

The Growth of Female Piano Pedagogy in Nineteenth-Century Dublin and Annie Curwen's Pianoforte Method

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At the turn of the nineteenth century women's involvement in music in Ireland was still mainly limited to performance. However, over the course of the century their participation in music teaching increased dramatically. Music teaching became one of the few acceptable professions for women and the majority of female music teachers taught piano.¹ Music was also seen as an asset for young ladies, creating social acceptance as well as adding to their desirable attributes for possible suitors. It gave them an opportunity to demonstrate their education, grace and self-expression through their musical abilities as a singer or pianist.² However, opportunities in music were usually limited to those from a reasonably wealthy background because they themselves would have to pay for lessons and a piano to practice on. After that, a good standing in society was helpful in giving women the opportunity to illustrate their talents and gain students of their own. By the turn of the twentieth century the number of female music teachers was nearly equal to the number of men. Many factors contributed to this situation: the growing popularity of the piano, an increase in the demand for teachers, and finally the development of the Royal Irish Academy of Music and its acceptance of women as both teachers and students. One woman who benefited from all of the above was Annie Curwen. She received her music education at the Academy before embarking on a career teaching piano privately in Dublin. When she left the capital for Scotland, circumstances led to her continuing to contribute to female pedagogy through her instruction manuals and teaching aids on the subject. Her marriage to John Curwen provided her with the sources to put her education and experience as a piano teacher to good use and become

¹ Nancy B. Reich: 'European composers and musicians, ca.1800-1890', *Women and Music*, ed. Karin Pendle (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991), 98. Hereafter referred to as Reich: 'European Composers and Musicians'.

² Phyllis Weliver: *Women Musicians in Victorian Fiction, 1860-1900* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2000), 1.

one of the leading educators on piano pedagogy in the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century.

Evidence of women involved in the teaching of music in Dublin at the beginning of the nineteenth century is limited; however, their growing involvement and success as music teachers can be traced through the century. In the 1800 edition of *Wilson's Dublin Directory* there are several entries for women listed under merchants and traders but none as 'professors of music'.³ There is one female entry related to music: Elizabeth Rhames is listed as a music seller and haberdasher on 16 Exchange Street. This was the family business, which she seems to have taken over after her husband's death. There are fourteen entries for men involved in music that year, four of whom were professors of music and ten were music sellers or pianoforte makers. By the 1851 edition of *Thom's Directory* there is a separate listing for 'professors of music'. Twenty-seven names are given of which five were women, thus making up 18% of the music teachers listed.⁴ In the listing for merchants and traders within this edition there are four women listed as either music teachers or professors, but one of them also appears in the previous list. By 1900 the list for professors of music and singing had increased to sixty-six out of whom twenty-eight were women, putting the percentage of advertised female music teachers up to 42%. This information goes a little way towards illustrating the growth in active female music teachers in Dublin. It may not be conclusive because, as Derek Collins points out in *To Talent Alone*, it is difficult to estimate the volume of teachers through the press because those who advertised through word of mouth cannot be accounted for.⁵ Also, the abolition of the advertisement duty in 1853 may have influenced the growth in listings in the years that followed. However, the lists are a starting point in establishing the position female teachers held within society.

³ *Wilson's Dublin Directory 1800*, Merchant and Trader Listings.

⁴ *Thom's Irish Almanac and Official Directory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1851. Hereafter referred to as *Thom's Directory*.

⁵ Derek Collins: 'Music in Dublin 1800-1848', *To Talent Alone: The Royal Irish Academy of Music 1848-1998*, ed. Richard Pine and Charles Acton (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1998), 27. Hereafter referred to as Collins: 'Music in Dublin'.

diff
types
of
teacher

In the first half of the nineteenth century the active music teachers in Dublin can be divided into three main groups: part-time freelance teachers who taught on the side with another job as their main source of income; visiting teachers who were usually in Dublin to perform for a season and who would teach a small number of students on the side; and finally, full-time professional teachers who taught as their main source of income. The majority of female teachers were in this latter category. Many of them operated 'academies' from their homes while a small number travelled to homes and schools. In several cases whole families became involved in music teaching, for example Mr and Mrs Willis who both taught music in their home and whose daughters followed in their footsteps. Mr Willis was a singer, flautist and composer and his wife was a pianist.⁶ Another example of a family of teachers is that of Johann Logier. He is probably best remembered for inventing the chiroplast, which he patented in 1814 which was first advertised for sale in *The Freeman's Journal* in January 1815.⁷ Logier developed new methods of teaching, which he taught to his children and later published. Both his son and daughter followed in his footsteps and taught the piano. After his death his daughter and her husband, Mr E. C. Allen, became the chief exponents of his methods in Dublin.⁸ They ran a successful academy of music at 5 Gardiner's Row, and students were taught and examined using Logier's methods. The academy continued into the 1850s and was one of the most successful in the city despite the fact that Mrs Allen was widowed in 1833 and was the sole director from that time onwards, a task she performed while raising ten children. It was exceptionally well equipped, advertising that it had fourteen pianos in 1829, and over the years that followed it had as many as ten student concerts a year, which by today's standards sounds like a huge undertaking.⁹

Another female figure that is present in the merchant and trader listings of 1825 is Miss Elizabeth Bennett. She causes some confusion because she is listed in the directory from 1825 but there was

⁶ Collins: 'Music in Dublin', 23.

⁷ *The Freeman's Journal*, 13 January 1815. The chiroplast was a wooden mechanism that was attached to the front of a piano to regulate the performer's hand movements.

⁸ Collins: 'Music in Dublin', 26.

⁹ *The Freeman's Journal*, 20 April 1829.

also a Miss Elizabeth Bennett, clearly not the same person, who taught in the Royal Irish Academy of Music and who was still active there in 1902. However it is unclear if the two are related or if there was a connection. The earlier Miss Bennett first began to advertise in *The Freeman's Journal*, where she announced her availability to teach piano, thorough-bass and composition in 1821. She regularly advertised in the years that followed and was listed each year in the merchant and traders listings as a 'Professor of the Pianoforte living at 11 Lesson Street'.¹⁰ She is notable as one of the first teachers to adopt the idea of taking on an apprentice, a practice that was popular in London in the early nineteenth century.¹¹ She began this practice in 1825 and the Allen's Academy and Haydn Corri soon followed her lead. These apprentices usually paid a fee and began when they were between the ages of twelve and fourteen. In some cases they took up residence with their teacher.¹² They were given responsibility for preparatory teaching and copying music and in return they received lessons in their teacher's area of expertise. For example, in Miss Bennett's case her apprentice was offered lessons in pianoforte and composition. This system became an important element in the growth of professional music teachers in Dublin and by the 1850s the majority of private teachers and academies had an apprentice and advertised for replacements on a regular basis.

With the founding of the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1848 another door was opened for the female music teacher. An example of female equality in the Royal Irish Academy of Music is the employment of Fanny Arthur Robinson. She became a member of the teaching staff in 1856, just after the Royal Irish Academy of Music was reorganised. From the onset she was in a position of importance as the second professor of piano with her husband, Joseph Robinson, holding the position of first professor of piano. She taught both male and female students and she was earning £100 per annum, the same amount of money as her husband and the other professor of the piano, Sir Robert Stewart. This was important for the generations that followed because, as one of the first female teachers in the Academy, the treatment of Fanny Arthur Robinson set the precedent for those who followed. Her treatment was also unusual by European and American standards. In

¹⁰*Thom's Directory*, 1833, 1851, 1860, 1864.

¹¹ Collins: 'Music in Dublin', 24.

¹² Collins: 'Music in Dublin', 24.

Europe in the mid-nineteenth century women professors were usually not given the same respect, rank or salary as their male colleagues.¹³ In nineteenth-century America, particularly in the larger cities like Chicago and New York, there was still a strong preference for male teachers and therefore women found it 'almost impossible' to get a good position in the fashionable schools in the city.¹⁴ If women did manage to get a position it was usually as an under-teacher, which was poorly paid.

Annie Gregg became a pianoforte student of Fanny Robinson and Joseph Robinson when she first attended the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1857. She also attended classes in harmony with Sir Robert Stewart, whose teaching methods she referred to in her teacher's manual when she noted that he was 'a very able and interesting teacher'.¹⁵ Upon the completion of her studies at the Academy in 1865, Gregg, who was a native of Dublin, set about becoming involved in private teaching in the city. She was also a regular performer at musical evenings and concerts throughout the city. In 1876 she moved to Scotland and continued to teach privately there. While the reasons for her move are not known it is fair to say that this decision and the circumstances that followed led to the establishment of Annie Gregg as an important contributor to music education.

Through her teaching in Scotland she first encountered John Curwen who was a congregational minister and the main proponent of the tonic sol-fa system at that time. While he did not invent it, his great achievement lay in his methods of teaching and using the system. A primary example of this is his use of tonic sol-fa hand signs (Figure 1). These became a popular approach to teaching tonic sol-fa and were later used by Annie in the twentieth century they were adapted by Zoltan Kodaly as an integral part of the Kodaly method of teaching.¹⁶ In 1844 John Curwen had started printing his own publications and in 1863 he established his publishing firm, J. Curwen and Sons. Annie Gregg married John Curwen's son, John Spencer Curwen, who was involved in

¹³ Reich: 'European Composers and Musicians', 101.

¹⁴ Amy Fay: 'The Woman Teacher in a Large City', *Women in Music: An Anthology of Source Readings from the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. Carol Neuls-Bates (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1986).

¹⁵ Annie J. Curwen: *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method: The Teacher's Guide* (London: J. Curwen & Sons Ltd, 1913), 360. Hereafter referred to as Curwen: *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method*.

¹⁶ Curwen: *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method*, 346.

the publishing firm and became the main exponent of John Curwen's methods. However, up until the 1880s the Curwen Press was not targeting the growing population of female musicians and teachers. The increase in female involvement in music in the nineteenth century gave an impetus to all music-related businesses. Many began to produce books and magazines aimed at the female musician, which were designed to meet the needs and interests of the 'fairer sex'.¹⁷ Annie Curwen soon set about rectifying the lack of publications that the Curwen Press was producing for the female market.

¹⁷ Reich: 'European Composers and Musicians', 98.

Figure 1. John Curwen's Tonic Solfa Handsigns¹⁸

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Mrs. Curwen's Pianoforte Method.

[Section VI.]

MANUAL SIGNS FOR THE
SCALE SOUNDS.

NOTE.—The diagrams show the hand as seen from the left of the teacher, not as seen from the front. Teachers should particularly notice this.

**soh.**The GRAND or *bright* tone.**te.**The PIERCING or *sensitive* tone.**me.**The STEADY or *calm* tone.**ray.**The ROUSING or *hopeful* tone.**doh.**The STRONG or *firm* tone.**lah.**The SAD or *weeping* tone.**fah.**The DESOLATE or *awe-inspiring* tone.

¹⁸ Curwen: *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method*, 346.

John Curwen's publications on music teaching and the tonic sol-fa method aimed to provide the student and teacher with a 'cheap and accessible' guide to understanding and learning music. Annie Curwen felt that a similar guide that dealt with the pianoforte would be useful. Her preface to the teacher's manual notes that the guide was 'an experiment' and indicates that Curwen wanted to do for pianoforte teachers what her father-in-law had done for the singing teacher.¹⁹ In the first appendix of the book Curwen states that as far as she 'was able to ascertain by diligent search among the publishers and at the British Museum, nobody had attempted to do anything on this principle for the guidance of the pianoforte teacher'.²⁰ Annie Curwen set about writing a book that would provide a new and better understanding of music and better methods for teaching the basics. Her aim was for the student to 'gain knowledge of musical phenomena through ear observation and learning notation bit by bit as a means of recording what the ear had learnt to recognise'.²¹ Much of the material in the lessons and exercises was based upon materials which she had taught to her own children. Her connections to the Curwen family meant that she had no trouble finding a publisher and, as it turned out, the firm benefited greatly from her books, which remained popular well into the twentieth century.

Annie Curwen's first publications appeared in 1886: *The Child Pianist* was a series of work books for the student and *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method* was the accompanying teacher's handbook. Her teaching course was made up of graded sections with the student's workbooks containing pieces and exercises while the teacher's guide contained the instructions on how best to teach and approach each grade. Her reason for keeping all the instructions in the teacher's guide is explained in the preface. She felt the student would think more of the teacher who could teach them 'out of their own head' rather than someone who just read instructions from the student's book.²²

When the teacher's guide first appeared in 1886 it comprised four main teaching steps which were: reading note values, reading rests, reading intervals and notes, and as a final step the introduction of

¹⁹ Curwen: *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method*, iii.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 347.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 347.

²² *Ibid.*, iii.

syncopation and compound time. The whole series proved to be extremely popular, with Curwen receiving so many letters from mothers and teachers who had used her methods to great success that she set about adding to them. By the sixteenth edition, which was published in 1913, several additions had been made, based on the feedback she had received. The preface notes that after the first editions and through talking to teachers she felt she had over-condensed the early stages. It was teaching the staff and time signatures that many teachers found the most difficult. As a result she added a preliminary course on teaching the first notions of pitch, time and notation.²³ She also added two new steps with information on exercises, scales, chords, transposition and ear training. This edition concluded with six appendices on topics such as sight-singing and class teaching.

By 1913, when Curwen's methods were at the height of their popularity, the Curwen Press was also producing aids to the methods including books of illustrative duets, C clef exercise books, illustrative tunes, music slates, staff cards, and certificate cards for the exams at the end of each step.²⁴ The book's continued popularity resulted in the teachers guide reaching its thirty-first edition.

Upon examination the reasons for the popularity of her books become evident. The *Teacher's Guide* is one of the most extensive music manuals of its time. It is a step by step guide to teaching the basics of music theory on the piano with nothing left to the imagination. Each new lesson is laid out under the following headings: aim of the lesson, preparation, method, practice, and ear exercise. This final heading is of the utmost importance throughout the book because, as she mentions in the introduction, 'Music theory and piano teaching should not be about just looking at the music, it should be about listening too'.²⁵ The book begins with 'A Few Educational Maxims' or Mrs Curwen's twelve step plan to being a good teacher and getting the best from students (as listed in Figure 2).²⁶

²³ *Ibid.*, vii.

²⁴ Simon Herbert: *A History of the Curwen Press* (London: George All & Unwin Ltd, 1973), 71. Hereafter referred to as Herbert: *A History of the Curwen Press*.

²⁵ Curwen: *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method*, 8.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, viii.

Figure 2. Mrs Curwen's Educational Maxims²⁷

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A FEW EDUCATIONAL MAXIMS

Showing the Principles on which the Method
of the "Child Pianist" is founded.

1. Teach the easy before the difficult.
2. Teach the *thing* before the *sign*.
3. Teach one fact at a time, and the commonest fact first.
4. Leave out all exceptions and anomalies until the general rule is understood.
5. In training the mind, teach the concrete before the abstract.
6. In developing physical skill, teach the elemental before the compound, and do one thing at a time.
7. Proceed from the known to the related unknown.
8. Let each lesson, as far as possible, rise out of that which goes before, and lead up to that which follows.
9. Call in the understanding to help the skill at every step.
10. Let the first impression be a correct one; leave no room for misunderstanding.
11. Never tell a pupil anything that you can help him to discover for himself.
12. Let the pupil, as soon as possible, derive some pleasure from his knowledge. Interest can only be kept up by a sense of growth in independent power

²⁷ Curwen: *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method*, viii.

The twelve 'maxims' above are the key to understanding the whole book and all of Curwen's teaching methods. Throughout each step she refers to the maxims to support her methods. The preliminary course²⁸ which appeared in the sixteenth edition is preparatory to reading and playing music. It is set out in five lessons (although she often mentions through the course of the book that her lessons may take two or three actual sessions with the student). At the beginning she suggests that the first lesson given to a child should be about the piano itself. She recommends opening it up to show how it works and to get the student to talk about the piano and what they know of it.²⁹

These preliminary lessons are all concerned with understanding the basics through aural work rather than through reading music straight away. For example, in first approaching the keys of the piano she suggests introducing them as musical sounds rather than notes. She begins with D because it is the easiest key on the piano to find and remember, and in saying this she refers back to maxim 1. It is also in the middle of the group of alphabet letters that are 'borrowed for music' and she noted at this point that it might have been easier if these notes had been given names that were not used for anything else!³⁰ She then suggests working outwards to C and E, B and F and finally A and G. The section goes on to introduce the staff, beginning with the 'Great Staff', which is comprised of eleven lines.³¹ She shows how it is divided, introducing elements of pitch and finding the sounds that the student has become familiar with. Pulse and time are also introduced in this section with the suggestion that each lesson should contain a little on both pitch and time. The conclusion of the section has a proposed examination for the end of the introductory stage. Annie Curwen believed that the object of the examinations throughout the book were

²⁸ The preliminary course was added to *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method* in 1900. Annie Curwen felt after hearing from teachers and parents since the first edition appeared, that she had over-condensed the original edition and that she needed to give more attention to the first steps of teaching, which was an area that many reported to have difficulty with. The preliminary course gives the teacher guidance in the first lessons with the student and how to introduce the 'first notations of pitch, time and notation'. Curwen: *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method*, vii.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 39.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 57.

not for the glorification of the student, but for the testing of the teacher's work. Curwen states:

The mason tests his wall with a plumbline before he adds his next row of bricks. Surely a teacher should not be less careful in ascertaining, at every step, whether or not the ideas he has been presenting to his pupils mind have been assimilated, seeing that on this depends the power to assimilate the ideas that are to follow.³²

She also mentions later in the book that exams are not for every student and that whether they sit examinations or not is a 'matter of small importance'. She suggests that the student's knowledge and clarity are what is important and therefore teachers should still work towards exams, with the requirements being the framework for the lessons.

In the following steps the same approach is evident throughout. Her main aim is always to keep the student interested and to make sure that they fully understand each new concept. Steps one to four are all subdivided into lessons, with each lesson consisting of eight exercises on different topics. The exercises and illustrative duets are contained in the pupil's books while the explanations of each are in the teachers guide. The eight topics were: 1, technique; 2, locality; 3, staff knowledge; 4, reading by interval; 5, ear exercise; 6, reading time; 7, time dictation and 8; reading time and interval combined.³³ In the introduction to these she suggested doing a little of each in every lesson because 'constant change of topic usually prevents weariness'.³⁴

The fifth and sixth steps expand upon the first four and include an introduction to major and minor scales. All six steps include the repetition of the ideas that each lesson should have a definitive aim and prepare the pupil for what is coming by recalling what they have learned. She also suggested that while her lesson plans suggest what to cover, each lesson should be tailored to suit the student. For example, in step two she notes that 'illustration and analogies used in talking around the subject must correspond with the individual child's ideas outside music'.³⁵ She suggests this affords the teacher the opportunity to

³² *Ibid.*, 78.

³³ *Ibid.*, 80.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 80.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 103.

show originality, an idea she returns to in her book on the psychology of music teaching.

In the six appendices Curwen takes the opportunity to make suggestions on other questions she was frequently asked. In the first appendix she refers to the question of technical training, which was avoided in previous editions. In the sixteenth edition and through the appendix she continues to refrain from commenting on technical training because, as she saw it, 'many better qualified than her were at work in it'.³⁶ She does recommend to the reader the 1903 publication by Tobias Matthay entitled the *Act of Touch*. She believed he was revolutionising pianoforte teaching through his approach. In appendix two she discusses the use of her book in class teaching since she had been informed that many teachers were using her book as 'the basis of the class lessons which used to be called "theory"'.³⁷ The appendix deals with those parts of her book she deemed suitable for class teaching and the parts that were not suitable. The third appendix focuses on the clefs and primarily the teaching of the C clef. The fourth appendix is a discussion on recreational music and using other publications in the series to further the student's knowledge. The fifth appendix is concerned with duets and the final appendix gives pointers for sight reading and playing.

Annie Curwen's teaching methods revolutionised teaching practice, particularly in private teaching, around the turn of the twentieth century. Curwen's innovative methods led to the development of a style of teaching that promoted aural observation alternating with actual music making. From the first edition onwards she received thousands of letters of thanks for the aid she had provided to teachers and to mothers who were supervising their children's musical education. In addition to her sales in Ireland and England her books were also sold in America, Canada and Australia. Their success in England led to the establishment of official exams in the Curwen Method every February and July with the support of the Curwen Method Office in London.³⁸ She also began teaching seminars and training classes on her methods all over England as well as in the Royal Academy of Music in London. Her books were the first of their kind for

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 347.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 353.

³⁸ Herbert: *A History of the Curwen Press*, 72.

piano pedagogy. They provided the teacher with a guide to teaching the basics which they could stick to rigidly or use as an aid from time to time. She broke down elementary piano teaching into easy to follow steps which were clear and concise but also well researched and successful in their outcome. Her methods have been acknowledged as an influence on such educators as Kodaly, with research into her work in 1971 suggesting they were the foundations for the Hungarian method of teaching beginner pianists.³⁹

Through her travels and conversations with teachers Annie Curwen became increasingly interested in the psychology which accompanied her methods of teaching. She began lecturing on elements of this, for example on the teacher's need for psychology in understanding the student and the mind as an important component in the teaching process. This led to her publication in 1920 of the book entitled *Psychology Applied to Music Teaching*.⁴⁰ It comprised material that had appeared in her lectures at holiday courses and at the Royal Academy of Music. Within the book she suggests that teachers and parents often lacked a knowledge of psychology and this often resulted in students not understanding or learning. Annie Curwen felt that every good teacher should be an unconscious psychologist. She believed that many teachers spent their time thinking about subject and development and that what they did not understand was that 'it is the pupil's point of view that counts, that it is by his mental activity that the work must be done'.⁴¹ Her suggestions included teachers observing their students' words, looks and actions as a way of gauging their understanding and enjoyment. Within this volume it seems that Annie Curwen is trying to take her reader a step further: now that they have a correct method of teaching they need to learn to understand their students as much as possible so that they can appeal to the student's interests. As she states it in her chapter on the teacher's need for psychology, it is 'a very daring thing to profess to educate a human being—you are helping to form the

³⁹ M. Lucia Schulte: 'A study of the Piano Pedagogy of Annie Curwen: It's correlation and adaption with the Hungarian Method for the Instruction of Beginning Pianists and Its implications for Modern Piano Teaching' (unpublished MA diss., Catholic University of America, 1971).

⁴⁰ Mrs J. Spencer Curwen: *Psychology Applied to Music Teaching* (London: J. Curwen & Sons Ltd, 1920). Hereafter referred to as Curwen: *Psychology Applied to Music Teaching*.

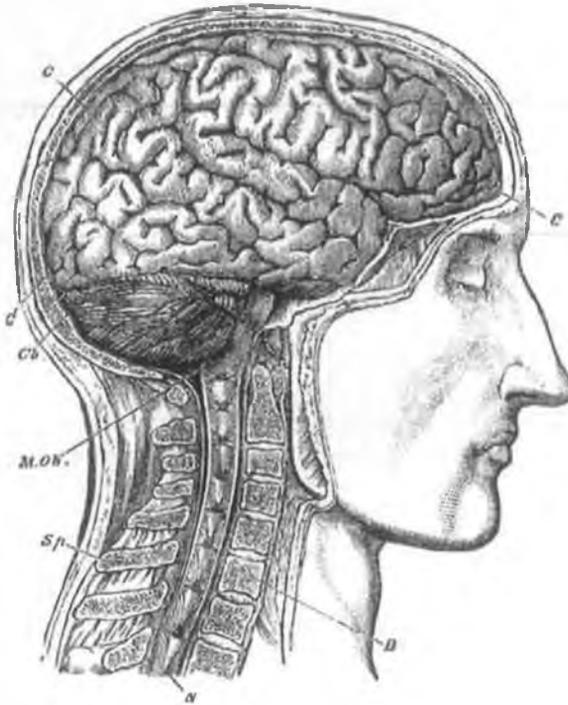
⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

finest most complex, most subtle thing known to man, a mind'.⁴² Annie Curwen believed this was a duty that was not to be taken lightly. The book, while dealing with complex topics, is laid out in clear points with each subject thoroughly explained. For example in her chapter entitled 'The Human Telegraph' she gives a detailed account of the human brain (Figure 3).⁴³ She then explains the workings of the nervous system through a comparison with the telegraph system in England at that time, with the brain being represented through the main telegraph centre in London. She explained that each centre in towns across England could communicate with all of the others but that if a problem with this communication arose or if they needed to do something new then they would have to refer to the centre in London. Similarly with the human nervous system the hands can play a well-known piece of music without much conscious thought but when something new is presented they must refer to the main centre that is the brain. While this may sound a little simplistic, her clever comparisons enable the reader to understand what is a complex subject. Her chapter on the brain and its workings also illustrated a good understanding of the neurobiology of that time and of its relation to psychology.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 52–64.

Figure 3. The diagram Curwen used to illustrate the workings of the human brain in her chapter entitled *The Human Telegraph*⁴⁴



A side view of the brain and upper part of the spinal cord in place—the parts which cover the cerebro-spinal centres being removed. C.C. the convoluted surface of the right cerebral hemisphere; Cb. the cerebellum; M.O.b. the medulla oblongata; B. the bodies of the cervical vertebrae; Sp. their spines; N. the spinal cord with the spinal nerves.

The book has chapters dedicated to the importance of the choice of language in teaching, how to gain and maintain interest and attention,

⁴⁴ Curwen: *Psychology Applied to Music Teaching*, picture inserted between pages 30 and 31.

and the best methods of illustrating topics to the student, along with many others. It was another milestone in music education at that time and one of the first works to focus on the psychology of teaching music, which had also been lectured on by Tobias Matthay, whom Curwen mentions in her *Teacher's Guide*. His lectures were given as part of teachers training courses in the Royal Academy of Music.⁴⁵ However, his treatment of the subject, while being similar in many areas to Annie Curwen's, is not as detailed and does not suggest the same understanding of the mind and the nervous system.

Over the course of the nineteenth century many changes occurred in music in Dublin and there was a continuous growth in music teaching. Women were evident throughout this growth. In many ways their treatment as professionals was progressive in comparison to their international counterparts and also in relation to the general treatment of women in Irish society. With the opening of the Royal Irish Academy of Music the acceptance of women in music became even clearer and their value was illustrated through the equal rates of pay that they received. The growth in private teaching led to a growth in music publications. The increased number of female teachers and female students meant there was a large market for a pedagogical manual such as Annie Curwen's. Her work as a music educator made a huge contribution to piano pedagogy and music pedagogy in general in the final years of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century. She anticipated twentieth-century pedagogical trends through her progressive methods and educational principles. Her books illustrate an immense understanding of the elements of teaching on both a theoretical and psychological level. She did not just understand the music and the piano, but also the student she was teaching. Her main teaching objectives included making learning music enjoyable, promoting intellectual, spiritual and physical growth, developing intelligent listeners and discovering talented musicians. Although Annie Curwen's contribution to piano pedagogy was made after she had left her native Dublin, it grew out of her early training in the Royal Irish Academy of Music and her experiences as a piano teacher and pianist in Dublin in the decade before she moved to Scotland. As such it reflects

⁴⁵ Tobias Matthay: *An Introduction to Psychology for Music Teachers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), v. He notes in the preface that the lectures were first written in 1919.

the important contribution of women to piano pedagogy in nineteenth-century Dublin.

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