The Anglo-Jewish Contribution to the Education Movement for Women in the Nineteenth Century

By Miss Stella Wills, M.A. (Lond.), B.A. (Cantab.).

In the movement for women’s education in the second half of the Nineteenth Century, two Jewesses, Louisa, Lady Goldsmid and Mrs. Fanny Hertz played a prominent part. Both of them made a considerable contribution to women’s education, the former as one of the founders of Girton College, Cambridge, the latter as a member of the North of England Council for Promoting the Higher Education of Women, and as the founder of the Mechanics’ Institute for Women in Bradford, one of the first in England.

To evaluate the work of Lady Goldsmid and Fanny Hertz some knowledge of the causes of the Nineteenth Century movement for women’s education is essential. They were mainly social and economic. A study of the 1851 census figures reveals that there were about two million more women than men in Great Britain. This disproportion of the sexes seems to have been more marked in the middle classes, from which a large number of men emigrated to posts abroad. Besides the numerical disproportion of the sexes, there seems to have been a disinclination, for economic reasons, among certain sections to marry. Bainbridge states in a lecture that “cities were filled with club houses. Men can live, and more sumptuously too, at their clubs and at much less expense. It is a great mistake to marry, which many gentlemen in the Nineteenth Century decided not to commit.”

The education of the middle class girl was directed solely to one aim, that of obtaining a husband, and was well described by Frances Power Cobbe as “probably at its lowest ebb half a century ago. It was at that time most pretentious than it had ever been before and infinitely more costly and it was likewise more shallow and senseless than can easily be believed.”

If a girl failed to get married and her father was not in a position to maintain her, the only socially approved way of earning her living was for her to become a governess. No special training was expected as long as she herself had received the education of a lady, which consisted in being a member of a certain class of society. Some general knowledge, a smattering of foreign languages and “accomplishments” were expected from her. But as there were far more governesses than situations available for them, their salaries were very low. By birth a lady, the governess was economically in the same position as a servant and as she was not considered by the family as an equal, nor by the servants as belonging to their group, she was consequently very lonely. There were, however, some who tried to improve her lot, among them being the founders of the Governesses’ Benevolent Institution in 1841. They were mainly clergymen of the Church of England, whose relief work among governesses consisted of finding them situations and providing an asylum for the sick and aged. The promoters realised, however, that relief work was not a solution, and that a more radical and lasting remedy had to be found for the social problem presented by the governess. They came to the conclusion that the work of the governess should be raised to that of a profession, which would give her a status in life. Education for

1 Paper read before the Jewish Historical Society of England on 18th December, 1951.
3 Frances Power Cobbe, Life of Frances Power Cobbe as told by Herself. p. 58.
women was looked upon by the promoters of the Governesses’ Benevolent Institution in this way: the governess was a teacher; a teacher was a woman of culture who could pass on her knowledge to others; therefore the only way of solving the problem of the untrained governess was to give every middle-class girl the power of becoming a teacher so that she could resort to a profession should the need ever arise. This solution would, in the first place, mean a complete change in girls’ education. The adoption of this solution would mean the stress on intellectual education rather than on “accomplishments.” The promoters of Governesses’ Benevolent Institution therefore, with the help of some professors from King’s College, London, notably Bernays and Frederick Denison Maurice, founded a College for Young Ladies in 1848—Queen’s College, Harley Street. This institution was at first a branch of the Governesses’ Benevolent Institution, and had a double function. It was a school which could be attended by girls and women above the age of twelve and it was also an educational centre for governesses who could attend evening classes and receive certificates after undergoing an oral examination, regardless of whether they had been trained at the College or not. Queen’s College was the first institution for the Higher Education of Women in England and although it catered mainly for schoolgirls, the teaching was carried out by university professors on lines very similar to those followed at King’s College. It need hardly be pointed out that Queen’s College had an immense influence on women’s education and that it helped to create the pattern of the girls’ grammar school which developed in the second half of the nineteenth century. Among the members of the Ladies’ Committee of the Governesses’ Benevolent Institute, we find in 1849 the name of Mrs. Francis Henry Goldsmid (1819-1908). It is an interesting and noteworthy fact that a Jewess should have been elected a member of a committee of an institution which was promoted by clergymen of the Church of England, some years before the emancipation of the Jews in this country. Thus the name of Louisa, Lady Goldsmid, wife of her cousin, Sir Francis Goldsmid, and daughter of Moses Asher Goldsmid, can be connected even at so early a date, with the Governesses’ Benevolent Institution, the parent of Queen’s College, Harley Street.

**Louisa, Lady Goldsmid**

Lady Goldsmid was not, however, the only woman in her family who took an active part in the early movement for women’s education. Her mother-in-law, Isabel, Lady Goldsmid (1788-1860), who was married to her cousin, Sir Isaac Lyon Goldsmid, was among the first Lady Visitors of the Ladies’ College, Bedford Square (Bedford College),

which was founded on similar lines to Queen’s College, by a Unitarian, Mrs. Reid. This College had a strictly undenominational character and the teaching was mainly in the hands of professors from University College; and whereas in Queen’s College there were no women on the governing body, the management of Bedford College was largely in the hands of women and the “Lady Visitors.” The work of the Lady Visitor also included constant chaperonage during lecture hours. In accordance with the etiquette of the day, young ladies could not be permitted to sit under a professor unless a married woman or, if single, one of advanced years, was present. The Lady Visitors were also responsible for maintaining the rules of the College. They had to look after

---

the health of the pupils and see to it that the rooms were aired. Isabel Goldsmid, as one of the Lady Visitors, attended the College regularly in 1849 for two hours a week.¹

Isabel Goldsmid’s daughter, Anna Maria Goldsmid, was also interested in the early women’s educational movement. She seemed to have belonged to the same circle as Emily Davies and Elizabeth Garrett, who became the first woman doctor in England. These women met at Langham Place, which was the office of the Society for Promoting the Employment of Women, a society which tried to help middle-class women to enter new fields of employment, and encouraged them to take the necessary training. It is therefore not surprising that Elizabeth Blackwell, who had qualified as a doctor of medicine in the U.S.A., was invited by this group of women to lecture at the Marylebone Hall in March, 1847, on the medical profession for women. In the audience was Elizabeth Garrett, who decided to attempt the same career herself in England, and it is clear from Dr. Blackwell’s autobiography that Anna Maria Goldsmid was present too, apparently in an emotional mood, for, says Dr. Blackwell, “... I well remember the tears rolling down the benevolent face of Miss Anne Goldsmid.”²

When Elizabeth Garrett decided to approach London University to allow her to become a student, and thus brought up the whole question of degrees for women, she was helped in her attempt by Emily Davies, of whom one of the closest collaborators and lifelong friends was Louisa Goldsmid. In 1862 the name of Louisa Goldsmid appeared on a pamphlet which set forth reasons why London University should admit women to university examinations on the same terms as men. The University of London was considered particularly suitable as it was merely an examining body, requiring no residence and giving no course of instruction, so that the conditions of the examination would in no way interfere with a woman’s ordinary domestic life.³ In July, 1862, a fund was established to provide for incidental expenses connected with the movement to obtain for women admission to university examinations in Arts or Medicine. The Honorary Secretary of the Fund was Emily Davies, and Lady Goldsmid, who contributed £5, was the Treasurer.⁴ London University, however, refused to allow women to sit for the existing examinations. The University did not like to be treated as a “corpus vile” on which all experiments were to be tried, and the Committee was advised “to get something from the older Universities.”⁵

Emily Davies and her collaborators decided to take up this suggestion and so on October 23rd 1862, at a meeting held at 3 Waterloo Place, it was resolved that “a committee be formed for obtaining the admission of women to University Examinations.” Emily Davies was the Secretary and Lady Goldsmid the Treasurer.⁶ So far, the only examinations girls and women were allowed to take were those of the Society of Arts, but they supplied on the whole the need of a different class of society. The Committee approached the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to obtain their co-operation in connection with the Local Examinations. The examiners at Cambridge agreed to allow the girls to sit for an experimental examination, but as candidates for the first examination (School Certificate) were not asked to pay fees, subscriptions had to be

¹ Ibid, p. 46. “Note of one of the meetings of the provisional Executive Committee: Mrs. Goldsmid will attend after the first of November and the rest of the autumn term for two hours a week.”
² Ray Strachey, Millenent Garrett Fawcett. p. 11.
⁴ Ibid. Entry for July 1862, p. 261.
⁵ Ibid. Entry for July 1862, p. 263.
raised to pay the examiners. In the statement of accounts for the year ending August 5th, 1864, which was signed by Lady Goldsmid, we find that she had contributed £20, and Sir Francis Goldsmid £10. No one else contributed more than £5. This first examination was arranged very hurriedly and with no previous experience to guide the Committee. Arrangements had also to be made for local examination centres and Lady Goldsmid took an active part in all this work. Emily Davies was very concerned about all the practical details, the organisation of this first examination entailed, but her mind was set at rest when she received Lady Goldsmid's cheque. Thus it was in no small measure due to Lady Goldsmid's generosity and hard work that the first trial School Certificate for girls proved to be a success, and that girls were admitted on the same terms as boys.

We need hardly point out the effect of this examination on girls' schools. This examination more than any other step helped to approximate the education of girls to that of boys and to bring about the revolution in girls' education. The examination, in calling attention to the state of middle-class female education helped to achieve the results which its promoters had intended.

As the experimental examination proved to be such a success, the Committee decided to forward a memorial to Cambridge University asking for the admission of girls to the Local Examinations of the University of Cambridge. Lady Goldsmid threw herself into the work of drafting the Memorial and collected names of women of rank and influence who would be likely to impress the Senate. The Memorial was sent to the Chancellor of the University in October, 1864, and in February, 1865, the Syndicate issued a report recommending that girls should be admitted to the local examinations. "Girls, instead of being in a kind of No-man's Land, were now brought, by contact with the University, into a national system." After procuring the admission of girls to the School Certificate, the Committee devoted its energies to the project for a college which was to be the first College for the Higher Education of Women in Great Britain and equal in status to a Man's College. One of the closest collaborators of Emily Davies was Lady Goldsmid, a member of the first Executive Committee, which drew up the plans for the establishment of the College. Lady Goldsmid was included on this committee on account of her financial acumen—her "economy" as Emily Davies termed it. Not only did Emily Davies hope that Lady Goldsmid would make a considerable monetary contribution herself, but she realised that Lady Goldsmid had a talent for business—in particular for the raising and investing of funds, and so she was invited to act as a financial adviser to the College. No doubt she was helped here by her husband. The College was to prepare students for the

1 Emily Davies, op. cit. Entry for April 29th, 1864.
2 Proposed Admission of Girls to University Local Examinations, p. 2. Pamphlet included in Emily Davies' "Family Chronicle," pp. 298-292.
3 Barbara Stephen, op. cit. p. 96.
4 Barbara Stephen, op. cit. p. 100. Durham University and Oxford University were also approached and Memorials sent.
5 Emily Davies, op. cit. Entry for March 1867. p. 518.
6 Girton College Minute Book. Jan. 11, 1872. Sir Francis Goldsmid promised to guarantee £300 provided that guarantors to the extent of £5,000 could be obtained. Girton College. Minute Book. Entry for February 9th, 1877. A suggestion made by Lady Goldsmid that an effort be made to raise a special fund of £1,000 towards removing the College debt, with an offer of £100 provided the remaining £900 could be raised, was considered. It was agreed that no public appeal be made for £1,000, but that Lady Goldsmid's liberal offer be mentioned with individual applications.
examinations of the University of Cambridge. Every student was expected to pass an entrance examination, which was to be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England. The Rev. S. A. Steinthal from Manchester objected to this clause, but Lady Goldsmid was prepared to give her support to the scheme. This small Executive Committee worked hard, for Emily Davies and Lady Goldsmid met frequently. She was among the first to contribute £100 to the College Scheme and as a sign of appreciation Lady Goldsmid was made one of the early members of the College. Moreover her growing influence in women's education is shown by the fact that the architects' plans for Girton were submitted to her for her opinion; she stated that, in her view, £900 in pocket would not justify an outlay of over £2,000. So Emily Davies rightly chose the word "economy" as characteristic of Lady Goldsmid.

After the establishment of the College, Lady Goldsmid took a considerable interest both in its general requirements and in those of the individual students. When books were needed for the library, it was Lady Goldsmid whose help was sought. When the pond was built, Lady Goldsmid gave £20 for it, and she continually gave money for one purpose or another. After the death of her husband, she presented the sum of £1,200 to the College, founding a scholarship in his memory called the "Sir Francis Goldsmid Scholarship." The holder of this scholarship was given £45 a year, which later was augmented by the terms of Lady Goldsmid's will, to £100.

Lady Goldsmid not only took an interest in the financial affairs of the College but also in the individual students, particularly in Sarah Marks (Hertha Ayrton) who became a very distinguished scientist. Before Sarah Marks could go up to College, poverty had forced her to earn her living as a governess, while at the same time contributing to the upkeep of her own very poor home. When Miss Marks was looking for a post, Madame Bodichon wrote on her behalf to Lady Goldsmid, who advised her to advertise in The Jewish Chronicle which, she said, "finds its way among the well placed and wealthy of our community . . ." Sarah Marks apparently met and dined with Lady Goldsmid frequently and the latter seemed to listen with interest to the ideas of this young woman who came from an entirely different social background. Sarah Marks told Lady Goldsmid in 1880 that she was a socialist, an admission which profoundly shocked Lady Goldsmid, but did not seem to affect their relationship. Lady Goldsmid also took an interest in Sarah Marks' personal affairs and gave her some "amusing worldly-wise advice." She understood very well the relationship of Hertha to Madame Bodichon and called Madame Bodichon a kind of "universal friend" to Hertha. Later, Lady Goldsmid advanced Hertha Ayrton money so that she could have one of her inventions

1 S. A. Steinthal was a Member of the first Suffrage Committee in Manchester in 1867.
2 Letter from Louisa, Lady Goldsmid, to Madame Bodichon, 16th Sept., 1875 (Archives of Girton College).
4 Ibid. p. 173.
5 Letter from Louisa, Lady Goldsmid, to Madame Bodichon, 16th Sept., 1875 (Archives of Girton College).
6 Barbara Stephen, op. cit. p. 272. Miss Davies to Madame Bodichon. "We want the works of Goethe, Schiller and some other books. Would it be well to make a list for Lady Goldsmid?"
8 English Woman's Review. February 14th 1880. p. 83.
9 Girton Review 1908, p. 16. Obituary. The author less states that Lady Goldsmid left £25,000 for the College. In 1883 Lady Goldsmid gave £500 to the College. (Girton College Annual Report, 1883, p. 29).
10 Evelyn Sharp, Hertha Ayrton, p. 82.
11 Evelyn Sharp, op. cit. p. 93.
12 Ibid. p. 93.
patented.\textsuperscript{1} After the establishment of Girton College Lady Goldsmid continued to take an active interest in the Women’s Education Movement. She worked “zealously,”\textsuperscript{2} so that Cambridge women, could become members of the University and she was not discouraged by failure. After Miss Scott, a Girton student, became a wrangler in mathematics in 1879, and so had proved that women could do first-class work, Miss Davies approached the Senate, asking for formal admission of women to examinations and the B.A. Degree.\textsuperscript{3} Lady Goldsmid worked hard to obtain signatures\textsuperscript{4} for the memorial, since 6,000 non-resident members of Cambridge University were to be approached, and her hard work was crowned with success. Students of Newnham and Girton were allowed to sit for the B.A. Examination in 1880 without becoming members of the University. When Miss Ramsay was placed in the First Division of the First Class of the Classical Tripos in 1887, Miss Davies again approached the Senate to admit women to degrees. Here she was again helped by Lady Goldsmid,\textsuperscript{5} but still the Senate refused to yield.

Lady Goldsmid was not only connected with the foundation of Girton College, but was also instrumental in founding a Hall of Residence for women students attending University College, Gower Street.\textsuperscript{6} London University had admitted women to degrees in 1879 and University College accepted women students as a consequence of its action. Thus it became essential to establish a hall of residence for women students with a library. This Hall was also to meet the needs of students who worked at the London School of Medicine and the Slade School; and it was Lady Goldsmid again who was President of the Planning Committee. This Hall of Residence was established later in the autumn.\textsuperscript{7} Lady Goldsmid, who was very fond of music herself, also encouraged girls to take up music professionally by presenting scholarships to the Royal Academy of Music.\textsuperscript{8} These scholarships were intended “for female pianists, who had been studying for two years in the Institution, to enable the successful candidate to continue her education free of cost.”\textsuperscript{9}

Besides working energetically for the cause of women’s education, Lady Goldsmid was also interested in the political aspect of the women’s emancipation movement. She was a member of the First Women’s Suffrage Committee\textsuperscript{10} in London. This committee worked with John Stuart Mill, M.P. for Westminster, who initiated the first Parliamentary Debate on Women’s Suffrage in the House of Commons in 1867.\textsuperscript{11} Lady Goldsmid insisted that the words “unmarried women and widows should be inserted instead of ‘freeholders and householders.’”\textsuperscript{12} She was on the right wing (the quiet section) of the Suffrage Movement. It was possibly due to Lady Goldsmid that the Women’s Education Movement became entirely separate from the political movement. Here she showed wisdom, political insight and independence of mind. Men, who

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid. p. 108.
\textsuperscript{2} Barbara Stephen: Letter from Miss Davies to Madame Bodichon Nov. 2nd, 1880, quoted in Emily Davies and Girton College, p. 324.
\textsuperscript{3} Barbara Stephen, op. cit. p. 324.
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid. p. 324.
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid. p. 327.
\textsuperscript{6} English Woman’s Review, March 15th 1882, p. 118.
\textsuperscript{7} English Woman’s Review, Sept. 15th 1882, p. 424.
\textsuperscript{8} English Woman’s Review, Feb. 14th 1880, p. 83. Lady Goldsmid gave three scholarships to the Royal Academy of Music.
\textsuperscript{9} English Woman’s Review, Feb. 14th 1880, p. 83.
\textsuperscript{10} Blackburn, Record of Women’s Suffrage, p. 59.
\textsuperscript{11} Ray Strachey, The Cause, p. 107.
\textsuperscript{12} Barbara Stephen, op. cit. p. 112.
might not have been ready to support Women's Suffrage, might however have been in favour of the education movement. She did not want the College project to be damaged by political agitation. It was Lady Goldsmid who persuaded Emily Davies to withdraw from the political movement "and to stick to the Middle Class i.e. to education." Emily Davies, not wanting to lose Lady Goldsmid's help, followed her advice.

Louisa, Lady Goldsmid, was, as we have seen, not an uncritical follower of Emily Davies and her opinions were of sufficient value to decide the direction the Movement was to take. When the College project was first discussed, Lady Goldsmid advised the Committee to bide their time and wait "till the ferment about the franchise was over." This was, however, only a diplomatic move on her part, as she still supported the political movement wholeheartedly and was considered to be one of its leaders. After the death of Henry Fawcett, when the progressive women of England wanted to give him a memorial to perpetuate his memory, Lady Goldsmid was the Treasurer of the Women's Fawcett Memorial Fund. The women also selected her to unveil the memorial, which was a drinking fountain in the Thames Embankment Gardens, nearly opposite Cleopatra's Needle, on the 27th July, 1886. Her speech is proof of her unflinching feminism and is worth quoting: "Rarely, if ever, in this country, have women as a distinct body come forward to render services rendered by any individual; they have not been supposed to take any active part in public life and not many years ago their doing so would indeed have been deemed unfeminine, not to say, ridiculous; for even the fact of the Sovereign being a woman could not, as a rule, change the masculine conviction that women neither could nor should trouble themselves about public or political matters." She was also a member of a deputation to W. H. Smith, the First Lord of the Treasury in April, 1891, to plead for "The Cause." She was a member of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage. Her name was found on its Executive Committee.

Lady Goldsmid was also anxious to further the well-being of the children of her own Community. She was a member of the Ladies' Committee of the Infants' School for Jewish Poor, which was established by the Goldsmid family, and bequeathed to the school £3,000 in her will.

Louisa, Lady Goldsmid's life was one of continual struggle. Her girlhood, and the earlier part of her married life were devoted to the fight for Jewish Emancipation which finally succeeded in 1858. No sooner was this object achieved than she devoted herself to the campaign for Higher Education for Women and for their right to enter professions which so far were closed to them. Just as her husband fought for the emancipation of the Jews from 1828 onwards and was never discouraged by setbacks, she fought the battle for the women on the educational front with the same tenacious spirit in the face of prejudice and great difficulties. The writer of her Obituary in the Girton Review rightly considers a period before 1858 as a training period, since "in that

1 Ibid. p. 128.
2 Ibid. p. 115.
4 English Woman's Review, Nov. 14th 1885.
6 Barbara Stephen, op. cit. p. 348.
7 Annual Report of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage.
8 Obituary, Dec. 11th 1908, Jewish Chronicle.
10 Jewish Chronicle, Jan. 22nd 1909.
time of stress and conflict the abhorrence of injustice and oppression which characterized her in after-life was developed and strengthened.\footnote{Obituary 1908, p. 16, \textit{Girton Review}.}

As we have seen, she was a loyal collaborator of Emily Davies who valued her opinion and who often sought her advice. She was, however, not a blind follower, but by her independence of mind, helped to separate the educational movement from the political side of the Women's Movement. As was reflected in her relationship to Hertha Ayrton, any form of social snobbery was alien to her nature. She was as interested in the secretary of the working Women's Society of a Trade Union as in a famous politician or diplomat.\footnote{Ibid. p. 17.} She was many-sided and her interests in her friends embraced people from all walks of life. Her greatest quality was that of loyalty both to people and to causes which were dear to her heart. Her loyalty to personal friends is seen in her kindness to the musician Agnes Zimmermann, to whom she gave a home, and whom she accompanied on her concert tours. Miss Zimmermann's affection and gratitude appears in this letter to a friend: "But my friend, Lady Goldsmid, has arranged to come both to Manchester and Liverpool with me.—I lost my dear Mother in 1863 many years ago now—and my poor Father died in 1877—so I am quite alone now, but I have many kind friends, and a very happy home with Lady Goldsmid, \textit{who is everything to me.}\footnote{Letter written by Agnes Zimmerman on 16th Nov. 1884.} Lady Goldsmid spent a great deal of money on others and very little on clothes or personal pleasures for herself. She was, in fact, self-denying almost to a fault.\footnote{Obituary, \textit{Girton Review} 1908, p. 17.} In short, the able summing up of the Goldsmid family by Cecil Roth can also apply to Lady Goldsmid: "The first English Jews who were received into English Society, without losing in the process anything of their Jewish loyalty, were the members of the Goldsmid family, and they repaid England wholeheartedly.\footnote{Cecil Roth: \textit{The Challenge to Jewish History}, Oct. 20th 1936. \textit{Some Jewish Contributions to English Life.}}"

\textbf{MRS. FANNY HERTZ (1830-1908).}

Whereas Lady Goldsmid was concerned with the extension of women's education in the South of England, Fanny Hertz played an important part in the same movement in the North and in particular in Bradford. One of her most important activities was the foundation of the Bradford Mechanics' Institute for Working Women\footnote{English Woman’s Journal, Sept. 1859, p. 127. "Bradford along with one or two other towns of its class, possesses a female institute which has been in existence for two or three years... one of the ladies instrumental in the founding of this institution will give an account of its rise and progress."} which was one of the first institutes of its kind in England. As her work aroused much interest, she was among the first women to be selected to address a Social Science Congress in 1859. There were also two other women speakers, Mary Carpenter and Louisa Twining, who were prominent social workers. Mrs. Hertz' address, entitled \textit{Mechanics Institute for Working Women with special reference to the Manufacturing Districts of Yorkshire}, was published in the Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science.\footnote{Transactions of the National Assoc. for the Promotion of Social Science, pp. 347-354.} It is a very interesting source of social history as it describes the habits and conditions of life of working women in Yorkshire. Fanny Hertz showed herself a penetrating observer of social conditions which she tried to improve by means of large scale educational schemes.
Fanny Hertz tells us that the "female population from its employments and its habits of life has much in common with male artisans." The factory girls "live in one perpetual round of monotonous ugliness." The girls rise at 5 o'clock in the morning and work for twelve hours. The working girl is independent owing to liberal wages. She becomes her own mistress at a comparatively early age. She lives in lodgings, away from her parents and not being bound by home ties she is always "more or less on the look out for such districts and towns as may furnish the greatest demand and consequent remuneration for her labour." She "readily migrates from one place to another in search of better wages and thereby acquires a roving and very independent cast of mind." Having described the living condition of the working girls, Mrs. Hertz explains why Mechanics' Institutes for Working Women should meet the needs of the female working population. As the working girl is an independent person, she would resent any "patronage or control." The Mechanics' Institutes are based on the principle of self-government, which would appeal to the independent working-class girl. "The pupils being in their quality of members part proprietors and managers, give their votes at elections of committees and officers and otherwise have a share in the government of affairs. "They pay their fees of membership from time to time, use their privilege of voting and feel that they are not being educated in charity by others but are educating themselves."

Fanny Hertz then describes the methods and difficulties of the Institute which she herself founded in Bradford. The Institute was established in 1857. Six hundred pupils had enrolled, but only 120 were regular weekly pupils, giving an average of ninety per night. The subjects taught were reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, grammar, needlework and singing. There was an advanced class for the elements of natural science. Pupils were admitted from the age of fifteen. The fee was two pence per week or eighteen pence per quarter. In connection with the Institute there were established a library, reading room and penny savings bank. Mrs. Hertz believed that the Institute could only be a success if the teaching were good and inspiring. The pupils had to feel that they were improving "only by first rate tuition," she said, "we can hope to awaken that love of mental activity that thirst for knowledge, which constitute the groundwork of all intellectual excellence."

Mrs. Hertz appeared to have taken a great deal of interest in teaching methods and had progressive ideas on the subject. She realised that teachers should not aim merely "at pouring into their pupils a certain quantity of facts, but should lead them to the desired point, by a chain of nicely calculated questions, adapted to their understanding and elucidated by example." Pupils should be encouraged to discover many things for themselves. She suggested that "the elements of physiology on a system so admirably showed forth by George Combe should certainly be taught in all educational institutes for women. "It is so important to the well-being of the whole community that women should have some idea of the human body and its function, some notions of the laws of health." From the lecture we can also discover Fanny Hertz's views on women's education and position in society. She advocated education for its own sake and believed that any human being whatever his or her station in life, had a right

1 Transactions, p. 349 to 350.  3 Ibid. p. 350.  2 Ibid. p. 350.  4 Ibid. p. 151.
5 Ibid. p. 151.  6 Ibid. p. 351.  7 Transactions, p. 351.  8 Ibid. p. 352.  9 Ibid. p. 353.  10 Ibid. p. 353.
11 A List of the books contained in this library can be found in the Bradford Public Library.
to benefit from a liberal education. She said "how little weight is attached to the
consideration that moral and mental culture must be of the greatest consequence quite
apart from the good results, which necessarily accrue thence to others."1 She pointed
out "that all the obstacles to happiness in such a working community as Bradford would
be proved when analysed to be more or less connected with the degradation of women,
consequent upon ignorance."2 In establishing the Mechanics' Institute in Bradford
she worked with John Henry Bridges who became her lifelong friend. He himself
worked at the Institute and thus recorded his experiences "Meanwhile I have been
distributing scraps of sanitary knowledge to a class of factory girls at a huge sort of
evening school or Educational Institute, taking Miss Nightingale's Notes as a textbook."3
Mrs. Hertz might have developed her interest in public health and education through
her contact with Bridges, who made Public Health one of his principal concerns, and
worked hard to bring about an improvement in the sanitation of Bradford.4 Bridges
also introduced her to Positivism, a cult to which she adhered all her life.

In addition to her activities for female working class education, Mrs. Hertz also
founded the Bradford Ladies' Educational Association and represented Bradford on the
This Council, which was founded in 1867 was a voluntary organisation, consisting of
representatives of associations of school mistresses and others who were interested in
the education of women, from other towns in the North of England. This Council,
representative of middle class women, was to be the central policy-making body for an
extensive area; it existed for ten years and was the first important educational organisation
for the higher education of women. It was initiated and organised almost entirely by
women and served as a forum for the women's point of view on all educational questions.
The problems which were discussed in Council meetings were by no means local in
close. Between 1867 and 1877 when the Council may have finally ceased to exist,
it carried through matters, which had a revolutionary effect on women's education.
The Council instituted local lectures for women, prepared the way for university
extension which was started as an experiment by Cambridge University in 1873. Another
notable achievement was the examinations for women which the North of England
Council helped to institute. In 1868 the Council presented a memorial to Cambridge
University which resulted in the Cambridge University examination for women, the
first examination in England open to girls over eighteen years of age. This examination
led to the foundation of Associations for Promoting the Higher Education of Women
in many parts of the country. Thus the work of the Council can be considered as an
attempt to give a national character and direction to the higher education of women in
England. Although the principal moves in the education of women were discussed by
the Council, a common policy was decided upon and certain measures were successfully
carried through by it, it never founded educational institutions. It was mainly left to
the local associations which the Council, by its activities helped to foster, to found schools
and institutions for higher education for women. Newnham College, which developed
out of the work of the Associations for Higher Education for Women in Cambridge,
and the women's colleges in Oxford and Manchester may be considered indirectly as

1 Ibid. p. 348.
2 Ibid. p. 348.
3 Recollections of John Henry Bridges, 1908, p. 100.
4 Ibid. p. 101. In 1862 Bridges published a lecture on health with remarks on the death rate
of Bradford and other towns.
some of the achievements of the North of England Council: they were the direct consequence of the examination for women instituted by Cambridge University in 1868. Another important contribution of the Council was the action taken on behalf of persons of both sexes who did not enjoy educational opportunities. Thus the Council approached Cambridge University to undertake extra-mural teaching as one of its functions, so that men and women who were unable to go to a university were able to benefit from a higher education. After the Endowed Schools Act in 1869 the Council was instrumental in forming a special committee in London to take responsibility for the fair distribution of educational endowments which were to be available for re-distribution. In 1870 this Committee appears to have become an independent body and we meet it under the name of “Association for Promoting the Application of Endowments to the Education of Women.” This interest in endowments for girls’ schools led direct to the foundation of schools by the local associations, which were linked with the Council. The Council also concerned itself with elementary education and the appointment of women as inspectors, and some of its members presented a Memorial to Parliament in 1871 asking for equal treatment of boys and girls in “Privy Council Schools, and for the appointment of women as inspectors.” The Council also agitated for the election of women as representatives of School Boards. Thus we see that the Council concerned itself with all educational issues of the day which had some connection with the education of women. Sir Michael Sadler rightly considered “the records of the earlier meetings as almost an epitome of some of the most interesting chapters in our recent educational history.”

Although, as we have seen, the Council has concentrated in the North of England and so represented persons and teachers interested in education from only one part of the country, it formulated and carried through plans which not only had a far-reaching effect on women’s education in England, but also on the education of the English people as a whole, and stimulated less active districts in Great Britain and even on the Continent, to work for women’s education.

The women who were members of the Council were active, not only locally, but on matters of national interest in which they obtained wide reputations. Mrs. Josephine Butler, the President, who represented the Ladies’ Educational Association in Liverpool has found a place in history as she agitated for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act. The two representatives of the Ladies’ Association from Bradford were the wife of W. E. Forster, also responsible for introducing the Elementary Education Bill in 1870, and Mrs. Fanny Hertz herself. Mrs. Hertz worked in a team, with the most distinguished women in England, Anne Jemima Clough, the founder of Newnham College, Cambridge, Mrs. Butler, Miss Wolstenholme, and Mrs. Hertz attended meetings of the Council regularly, and the latter made valuable contributions to the discussions. The Education Association in Bradford, which was founded by Mrs. Hertz was a particularly active body. The lectures were arranged for ladies and given by university lecturers, generally from Cambridge, and the enrolments compared very favourably with other northern towns. Fanny Hertz aimed at getting interesting lectures herself and invited John Morley, who lectured to the Association. It is, incidentally, worthy of note, that the Bradford Ladies’ Educational Association founded one of the earliest grammar schools for girls in the North of England, in 1883. But by that time Mrs. Hertz had

2 Obituary in Yorkshire Observer, 4 Apr. 1898.
left the district. Thus she was the founder of an important institution and association and represented her home town in a council which was the spearhead of the women's educational movement at its time.

Mrs. Hertz had a very attractive personality which made many friends for her, and helped to make her home an intellectual and cultural centre. She was a Hertz by birth and was related to Henrich Hertz, the famous physicist of Hamburg who discovered Hertz' Rays. Her father, was an antique dealer in Brunswick, who emigrated to London about 1837. Her husband, William D. Hertz, was one of her cousins, whose branch of the family came to Yorkshire in 1825. He was an agent for yarn at Bradford, where Fanny Hertz had the opportunity of making friends with John Henry Bridges, a resident there until 1837. Fanny Hertz counted for much in Bradford in those days, “She stood for all that was richest and best in art and music and in intellectual life. She was herself an exquisite musician and a picturesque and forcible writer, and her letters and conversation alike, proved her remarkable skill as raconteur.” She could converse in three languages. In Bradford she joined the Positivists, to whom she gave support all her life.

In 1870 the Hertz family moved to London, and the friendship with Bridges continued. Indeed he was Fanny's closest friend and after his death she contributed a chapter to Frances H. Torlone’s book entitled, Some Account of John Henry Bridges and his family (Some Memoirs of John Henry Bridges, by Mrs. Hertz). She always expressed how much he meant to her “to me and my daughter he was an external conscience.” In London her salon was much frequented by radical writers and lawyers of all nationalities. Jean Jules Jusserand, the French Ambassador, was among her visitors and he described her salon in his Autobiography, “What Me Befell” “In the Hertz family many people of interest were to be met, no grandees, but men notable for what they thought and what they did. Interested in questions of social development, liberal-minded, they had no ambition except that of pleasing their friends and making them know and understand one another. Their fortune went dwindling. their smiling temper remained unaltered and they continued as keenly interested in the welfare of others.”

“Towards the end of the last century she [Fanny Hertz] used to collect at 145 Harley Street the most carefully selected notabilities. She looked for intellect and conversational powers rather than rank or wealth, but she would never admit that anybody who was anybody was unknown to her.”

In 1876 Mrs. Hertz translated Comte’s “Positive Polity” and in London also she continued to take an interest in the education of working-class women, and put what

---

1 Letter from Sir Gerald Hurst (Hertz) of 25.5.1951.
2 Yorkshire Observer, 4.4.1908.
3 “The Recollections of Mrs. Hertz,” E. M. Beasley, The Positivist Review, 1908, p. 115. She was warmly interested in a great variety of subjects that appeared to her cultivated mind, keenly enjoying the discussion by well-equipped disputers, herself propounding the question.
4 Livening : 19th Century Teacher. John Henry Bridges, p. 137. In a letter written to her nephew Sir Gerald Hurst, Mrs. Hertz writes on January 15th 1908, “John Henry Bridges was the dearest friend over 45 years, I have ever had and shall have and the intellectually most important man I have known. He was the intimate and honoured friend of the best men of his time, John Morley, James Bryce, etc.” Livening op. cit. p. 252. “In the last years of his life Bridges formed a friendship with Mr. Yates who painted his portrait for Mrs. Hertz.”
5 J. J. Jusserand, What Me Befell, 1933, p. 49.
7 Yorkshire Observer, 4th April 1908.
she considered to be her duty towards society before personal pleasures. J. J. Jusserand gives us a good illustration of her attitude and that of her daughter. He tells us that the London season was made especially bright in 1879 by the presence of the Comedie Francaise, then at the height of its fame with Sarah Bernhardt. ... the success was prodigious; it was very difficult to get seats. Mrs. Hertz was given one, but it was for a night which she was accustomed to spend with poor women in the East End, trying to enliven and instruct them. She sorrowfully, but unhesitatingly gave up the ticket, not the poor women; such was the spirit of the family.1

Sir Gerald Hurst, her great-nephew, found her in his youth a most accomplished hostess, who delighted in bringing interesting people together. The atmosphere of her home seemed to him to be consecrated almost too devotedly to culture and to a less degree to Radical causes.2 Intellect was indeed valued very highly by Fanny Hertz. She was intensely pleased that her nephew Sir Gerald Hurst had a brilliant college career and was marrying the daughter of a Senior Wrangler. She was proud of her descent from Heinrich Hertz whose name has been "bracketed with that of Newton and who already ranks among the Immortals."3 She admired Bridges because he was "intellectually the most important man she had known."4 It is interesting that her sister was married to Lord Moulton, who was also a Senior Wrangler, and was the first tutor in Mathematics at Girton College, and so an indirect tie can be established between Fanny Hertz and Lady Goldsmid's work. Thus it was her high regard for intellect which made Fanny Hertz take an interest in the movement for women's education, whereas in the case of Lady Goldsmid it may have been a desire for justice which prompted her to devote her time to this work. Both women worked hard and successfully for a cause, which although unpopular in their lifetime, eventually changed the whole position of women in society. English women of all creeds today owe much to these two Jewesses of the Nineteenth Century.

---

1 J. J. Jusserand, op. cit. p. 49.
2 Letter from Sir Gerald Hurst of 25.5.1951.
3 Letter from Fanny Hertz to Sir Gerald Hurst, Feb. 9th 1903.
4 Letter from Fanny Hertz to Sir Gerald Hurst, Jan. 15 1908.