

## Pamphlets and the Economy of Print in the Nineteenth Century: a Taster

### 1. Introductory Forays

Few students of nineteenth-century studies are familiar with its pamphlet culture, and for most people the phrase 'nineteenth-century pamphlets' may appear an oxymoron. Notable exceptions to this general ignorance are early modern historians, as articles and books by Joad Raymond and Alexandra Halasz indicate, and work by Miles Taylor on later periods. Alerted to the phenomena by 19C British Pamphlets online, we are offered access to full-text facsimiles of 23,000 documents, themselves in turn only a small proportion of those held in the research libraries in the UK.

As a literature scholar researching this type of print for the first time, I could only summon the names of three or four pamphlets, knowledge of which I had acquired from research on isolated topics: the Tracts for the Times (1833-41) from my early interest in Newman; Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera* (1871-84), described by Ruskin as 'Letters to Working Men', from Brian Maidment's groundbreaking piece on 'Ruskin and the Periodical Press' (in Shattock and Wolff, 1982); and 'Literature at Nurse' (1885) by George Moore, which stood out because its format was so anomalous -- short but not in a periodical, and worryingly *unattached* according to my serial expectations. At the very last I remembered Carlyle's *Latter Day Pamphlets* (1850, 1858), one of which I had read, but in *volume* form. However, I decided to accept the challenge to investigate this increasingly populated field, and the new virtual archive of nineteenth-century pamphlets that Mark Brown, James Thompson, Grant Young and their team have produced. In order to tackle the subject, I compiled an introductory bibliography which I append to this initial foray, which is from the

perspective of a student of print media and literature. In what follows, I shall largely scrutinise the generic characteristics of pamphlets, as a form and format of nineteenth-century print culture in circulation with other formats, rather than their contents, as historians or social scientists might. In addition to individual pamphlets from 19C British Pamphlets online and in library collections, and the work of the scholars mentioned above, I have mainly relied on two anthologies of pamphlets compiled roughly in the last century, *The Pamphlet Library* (1897-1898) and *British Pamphleteers* (1958, 1961), in order to tease out some (changing) definitions through a variety of historical perspectives. I found Samuel Johnson's 'An Essay on the Origin and Importance of Small Tracts and Fugitive Pieces' (1744-46) most suggestive, and an excellent place to start.

Of the above list, only George Moore's title is apparently a standalone pamphlet; the other titles are series, although *not* arguably *serials* that normally appear at regular intervals whose duration is open-ended, tacitly to whenever the market permits. Rather, pamphlet series are not necessarily produced at regular intervals (eg *Tracts for the Times*) and they do often have predictable or at least foreseen endpoints (*Latter Day Pamphlets*).<sup>1</sup> Even if the eventual number of pamphlets differs from that projected, the expectation is that pamphlet series *will end*. The disproportionate incidence of series in my first list of pamphlets is meaningful, I think -- indicative of what I have come to view as their most salient and constitutive characteristic -- their connectedness to other forms of print and culture more generally. I shall argue that of *all* the artefacts of nineteenth-century print culture, pamphlets are the most dialogic (Mikhail Bakhtin's term), and invariably in

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<sup>1</sup> For an excellent formal account of the plans for Carlyle's series, see 'Introduction', *Carlyle's Latter-Day Pamphlets*, ed M.K. Goldberg and J.P. Seigel. Canadian Federation for the Humanities, 1983, pp xxxv-xlii.

dialogue with other agents of print and speech. For example, in 1830 we have George Whitfield, whose pamphlet began as letters for private circulation, that were then printed serially ('separately') in a periodical, and only then were gathered in a pamphlet:

The following Letters were written for the perusal of certain of the Author's friends. They were afterwards printed separately in the *Imperial Magazine*; and are now, at the suggestion of some who have been convinced or confirmed by them, presented at one view. No merit is claimed for them, except on the ground of the Author's sincere and earnest desire to do something—though ever so little—for the cause of humanity. They are not published from an ambition of literary reputation; but they contain the plain thoughts of a plain man plainly expressed. Indeed, the cause advocated in them ought not to require "adventitious aids" to impress the mind. ( 'Preface', 'Remarks on The Injustice and Immorality of Slavery in Eight Letters. By the Rev George Whitfield, Sometime Travelling Companion of the Rev John Wesley,' London: John Stephens, 1830. pp 42, iii-iv.)

However, while pamphlets are dialogic to the core, they are *not* necessarily polemical as George Orwell and Geoffrey Glaister allege:

it is written because there is something that one wants to say now...in essence it is always a protest. (Orwell, 'Introduction', *British Pamphleteers*, George Orwell and Reginald Reynolds, eds. 2 vols. London: Allan Wingate, 1948, I: 7),

a short piece of polemical writing, intended for wide circulation’  
(Glaister, *Encyclopedia of the Book*, New Castle, Delaware and  
London: Oak Knoll Press & the British Library. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1996, p.  
358.)

but simply in dialogue, as the writer of a pamphlet on the ‘River Ouze Outfall  
Improvements’ of 1839 demonstrates. This is a 13 page report, with minutes of a  
meeting, the exposition of the case, and fold outs at the end – a complex map and a  
plan of the terrain. It presents its report, in a rational, expository register, rather than  
as an argument.

Scrutinised further, even George Moore’s pamphlet is not a standalone, but  
closely locked into an article and correspondence in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which  
Pierre Coustillas felt obliged to include in his edition of *Literature at Nurse*. Related to  
the dialogic discourse of pamphlets, then, and dependent on it, is another of their  
outstanding features that distinguishes them from other nineteenth-century print  
culture: their revelation, disclosure, and evident participation in *networks*. It is true,  
as Percy Dearmer petulantly complains in 1898 in his preface to one of the volumes  
of The Pamphlet Library, that pamphlets are above all stamped with the  
encumbrances of the contemporary, ‘the clatter of a day’, and ‘only to be read with  
weariness and difficulty by the curious in after years. Allusions that are lost beyond  
recovery, jests that grin upon us without meaning, triumphant arguments based upon  
moth-eaten premises, and acid personalities that now injure none but their authors,  
these are but poor reading to the most devoted of historians.’ (‘Introduction’,  
*Religious Pamphlets*, ed by the Rev. Percy Dearmer. London: Kegan Paul, Trench,  
Trubner & Co., 1898, p. 9)

Exactly. These are what I am claiming as the strengths of pamphlets! -- the exposure of the beams of the structures. This is a point reminiscent of Samuel Johnson's workmanlike and robust sales pitch for his latest book, the *Harleian Miscellany*, a collection of pamphlets. Johnson's introduction to the collection emphasises that what pamphlets offer us is a view of the *processes* of history and decisions. This short piece -- ingeniously repetitive and rhetorical -- puts the advantage of pamphlets over the retrospective, finished books eloquently, while nicely demonstrating how pamphlets reveal structures of communication, argument, thought and power, what I mean by networks.

From pamphlets, consequently, are to be learned the progress of every debate; the various state (sic) to which the questions have been changed; the artifices and fallacies which have been used, and the subterfuges by which reason has been eluded; in such writings may be seen how the mind has been opened by degrees, how one truth has led to another, how error has been disentangled, and hints improved to demonstration, which pleasure, and many others, are lost by him that only reads the larger writers, [who thus misses] 'the transient advantages which error may sometimes obtain, by the artifices of its patron, or the successful rallies by which truth regains the day, after a repulse; but will be to him who traces the dispute through into particular gradations, as he that hears of a victory, to him that sees the battle.

Johnson, ('An Essay', 1744-46.)

I want to consider briefly some social conditions which allegedly foster pamphleteering, and then approach the problem of definitions through a comparison

of pamphlets with serials, linking and distinguishing these two closely related formats. I shall then comment on pamphlet collections, and look at a specific bound and published foray into collecting in the late nineteenth century, Kegan Paul's 4 volume Pamphlet Library, which has the felicitous advantage of multiple nineteenth-century pronouncements on pamphlets, comprising one general if very short Preface by the editor of the series Arthur Waugh (who had been a recent contributor to the *Yellow Book*), and three lengthy introductions by respective editors of volumes on *Religious Pamphlets*, (by Rev Percy Dearmer), *Literary Pamphlets* (by Ernest Rhys), and *Political Pamphlets* (by A F Pollard, the bibliographer).

It says something about the nineteenth century, but perhaps more about the perception of pamphlets by these editors at that retrospective moment at the end of the century, that half of the series is devoted to Literary Pamphlets, and only one volume each to religion and politics. At the very least, this seems antipathetic to the century in which it appeared, as religious pamphlets were so abundant. However, it is notable that almost all of the pamphlets excerpted in the series are *not* from the century in which the collection is published; the selection process seems to reflect the historical tendency of nineteenth-century men of letters, along with a gender bias (not one woman in any of the volumes). Moreover, the eloquent and absolute silence about the various pamphlet campaigns of their own century – the Tractarians, the Chartists, and the Feminists is perhaps the most telling exclusion, particularly in contrast to the selection criteria of 19C British Pamphlets online in our own century, which collects politics and social science material *only*. So, while the nineteenth-century editors of The Pamphlet Library thought about the pamphlet largely in terms of belles lettres, our own peers now conceptualise them primarily in precisely political

and social terms. I hope to allude to some of what The Pamphlet Library didn't publish in 1898.

## 2. Some More Definitions

I sought to begin my research with definitions, but as Joad Raymond nervously chortles, 'What is a Pamphlet? What held together the antithetical qualities of ecumenical variety, libellous motifs, pseudonymous inconsiderableness, apocryphal or suppositious origins, playful self-referentiality, commonness and small bulk? (Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*. CUP, 2003, p. 20.) Indeed, there is nothing so comfortable as one adequate definition, and relatively little to hand in general about the pamphlet as a form; most of the useful discussion is found in connection with work on specific historical cultures of pamphlets, mainly early modern, or with respect to nineteenth-century pamphlets in relation to specific authors -- Carlyle, Moore, Ruskin. That is the explanation of some of the unexpected entries in the attached Bibliography, on the subject of pamphlets in the nineteenth century.

So, as Geoffrey Glaister and George Orwell aver, their length is relatively short, or at least shorter than a volume:

Probably a true pamphlet will always be somewhere between 500 and 10,000 words....The great function of the pamphlet is to act as a sort of footnote or marginal comment on official history'. (George Orwell, 'Introduction', *British Pamphleteers*, Vol 1. (Allan Wingate, 1948), p. 7)

a short piece..., intended for wide circulation, printed and issued as an unbound publication, with either stapled or sewn pages; it may or may not have a paper cover. (Geoffrey Glaister, *Encyclopedia of the*

*Book*, New Castle, Delaware and London: Oak Knoll Press & the British Library. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1996, 358).

They are normally unbound, they are usually but not always aimed at public, or *wide* circulation, but some nineteenth-century titles address a smaller group of specialist readers; so while the language of pamphlets is public, and understandable rather than arcane, it is not necessarily unspecialised. Pamphlets may or may not have a cover, and in any case, often the covers (and consequently the price) are missing; this is often true of the 19C British Pamphlets collection. They are frequently cheap (but not Ruskin's), or at least cheaper than books and sometimes serials (periodicals or newspapers) but *not* cheaper than broadsheets. A flourishing pamphlet culture does depend, as Sam Johnson notes in the passage I quote just below, on liberty of expression/freedom from censorship, *and* on a proliferation of available and willing printers. Both of these cultural conditions prevailed in the nineteenth-century, in which print stealthily became ubiquitous. One of the many areas of nineteenth-century pamphlet culture which is ripe for research is the identity of frequent publishers of pamphlets, and their printers, and how the incidence and nature of the pamphlets they publish/print relate to their other titles and work flow.

As for the role of pamphlets in political, literary or religious culture, there is considerable disagreement. While Waugh and Dearmer lean to the footnote of history argument, locating pamphlets out of the mainstream, Johnson is robust in claiming their centrality to a thorough understanding of history as we have seen, and to the development of knowledge and thought itself:

political or religious controversies are [not] the only products of the liberty of the British press; the mind once let loose to inquiry, and suffered to operate without restraint, necessarily deviates into peculiar



opinions, and wanders in new tracks, where she is indeed sometimes lost in a labyrinth, from which though she cannot return, and scarce knows how to proceed, yet sometimes makes useful discoveries, or finds out nearer paths to knowledge. (Samuel Johnson, 'An Essay on the Origin and Importance of Small Tracts and Fugitive Pieces' ['Introduction'], *The Harleian Miscellany*, 1744-46]

As for the motivations of pamphleteers, Johnson, while allowing for the exposition of 'truth', conviction, or party loyalties, also draws attention usefully in his 'Life of Savage' to pecuniary gain on the part of impecunious writers such as Richard Steele.<sup>2</sup> Certainly, the representation of motives is a repeated self-conscious element of the nineteenth-century pamphlets I have seen. These range from that of James Hannay signing himself 'A Carlylian' in '*Blackwood v Carlyle*' (1850), who claims that he must disinterestedly 'vindicate' the calumny of critics on Carlyle's 'Latter Day Pamphlets', to Swinburne in 'Notes on Poems and Reviews' (1866) who insists that his appearance in print in a pamphlet had nothing to do with him, that he is barely stooping to note his critics, and that the impetus is his publishers'. He does however go on to repeat the offence in 1872 in 'Under the Microscope', another pamphlet! In all probability, pamphlets in the nineteenth century were not a high

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<sup>2</sup> See Johnson's account in his 'Life of Savage' of Richard Steele's composition of a pamphlet, dictated to Savage in an eating house, to raise immediate funds on its sale to pay the bill: 'Mr. Savage then imagined his task over, and expected that Sir Richard would call for the reckoning, and return home; but his expectations deceived him, for Sir Richard told him that he was without money, and that the pamphlet must be sold before the dinner could be paid for; and Savage was therefore obliged to go and offer their new production to sale for two guineas, which with some difficulty he obtained. Sir Richard then returned home, having retired that day only to avoid his creditors, and composed the pamphlet only to discharge his reckoning.'

status form of publication, but they were resorted to frequently. However, it is not surprising that many scholars of nineteenth-century literature are unfamiliar with them, as they are invisible and relatively inaccessible, as the editors of 19C British Pamphlets claim. Until recently, I did not realise that 'Under the Microscope' was a pamphlet (of 88 pages), although I have read it more than once in the Collected Edition of Swinburne's work, or that Swinburne regretted publishing it in that form rather than as an article in the *Fortnightly Review*, because it was so neglected on its initial appearance as a pamphlet.

Let's probe this question of definitions further: WHY is a pamphlet not published in a newspaper or periodical?? I asked this question of an anonymous 1823 pamphlet of 15 pp printed in London, 'Remarks upon Certain Objections Published in the Dublin Newspaper called The Warder, against the Tithe Composition Bill Now Pending in Parliament'. Answers lead to distinctions between pamphlets and serials which help define both. Most immediately, the pamphlet is not in the *Warder* itself, because it is a clerical publication, and a Dublin title, whereas location of the pamphlet's printing in the metropolis may well signify proximity to Westminster; but why wasn't it placed in a London paper? What status does the pamphlet format have, or what properties might it possess that rule out publication in a newspaper or periodical? One characteristic is that the piece is too long to be compatible with journalism article templates (here 15pp) and to fit into a weekly or daily at this date. Secondly, there may be no ready ideological fit with an extant title, or appropriately iconoclastic title, or available single issue of an established organ that would publish it as a supplement. Thirdly, the pamphleteer may prefer to avoid the mediation/censorship of a journal or newspaper editor, who may be governed by fear of libel. Fourthly, the pamphlet writer may lack contacts in the press. Fifthly,

individual pamphleteers may well be more obscure than writers embedded in local networks. With respect to that, the pamphlet format may be most readily deployed by strangers, radicals, or non-professionals. Sixth, the range and format of the press at the time may not formally accommodate the type of material which the pamphleteer wishes to publish; for example, feature articles seldom appeared in newspapers in 1823. Seventh, the writer may wish to remain truly anonymous: on this point Samuel Johnson argues that pamphlet writers may aim to make their reputation without much risk if signed, or with less risk if anonymously issued. Eighth, in so far as the pamphlet is usually cheaper than a newspaper or periodical issue, it is more within reach of working class readers. Ninth, pamphlets are free of serials' timeframe limitations; for example, the extended intervals of the quarterly or the monthly, which require the pamphleteer's copy to wait for an issue. But also the press carries the limitations of the precise datestamp of newspapers and periodicals, which admits both to the pressure of other news, and an unwelcome specificity – eg 7 Aug 1823 or even Aug 1823, rather than 1823, which leaves the pamphlet more open to circulation and sales over time, if not longevity. Pamphlets then are more open to spontaneity or the selected moment for optimum topicality and maximum impact (as a Bill goes through Parliament), for example. Tenth, a pamphlet may have an institutional or group affiliation that is part of its authorship (for example with the Social Science Association), and have its own distribution network which it prefers to that of any newspaper or periodical vehicle. An example from 19C British Pamphlets is W. T. McGowen's 'The Air We Breathe: Shall Every One Do As He Likes with It? With Facts from Liverpool, Relative to the Enquiry' -- A Paper Read Before the Public Health Section of the Association for Promoting Social Science, at Bradford, October 1859, Together with the Discussion of the Paper [Copied from the Newspaper

Reports]. Liverpool: Harris and Company, Steam Press Offices, Drury Lane, 1860. 28 pp. Alternatively, the pamphlet format may be the preferred form of print of the organisation or cause, as in Charles Bradlaugh's 'Capital and Labour.' London: Freethought Publishing Company, 1888. 20 pp. Price Twopence., from the online collection.

A concomitant factor in pamphlet publication is commercial, that its author but also its printer, publisher, distributor and cause may seek the income from pamphlet sales, which would be immediate and more than paid by any editor. Lastly, while pamphlet publication normally loses the advantage of the distribution networks offered by serials, single issue pamphlets may benefit from the exclusive attention of the standalone format, whereby the argument and cause are not lost among the miscellaneous contents of serial publications. The convention of anonymity may also be deployed to enhance the centrality of the cause, but as signature becomes more common over the century, signed pamphlets may either carry a nascent cause (J S Mill on women's suffrage in 1871) or the combination of name and cause may further it palpably (Lydia Becker's 1867 article on 'Female Suffrage' that appeared in a monthly magazine, the *Contemporary Review*, was immediately followed by its re-issue by the Manchester Committee in 10,000 pamphlets). Insofar as these characteristics help define the meanings of pamphlets and their market niches, they need to be borne in mind in designing electronic editions. Finding or creating the most complete texts of pamphlets, in order to accrue paratextual material from more than a single copy if necessary, and providing a range of metadata categories beyond publisher and author, to include size, pagination, price, publisher, printer, and distributor if different from printer ( eg 'agents') are ideal constituents of electronic editions.

One element of many of the pamphlets I examined from 19C British Pamphlets was not only their dialogic relation to other forms of print, but their *origins* in other media, which are characteristically acknowledged. Origins – in lectures, sermons, papers submitted to private groups or organisations – seem to be readily revealed. This transparency about origins in pamphlets is in marked contrast with the practice in collections in volume form of previously published articles. Volumes often contain Prefaces which offer an *apologia* for such origins, if they are admitted at all, with protestations that the material has been carefully rewritten, or that it is untouched, and thus retains the spontaneity and spice of journalism. Well into the nineteenth century, embarrassment is the word that best describes the relation between volumes of articles and their serial origins, whereas pamphlets celebrate and advertise their protean element, in another articulation of their self-conscious connectedness and networking. The material in a bound volume of Political Pamphlets, for example, begins with two titles with origins in meetings:

1. Speech of the Late John Stuart Mill at the Great Meeting in Favour of Women's Suffrage, Held in the Music Hall, Edinburgh, January 12, 1871'. Price one penny. Edinburgh: Printed by John Lindsay, for the Edinburgh National Society for Women's Suffrage. 1873.[8 pp]

2. Claylands Debating Society, London. 'Mr Mill's "Subjection of Women", from A Woman's Point of View: Being a Few Suggestions Offered for the Consideration of the members of the above Society, by one of its invited guests, at the meeting of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1870 [By Mrs Henry Davis Pochin (in hand writing)] – Question for Discussion Before the Meeting: "Can the Claims Advanced on Behalf of Women by Mr J S Mill be advantageously Granted in this country?" Published by

Request of the Club. Manchester: John Heywood, 141 and 143 Deansgate. [1870 in handwriting]. Pp 23.

An example of the protean matter of pamphlet texts is also seen in the explanation offered by George Whitfield, quoted above (p. 3). The provenance of these Letters shows the movement from private circulation to public as I argue above, but also the advantages of mixing serial publication over time with subsequent pamphlet circulation. It brings both brings the argument and letters together in one continuous form, and also extends their life beyond the dated issues of the journal in which they first appeared. 'Letters' invokes the links of pamphlets with news, and with the 'letters' from correspondents who supplied journals with contents on a regular basis before the proliferation of staff journalists after the lifting of stamp and other duties after 1855.

As the Whitfield example shows, with respect to serial publications, *some* pamphlets **are** one-off, deracinated reprints from journals, collecting the parts into one, and making them free to circulate beyond the moment of the journal, not overtaken by the next number, and cheaper than the original serial accumulation of issues. Later in the century, W T Stead was prone to issue pamphlets after publication in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, as he did in 1885 with the Maiden Tribute articles, certainly for profit, but also for dissemination of his cause.<sup>3</sup> What about the status of bald offprints, such as the one I saw from *Bentley's Miscellany*: Alfred Crowquill, 'Amusements of the People', Chap iii, p. 101-107. This is taken from an unnamed volume and retains the original pagination (of vol 18,1850]; are such reprints/offprints arguably pamphlets of a certain kind, although printers may not

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<sup>3</sup> Stead and his supporters were campaigning to raise the age of consent from 14 to 16, in order to 'protect' vulnerable children from an alleged domestic trade in 'white slavery'.

regard them as such? This is a definition from a recent encyclopedia: 'Off-print': 'a separately printed copy of an article or paper which has appeared in a larger publication. It may or may not be enclosed in a cover. Also known as a separate or an overprint, and by the printer as a run-on.' (Glaister, *Encyclopedia*, 348).

### 3. Pamphlet Collecting and Collections

I want now to turn briefly to pamphlet collecting and collections, and their relation to ephemerality. That contemporaries were alert to the vulnerability of pamphlets to eclipse and loss is seen in the many examples of the practice of collecting them, by diverse types of individuals and institutions. There is a dual posture of collectors who own both their desire to acquire pamphlets, and the position of pamphlets as victims, whereby collection is altruistically motivated. Individual collectors are variable and include the following categories: individual writers – Carlyle, for example, issued his own *Latter Day Pamphlets* separately in a series, and then immediately collected them in a volume; printer/publishers such as Kegan Paul, which published The Pamphlet Library, four anthologies of pamphlets, organised by topic; political proponents such as the radical printer and MP Joseph Cowen, whose collection of 'tracts' forms one of the holdings of the University of Newcastle digitised here; and antiquarians/editors such as Samuel Johnson, editor of *The Harleian Miscellany*, who presents these 'fugitive pieces' of the Miscellany as rare, valuable, and highly sought after by collectors: 'pamphlets and small tracts [are] a very important part of an English library; nor are there any pieces, upon which those, who aspire to the reputation of judicious collectors of books, bestow more attention, or greater expense; because many advantages may be expected from the perusal of these small productions, which are scarcely to be found in that of larger works.' (Johnson, 'An Essay', 1744-46).

Libraries themselves often collected separate contemporary pamphlet items, as well as becoming the repository/preserver of already collected private caches of pamphlets acquired through bequests or purchase, as may be seen in the various collections from which 19C British Pamphlets online are drawn. Libraries also hold retrospective collections in bound volumes, either of original pamphlets ('Political Tracts 1918 Manchester Public Library, now British Library') collected for a personal or public library, or printed collections of pamphlets – such as The Pamphlet Library (1897-8), Orwell's and Reynolds's *British Pamphleteers* (1958, 1961), and now the 19C British Pamphlets online 'collection', which represents, selectively, other collections. Underlying this repeated phenomenon of 'collecting' pamphlets, lies an anxiety about their loss, and a tacit acknowledgment of their propensity for disappearance if they are left to posterity as single issue ephemera in paper covers.

#### 4. The Pamphlet Library

I wanted to examine a nineteenth-century series of volumes on pamphlets, to function as a text on the pamphlet form, which is open to interpretation here. Appearing late in the 1890s, I thought that it would, offer an informative backward glance at the pamphlets of the preceding century, on the cusp of the new one. However, it turned out to be a *doubly* retrospective view, of the past, but largely of pamphlets that were distant to that period, 'before the ... newspaper', rather than of nineteenth-century pamphlets alongside the newspaper. This is what 19C British Pamphlets online documents, and what The Pamphlet Library tacitly conceals:

Reform is the child of Controversy, and the most effectual arrows in the quiver of Controversy are those of a country's Press. Before the day of the clamouring newspaper, the Pamphlet was the leader of popular



taste, so that in a study of these fugitive pieces we may see the features of an Age, as in a glass, may mark its expression, and understand its tendency. As some such footnote to history the following papers have been collected. (Arthur Waugh, 'Preparatory Note', *Political Pamphlets*, ed. A F Pollard. The Pamphlet Library. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co, 1897, p. vi).

This perspective is itself significant, and an indication of the nature of the publication and its intended readership. The Pamphlet Library, a commercial enterprise of Kegan Paul, is demonstrably in keeping with a format, then common, of an educational series with an instructive approach for the popular market -- a 'Library' series that might be acquired relatively cheaply over time through regular collection. Thus four volumes of The Pamphlet Library appeared in 1897-8, at a price of 6s per volume, which was within the reach of lower middle class readers and above.

Features of the series that tell us about the representation of the pamphlet as a genre at this late date in the nineteenth-century include the ordering of its material into Religious, Literary and Political groups, neat and constraining categories to which all three editors rhetorically object in their respective prefaces. The strain of decanting the unruly and extensive material into small, pocket sized volumes suitable for the targeted market is evident in the introductions, and also in the decision to abridge the texts of the material. If this editorial policy contrasts with Samuel Johnson, who assiduously avoids imposition of such alien order in the last paragraphs of his introduction to the *Harleian Miscellany*, it is probably because of the divergent readerships envisaged -- the democratic, broad educationally-oriented purchasers of pocket-sized volumes of the late nineteenth-century versus the antiquarian/learned gentry purchasers of 150 years earlier. The selection by the

three anthologists of emphatically historical contents in *The Pamphlet Library* volumes results in the virtual exclusion of the rich exempla of nineteenth-century pamphlets right on their doorstep. If the second volume of *Literary Pamphlets* publishes three nineteenth-century items by Wordsworth, Byron, and Bowles on Byron, they all date from the first quarter of the century, *Political Pamphlets* includes none from the entire century. Dearmer's *Religious Pamphlets* alone ventures on a still topical subject (of Roman Catholicism), but his two nineteenth-century pieces are again early in the century, and over 60 years old: Sydney Smith on the Catholics (1807), and John Henry Newman's Tract for the Times, No 7 (1833). Moreover, the selection throughout is premised on authorship, and a parade of pamphlets by famous authors is supplied, in a genre where anonymity is otherwise frequent. In short, their selection is canonical and belletrist. Avoiding association of pamphlets with nineteenth-century radicalism and popular literature, the principles of selection now seem eloquent, with the absent as visible as the present. By contrast, a good indication of what is left out may be gleaned from the contents of 19C British Pamphlets. One might argue that it is their contemporaries' ambivalence and anxiety about the status of pamphlets that influence the selection by Rhys, Dearmer and Pollard. The description by Arthur Waugh, the general editor, of the criteria the editors deployed articulates their belletrist perspective: 'The object of *The Pamphlet Library* is to set before readers...the text of those pamphlets or tractates which, beside possessing *the only saving qualities of distinction and style*, have also exercised *a striking influence* upon the current of events.' (my emphases; Waugh, 'Preparatory Note', *Political Pamphlets*, p. v). Thus we have at places the abridgement of texts, to include gems which meet these stylistic, literary criteria. Lack of confidence in the project by the editors may also have resulted in the

cancellation of a fifth volume on Dramatic pamphlets, announced but never published. The Pamphlet Library then offers a glimpse of the popular publishing industry's packaging of pamphlet literature at the end of the century.

## 5. Future Work

The 23, 000 pamphlets digitised here provide a rich repository for research, not only into contents-related work, but into future work on pamphlets themselves as a form, and their relations to the economy of print culture. To take an example from 19C British Pamphlets, selected blind, 'What Shall We Teach? Or Physiology in Schools: Being an Attempt to Advocate Instruction in the Laws of Life as a Branch of General Education'. By Edwin Lankester, M.D, F.R.S. Author of "A School Manual of Health" etc. Groombridge and Sons, 5, Paternoster Row, 1870. Price One Shilling. pp. 63.

This is an intact pamphlet, with wrappers and adverts which lead to other titles published by Groombridge & Sons, written by Lankester and with others, including *A School Manual of Health* (1868), each of which involves threads of affiliation that lead to a variety of networks. From *ODNB* I learned that the author was a doctor, health populariser, natural history writer, and one-time editor of the *National Journal of Social Science* (Nov.1865-Oct. 1866). Having checked Lankester as an author in the British Library Catalogue and in COPAC, I found that some of his books, when examined, were written in a similar, instructional style to the pamphlet, in numbered paragraphs. And having looked at the journal he edited, its affiliation with the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, based in London is clear. It would seem that this national journal failed, and that a later pamphlet, 'The Low Cheap Literature of the Day: the Best Means of Suppressing It', being A Paper Read Before the Section for the Repression of Crime of the SOCIAL SCIENCE

CONGRESS at the Plymouth and Devonport Meeting, 1872. By R Reynolds Fox. Plymouth: I.W.N. Keys and Son, Printers, Bedford Street. 1872. 16 pp incl front and back covers, 12 pp of text, shows the use of the pamphlet form for papers read in a provincial branch of the Social Science Congress (in Plymouth, Devon) without a dedicated periodical. How many other papers from the Plymouth branch of the SSC appeared as pamphlets, and in magazines, and which ones?

It would be worth pursuing the choice of publication format by Lankester during the life of the journal, and before and after it, to see if there were discernible patterns of his location of (other) journals/newspapers, books, and pamphlets for his work; also to see the percentage of pieces by other paper-givers to the Social Science Congresses that appeared as pamphlets, in periodicals, and in books, geared to dates, and the existence of appropriate periodicals for publication of the new social science discourses. Moreover, in the absence of a dedicated journal, did the National Association or any Association of the Social Science Congresses either become a publisher of pamphlets, or gravitate to particular publishers, or serials for publication of their work. How did such strategies change over the course of the Social Science Association's existence, from 1857? Moreover, this polemic about efforts to stem 'low cheap literature', lodged in a pamphlet (price not discernible), provides insight into the underpinning of improvement strategies, of which the Lankester pamphlet is an instance. 'The Pure Literature Society' nationally developed 'depots' of good literature or 'loan libraries' for schools, which Fox documents with a statistical account of periodicals distributed. The Lankester pamphlet, read with others, and in various contexts, can truly illuminate our understanding of the matrix of nineteenth-century print media, into which account pamphlets should be inserted, alongside serials and books.

Laurel Brake

Birkbeck, University of London

This is an edited version of a paper Laurel Brake presented at the launch of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century British Pamphlets collection in Liverpool on 20 March 2009