woman's high calling

the teaching profession in america, 1830-1860

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Americans assume today that school teaching at the primary and elementary level is women's work. Yet the basis of this assumption, its sources in the educational reform movement of the period 1830-1860, has been largely ignored by students of American culture. The thousands of young women who entered what was then a new profession, school teaching, have received little notice by historians or educators. Page Smith in his recent historical survey of American women, *Daughters of the Promised Land* (Boston, 1970), devotes a lengthy chapter to women's missionary work for the Protestant churches, but scarcely a line to the far more significant role of women in staffing this nation's public schools. Nor have historians of education given more than passing attention to this important development.[1] Nevertheless, by their willingness to answer the demand for teachers and their belief in the capacity of schools to bring about cultural progress, the young women who entered the teaching profession in these years literally made possible a comprehensive system of public schools. What follows will be a preliminary survey of the manner in which teaching became one of the most important and useful professions for women in the nineteenth century.

The antecedents of women teachers lie much further in the past than the 1830s, in times when education was chiefly informal, an inherent part of the child-rearing process rather than the concern of a distinct series of institutions or a separate profession of teachers. Women have had a major role in educating children from prehistoric times and this role continued in the American colonies. Explicit definition came to this role through the institution of dame schools in some colonies, where "dame" teachers instructed little boys and girls in letters and ciphering.[2] Strictly speaking, however, no distinct profession of school teachers existed during the colonial period. Although a few men spent their lives as educators,

most teachers had other professions in mind, in the church or the law, and kept school only temporarily.

In the wake of the Revolution came a quickened interest in education and, after 1800, a rapid expansion of private academies and female seminaries. These institutions varied immensely in quality, but they served to offer opportunities to young women for formal instruction and for teaching. To some extent the seminaries prepared women to act as teachers of district schools, although their primary purpose was not teacher training. They set precedents for women's education, but more important for the school reform movement, they demonstrated that females could be competent instructors in a formal, institutional setting. When the movement to improve the public schools took hold in the 1820s and '30s, leading reformers could point to women teachers and pupils in the female seminaries as qualified instructors for common schools. Sentiment, need, and economics dictated that women would be the principal members of the new teaching profession.

Sentiment, as exhibited in an immense outpouring of popular, genteel literature and reflected in widespread attitudes toward women, emphasized the religious duties and susceptibilities, the purity and innocence, the submissiveness and passivity, and the domestic responsibilities of females.[3] Motherhood was woman's crowning glory, but teaching followed closely, as reflected by this statement of Governor William H. Seward:

> They are the natural guardians of the young. Their abstraction from the engrossing cares of life affords them leisure both to acquire and communicate knowledge. From them the young more willingly receive it, because the severity of discipline is relieved with greater tenderness and affection, while their more quick apprehension, enduring patience, expansive benevolence, higher purity, more delicate taste, and elevated moral feelings qualify them for excellence in all departments of learning, except perhaps the exact sciences.[4]

Even more than politicians, school reformers lavished eloquence on the special capacities of women to teach. According to Horace Mann, "if there be a true appreciation, by the female teacher, of the station she holds, of the power she wields, of the destinies she helps to decide, of the fountains of happiness, it is her privilege to open, and of the sources of misery, it is her prerogative to close, then there is no station, or office, or dignity, known among men,—save that of the mother, only,—which outranks hers in importance."[5]

Coexisting with these Victorian attitudes was a critical need for teachers. Observers of the schools during the 1820s complained that district teachers were generally poorly qualified men who planned as soon as they could afford it to leave teaching. They had no permanent interest in teaching, but found it profitable for one or two terms. "So many oppor-

tunities are open for industrious enterprise, that it has always been difficult to induce men to become permanent teachers," declared a spokesman in the *American Journal of Education* in 1826.[6] Reformers saw both a quantitative and qualitative need for teachers, and only a resort to women would remedy the situation. "How shall we get good teachers for our district schools?" asked Thomas Gallaudet:

> While we should encourage our young men to enter upon this patriotic, and I had almost said, missionary field of duty, and present much higher inducements to engage them to do so, I believe every one must admit, that there is but little hope of attaining *the full supply* from that sex. This will always be difficult, so long as there are so many other avenues open in our country to the accumulation of property, and the attaining of distinction.[7]

Educators must look to the "other sex" to supply a qualified body of teachers, he reasoned.

While the reformers could not agree on the magnitude of the need, they did unite in crying out for teachers. One prestigious journal estimated in 1833 that an increasing population was poorly served by its schools, with 1,400,000 children "destitute of common instruction." According to this survey a shortage of more than 30,000 teachers probably existed and, with an increasing school-age population, an annual increment of 10,000 teachers would be "indispensible for years to come."[8] Five years later another reformer urged that 80,000 additional teachers be provided for the common schools.[9] While this figure may have been exaggerated an examination of educational statistics suggests the rapid growth of the schools. Census figures show a public school enrollment of more than 3,350,000 in 1850 that increased to nearly 5 million ten years later.[10] These figures do not account for additional hundreds of thousands of school-age children not attending school. In Massachusetts, with one of the most comprehensive public school systems, the number of students increased by more than fifty per cent between 1840 and 1860. During the same period the number of women teachers more than doubled.[11]

Mere numbers of teachers would not suffice. A recurrent theme in the educational literature is the need for able, qualified, virtuous and professional school keepers. "To be a good instructor," asserted the *Common School Assistant*, "requires as much knowledge of human nature, as uniform a government over ourselves, and as complete a mastery of the respective studies, as it does to be a good preacher. . . . Teaching should be a distinct profession."[12] At the same time they set out to attract women into teaching, the educational leaders took steps to insure that the new profession would be self-governing and self-perpetuating through specialized training and apprenticeship, and control of access by licensing procedures. In striving for adequate and systematic compensation, establishing status and prestige with respect to other professions, setting

standards for performance and founding formal means of communication—conventions, institutes, journals—the schoolmen put their professional aspirations into practice.

Women were essential to this program, however, for the educators saw that the greatest advantage they could claim for reform was economy. It became the standard argument in the late 1830s and '40s that women would teach for less money than men. Fortunately for a population that seemed to count dollars spent on schooling as dollars lost, women seemed to be actuated by motivations that had little to do with material rewards or wordly acclaim. The good female teacher would look for her reward "in the secret depths of her own soul, in the convictions of an approving conscience, and in the approbation of Him, whose eye seeth in secret, and whose approving sentence will reward us openly."[13] According to Horace Mann, the circumstances of life for young women made them uninterested in fame, fortune or social mobility:

> Their minds are less withdrawn from their employment, by the active scenes of life; and they are less intent and scheming for future honors or emoluments. As a class, they never look forward, as young men almost invariably do, to a period of legal emancipation from parental control, when they are to break away from the domestic circle and go abroad into the world, to build up a fortune for themselves.[14]

In short, women were ripe for exploitation as school m'ams.

Educational reformers could be very explicit about the cheapness of women teachers. Connecticut in 1838, with almost an equal number of males and females in the teaching force, paid men exclusive of board $14.50 per month, women $5.75. In Ashtabula County, Ohio, the average male wage was recorded as $14 per month, while females took home $1.25 each week. In the same year Massachusetts school returns indicated, with 2411 men and 3826 women teaching, an average salary of $23.10 a month for men, $6.49 for women, excluding board. Pennsylvania, with many more men than women teachers, recorded wages of $18.50 per month for males, $11.30 for females.[15] Little wonder that Samuel Lewis, Ohio Superintendent of Common Schools, boasted in his 1839 report that areas of the state employing female teachers "are able to do twice as much with the same money as is done in those counties where female teachers are almost excluded. As the business of teaching is made more respectable, more females engage in it, and the wages are reduced."[16]

Another popular means of economizing was the grading of schools so as to employ women teachers for primary schools and men for more advanced institutions. Implicit in this suggestion was the prevalent attitude that women were, by their maternal nature, more adept at communicating with younger children, while men, because of their stronger per-

sonal influence and greater intellect, should teach older children, especially boys.

Presenting their case for graded schools to state legislatures and the public, the reformers defended it on the grounds of economy, efficiency, and "its tendency to produce a body of *capable, experienced, female teachers.*" They argued that a district as large as four miles square could be divided into four sub-districts, each containing a school taught for ten months by a woman, with a central, or secondary school, for older pupils taught by a man. All agreed that by employing one male teacher to every four female teachers, they could purchase more schooling for the same cost, given the fact that women earned half or less than half the pay of men. The educators saw greater efficiency and more potential for instruction in separating younger pupils from the older boys who could attend the central school. Moreover, a longer school year for one group or the other would be beneficial. By providing steady employment to a body of young women especially prepared to take charge of schools, graded education would allow for what the reformers dearly hoped to achieve—a profession of teachers, chiefly women. Wrote one advocate:

> In every district, we should have a permanent female school; and when it is considered what immense numbers of young women flock to the manufacturing establishments, there cannot be a reasonable doubt, that these much more eligible and independent situations would soon be filled by well-qualified incumbents. Only create a demand for teachers, and a steady supply will soon be obtained.[17]

Thus it can be seen that the woman teacher was central to the purposes and programs of the school reformers who flourished in the 1830s and '40s. These men could appeal to numerous values in advocating the use of women as teachers: their maternal qualities, natural affinity for young children and their superior powers of sympathy and communication. An expanding school population required greater numbers of teachers, women were available and evidently willing to serve for inferior wages because of their benevolence and spiritual nature. They would, when properly trained, constitute the body of the new profession. The system emerging in the late 1830s, however, exhibited a stark pattern of discrimination in nearly every area, a pattern that became embedded in American public education. Women would work for half the wages of men; they would teach little children where their emotions rather than their intellectual capacities would be felt; they would put up with conditions that men, because of their opportunities elsewhere, did not need to tolerate. Seldom in the abundant reformist educational literature of this period did the leaders, mostly men, admit their prejudices.[18]

In 1841 Horace Mann could express his satisfaction in the "change . . . rapidly taking place, both in public sentiment and action, in regard to the employment of female teachers." He counted fewer men employed

in the Massachusetts schools and more women serving as instructors.[19] The reformers had succeeded in some states in creating a favorable public attitude toward women teachers. Attainment of this objective was not the end of their problems, however. Education leaders needed to recruit thousands of competent young women and they found it essential to establish institutions providing formal instruction in pedagogy and schoolroom management. I have not been able to determine the recruitment pattern with any degree of certainty, although it seems to have developed, as the schools themselves did, from casual, haphazard arrangements toward increasingly more formal, structured recruiting procedures. Before 1830, when relatively few women taught district or city public schools, informal networks seem to have existed, consisting of neighborhoods and families, which arranged for women to fill teaching positions. Word of mouth, carried by families, clergymen, pupils and friends stimulated these early women to become teachers and established their reputations before the spread of formal means of communication and certification procdures among schoolmen.[20]

Other institutions aided in recruiting women teachers. The evangelical churches undoubtedly brought in some likely candidates, urging the Christian duty of rearing new generations in the paths of virtue and righteousness. In fact, overlapping often occurred between sabbath school and district or subscription school teaching. A number of the better female seminaries also served as recruiting agencies for teachers. Distinguished principals of such institutions, Emma Willard, Catherine Beecher, Almira Phelps, Mary Lyon and others, encouraged their students, who might not have entered school with any other thought than being "finished" and prepared for a career of motherhood and family care, to consider teaching. Beseiged with requests to recommend her pupils as teachers, Zilpah Grant of the Ipswich Seminary wrote in 1837: "Never before was the call for pious, well qualified female teachers, so urgent, and so reiterated from every part of our land."[21] Miss Grant sometimes turned these requests to her advantage by reading them in assemblies and engaging the services of visitors who addressed the students on the importance of their work as teachers.[22] Mary Lyon, who taught for a number of years with Zilpah Grant, was equally enthusiastic about emphasizing woman's duty to teach and no less successful in producing teachers at Mt. Holyoke Seminary.

No doubt many young women succumbed to the bombast of rhetoric that issued forth from clergymen, educators and other guardians of the nation's moral fabric who wrote in the educational periodicals and more popular publications. Few pamphleteers could approach Catherine E. Beecher in the volume and passion of polemical matter produced. Miss Beecher foresaw a profound national crisis which only women could resolve, or the nation would be "dashed in pieces. . . . I see no other way," she wrote, "in which our country can so surely be saved from the inroads

of vice, infidelity and error. Let the leading females of this country become refined, well educated, pious and active, and the salt is scattered through the land to purify and save."[23] How many missionary-teachers were moved by Miss Beecher's arguments cannot be known, but an organized recruiting effort "to educate destitute American children, by the agency of American women" grew out of her efforts and sent 452 teachers from the east, chiefly New England, into western and southern communities. According to its agent, this group, the Board of National Popular Education, expected to create "a greatly increased appreciation of the value of female teaching, and a rapid increase everywhere, of the proportion of female teachers."[24] Teacher recruitment gained from other influences that were beyond the control of educational promoters. Taking a school offered a respectable and sometimes pleasant alternative to young women who needed to work and found few alternatives except textile mills or domestic service. Teaching permitted educated women, who found most professional roles closed to them, an outlet for their skills.

Although informal and privately sponsored recruiting patterns for teachers continued in the 1850s, the reformers insisted that formal institutions should be established under their management to provide competent female teachers. State superintendents of education functioned in a few localities by 1840, and a decade later the majority of states had chief educational officers.[25] A proliferation of school officers at the local level during the 1840s encouraged the exchange of information about vacancies and qualified candidates, while the rapid spread of teachers' institutes, educational periodicals and teachers' associations provided means for such exchange. An officer of the Ohio State Teachers Association served as a communications link in 1852 for a schoolman in Dayton who wrote: "I want an experienced teacher . . . who can preside over our general study hall, and instruct in English branches. She must be a *Lady*, and what is more to the purpose a *Woman*, and an enthusiastic teacher."[26] By 1860 state and local school systems were sufficiently organized in most northern states to provide recruiting facilities to women teachers who might look forward to careers in education.

Leading educators felt that in order to attract adequately qualified young women, the state would need to intervene in the process of teacher-training. School boards that had been content to hire girls barely out of district schools were urged to seek more mature and experienced young women trained by Zilpah Grant, Mary Lyon, or other distinguished teachers. A few private normal schools attempted to fill the need, but they tended not to be financially successful. The movement for public normal schools or teacher's seminaries began about 1825 with the appearance almost simultaneously in three eastern cities of separate pleas for publicly sponsored teacher education.[27] As the movement gained momentum during the 1830s two competing plans emerged, the New York system

which offered public subsidies to private academies for teacher-training departments, and the Massachusetts plan which advocated separate institutions devoted exclusively to preparing teachers.[28] Finally the Massachusetts plan prevailed in the United States, and for nearly a century its offspring, the normal school, dominated the system of teacher education.

After a narrow defeat in 1827, the normal school promoters pushed their program through the Massachusetts legislature in 1838. The state matched a private donation of $10,000, enabling three normal schools to open in 1839 and 1840. The first school at Lexington is considered to be the grandmother of professional teacher preparation in the United States, and an important precedent for state support of higher education. It was not first, however, in either of these categories. Usually overlooked in evaluating Lexington Normal's influence is its role in training women, for the school permitted only young ladies in its course, a practice that underscored the reformers' determination to make school teaching a woman's profession. A new kind of school, a new kind of profession, the principle of taxpayer support and a new vocation for women: these innovations were represented as the Lexington Normal School opened on a rainy July day in 1839.[29]

Lexington Normal became a model for other state normal institutions at Barre and Bridgewater in Massachusetts; in 1845 for a New York state school; a Pennsylvania normal school in 1848; a Connecticut school in 1849 and a Michigan school in 1850. Other states developed similar institutions during the 1850s. Cyrus Peirce, the first principal at Lexington, perfected a program that evidently spread to other institutions. The course of study included thorough grounding in the so-called "common branches," those subjects "which the law requires to be taught in the district schools," and finally "*the science and art of teaching, with reference to all the above named studies.*"[30] The latter field received attention in frequent lectures and daily recitations, but most significantly in the program of the model school. Consisting of children taken from the town of Lexington, the model school was intended to be the laboratory and workshop in which future teachers might observe and themselves attempt instruction. Based on what he saw of the teacher-trainees' conduct, Peirce offered suggestions or advice, thus combining, as he described it "theory and practice, precept and example."[31] In urging his young students to take their responsibilities as female teachers seriously, Peirce used rhetoric almost identical with that used by Mann, Catherine Beecher, and other advocates of women in the schools.[32]

By the decade of the 1850s a clear pattern of women's involvement in teaching was evident. From constituting a minority of teachers during the 1830s in most states, their numbers rose by 1860 in some localities to equal or surpass the number of men teachers. The highest ratio of women to men teachers occurred in urban areas; for example Brooklyn counted 103 women and 17 men, while Philadelphia had 699 women teaching, but

only 82 men. On a regional basis New England was furthest advanced in replacing men with women in the schools. By the century's end women came to dominate classroom teaching throughout the nation.[33]

In their attitudes toward woman's appropriate sphere, the reformers reflected sentiments and prejudices agreed upon by most Americans of their time. They were thus predisposed to see women as selfless beings, a class to be exploited. The thought of equal pay for women would have struck them as utterly nonsensical. By opening new moral and intellectual opportunities for the "other sex," the educators assumed they were contributing toward the elevation of woman's character and social role. In some respects the new profession made positive contributions, but there was a darker side to the issue. Michael Katz has argued that, contrary to conventional historical accounts, educational innovation of this period served the interests of particular leaders rather than those of the masses:

> Very simply, the extension and reform of education in the mid-nineteenth century was not a potpourri of democracy, rationalism, and humanitarianism. They were the attempt of a coalition of the social leaders, status-anxious parents, and status-hungry educators to impose educational innovation, each for their own reasons, upon a reluctant community.[34]

Katz may put the educators down too cynically. Nevertheless, the movement's leaders were men of relatively high educational attainments and high social standing—lawyers, clergymen, physicians, merchants—who may have seen more than altruistic value in a massive school system that emphasized morality, industry, order and patriotism far more than intellect. Perhaps it was no coincidence that a leading industrial state, Massachusetts, led in the provision of public schools and the employment of women teachers.

For the fact is that educators, like mill-owners, discovered in women a resource, a labor force, that could be manipulated for their advantage, that would ensure their control over a major social movement. The pattern in education is parallel to those of other movements. In the churches women were urged to piety and advised of their immense moral power to do good by forming benevolent and religious organizations of many sorts.[35] When they sought to enter the ministry or speak in religious councils, however, the clergy declared women to be "out of their sphere." Similarly in the antislavery movement, when societies formed and money was needed, or when petitions against the interstate slave trade required circulating, women were welcome, but when they insisted on speaking in public and holding offices in antislavery organizations, the women precipitated a major crisis.[36]

Women entered the schools, enthusiastically supported by male educators, only to find that they occupied the lowest rung of a long bureaucratic ladder with virtually no hope for advancement into positions of

power.[37] A tiny minority of women became principals of secondary schools, system superintendents, or officers of teachers' organizations, but men monopolized administrative and policy-making positions. One of the great advantages seen by the educators in employing them was the very docility and lack of wordly ambition which appeared to give women an advantage in teaching young children. Woman's natural submissiveness would prevent her from becoming a threat to the system of education, the policy-making and power structure erected by men. In attracting women into teaching the reformers not only obtained a competent labor force that they could not secure otherwise, but a class of workers which would accept masculine domination. Not all women submitted to the bureaucracy, but few true rebels stayed within the system. Few teachers possessed the stamina or forcefulness to lash out against a repressive orthodoxy as a minority of female abolitionists had done between 1837 and 1850.

For the young lady teachers who responded to the challenge of a new profession, the opportunity to teach was ambiguous. They could not expect to earn decent wages; many could not imagine even earning their living by teaching, although the procedure of boarding around usually meant that teachers would have beds and meals, however inadequate these might be. For the casual teacher an inferior salary might be tolerable, but for a young woman who needed to be self-supporting, or who had the responsibility to provide for a relative, the payment of half or a third of the money earned by a male teacher was scarcely adequate or satisfying. In one sense, according to the prevailing value system, teachers had the prestige afforded to a noble calling, yet practically speaking they were servants of a frequently unappreciative public. Educators might call it a professional activity but many women who sought the rewards of a profession must have felt that they performed a traditional female task. Like making yarn and spinning cloth, which American women generally regarded as their domestic work before the growth of industrial establishments, teaching young children had been a domestic activity before its "industrialization" into schools. The vocation's setting changed but not its sex-role definition or its inferior compensation at a time when financial reward was a definition of prestige.

On the other hand, women's entry into school teaching raised issues that could not be entirely ignored. If women were as good for the schools as the reformers claimed, why should their compensation be so much lower than that of men teachers? If teaching was truly professional and women were so effective as teachers, why should other professions not be open to the sex? If women could function in public as instructors, why were other public roles generally forbidden to them? If women were clever enough to communicate knowledge to large groups of unenthusiastic, often hostile children, why could they not deal as intellectual peers with similarly-educated men? In other words, admitting females into any

profession entailed risks for a majority of both sexes that subscribed to prevalent notions of women's inferiority. Years later the advocates of woman's rights and woman suffrage would ask questions of this kind and, inevitably, they would find that not only the teaching profession but the society and political system in general were at fault. Thus women's activities as teachers contributed something—how much is impossible to say—to the growing uncertainty about sex-role definitions in the mid-nineteenth century period.

Few women teachers rebelled against their hard lot, but it is hardly irrelevant that a majority of the militant American feminists of the 19th century had been school teachers, including Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone, Abby Kelley Foster, Susan B. Anthony, Frances E. Willard, Carrie Chapman Catt and others.[38] In spite of its negative aspects, teaching provided a measure of economic and psychological independence for women; it offered a semi-professional and respectable vocational opportunity outside the household; it was advertised as a missionary activity, giving women a profound responsibility for the moral, intellectual, and physical well-being of their pupils; it demanded capacities of leadership and mastery over diverse groups of pupils; and teaching had, built in, a series of important grievances. Little wonder, then, that many feminists knew the experience of teaching.

Other impacts of women teachers, such as their importance in offering a sense of common understanding to a heterogeneous children's population, or their influence in feminizing the educational system, might be worthy of consideration, but limitations of time and information forbid their consideration here.

In spite of what I have described as problems and negative factors in relation to women teachers between 1830 and 1860, the story has a happy, although ironic ending: many of the teachers seem to have enjoyed and been inspired by their responsibilities. Some accepted the idea of teaching as a mission and agreed with leading educators that their work was an effort for national salvation. One catches occasional glimpses of the enthusiasm shared by these young teachers and their pupils in fragments of correspondence that have survived.[39] Thus a sense of purpose and community infected the teachers as they increased in numbers and apparent influence. Listen to a teacher as she composes doggerel verses in praise of education:

> Ho the car for education
> Rise majestic throu[gh] our nation
> Baring on its train the story
> Free school[s] are a nations glory.
> Roll it along through the nation
> Free schools are for education.
> All true friends of education,
> Haste to free school rail road station
> Quick into the cars get seated

All is ready and compleated.
Put on the steam all are crying
And the free school flags are flying.
See the people run to meet us,
At the depot thousands greet us,
All take seats with exultation
In the car free education.
Hurrah Hurrah Hurrah Hurrah
Education soon will bless our happy nation.[40]

Thus the railroad to this woman became a metaphor, in terms of progress, for education. I wonder where she placed herself, though, in the cab as engineer, or in some other position in the train crew?

This leaves a large question, the sort of question which must perplex most students of women's history. What were the inner drives and feelings of the young women who became teachers during this period? Did they feel put upon or discriminated against, or were they content in their subordination? The rhetoric of educational promoters offered an exalted interpretation of their roles as teachers, while justifying their economic and intellectual inferiority. A nineteenth-century "feminine mystique" pervaded their lives. I look, largely in vain, for any spirit of rebellion. These teachers seem to have been convinced by the masculine elites they served, that woman's role was that of self-sacrifice. In their willing subordination, they probably represent one of the great features of women's history, and more generally, of the total human experience. But why?

Despite, or perhaps because of, their apparent self-abnegation, these teachers contributed massively to the modernization and nationalization of the United States, through their educational efforts, and this work deserves recognition. Unsung heroines they were, and it is a commentary on our prejudices that their significance has been so long ignored.

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footnotes

1. For criticisms of the history of education see Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Wonderful World of Ellwood Patterson Cubberley, An Essay on the Historiography of American Education* (New York, 1965); Bernard Bailyn, *Education in the Forming of American Society, Needs and Opportunities for Study* (Chapel Hill, 1960); and David B. Tyack, "New Perspectives on the History of American Education," unpublished paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians, April 18, 1969. A good example of revisionism is Michael B. Katz, *The Irony of Early School Reform: Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968).

2. Thomas Woody, *A History of Women's Education in the United States* (New York and Lancaster, Pa.: the Science Press, 1929), I, 137-142. Chapter 10 of this volume is the most extensive treatment of women's entry into the teaching profession in the secondary literature.

3. This literature is ably digested in Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly*, XVIII, 2 (Summer, 1966), 151-174.

4. Quoted in the *Common School Journal*, I, 14 (July 15, 1839), 224, and in the *Connecticut Common School Journal*, II, 11 (April 1, 1840), 168.

5. *Common School Journal*, I, 11 (June 1, 1839), 161. Mann frequently discussed the employment of female teachers in glowing terms; see for example his Fourth Annual Report as Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, *Common School Journal*, III, 19 (October 1, 1841), 303-304. Some women educators were equally enthusiastic about attracting women into

the teaching profession. See, for example, Catherine E. Beecher, *Suggestions Respecting Improvements in Education, Presented to the Trustees of the Hartford Female Seminary* (Hartford, 1829), 7, 50-55. The work of Anne L. Kuhn, *The Mother's Role in Childhood Education: New England Concepts 1830-1860* (New Haven, 1947), offers a helpful survey of attitudes toward women as educators, focusing on the maternal role.

6. *American Journal of Education,* I, 11 (November, 1826), 661, 661-664; see also *Ibid.,* 666-667.

7. *Connecticut Common School Journal,* I, 2 (September 1, 1838), 10; a similar statement by another critic occurs in *Ibid.,* I, 1 (May, 1838), 4.

8. *American Annals of Education and Instruction,* III (August, 1833), 361-367; *Ibid.* (September, 1833), 404-417.

9. *Common School Assistant,* III, 9 (September, 1838), 69; *Ibid.,* II, 3 (March, 1837), 22.

10. Lawrence Cremin, *The American Common School, An Historical Conception* (New York, 1951), 179.

11. Katz, *School Reform,* 224.

12. *Common School Assistant,* I, 6 (June, 1836), 41; see also *Ibid.,* I, 7 (July, 1836), 49.

13. *Common School Journal,* III, 8 (April 15, 1841), 126, possibly from a discourse by the Rev. Parsons Cooke, an orthodox Congregational minister.

14. *Ibid.,* III, 19 (October 1, 1841), 304, excerpted from Mann's Fourth Annual Report as Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education.

15. Statistics are abstracted from the *Common School Assistant, Common School Journal,* and *Connecticut Common School Journal,* 1838-1841.

16. *Connecticut Common School Journal,* II, 10 (March 1, 1840), 155; *Ibid.,* I, 10 (March 15, 1839), 118-119.

17. Excerpts from "Palmer's Prize Essay," *Connecticut Common School Journal,* III, 1 (November 1, 1850), 13; see also *Ibid.,* I, 10 (March 15, 1839), 117-118.

18. *Ibid.,* II, 12 (May 1, 1840), 195.

19. *Common School Journal,* III, 19 (October 1, 1841), 303.

20. The Cowles family of Connecticut and Ohio recruited many of its own members as teachers and had, among its other connections, a close and continuing relationship with Oberlin College; see Robert S. Fletcher, *A History of Oberlin College From its Foundation Through the Civil War,* 2 vols. (Oberlin: Oberlin College, 1943). Information on Betsey Mix Cowles and other members of the family comes from a collection of family papers generously lent by Mrs. Robert Ticknor of Austinburg, Ohio.

21. Zilpah P. Grant Banister to Rev. Rufus Anderson, February 23, 1837, Ms., Mt. Holyoke College Archives, Williston Library, South Hadley, Mass.

22. Harriet Hale Johnson to her parents, December 1, 1836; Maria Cowles to Rev. Henry Cowles, July 26, 1830, March 29, 1831, Mss., Mt. Holyoke College Archives.

23. Catherine E. Beecher, *An Essay on the Education of Female Teachers* (New York, 1835), 18-19; Catherine E. Beecher to Mary Dutton, February 8, 1830, Ms., Beinecke Library, Yale University.

24. Board of National Popular Education, *Third Annual Report of the General Agent* (Cleveland, 1850), 15; see also *Tenth Annual Report. . . .* (Hartford, 1857).

25. Cremin, *The American Common School,* 176-177.

26. I. C. Tacher (?) to Lorin Andrews, June 14, 1852, Ms., Lorin Andrews papers, Ohio Historical Society.

27. Henry Barnard, *Normal Schools and other Institutions, Agencies, and Means Designed for the Professional Education of Teachers* (Hartford, 1851), 7-8.

28. *Common School Journal,* I, 6 (March 15, 1839), 83-85; see also the criticism of Professor Potter of Union College, *Connecticut Common School Journal,* III, 11 (April 15, 1841), 134.

29. Arthur O. Norton, ed., *The First State Normal School in America: The Journals of Cyrus Peirce and Mary Swift* (Cambridge, Mass., 1926), 7.

30. *Connecticut Common School Journal,* III, 12 (May 1, 1841), 141.

31. *Ibid.,* 142.

32. Norton, *The First State Normal School,* journal of Mary Swift, a pupil at Lexington, 87, 91.

33. Woody, *Women's Education,* 496-500; Barnard's *American Journal of Education,* I, 3 (March, 1856), 371-380.

34. Katz, *School Reform,* 218.

35. See Keith E. Melder, "Ladies Bountiful: Organized Women's Benevolence in Early 19th-Century America," *New York History,* XLVIII (July, 1967), 231-254.

36. Alma Lutz, *Crusade for Freedom: Women in the Antislavery Movement* (Boston, 1968); Gerda Lerner, *The Grimke Sisters from South Carolina: Rebels Against Slavery* (Boston, 1967); Aileen S. Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism* (New York, 1969), chapter 3;

Keith E. Melder, "Forerunners of Freedom: The Grimke Sisters in Massachusetts, 1837-38," *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, CIII, 3 (July, 1967).

37. For example, by 1905 in Portland, Oregon, all elementary school teachers were women, but 23 out of 27 elementary school principals were men; see David Tyack, "Bureaucracy and the Common School: The Example of Portland, Oregon, 1851-1913," *American Quarterly*, XIX, 3 (Fall, 1967), 487.

38. See accounts of leading feminists in Robert E. Riegel, *American Feminists* (Lawrence, Kansas, 1963).

39. L. C. Lawrence to Betsey Mix Cowles, December 3, 1839, Ms., Betsey M. Cowles papers; M. S. Howell to Betsey Mix Cowles, March 30, 1837, Ms.; other letters in the Cowles papers illustrate the sense of shared vocational goals and enthusiasm among some of the early teachers and their pupils.

40. Ms. verse or song in the hand of Betsey M. Cowles, Betsey M. Cowles papers.