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The Reason for What is Right: Practical Wisdom in John Keble and Charlotte Yonge

[Maria Poggi Johnson](#)

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Abstract

This essay explores the Aristotelian theme of *phronesis*, or practical wisdom, as it appears in John Keble and Charlotte Yonge, with reference in particular to Yonge's novel *Hopes and Fears*, treated as ‘the embodiment, in the actions and transactions of actual social life’, of some of Keble's ideas about the

development of virtue and of practical wisdom. The argument employs Alasdair MacIntyre's ideas about the way in which narrative can embody theory to show, in particular, the relation between priest and novelist. Keble and Yonge's understanding of the moral life, further, are in harmony with some of the central contentions of MacIntyre's own thought, particularly with regard to his understanding of virtue as *techne*, as a skill to be learned within a tradition, while Yonge's narrative skill embeds her 'Church views' in the realist setting of an 'actual social life'.

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