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*Paper delivered at English X, MLA, San Francisco, Dec. 1979

Cover Illustration: Nancy Shuler, "Daddy's Surprise," lithograph, 1981.
This lithograph was drawn directly on a stone and
printed by hand in the same manner as lithographs of
the Victorian era.

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Tennyson and Carlyle: A Source for "The Eagle"

Paul F. Mattheisen

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
and like a thunderbolt he falls.¹

Tennyson's "The Eagle," though it is sub-titled "A Fragment," seems best regarded as a completed effort, a fragment only in that Romantic sense of a finished piece in the genre known as "the fragment." It appears to have sufficient coherence in itself: it leaves no action incomplete, it raises no questions requiring an answer, it conveys no sense of broken argument or unfinished reverie; it has its own antipodal tensions, its own rhetorical balance and optic harmony, its own sense of finality; in short, it has nowhere else to go. Indeed, critics who mention it at all seem relieved that the poet did not himself spoil the poem by extending its implications. It stands as "a sharply etched image. . . generating its own human analogies, whether of a robber baron, an apocalyptic poet, or any bold impetuous spirit."² It would be foolish for a critic to take the spoilage on himself by further drawing out these analogies, and at any rate images should be allowed to speak for themselves, retaining the matrix of silence which Carlyle thought appropriate to such mysteries as symbols. Since robber barons and apocalyptic poets do not seem congenial allies, however, something further might be said about the precision of the etching in this vignette, and a little attention to Carlyle's treatment of symbol may disclose the direction in which Tennyson perhaps meant to take us.

A brief surface reading of the poem may help us to note the extent of Tennyson's indebtedness to Carlyle. The structure is antipodal — almost antiphonal — each half stressing an antithetical tone, diction and movement, an opposing sense of place, time and perspective. If we temporarily omit the first line in the first stanza, the picture there is truly iconic in its sense of holy stasis figuring the divine within the human as a metaphysical basis for the actual. Viewing the bird as "close to the sun," an absurdly Icarian image if taken literally, involves an optical illusion brought about when the eagle is in a direct line between the eye of the observer and the sun, resulting in spatial foreshortening, a suggestion of spacelessness. But this placement entails a moral overtone, linking the bird with a symbol inherently suggesting Plato's "The Good," or "God," or even (in terms of Christian symbolism) "Christ" — in this case foreshadowing the "fall" which is to follow.³ The moral

burden is reinforced by the alliteration of "lonely lands," suggesting that the moral achievement is as rare and isolating as the ascent on the literal level. So far in the poem this literal level is the world of "crooked hands" in the neglected first verse, but we have already soared above that to another world of "azure" with which the eagle is "ringed" or "rounded," and this optically shaped portrait reinforces the sense of religious icon by suggesting the corona, or halo, familiar in portraits of saintly figures. The first stanza portrays a state of being. It is timeless and purely visual world in which the external dimensions stand for an internal quality, the timelessness even appearing to absorb space, leaving the symbolic order the primary reality. The final word in the stanza, the verb which abruptly completes the grammatical unit, supports the timeless, majestic effect: "stands" is an active verb, yet coming at the end of this motionless icon the word is drained of any suggestion of action, which would destroy the pictorial effect. The verb itself, which being active should break the tableau, reinforces the stasis.

In fact, one of the most effective contrasts in the poem is that between the verb, which ends the stanza, and the one which ends the poem. "Falls" is a verb, which ends the stanza, and the one which ends the poem. "Falls" is a verb which suggests nothing but pure motion, specific only in its downward direction. We should call this movement a "descent": it is no uncontrolled motion — we do not get the picture of an eagle losing its clasp and flopping downward aimlessly, and any "fall" which is compared to a thunderbolt, even apart from the obvious mythic associations, is as filled with deliberate intention as Keats' "ditties of no tone" are filled with sound. And just as the immobility of "stands" is prepared for by the lines preceding it, so here the "fall" acquires its purposiveness from the context it emerges from. In the first line of this stanza, the "wrinkled sea" appears to preserve the timeless and motionless icon, but as the line progresses we race towards the fall; with the crawling sea, we are taken quite suddenly out of the world of timeless visual perfection and plunged into a world of struggle, a tactile world of imperfection, ugliness and fear, where the action is important on the literal level as providing the reality and justification of the "being" portrayed in the first stanza. And when the cliffs on which the eagle is perched are described as "mountain walls," we know that this is a world that needs watching, that needs to be guarded and guided — a world over which the eagle in some way presides like an unacknowledged legislator. Readers who

1. *The Poems of Tennyson*, ed. Christopher Ricks (London: Longman's, Green and Co., 1969), p. 496.

2. Dwight Culler, *The Poetry of Tennyson* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1977), pp. 242-43.

3. Some readers may find Christ images in the "crooked" (nailed) hands and in the pun involving the pastoral "crook," but these seem far-fetched to me.

at this point wonder about the natural prey of the eagle, as if this one were going about its dinner, are clearly on the wrong track here. What the eagle is falling for or toward is precisely what we don't know, what we don't want to know.⁴ But it is not an uncharacterized fall; it has specific dimensions. Having risen from the world and above it, the eagle is in a position to see it whole and to judge it. We know nothing about its precise mission, but since it is the agent of the divine thunderbolt, we are meant to be confident in its sense of wisdom — or at least of its success in some just cause, however painful. As to the specific goal, we may avail ourselves of Shelley's view that the poet, in disclosing the ideal, "would do ill to embody his own conceptions of right and wrong."⁵

I have indulged in this brief summary of the poem not in order to make the analogies specific, but to focus and limit the symbolism. One might now hesitate to say that the eagle may represent the "robber baron," since such a reading contradicts the religious associations of the first stanza and the moral and legal direction of the second. And though he can still be the "apocalyptic poet" or the "bold spirit," he cannot be just any such poet or spirit, for we know too much about him to let him be arbitrary. We know that his movement has been first upward into the realm of the divine, and then downward in a descent to a world from which he obviously came, but one in which he now makes a difference. He has known the loneliness of strife — in this case clearly a moral strife — and we know from the crooked hands that his success has been an earned one. These hands, however, pose a problem regarding the unity of the first stanza. A little stunned perhaps by the powerful image emerging there, we are apt to forget the somewhat breathless leap we had to make in passing from the earthy ugliness of the first line, which I have so far neglected, into the immaculate world of the next two. Though we first meet the eagle in a high station, he is still rooted in earth — we are still reminded of a world in which the clasping is done with "crooked hands." It is a line which ought to have troubled us from the beginning, for it stands in rough tactile strength against the disconnected visual world which follows.

The world where crags are clasped with crooked hands is, of course, the world of time and struggle we view in the second stanza. We may find, obviously, that these hands are themselves suggestive of labor and age, and the fact that they are crooked may symbolize the earned nature of the eagle's achievement in association with the ideal world surrounding him. Having arrived at the view that the eagle as a symbol generates specific kinds of human analogy, we may now identify an illusion in this first line that urges us to view the poem in relation to Carlyle's treatment of symbols in Book III of *Sartor Resartus*. The formal treatment of this subject occurs in Chapter III, but in the following chapter Carlyle works out some symbols of his

own in the words of Teufelsdröckh:

"Two men I honour, and no third. First, the toilworn Craftsman that with earth-made Implement laboriously conquers the Earth, and makes her man's. Venerable to me is the hard Hand; crooked, coarse; wherein notwithstanding lies a cunning virtue, indefeasibly royal, as of the Sceptre of this Planet."⁶

We are here with the crooked hands at the beginning of Tennyson's poem, but it should be noted that we are also swiftly embarked on the upward spiral toward the azure of royalty, and thence downward toward the Sceptre of rule. The poem's pattern is, in fact, fully captured in this brief encomium — imperfectly as yet, because we are still with the crooked hand, the craftsman redolent of earth. And yet the potential for expansion of this symbolic man, who toils "for daily bread," is there just as soon as Carlyle sums up his virtue by elevating him into an apparently more universal plane: "thou art in thy duty" (p. 228). In the context, this appears to be a category on a more democratic level of abstraction, one which endows a kind of equality in moral worth to those who are otherwise valued on a scale of social function. For the second man of value, whom Carlyle claims to honor "still more highly," is also introduced as a man who is "in his duty," only this time it is the toiler, not for daily bread, but for the "spiritually indispensable." This man strives for an inner harmony, which he reveals through both his inward and outward endeavor, his being and his act, a rough parallel with the two stanzas of "The Eagle"; and when he succeeds, we may then "name him Artist" rather than "earthly Craftsman." And just as the Craftsman must toil for the rest of mankind, so must this Artist toil for the Craftsman so that he might "have Light, have Guidance, Freedom, Immortality." In other words, we have now traced the eagle through his first stage of earthly Craftsman with earth-made implements and crooked hands into the second state of spiritual harmony, so that with "heavenmade implements" he "conquers Heaven for us," and then back down to the guidance which is the outcome of achievement. Again, this is certainly no "robber baron," and probably not any merely "impetuous" spirit. We are again reminded of Shelley's unacknowledged legislator.

The pattern is in one way still imperfect, however, inasmuch as these two phases are represented by different agents, the worker and spiritual architect, no matter how much they appear to merge in the line of duty, Carlyle draws them together in a passage which perfectly reflects the double agency of the eagle in his earthly and divine functions, linking it with the Christ-like pattern I have suggested in the first stanza and with the lightning implied by the thunderbolt in the second:

4. In an article on "Tennyson's Optics" (*PMLA*, 92 [1977], 420-28), Gerhard Joseph speaks of the "unnamed prey" which is unseen by the "myopic poet." If it is unseen and unnamed, clearly the poet is directing our attention away from it.

5. *The Complete Works of Shelley*, ed. Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck (New York and London: Gordian Press, 1965), Vol. VII, 118.
6. Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, ed. Charles Frederick Harrold (New York: Odyssey Press, 1937), p. 227.

"Unspeakably touching it is, however, when I find both dignities united; and he that must toil outwardly for the lowest of man's wants, is also toiling inwardly for the highest. Sublimier in this world know I nothing than a Peasant Saint, could such now anywhere be met with. Such a one will take thee back to Nazareth itself; thou wilt see the splendour of Heaven spring forth from the humblest depths of Earth, like a light shining in great darkness." (p. 228.)

It is a little difficult to discuss Tennyson's poem in relation to Carlyle's formal treatment of symbol in Chapter II, because there Carlyle does not deal only with literary symbol, but with the universe itself as a pervasive transcendental symbol. Even this general treatment, however, provides us with a language that can be seen to describe the symbolism of the eagle as we have just viewed it. I have said that I do not care to draw out and explain the analogies in the poem because that reduces the vitality of symbols, and I trust this is Carlyle's point when he speaks of silence and concealment in this connection. Symbols are akin to Concealment: in them "there is concealment and yet revelation" (p. 219), so that "Silence and Speech acting together" provide "a double significance." Part of the reason for this is that the silence of symbols enlists "Fancy with her mystic wonderland"; that is, the reader himself engaged in the meaning, since Fancy here refers to "reason" rather than "understanding" in the Kantian use of these terms — "Reason/Fancy" appealing to a higher faculty than the mere understanding, what we would normally call reason. In Carlyle's words, the symbol appeals "not to our Logical, Mensurative faculty, but to our Imaginative one. . . ." (p. 222). The symbol, then,

acquires meaning by enlisting the energies of the reader, who in this way acts as co-creator. The basic function of symbols, however, is one which relates directly to the progress of the eagle: in symbols, says Carlyle, "there is ever, more or less distinctly and directly, some embodiment and revelation of the Infinite; the Infinite is made to blend itself with the Finite, to stand visible, and as it were, attainable there" (p. 220). We have seen the eagle "stand visible" there in identification with the divine, though trailing signs of earth with the crooked hands, before he finally descends to revealing or embodying whatever he has found there, bringing it to the guidance of the earth below his walls. Rather than specifying his function in particular terms, we may note what Carlyle says about "intrinsic" as opposed to "extrinsic" symbols: "Of this latter [intrinsic] sort are all true Works of Art: in them. . . wilt thou discern Eternity looking through Time; the Godlike rendered visible" (p. 223). It is this gesture which is perfectly enacted by the eagle — by his nature, his placement, and his movement. Ennobled at least by traditional associations, this eagle is further associated by images of achievement and divinity implied by the sun, the azure world and the corona, and in a willed descent brings his wisdom to the guidance of the world below. In so making the Infinite manifest in the Finite, Tennyson embodies both the divine and the juridical meaning of that Hand which is the object of Carlyle's veneration: "the hard Hand; crooked, coarse. . . . indefeasibly royal, as of the Sceptre of this Planet."

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The Schooling of John Bull: Form and Moral In Talbot Baines Reed's Boys' Stories and In Kipling's *Stalky & Co.*

Patrick Scott

In his autobiography, *Something of Myself*, Rudyard Kipling admitted no doubt as to the intention and nature of his most controversial book. There he described how, in 1896,

there came to me the idea of beginning some tracts or parables on the education of the young. These, for reasons honestly beyond my control, turned themselves into a series of tales called *Stalky & Co.* . . . It is still read, and I maintain it is a truly valuable collection of tracts.¹

Of course, there is some element of the tongue-in-cheek about this account, and especially about that final judgment, for had not one early and indignant reviewer of

Stalky exclaimed that "there is hardly a precept of the Sermon on the Mount that is not joyously outraged in its pages"?² Modern readers tend to rush to one of two extremes in their comments on *Stalky*. On the one hand, historians usually follow Kipling in emphasizing the book's didactic intent, linking its apparent moral flaws to the assumed larger amorality of late Victorian imperialism, quoting and re-quoting the words of the final chapter that "India's full of Stalkies — Cheltenham and Haileybury and Marlborough chaps," and seeing the schoolboy violence of the novel as a shocking if unwitting revelation of the way the public schools prepared boys to

1. Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself, for My Friends Known and Unknown* (London: Macmillan, 1937), pp. 134-5, 136.

2. *Academy*, no. 1432 (Oct. 14, 1899), 421-2, in R. L. Green, Ed., *Kipling: the Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge, 1971), p. 232.

be colonial oppressors. 3 On the other hand, psychologically-inclined critics, and readers who identify the book primarily as children's literature, often see it as one of the most explicitly anti-ideological, anti-moralistic books for the young in its period; one early critic described it with approval as "simply the best collection of boisterous boy farces ever written," and one might well go further and describe it, as Kipling's biographer Charles Carrington does, as a work of fantasy, expressing the child's resentment and revolt against the moral authoritarianism of his elders and educators.⁴ Kipling's own assertion that his book was didactic in intent, but didactic about education rather than empire, tends to get lost in the debate, and deserves further examination, because it directs attention to some broad questions about the role of ideology in late Victorian children's literature.

The most common model, I suppose, through which modern critics approach Victorian children's fiction is that of the decline of didacticism; as the century progressed, we are told, Victorian authors exhibit a growing recognition of the reality, even the autonomy, of the child's view of life, and therefore a growing ability to write coherent and satisfying literary works for and about the childish imagination. Such a model accounts fairly well for the main developments in books for younger children, and on the face of it the same model will fit the special case of the Victorian school story, a sub-genre primarily aimed at readers in their early teens, though often aware also of the adult reader over the school-boy's shoulder.⁵ From the perfervid religiosity of Dean Farrar's *Eric, or Little by Little* (1858),⁶ or even from the moral dormitory discussions over "cribbing," compromise, and the Old Testament example of Naaman, in the later chapters of Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, one year earlier,⁷ to the healthy, boyish, non-moralizing school stories of the last years of the century (say, to P. G. Wodehouse's excellent early novels, *The Gold Bat* [1904], or *The Head of Kay's* [1905]), seems a massive step forward, from crude ideologically-inspired manipulation of the young, to a wholesome understanding and acceptance.

On the surface, in spite of Kipling's stated didactic intention, *Stalky & Co.*, published in 1899, would seem part of the newer kind of boys' fiction. In almost every

chapter, the book's explicit alliance is with the shift away from the moral didacticism of the mid-Victorian school novel. A maiden aunt of Stalky's had presented him with copies of Farrar's *Eric* and its companion volume, *St. Winifred's, or The World of School* (1865), and the confederates of Study Number Five, once they discover that the books have no value at the Bideford pawnshop, get great consolatory glee from reading poor Farrar's sillier passages aloud, abusing each other with such Farrar phrases as "pure-minded boy," and making it abundantly clear that they "ain't goin' to have any beastly Erickin'" in their College.⁸ The only master who tries to encourage moral self-scrutiny, an unfortunate young mathematician called Mason, is immediately shown up as a gullible fool (pp. 47-49), and even Kipling's school chaplain repudiates preachiness: "I don't talk about ethics or moral codes," he says, in one of those asides most obviously aimed at the adult reader, "because I don't believe that the young of the human animal realizes what they mean for some years to come" (p. 123). Some critics have deduced from such references that Kipling's main purpose in *Stalky & Co.* was "the ridiculing to death of Ericism."⁹

But this attack in the novel on *Eric* and the mid-Victorian moralizers is in many ways a side-issue, mere devilment or gloating by Kipling, kicking a fellow-novelist who was already long down by the time Kipling himself appeared on the scene to deliver such rather redundant *coups-de-grace*. One can, of course, reassert the didactic nature of the novel by joining the historians and quoting the few directly-imperialistic sentences, though then one would still be open to a counter-argument from the children's literature critics that such sentences are flaws, mere inconsistencies, and that the major achievement of the novel is boy-centered, and so fits with the anti-didactic jibes at Farrar. One can, however, circumvent this counter-argument if one compares *Stalky & Co.*, not with such distant predecessors as *Eric* and *St. Winifred's*, but with much more immediate precursors in its genre. The real reference-point, it seems to me, for understanding the didacticism of *Stalky* lies much closer chronologically than Farrar's novels, in the 1880s and 1890s, rather than in the 1850s. The later Victorian years, well before Kipling's own work, had seen a shift in the nature of novels about

3. E.g., Steven Marcus, introduction, *Stalky & Co.* (N.Y., Cromwell-Collier, 1962), repr. in Elliott L. Gilbert, ed., *Kipling and the Critics* (N.Y.: New York Univ. Press, 1965), pp. 150-162; E. C. Mack, as in n. 5, pp. 221-7; and the essay on militarism by G. F. A. Best, in Brian Simon and Ian Bradley, eds., *The Victorian Public School* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1975), pp. 129-146.

4. John Palmer, *Rudyard Kipling* (London, Nisbet, 1915), p. 91; Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling, His Life and Work* (London: Macmillan, 1955; Pelican Edition, 1970), p. 62.

5. In this paper I am concerned with the school story (fiction about public school life written primarily for boys), rather than with the different, more critical, conventions of the school novel intended primarily for adults, on which see, e.g., John R. Reed, *Old School Ties, The Public Schools in [Twentieth Century] British Literature* (Syracuse Univ. Press, 1964); cf. also E. C. Mack, *Public Schools and British Opinion Since 1860* (N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1941), and John R. Reed, "The Public Schools in Victorian Literature," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 29 (1974), 58-76.

6. Cf. P. G. Scott, "The School Novels of Dean Farrar," *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 19 (1971), 163-82.

7. For the early Victorian elements in Hughes, and their unacceptability to late Victorian readers, see P. G. Wodehouse, "The Tom Brown Question," *Tales of St. Austin's* (London, 1904), and P. G. Scott, "The School and the Novel: *Tom Brown's Schooldays*," in Simon and Bradley, *Victorian Public School* (as in n. 3 above), pp. 34-57.

8. Rudyard Kipling, *Stalky & Co.* (Orig. publ. 1899; London: Macmillan, 1960), pp. 59-60, 64-5, 137; other references to *Eric* are made at pp. 49, 105-6, and 239. Future references to the novel are given in parentheses in the text. Kipling refers to comic responses to *Eric* at the actual U.S.C. at Westward Ho!, in his essay "An English School" (1893), repr. in *Land and Sea Tales, for Scouts and Guides* (London, 1923), p. 267.

9. G. F. Monkshood and George Gamble, *Rudyard Kipling, the Man and his Work*, 3rd edn. (London: Greening and Co., 1902), p. 240.

school life and the emergence of a new, popular genre, the school story. This new genre rejected, as Kipling was to do, the old overt didactic moralizing, but exchanged it, not for some value-free naturalism about schoolboy life, but for a fiction of implicit values; in schoolboy fiction, at least, if not in other late Victorian children's literature, the didactic was transmuted, not into the non-didactic, but into the normative. Such a development was prefigured by the chapters in part one of Hughes's *Tom Brown's School-days*, where Tom is still learning about the norms of school life, and it is no coincidence that it was those chapters that pushed aside the rest of the novel in most late Victorian commentary, as they still do to this day.¹⁰ The key figure in the transmutation, however, was not Hughes himself, but a much less well-known author, whose works will illustrate this triumph of the normative, and its implications for the school story's narrative form.

Talbot Baines Reed (1852-1893) was a typefounder by trade, and a very scholarly amateur bibliographer by inclination,¹¹ but by genius he was a prolific and constant writer of boys' school novels, and the virtual founder of the new genre. Between 1883 and 1893, Reed wrote seventeen books, of which eleven were school stories. Not all were about boarding schools — there's a very interesting novel for instance about two apprentices in a London printing shop.¹² But his best novels were all school stories, and his schools were all of the late-Victorian, games-playing, enclosed-institution kind. The stories were originally contributed to the *Boy's Own Paper*, a new penny publication put out by the largely-Congregationalist Religious Tract Society.¹³ In many ways, the *B.O.P.* was a sign of the times; the congregationalists moved faster away from traditional evangelical religion than did the other mainstream nonconformist groups in Victorian Britain, and their new boys' paper was intended to meet the new wish for reading material that was wholesome without being oldfashionedly "religious." The Victorian public schools had faced a

very similar problem, in their need to develop methods of socialization that did not depend on an ungentlemanly religiosity, and had increasingly based their discipline on internally-set goals of games-playing and group loyalty, rather than on the beliefs of external, adult life. In David Newsome's evocative phrases, the early Victorian educational goal of 'Godliness and good learning' (*ad pietatem et studia litterarum alimur*, as Winchester scholars prayed) gave place to the late Victorian "cult of Manliness," by which was meant an approved kind of boyishness.¹⁴ Though Reed himself had not gone to a conventional public school, he had with others tried to cultivate the games ethic at the school he did attend,¹⁵ and in games-centered school stories he found a way of satisfying the *B.O.P.*'s need to avoid controversial and unsettling reference to religious values, while keeping his characters (and readers) strongly motivated by the internal conflicts and pressures of the school community. His very first contribution to the *Boy's Own Paper*, the lead short-story of the first number, was a straight set-piece description of a football match, written under Thomas Hughes's old pseudonym "An Old Boy."¹⁶ Essentially, Reed used the school story as a way of presenting morally-approved behavior while avoiding moralization; as long as victory in games was the goal of (school) life, good and evil needed no very subtle discussion.¹⁷ The change in the late-Victorian school story is quite as much the result of an adult flight from explicit or divisive ideological statement as it is a recognition of the intrinsic worth of the boyish imagination.

Reed's most famous book is his first full-length school story, *The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's* (1887), but his skill in the construction of such books is perhaps better illustrated from a later work, *The Cock-House at Fellsgarth* (1891).¹⁸ The central theme is Reed's usual one, in which an unobtrusive morality wins out over spite and moral jealousy. The events of the book all take place

10. It is surely significant that both film versions of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, as well as the recent BBC Television series, confined their plot entirely to incidents from the first half of the novel; cf. Scott, as in n. 7 above.
11. The only modern biography, by the typographer Stanley Morrison, stresses this side of Reed's activity: *Talbot Baines Reed: Author, Bibliographer, Typefounder* (Cambridge: privately printed at the University Press, Christmas 1960). There has been relatively little literary comment on Reed, but the praise given to him by the Scottish author 'Ian Hay' is interesting: "anybody who has ever attempted to write a tale which shall be probable yet interesting, and racy yet moral, will realise how admirably Mr. Reed has achieved this feat" ('Ian Hay' [John Hay Beith], *The Lighter Side of School Life* [Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis, 1914], p. 166).
12. P. M. Handover, "Some Uncollected Authors, XXXV: Talbot Baines Reed, 1852-1893," *Book Collector*, 12 (1963), 62-67; the novel about the printing shop is *Reginald Cruden, A Tale of City Life* (London: Office of the 'Boy's Own Paper,' 1894).
13. On the *B.O.P.*, see chapter VI of E. S. Turner, *Boys will be Boys* (1948: new edition, "bang up to date with many curious finds," London, Michael Joseph, 1975), pp. 88-95; the paper had a readership of about 250,000.
14. David Newsome, *Godliness and Good Learning, Four Studies on a Victorian Ideal* (London: John Murray, 1961), pp. 195-239, or, more recently, J. R. de S. Honey, *Tom Brown's Universe, the Development of the Public School in the Nineteenth Century* (London,

- Millington, 1977), esp. pp. 104-117. The ideological implications of athleticism have been discussed by, *inter alia*, Sir Charles Tennyson, "They taught the world to play," *Victorian Studies*, 2 (1959), 221-222; P. G. Scott, "Cricket and the Religious World in the Victorian Period," *Church Quarterly*, 3 (1970), 134-144; J. A. Mangan, "Play up and play the game: Victorian and Edwardian Public School Vocabularies of Motive," *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 23 (1975), 324-335; and, more generally, Bruce E. Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1978).
15. G. A. Hutchinson, "Introductory Sketch: the late Talbot Baines Reed as Boy and Man," in Reed's *Parkhurst Boys and other Stories of School Life* (London: Religious Tract Society, n.d. [1905]), pp. iii-xx; pp. viii and xviii. This memoir first appeared in the *Boy's Own Paper* (of which Hutchinson was editor), in two parts (Feb. 24 and March 3, 1894).
16. *Boy's Own Paper*, 1 (January 18, 1879), 1.
17. Cf. Patrick Howarth's discussion of Reed in his *Play Up and Play the Game: the Heroes of Popular Fiction* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973), ch. 3.
18. The dates given in the text are for book-publication: the first appearance of both novels had been as serials in the *Boy's Own Paper*, *The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's* in 1881-82, and *The Cock-House at Fellsgarth* in 1891. The latter is cited here from the book edition (London: Religious Tract Society, n.d. [1893]).

within the school bounds (except for two symbolically-dangerous journeys outside, where small groups of boys risk their lives on a nearby mountain and river); all the action is concluded within a single school term, so that the motivation of the novel can be limited to school ambitions. We are introduced to Fellsgarth by a new boy, Fisher II, younger brother of Fisher I, treasurer of the School Games Committee. The younger boys in the school (like those in the earlier novel at St. Dominic's) are split into a friendly and harmless rivalry, between the Classical and Modern houses, and so that the reader knows both sides, the leaders of the two groups are made identical twins. Their sixth-form seniors, the prefects of the two houses, who should be more cooperative, are also split in a comparable but less friendly rivalry between Classics and Moderns, with the Moderns being both richer and less gentlemanly, even to the extent of refusing to play on the Fellsgarth football fifteen when one of their group is left out. All the tensions of the novel, therefore, are there in the internal social structure of the school, before the main plot is introduced – the suspicion that a poor Classic scholarship boy has stolen £4 10s. from the Games Committee funds. The novel simply explores the different boy's varying attitudes towards the alleged thief until eventually he and the Classics are proved innocent (as we knew they would be), his Modern accusers are forced to apologize for their base suspicions, and all parties cooperate once again with the football captain. In the subplot about the rival junior boys, a similar harmony is established when the two groups cooperate in running the school tuck-shop, and in joint resistance to the school bully, who is, of course, a Modern prefect. The final chapter of the book describes the final football match of the term, in which all the rivals now join and in which they are rewarded with victory, and thus neatly symbolizes the resolution of all the earlier inter-group and inter-personal conflicts.

In a book like this one of Reed's, the school story has reached a kind of classical unity, with remarkably coherent plotting. The values and morality of the book, sound enough, no doubt, in themselves, are all implicit in the action, except for a few vague phrases, like the need for cooperation, getting rid of bad blood, or saving the good old School. Only in the description of Yorke, the Captain of the School, does there come any hint of overtly religious comment, and even that is kept until we have received assurance that he is an outstanding footballer. The comment goes like this:

But his popularity in his own house depended less on these exploits [i.e., at football] than on his general good nature and

incorruptible fairness. He scorned to hit an opponent when he was down, and yet he would knock down a friend as soon as a foe if the credit of the School required it. A few, indeed, they were whose habit it was to sneer at Yorke for being what they called a 'saint.' The Captain of Fellsgarth would have been the last to claim such a title for himself, yet those who knew him best knew that in all he did, even in the common concerns of daily school life, he relied upon the guidance and help of a Divine Friend (p. 29).

That comment, in chapter II, and a much briefer one, also about the idealized Captain (in chapter XXII, some two hundred and fifty pages later), are the only two overtly religious references in the entire book, and even here, one notes, the chief standard of morality is internal, "the credit of the School." In Reed's novels, unlike those of either Farrar or Thomas Hughes, religion never enters the *conversation* of any of the boys. The motivation and evaluation of the different characters is all implicit, judged by how it helps school cohesion and school football. The morality of the school story, like the schools themselves in the late-Victorian period, had become an enclosed system.

Novels like *The Cock-House at Fellsgarth* set a pattern for school fiction that countless lesser writers were to follow happily for another fifty or sixty years. The same plots – the vital school match, the school bully, the house that had struck bad days and needed to be pulled together, the dangerous expedition to the mountain, the unknown thief – these story-lines were common property, and worthy professional writers turned them middle to sides and sides to middle to meet a continuing demand.¹⁹ By the late-Victorian period, I would argue, the school story had become a recognized normative genre, indirectly inculcating a social ideology, without any need or wish for the narrator's explicit moralizing intrusion. The closed form of the school story, like the ever more-secluded world of the boarding school itself, socialized children rather than indoctrinating them, and so reflects the more general late-Victorian shift from explicit to implicit ideology.

It is in contrast to this newer genre of the school story, rather than against the early Victorian moralizers, that Kipling shapes his "tracts. . . on the education of the young." Kipling's three heroes in *Stalky & Co.* knew exactly what "they do at all schools accordin' to the *B.O.P.*" (p. 106), and they set out to subvert that predominant pattern for behavior. Stalky and his friends have no responsibilities for the good of the School – they are middle-school boys, neither fags nor prefects, and since they are in the new Army Class, they will leave before they enter the local dignity of the Sixth Form; their activities

19. Much the best of Reed's successors was P. G. Wodehouse, whose early novels on the closed world of school for *The Captian* and the *Public School Magazine* anticipate his later better-known works on the equally closed and artificial worlds of Blandings Castle and the Drones' Club. Perhaps more typical of the genre, though, were the works of Harold Avery, who produced at least 67 boy's books between the 1890s and the 1930s, as well as a short pamphlet *Wrinkles for Young Writers* (1902), the chief wrinkle of which is

"Study the Market." The legendary monster of the genre was Charles Hamilton (1876-1961), who created Billy Bunter and Greyfriars School, and under at least twenty-six pseudonyms wrote stories about well over a hundred different fictional schools for a total of at least 5000 school stories, and is estimated to have "penned about a hundred million words in his lifetime" (W. O. G. Lofts and D. J. Adley, *The Men behind Boys' Fiction* [London: Howard Baker, 1970], pp. 168-73).

are singularly unconfined by the school bounds, which had so neatly enclosed the plot-lines of Reed's Fellsgarth – they roam neighboring estates, go off for an afternoon pipe on the local cliffs, and have a friendly acquaintance with the proprietress of a tea-shop in the nearby town of Bideford, and, still more untypically, with her buxom and forthcoming daughter; above all, they are absolutely untouched by the belief of their housemaster that “by games, and games alone, [is] salvation wrought” (p. 66). It is only in sardonic jest that the inhabitants of Kipling's Study Number Five threaten to “take an interest in the House,” and “make it a be-autiful house before” they're done (p. 105), for unlike a Reed hero, they plan to “improve” their house by a guerilla campaign of disruption, not a programme of sterling leadership in manly sports. When Stalky and the others conquer the school bullies, they do so not as youngsters spurred by moral indignation into direct conflict, but through guile, though fully the physical equals of those they put down, and they take great pleasure in the opportunity the occasion affords of doing a little return bullying on their own account.²⁰ When, in the sixth story (“A Little Prep”), they do take up football, so they can participate in the Old Boys' Match, the match itself is pushed into insignificance beside the adult story of an old boy's heroism in India, and even that pales beside the even greater civilian heroism of the Headmaster, off school premises, in saving a pupil's life by sucking clear his diphtheria-clogged throat. Of course, there are biographical reasons for some of the irregularity, unpatternedness, even primitivism, in Kipling's picture of school life; the U.S.C. to which he had gone in the late eighteen-seventies (the United Services' College at Westward Ho! in Devon) had really been very different from the conventional mainstream late-Victorian public school, in aims, clientele, setting and organization.²¹ But the central distinction between Kipling and his immediate precursors is one of ideology.

Even the structure of Kipling's book reverses the neat plotting of the conventional school stories like Reed's.²² Most modern commentators simply take it for granted that Kipling was really a short-story writer, from whom one should not expect careful structure at book length. In the case of *Stalky & Co.*, however, there is a unity that many of his other volumes lack. As one early reviewer noted,

the book is “a series of school *contes*, but their total result is to work up into a tolerably complete picture of a certain school organisation.”²³ The action ranges widely and discontinuously through several years of school life, and continually refers outside the school to the subsequent careers of its Old Boys, in service to the Army and the Empire. The last chapter suggests an analogy between the qualities developed at school and those needed in the battle of life on the North-West Frontier, but the qualities that form the analogy are not those of playing the game, but of trickery, guile, divisiveness, and the ability to break rules in self-defence. Not for nothing did the conventional R. W. Buchanan make *Stalky & Co.* his chief text for an attack on Kipling as “The Voice of the Hooligan,”²⁴ for Kipling reverses nearly every generic convention of those school stories concerned to establish the norms of good clean gentlemanly schoolboy life; as the apparently shocked Buchanan put it, in rejecting the old-fashioned idea of Dean Farrar's generation that “the truly ideal schoolboy” was “a little sentimentalist,” Kipling seemed to end up by depicting him as “a little beast” (p. 245). The disordered form of Kipling's novel images his central message, so apt for the period when British armies led by gentlemen were losing to less rule-bound Boer farmers, that the proper training for life is to be “unsocialized,” and that schools succeed if they inculcate not a public-school code, but some educational analogue to the iron if unpalatable law of the Jungle.²⁵ Kipling had to change the conventional form in his school story, so that he could present his much more complex moral about the adult reality.

The comparison between Reed and Kipling raises some wider issues about the historical use of children's literature. Whatever may be the case with stories for younger children, school stories aimed at adolescents necessarily involve, at some level, questions of didacticism and of ideological intent.²⁶ The shift away from overt moralizing in late-Victorian boys' books was a shift in the way Victorians held beliefs, in the kind of inculcation they wanted, rather than a real abandonment of moral purpose in books for schoolboys, or a mere improvement in literary technique. Even among the japes and anti-*Ericism* of *Stalky & Co.*, Kipling was being didactic, just as he later claimed, even if his readership has

20. On the element of cruelty in the *Stalky* stories, see the discussions by J. I. M. Stewart, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1966), pp. 126-139, and Angus Wilson, *The Strange Ride of Rudyard Kipling, His Life and Works* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1977), pp. 48-51.
21. There are good discussions of the biographical background to *Stalky & Co.* in Roger Lancelyn Green, *Kipling and the Children* (London: Elek Books, 1965), pp. 51-73 (and see also pp. 146-68), and in Carrington (as in n. 4 above), pp. 55-76. Apart from Kipling's own *Something of Myself*, the two basic sources are by his two study-mates at U.S.C.: Major-General L. C. Dunsterville, *Stalky's Reminiscences* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1928), pp. 28-58, and G. C. Beresford (“McTurk”), *Schooldays with Kipling* (N.Y.: G. P. Putnam's, 1936), which stresses the aesthetic rather than the tough aspects of Kipling's boyhood at U.S.C. (and which other authorities all treat as a rather suspect source).
22. My awareness of the importance of “generic inversion” in late Victorian writing owes much to discussions with Dr. Ina Hark

- about her work on Victorian satire and its “Topsy-turveydom.”
23. *Athenaeum*, no. 3755 (Oct. 14, 1899), 515-6, repr. in Green, *Critical Heritage*, p. 228.
24. R. W. Buchanan, “The Voice of the Hooligan,” *Contemporary Review*, 76 (December 1899), 774-89. Buchanan's essay was separately reprinted (N.Y.: Tucker, 1900), and is reproduced also in *Critical Heritage*, pp. 233-249, from which I quote, and is excerpted in Gilbert, *Kipling and the Critics* (as in n. 3 above), pp. 20-32.
25. On the curious half-moral, half amoral realist status of “the Law” in Kipling, see Noel Annan, “Kipling's Place in the History of Ideas,” in Andrew Rutherford, ed., *Kipling's Mind and Art* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1964), pp. 97-125, esp. pp. 109 ff; cf. also the parallels suggested between Kipling's Imperialist realism and Marxist thought in Steven Marcus's essay (as in n. 3 above).
26. I have written more generally on the significance of these stories to the historian, in my “School Novels as a Source Material,” *History of Education Society Bulletin*, 5 (1970), 46-56.

often found it difficult to recognize the lessons he inculcates as being a "moral." It is, however, not in the extracted or paraphrased or inferred moral of these books that their main importance lies. For the cultural historian, the very form of the books – the neatness and boundedness of Reed, the disruptiveness of Kipling – is also significant, for in it one can see imaged some of the larger contrasts of British thought and experience at the turn of the century. The social forms that had come to seem so stable and to be so important in the anti-ideological atmosphere of late-Victorian upper-middle class life were already inviting reaction and rejection by the turn of the century, whenever they had to come into contact or conflict with worlds beyond their own. If in Victorian boy's fiction the school was, as A. P. Stanley suggested, "a little world," a microcosm of adult life,²⁷ it is surely of

great historical significance that the heroes of one of the best school stories of the eighteen-nineties reject their school as either institution or moral system, for it implies a similar disintegration in Kipling's view of the larger institutions and moralities of his time. Children's literature no doubt has its place as a pure backwater of literary study, but it has much to teach the general historian also. What the case of *Stalky & Co.* demonstrates is that the cultural historian who works with children's literature needs to base his interpretation, not just on the presence or absence of explicit ideology, but on a recognition that the fundamental world-view of the author may well not lie on the surface, but be immanent within his manipulation of literary form.

University of South Carolina

How It Struck a Contemporary: Tennyson's "Lancelot and Elaine" and Pre-Raphaelite Art

Catherine Barnes Stevenson

Recalling the summer of 1858 in his *Memoir* of his father, Hallam Tennyson notes:

In July we stayed at Little Holland House, Kensington, with the Prinseps: and here my father began "The Fair Maid of Astolat" ("Lancelot and Elaine"). It was then that my father met Ruskin again. A voice from the corner of the room exclaimed: "Jones, you are gigantic." This was Ruskin apostrophizing Burne-Jones as an artist.¹

A tissue of circumstances links "Lancelot and Elaine" with Pre-Raphaelitism. First, the idyll was composed in the summer following the appearance of Moxon's *Illustrated Edition* of Tennyson's poems, a volume containing works by Rossetti, Hunt, and Millais among others. Second, the poem, which had been urged upon Tennyson by the Pre-Raphaelite sculptor Woolner,² was begun at the home of Val Prinseps, friend of Rossetti and painter of one of the ill-fated murals in the Oxford Union. At the same time, Ruskin, the champion of Pre-Raphaelitism, was also a house guest. Finally, "Lancelot and Elaine" was written during the same summer that Holman Hunt visited Tennyson, discussed his illustration of "The Lady of Shalott" with the Poet Laureate, and

"admired greatly" some paintings that Tennyson himself had executed.³ I would contend that these associations are more than coincidental, that in fact "Lancelot and Elaine" is a dramatic embodiment of Tennyson's complex reactions to Pre-Raphaelite art. Pre-Raphaelite illustrations of his own poems, and the aesthetic controversies generated in the 1850's by Pre-Raphaelitism. Thus, this idyll represents the results of an artistic cross-fertilization: just as Tennyson's richly detailed, sensuous verses fired the painterly imaginations of the P.R.B., so their art may have shaped Tennyson's depiction of Elaine as a visual artist.

I

Between 1849 and 1858 when "Lancelot and Elaine" was composed, Tennyson socialized with the Pre-Raphaelites and their circle (Patmore, Allingham, Prinseps), visited exhibitions of their works, often admired their paintings, and actively involved himself in engaging Pre-Raphaelites to illustrate his poems. The following chronology details some of the interaction between the Poet Laureate and the Brotherhood during those years:

27. "We find boyhood an exact type of manhood – school a faithful mirror of public life"; [A. P. Stanley], "School a Little World," *Rugby Magazine*, 1:2 (1835), 95-105, p. 100.

1. Hallam Tennyson, *Alfred Lord Tennyson: A Memoir* (London: Macmillan, 1905), p. 360. Hereinafter cited as *Memoir*.

2. Christopher Ricks, *The Poems of Tennyson* (London: Longmans, 1969), p. 1621. All textual quotations are taken from this edition.

3. William Holman Hunt, *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, 2 Vols. (London: Macmillan, 1905), II, 172, reports having seen "writhing monsters of different sizes and shapes, swirling about as in the deep. This had been done with remarkable taste and judgment. The paints. . . had here been most happily combined to make mysterious tints, and the definition of forms had been judiciously relinquished when only a general suggestion had been achieved." Hereinafter cited as Hunt.

- 1849 Coventry Patmore persuades Tennyson to sit for Woolner.⁴
- 1850 Tennyson, hearing that Millais is doing a painting of Patmore's "The Woodman's Daughter," remarks "I wish he would do something from me" (*P.R.B. Journal*, p. 72). Hunt paints first version of *The Lady of Shalott*.
- 1851 Woolner with Tennyson in the Lakes. Millais paints *Mariana*; Tennyson is "delighted" by it (*Memoir*, p. 297). Millais' diary records his "veneration" for Tennyson; he begins an illustration of Tennyson's lines "Two lovers whispering by a garden wall" which evolves into *A Huguenot*⁵ (Hunt, I, 283).
- 1852 Millais meets Tennyson in October (Millais, p. 179). Lear, living with Holman Hunt, writes to Emily Tennyson to suggest an illustrated edition of Tennyson's poetry and to recommend Hunt, who "knows all Alfred's poems by heart," as an illustrator.⁶ Tennyson admires Millais' *Ophelia* and *A Huguenot* (*Memoir*, p. 297). Hunt champions Tennyson against the criticism of Oxford undergraduates (Hunt, I, 316).
- 1853 Tennyson discusses an illustrated edition of his poems with Millais, indicates "a willingness" to give the greatest part of the work to the P.R.B.⁷ (*Memoir*, p. 316).
- 1854 Tennyson and Moxon visit Millais to discuss illustrated edition. Millais writes to Tennyson in August postponing a promised visit and indicating that there are "some questions I wish to ask you about the poems I am to illustrate."⁸ Millais visits in November, sketches Emily and Hallam, discusses with Tennyson "the limits of realism in painting" (*Memoir*, p. 320).
- 1855 Rossetti writes in January: "I have been asked by Moxon to do some for the *Tennyson*, and I said I would, but. . . the most practicable subjects have been given away already"⁹; Tennyson learns that Elizabeth Siddal admires his poetry, suggests to Moxon that she be allowed to do an illustration.¹⁰ Rossetti sketches Tennyson reading *Maud*; Tennyson and Rossetti walk through London streets in early morning.¹¹
- 1856 *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (January 1) contains laudatory review of Tennyson's poems written by William Fulford: "The Lady of Shalott" is seen as an illustration of "a faculty very desirable, if not absolutely requisite in poetry — painting in words." Tennyson responds to the *Magazine*: "I find in such articles as I have read, a truthfulness and earnestness. . . . May you go on and prosper."¹² Hunt meets Tennyson at Cameron's house in Roehampton (Hunt II, 165).
- 1857 Tennyson spends "much time. . . . studying Holman Hunt's pictures" at the Manchester Exhibition in the summer (*Memoir*, p. 354); Hunt is invited to spend Christmas at Farringford. "Pre-Raphaelite Exhibition" displayed in Russell Place, Fitzroy Square, London. Millais sees Tennyson at the Prinseps (Millais, p. 323). *Illustrated Edition* published by Moxon in summer, with 5 illustrations by Rossetti, 6 by Hunt, and 18 by Millais. Allingham writes to Rossetti in August that Tennyson "praised the P.R.B. designs to his poems in a general way. . ." (Hill, p. 104). Murals painted in Oxford University Union Society by P.R.B., among whom is Valentine Prinseps.
- 1858 Woolner writes to Emily Tennyson, urging her to persuade her husband "to do the Maid of Astolat" (Ricks, p. 1621). Tennyson stays at Prinseps' Little Holland House at same time as Ruskin. Hunt at Farringford in summer admires Tennyson's paintings (Hunt, II, 172).

But not only was Tennyson personally acquainted with several members of the P.R.B. in the early 50's he was also familiar with — indeed he seems to have seriously reflected upon — some of the aesthetic problems of Pre-Raphaelitism. When Millais made a "long promised visit" to Farringford in 1854, he and Tennyson discussed "the limits of realism" in painting. Tennyson, who "hated the modern realism in painting and literature," is reported to have observed regarding "certain English pictures": "if you have human beings before a wall, the wall ought to be picturesquely painted, and not to be made too obtrusive

4. William Michael Rossetti, *The P.R.B. Journal*, ed. William E. Fredeman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 72. Hereinafter cited as *P.R.B. Journal*.

5. John Everett Millais, *The Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1899), pp. 130-35. Hereinafter cited as Millais.

6. Angus Davidson, *Edward Lear: Landscape Painter and Nonsense Poet* (1938, rpt. Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1968), p. 83.

7. G. H. Fleming: *That Ne'er Shall Meet Again* (London: Michael Joseph, 1971), p. 83.

8. Unpublished letter, Tennyson Research Centre, in June S. Hagen,

Tennyson and His Publishers (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1979), p. 104.

9. *The Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to William Allingham, 1854-1870*, ed. G. B. Hill (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1897), p. 97. Hereinafter cited as Hill.

10. Charles Tennyson, *Alfred Tennyson* (London: Macmillan, 1949), p. 293.

11. Robert Bernard Martin, *Tennyson: The Unquiet Heart* (Oxford and New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1980), p. 395.

12. J. W. Mackail, *The Life of William Morris* (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1899), I, 30-33.

by the bricks being too minutely drawn, since it is the human beings that ought to have the real interest for us in a dramatic subject picture" (*Memoir*, p. 320). Tennyson is probably alluding here to *A Huguenot, on St. Bartholomew's Day refusing to shield himself from danger by wearing a Roman Catholic badge* (1851-52), a controversial painting which Tennyson had seen in 1852 and admired. This work, which according to Millais had received positive reviews from only *Punch* and *The Spectator* but which drew crowds of spectators who "stood before it all day long" (Millais, p. 146), depicts the dramatic interchange between doomed lovers standing before a laboriously detailed brick wall (which Millais had spent several weeks painting from an actual wall at Worcester Park Farm).

This lamentably brief and incomplete record of Tennyson's views on pictorial aesthetics is, nonetheless, important on two counts. First, the poet who himself cultivated a "miniaturist accuracy"¹³ in the representation of natural detail, here, surprisingly, objects to the minute particularization of a brick wall; instead he urges a "picturesque" treatment of detail, that is, the subordination of the discrete particulars of a scene to the overall "pictorial" composition of the whole. In addition, he seems to affirm the primacy of the narrative content, the "human interest," of a painting. But Tennyson's remarks to Millais are especially interesting because they echo in phrasing, in choice of example, and in content three objections to Pre-Raphaelite painting frequently voiced by critics in the early 1850's.

II

Eschewing the dead academic conventions of painting, the young artists of the P.R.B. cultivated, in Ruskin's words, "absolute, uncompromising truth. . . by working everything down to the most minute detail, from nature."¹⁴ David Masson, explaining Pre-Raphaelitism in the *British Quarterly Review* (1852, pp. 197-220) used a brick wall, as Tennyson later did, to illustrate the P.R.B. treatment of detail: "the great principle, . . . which became the bond of their union, was that they should go to Nature in all cases and employ, as exactly as possible, her literal forms. . . . If they were to paint a brick wall as part of the background of a picture, their notion was that they should . . . take some actual brick wall and paint it exactly as it was, with all its seams, lichens, and weather-stains." But such microscopic fidelity seemed to contemporary viewers a "devotion to the minute accidents of a subject" (*Times*, 7 May 1851) and a "servile" imitation of the "facts and phenomena of external nature" (*Saturday Review*, 4 July 1857). Sometimes, critics deprecated Pre-

Raphaelite detail because it was too realistic and ugly: for example, the *Times*' critic (9 May 1850) attacked Millais' *Christ in the House of His Parents* because of its "disgusting" representation "of misery, of dirt, even of disease, all finished with the same loathsome minuteness." Often, though, it was the distracting effect of Pre-Raphaelite minutia that disturbed nineteenth-century viewers. William Michael Rossetti acknowledged in 1851 that Pre-Raphaelite art was particularly subject to the danger that "detail and accessory should be insisted upon to a degree detracting from the chief subject and action."¹⁵ The art critic for *Punch*, who in 1852 defended Millais' elaboration of the mosses and weeds in the background of *Ophelia*, analyzed Pre-Raphaelite art a year later in terms that closely resemble those employed by Tennyson. The P.R.B. recognize, according to this critic, "that as a man works in a setting of earth and air, all the beauties and fitness of that setting must be rendered — the more truthfully the better — and that the most accurate rendering of these need not detract from the crowning work — the creation of the central interest which sums itself in human expression." But, the critic goes on to warn, "if roses and a garden in a painted love-scene are more important than the faces of the lovers, then the painter has reversed the true order of his painting." (*Punch*, 24 [1853], p. 207). What Tennyson and these other critics found disturbing is the "new dynamic, kaleidoscopic, visually uncertain and changing"¹⁶ relationship between picture and spectator created by Pre-Raphaelite art. W. F. Axton aptly describes this radically unsettling interaction: "Academic works. . . were designed to create a unified impression instantaneously on a viewer. . . , but it is usually not possible with Pre-Raphaelite paintings. . . . The complex and in some cases mutually antithetical pictorial elements . . . diffuse and as it were 'unfocus' the viewer's attention."¹⁷ Such "unfocusing" in turn created a hermeneutical dilemma for many nineteenth-century spectators: if a picture's purpose is, as many assumed, to tell a story or to exemplify a moral or psychological truth, then how is plenteous, photographically accurate detail relevant to that end? On the other hand, if painting simply rivals photography in the reproduction of empirical reality, then can it legitimately be considered art, at all? J. B. Atkinson, reviewing the Manchester Exhibition of Art Treasures for *Blackwood's* (1857) raises this problem. Calling Pre-Raphaelitism "the last and most ultra development of the naturalistic tendencies" of British art, Atkinson warns: "if art be nothing but a literal transcript of nature, then is picture-making mechanical. . . . Art is no longer the rendering of what the poet-mind perceives or feels, but the manual and servile transcript of detail. . . . This is a natural-

13. Gerhard Joseph, "Tennyson's Optics: The Eagle's Gaze," *PMLA*, 92 (May 1977), 420. Joseph discusses the dialectic in Tennyson's poetry between "proximate particularity" and vague, distanced perspectives.

14. John Ruskin, "Pre-Raphaelitism," *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (London: Smith Elder, 1854), in *Pre-Raphaelitism: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. James Sambrook (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1974), p. 99.

15. William Michael Rossetti, "Pre-Raphaelitism," *Spectator* 24, no. 1214 (4 October 1851), 955-57, in Sambrook, p. 67.

16. W. F. Axton, "Victorian Landscape Painting: A Change in Outlook," *Nature and the Victorian Imagination*, ed. U. C. Knoepfelmacher and G. B. Tennyson (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1977), p. 304.

17. *Ibid.*

ism which defeats itself, by leading to an art which, as art, is unnatural and monstrous; a naturalism which is, in fact materialism" (p. 170). Not only does he equate the painter and the poet but, in his final phase, Atkinson also associates Pre-Raphaelite art with that conception of a meaningless material universe, devoid of spiritual significance, that Victorians like Tennyson so feared.

By asserting that the paintings of Pre-Raphaelite artists fail to infuse matter with imaginative or spiritual significance, Atkinson echoes a fairly common criticism of their work. William Michael Rossetti had affirmed that Pre-Raphaelitism would produce "the intimate intertexture of spiritual sense with material form; small actualities made vocal of lofty meanings."¹⁸ But viewers often found those "small actualities" to be mute or to invite purely private, capricious interpretation. The Pre-Raphaelite artist by minutely detailing each brick in a wall or each flower on a bank implies that these particulars are significant, even symbolic; yet the naturalistic depiction of these details on canvas provides viewers with few keys to their symbolic import.¹⁹ Thus when Holman Hunt exhibited *The Scapegoat* (1856) the *Athenaeum's* critic "shudder[ed] . . . in anticipation of the dreamy fantasies and three-deep allegories which will be deduced from this figure of a goat in difficulties" and complained that "the salt may be sin, and the sea sorrow. . . but we might spin these fancies from anything. . . a goat is but a goat, and we have no right to consider it an allegorical animal, of which it can bear no external marks" (10 May 1856, p. 589). Furthermore, in the year of Tennyson's conversation with Millais the issue of how to "read" the details of another of Hunt's paintings, *The Awakening Conscience* (1854), was being publicly debated. *The Morning Chronicle* (29 April 1854) labelled the picture "absolutely disagreeable" and charged that it "fails to express its own meaning, either in its general composition or through the agency of its details." The *Athenaeum* (6 May 1854) observed that the work was "understood by few" and that "unenlightened spectators" supposed it "to represent a quarrel between a brother and a sister. . . [instead of] the momentary remorse of a kept mistress." This confusion over the painting's subject drew an explication and a defense of the work from Ruskin. As if answering some of the objections which Tennyson voiced to Millais, Ruskin concedes that "the careful rendering of inferior details" in this painting "cannot but be at first offensive" to many viewers because it

calls "their attention away from the principal subject." He goes on, however, to defend the painting's particularization on psychological and allegorical grounds. First, he asserts that the presentation of detail is psychologically significant: "Nothing is more notable than the way in which even the most trivial objects force themselves upon the attention of a mind which has been fevered by violent and distressful excitement. They thrust themselves forward with a ghastly and unendurable distinctness, as if they would compel the sufferer to count, or measure, or learn them by heart." But, according to Ruskin, the detail not only mirrors the young woman's psychic state (much as the external world in Tennyson's "Mariana" mirrors that overwrought maiden's mind), it also serves symbolic and allegorical functions. Thus the torn and dying bird on the drawing room floor can be read as Hunt's symbol of the woman's condition while the picture above the fireplace, with its single drooping figure — the woman taken in adultery — is emblematic of the woman's sin and a reminder of Christ's loving forgiveness of the penitent.²⁰ In Ruskin's view "there is not a single object in all that room, common, modern, vulgar. . . but it becomes tragical if rightly read" (25 May 1854). The problem for the public, of course, was to find a lexicon for such a right reading.

Clearly then Tennyson's remarks to Millais need to be seen in the context of the controversies about Pre-Raphaelite art. Both his observations and the public discussion point to the uneasiness in the mid-nineteenth century about the chasm between the de-sacramentalized world of nature as it was perceived through the eyes of science and the cosmos "charged with the grandeur of God." Early commentators on Pre-Raphaelitism thus questioned how naturalistic details assertively presented in art could be meaningful, could do anything but distract from the true subject of a painting, could become comprehensible symbols of a hidden non-material reality.

III

Tennyson's reflections on these issues are dramatized in his characterization of Elaine as a visual artist in "Lancelot and Elaine."²¹ At the idyll's opening, she is ensconced "high in her chamber up a tower," like that earlier embowered artist the Lady of Shalott. That doomed lady recorded in a work of art, a tapestry, only the phenomena framed by her window and reflected in her mirror. Elaine similarly narrows her focus on reality by

18. *The Germ*. . . *A Facsimile Reprint*. . . with an Introduction (1901; rpt. New York: A.M.S. Press, 1968), p. 19. The problem of the meaning of natural detail in Pre-Raphaelite painting has been discussed by Herbert Sussman, "Hunt, Ruskin, and 'The Scapegoat,'" *VS*, 12 (1968), 83-90, who argues that because of the decline of the "sacramental view of Nature in the 19th century, natural fact is no longer felt to have a metaphysical correspondence to a specific spiritual fact," and thus "the way is open for private mythologies."

19. Carol Christ *The Finer Optic: The Aesthetic of Particularity in Victorian Poetry* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1975), discusses the tension in Pre-Raphaelite painting between the detailed representation of objects which suggests a symbolic view of the world and builds into the paintings themselves "the impetus to a sacramental view of reality" and the naturalism of image which

"pushes what had been a symbol toward status as a natural object."²⁰ George P. Landow, *William Holman Hunt and Typological Symbolism* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1979), argues that Hunt tried to prevent the accumulation of fact in his painting from becoming "mere scientific record" (p. 19) and that he employed the tradition of Biblical typology to give significance to the details of a painting like *The Awakening Conscience*, which can be "read" as not only a moral but a political and social commentary as well (pp. 46-53).

21. A number of critics have seen Elaine as an artist figure. John Rosenberg, *The Fall of Camelot: A Study of Tennyson's "Idylls of the King"* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1973), p. 101, calls Elaine "a starved symbolist" who wants to bring her waking life into harmony with "the dream on which she feeds." A. Dwight Culler, *The Poetry of Tennyson* (New Haven and London: Yale

fixating on Lancelot's shield, which he has left in her keeping. The shield becomes the center of her existence; in a symbolic gesture she places it "where morning's earliest ray/might strike it and awake her with the gleam" (1. 5-6). The shield also provides the creative incentive for and the subject of a work of art, an embroidered case of silk. With a Pre-Raphaelite devotion to the accurate representation of the accidents of reality, Elaine's artwork exactly reproduces the shield's surface and even imitates its function — it is a protective covering for a protective covering and thus both redundant and empty of content. As an embroiderer, a maker of pictures on cloth, Elaine resembles the subjects of several Pre-Raphaelite paintings: the Virgin in Rossetti's *Ecce Ancilla Domini* and *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* and Mariana in Millais' painting based on Tennyson's poem. (Interestingly, Millais' Mariana is embroidering a leaf design derived from some actual leaves on her work table). Martin Meisel argues that embroidery in these paintings is an emblem of Pre-Raphaelite art itself, particularly its "laborious and somewhat mechanical" treatment of nature.²² In Tennyson's poem, on the other hand, Elaine's needlework is emblematic of the difficulty of fusing imagined and perceived reality.

In her embroidery, Elaine not only imitates the devices on the shield, however, she also adds, like a Pre-Raphaelite painter decorating the frame of his painting, a "border fantasy of branch and flower." Here the crucial word "fantasy" has several possible meanings. It could suggest an ingenious device in which natural forms have been transmuted by the shaping power of the artist's imagination, as in Keats' "a soiled glove, whereon her silk had played in purple phantasies" ("Isabel," xlvii). But, as Stephen Prickett has shown, the word also carried a "curious polarity" of meaning after 1830. " 'Imagination' and 'fantasy' had come to stand for two sides of the Victorian psyche: its sacred and profane loves. Following Coleridge, the Imagination was elevated on to a pedestal: it was the supreme gift of the poet, the creative power of the artist. . . a reflection in man of the divine and life-giving spirit of God the Creator. Fantasy, in contrast, was the gift of dreams; the haunting magic of Keats' *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*; it was delightful, alluring, compulsive, disturbing, nightmare and hag-ridden. It was akin to madness."²³ According to Baker's *Concordance*, this word appears only eight times in the Tennyson canon —

four of those appearances are in "Lancelot and Elaine." Tennyson seems to have used the word in two senses: sometimes it signifies a mental process that can lead to perceptions of dubious authenticity; other times it refers to an elaborate and implicitly false visual display. In this latter, negative sense, the word occurs in *The Princess*. During one of his "weird seizures," the Prince becomes aware that Ida's court is a "hollow show" and her tame leopards "a painted fantasy" (II, 169-70, italics mine). Literally, of course, the cats are real, but the Prince perceives that the outward splendor of Ida's kingdom is illusory, that it masks an inward unreality of conception. Similarly, in "Gareth and Lynette," the foolish masquerade of the knights as Day, Morning-Star, Noon-Sun, and Evening-Star is characterized as a "fantasy." And Tristram, having won the mock tournament commemorating "dead innocence," contemptuously chides Lancelot to "let be thy fair Queen's fantasy" ("The Last Tournament," 1. 197), presumably alluding both to Guinevere's illusion that chivalry can still exist in Camelot and to the parodic tournament which had resulted from that illusion. "Fantasy" has a slightly more ambiguous meaning, however, in the final section of "The Lover's Tale." The narrator discusses the hallucinatory state in which Julian has heard a death knell transform itself into his lover's wedding bells:

Whether they were his lady's marriage-bells,
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never asked. (11. 11-13)

Here "the fantasy" seems to be a faculty capable of producing either delusions or prophetic visions.

Since the word has several meanings in Tennyson's poetry and since its connotation is, at best, ambiguous, it is not surprising that James Kincaid argues that in "Lancelot and Elaine" "fantasy" "may suggest illusion, but it can just as well suggest legitimate creative activity."²⁴ What Kincaid does not realize is that Tennyson explores *both* meanings of the word in this idyll by depicting the various ways in which Elaine's creative faculty responds to the empirical world and by limning the different kind of "fantasies" that she produces.

Elaine, like the Pre-Raphaelite artist who carefully scrutinized the bricks in the background wall and laboriously detailed them in his painting, pours over the

Univ. Press, 1977) p. 235, asserts that Elaine is the Lady of Shalott living in a "demythologized world." "She is still a poet in the sense that she lives 'in fantasy,' but her imagination is now exercised in fashioning a 'pretty history' . . ." As a figure of attenuated spiritual power Elaine represents, in Culler's formulation, the "diminished voice" of poetry (although Culler does add "if she be a poet"). Lawrence Poston III, "The Two Provinces of Tennyson's *Idylls*," *Criticism*, 9 (1967), 372-382, argues that Elaine, who is a more psychologically complex figure than the Lady of Shalott, is a kind of poet who oversimplifies reality and fails to confront the external world. Her silence at the idyll's end "bears witness to this silencing of the poetic voice in a society ruled over by cynicism." James R. Kincaid, *Tennyson's Major Poems: The Comic and Ironic Patterns* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1975), pp. 187-88, sees Elaine as a "comic artist in an ironic world" who uses

her senses to serve her imagination, who shares Arthur's "god-like assurances," but who is trapped in a world that is no longer divine, a world in which "manners and nature" are severed. This argument shares with mine the perception that in Elaine's world a sacramental view of nature is not viable and the artist must struggle to reconcile matter and spirit.

22. Martin Meisel, "Half Sick of Shadows," *Nature and the Victorian Imagination*, p. 326. Meisel goes on to argue that the "humility" of Mariana's occupation in this picture "both ornamental and trivially practical, laborious and somewhat mechanical, may itself be a comment on art."
23. Stephen Prickett, *Victorian Fantasy* (Bloomington and London: Indiana Univ. Press, 1989), p. 6.
24. Kincaid, p. 187.

surface of reality – Lancelot’s shield – and finds in every “accident” a hidden significance. She invests these “accidents” with a personal meaning – much as Holman Hunt was said by Ruskin to have infused a “tragical” significance into the insignificant, vulgar objects of the Victorian parlor in *The Awakening Conscience*. Fleeing to her tower and barring the door, she:

...read the naked shield
 Now guessed a hidden meaning in his arms,
 Now made a pretty history to herself
 Of every dint a sword had beat in it
 And every scratch a lance had made upon it. (11. 16-19)

In effect, the shield has become a springboard for private vision, a catalyst for the creation of “pretty histories” which are purely conjectural. The object itself cannot yield the romantic reality that Elaine’s imagination craves, so she creates an alternative reality by “liv[ing] in fantasy” (1. 26). The climactic repetition of this word at the end of the idyll’s first verse paragraph and its association with Elaine’s erotic reverie over the shield suggest that here “fantasy” connotes the “underside, or obverse, of the Victorian imagination.”²⁵ Later in the idyll, Tennyson uses an almost identical phrase to describe Elaine’s withdrawal from the world of everyday reality. When Lancelot leaves Astolat: “to her tower she climbed and took the shield. . .and so lived in fantasy” (1. 396).

What Tennyson presents in this initial portrait of Elaine as an artist is a three-fold disjunction between fact and value similar to that which commentators found in early Pre-Raphaelite art. First, because it is mimetic, Elaine’s artwork is an “empty labour” (1. 984); when Lancelot reclaims his shield, her case is literally a hollow shell. Second, in creating the case, the artist’s imagination has been “servile,” has subordinated itself to the mechanical act of reproduction; its only creative outlet has been the production of delusive “fantasy,” not the shaping of a symbolic reality. Finally, an object – be it a shield, or a brick wall, or a goat – which is fraught with private, and perhaps even arbitrary, meaning in the artist’s mind has stimulated a work of art which cannot reify that private meaning.

But the idyll does not end with Elaine contemplating her unsuccessful, insubstantial work of art alone in her tower; instead, it goes on to suggest both that visual art can be more than just a “painted fantasy” and that Elaine’s imagination is capable of producing and actualizing a truly symbolic vision. In an extended simile, Tennyson compares Elaine, who is haunted in dreams by Lancelot’s visage, to a great portrait painter who

...poring on a face,
 Divinely through all hindrance finds the man
 Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
 The shape and colour of a mind and life,

Lives for his children, ever at its best
 And fullest; so the face before her lived,
 Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence, full
 Of noble things. . .(11.229-337)

The ideal artist pierces with a “divine” insight beyond the phenomenal world to an inner spiritual reality and then embodies that vision in a work of art in which physical details speak of unseen truths. In her dreams Elaine perceives what the idyll’s narrator knows but Lancelot himself does not – that he will die “a holy man” because of that nobility within him (1. 1417). In her dreams she achieves what Edward Burne-Jones, writing in the Pre-Raphaelite *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (June 1856), identifies as the essential vision of true artists who “can see a thing as scarce any other men can. . .; can see deep into the natures of mysterious things; visions float before their eyes and pierce to their hearts” and they “show in the faces of men some of their souls.” The distinction between Elaine’s initial “fantasy” and this dream vision may perhaps be best explained in terms of Ruskin’s distinction between fancy and imagination in *Modern Painters*, II(1846). According to Ruskin, the fancy “sees the outside and is able to give a portrait of the outside, clear, brilliant and full of detail” but can never pierce through to an inner reality. Imagination, on the other hand, “never stops at crusts or ashes, or outward images of any kind; it ploughs them all aside, and plunges into the very central fiery heart; nothing else will content its spirituality” and its virtue derives from “its reaching, by intuition and intensity of gaze. . .a more essential truth than is seen at the surface of things.”²⁶ Burne-Jones and Ruskin speak of the Pre-Raphaelite ideal which Elaine, at this point in the idyll, has only achieved in her dreams.

But near the idyll’s end, Elaine has a dream which she determines to convert into a visual reality. Abandoned by Lancelot, she imagines herself sailing to Camelot:

I will enter in among them all,
 And no man there will dare to mock at me,
 But there fine Gawain will wonder at me,
 And there great Sir Lancelot will muse at me,

 And there the King will know me and my love,
 And there the Queen herself will pity me,
 And all the gentle court will welcome me. (11. 1045-53)

Determined to have her “will,” Elaine sets about creating a funeral barge which will not only be a “speaking picture” of her life and desires but will also be interpreted by her audience just as she desires. With a stunning sophistication in the selection and arrangement of symbolic natural detail, Elaine fashions herself in death into Guinevere’s competitor. The Lily Maid insists that she be dressed as richly as the Queen, transported royally in a “chariot bier,” and laid upon the “little bed” where

25. Prickett, p. 9.
 26. John Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, II, Sec. 2, Ch. 3, *Library Edition*,

The Works of John Ruskin, ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (London: George Allen, 1903-10).

she "died" for love of Lancelot – the virginal analogue not only of the marriage bed she desires but also of the adulterous bed on which the Queen "dies" with Lancelot. Moreover, to emphasize the fact that her *tableau mort* will speak for itself Elaine stipulates that she is to be accompanied only by a "dumb old man." At this point in the idyll, the word "fantasy" occurs for the final time. After her family has agreed to carry out her burial wishes, the narrator notes that Elaine "grew so cheerful that they deemed her death/Was rather in the fantasy than the blood" (11. 1124-25). While her family associates "fantasy" with "delusion," it would seem that here the "fantasy" has been the source of a powerful visual metaphor, of a thoroughly effective transformation of the external world in accordance with an idea. Elaine's dream vision of the effect she will create is made a reality through her work of art. When the barge enters Camelot, her love eclipses Guinevere's; she elicits from Gawain, Lancelot, and Arthur precisely the response she predicted (11. 1259-64); and she is buried "like a Queen" (1. 1325). Unlike the Lady of Shalott, whose arrival at Camelot frightened and puzzled the inhabitants, communicating to them only her name and the fact of her beauty, Elaine has created an art that is both symbolic and comprehensible to the citizens of Camelot.

Unlike her initial art work, the case, which derived from the physical world and led to private "fantasy," Elaine's funeral barge seems to have achieved the Pre-Raphaelite goal of making "small actualities. . . vocal of lofty meanings." More than this, however, it seems likely that some of the specific details of Elaine's death tableau were derived by Tennyson from Rossetti's illustration of "The Lady of Shalott." Rossetti, who believed in "allegor[izing] on one's own hook on the subject of a poem"²⁷ augmented Tennyson's poem in this 1857 illustration. For example, he gave the Lady the characteristic flowing tresses of a Pre-Raphaelite woman; he added an unidentified second male, peering over the body with Lancelot; and he created a religious aura by giving the corpse a beatific expression and a triangle of candles surrounding its head.

Echoes of this illustration can be found in "Lancelot and Elaine." First, in imagining her arrival at Camelot, Elaine envisions two men – Lancelot and Gawain – contemplating her corpse. Second, she has the bright "streaming hair" (1. 1149) of the familiar Pre-Raphaelite woman; and her corpse, as in the Rossetti illustration, seems not to be dead but rather smiling in its sleep (11. 1153-54). Finally, Rossetti's beatification of the Lady of Shalott may have influenced Tennyson's account of the "reverential" procession of Elaine's body into Camelot and her "worshipful" burial.

But the presentation of Elaine's death has a further resonance with Pre-Raphaelite illustrations of his works. In 1857-58 Tennyson was particularly concerned with the gap between the author's text and the illustrators' inter-

pretation of that text. After the illustrated edition of his poems had appeared, John Ruskin wrote to the Poet Laureate that "many of the plates are very noble things, though not, it seems to me, illustrations of your poems." Ruskin then added: "I believe in fact that good pictures never can be; they are always another poem, subordinate but wholly different from the poet's conception, and serve chiefly to show the reader how variously the same verses may affect various minds" (*Memoir*, p. 354). Although Hallam Tennyson asserted that his father "had called on most of the artists so as to give them views of what the illustrations ought to be," his "ought" was clearly not a "fiat." Rossetti, for example, "drew just what he chose, taking from his author's text nothing more than a hint and an opportunity."²⁸ And, at least one of his illustrations, forced a puzzled Tennyson "to give up the problem of what it had to do with his verses."²⁹ Moreover, though he admitted to being "strongly engaged" by Hunt's illustration of "The Lady of Shalott," Tennyson was dismayed by the difference between what he wrote and what Hunt drew. In his autobiography Hunt recalls that Tennyson told him: "I was always interested in your paintings, and lately your illustrations to my poems have strongly engaged my attention!" But then he confronted Hunt: "I must now ask why did you make the Lady of Shalott, in the illustration, with her hair wildly tossed about as if by a tornado?" A perplexed Hunt replied that he had been trying to suggest "the idea of the threatened fatality by reversing the ordinary peace of the room and of the lady herself." Tennyson, however, persisted "But I did not say it floated round and round her" and then added "an illustrator ought never to add anything to what he finds in the text" (II, 125).

Such a radical curtailment of the illustrator's creative license would mean that the poet's imagination always had primacy. Clearly, this line of thinking leads to the conclusion that the poet should always be his own illustrator – as Elaine was – so that word and image, conception and realization are the work of the same creator. Perhaps, then, there is a final way in which Elaine embodies Tennyson's thoughts on Pre-Raphaelitism and the problem of integrating the literal/empirical with the visionary/imaginative. When Elaine begins with a "text" external to herself – say, the shield – she moves from faithful reproduction to the indulgence of private and incommunicable fantasy. However, when illustrating the text of her own life and death, Elaine creates, in Holman Hunt's phrase, "the reflex of the living image" (I, 125) in her own mind. In so doing, she becomes the ideal Pre-Raphaelite: poet and painter in one; moreover, she puts into action Ruskin's injunction that, in order to encourage "noble" painting, people must themselves "be" pictures.³⁰ Thus, in her attempts at visual artistry Elaine reflects her creator's multi-dimensional response to the artists who paid tribute to his verbal artistry in a series of memorable pictures.

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27. *The Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, ed. Oswald Doughty and John Robert Wahl (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), I, 239.

28. William Michael Rossetti, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: His Family-*

letters With a Memoir (London: Ellis, 1895), I, 189.

29. *Ibid.*

30. Ruskin, in Sambrook, p. 101.

Amours de Voyage and Matthew Arnold in Love: An Inquiry

Eugene R. August

Matthew Arnold's *Switzerland* poems are widely considered to be a partly fictional account of an actual love affair between Arnold and a mysterious young woman known as Marguerite, the affair evidently reaching some kind of crisis in late 1848-early 1849. What have not been considered to any great extent are the possibilities that Arthur Hugh Clough's *Amours de Voyage* is also a semi-fictional account of this same love affair and that Claude, the poem's central figure, is in part a portrait of Matthew Arnold in love.

The purpose of this article is to present evidence supporting these ideas. The article is labeled as an inquiry, however, to invite others to assess, correct, or qualify its conclusions. Because all good discovery involves a sifting of possibilities, my aim — despite the unqualified nature of some of the following statements — is less to press a single-minded view than to open a discussion that may clarify the truth.

That Clough would introduce a fictionalized account of Arnold's life and character into one of his poems should surprise no one. It is well-known that in *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, written in the autumn of 1848, Clough had drawn upon the life and character of Arnold's younger brother Tom for part of the story and the main character, Philip Hewson. There seems little reason to believe that Clough would hesitate to do something similar with "Matt" himself. Moreover, in "To my Friends, who ridiculed a tender Leave-taking" published in February 1849, Arnold himself had brought his love-life and his friends into his poetry for publication. By the time *Amours de Voyage* was published in 1858, all but one of the *Switzerland* lyrics, with their disguised account of the Marguerite affair, were in print. By alluding to Arnold's affairs in *Amours*, Clough would not have been doing anything extraordinarily unusual. As we shall see, Clough and others in the Clougho-Matthean circle were not above chaffing the somewhat Olympian Arnold (whom they nicknamed "the Emperor") about his romantic misadventures.

Clough's art, of course, cannot be reduced to raw biography. It is a complex art that transforms its sources into imaginative literature. A poem like the *Bothie*, for example, draws upon numerous sources both literary and biographical — upon sources as diverse as George Sand's *Jeanne*, Clough's own experiences on long-vacation reading parties in the Highlands, and Tom Arnold's

dreams and decisions to emigrate to New Zealand in 1847. But the *Bothie* in its finished form is clearly more than the sum of its sources, which have been transformed by Clough's imagination into a coherent literary work. Nevertheless, there is truth in Robindra Kumar Biswas's description of the *Bothie* as "a roman à clef. . . peopled by figures who, though disguised, re-distributed, composed, and transformed, begin their lives in personal acquaintance."¹ Whoever else in Clough's acquaintance may have contributed to the make-up of Philip Hewson, the elements of Tom Arnold's life and character have been recognizable to numerous readers, including Tom himself.² In *Amours* Clough seems to have done something similar, but this time his hero resembles Tom's older brother, Matthew.

What does not appear likely is that *Amours de Voyage* owes anything to Clough's own ill-fated attachment in 1846 to a young woman who remains even more elusive than Arnold's Marguerite.³ The little evidence that has survived concerning this love interest contains such discrepancies with the story and characters in *Amours* as to suggest that Clough was deliberately avoiding any allusion to his own affairs in the poem.

No one would deny, however, that *Amours de Voyage* draws upon Clough's own personality as well as his experiences in Rome during the turbulent spring and early summer of 1849 when the poem was drafted. Indeed, one can hardly miss the Claude-like attitude and language of a passage like this from one of Clough's letters:

St. Peters disappoints me: the stone of which it is made is a poor plastery material. And indeed Rome in general might be called a *rubbishy* place; the Roman antiquities in general seem to me only interesting as antiquities — not for any beauty.

(*Correspondence*, I, 252)

Such borrowings from himself, however, are confined mostly to opinions on art and politics, suitably heightened for dramatic effect. In the end, Claude does not much resemble Clough. "Those critics who have tried to equate Claude, the protagonist, with Clough himself," writes Michael Timko, "have revealed their lack of familiarity with Clough's character. . . ." ⁴ The closer one looks at Claude, the less he resembles Clough and the more he resembles a portrait of Matthew Arnold in love.

Such an idea is not idiosyncratic. James Bertram, for example, has observed that "it is hard not to see at least

1. Arthur Hugh Clough: *Towards a Reconsideration* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 264.

2. See, e.g., Katharine Chorley, *Arthur Hugh Clough: The Uncommitted Mind* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 169; James Bertram, *Intro.*, *New Zealand Letters of Thomas Arnold the Younger, with Further Letters from Van Dieman's Land and Letters of Arthur Hugh Clough, 1847-1851*, ed. James Bertram (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), p. xxviii; and Biswas, *Reconsideration*, p. 263 and n. 3.

3. See *The Correspondence of Arthur Hugh Clough*, ed. Frederick L. Mulhauser (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), I, 175 — hereafter cited in the text as *Correspondence*; Bertram, Appendix C: "Clough and Agnes Walrond," *New Zealand Letters*, pp. 222-3; and Biswas, *Reconsideration*, pp. 183-5.

4. *Innocent Victorian: The Satiric Poetry of Arthur Hugh Clough* ([Athens, Ohio]: Ohio Univ. Press, [1966]), p. 138.

the spectre of Matthew Arnold behind a poem about the brief abortive love affair of an Englishman abroad. . . ."⁵ Although Bertram does not explore the idea to any great length, the more one does explore it, the more plausible it becomes.

Chronology supports such an idea. Whenever it began, Arnold's infatuation with the mysterious Marguerite was definitely in progress during most of 1848, when it apparently suffered some kind of crisis between late September and the following January. On 29 September 1848 Arnold wrote to Clough from the Baths of Leuk that he planned to "linger one day [at Thun] at the Hotel Bellevue for the sake of the blue eyes of one of its inmates."⁶ Nearly all critics agree that those blue eyes belonged to Marguerite. In a series of fascinating and informative articles, Park Honan has argued persuasively that the real-life counterpart of Marguerite was a young woman named Mary Claude, whose family resided near Fox How and who was well-known to the Arnold family and to Clough.⁷ Honan conjectures that the *Switzerland* poems offer a partly fictionalized account of Arnold's attachment to Mary Claude. Certainly, this attachment coincided chronologically with the Marguerite affair, and it seems most unlikely that Arnold would be in the throes of two passionate amours at the same time.

Honan's research provides valuable clues for reviewing Arnold's affair with Mary Claude and connecting it with Clough's *Amours*. Around 25 November 1848, Arnold's sister Mary Twining sent a now-lost letter to her brother Tom in New Zealand, prompting Tom to reply in the following June that "her account of Matt's romantic passion for the Cruel Invisible, Mary Claude, amused me beyond everything."⁸ Why Cruel Invisible? Honan believes that Arnold hoped to see Mary Claude's blue eyes at Thun, but Mary (who indeed had blue eyes and who had set out in August 1848 to travel with her mother) returned home early to nurse a friend.⁹ If so, Arnold missed those blue eyes at the Hôtel Bellevue and perhaps was left wondering for a time what had become of them. Evidently others besides Tom were amused beyond everything by Arnold's romantic passion, as the poem "To my Friends, who ridiculed a tender Leave-taking" demonstrates. One of those friends undoubtedly was Clough: Mary Claude was a close friend of his sister Anne, and beyond that the romantic doings of any member of the Clougho-Matthean circle would inevitably have been known to all. A few months after "To my Friends" was published in February 1849, Clough was at Rome drafting *Amours de Voyage*.

The knowledge of Arnold's romantic debacle would have been fresh in his mind.

Moreover, Arnold's criticisms of Clough would have been still ringing in his ears. In November 1848 Arnold had written an ill-tempered letter to Clough containing a blistering denunciation of the *Bothie*, its author, and its admirers (*Letters*, p. 95). Leaving Clough and his followers to "plunge and bellow" in the Time Stream, Arnold announced loftily that he had taken up Obermann instead "and refuted myself with him in his forest against your Zeit Geist." Although Arnold soon apologized to Clough for his outburst, Honan believes that the letter put a strain upon their friendship.¹⁰ Then, early in February 1849, came another Arnold letter coolly discussing the faults in Clough's poetry ("not natural": *Letters*, pp. 98-9). Later in the same month came the volume of Arnold's poems, several of which taxed Clough for failings — for excessive republicanism and self-questioning, for ridiculing a tender leave-taking, and for rejecting Arnold's "quietism."¹¹ Despite his willingness to listen to criticism of his own poetry and despite his professed admiration for Arnold's volume, Clough might well have felt in a mood to offer an ironic reply to "the Emperor" in *Amours de Voyage* when he began writing it a few months afterwards.

The chronology of events, then, takes on this pattern: during late 1848-early 1849 the somewhat overbearing Matthew Arnold, who was all too prone to lecture Clough and others on the need for detachment, was involved in a "romantic passion" that amused his family and friends beyond everything. His love affair took on the aspect of a comedy of errors when he planned to meet his beloved in Switzerland, only to discover (after what confusions?) that he had inadvertently missed her. Already one begins to sense the ironically comic atmosphere in which *Amours de Voyage* was born.

But the most obvious clue that Clough had Arnold in view when he composed *Amours* are the names of his would-be lovers — Mary and Claude.¹² It is inconceivable that Clough, writing in 1849 shortly after a comic crisis in Arnold's romantic passion for Mary Claude, could have chosen these names by accident.

There is ample evidence that Clough enjoyed such private jokes. One need only recall his somewhat naughty burlesque, "Resignation — To Faustus," sent to Arnold with the note: "Now you shall have some sweet pretty verses in your style."¹³ Whatever else it may have become, *Amours de Voyage* was begun as something of an in-joke with the name of Mary Claude employed as an ironic

5. James Bertram, "Arnold and Clough," in *Matthew Arnold*, ed. Kenneth Allott (Athens, Ohio: Ohio Univ. Press, 1976), p. 198.
6. *The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough*, ed. Howard Foster Lowry (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), p. 91 — hereafter cited in the text as *Letters*.
7. "A Note on Matthew Arnold in Love," *VNL*, no. 39 (Spring 1971), 11-5; "Fox How and the Continent: Matthew Arnold's Path to the European Sentimental School and 'La Passion Réfléchissante,'" *Victorian Poetry*, 16 (1978), 58-69; "Matthew Arnold, Mary Claude, and 'Switzerland,'" *Victorian Poetry*, 16 (1978), 369-75.
8. *New Zealand Letters*, pp. 119-20.

9. "Matthew Arnold, Mary Claude, and 'Switzerland,'" 372-3.
10. "Fox How and The Continent," 63, n.3.
11. See "[To a Republican Friend] Continued," "Religious Isolation: To the Same Friend," "A Memory Picture" — originally published in 1849 as "To my Friends, who ridiculed a tender Leave-taking," and "The World and the Quietist: to Critias."
12. Bertram, "Arnold and Clough," p. 198, also notes this point.
13. *The Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough*, ed. F. L. Mulhauser, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 668. All quotations from Clough's poetry are from this edition, hereafter cited as *Poems*.

needle to prick "the Emperor's" ego.

The idea that Claude is drawn in part from the character of Matthew Arnold is not fanciful. Other critics, with no intention of arguing that Clough derived Claude in part from Arnold, have already noted similarities between the two. Patricia Thomson, for example, notes that on occasion the rhythms and sentiments of Arnold's letters resemble those of Claude's.¹⁴ Indeed, to turn from the reading of Arnold's letters to Clough to the reading of Claude's letters to Eustace is to discover numerous similarities. John Goode, for example, has already compared similar attitudes toward revolution found in Arnold's letter of 1 March 1848 with that of Claude's letter in *Amours*, II.vi.¹⁵ Finally, Patricia Ball's extended comparison of *Amours* and the *Switzerland* poems concludes that "Claude's nature includes the Arnold-instinct, as it may be called; like Marguerite's lover, he too feels the call to a philosophy of solitude and contemplation beyond the human world. There is the same fear of passionate involvement."¹⁶ Clearly, resemblances between Claude and Arnold have been noticed.

Looking more closely for resemblances, we can note that Claude, like Arnold, employs the mask of the superior cosmopolitan — cynical, blasé, detached — to conceal a more vulnerable self replete with romantic ideals. Arnold's use of dandified attire and airy flippancy to conceal his earnest idealism is mirrored in Claude's breezy sophistication to conceal his passionate affirmations. Despite Arnold's "Olympian manners," those close to him were aware that this ironic aloofness was a shell to protect his more vulnerable inner self.¹⁷ Even a shrewd acquaintance could catch the situation: meeting Arnold at Fox How in 1851, Charlotte Brontë was at first repelled by his "seeming foppery" but soon noticed that "a real modesty appeared under his assumed conceit, and some genuine intellectual aspiration, as well as high educational acquirement, displaced superficial affectation."¹⁸ Mary Trevellyn's reaction to Claude is strikingly similar. Initially, she dismisses him as what people call "a superior man" — "selfish" and "repulsive." He is unaffected, Mary believes, only when he speaks of ideas.¹⁹ Later she discovers that he is not selfish and that he is capable of noble action. In brief, Claude — like Arnold — is a divided self, whose division can be seen in the odd discrepancy between an outward appearance of bantering scepticism and an inward self of passionate idealism.

This division of self can also be seen in Claude's indecisions, that is, in his shifting views on art, politics, and love. On all three topics, Claude is initially scornful, then ardent, and finally disenchanted. It is on the topic of passionate love that Arnold's presence in the poem is most

surely felt.

Claude's views on art — or at least the Roman antiquities — mirror the ambiguity in Clough's letters of the time. At first Clough characterizes the monuments as "rubbishy," but later he hopes that the British will intervene in Italian affairs — if only to save the monuments (*Correspondence*, I, 252, 261). No debt to Arnold is apparent here.

The vehemence of Claude's political oscillations, however, may owe something to Arnold. In his letters from Rome, Clough is initially sober in his assessment of the Republic's chances for success (although his sympathy with its cause is clear); later he warms to the defense of Rome and is indignant when the French enter the city (*Correspondence*, I, 255-6, 265-8). The same trajectory of emotions appears in Claude's letters. After his initial ironic view of the situation, Claude is swept up in its drama, and dreams of participating heroically in it. He is bitterly disappointed when the French are victorious, and he ends politically disenchanted. Claude's letters, however, exhibit a vehemence and intensity missing in Clough's. Indeed, a letter from Switzerland in which Clough actually quotes Claude's reaction to the collapse of the Republic only demonstrates the author's distance from his character's response. Gently, coolly, Clough mocks Claude's attempt to conceal frustrated idealism with cynicism.²⁰

It was Arnold, not Clough, who reacted extravagantly to the events of 1848. Finding these excesses droll, Clough apparently decided to satirize them in *Amours*. "Matt was at one time really heated to a fervid enthusiasm," an amused Clough wrote to Tom Arnold on 16 July 1848, "but he has become sadly cynical again of late" (*Correspondence*, I, 181). In contrast to Clough who retained his calm despite the disappointments in France and Italy, Arnold thundered: "If one had ever hoped any thing from such a set of d---d grimacing liars as their prophets one would be very sick just now" (*Letters*, p. 84). Arnold's disillusionment with France in particular and the chance of human progress in general can be seen most clearly in two sonnets — "To a Republican Friend, 1848" and "Continued" — addressed to Clough and published shortly before the writing of *Amours*. The rise and fall of Claude's political hopes may owe something to the sharp reversal in Arnold's two poems, the first vibrant with republican enthusiasm, the second chilled by disenchanted second thoughts.

But it is in Claude's romantic dilemma that the poem's clearest debt to Arnold can be seen. In Claude, Clough seems to be depicting Arnold's conflicting views on love and passion. At first Claude smiles condescendingly over

14. *George Sand and the Victorians: Her Influence and Reputation in Nineteenth-Century England* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1977), p. 92.

15. "Amours de Voyage: The Aqueous Poem," in *The Major Victorian Poets: Reconsiderations*, ed. Isobel Armstrong (Lincoln, Neb.: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1969), pp. 282-3.

16. *The Heart's Events: The Victorian Poetry of Relationships* (London: Univ. of London-Athlone Press, 1976), p. 55.

17. Douglas Bush, *Matthew Arnold: A Survey of His Poetry and Prose* (New York: Collier, 1971), pp. 3,5.

18. Quoted in Winifred Gérin, *Charlotte Brontë: The Evolution of Genius* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967), p. 461.

19. *Amours de Voyage*, I.xiii.269-70, II.xv.229-30, III.i.17-39.

20. *Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough, with a Selection from His Letters and a Memoir*, ed. [Blanche Clough] (London and New York: Macmillan, 1888), p. 169.

George Vernon's attentions to the Trevellyn girls, and he is amused to think of himself in the awkward situation of having to lay down his life "for the British female" should the French or Neapolitan soldiers offer offense. But before long he allows himself to drift into love with Mary Trevellyn despite his fear of a passionate tie that will disrupt his life:

I do not like being moved: for the will is excited; and action
Is a most dangerous thing.

(II.ix.270-1)

Soon after, however, Claude is fully in love with Mary, frantically and unsuccessfully pursuing her around Italy and finally losing her in Switzerland.

Like Claude, Matthew Arnold was prone to laugh at other people's romantic foibles. Likewise, he was (in Douglas Bush's words) "at once attracted and repelled by romantic passion."²¹ In the very letter in which he begins by telling Clough of his attachment to a pair of blue eyes, Arnold closes cynically with: "More particularly is this my feeling with regard to (I hate the word) women. We know beforehand all they can teach us: yet we are obliged to learn it directly from them" (*Letters*, p. 93). Some remarkably unsentimental verses supplement the thought. A year later, writing from Thun, Arnold provides an analysis of his character that reads like an account of Claude's behavior in *Amours*:

What I must tell you is that I have never yet succeeded in any one great occasion in consciously mastering myself: I can go thro: the imaginary process of mastering myself and see the whole affair as it would then stand, but at the critical point I am too apt to hoist up the mainsail to the wind and let her drive.

(*Letters*, p. 110)

Arnold's fear that the tie of passion is disruptive of philosophic calm is well-known. Yet, like Claude, he hoisted up the mainsail, amusing his family and friends with his romantic passion for Mary Claude and his thwarted plan to meet her in Switzerland. The spectacle reminds one of the "superior" Claude comically pursuing Mary Trevellyn and finally losing her in Switzerland.

The romantic problems of both Claude and Arnold are apparently complicated by their attitudes toward the beloved's family. Claude initially describes the Trevellyns as "Middle-class people these, bankers very likely, not wholly/Pure of the taint of the shop" (I.vi.125-6). Before he can fall in love with Mary Trevellyn, he must first overcome his snobbishness. Likewise, Mary Claude's family was mercantile and upper-middle class, the father being a Liverpool merchant. Despite his romantic passion, Arnold seems to have felt that he would impress no one by marrying Mary Claude.²² (In contrast, the more aristocratic Frances Lucy Wightman would make a much more impressive bride.) Like Claude in *Amours*, Arnold may well have regarded Mary Claude's family as "Neither

man's aristocracy this, nor God's, God knoweth!" (I.vi.128,134).

Both Arnold and Claude share a "fatalistic" attitude toward their misfortunes. It is interesting that J. C. Shairp was disturbed by the same characteristic in both Arnold and Claude. Writing to Clough on 30 June 1849, Shairp deprecated "that great background of fatalism or call it what you will which is behind all his [Arnold's] thoughts" (*Correspondence*, I, 270). In November of the same year he deplored "the state of soul" manifested in *Amours* as having "no hope, nor strength, nor belief" (*Correspondence*, I, 275). Shairp was acute here. In the *Switzerland* poems, Arnold attributes the break-up of his love affair to indomitable fate: "A God, a God their severance ruled!" as the famous line from "To Marguerite - Continued" proclaims. In *Amours*, of course, the fatalism is Claude's and not necessarily Clough's, as Clough himself pointed out to Shairp: "Gott und Teufel, my friend, you don't suppose all that comes from myself! - I assure you it is extremely *not* so" (*Correspondence*, I, 276). But Claude's fatalism is as evident as that of Marguerite's lover. Claude abandons his quest, sighing:

Great is Fate, and is best. I believe in Providence partly.
What is ordained is right, and all that happens is ordered.
Ah, no, that isn't it. But yet I retain my conclusion.

I will go where I am led, and will not dictate to the chances.

(V.viii.176-9)

Like Claude, Marguerite's lover would place the blame for separation upon an uncontrollable fate and would preach to himself the value of resignation.

Clough's *Amours de Voyage*, then, appears to be in part an ironic variation upon the same events that Arnold fictionalized in his *Switzerland* poems. Both poets recount the romantic mischances of an Englishman abroad, and both depict the parting of the lovers as somehow connected with Switzerland. Arnold employs the Alpine setting for its romantic associations, Clough for its comic allusion to the miscarriage of Arnold's plan to meet his "Cruel Invisible" at Thun. Arnold emphasizes the continental background of the Claude family, converting Mary Claude into Marguerite, a "daughter of France." Clough emphasizes the English middle-class aspect of the Claude family, converting Mary Claude into Mary Trevellyn. Arnold, as Honan demonstrates, chose the name Marguerite as an allusion to Mary Claude's use of daisy imagery in her "The Winter Daisy" and in other works.²³ Clough chose the names of his would-be lovers as a chaffing allusion to Arnold's romantic passion for Mary Claude. The speaker in the *Switzerland* poems is generally recognized as Arnold himself; the character Claude in *Amours* bears more than a passing resemblance to Arnold in the late 1840s, complete with his mask of bantering superiority, his vulnerable idealism, his snobbery, his violently fluctuating political views, his longing for philo-

21. *Matthew Arnold*, p. 54.

22. Letter received from Park Honan, 23 June 1979.

23. "Matthew Arnold, Mary Claude, and 'Switzerland,'" 372-3.

sophic calm, his sudden yielding to romantic passion, his fatalism. That Arnold saw himself in part in Claude may help to explain his reluctance to say anything about the poem (*Letters*, p. 132).

Those who examine the *Switzerland* poems along with *Amours de Voyage* are likely to find themselves discussing them as companion pieces. With no intention of linking the poems through biography, Patricia Ball, for example, writes:

What is suffered in Arnold is exploited by Clough. The confusions, rationalisations and equivocations which dominate the *Switzerland* lyrics are controlled and used in *Amours de Voyage* (1849), being recognised for what they are in the creation of Claude. Arnold provides a barometric record of his feeling and his recoil from feeling; Clough reads the barometer.²⁴

Perhaps the *Switzerland* poems and *Amours de Voyage* can be so neatly discussed partly because they derive from the same events, recalled subjectively by Arnold and depicted ironically by Clough.

That Clough fashioned Claude in part as a portrait of Matthew Arnold in love raises a host of questions and suggests numerous implications that cannot be pursued here. What must be noted, however, is that Clough was not content to abandon the Arnold-Claude story after writing *Amours*. In "The Lawyer's First Tale" in *Mari Magno, or Tales on Board*, a collection of linked stories left unfinished at his death, Clough returned to the story of *Amours* and supplied an alternate ending to it. This time the separation of lovers in *Switzerland* provides the occasion for a more positive conclusion.

Perhaps in "The Lawyer's First Tale" Clough was influenced by negative reactions to the fatalistic conclusion of *Amours de Voyage*. In addition to Shairp's stern response, there was Ralph Waldo Emerson's distaste for the ending ("...tis bad enough in life, and inadmissible in poetry") which had led Clough to confess that "very likely I was wrong" about it (*Correspondence*, II, 548, 551). Perhaps he simply enjoyed reworking old themes in his later poetry, or perhaps as he had grown older his vision of life had mellowed. Perhaps too he saw that Arnold's break-up with Mary Claude had not resulted in emotional alienation but had provided the impetus for his friend's personal growth.

Clough's penchant for reworking materials from his earlier poems in the *Mari Magno* tales has long been noticed, but his echoings of Arnold have not. To cite one instance: in the midst of "My Tale," the *conducteur* of a *banquette* in southern France breaks into a song recalling past loves. The third stanza reads for all the world like an addition to Arnold's *Switzerland* poems:

'You lovely Marguerite! I shut my eyes,
And do my very utmost to be wise;
Yet see you still; and hear, though closed my ears,
And think I'm young in spite of all my years;
Shall I forget you, if I go away?
To leave is painful, but absurd to stay;
I've fifty dreadful reasons to obey.
Adieu, gay loves, it is too late a day!'

("My Tale," 11. 151-8)²⁵

Like so much in *Mari Magno* this farewell to Marguerite may be a final attempt by Clough to put something from the past into a perspective that balances poignancy with comic acceptance.

The narrator of "The Lawyer's First Tale" tells of himself as a boy of twelve, spending his holidays in Wales with his rector uncle, and visiting his female cousins at their father's vicarage over the mountain. Among the six girls, the boy is attracted to the third, Emily. The first three parts of the tale recount the boy's awkward awakening to love of his cousin during the next seven or eight years, and his unflinching ability to mar his chances with her because of his immature gaucheries.

At first glance, the parallels between "The Lawyer's First Tale" and *Amours de Voyage* seem both clear and superficial. As A. W. Turner has noted, "the hero's failure to realize his love until too late is paralleled by that of Claude, hero of *Amours de Voyage*. . . ."²⁶ But dissimilarities between the two poems forbid easy linking of them with each other or with the Arnold-Claude story. If the hero resembles anyone, it is Clough — not Arnold or Claude. If Emily resembles anyone, it is probably Clough's sister Anne — not Mary Claude or Mary Trevellyn. Clearly, many incidents in the tale are derived from Clough's boyhood experiences with relatives in Wales — not from Arnold's life. There are, however, a few intriguing parallels between the tale and the Arnold-Claude story. The poem's geography, although set in Wales, resembles that of the Lake District, with the Arnolds and Clough residing at Fox How and the Claudes residing over the fells at Rothay Bank and (later) Broadlands.²⁷ Moreover, a central problem in the poem stems from the hero's jejuneness compared with Emily's maturity: she is two years older than he, just as Mary Claude was two years older than Arnold. (Clough's sister was a year younger than he.) In the poem, as in the relationship between Matthew Arnold and Mary Claude, the woman's greater precocity contributes to the rift between the lovers.

But it is in the fourth part that the tale's relationship with *Amours* and the Arnold-Claude story is most clearly seen. It is several years later, and the scene is *Switzerland*. In a manner that reminds one of the restlessness of Arnold's

Claude in *Amours de Voyage* and to conjure up the memory of a semi-fictional Marguerite in the song of the *conducteur*, but a seeming allusion to Arnold's wife in the same song containing a reference to Marguerite would have been too awkward.

24. *The Heart's Events*, p. 47.

25. The choice of the name Marguerite is telling, but perhaps even more significant are the changes that lie behind the name Juliette which is mentioned in the second stanza of the song. Clough had originally written Lisette (in his 1861 diary) and Lucette (in MS. A). See *Poems*, p. 790. Both names may have been cancelled because of their similarity to the maiden name of Arnold's wife, Frances Lucy Wightman. It was one thing for Clough to allude playfully to Mary

26. "A Study of Clough's *Mari Magno*," *PMLA*, 44 (1929), 575.

27. Honan, "Matthew Arnold, Mary Claude, and 'Switzerland,'" 370-2.

letter to Clough of 23 September 1849 from Thun (*Letters*, pp. 109-11) — a letter which, incidentally, contains an extract from the *Switzerland* poem “Parting” — Clough’s narrator seeks (as Arnold did) repose amid Alpine splendors. Among a group of tourists from Interlaken, he suddenly spies Emily and is about to greet her with a spontaneous declaration of his love, when she forestalls him by introducing her new husband and by announcing that they are honeymooning — at Thun. Here Clough appears to reinvoke the fateful meeting in Switzerland which was denied both Arnold and Mary Claude, Claude and Mary Trevellyn. Ironically, the meeting is as catastrophic as the frustration of missing the beloved: it serves only to separate the lovers, apparently irrevocably, thus reconfirming the fatalism and isolation contained in both the *Switzerland* poems and *Amours de Voyage*.

The tale does not end here, however. Clough clearly wished to go beyond the ironies of *Amours* and the Marguerite lyrics to something more ameliorative. In part V the hero visits Emily two years later at her home, where she (like Clough’s sister) advises him to leave his position at college and to marry. Although he indirectly accuses her of betraying him, he heeds her advice, and a year later discovers that he has entered upon a new relationship with her as a friend, sloughing off his old moodiness and setting out to fulfill himself. The conclusion illustrates Clough’s belief that the ironies and alienations of human existence are not inexorable. Even though a God may rule that two lovers be severed, the possibilities for personal growth and new love persist. “One lives in the daily possibility of falling in love,” Clough had once written (*Correspondence*, I, 223). “The Lawyer’s First Tale” embodies that hope.

By the time he was writing *Mari Magno* Clough seems to have been moving away from his earlier preoccupation with irony and tragic circumstance to a more mellowed, more comic acceptance of life’s poignancy and possibilities. Among authors who have survived to complete their life’s work (to take some of the highest examples: Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe), the final period of composition is often one in which tragic awareness is modified by a divine comic vision of forgiveness and reconciliation. Clough did not live to write his *Oedipus at Colonus* or *Tempest* and perhaps he was incapable of such achievement, but in *Mari Magno* he was making a beginning. We need not, however, unduly denigrate either him or his final poems because death intervened before he could succeed at perhaps this most difficult of all personal and literary tasks.

In its unfinished state “The Lawyer’s First Tale” represents (among other things) Clough’s final comment on the Arnold-Claude relationship, the *Switzerland* poems, and *Amours de Voyage*. The blighting of young love need entail neither fatalism nor irrevocable isolation; it may instead provide opportunities for fuller development of the self in another direction, for reconciliation, for other possibilities of love, for the rejection of fatalism. In Arnold’s “Meeting” the lover submits to a stern God’s command: “Be counselled, and retire” — presumably to lifelong isolation. In Clough’s “The Lawyer’s First Tale” the lover heeds the voice of human wisdom and resilience:

As she had counselled, I had done,
And a new effort was begun.

(V. 109-10)

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Tennyson’s “Ulysses” as Rhetorical Monologue

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Tennyson’s “Ulysses,” its form dissected and re-dissected, and its speaker deemed everything from noble to selfish to insane, robustly continues to challenge its readers. At least part of that challenge resides in the confusion about both setting and audience: from where and to whom is Ulysses speaking? And we can answer those questions if we concentrate, not on the dramatic elements of the poem, as most interpreters have done, but on the rhetorical. For it is a rhetorical, not a dramatic, monologue, in which persuasion and the nature of the speaker’s audience are as significant as the character of the speaker himself. Indeed I believe that a number of

other Victorian poems, from Tennyson’s own “Tithon,” “Tiresias,” and “Locksley Hall Sixty Years After” to Browning’s “Bishop Blougram’s Apology” and “Karshish,” might be described as rhetorical monologues.¹ In the space of a brief essay, however, I will not attempt to classify all of these poems, but will chiefly consider “Ulysses,” and “Tithon” and “Tiresias” as they shed light on “Ulysses,” as a poem whose form is inseparable from its rhetoric.

Questions of setting and audience — whether Ulysses in the span of seventy lines moves busily from hearthside to shipboard, addressing successively his family, his people,

1. Robert Langbaum mentions the “rhetorical method” of “Bishop Blougram’s Apology,” “A Death in the Desert,” “Karshish,” “Cleon,” and “Saul,” but does not elaborate on this method or its significance. See Langbaum, *The Poetry of Experience* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1957), p. 102.

and his mariners as they brave the sounding furrows — have remained unresolved. John Pettigrew draws conclusions first suggested by Paull Franklin Baum, conclusions that emphasize the poem as a structural hybrid. According to Baum and Pettigrew, lines 1-32 must be a soliloquy, for Ulysses, in comparing the stagnation of Ithaca with his past rich in adventures, would not address Penelope as “aged” nor his people as “savage.” Lines 33-43, less harsh in reference to his “rugged” countrymen, are Ulysses’ farewell to the Ithacans; the final section is his exhortation to his mariners. Pettigrew asserts that quibbling over where Ulysses addresses his audience is inventing difficulties. More recent critics, in fact, have tended to dismiss such questions as insoluble or unimportant. James R. Kincaid, for example, has written that “Whether or not Telemachus is *there* could be important, but it is not a soluble problem.”² Tony Robbins, in a study of Tennyson’s debts to Homer and Dante, concludes that questions concerning a specific audience and setting in “Ulysses” are irrelevant. It is “an account of the heroic spirit addressed to the world at large; past achievements, present predicament, and aspirations for the future all correspond to a generalized predominant feeling, which is finally independent of any context.”³ Linda K. Hughes, on the other hand, uses Tennyson’s life to illuminate the context. Tennyson, enmeshed in family problems in 1833, projects himself through Ulysses on a heroic voyage that will transcend the poet’s own troubled hearth.⁴ But Hughes, much like Robbins, stresses the evolving positive tone of the poem and says that questions of setting and audience constitute a “minor criticism.”⁵

Like Hughes and Robbins, I do not believe that interpretations of Ulysses as a shirker of duty or as a tired old man longing for death are true to the spirit of the poem. I maintain, however, that to minimize the importance of audience and setting, or, like Baum and Pettigrew, to divide the poem into part soliloquy, part exterior or dramatic monologue, does a disservice to the cogent artistry of “Ulysses” and overlooks its actual form: the poem is a whole, not a series of parts, a whole that includes a specific setting and audience that remain the same throughout. The setting of this rhetorical monologue, as I shall argue, is Ulysses’ palace, and his audience is Telemachus and the mariners. But before discussing more specifically these details of form and distinguishing this form from that of the dramatic monologue, I must consider the viewpoint of Ralph Rader, another recent critic who minimizes the problem of determining audience and

setting but who also believes, as I do, that “Ulysses” is something other than a dramatic monologue.

I agree with Rader when he says that distinctions between closely related kinds of poems are “practically necessary”⁶ to interpretation, but I must disagree with his view of “Ulysses” as a “mask lyric.” According to Rader, through the mask of Ulysses Tennyson is expressing his need to go forward after Arthur Hallam’s death, not creating, as in a soliloquy or a dramatic monologue, a separate character. Rader groups “Ulysses” with Eliot’s “Prufrock” and Browning’s “Childe Roland,” and while each of these poems does give a sense of projecting, in Rader’s words, “some private felt meaning of the poet,”⁷ “Ulysses” has a more specifically located setting and a more obviously present audience than “Prufrock” or “Roland.” Furthermore, as my paper will demonstrate, “Ulysses” is a poem in which rhetoric moves toward a resolution involving the speaker, his audience within the poem, and the reader. The resolution, if there is one, in “Childe Roland” seems to involve only the narrator and the audience of readers; in “Prufrock” there is perhaps a sense of self-recognition but no sense of the speaker and his audience within the poem being passionately and mutually involved in overcoming difficulties. Surely “Roland” and “Prufrock” are conversations with the self and between the self and the reader in ways that “Ulysses” is not.

The sense of movement toward a resolution involving speaker, audience, and setting as it is manipulated in symbolic ways is the strongest point of difference between “Ulysses” and the mask lyric as described by Rader and the dramatic monologue as discussed by Robert Langbaum. If the dramatic monologue causes us to suspend judgment,⁸ thereby arriving at a fairly full understanding of the speaker’s character, the rhetorical monologue causes us to put ourselves in the place of the speaker’s audience within the poem. Thus, in terms of the effect of the rhetorical monologue, our understanding the character of the speaker is less important than our being persuaded, like his auditors, toward a resolution of the revealed problems. The likelihood of our being persuaded is increased through the poet’s creation of setting and audience. The details of the setting — and I use “setting” throughout to mean the surrounding scene as well as the actual place of speaking — are more symbolic than realistic and are drawn to further the speaker’s purpose; the audience, vulnerable to cries from the heart, invites the sympathy of the wider audience of readers.

2. “Rhetorical Irony, the Dramatic Monologue, and Tennyson’s *Poems* (1842),” *PQ*, 53 (April 1974), 230 n. 11. Earlier critics of the form of “Ulysses” include Paull Franklin Baum, *Tennyson Sixty Years After* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1948), pp. 299-303; John Pettigrew, “Tennyson’s ‘Ulysses’: A Reconciliation of Opposites,” *VP*, 1 (1963), 37-42. A more recent interpretation of the poem as a soliloquy or interior monologue is Authur D. Ward’s “‘Ulysses’ and ‘Tithonus’: Tunnel-Vision and Idle Tears,” *VP*, 12 (1974), 311-19.

3. “Tennyson’s ‘Ulysses’: The Significance of the Homeric and Dantesque Backgrounds,” *VP*, 11 (1973), 187.

4. “Dramatis and Private Personae: ‘Ulysses’ Revisited,” *VP*, 17 (1979), 196-97.

5. Hughes, p. 203.

6. “The Dramatic Monologue and Related Lyric Forms,” *Critical Inquiry*, 3 (1976), 142.

7. Rader, p. 140. Rader’s essay separates dramatic monologues from dramatic lyrics, mask lyrics, and a poem like “Tintern Abbey,” which “presents the cognitive act of the poet” (p. 144). My argument obviously does not concern itself with all of Rader’s distinctions but with his failure to account fully for the rhetorical form of “Ulysses.”

8. Like Rader, I use as a point of departure for my discussion of “Ulysses” Langbaum’s theory of the dramatic monologue in *The Poetry of Experience*, especially pp. 75-108.

In the dramatic monologue, setting and audience provide realistic immediacy for the gradual revelation of the speaker's character. Andrea del Sarto tries to persuade his wife to spend a half-hour at home with him, or Fra Lippo Lippi, embarrassed in an alley, attempts to convince the Florentine police to ignore his excursion to the bordello; in the process of confronting a specific situation, the speaker inadvertently reveals his nature to the reader. Enhancing persuasion more than contributing to the revelation of character, the setting in the rhetorical monologue is symbolic and suggestive. The hearth and crags of "Ulysses," the sea broad with challenge, comprise a different kind of scene from the room in "Andrea del Sarto," cluttered with sketches and paintings and offering a view of the convent wall across the way. We can imagine visiting Andrea's sitting room. Browning's details, as well as having symbolic import, give the room a realistic immediacy; Tennyson's details, less particularized, have a symbolic immediacy, contributing to the effect of Ulysses poised at a crucial choice between what he considers death-in-life on Ithaca and the infinitely challenging call of the sea. The setting, then, reinforces a situation demanding a mighty effort of persuasion for resolution.

Similarly, the audience in the rhetorical monologue has a different significance from that in the dramatic monologue. The reader perceives this audience as sharing in the perilous emotions of most of us — the fears of age (the mariners), or the uncertainty of youth (Telemachus). In identifying with this audience, the reader is persuaded toward a resolution. In "Andrea del Sarto," however, what is important is that we understand Andrea and his failures, not that his wife, physically enchanting and interestingly ruthless, be persuaded of anything; she will go with the cousin no matter what her husband says. Therefore, the tensions in "Andrea del Sarto" between speaker and auditor dramatize his character but point to no resolution. In contrast, Ulysses' injunctions to his son and his mariners have everything to do with the movement of the poem and the possible resolutions of the problems revealed.

In fact, to clarify the genre of "Ulysses," Rader might have looked to poems more closely linked to "Ulysses" in date of composition, theme, and authorship. Tennyson's own "Tithon" and "Tiresias" have the same rhetorical pattern as "Ulysses," and a summary of this pattern will serve both to introduce and to strengthen my reading of "Ulysses" as a rhetorical monologue.⁹

In the three poems, dissatisfaction in the present, which

establishes a need for change, is followed by a recollection of the past that enlists sympathy and thus more positively enjoins action; finally, an exhortation to action in the immediate future is delivered so forcefully as apparently to admit no response other than conformity to the speaker's will. Tithon's bemoaning to Eos his "fatal immortality" (1.6) and "The ever-silent spaces of the East" (1.9), his frustration at beholding beauty yet enjoying it only through memory, give way to his recalling with painful vividness his "divine embraces" (1.42) with Eos. Such a strong evocation of past love might, we feel, move her to grant his pleas for release. Tiresias' dissatisfaction in the present is in the opening line conjoined with his longing for the past: "I wish I were as in the years of old." His passion then for "larger glimpses of that more than man/Which rolls the heavens, and lifts, and lays the deep" (11.20-21) should now enlist the sympathy of his auditor Monoecus, young as once Tiresias was, inspiring the youth to the sort of glorious ending apparently denied to Tiresias.¹⁰

"Ulysses," too, is a powerful rhetorical plea, a plea which begins in the first five lines. And when we view these lines as part of the rhetorical situation which is the poem, they lose the suggestions of insulting family and nation that have caused critical discomfort to the point of calling Ulysses a villain. The "barren crags" and "aged wife" are similarly referred to in Homer, without pejorative connotations,¹¹ but more important to the rhetorical context of Tennyson's poem, they may be seen not as expressive of "lofty" and imposing contempt¹² but rather of desperation, the desperation of an old man who finds himself in a place he must leave. "It little profits that an idle king" and the four lines following have a rough abruptness that is absent in the more self-pitying weariness of the opening of "Tithon," but Ulysses, unlike the tormented lover in so many ways, also feels trapped in the present.

As in "Tithon" and "Tiresias," there is no reason to suppose than an audience is present other than that specifically mentioned. The difficulty in establishing the audience arises because while Tithon and Tiresias address auditors early in the poems,¹³ there is no clear indication that anyone is listening to Ulysses until lines 33, "This is my son, mine own Telemachus," and 45, "My mariners. . . ." Ulysses' "aged wife" and the "savage race" of Ithaca — in his transferring his rule to Telemachus referred to as a "rugged people" — are spoken about, not addressed directly. Despite the passage of thirty-two lines before listeners are indicated, there seems no reason to

9. The Heath manuscript of "Ulysses" is dated 20 October 1833 and "is virtually that of 1842," Christopher Ricks, ed., *The Poems of Tennyson* (London: Longmans, 1969), p. 560. "Tithon," expanded in 1860 to "Tithonus," and "Tiresias" to l.160 are accepted as belonging to this same period. Ricks reviews the chronology of composition in his headnotes to the individual poems: "Tithon," p. 566 and "Tithonus," pp. 1112-13; "Tiresias," pp. 568-69. All citations from Tennyson's poetry in this paper refer to Ricks, *Poems*.

10. David F. Goslee details the stages of composition of "Tiresias" in "Three Stages of Tennyson's 'Tiresias,'" *JEGP*, 75 (1976), 154-

67, suggesting that Tennyson's additions and revisions for the 1885 version augmented what I consider the rhetorical nature of this monologue.

11. Robbins, p. 182, n. 13, also suggests that Tennyson may have been thinking of the Ithacans, who are described in *Odyssey* II as having forgotten their ruler.

12. Kincaid, p. 229.

13. Tithon is clearly speaking to Eos in line 6: "I wither slowly in thine arms"; Tiresias addresses Monoecus as "my son" in line 9.

suppose that Tennyson intended Ulysses to be speaking to other characters than the mariners and Telemachus, who is spoken about as if he is present.

Ulysses' evocation of his past in lines 6-18, then, does not have to be the voice of self-persuading egoism speaking in soliloquy, but may serve, as evocations of the past serve in "Tithon" and "Tiresias," as an arousal of sympathy leading toward a plea for action (11.19-32). His mariners and his son must perceive that this great hero, who has suffered and enjoyed, unintimidated by the "scudding drifts" or the clamor of battle, "cannot now rest from travel," stagnating in the relative stillness of Ithaca. The mariners must begin to feel, too, some excitement at the prospect of the "untravelled world." Ulysses' advice to Achilles in the third act of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* to shun the fate of rusty mail is in "Ulysses" an exclamation not only to himself, but also to his son and his mariners. How dull, they and we can feel with him, it is to pause and "rust unburnished, not to shine in use" (11.22-23). The imperative of persuading others to act within the limits of time is poignantly emphatic in the rhetoric of Tennyson's Ulysses:

Life piled on life

Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; (11.24-28)

Surely these lines may be heard as spoken to an audience within the poem as well as to the self. And if to Ulysses little of his life remains, the same is true for the mariners addressed as "old" in line 49.

Alexander Pope, whose translation of Homer Tennyson so much admired, can help to clarify Ulysses' use of rhetoric in lines 19-32 and in the subsequent section concerning Telemachus. Pope, in a lengthy footnote to Ulysses' rousing the Greeks to battle in *Iliad* II, cites the admiration of classical rhetoricians for Ulysses' "artful Touches of Oratory." Pope discusses the device of *ethopopeia*, that is, of seeming to address one group of auditors while obliquely aiming the burden of the words at another.¹⁴ In lines 19-32, Tennyson's Ulysses, in a painfully urgent situation, seems to be speaking of and to himself, yet the appeal to his auditors rings through his phrases. And so too with the discussion of Telemachus, which is calm and decisive; readers who complain of Ulysses' "bored patronizing" or "dull prosiness"¹⁵ are

missing the rhetorical point of what can be described as Ulysses' use of *ethopopeia* to serve two purposes in lines 33-43. Speaking of his son's fitness for the difficulties of ruling Ithaca, Ulysses is at the same time answering a possible objection from his prospective sailors that he cannot abandon his kingdom. And while his words are ostensibly addressed to the mariners, to whom Telemachus is being praised, there is a definite message for the son which can be recast succinctly: You are equal to the task. Of course subduing a rugged people to the "useful and the good" sounds much less exciting than following knowledge "Beyond the utmost bound of human thought," but no less challenging depending on one's perspective. And the perspectives of father and son are different; as Ulysses concludes, "He works his work, I mine."¹⁶ To deduce that the fate Ulysses prescribes for Telemachus is evidence of his "patronizing" or is insulting is to make a value judgment that probably neither Tennyson nor his character would make. It is just as possible to read these lines as spoken in a tone of calm, even tender, assurance. Telemachus is a "well-loved" son — discerning, realizing, if we accept his experiences in the *Odyssey* as Tennyson's guide to his character, that "slow prudence" is a necessity of his rule.¹⁷ There is little question that he is ready to assume his duties. Thus Ulysses need not rhetorically elaborate on the matter of who will rule Ithaca; he must intensify his urgent message, persuading the mariners to come with him.

Lines 44-70 are in sharp contrast to the rough desperation of 1-5: Ulysses is now sure of himself, of the rightness of his purpose, and speaks in his most persuasive voice. The passage rich in assonance with which Ulysses describes the close of day and the mysterious voices of the deep may be read not as, in Langbaum's interpretation, a yearning toward death¹⁸ but rather as a solemnly beautiful reminder that although night is falling and death, perhaps suggested in the call of the buried voices, may not be far behind, there is still time for action:

The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans around with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world. (11.54-57)

That he tells the mariners, of the same character as those who sometimes wept with fright in the *Odyssey*, that they "ever with a frolic welcome took/The thunder and the sunshine" or that they might see Achilles in the Happy

14. *The Iliad of Homer*, ed. Maynard Mack et al., vol. VII of *The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope* (London: Methuen, 1967), 143-44, n. 348. Subsequent references to the *Odyssey* will be to the Twickenham edition, IX, X, 1967. Pope's translation was loved by Tennyson as a child; he wrote "hundreds and hundreds of lines in the regular Popeian metre." Hallam Tennyson, *Alfred Lord Tennyson, A Memoir* (New York: Macmillan, 1897) I, 11.

15. Kincaid, p. 230, complains of "bored patronizing"; Pettigrew, p. 40, of "dull prosiness."

16. Ricks, *Poems*, p. 564, n. to 1.43, says that a manuscript variant of line 43 "included an approving comment on Telemachus which

made it clear that Ulysses was not here scornful of him." Also see A. Dwight Culler, *The Poems of Tennyson* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1977), pp. 95-96.

17. See, for example, *Odyssey* XVI in which Ulysses, disguised as a beggar, must incite Telemachus to courage (11.11-12), and then, after he reveals himself to his son, must persuade Telemachus that they can rout the suitors (11.265-89). The *Odyssey* is Telemachus' journey to maturity as well as Ulysses' journey home; Tennyson's Ulysses in lines 33-43 seems to be reassuring the able but cautious and sometimes too prudent Telemachus of the *Odyssey*.

18. Langbaum, p. 91.

Isles (not where he was consigned by Homer – to Hades) may be heard as natural rhetorical distortions. In the *Odyssey*, of course, the mariners die before Ulysses arrives home. We must assume that Tennyson was using a poet's prerogative, imaginatively fusing his sources; he was thinking, too, of the mariners on Ulysses's last voyage in *Inferno* xxvi who, although old, have traveled "Through perils without number" (1.112).¹⁹

Ulysses' exhortation to his men, so obviously rhetorical in its appeal, is something of a puzzle in regard to setting. Has Ulysses left the "still hearth" of line 2 for some public forum in lines 33-43, and then, by line 58, boarded the ship itself, ordering his men to "Push off"? There is no convincing evidence that Ulysses ever leaves the still hearth, probably in his palace with a view of the harbor. The fixity of setting in "Tithon" ("The gleaming halls of morn," 1.10) and "Tiresias" (the court of Creon) suggests that Tennyson meant to create no confusion as to the locale of "Ulysses." He has gathered together his son and those who he hopes will sail with him. Transferring his rule to Telemachus is a way of informing the mariners that his business on Ithaca is well taken care of; there is no reason to hesitate on that score. There is no reason, either, to assume that Ulysses is on shipboard for lines 44-70. Perhaps in the lines beginning "Push off" the infinitive is understood:

Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
[To] Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows. . . .

Whether we accept that the infinitive may be elided, the sheer passion of Ulysses' appeal suggests that he might well be projecting himself and the mariners into their tumultuous future at sea, not issuing commands in the harbor. The sounding furrows, like the "ringing plains of windy Troy," are far removed from the still hearth; the present becomes the future; the will to go forward has triumphed.

The will to go forward probably triumphs within most readers as well. The situations of Telemachus and the mariners are universal, inviting our responses as well as theirs, for we all have faced or will face choices in life, problems of feeling useless or misplaced, and responsibilities for which we may not think ourselves ready. We all need to hear, as Tennyson, Telemachus, and the mariners did, that we are fit to transcend our situations and effect a change. Our responses are not only personal²⁰ but involve a communal sense of potential recovery and change. The rituals of transferring leadership and beginning again in "Ulysses" – "the dawn and the goal of ordinance/Where all should pause." (11.22-23) in "Tithon," the urgency of war in "Tiresias" – all point to rebirth with broad implications that distinguish them from the personal hells of Andrea del Sarto or J. Alfred Prufrock. A rhetorical monologue, "Ulysses" is a poem of communal hope.

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The Mathematical References to the Adoption of the Gregorian Calendar in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

Laurence Dreyer

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*¹ is its relationship to the equally fascinating history of the calendar. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, a teacher of mathematics at Christ Church, Oxford, not only invented a great many mathematical puzzles, games, and cipher methods, but his lectures and correspondence reveal his fascination with time.² In view of Dodgson's background, it is not too surprising that ingenious mathematical clues clearly referring to the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, which evolved from the Old Roman and Julian calendars, are exhibited in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Much of the humor in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* consists of puns in reference to time. For example, in the chapter "Pig and Pepper" the Duchess tells Alice " 'If everybody minded their own business, the world would go round a deal faster than it does' " (p. 84). "Alice, who felt very glad to get an opportunity of showing off a little of her knowledge" said, " 'Just think what work it would make with the day and night! You see the earth takes twenty-four hours to turn round on its axis--' " (p. 84). The Duchess' reply was " 'Talking of axes, chop off her head!' " (p. 84). Such puns pervade *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Alice reveals time as an underlying theme;

19. Cary translation (1805). Lines 90-122 are quoted in Ricks, *Poems*, p. 561, where they seem to have been misnumbered as 90-124. Robbins, p. 179, comments on the fusion of sources.

20. Rader, p. 141, speaks of our being "stirred on our own behalf by Ulysses' final resolve."

1. Lewis Carroll, "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," *The Annotated Alice*, With an Introduction and Notes by Martin Gardner (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1960), pp. 9-11; subsequent references to this edition will appear in the text.

2. Phyllis Greenacre, "Dodgson's Character Revealed in the Writings of Carroll," as reprinted in *Aspects of Alice* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1972), p. 318.

however, her comment is irrelevant to the context of the fanciful tale that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* appears to be, and fun is made of her remark. Throughout this study we shall take the characters literally when they refer to dates and time, while ignoring the nonsensical context in which these comments occur.

Alice is a bit unsure of her information as she goes on: " 'Twenty-four hours, I *think*; or is it twelve? I--[am not sure?]' " (p. 84). Perhaps she was confused by our custom of telling time using twelve hours on the clockface while the day is considered twenty-four hours long. To a mathematician time is an arbitrary measurement. According to the article entitled "The Calendar" in the 1976 *Information Please Almanac*, the calendar is a device for measuring an extended length of time. The units of measure (day, month, and year) are respectively determined by the duration of the revolutions of the earth about its axis, the moon about the earth, and the earth about the sun. None of these units of time are exact multiples of the others, which made the construction of an accurate calendar a problem. An important occurrence for determining the accuracy of a calendar is the vernal equinox, the point when the sun crosses the equator and day and night are the same length. The vernal equinox is used as a reference point in astronomical measurements marking the beginning of the solar year. Thus, it is imperative that the date of the vernal equinox remains fixed.

With the importance of the vernal equinox in mind, let us now consider the evidence which the Mad Hatter presents at the trial in Chapter 11. Once again we shall interpret his remarks literally while ignoring the context in which they occur. In response to the King's question, " 'When did you begin [your tea]?' " the Hatter replies, " 'Fourteenth of March, I *think* it was' " (p. 146). A vernal equinox occurred in the Julian calendar on March 14, in the year 1221 A.D. " 'Fifteenth,' said the March Hare" (p. 146). Another vernal equinox occurred in the Julian calendar on the date March 15, 1093 A.D. " 'Sixteenth,' said the Dormouse" (p. 146). Again a reference is being made to a vernal equinox 128 years earlier; the date of the vernal equinox was drifting in the Julian calendar.

The King's response " 'Write that down,' " must also be taken literally, "and the jury eagerly wrote down all three dates on their slates, and then added them up, and reduced the answer to shillings and pence" (p. 146). Clearly Dodgson intends the reader to perform the

indicated computations with a surprising result. Let us add up the dates first: $14 + 15 + 16 = 45$, which numerically represents the start of the Julian calendar. In 45 B.C. the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar ordered a sweeping reform of the Roman calendar making one year 445 days long, which brought the calendar back into step with the seasons. The Old Roman Calendar was based upon the lunar month and was further complicated by the Roman's superstition that even numbers were unlucky. Thus they made their months 29 or 31 days long; as a result, their calendar had too few days. When Julius Caesar reformed the calendar, he followed the advice of the astronomer Sosigenes and made the solar year the basis of the Julian calendar. The months were 30 or 31 days, and an extra day was added every four years because a solar year consists of 365 days plus about six hours; however, the solar year is $11\frac{1}{2}$ minutes shorter than the figure upon which the Julian calendar is based. This accounts for the drift of the vernal equinox in the Julian calendar. The $11\frac{1}{2}$ minute error accumulates, totalling a day every 128 years.

Scientists were disturbed by the drifting of the date of the vernal equinox and tried to have the calendar reformed. In 1545 the Council of Trent authorized the Pope to reform the calendar. The council could be what is represented by the great concert given by the Queen of Hearts.³ Pope Gregory XIII finally reformed the calendar, but many countries did not adopt the Gregorian calendar until centuries later. Charles Dodgson refers us to this point in history when the Hatter asks, " 'What day of the month is it?' " and Alice replies, " 'The fourth' " (p. 96). This is another date which seems to have been picked at random; however, another correlation does exist: Thursday, October 4, 1582, was to be the last day of the Julian calendar by order of Pope Gregory XIII. The Hatter's watch, which showed only the date, was " 'Two days wrong!' " (p. 96). The note on the Hatter's hat at the tea party and again at the trial says, " 'In this style 10/6' " and is probably a reference to October 6 (pp. 94, 147).⁴ However, since his watch is two days wrong, the actual date for Alice appears to be October 4. " 'I'm a poor man, your Majesty,' the Hatter began, . . . 'and I hadn't begun my tea--not above a week or so--' " (p. 148). Considering that Thursday, October 4, 1582, was the last day of the Julian calendar, and ten days ["a week or so"] were needed to put the vernal equinox back into late March, Friday, the day after Thursday, October 4, 1582, was dated October 15, 1582. As a result, ten days never existed. The date of Alice's underground adventure being

3. At the Council of Trent the data contained in the *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* by Copernicus was influential in convincing the clergy that a calendar reform was necessary to fix the date of Easter. However, the heretical theory that the earth turned on its axis and revolved around the sun caused it to be placed on the index of prohibited books. In the 1600's Galileo faced capital punishment for discussing the Copernican theory in his work *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo*. Perhaps the Duchess' earlier statement " 'Talking of axes, chop off her head!' " is a reference to the censorship of the Inquisition (p. 84). Despite many attempts to have them removed, the works of Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo remained on the index until 1835. It seems that this incongruous chapter of history

is mocked in the chapter "The Queen's Croquet Ground" where the Queen of Hearts frequently yelled "Off with his head!". Even the Mad Hatter faced decapitation "at the great concert given by the Queen of Hearts" for "murdering the time" with the song he had to sing (p. 98). A. Pannekoek, *A History of Astronomy* (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1969), pp. 220-234.

4. The date on the Hatter's hat if interpreted in the standard British notation would refer to June 10, which bears no relationship to any proposed interpretation of the two other clues. Since the note is quite prominent in Tenniel's original illustrations, I feel that Dodgson had it put there intentionally using American notation as a cipher method.

October 4, in the year 1582, places her at a fascinating point in history: at the edge of a discontinuity in time, a phenomenon which must have fascinated Dodgson, the mathematician.

Martin Gardner in *The Annotated Alice* argues that "Alice's remark that the day is the fourth, coupled with the previous chapter's revelation that the month is May, establishes the date of Alice's underground adventure as May 4. May 4, 1852, was Alice Liddell's birthday" (note 4. p. 96). While I agree that Alice's underground adventure takes place on a specific date, I submit that this date should be October 4, 1582. While this date has Alice going back in time, Gardner himself has pointed out that Dodgson has used this literary device in other works (note 5. p. 96). I feel that Gardner's theory that Alice's birthday is the date of her underground adventure, is coincidental, since no sense can be made of the other clues using his interpretation. Dodgson undoubtedly recognized this coincidence also and had Alice mention in the previous chapter that the month was May to create an ambiguity that would allow both a recognition of Alice Liddell's birthday and October 4, 1582. Notice too another coincidence; if you transpose the middle two digits of the year of Alice's birth you get the year 1582 once again.

The analysis by A.L. Taylor in his book the *White Knight* is also criticized in Gardner's *The Annotated Alice* (note 4. p. 96). Taylor suggests that the Hatter's watch ran on lunar time which accounts for its showing only the date. He again takes the story literally noting that Alice fell to the bottom of a very deep mine and was near the center of the earth where the sun would neither rise nor set and would be useless for telling the time of day. At the center of the earth the phases of the moon would be unaffected and still useful for telling the day of the month. I agree in part with Taylor's interpretation since it is consistent with my analysis: the time of day stops because they are at the center of the earth, but the nonexistent date (October 6, 1582) makes Wonderland truly timeless. Not only do the Wonderland characters exist near the center of the earth where the rising and setting of the sun does not occur, and time of day is meaningless, but they also appear to live on a date (October 6, 1582) which does not appear on any

calendar. No wonder time had stopped for the Hatter!

Returning again to the evidence which the Mad Hatter presents at the trial in Chapter 11 ("Who Stole the Tarts?"), the sum of the 3 dates in March ($14 + 15 + 16 = 45$) reduced to shillings and pence, (1 shilling = 12 pence) gives us 3 shillings and 9 pence. Although Dodgson never told us what to do after we had reduced to shillings and pence, if we multiply these numbers together ($3 \times 9 = 27$) we then get an amazingly close approximation of the error of the Gregorian calendar. It just so happens that by eliminating 3 leap years every 4 centuries from the Julian calendar, we have the Gregorian calendar which is only 26 seconds longer than the earth's orbital period.

Furthermore, Dodgson personifies time and puts him up on trial before the King. The Hatter explains, "'If you knew Time as well as I do, you wouldn't talk about wasting it. It's *him*'" (p. 97). The Hatter tells Alice about Time doing him special favors, but further explains that "'We quarreled last March--just before *he* [Time] went mad, you know--'" (p. 98). I wonder, did Time really do favors for the Hatter, or just for good friends like Julius Caesar and Pope Gregory XIII? Time really didn't go mad; "he" just did a hop, skip, and a jump to catch up with the seasons. It will not happen again for at least another 3,323 years when those 26 seconds add up to a single day's difference.

Though the Gregorian calendar began in 1582, England was a Protestant country and ignored the papal bull. It did not shift over to the new calendar until 1752 under King George II. It is very possible that the picture of the trial on the frontispiece of the book is a representation of the trial during which the Gregorian calendar was adopted in England.

It is truly remarkable how Dodgson took strange historical facts and wove them into a children's story, leaving only the slightest hint of clues for the reader. There are far too many correlations between dates for the relationship to be purely coincidental. The clues are logical and provide just the type of puzzle that a mathematician would be expected to write into a story of this sort for his own private satisfaction.

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Self-Helpers and Self-Seekers: Some Changing Attitudes to Wealth, 1840-1910

J. L. Winter

The subject of this essay is the literary expression of what Wells called in 1914 "the ultimate surviving indecency." In *The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman* Wells claimed that Victorian delicacy, removed from many subjects, had become intensified in discussion of wealth and income. What changes really occurred in the accommodation of wealth in the writings of Victorians and Edwardians? Especially, what changes occurred in moral attitudes to wealth? How are these changes associated with developments in those "hard particularities" of prose fiction, plot and characterization? The purpose of this essay is to suggest that some answers to these large questions can be found in numerous minor works of the period, many of them forgotten and many superbly bad. Knowledge of them may be no great delight, but ignorance of them may seriously impair our historical vision of the fiction that endures.

The most potent single issue that affects changing attitudes to wealth among Victorians and Edwardians is the attrition of the all too familiar Protestant ethic of capitalism. The doctrine of work, embraced by so many, and published so loudly by Carlyle and others, needs no lengthy rehearsal. The Victorian literature of success – inspiring biographies of industrialists and men of commerce, manuals of self-improvement through diligence, honesty and thrift – is common knowledge too. Its ideological significance has been studied by historians such as J. F. C. Harrison. Professor Harrison shows that its most famous expression, Smiles's *Self-Help* (1859) is "in origin. . . a product of the 1840s," which "did no more than restate in an attractive form a doctrine that had already begun to appear elsewhere."¹ To sanction wealth by the industriousness of its getting or the charity of its spending was a debate that ran at least from the 1830s. John Harris's *Mammon* (1836) and the anonymous reply *Anti-Mammon* (1837) are representative. SPCK tracts such as *Easy Lessons on Money Matters for the Use of Young People*, which reached twelve editions by 1850, observed the wise and beneficent Providence in men's serving the public most effectively when thinking exclusively of their own gain. The Revd Benjamin Hanbury's *Life of Joseph Williams* is unrepresentative in its explicitness of title. The third edition, which appeared in 1853 as *The Christian Merchant: A Practical Way to Make 'the Best of Both Worlds.'* Ruskin's *Pre-Raphaelitism* (1851) and *The Two Paths* (1859) brought the indispensability of hard labor to greatness of character and achievement

into the realm of high art. For this art Samuel Smiles was to have scant sympathy. Consistently sounding Arnold's note of provinciality; celebrating the heroic innovator but conservatively endorsing the present social order; offering self-help as benefiting individual and nation alike; praising habit rather than fresh consideration of principles in moral life, *Self-Help* sold 20,000 copies in 1859 and about 250,000 by 1904, when Smiles died. These sales, together with those of other works by Smiles, indicate the dominance and the persistence of one mode of accounting for the "wealth, population and materials" that had appeared to Mark Pattison in 1855 as being "too vast for our capacities of system."² In the 1870s and the 1880s there came from many disparate minds sermons, economic treatises and social criticism that supported the Smilesian mode. Dr. E. W. Benson (*Work. Friendship. Worship*, 1872), Alfred Marshall ("The Future of the Working Classes," 1873) and James Platt (whose *Money* reached its third thousand in 1880) are examples. William Cassels defined the current social problem as "Work versus Waste" in his paper to the Ruskin Society of Glasgow on 20 April 1885, and quoted copiously from Carlyle. George Rae's frequently reprinted manual *The Country Banker* (1885) endorsed the work ethic. The Pan-Anglican Synod of 1889, in its committee on socialism, reached for Smiles for comfort: "after all, the best help is self-help. More even than increase of income, and security of deposit, thrift and self-restraint are the necessary elements of material prosperity."³ In 1893, Bishop Thorold published *The Gospel of Work*. The Dean of Rochester, S. Reynolds Hole, advocated the spiritual advantages of work in *Addresses Spoken to Working Men from Pulpit and Platform* (1894). Archdeacon William Cunningham lifted the title of his book on money from the tenth chapter of *Self-Help*, and produced another *Gospel of Work* in 1902. The Revd William Barry put the Smilesian notion of wealth into his article "Wealth: Apology of Dives," in the *National Review* in 1896, though he did admit that new ways of getting wealth were becoming too much for the old platitudes. The new century saw the founding of the magazine *Success: A Monthly Magazine of Inspiration and Self-Help* (1901). Undoubtedly the Smilesian ethic had its dominance, and its persistence.

There was, however, a powerful antithesis to the Smilesian tradition. The writers who opposed Smiles, explicitly or implicitly, have not been much studied, as a

1. J. F. C. Harrison, *The Early Victorians 1832-1851* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1971), p. 140.

2. Mark Pattison, *Essays*, ed. H. Nettlehip (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), I, 459.

3. Quoted in Henry Rose, *The New Political Economy* (London: J. Speirs, 1891), p. 140.

group, by professional historians. They have a definite interest for the student of the novel. From about 1865 there was an increasing production of books and pamphlets that offered advice and encouragement to those who aspired to wealth without drudgery. The patience and perseverance, the thrift and the abstinence, so vital in Smiles's way of making new wealth morally acceptable that they were for him indispensable means to an end, are either ignored or rejected by his later rivals. The change in the tone of titles is obvious from the mid-1860s. It is easy to pick up works with catchpenny titles like T. V. Paterson's *How to Get Money Quickly: or, Thirty Ways of Making a Fortune* (1868). In the 1880s works appeared such as the anonymous *Millionaires and How They Became So* (reprinted from *Tit-Bits*, 1884). The publisher John Hogg, previously a prolific producer of Smilesian wares, showed a marked change in taste in the 1880s, by his offering such books as *Fortunate Men: How They Made Money and Won Renown* (1885). By the 1890s, the market for get-rich-quick manuals seems to have been enormous. There abounded works with titles like *How A Money-Spinner Made £1,000 Out of 5s* (1890) and Ritchie's *Money-Making Men, or How to Grow Rich*. Obviously these works appealed to, and were motivated by, mere cupidity. Yet they may also have been a crude sort of response to the fact that by the 1890s there were many prominent and powerful people who had not gained their wealth either by inheritance or by industriousness of a discernible kind, but by speculation. The phenomenon was not new in itself, but it was more pervasive than it had ever been. The appropriate models of behavior, on which Smiles had founded his successful manuals of success, were changing. Economists and popularizers of economics like Alexander Del Mar in *Money and Civilization* (1886) had to try to reconcile the increase in material wealth with a decrease in the apparent exertions of those who were amassing it. Even Herbert Spencer, who once with uncharacteristic levity proposed a "gospel of relaxation" to replace the North American variant of the gospel of work, dispensed with the work ethic in "The Industrial Type of Society" in the *Contemporary Review*: "It is not the diligence of its members" that constitutes an industrial society.⁴ Noteworthy also are the attempts of exponents of high culture to resist the policies and the attitudes of the Smilesians. Morris did that, of course, in the name of socialism – more than just in its name. In "Useful Work versus Useless Toil," Morris denied the "article of the creed of modern morality that all labour is good in itself," for this was "a convenient belief of those who live on the labour of others."⁵ From a very different political stance, Sir Leslie Stephen argued in his essay on "Luxury" in *Social Rights and Duties* (1896) that it is not the manner of getting wealth that sanctifies it; what matters is whether the wealth increases the happiness of a nation of men with

faculties and sensibilities "cultivated to the utmost possible degree."⁶ Here is one origin of the attitudes later to be worked out by Virginia Woolf, Forster, and by Clive Bell in *Civilization*, that the doctrine of work, the product of men of action, is deadly to the spirit of civilized man and woman.

It would be nice to end a review of the opponents of the work ethic with the names of such sensitive people. It would be more accurate to represent the anti-Smilesians by Thomas Sharper Knowlson, author of *The Art of Success* (1902).⁷ Knowlson attacks the Smilesian tradition head-on. That tradition has, by its insistence on ambition and hard work, concealed the fact that people differ in ability and capacity. In the struggle for wealth, "the only limitation, it would seem, is indolence. Such talk can only be described as mischievous. . . It places a false ideal, or rather an impossible one, before the minds of those who have less than ordinary ability. . . and reduces the quality of great achievements until they become possible to the incompetent" (pp. 52-53). The Smilesians' stress on patience, perseverance, caution and hard work has encouraged a facile optimism (p. 54). Considerations of moral virtue have obscured the real need for practical enterprise. In using the testament of the commercially successful, the Smilesians have erred because the successful businessman usually does not know the real cause of his own success (p. 55). Further, the famous models for behavior are redundant: "one grows a little tired of hearing about George Stephenson, Samuel Budgett and a host of others who have 'risen'" (p. 97). The two worlds that the Revd Benjamin Hanbury had tried heroically to reconcile in 1853 are now too obviously disparate: "The pure in heart have a reward all their own, but earthly rewards are the direct results of pursuing earthly things in accordance with earthly methods" (p. 115). "You must be an egoist," he asserts, for "the world owes you a living, and see that you get it" (p. 125). In opposition to the Smilesian conception of man, his attributes and virtues, Knowlson praises originality (the "only . . . key to open the door of notable prosperity" [p. 78]) and ability (pp. 59-62). There is a desperate attempt to argue that the average man can be original but the commitment is firm to the belief that the old ways have too many adherents (p. 83); and elsewhere he argues for the acceptance of human inequalities, innate or acquired, that determine success in the struggle for money (p. 60).

Two years after Knowlson's book was published, Samuel Smiles died. The *Athenaeum* published a long and delightfully sardonic obituary on 23 April 1904. Its tone indicates the changing temper of the times. Noting the popular success of Smiles's works in many countries, and especially the rapturous response given to him personally by the Italians (Garibaldi on a sick-bed rehearsed to him the story of his life), the *Athenaeum* remarked that such

4. Herbert Spencer, "The Industrial Type of Society," *Contemporary Review*, 40 (1881), 508.

5. Quoted in E. P. Thompson, *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1955), p. 752.

6. Leslie Stephen, *Social Rights and Duties* (London: Sonnenschein, 1896), II, 116.

7. Thomas Sharper Knowlson, *The Art of Success* (London: Frederick Warne, 1902).

lionizing was

"if not poetical, at least prosy, justice. His own career illustrated his own theme. He was able to build a substantial house out of the profits of a single book, and to put a copy of it into the foundations. He self-helped himself, and his own name was very obviously added to the list of the rewarded virtuous. . . . Affectingly simple and sanguine, he was the popular apostle of a universal Jack Hornerism."⁸

A second body of non-fictional writings that has strong contextual importance for the student of literature concerns attacks upon, and defences of, the new plutocracy that emerged in England from about 1875. The people with whom these writings were concerned were those whom Trollope observed, with varying authenticity, in *The Way We Live Now* and whom Beatrice Webb remembered in *My Apprenticeship*. Of course complaining about plutocrats had been a English pastime long before the nineteenth-century, and long before the Smilesian ethic began to wane. In *England and the English* (1833) Bulwer Lytton had lamented the respect paid to wealth that ought to be paid to genius. But from about 1875 the complaints became more frequent and more strident. On 11 August 1875 Delane of the *Times* surveyed English society and saw a new, alarming fluidity in formerly stable social relationships; an increasing recklessness in financial speculation; senseless gambling, and extravagant consumption. Most significantly, Delane saw a new class of men: reckless adventurers (French, German, American as well as English) who were challenging the older mores and crossing previously closed social frontiers by the pass of money, not birth. An essay on "London Society" in the *North American Review* in May 1892 gave a detailed analysis of the invasions of the new-rich, and denounced them. In 1899 Lecky in *The Map of Life: Conduct and Character* identified the greatest modern evil as the public approval given to the dishonest means by which powerful men have made their wealth; he was especially critical of American examples. In the *North American Review* in December 1900, Lord Charles Beresford observed that "the plutocrat is gaining power each day on both sides of the Atlantic"⁹ and is likely to become the worst kind of tyrant ever known in history. Arthur Ponsonby, in *The Decline of Aristocracy* (1912) argued that the modern equivalent of medieval and renaissance tyrants and princes is the plutocratic financier, contemptuous of all laws and all morality.

In modern accounts of the period, it has usually been such defenders of the older social order and opponents of the new that have been given greatest prominence. There was, however, wide support for the new wave of financiers and some vigorous champions of their methods. A new attitude is to be found in Alexander Shand's *Half a Century, or Changes in Men and Manners* (1887) which welcomed Jewish, Greek and German speculators as a

sign that Britain might congratulate herself on knitting up commercial connections with all the mercantile races of the world. Chartres put the question (a common one at the time) "Are We Deteriorating?" in *London Society* in 1890 and concluded that they were not, due largely to the plutocrats who were in every way preferable to the landed, hereditary aristocracy. Three years later Charles Henry Pearson wrote a book called *National Life and Character: a Forecast* in which he praised the opportunities present for the money-grasping intelligence that works on a grand scale and that delights in "magnificent ostentation." "Americanus" [E. J. Cattell] praised the righteousness of great wealth in few hands in *The Cornhill Magazine* in 1896. J. R. MacDonald contributed an essay on "The People in Power" to Stanton Coit's *Ethical Democracy* (1900), in which he claimed that the new plutocracy had influenced politics and society for the good. It had not brought the political corruption infamous in the United States. It exerted claims for social distinction and leadership in taste like the old aristocracy, yet it had promoted domestic and international harmony. Among all the exponents of social darwinism, which did much to provide a quasi-scientific basis for the plutocrat, one example must suffice. In 1907 the archaeologist and Egyptologist, Flinders Petrie, propounded what he called a "gospel of giving to him that hath, and taking away from him that hath not."¹⁰ Some of Petrie's thinking is Mandevillian in its justification of the great man of wealth. He regarded the multi-millionaire as the man best able to prevent the waste of resources; only this man had proved by his accumulation of wealth that he could be trusted with the surplus wealth in society. The speculators, the financiers, the trust men were justifying themselves, as a class, far more than any other in English society.¹¹

It is in this context that many Victorian and Edwardian novelists worked out their attitudes to wealth and to the morality of wealth. From the 1850s to the early 1880s scores of novels articulated the ethic that Smiles had expressed. In 1859, the year in which *Self-Help* was published, George Eliot endorsed the Feuerbachian notion that "work is worship" and made it quite explicit in the first and fiftieth chapters of *Adam Bede* that Adam is sustained by this ethic. This philosophy is of course not to be equated with the Smilesian one, but it has an affinity. Much closer to Smiles was Francis Francis's novel *Newton Dogvane: A Story of English Country Life* (also 1859), which praised the hard-working British merchant and attacked the encroaching speculator and stock-jobber. Kate Pyer's sententious, self-righteous novel *Love and Labour, or Work and its Reward* (1860) demonstrated that perseverance, industry and sacrifice are the means by which to win an old age of prosperity and temperance. Charles Clarke's *Which is the Winner? or The First Gentleman of his Family* (1864) presented the rise of a successful iron-master to wealth and political importance.

8. *Athenaeum*, 23 April 1904, p. 531.

9. Lord Charles Beresford, "The Future of the Anglo-Saxon Race," *North American Review*, 171 (1900), 807.

10. W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Janus in Modern Life* (London: Constable, 1907), p. 87.

11. Petrie, p. 63.

Emma Newby's *Common Sense* (1866) has a very similar subject, though in this novel the iron-master begins as a workman. *Christie's Faith*, published anonymously in the same year, has a double plot that perfectly represents the Smilesian doctrine and its alternative. Of two brothers, one achieves wealth in business by immoral means (and suffers, of course); the other pursues honest trade. Another anonymous novel, *Brothers-in-law* (1868) rewarded the self-made hero with the position of Mayor of London. *The Pace that Kills: A Tale of the Day* (1872) was an awful warning to the spendthrift: a banker tries to solve his financial difficulties by forgery, and kills himself. William Sime's *King Capital: a Tale of Provincial Ambition* was considered by the *Contemporary Review* in 1883 to be faulty in many respects, but "we counteract many objections when we say that *King Capital* is a story of work."¹² Of Mrs. Craik's many novels, *John Halifax, Gentleman*, completed in 1856, was still immensely popular in the 1870s. Kingsley, writing on "Heroism" in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1873, argued that the career of Halifax makes this "an heroic and ideal book."¹³ But after about 1885 the publishers' trade lists show a steep decline in this kind of fiction with a purpose. Sporadic examples recurred. Mrs. Humphry Ward's *History of David Grieve* (1892) presented a shop assistant's rise by his own efforts to the position of a great employer and philanthropist. Frederic Carrel's *The City* (1896) exposed the vices of speculation and their inevitable punishments, as did G. B. Burgin's *A Son of Mammon* (1901). These works have resemblances to Percy Fitzgerald's novels of the 1870s, novels such as *The Parvenu Family, or Phoebe: Girl and Wife* (1876), which chronicled a family elevated by chance into high life, and then reduced to poverty and obscurity.

Rivalling this genre, and surpassing it after the mid-1880s, was a body of novels which excused, condoned, or extolled the speculator, the plutocrat and the swindler. The first stirring of this genre may be felt even in the 1840s, when the serious industrial novel was at its best. Samuel Warren in *Ten Thousand a Year* (1841), Thackeray in *The History of Samuel Titmarsh and the Great Hoggarty Diamond* (1841) are cases in point. In *The Newcomes* (1853-55) Thackeray explored more fully than any previous novelist the instability of credit, the fluctuations in capital, the processes of honoring bills; but he makes Rummun Loll, of the Bundelcund Bank, a villain. The speculations of the "railway mania" of the 1840s appear to have resulted in only one novel that unequivocally asserted that moral worth may reside in the speculator. Robert Bell's *The Ladder of Gold: An English Story* (1850) was based very directly on the career of Hudson, the "railway king," who crashed in 1849. One should not underestimate the national prestige Hudson attained, nor the publicity his fall received. Mark Pattison includes in

his *Memoirs* (1885) the recollections of G. V. Cox, according to whom, at Oxford High Tables in the late 1840s, don's conversation changed utterly: "Instead of High, Low and Broad Church, they talked of high embankments, the broad gauge and low dividends."¹⁴ Carlyle, author of "Hudson's Statue," recorded in his journal pity for the man now that he was exposed. "King Hudson flung utterly prostrate, detected 'cooking accounts'; everyone kicking him through the mire. To me and to quiet onlookers he has not changed at all. . . . Why should this, the chief terrier among them, be set upon by all the dog fraternity? One feels a real human pity for the ugly Hudson."¹⁵ Gladstone, after Hudson's exposure, remarked that Hudson was "no mere speculator, but a projector of great discernment, courage and rich enterprise."¹⁶ In Bell's novel, the protagonist, Richard Rawlings, is presented as a shrewd manipulator of finances whose career is aided by marrying his employer's widow. In the great panic of 1845 his position is at first secure, but is then threatened by rumours of fraud started by the aristocratic family into which he has persuaded his daughter to marry. Rawling's finances do in fact crash, but he recovers sufficient wealth to regain his power, this time as an industrialist.

In the 1860s a few novels accepted without much resistance the ease by which the speculator and financier could penetrate the aristocratic levels of society: William Aytoun's *Norman Sinclair* (1861) and Hamilton Aidé's *The Marstons* (1868) are examples. In 1872 the anonymous novel *Amy Stennett* traced the rise to wealth of a manufacturer who has committed a crime in his youth – and no punishment is prescribed. In the Earl of Desart's *The Honourable Ella: A Tale of Foxshire* (1870) love is sacrificed by a young lord and a young lady, for money and social position respectively. Joseph Hatton's *Cruel London* (1878) rejected the Smilesian doctrine that poverty is an incentive to industriousness by having its hero become as rich as the Rothschilds by good luck in American commerce. In Dora Russell's *Croesus's Widow* (1883), the wealth of John Trelawn is admitted to have been made fraudulently, but this is no bar to his family's being raised morally far above the aristocrats who fawn upon them.

From about 1890 to 1910 there was a spate of fiction that virtually ignored the Smilesian way of accumulating wealth and which dispensed altogether with the version of poetic justice that had attended it in fiction. William Herbert's *The World Grown Young: . . . Reforms . . . by Mr. P. Adams, Millionaire and Philanthropist* (1892) was a romance which showed how a benevolent millionaire regenerates society in the twentieth century. *The Market-Place*, by Harold Frederic (1899), was a much more thorough attempt to revise the motives and role of the wealthy philanthropist. Joel Thorpe has been to a public

12. Julia Wedgwood, "Contemporary Records," *Contemporary Review*, 44 (1883), 137.

13. Charles Kingsley, "Heroism," *Cornhill Magazine*, 27 (1873), 40.

14. Mark Pattison, *Memoirs* (London: Macmillan, 1885), pp. 235-36.

15. Thomas Carlyle, *Journal* 17 May 1849, quoted in R. S. Lambert, *The Railway King* (1934; rpt. London: Allen and Unwin, 1964), pp. 275-76.

16. Quoted in Lambert, p. 16.

school, but his real training for life comes in a hard and thorough apprenticeship with international financiers. He becomes bored with the sterile life of a country gentleman, which his wealth has gained for him. He realizes that the beneficence of the patrician, idly given, is idly received, and must be replaced by another notion of philanthropy. He regards the people, in mass, as mere hogs, but feels compelled to help them. They must give sovereignty to the professional man of millions who has succeeded and who has the power to retain his wealth. Only the will to power gives meaning to life in the individual; only by the extension of this forcefulness, irrespective of moral considerations, can order and happiness be attained in society. *The Market-Place* is indeed a species of novel that revised earlier Victorian ideas of philanthropy in the light of amoral titanism.

Given the colonial sources of the wealth of some of Britain's great financial figures, it is to be expected that a second species should be imperialistic. An example is Morley Roberts's *The Colossus: A Story of To-Day* (1899).¹⁷ The theme of this novel is "material interests" (the phrase recurs) but this is no Conradian exposure of them as in *Nostramo*. The central figure, Eustace Loder, is clearly based on Cecil Rhodes. The plot consists of Loder's machinations in accomplishing his pan-African vision, especially his trans-African railway. Such moral action as the book possesses consists in the tension between Loder's instincts as a financier and his instincts as an empire-builder. Extravagantly presented (he is "as big as a continent, as cruel as the sea" [Ch. 5]) Loder's ends are justified, and his means explained, racially. The penetration of social darwinism into Roberts's presentation of his hero is very deep. The protagonist is offered for the reader's approval as a new type — an amoral being who transcends the limitations of Western morality by representing a new culture. "The big individual is the race in miniature," writes Roberts. "That his thought was chaotic and uncrystallized made him the half-conscious representative of a plastic uncrystallized race" (Ch. 4).

The reception of these new kinds of novels appearing after 1890 was a ready one. Weekly reviews of fiction in the *Athenaeum* between 1900 and 1910 reveal that in this fairly sophisticated journal, at least, approval could easily be given to Iza Hardy's *MacGilleroy's Millions* (1900) with its "good pictures of scoundrelism";¹⁸ to H. B. Watson's *Godfrey Merivale* (1902) in which a journalist reaches a baronetcy and £50,000 a year; to Benjamin Farjeon's *The Pride of Race* (1901) which presents an illiterate Jew who becomes a millionaire on the stock exchange. In 1902 the rather trenchant cynicism of Squire Sprigge's *An Industrious Chevalier* prompted a somewhat nervous response from the *Athenaeum* reviewer. Pointing out that authors of the literature of roguery from Fielding to Thackeray rendered poetic justice to their rogues, the reviewer commented that the effect of Sprigge's work on "the weaker patrons of the circulating libraries can hardly be healthful."¹⁹ But this response to the new amoralism is not representative. On 4 October 1902 in the course of a

review of Thomas Cobb's *A Man of Sentiment*, the critic welcomed the presentation of the unscrupulous adventurer, who ought to be as well-known in fiction as he was in life. Cobb's example has to be accorded greater veracity by his hero's being allowed kindness of heart, geniality, and vitality. Similarly, on 3 October 1903, the *Athenaeum* had no hesitation in accepting John Oakley's invitation in *The Blackmailer* to side with the blackmailing financier against his blindly innocent victims. True, the *Athenaeum's* appetite for sensationalized, Anglicized, Nietzscheans of the financial world was occasionally to fade. Sir William Magnay's *The Man of the Hour* (1902) stuck in the reviewer's throat: even the *Athenaeum* could not quite accept that the government of Britain depended entirely upon one magnanimous plutocrat.²⁰ The credibility of the plutocrat was diminished if he were not English. Reviewing Frank Danby's *Pigs in Clover*, the *Athenaeum* lamented the introduction, in a novel that promised to study ordinary English life, of Karl Althaus, the Jew — "a noble creature, as all millionaires must be."²¹ The reader may be spared the reception given to Griffith's *The Lake of Gold*, West's *Edmund Fulleston, or the Family Evil Genius*, and Roy Horniman's *Bellamy the Magnificent: An Extravaganza* (of which the author remarked in his preface that "in arranging the materials for this book the morals were unaccountably misled").

In this parade of dubious fiction lies an important body of evidence that, cumulatively, contributes to understanding and assessment of important issues in the culture of the period. These novels did more than acknowledge the truth in Asquith's quip, "a gentleman may make a large fortune, but only a cad can look after it." In part, some of them satisfied the expectations expressed by Wilde in the *Dramatic Review* in 1885: "Perfect heroes are the monsters of melodramas. . . . I look forward to a reaction in favour of the cultured criminal." More of them presented the attraction of the human type that Clive Bell observed in *Civilisation* — the type that can "seize life and shake it." For once in the history of the novel it seemed possible to present a type of character — let it be called "the card," since Bennett named a novel after it — who was larger than life and hence greatly appealing and yet who was, simultaneously, in another sense representative of life. In Dickens the card could only be a fantasy figure, or purely theatrical. By 1895 Hooleyism was a fact of life. People "larger than life" figured in public affairs and the press: some, like Horatio Bottomley, sought to control the press. One only has to look at the biography of Birkenhead to read the kinds of extravagant lies which a crooked financier such as Bottomley could expect to get away with in public conversation with an Attorney-General. The laws which these figures transgressed, sometimes with impunity, were laxer than our own. Accepted commercial practice of the 1880s would earn a prison sentence today.

17. (London: Arnold, 1899).

18. *Athenaeum*, 23 June 1900, p. 780.

19. *Athenaeum*, 3 May 1902, p. 558.

20. *Athenaeum*, 8 November, 1902, p. 614.

21. *Athenaeum*, 6 June 1903, p. 715.

This needs to be borne in mind before the fiction is dismissed on the ground of "unreality," even though it may cheerfully be dismissed on every other ground known to literary criticism. Certainly the categories of evidence that have been examined here – the Smilesian tradition and its antithesis in polemic, and the minor fiction that begins by endorsing the work ethic only to forsake it – amount to an important context in which to view the fiction of greater writers.

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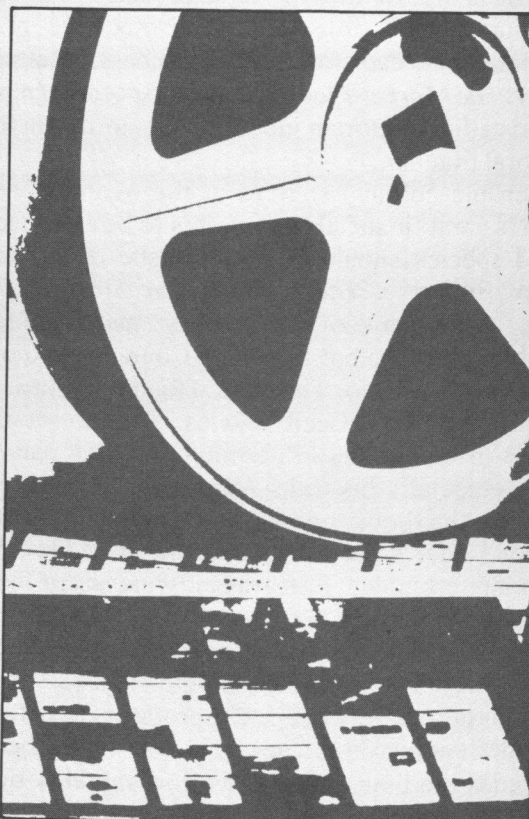
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Victorian Group News

A. THE NEW YORK MEETING

28 December 1981, 10:15-11:30 AM, Sutton North, Hilton Hotel
Presiding: James R. Kincaid, Univ. of Colorado;
John D. Rosenberg, Columbia Univ.

I. Business

II. Papers and Discussion

1. "Carlyle's *The Guises* and the Theory of Transcendent Historicism," Rodger L. Tarr, Illinois State Univ.
2. "This Historical Imagination: Browning to Pound," Adena Rosmarin, Univ. of Miami, Florida.
3. "George Eliot and the Victorian 'Historic Imagination,'" Brian Rosenberg, Columbia Univ.
4. "The Victorian Historical Sense and Modernism," Louis Menand, Princeton Univ.

B. THE VICTORIAN LUNCHEON

The Annual Victorian Division Luncheon will be held in the Surrey and Kent Rooms of the Warwick Hotel, 65 West 54th Street, N.Y.C. Cash bar at 11:45; luncheon at 12:30. For reservations, send a check for \$18.50 by December 15 payable to Steven Forry (431 Riverside Drive, Apt. 7-D, New York, N.Y. 10025).

C. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Northeast Victorian Studies Association Conference: "Victorians and Money," April 5-7, 1982, Drew University, Madison, New Jersey. For program information, write Phillip Thurmond Smith, Saint Joseph's University, 5600 City Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19131.

Call For Papers: Conference on the year 1883, University of Toronto, spring 1983. Papers or proposals (2 to 3 pp.) in humanities or history of science by 1 Feb. 1982 (complete papers by 1 June 1982). Contact Wyman H. Herendeen, University College, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 1A1, Canada.

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D. PROJECTS: REQUESTS FOR AID

Professors Michael Peterman, Carl Ballstadt and Elizabeth Hopkins seek information about letters of Catherine Parr Traill (1802-1899) and Susanna Moodie (1803-1885), Canadian writers. Please contact Sheree-Lee Powsey, Lady Eaton College, Trent Univ., Peterborough, Ontario, K9J 7B8, Canada.

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