or new influence'.[33] Bell's personal fame and reputation rivaled Lancaster's and he had received the

[28] Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Minute Book Vol.1' (1808), 22 January 1808, BFSS/1/1/1/1/1, Brunel University Library.
[29] Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Minute Book Vol.1'.
[30] National Society, 'General Committee Minute Book Vol.1' (1815 1812), NS/2/2/1/1/1, Lambeth Palace Library.
[31] National Society, 54–56.
[32] National Society, 'General Committee Minute Book Vol.1'.
[33] National Society, 'Committee of Enquiry and Correspondence' (1838), NS/2/2/8/1, Lambeth Palace Library.

approval of important pedagogues and intellectuals such as Trimmer and Samuel Coleridge.[34] The growth of Lancaster's school and the formation of the BFSS around it had quickly been identified as a threat to Anglican educationalists. The NS was therefore, in large part, reactionary. Bell was the answer to Lancaster's success and once begun it grew even more rapidly.

As the system spread, the rivalry between the BFSS and the NS grew which stood to benefit both parties. The BFSS was pleased to quote at length a letter from Halifax in 1812 stating that though a school on Bell's system had been opened, the inhabitants had resolved to abandon it and establish one on 'more liberal principles', particularly with regards to mandated church attendance.[35] While a novelty in Halifax, across England both societies sought to affiliate schools anywhere their rivals were present. In 1831, John Hull, a BFSS school inspector, reported that in the country, the national schools were 'beggarly, and detested by both parents and children'.[36] Writing to Henry Dunn, the BFSS secretary, Hull reported that a parson in Mill End had taken Bibles away from students who had left the national school and gone to theirs, but that attendance continued to increase.[37] The two societies also competed in the press, through public lectures, by courting wealthy benefactors, and by establishing rival schools.

In 1814, the BFSS proposed a plan to unite the national and Lancastrian schools in small towns or places with limited funds and suggested this to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Royal Free School at Canterbury was struggling to compete with the Canterbury Diocesan School, which was affiliated with the NS. The BFSS applied to the Archbishop via his Highness the Duke of Kent, requesting that Catholic and Dissenting students be admitted into the school but not made to recite the catechism. The Archbishop refused. In their annual report, the BFSS quoted the NS's claim to accept 'children of all denominations of Christians' in support of which 'Society churchmen and Sectaries' contributed

[34] Satya S. Pachori, 'Dr. Andrew Bell and Coleridge's Lectures on Education', *The Journal of General Education* 35, no. 1 (1983): 26–37; Ferguson, 'The Social Organization of Schools (around 1800)'.

[35] Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Minute Book Vol.2' (1812), 257, BFSS/1/1/1/1/2, Brunel University Library.

[36] 'John Hull to Henry Dunn, Agents' and Inspectors' Correspondence' (Hillingdon, 1 July 1831), BFSS/1/1/7/4, Brunel University Library.

[37] 'John Hull to Henry Dunn, Agents' and Inspectors' Correspondence'.

donations.[38] This was a clear-cut fundraising strategy and the BFSS argued that there was a need for 'an Institution which provides schools for all'.[39]

In financial terms, the two societies were not on equal footing. The prominent funders on the dissenting side in the BFSS were outspent fairly easily by the contributions of the Prince Regent, the Queen, the Duke of York, more than twenty bishops, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and so forth.[40] In their 1818 report, the NS reported a total income of £10738 and an equivalent expenditure, of which £450 was spent on payments to training masters and £2600 on grants to affiliated schools.[41] The BFSS reported an income of £2535, of which £270 was spent on board and clothing for the training masters and over £40 on grants of books and lessons. None was spent on affiliated schools.[42] Ultimately, this meant that the NS was able to affiliate or help institute a much higher number of schools across England.

However, the competition between the societies extended well beyond English borders. From the outset, both Bell and Lancaster entertained global ambitions for their systems. Bell's original school was the male asylum in Madras and he wrote in his first *Experiment on Education* treatise: 'It is the grand aim of this seminary to instill into these children every principle fitting for good subjects, good men, good Christians; …in such habits as may render them most useful to their patrons and benefactors.' In publishing the treatise, he suggested the extension of this influence to other such subjects across the empire.[43] Lancaster's own promotional materials for his lectures and speaking tours advertised that 'His

[38] *Report of the Committee to the General Meeting of The British and Foreign School Society, November 1814* (The Royal Free School, London: Longman and co., 1815), 24.

[39] *Report of the Committee to the General Meeting of The British and Foreign School Society, November 1814*, 27.

[40] National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church, *Annual Report of the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church* (Printed at the Free-School, Gower's Walk, Whitechapel, 1818). In 1818, the Queen donated £650, and Oxford and Cambridge donated £1300 a piece.

[41] National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church.

[42] *Report of the British and Foreign School Society to the General Meeting, July 2, 1818, with an Appendix.* (Royal Free School, Borough Road: Longman and co., 1818).

[43] Bell, *An Experiment in Education, Made at the Male Asylum of Madras. Suggesting a System by Which a School Or Family May Teach Itself Under the Superintendance of the Master Or Parent. By the Reverend Dr. Andrew Bell, ...*

Object and desire is, and has always been, EDUCATION for THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE, as general as the dew, or the light of Heaven'.[44]

Both took the publicity dimension of their work very seriously by hosting and corresponding with diplomats, nobles, and educationalists from the Russian Empire to Haiti. Both were engaged in the nineteenth century equivalent of building their brand. The BFSS was quick to point out that while the NS limited its operations to England and Wales, their system could be expanded to Scotland, Ireland, and abroad.[45] Patrick Ressler describes both societies as engaged in pedagogical marketing and acting as 'educational franchisers'.[46] The society's brand was best represented by the schoolmaster and their credentials from the society's central school. As the central schools' numbers grew, the schoolmasters and schoolmistresses became the representatives of the system beyond the schools' doors, not only as exemplary products of the monitorial system and recruitment tools for potential students and donors, but also as information nodes connecting local communities back to London.

Once the central schools began to train schoolmasters, both societies received requests to send them across the world, from Quebec to the Cape Colony to Bombay to Russia.[47] The breadth of imperial activities at these metropolitan central schools were ambitious; they allowed missionaries to train at their schools, they sent schoolmasters and school supplies abroad, and they boasted about their wide reach in their annual reports. Even their domestic work served this larger imperial purpose. John Hull remarked that 'If Englishmen were well educated, they would emigrate and spread civilisation and improvement over the world'.[48] The two societies also accepted a few students from the colonies to be trained at their schools. Between 1813 and 1815, the Society of Saint Patrick, which was hosting Irish boys studying to be schoolmasters at Borough Road, also

[44] Lancaster, 'Pamphlet. New and Singular Improvement in the Mode of Tuition for Youth'

[45] *Report of the Committee to the General Meeting of The British and Foreign School Society, November 1814*.

[46] Patrick Ressler, 'Marketing Pedagogy: Nonprofit Marketing and the Diffusion of Monitorial Teaching in the Nineteenth Century', *Paedagogica Historica* 49, no. 3 (1 June 2013): 297–313.

[47] Further requests to both societies include Newfoundland, Montreal, St. Helena, Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad, the Kingdom of Haiti, Guatemala, Venezuela, Mauritius, New South Wales, New Zealand, Madras, Ceylon, Sweden, Denmark, and Ireland.

[48] 'John Hull to Salter, Agents' and Inspectors' Correspondence' (Gloster Coffee House, Hillingdon, 17 July 1827), BFSS/1/1/7/4, Brunel University Library.

boarded four boys from the African institution in Sierra Leone.[49] At the same time, the Church Missionary Society was training their missionaries at Baldwin Gardens before they also left for Sierra Leone.[50] Later, in 1816, Bell remarked that 'Few have ever lived to see the works of their hands flourish and spread to the same degree, with so well grounded a promise of their speedy extension to the utmost boundaries of the habitable world'.[51]

At the centre of these apparently magnificent changes were the teachers who were trained in the central schools to subsequently transform their local populations. This belief was shared by both societies and, in each case, highlighted the importance of teacher training. Each claimed they could receive a pupil from rural England, Ireland, or Jamaica and after attending the school they would be transformed into model English subjects. In 1819, a young man returned 'to his native country of Africa', likely the Cape Colony or Sierra Leone, after spending two and a half months at the NS school. In that time, it had bestowed upon him 'an excellent character'.[52] In some cases, the extent of the imperial connections was ephemeral and tenuous. For example, a missionary might train for a few weeks and leave. Or, a teacher might be sent out to a posting and return prematurely. Additionally, as was often the case in the colonial context, a teacher might be sent out but ultimately die within months or even prior to arrival.[53] However, in some cases, as with the BFSS in Ireland, the connections were deep, long lasting, and significant. Lancaster had a particular interest in Irish education. He travelled to Ireland to give popular lectures on education and raised subscriptions for Lancastrian schools in Ireland. He took on young Irish boys and trained them to be schoolmasters at a boarding house in Tooting until the BFSS forced him to surrender all his students to the Borough Road college and boarding house. He also sent John Veveers, one of his earliest students, to the Kildare Place Society in Dublin, an educational charity for the poor.[54] Veveers went on to become the Society's school inspector and exercised influence over the

[49] Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Minute Book Vol.2', 425.
[50] National Society, 'Register of Masters (No. 2)' (1846 1843), NS/7/6/1/3/1, Lambeth Palace Library.
[51] Bell, 'Rev. Andrew Bell to Robert Banks Jenkinson, Lord Liverpool. Memorandum on Dr. Bell's Madras System', 1816.
[52] National Society, 'School Committee [Minute] Book' (24 April 1818), 128, NS/2/2/2/1/3, Lambeth Palace Library.
[53] 'Letter from Thomas Jesty to Pratt: 27 March 1819: Freetown' (1819), CMS/B/OMS/C A1 E7A/18, Church Mission Society Archive.
[54] Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Minute Book Vol.2', 182.

development of Ireland's national education system, the first in the British Empire.

While the two founders of the societies were hugely important for soliciting initial donations, and for establishing an authoritative claim to pedagogical innovation, both societies quickly distanced the founders from the day-to-day activities in the schools. Bell and Lancaster were initially given full power to examine and approve candidates but eventually spent significant time away from their school. This duty was quickly and permanently delegated to the local headmasters: Mr. Johnson at Baldwin Gardens and Mr. Pickton at Borough Road.[55] Lancaster's ongoing financial troubles precipitated his separation from the BFSS as did accusations of physical abuse against some of his pupils. This was particularly damning since one of the core principles of the Lancastrian system was a move away from corporal punishment. Initially, Lancaster tried to maintain a separate school and boarding house at Tooting, but ultimately the committee required Lancaster to close both and refused to readmit the students until he cancelled the personal indentures he held with each of the boys. By 1814, following his falling out with the committee, Lancaster had been fully removed from the organisation, which was subsequently renamed.[56] After Lancaster was removed the committee was given 'paramount power' over the institution and 'undivided authority' over each person affiliated with the BFSS.[57]

For his part, Bell maintained a much longer connection to the NS although he was often away on lecture tours and was not involved in the school's day-to-day activities. Instead, decisions for the school were made by the school committee and later communicated to Bell for his knowledge, rather than approval.[58] In both cases, control over the schools and pedagogical authority shifted quickly from the personal influence of Bell and Lancaster to the societies.

[55] Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Annual Report, Minutes Vol. 2' (1812), BFSS/1/1/1/1/2, Brunel University Library.

[56] Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Minutes at a Meeting with His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, Minutes Vol.2' (13 August 1813), BFSS/1/1/1/1/2, Brunel University Library.

[57] Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Minute Book Vol.2', 425.

[58] National Society, 'The School Committee of the National Society Minutes Vol. 1' (24 January 1812), NS/2/2/2/1/1, Lambeth Palace Library; National Society, 'August 9th 1816 Meeting, School Committee of the National Society, Minutes Vol. 2' (27 October 1815), NS/2/2/2/1/2, Lambeth Palace Library; National Society, '27th Feb 1828, School Committee of the National Society, Vol. 5' (17 December 1824), NS/2/2/2/1/5, Lambeth Palace Library.

In the first decade of operation, both institutions greatly expanded. As they took on control of the central schools, the general and school committees simultaneously grew their outward reach. Teachers proved central to each organisation's expansion. Both societies were trying to grow their influence by bringing as many schools as possible under their banner. The structure of the BFSS did not extend beyond its committee and the Borough Road school. While it corresponded with schools all over the world, it could not directly govern or oversee them. And although the NS was better connected by virtue of their affiliation with the Anglican diocese, technically they existed as an independent organisation and as such, did not have the ability to directly oversee individual schools. Instead, both societies outlined what conformity entailed. For the BFSS, it published a manual for how to set up a Lancastrian school. Central to its message was the use of the Bible without note or comment. It counted those correspondents professing to follow the system as affiliated with them.[59] The NS published their criteria such as not teaching any texts not published by the SPCK and counted on their list those schools who sent them their conforming rules and regulations along with a desire to affiliate.[60] In exchange, schools were promised support, potential funding, and access to schoolmasters or to training for their existing schoolmasters. Paradoxically, the BFSS also hoped to use affiliated local education societies to raise funds for the central body. Even with a much higher level of funding, the NS faced significant financial challenges and neither society was able to take on funding the hundreds of new schools that were built. Though they were constantly turning down requests for financial support, and depended on local funding for school construction, the societies could continue to exert control through the supply of schoolmasters and schoolmistresses.

Ultimately, both societies turned to their schoolmasters as their eyes, ears, and enforcers. BFSS trained teachers might be hired by a school and subsequently adjust it to make it conform to the society's rules. For example, by removing the church catechism as a school text and allowing attendance at a dissenting chapel on Sundays.[61] In 1815, the NS resolved that all training masters sent out on temporary assignments to schools were required to present written reports on

[59] National Society, 'Corresponding Committee Minutes Vol. 1'; Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Minute Book Vol.2'.
[60] National Society, 'Corresponding Committee Minutes Vol. 1'.
[61] Committee of the Royal Lancastrian Institution, 'Saunders to Henry Dunn', 1833, BFSS/1/1/1/1/2, Brunel University Library.

those schools upon their return.[62] A few years later, the reports became mandatory for the schoolmasters and mistresses wishing to receive their pay and the reports became standardised by requiring details on pupils' church attendance.

In addition to schoolmasters' reports, both the BFSS and the NS also made use of school inspectors. In the case of the NS, inspectors were recommended as early as 1813. They were described as 'persons duly qualified to examine the mode in which [the schools] are conducted and the degree of perfection of the madras system practiced'.[63] Thus, the inspectors had to be members of the NS's committee or else trained at the central institution. This was the situation at the BFSS as well, where the first inspector, appointed in the mid-1810s, was a volunteer member of the committee. Subsequent inspectors were trained schoolmasters. The BFSS inspectors travelled not only to ensure schools were following the Lancastrian system, but also to encourage, fundraise, establish new schools, give public lectures on the merits of the system, and to take over and correct schools they found in bad shape. However, inspectors had to be paid for their extensive travels and would have been perceived as intrusive or an outside imposition on the local community. Schoolmasters were often sent from their local community to train in London and then returned home to teach. This allowed both societies to extend their influence without appearing to override local authorities and local school committees.[64]

The NS maintained their network of teachers by controlling their professional reputations and their teaching appointments. The general committee was quick to dismiss teachers or to unaffiliate schools who arranged their appointments separately. In 1837, the committee reiterated that any personal communications between managers of schools with masters and mistresses in training were strictly prohibited and 'all overtures…be made through the medium of the committee only'.[65] They also did not allow any of their schoolmasters to take on additional employment. For example, Thomas Mumford was dismissed for charging students in exchange for providing additional instruction in

[62] National Society, 'Dec 1st 1815 Meeting, School Committee of the National Society, Minutes Vol.2' (27 October 1815), NS/2/2/2/1/2, Lambeth Palace Library.
[63] National Society, 'March 26th 1813 Meeting, The School Committee of the National Society Minutes Vol. 1' (24 January 1812), NS/2/2/2/1/1, Lambeth Palace Library.
[64] National Society, 26.
[65] National Society, '13th April 1837 Meeting, The School Committee of the National Society Minutes Vol. 6' (15 January 1835), NS/2/2/2/1/8, Lambeth Palace Library.

arithmetic.[66] Once sent out to their posts, teachers were expected to remain there unless called back, to avoid the displeasure of the committee, and the possible removal from the teaching list, which controlled all appointments within the national system.[67] Once removed from the list, candidates could not be readmitted, even, as in one instance, with the support of the Archdeacon of Cambridge.[68]

The NS also took a further step in exerting control over the teaching profession. From its inception, the NS contributed to the Schoolmasters Society, a benevolent society for schoolmasters. Working with the society, which requested their patronage, the NS agreed to provide pecuniary aid to the society if they changed their name to 'the society of schoolmasters upon the Madras system, under the patronage and protection of the national system'.[69] This meant that schoolmasters working under the BFSS system had to either set up their own societies or forfeit the security for themselves in old age or for their families in case of their death.

In many ways, the purpose of cultivating a new, modern class of schoolmasters lay in this network and in the oversight and continuous influence the societies could exercise through their teachers. Lancaster argued that schoolmasters were not mushrooms springing up out of nowhere, but, in fact, they were somewhat like mushrooms in the sense that they were spread out over vast distances, connected by a network invisible to the naked eye, and yet powerfully shaping their ecosystem. Unlike the rhizomatic networks of fungi, schoolmasters were closely tied into the central nucleus of their respective societies. The ideal schoolmaster attracted students, maintained a positive relationship with the local population, and most importantly, sent back regular communications to London. Based on teacher's manuals published by Bell, Lancaster, the BFSS, the NS, and various syntheses of their systems, the schoolmaster had more in common with a manager than a pedagogue. In 1806, Patrick Colquhoun, a Scottish merchant, statistician, and founder of the Thames police, wrote his own education treatise based on Bell's system. In it, he wrote that 'the province of the master or mistress is to direct the whole machine in all its parts…it is their business to see that others

[66] National Society, 'School Committee Minute Book Vol. 4' (June 1821), 169, NS/2/2/2/1/4, Lambeth Palace Library.
[67] National Society, '13th April 1837 Meeting, The School Committee of the National Society Minutes Vol. 6', 192.
[68] National Society, 'School Committee Minute Book Vol. 4', 215.
[69] National Society, 'Corresponding Committee Minutes Vol. 1'.

work, rather than work themselves'.[70] In 1818, the committee of the NS drew up a precise list of rules for the schoolmistress which included not attending to individuals, but rather to 'look over the whole collectively' and see that her assistants 'understand and do their duty'.[71]

Both the BFSS and the NS prescribed rigid models for which books schoolmasters could use, how the school day should be organised, and even how attendance should be recorded. These rigid models were an intentional departure from the earlier model of an independent schoolmaster. While schoolmasters in parish and charity schools required a license from their minister, volunteer Sunday schoolmasters could teach as they wished and day schoolmasters could charge and teach according to their skills and the demand for their services. In her critique of the Lancastrian system, Trimmer saw the schoolmaster as following the description in James Talbots' *The Christian School-master,* someone who confirmed *'with himself* whether he is duly qualified for it' (emphasis mine). The schoolmistress was meant to be inspired by works such as Talbot's to understand her duties and could study independently from a variety of books designed to instruct her. Lancaster, as we saw in the opening quotation, believed that schoolmistresses and masters should instead be trained and officially qualified according to the specific plan he had outlined. Much like how many of Lancaster's initial schoolmasters-in-training were personally indentured as his apprentices, Trimmer suggested training schoolmasters on either Talbot's plan or Bell's version of the monitorial system and then apprenticing them to more experienced schoolmasters. Following this, Trimmer suggested the student might "engage himself as an assistant" before, at a proper age, having weighed the importance of his charge he would 'submit to the examination of the parochial minister and the trustees of the school' and 'pledge himself to the constitution in church and state'.[72] Trimmer acknowledged that the system she described had not proven sufficient. She saw the mechanical aspects of Lancaster's system as a benefit but wanted to see them enshrined within a school structure where the

[70] Patrick Colquhoun, *A New and Appropriate System of Education for the Labouring People: Elucidated and Explained, According to the Plan Which Has Been Established for the Religious and Moral Instruction of Male and Female Children, Admitted Into the Free School, No. 19, Orchard Street, in the City of Westminster* (Savage and Easingwood, 1806).

[71] National Society, 'June 19th, 1818 Meeting. School Committee Minute Book' (24 April 1818), NS/2/2/2/1/3, Lambeth Palace Library.

[72] Trimmer, *A Comparative View of the New Plan of Education Promulgated by Mr Joseph Lancaster*.

schoolmaster remained under the authority of the minister. Lancaster had redesigned the instruction in his school but followed a conservative apprenticeship model not far from what Trimmer described. The transition to committee control over the central school also involved a shift in the authority of qualifying teachers.

Trimmer's attempt to integrate monitorial education into her vision of the ideal schoolmistress demonstrates how the schoolteacher embodied the central promise and contradiction of monitorial schooling. Mechanical education itself was not a problem. Trimmer argued that the '*mechanical part* of Mr. L's plan must be approved by all who are advocates for the instruction of the rising generation of the labouring people'. Both Lancaster and Bell described their systems as operating like steam engines, conveying efficiency and progress, and not the inevitability of unthinking rote-learning the analogy may conjure for the modern reader. Cheap, replicable education was a goal shared by reformers across religious and political divides. Monitorial education did receive these criticisms, but it was not a foregone conclusion, and the pedagogical training goals espoused by its founders were much more ambitious.

Lancaster described the training schoolmasters should receive as follows.

> The best information of the various modes of tuition practised in the lower or superior seminaries, as they relate to the simple objects of the proposed institution, should be gleaned from every field. The best authors should be read, and remarks made by the instructor and students; lectures should be frequently read on education, or subjects connected with it; the students should be required to answer questions unprepared, and viva voce; the simple answers to which should naturally be the echo of the lecture; by this means accustoming the youth to exercise their attention on the subject before them…when the young men are in training for this important employment, they should have an ample knowledge of its theory, and at all events be taught actually to reduce it to practice; to understand the reason of every operation and have it nature explained while practicing it.[73]

[73] Lancaster, *A Letter to John Foster, Esq., Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland, on the Best Means of Educating and Employing the Poor, in That Country*. Trimmer was once again astute when she remarked that 'the simplicity of this plan vanishes out of sight, when such a comprehensive preparation is brought forward'.

When the societies initially took charge of the central schools, training mainly consisted of serving as monitors in the central schools. In both cases, candidates for admission were required to present testimonials to their good moral and religious conduct from their ministers or preachers.[74] There were many similarities between the institutions' concern for the moral virtue of their candidates. In both cases, the candidates were eventually required to reside at their respective boarding houses and required the committee's permission which was, at times, withheld to live elsewhere. The committee could keep an eye on their students and reprimand them for immoral behaviour outside of school. This was the case when multiple candidates at the NS, male and female, were reprimanded for attending a water party followed by a dance.[75] Another student was removed following a report of a 'want of sobriety'.[76] In many cases, schoolmasters were questioned, reprimanded, and suspended from the school following reports of violence and corporal punishment in their classes.[77] In another instance, Mary Jones Pirce was removed from the candidates for schoolmistress due to being 'impudent and violent in her conduct and language'.[78]

Though no detailed records of the early entrance examinations survive, in both societies, they also included some assessment of academic ability. The NS records mention several instances when candidates were turned away because they were insufficiently proficient. They followed these rejections with letters to their diocese noting that the school was designed to train schoolmasters, not to instruct them in reading and writing. In the case of Mary Nixon who was admitted to the NS school in 1819, her poor orthography led to her expulsion.[79] The BFSS also noted multiple candidates whose applications were discouraged although they did not specify their specific criteria or reasoning.[80]

[74] National Society, 'The School Committee of the National Society Minutes Vol. 1'.
[75] National Society, 'August 9th 1816 Meeting, School Committee of the National Society, Minutes Vol. 2'.
[76] National Society, '11th April 1839 Meeting, School Committee of the National Society, Vol. 5' (15 January 1835), 35, NS/2/2/2/1/8, Lambeth Palace Library.
[77] National Society, '11th April 1839 Meeting, School Committee of the National Society, Vol. 5'.
[78] National Society, '15th June 1827 Meeting, School Committee Minute Book Vol. 4' (June 1821), NS/2/2/2/1/4, Lambeth Palace Library.
[79] National Society, 'Jan 15th 1819 Meeting, School Committee Minute Book' (24 April 1818), NS/2/2/2/1/3, Lambeth Palace Library.
[80] British and Foreign School Society, 'General Minutes Commencing October 1830' (1835 1830), BFSS/1/1/1/1/5, Brunel University Library.

Surviving evidence of the candidate's proficiency dates to 1840. Initially, the entries were very brief.[81] The NS recorded the candidate's abilities upon entering and leaving the school in straightforward terms. Ann Hogg attended the Baldwin Gardens school at aged 22 between February and April 1840. Although she initially '[wrote] rather badly, [read] tolerably' and '[spelled] incorrectly', on leaving the school she '[wrote] rather better than at first, her reading not much improved', and still '[spelled] incorrectly'. Masters in training received slightly more detailed entries. For example, Henry Grumbold, aged 27, was described as 'reads well, writes a fair hand, spells correctly, scriptural history fair, liturgy pretty fair, doctrine – sound but not intelligent, arithmetic- proportion, composition moderate, misc- a little grammar – general intelligence fair, previous occupation – a teacher – has been above one month in training and has conducted himself in such a manner as to warrant any recommending his being promoted to master qualifying for a situation'.

These entries do not demonstrate a dramatic transformation in the students' abilities before they were qualified as schoolmasters. Despite the, ultimately, modest gains in academic achievement, over the first decades of their establishment the moral and academic standards at both institutions were elaborated and expanded. Missionary societies continued to send students to their schools in preparation for their mission, meaning that this was a desirable option and conferred some level of legitimacy despite the lacklustre results.[82] Ambitious educational goals were tempered by the circumstances of the students themselves, the high demand for teachers, and the expenses associated with the central schools. Students in each of the schools varied widely in age, work experience, and geographic origin. Schoolmasters sent to train from the country varied widely in ability and the previous occupations of other candidates were hugely diverse. They included a former Catholic priest, servant, joiner, policeman, gardener, and confectioner.[83] Schoolmasters in training also ranged in age from as young as 17 to as old as 45. On top of the difficulty of training schoolmasters with divergent experiences, the constant demand for schoolmasters meant that there was considerable pressure on the central institutions to train and send out candidates quickly. This meant tenures at the school tended to be as short as possible. Finally,

[81] National Society, 'Register: Mistresses from Schools in Union to Learn the System (Vol. I)' (1850 1840), NS/7/6/1/2/1, Lambeth Palace Library. National Society, 'Register of Masters (No. 2)'.
[82] Dornan, '"Book Don't Feed Our Children"'.
[83] National Society, 'Register of Masters (No. 2)'.

the teaching institutions were expensive. In addition to the higher salaries required for the head schoolmaster and mistress, both societies paid or subsidised lodging for their students. The NS also paid salaries to their highest level of schoolmasters in training. By 1821, the BFSS had trained over 225 schoolmasters and 130 schoolmistresses.[84] Though my count is based on the available NS records, which are less precise, they certainly trained a greater number than the BFSS, sending out about 100 teachers per year by 1830. The output at the BFSS school also increased in this period, but it is likely that the NS trained upwards of twice the number of teachers.

Despite the many obstacles, specific academic requirements were gradually elaborated. In 1816, every master in training at Baldwin Gardens rotated 2-3 times through each class in the school, spending no fewer than 3 full days in each.[85] In 1821, at the request of the school committee, Bell created a proposal explicitly focused on the training of the masters, suggesting certain classes be set aside for that explicit purpose, focusing on phonics and the alphabet, spelling and reading, and more advanced tracts.[86] The following year, the candidates had to advance through 3 newly created tiers to be considered fully trained: probation, candidates for situations, and masters on the pay list. A decade later, the NS ordered the schoolmasters to begin training and studying 3 evenings a week to prepare for Mr. Johnson's examinations on Saturdays.[87] Finally in 1841, the NS further clarified that before moving off the probationary list, all masters and mistresses had to receive a certificate from Mr. Coleridge regarding their general proficiency, and Mr. Moody regarding their "proficiency in the art of teaching."[88] This second certificate, focused on pedagogy, was among the first of its kind in Britain.[89] Despite the consistent requests for teachers from affiliated schools, these certificates were not guaranteed and multiple students were told

[84] National Society.
[85] National Society, 'August 9th 1816 Meeting, School Committee of the National Society, Minutes Vol. 2'.
[86] National Society, 'July 20th 1821 Meeting, School Committee Minute Book Vol. 4' (June 1821), NS/2/2/2/1/4, Lambeth Palace Library.
[87] National Society, '20th Sept 1833, School Committee of the National Society, Vol. 5' (3 December 1824), NS/2/2/2/1/5, Lambeth Palace Library.
[88] National Society, '13th May 1841 Meeting, The School Committee of the National Society' (1843 1840), NS/2/2/2/1/10, Brunel University Library.
[89] There is no direct corollary for the BFSS. I'm working to track down the founders' papers and the missionaries that trained there and will also look at their later records to see if there are any notes on what was retained and what the school looked like before.

that they could not be recommended for a situation and asked to leave the school.[90]

Scholars have argued that the government's involvement in education in Britain occurred so late because of the dominant position of these societies. However, the influence of this period on the state's involvement has not been fully explored. While the monitorial moment ended, its influence, and that of the BFSS and the NS, persisted. In Britain and the British Empire, state-run education was mapped onto the existing foundations built by these groups. Their reach in the arena of teacher training was already evident in the first decades of the twentieth century.

The evolution of the schoolmaster across the British Empire was initiated and fostered by the competition between these central schools and by their roles as the interlocutors between the central institutions and the hundreds of schools that received their teachers. In their attempts to control the religious character of national and imperial education, both societies identified teachers as the most effective instrument for achieving these goals. The creation of state-run education was an imperial problem from the outset, shaped by the ambitions of the BFSS and the NS, and initially implemented in teacher training institutes. Their networks of teachers survived well into the era of national education, and in this critical way the British Empire inherited the education landscape private reformers built.

[90] National Society, '23rd November 1827 Meeting, School Committee of the National Society, Vol. 5' (17 December 1824), NS/2/2/2/1/5, Lambeth Palace Library.

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