

THE VICTORIAN NEWSLETTER

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The Victorian View of Russian Literature*

Harold Orel

A FEW YEARS BACK, when I undertook the teaching of a seminar on the literary relationships between England and the Continent, I discovered that there was no usable or satisfactory anthology of primary materials for this kind of study. The best single bibliography, and the best place to start, was *The New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, Volume 3, 1800-1900, edited by George Watson (1969), "Literary Relations with the Continent," pages 91-158; but any attempt to use the two-volume *Books in Print* for the identification of texts that students might purchase and mark up was foredoomed. Only a few books, and those—as usual—overpriced, were available. Fortunately, the resources of the library of the University of Kansas proved adequate for the needs of students who were trying to assess the value of readings in Greek, medieval, German, Italian, Spanish, Scandinavian, French, and Russian literatures to the great Victorian writers. But it is impossible to combat the stereotype of insularity unless one has a clear notion of what cosmopolitanism implied: there was the world within the British Isles, and there was the world without; and there was far more intellectual traffic between the two than most of our students appreciate. Nor will the situation improve until the basic texts become available. It is ironic, and more than a little melancholy, that at the end of 1976, with a prospect of declining clientèle facing us in the 1980s, we discover that we failed to take advantage, during the relatively prosperous quarter century that has just ended, of the opportunity to build upon the numerous studies of specific literary relations and influences. We have not yet constructed a clear, comprehensive picture of the foreign impress on Victorian intellect and literature. Perhaps, as Karl Litzenberg wrote in the MLA-sponsored volume *The Reinterpretation of Victorian Literature*, a cooperative project, one undertaken by Victorian scholars interested in all phases of the foreign influence upon English letters, would produce a work of great usefulness; but that call went forth in 1950, and the work has not, as yet, appeared. So far as I know, it has not yet even been planned.

This morning my concern is with one aspect of that intellectual traffic across the English Channel, the interest paid by Victorian writers to developments in Russian literature—more specifically the Russian novel, because most Victorian writers were ill-prepared to appreciate the poetry

and regarded other literary forms as remote and largely irrelevant to their own concerns. It is impossible to render full justice to the Victorian view of Russian literature within my limited time, and I will be selective. Like all reception studies, this one will express astonishment that luck played so great a role in popularizing Turgenev, Tolstoy, and Dostoevski among English readers; yet, as I shall seek to demonstrate, a deliberate strategy was at work, too, and neither luck nor good timing expresses the whole of it.

First, however, permit me to sketch swiftly a picture of the literary landscape prior to the 1880s. The name of Muscovy was one for ill-informed speculation during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Very few Englishmen traveled to Russia, and fewer still bothered to learn the language. For the major part of three hundred years during which England and Russia were nominally at peace, prominent English authors adopted conventional attitudes toward Russia. John Milton, who read Hakluyt's *Voyages* with great interest, characterized Russia as a land of tyranny, drunkenness, and ignorance. To him and to his contemporaries, Muscovy connoted a vague vastness; constant winter; Lapland witches; strange customs, furniture, and clothes. But matters did not improve significantly in the eighteenth century. James Thomson claimed that the Russians were a "gross race" who knew not "sprightly jest," "song," nor "tenderness." Even Dr. Johnson found plausible the story that a person in the Russian dominions had discovered the secret of alchemy and had died without revealing it, "as imagining it would be prejudicial to society." In a land as far away as Russia, anything might happen. There was little enough in the way of authentic materials for Englishmen to read. Russian literature, during these early years, came into English via other languages: Church Slavonic, a hybrid official language; from English and French versions. Of course, adequate lexicons were lacking. The important research that established close ties between the Russian language and the Indo-European languages was carried on almost exclusively by Continental scholars. Not until 1887, more than half a century after the Collège de France had established a Chair of Slavonic Studies in 1840, did Oxford admit to its curriculum the "Lithu-Slavonic" languages. During the entire eighteenth century only three works—two of them histories of Russia and the third a trite moral tale

* This paper and the one that follows by Professor DeLaura were read before the Victorian group at the meetings of the Modern

by Catherine II—were translated directly from the Russian into English.

In passing, I will observe that ignorance of the Russian language and Russian history, and of the Russian people as revealed through the literature of that land, contributed to the growth of Russophobia. The cause-effect relationship has been ably traced by John Howes Gleason in his book, *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain* (No. LVII in the Harvard Historical Studies). Russia's domestic policies—her eagerness to westernize in the 1860s and to import capital and industrial technique—led to commercial competition with England; and foreign relations were continually conducted in an atmosphere of suspicion and ill will. War over Bulgaria almost broke out during the years 1877-1878. The Russo-Turkish War, conducted at that time, led to the overthrow of Turkish rule in Bulgaria, and Disraeli sent Indian troops to Malta. Russia was forced to consult with a European Congress and to sign the Treaty of Berlin as a substitute for the previously negotiated Treaty of San Stefano. Elsewhere, Russian intrigues in southern and eastern Persia, hitherto predominantly British preserves, led England to support the creation of Afghanistan as a buffer-state between Russia and India.

Against this background of hostility the literary men of England first met the literary men of Russia. There were not many of the latter, although George Borrow, who went to St. Petersburg to publish religious books in the 1830s, took the trouble to learn Russian and was one of the first Englishmen to appreciate Pushkin's poetry. By far the most important emissary of Russian culture in England during the Victorian Age, however, was Ivan Turgenev. His personality impressed everybody. Henry James became his lifelong friend. George Eliot, according to her second husband, preferred to talk to Turgenev more than to any other literary man; once, when Turgenev was shooting grouse in Cambridgeshire, she made a special trip to Six-Mile Bottom in order to see him. The Russian novelist held many long conversations with Carlyle, who regarded him as a "friendly, intelligent man, a general favourite with high and low . . . a most copious and entertaining talker." William Allingham wrote in his *Diary* that Turgenev spoke "well, softly, naturally, tellingly, politely." Turgenev was received by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the painter Madox Brown, and the mathematician William Spottiswood. In 1871 he attended the Walter Scott Centennial in Edinburgh (Scott, it may be recalled, entertained a large number of Russian visitors at Abbotsford in the 1820s, introduced them to his literary friends, and sponsored the first English translation of the famous Russian folk-epic, *The Song of Igor*). Anthony Trollope, Walter Besant, and James Payn were present at a dinner given in

his honor (1878). In 1879 Oxford University gave Turgenev an honorary D.C.L., and James Bryce entertained him during his visit. The Russian novelist, who liked people fully as much as they liked him, told Tennyson many tales of Russian life, met Thackeray and Disraeli, and made a favorable impression on George Moore and Frank Harris. Indirectly, he was responsible for commissioning George Gissing to write for the St. Petersburg quarterly, *Le Messager de l'Europe*, beginning in 1880. Moreover, he memorized portions of Shakespeare's plays, knew Swinburne's poetry intimately enough to quote portions of it to friends, and planned to introduce Burns to his compatriots.

Of necessity these personal contacts were limited, despite Turgenev's success as a literary lion. Few English booksellers imported Russian works; they knew little about their contents prior to their arrival; and they received them only after long delays. For the first six decades of the nineteenth century readers who went to the British Museum might find a few books by Karamzin and Pushkin, an imperfect set of *Sien Otechestva*, a literary journal, and little else. Moreover, the journals of popular opinion perpetuated the popular stereotypes about Russia while dismissing Gogol's *Mirgorod* as "one of the clumsiest and most wearisome attempts of the kind we have ever encountered in any language," or patronizing Turgenev as an unprofessional author who was "none the less an artist because a practised eye will detect the absence or even the want of art." The record of scattered translations from Russian literature lent undue importance to such critical dicta, and English readers found little opportunity to judge for themselves. The most popular book of translations of Russian poems, prepared by Sir John Bowring in 1821 and enthusiastically endorsed by Byron in a letter to Tom Moore, had been based on German and very literal English translations rather than Russian originals. The few Russian novels translated into English—*Ivan Vejeeghen*, by Thaddeus Bulgarin (1831), imitations of Scott's romances by Zagoskin and Lazhechnikov, and *Ammalát Bek: A True Tale of the Caucasus* (1843), by "Marlinsky," a pseudonym of Alexander Bestuzhev—were melodramatic in structure, romantic in tone, and much concerned with lightning, white-churned water, rocks, and mist.

It is a real question whether the Russian novels that were translated in the 1850s represented any improvement, even though some of the authors represented—Gogol, Lermontov, and Turgenev—were among Russia's finest. They suffered at the hands of unscrupulous publishers; their works appeared in badly distorted versions. Lermontov's masterpiece, *Hero of Our Time*, appeared as an anonymous and much mutilated text, with added inventions, changed names, elaborated descriptions, and height-

ened effects. Gogol's great novel, *Dead Souls*, appeared as a forgery in 1854. Turgenev's *A Sportsman's Notebook* came out as *Russian Life in the Interior, or, The Experiences of a Sportsman* (1855), a version so inaccurately translated, embroidered, and interlarded, that Turgenev protested strenuously against it.

Nevertheless, a new, more important stage of translations began with the Crimean War. Curiosity about the nature of the enemy—his customs and his aspirations—was stimulated by the conflict. This, allied with the growing willingness of English readers to condone and support experiments in the techniques of realistic fiction, leads to the perhaps not unsurprising conclusion that it took the entire nineteenth century to make possible the popularity of Tolstoy and Dostoevski in the 1880s and 1890s. At this point it is useful to recall some of the more notorious moments in the history of the reception of French realistic fiction in Victorian England, because attitudes toward the Russian novel were inevitably conditioned by responses to French novels.

It may seem more interesting than pertinent to know that criticism of Balzac changed from an outcry in the *Quarterly Review* that "a baser, meaner, filthier scoundrel never polluted society," to the rich praise of Leslie Stephen, Swinburne, and James; or to know that the fortunes of the translations of Daudet were mixed inextricably with contemporary attitudes toward Dickens. Yet in fact such corollary matters do bear on our problem: the novels of French naturalists were important because they approached subject matter boldly. George Saintsbury's important article for the *Fortnightly Review* (1878), which dealt specifically with Flaubert for the first time in English criticism, defined a new literary school: ". . . the faithful patience and the sense of artistic capacity which lead a man to grapple boldly with his subject, whatever that subject may be, and to refuse *tanquam scopulum* easy generalities and accepted phrases." By the early 1880s an awareness of French naturalism had become an important factor in English literary life. The number of English translations between 1883 and 1898 assumed the dimensions of a flood. At the height of the period of popularity of French naturalistic fiction, more than a million translations were in circulation in England, and the publishing house of Vizetelly alone was selling one thousand translations a week. The two important groups who opposed the dogma of the "new fiction"—particularly as defined in *Le Roman Experimental* (1880), by Émile Zola—may be differentiated roughly as the moralists and the literary critics. The former, who supported the work of the National Vigilance Association, managed to have Vizetelly indicted as a man who sold pornographic literature. In 1889, the year of Vizetelly's imprisonment, Blaye de

Bury wrote in the *Fortnightly Review* that French writers were intellectually perverted and cited, as evidence of "unqualified useless filth," the works of the Goncourts, Zola, and the decadents. The latter group, the literary critics, however, formulated the more telling arguments against the theories and practice of the French naturalists. They did not object to using the whole of human experience, but rather argued that naturalism dealt with the ugly aspects of reality in an ugly manner and that ugliness could not be equated with truth. The most discerning members did not repudiate their interest in the French novel when they discovered the more congenial Russian novel, the novel which stressed more of the spiritual side of life, but they found in Russian fiction those qualities which French fiction needed in order to become the indisputable master of the European novel.

The work necessary to differentiate French realism from Russian realism was aided enormously by the publication of two French studies in the mid-1880s: *Les grands maîtres de la littérature russe* (1885), by Ernest Dupuy, and Eugene Melchior de Vogüé's *Le roman russe* (1886). Dupuy's style was pleasant, easygoing, and well calculated to popularize the Russian novel; it was the first readable, if somewhat sketchy, history of Russian achievement in an understandable art form to become available to English readers. De Vogüé was a more considerable figure, and his was undoubtedly the most important single book on Russian literature written during the nineteenth century; indeed, Edmund Gosse has spoken of *Le roman russe* as "perhaps the most epoch-making single volume of criticism issued in France during our time." Both Dupuy and de Vogüé formulated critical judgments on the works of Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, and Dostoevski that passed intact into English criticism, and these became commonplaces. From 1886 on only a rare English critic could escape de Vogüé's notion that Turgenev's heroine characteristically possessed the iron will which Turgenev's hero lacked, or that Dostoevski was like a traveler who had visited the entire universe and who described everything he saw, but who had never traveled except by night.

In the final decades of the century, therefore, a consensus formed, one that distinguished between the pretensions of French naturalistic theory and the achievements of Russian realistic fiction. Perhaps I need mention only a few of the more distinguished writers who subscribed to the consensus: Henry James, who argued that Turgenev was too pure and strong a genius to be corrupted by the naturalists because his method began "further back" in relation to any human occurrence, because Turgenev told him the most about men and women; Robert Louis Stevenson, who said that an observer with documents saw less of a man than the poet who sought to

catch a glimpse of the heaven for which a man lived (the external truth might be found in salts and acids, but the far more important truth lay within the brain); William Ernest Henley, who preferred the "higher and better sort of Russian realism," "the realism which deals with mental and spiritual conditions, the realism of *Othello* and *Hamlet*," over the "barren pessimism of the latter-day French rhapsodist in fiction"; and Edmund Gosse, who declared flatly that Zola would have been unable to write a conclusion to *War and Peace* because Tolstoy understood that details served the novelist best when they "characterized." Nor, in a listing of distinguished Victorian critics, may we slight the contribution of Matthew Arnold, who, in an influential essay for the *Fortnightly Review* (1887), first introduced to many of his readers the nature and full dimensions of Tolstoy's artistic achievement. That essay contains a marvelous passage, in which Arnold imagined how a French novelist might treat *Anna Karenina*. Arnold foresaw the possibility that the French novelist would make her thoroughly unsympathetic, because, as he put it, a "spirit of observation" and "touch of hardness" had overtaken the French novel. Arnold then compared Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* with Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*:

Emma Bovary follows a course in some respects like that of Anna, but where, in Emma Bovary, is Anna's charm? The treasures of compassion, tenderness, insight, which alone, amid such guilt and misery, can enable charm to subsist and to emerge, are wanting to Flaubert. He is cruel, with the cruelty of petrified feeling, to his poor heroine; he pursues her without pity or pause, as with malignity; he is harder upon her himself than any reader even, I think, will be inclined to be.

But, as most of you know, the violent phase of the reception of French naturalism did not last long after Vizetelly's imprisonment. Vernon Lee encountered little important opposition when, in 1893, she defended the moral "teachings" of Zola. Genius, she wrote, might be narrow enough, but it could make its own terms. Zola's morality, where it appeared, was of a sound and humdrum variety, "the morality, precisely, of the very conservative and rather conventional Latin races." That same year Zola visited England; on their way to the Guildhall, Zola and his wife marched in a kind of state procession; the City's trumpeteers preceded them, while the Lord Mayor and other dignitaries followed them and an official cleared the way by crying loudly, "Monsieur Zola! Madame Zola!"; and many of the journals that had helped to prosecute his English printer were filled with enthusiastic praise of his genius. In this manner, quietly contrasting with the earlier hysteria of moral and aesthetic indignation, a way

was opened to critical reconciliation with French fiction. In short, as Herbert J. Muller pointed out in *Modern Fiction: A Study of Values*, an English novelist learned how to borrow Zola's method, even his subject matter, without subscribing to his mechanistic philosophy.

The implications of this ebbing of the tide of hostility to French naturalism are worth considering for a moment. Russian fiction, if it were to last as a potent influence on the careers of late Victorian novelists, now had to survive on its own merits, and not because it served as a convenient counterpoint to another Continental literature. That 1886 marks a real turning-point in the history of the reception of the Russian novel becomes clear when we examine the number and quality of the translations of Russian novels which came into the bookstores that year. Without citing titles, I may mention that major works by Pushkin, Lermontov, Dostoevski, and Tolstoy arrived; within five years, a veritable cascade of books by Gogol, Tolstoy, Dostoevski, and Turgenev. Tolstoy was the greatest phenomenon in the entire story: unknown in 1885 to English readers, Tolstoy was represented in 1889 in the *English Catalogue of Books* by forty items—eighteen of them American, and another twelve American translations republished in England. Within the brief space of three years practically everything that Tolstoy had written in the preceding thirty-five years was translated and published in England. In the 1890s the Brotherhood Publishing Company at Croydon, and later the Free Age Press, was founded specifically to publish Tolstoy's works or other works which fell into line with Tolstoyan doctrine. From 1900 to 1910, eighty-six editions of individual works, including one-volume collections of stories and tales, were published; six editions of the collected works appeared, and two other collected editions began to appear at the beginning of the decade. Tolstoy's fiction enjoyed an enormous popularity in Victorian and Edwardian England. Moreover, when we remember the generous number of translations of works by Gorky, Gogol, Lermontov, Pushkin, Dostoevski, Goncharov, and prerevolutionary writers like Artzybashev, a modest conclusion, that the English-reading public found Russian fiction congenial, becomes practically inescapable.

"Congenial" for its own sake: for what needs stressing now is the emergence of several native strains of English criticism of the Russian novel, perceptions indebted neither to Dupuy nor to de Vogüé, arguments that hastened the assimilation of Russian fiction to English reading tastes. By the mid-1890s the name of Turgenev was conjured up mainly as a means of contrasting his kind of art with the vastly superior powers of Tolstoy and Dostoevski. A classic formulation of this characteristically English point of view may be found in Maurice Baring's article

for the *Quarterly Review* (1909): "Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky shine and burn in the firmament of Russian literature like two great planets, one of them as radiant as the planet Jupiter, the other as red and ominous as the planet Mars. Beside either of these the light of Turgenev twinkles, pure indeed, and full of pearly lustre, like the moon faintly seen in the East at the end of an autumnal day."

Victorian critics also worried over the problem of Tolstoy's dualism: his mysticism (which they termed vague and sentimental) and his meticulously observed realism, which seemed (lamentably) to coexist within the same works of literature. As G. K. Chesterton complained, "We know not what to do with this small and noisy moralist who is inhabiting one corner of a great and good man." Only George Bernard Shaw granted Tolstoy the right to believe what he wanted and to express his views in his fictions; but the reasonably stated paradox of Matthew Arnold carried conviction as an opinion: Tolstoy was a great soul, "whatever else we have or have not."

The Victorian intelligentsia were quick to appreciate the greatness of Dostoevski—certainly quicker than the general reading public—even though they did not approve of his message and even termed it "faulty teaching," as John Lomas did in 1887. Dostoevski's tortured genius, his extraordinary depictions of suffering and redemption, and his powerful evocation of the Russian urban scene were often compared to the tamer home-grown product. By the turn of the century, after Thomas Hardy had renounced the craft of novel writing as a consequence of the unfriendly reception in many quarters of *Jude the Obscure*, the Russian novel was pointed out as singularly untainted by the curse of Grundyism.

The years between the death of Queen Victoria and the outbreak of the Great War lie outside the scope of this severely compressed history of English interest in the Russian novel. But they were the years of Anna Pavlova, Diaghilev, and Nijinsky; and Rebecca West was hardly exaggerating when she wrote (in 1915) that Russia had become to the young intellectuals "of to-day" what Italy was to the Victorians: "... as their imaginations, directed by Turner and the Brownings, dreamed of the crumbling richesses of Rome and Venice, so we to-day think of that plain of brown earth patterned with delicate spring grass and steel-grey patches of half-melted snow and cup-

ed in a round unbroken sky-line, which is Russia. We are deeply and affectionately familiar with Russian life." That familiarity was without doubt achieved through the reading of Russian novels, through the dedication of intermediaries and translators like W. R. S. Ralston, C. E. Turner, W. R. Morfill, Aylmer and Louise Maude, Constance Garnett, and the Honourable Maurice Baring, and through the enthusiasm of novelists who generously acknowledged the superior vitality and artistic vision of Russian authors whose milieu they could never hope to know personally. For example: George Gissing told his sister Ellen in 1883 that the death of Turgenev had made him realize how much the Russian was, without doubt, "the greatest living writer of fiction." Robert Louis Stevenson wrote to John Addington Symonds in 1886 that he believed *Crime and Punishment* was easily the greatest book he had read in ten years. George Moore spoke of Turgenev as "a sort of Jesus of Nazareth in art." John Galsworthy spoke of the characters Pierre and Natasha, in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, as the nearest approach "to the presentation of full spiritual union between men and women in real art"; he compiled a list of the twelve best works of fiction, on which five of the items were Russian. If such a proportion seems excessive, let us remember that Arnold Bennett compiled a list of the twelve greatest novels while he was traveling in the United States in 1913. All twelve were Russian. Despite cries of outrage in American and English newspapers, Bennett offered the same list again, and still a third time. Finally he offered to add a thirteenth title to the list—and the title turned out to be (also) a Russian novel.

The views of English novelists and critics after 1900 are another story, as Rudyard Kipling might have said; but during the Victorian Age itself the discovery of the Russian novel was tremendously exciting for a large number of practicing novelists and critics, and enlarged the literary horizons of many readers who had never thought seriously about Russian culture prior to the 1880s. The history of the reception of the Russian novel in Victorian England is, of course, part of a larger history, the history of the importation and the interactions of a number of Continental literatures; a history that to this day remains, regrettably, unwritten, and in some important ways is still not well understood.

The University of Kansas

Newman and the Victorian Cult of Style

David J. DeLaura

TRAVIS MERRITT HAS WRITTEN WELL of a "style-vogue," stressing "finesse" as against "strong" effects, that rose and fell in the last fifteen years of the nineteenth century, and his account of the intense discussion of style-for-its-own-sake identifies an important current within the wider stream of aestheticism.¹ But he virtually leaves out of account a key figure of the period, who clarifies some of the new goals and who points back toward an earlier and fuller origin of the movement. Merritt sees Wordsworth, De Quincey, and Carlyle as sources of the view that style is "above all a function of self."² But he sees nothing of Newman's central role in shaping Pater's concept of style or that Pater's view of the "sense of fact," as the expression of the author's "vision within," is elaborately dependent on Newman's richly "personalist" doctrine of style, in the essays in *The Idea of a University*, as the adequate expression of the author's "great or rich visions before him."³ I want to suggest here that an influential view of Newman's style as the appropriate "new" mode grew up rapidly in the 1860s, and that the central goals of the "stylism" of the '80s and '90s are a narrower and more "aesthetic" version of the same implicit program.

A review of the strangely negative qualities canonized by Saintsbury and Pater, the chief later theorists, gives a basis for the connection. Saintsbury's two important essays of 1876 and 1885 probably helped Pater formulate his views on style; for Pater did not quite discover his own key figure, Newman, until the late '70s and the early '80s as part of the re-Christianization of his thought, and his chief comments on prose occur between *Marius* (1885) and "Style" (1888). Saintsbury's openly "aristocratic" doctrine sees the enemies of true style as diffuseness and "gross and glaring effects," and he predicts the death of the "la-

boured and ornate" manner of "the prose-poetry style," which he especially associates with Ruskin and which "constantly tends to overstep" the line between the rhythm of prose and the rhythm of poetry. He rejects prose that "draws attention to originality of thought by singularity of expression," and says that good prose respects only "proportion, clearness, closeness of expression to idea, and (within the limits incident to prose) rhythmical arrangement."⁴

The qualities Pater promotes in "style" are even more starkly "privative." "Self-restraint, a skillful economy of means, *ascèsis*, that too has a beauty of its own," says Pater; there is "an aesthetic satisfaction in that frugal closeness of style which makes the most of a word"—and so forth. There should be "no uncharacteristic or tarnished or vulgar decoration, permissible ornament being for the most part structural, or necessary." And Pater's *positive* doctrine of style—"Say what you have to say, in the simplest, the most direct and exact manner possible, with no surplusage"—is as commonsensical and undeveloped as the views of most writers, of all parties, in the century.⁵ In fact, Merritt fails to note that Saintsbury and Pater, in their rejection of "gross and glaring effects" and "singularity of expression" and in their promotion of clearness, simplicity, directness, and exactness, can scarcely be distinguished from the despised "positivist" Herbert Spencer, and that they give next to no useful clues as to what are the actual qualities of this new aristocratic stylism, the authenticity of which can only be verified by the specially "sensitive." A glance backward helps fill out some of the ellipses.

A number of converging forces had created in the 1860s a climate of expectation demanding more sober and "bal-

1. Travis R. Merritt, "Taste, Opinion, and Theory in the Rise of Victorian Prose Stylism," in *The Art of Victorian Prose*, ed. George Levine and William Madden (New York, 1968), pp. 3-38.
2. De Quincey's distinction between the literature of power and the literature of knowledge is of course the explicit basis of Pater's distinction between "fact" and the author's "personal sense of fact." I cite "Style" from *Appreciations* (London, 1910), 5-38.
3. A topic I have pursued in Ch. 24 of *Hebrew and Hellene in Victorian England: Newman, Arnold, and Pater* (Austin and London, 1969).
4. "Modern English Prose" and "English Prose Style," in *The Collected Papers of George Saintsbury, 1875-1920* (London, 1923), III, 62-87, 88-119, especially pp. 74, 75, 104, 115-17.
5. Pater's description of *Marius*' "imaginative prose" and its "singular expressiveness"—*Marius the Epicurean* (London, 1910), I, 155-57—is similarly "negative." *Marius* prides himself on language "delicate and measured," the fruit of "a life of

industry" and controlled by "a large and liberal process of erasure." The "sober discretion of his thoughts" led (in a familiar paradox) to "this rare blending of grace with an intellectual astringency." Ruskin's view in *Modern Painters* I is that "the highest thoughts are those which are least dependent on language. . . . We are more gratified by the simplest lines or words which can suggest the idea in its own naked beauty, than by the robe and the gem which conceal while they decorate" (*The Works of John Ruskin*, ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn [London, 1903], III, 89). For Arnold's scanty theorizing, see John Campbell Major, "Matthew Arnold and Attic Prose Style," *PMLA*, 59 (1944), 1086-1103. And there is the rather astonishing "ultimate rule" of style that Carlyle preaches to the young, in a passage probably written after 1866: "Learn so far as possible to be intelligible and transparent, no notice *taken* of your 'style,' but solely of what you express by it" (*Reminiscences*, ed. Charles Eliot Norton [London, 1972], p. 195).

anced" critical and cultural debate, and the most influential figure in this sudden reassembling of attitudes was Matthew Arnold. But at the center of Arnold's own "myth" and "drama" of criticism and culture stands Newman, and around Newman Arnold erected a virtual theory of style that others were to develop. Arnold regularly uses the celebrated stylists of the preceding generation as examples of what is right and (more usually) wrong with English culture and civilization. These attitudes do not derive from "philosophical" distinctions in the sense usually observed in studies of the Victorians, since the objections are applied not only to a Macaulay but also to such adversaries of Macaulay's position as Carlyle and Ruskin. Arnold's attacks on "Carlylese" and "middle-class Macaulayese"⁶ concern matters of tone, attitude, and use of language that cross the usual doctrinal boundaries. Arnold is especially preoccupied with tone and manner. Ruskin, for example, is not only "pugnacious"; his criticism constantly betrays extravagance, provinciality, and whim (III, 275, 252). Carlyle's "furious raid" into "the field of political practice" in *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (III, 275) is simply the most egregious example of his usual failure in "justness of spirit" and his excess of British "self-will and eccentricity"; he remains "too wilful . . . , too turbid, too vehement" (III, 275, 107-108; X, 174). Arnold implies that the "medium" and "atmosphere" within which they worked told unfavorably upon Carlyle's style and Macaulay's ideas, and that the style of Macaulay, "the great Apostle of the Philistines" and "a born rhetorician," "has in its turn suffered by his failure in ideas" (III, 247 n.). What is wrong is clear enough, even vividly so; but the desired counter-qualities—moderation, proportion, balance of mind, fitness, measure, centrality (III, 252-53)—are rather negative, and sound more like preventive medicine than a positive literary and intellectual regimen.

Here, Newman came pat to Arnold's purposes. Even before the final installment of the *Apologia* had been issued, Arnold was telling his Oxford audience that, as against the prevailing willfulness, eccentricity, and provinciality of English criticism, Newman's book was "stamped throughout" with the needful quality of "urbanity" (III, 243-44).⁷ Not only is Newman a man who conveys to us the "charm" and "ineffable sentiment" of Oxford itself,

but in England "there needs . . . a miracle of intellectual delicacy" like his "to produce urbanity of style" (III, 244, 250). Newman is even more directly brought into Arnold's campaign against the Philistines in the farewell lecture at Oxford, in June 1867, where "Dr. Newman's movement, the keen desire for beauty and sweetness it nourished, the deep aversion it manifested to the hardness and vulgarity of middle-class liberalism, the strong light it turned on the hideous and grotesque illusions of middle-class Protestantism"—all these are said to have contributed to the "sudden collapse and supersession" of the older "self-confident liberalism" (V, 107). Urbanity, charm, sentiment, beauty, sweetness—these remained part of Arnold's permanent repertory of epithets for Newman; to these were later added the somewhat more doubtful terms, delicate, exquisite, entrancing, musical, subtle, mournful (VI, 377; VIII, 131; IX, 165). These terms, though they did not quite directly address Newman's style, did suggest its impact and offered a basis for others to work on.

For in the '60s, for a complex of reasons, there developed a kind of benevolent conspiracy among a group of Newman's now well-placed former hearers—led by Arnold—to invest the newly "available" figure of Newman with those literary and spiritual qualities felt to be most needful against contemporary faults of mind, spirit, expression, and critical temper.⁸ Apart from Arnold's various efforts, the most important single event was the widely noted portrait of Newman served up in 1866 by John Campbell Shairp, the Scottish critic and an old Oxford friend of Arnold's and Clough's.⁹ In fact, Shairp provided most of the elements Arnold worked up into his own now more famous bravura in the Emerson lecture of 1883. Shairp spoke of the "wonderful charm" of Newman, and of "the beauty, the silver intonation," of Newman's voice in the pulpit of St. Mary's, a "tone of voice . . . like a fine strain of unearthly music," with "now and then . . . a forlorn undertone." But it is especially the elaborate paradoxes that Shairp is driven to in describing Newman's style that suggest the simple but "refined" and "delicate" manner that was to become the new "artistic" norm. "What delicacy of style," he exclaims, "yet what calm power! how gentle, yet how strong! how simple, yet how suggestive! how homely, yet how refined! how penetrating, yet how tender-hearted!"

6. *Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor, 1960-), V, 347, 316-17. Hereafter cited as CPW or, where the context is clear, by volume and page alone. Arnold's attacks on Macaulay's "vulgar" and "retarding" self-conceit were pursued unrelentingly and with wounding contempt: see especially III, 203, 210, 232, 257, 381; V, 17, 51; VIII, 165-70, 173-76.

7. "The Literary Influence of Academies" was delivered on June 4, 1864 (CPW, III, 463). The seventh pamphlet of the *Apologia* appeared on June 2; an eighth part, answering Kingsley "in detail," on June 16.

8. I have followed out one significant aspect of the reemergence of Newman in "'O Unforgotten Voice': The Memory of Newman in the Nineteenth-Century," *Sources for Reinterpretation: The Use of Nineteenth-Century Literary Documents: Essays in Honor of C. L. Cline* (Austin, 1975), pp. 23-55.

9. "Keble and *The Christian Year*" appeared in the *North British Review*, NS 6 (September 1866), 229-64; rpt. in 1868 in *Studies in Poetry and Philosophy*. The Newman passage is cited here from the following edition (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1889), pp. 208-18.

The next important event was the republication in 1868 of Newman's Anglican parochial sermons; the way had been prepared to make a younger generation, including Pater, eagerly receptive, and the sermons became the object of a kind of cult in themselves. R. W. Church, one of Newman's most fervent Anglican admirers, rose to the occasion in the pages of the widely read *Saturday Review*, and described the sermons in terms that look like a first version of Pater's "Style"—and indeed of the broader goals of the stylism Merritt chronicles later in the century.¹⁰ For this reason, his account is worth citing at length.

The new tastes are reflected in the statement that Newman "is as far as anything can be in a great preacher from an orator," and that he wrote a sermon the way one "would write an earnest letter." But the deeper sources of the attraction are suggested when Church notes that the "outside form and look was [sic] very much that of the regular best Oxford type—calm, clear, and lucid in expression, strong in its grasp, measured in statement, and far too serious to think of rhetorical ornament." The range of expression Newman drew on was "wider, subtler, and more delicate" than in most sermons, and with "his strong, easy, exact language, the instrument of a powerful and argumentative mind, he plunged into the deep realities of the inmost spiritual life, of which cultivated preachers had been shy." His words were "the result of intellectual scrutiny, balancings and sufferings within; words of the utmost soberness belonging to a deeply gauged and earnestly formed purpose." Newman has "a very light, strong, easy touch," not the "self-conscious" style of Gibbon and Macaulay, but the "unconscious," as in Pascal or Swift or Hume, where the power of expression "seems to come at the writer's command, without effort." But both modes, he concludes, require "hard labour and honest persevering self-correction." The confident master of his instrument, Newman "can forget himself and let himself go," in a "free unconstrained movement." "With all that uncared-for play and simplicity, there was a fulness, a richness, a curious delicate music, quite instinctive and unsought for; above all, a precision and sureness of expression. . . ."

Perhaps most significantly, Newman's style is said to have "an ethical element which was almost inseparable from its literary characteristics." The "vast realities of re-

ligion" so held Newman's mind that "his personality sank and faded away before their overwhelming presence," and like the founders of the Oxford Movement generally, he had a "strong instinctive shrinking . . . from anything like personal display, any conscious aiming at the ornamental or brilliant, any show of gifts or courting of popular applause." A "stern self-containing severity . . . made [those founders] turn away, not only with fear, but with distaste and repugnance, from all that implied distinction or seemed to lead to honour." The prevailing keynote, finally, is a "severe and solemn minor," connected with "an aura of vastness and awe" and a plumbing of "the mysteries of human nature." The sermons struck readers by reason of "their strong effortless freedom, their lofty purpose, their generous standard, . . . their austere yet piercing sympathy." Paradox again, and all connected with an Arnoldian "disinterestedness."

Shairp reenters the scene with one of the lectures he delivered as Professor of Poetry at Oxford—which Pater would very likely have heard.¹¹ The high-pitched claims for Newman's style in the sermons, "so simple and transparent; so strong and yet so tender," displaying "the assured self-possession, the quiet gracefulness, of the finished athlete," are now inevitably paradoxical. Newman, "with disciplined moderation, and delicate self-restraint, shrinks instinctively from overstatement but penetrates more directly to the core by words of sober truth and 'vivid exactness.'" But I think Pater would have taken particular note of Shairp's treatment of the mode of Newman's personal presence in the sermons, a point that supplements Church. Beyond the many "most touching and most truly poetical" passages in Newman, Shairp seeks to define "touching passages of another kind," which "yield momentary glimpses of a very tender heart that has a burden of its own, unrevealed to man." Averse to "public exhibition of himself," Newman offered "a mere indirect hint . . . a few indirect words, dropped as it were unawares," which seemed to reveal "some very inward experience." Such a glimpse or glance haunts the reader ever after. For all this "veiled" quality, Shairp can claim, "the sermons seem more than any of his other writings to be full of his individuality, and to utter his inner feelings in the best language."¹²

Important later occasions for dwelling on Newman's

10. First, anonymously, in the *Saturday Review*, June 5, 1869; cited here from Church's *Occasional Papers* (London, 1897), II, 440-62. Church explicitly refers to Shairp's "striking account" of Newman, *The Times*, as early as 10 April 1869, p. 4, referred to Newman as one of "the three greatest masters of English style in the generation which is just closing"—the other two being DeQuincey and Macaulay! Cited in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. Charles Stephen Dessain and Thomas Gornall (Oxford, 1973), p. 241n.

11. Shairp's tenure began in 1877 and ended with his death in 1885. "Prose Poets: Cardinal Newman" was collected in *As-*

pects of Poetry (1881)—cited here from the American edition (Boston, 1891), pp. 377-401.

12. Shairp's discussion is plainly indebted to Keble's highly original view, in his Oxford lectures on poetry (1832-1841), that poetry is, paradoxically, a form of veiled self-expression. The *Praelectiones* were not Englished until 1912, though Saintsbury had earlier taken admiring note. They were in effect rediscovered in more recent times by M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (New York, 1958), especially pp. 147-48, 240, 257.

qualities were his being made a Cardinal in 1879, an event sentimentally approved in the press, and his death in 1890—by which time R. H. Hutton's remark on Newman's "pure and delicate" writing, that "Of Newman's literary style it is hardly possible to speak too highly," is entirely typical.¹³ Pater himself in the meantime had done a good deal for the furtherance of the myth; not only was Newman a chief source of the theory in "Style," as I have said, but although "imaginative prose" is declared to be "the special and opportune art of the modern world," Newman and Thackeray are the only Victorians singled out in that essay for praise as stylists. And Pater made no secret of his preference. In a book of 1890 on "authorship," in which most of the remarks on style, by a wide sampling of literary men, may be called "anti-style," Pater remarks, "I have come to think that, on the whole, Newman is our greatest master of prose, partly on account of the variety of his excellence."¹⁴

It is evident enough that the Newman insistently presented for twenty-five years by friendly critics, the Newman praised for his "idiomatic, . . . easy and elegant" style,¹⁵ fits Pater's and Saintsbury's prescriptions for urbanity, flexibility, delicacy, simplicity, directness, exactness—and the avoidance of ornament, decoration, and surplusage. But the emphasis placed by Newman's promoters on self-possession, measure, severity, austerity, "disciplined moderation, [and] delicate self-restraint," provides, I suggest, the exact ground of another, more mysterious matter, Pater's fascinating concern in "Style" with "exclusions, rejections," "self-restraint and renunciation," "a skilful economy of means, *ascēsis*," a "frugal closeness of style," "austerity"—and finally, perhaps, the view that, for "a select few," literature is "a sort of cloistral refuge."¹⁶

Newman's admirers also help explain another, related matter in late-Victorian stylism—I mean the role of "individuality" and "personality" in style. Merritt properly makes much of the "cult of individuality" in the later stylism, Newman's view (though Merritt does not know

it is Newman's) that "literature is personal," "the faithful expression of [the writer's] intense personality, attending on his inward world of thought as its very shadow."¹⁷ But I think Merritt may be confusing what he calls "extreme stylistic personalism," style as "a function of self," "the idiosyncrasy, the uniqueness of the creative self," with precisely the self-display and "strong" effects that Saintsbury, Pater, and others *reject*. R. L. Stevenson may, as he admitted rather boastfully, have played "the sedulous ape" to the highly "personal" Hazlitt and Lamb; Pater certainly admired Lamb; and Saintsbury himself exploited the first-person mode to the point of opinionatedness. But in recommending that the writer convey the "truth" and "sincerity" of his own "sense of the world," Pater explicitly cautions him to avoid "the subjectivity, the mere caprice, of the individual" ("Style," p. 36). And it is obvious that Pater himself is not "personal" to the degree that Lamb and Hazlitt and DeQuincey are. Pater has a strongly marked or at least characteristic manner, that draws attention to the implied author and his way of conducting things; but he reveals very little of himself in the directly autobiographical sense, and, as we would expect from a writer of Pater's temperament, his cool "stylism" is the agent of a great "reserve," one that conceals as much as it reveals.

Church and Shairp help explain the kind of "personal" presence Pater *would* sanction. As we saw, Church noted that Newman's "personality sank and faded away" before "the vast realities of religion," and that he avoided "personal display," "ornamental and brilliant" effects, and the "courting of popular applause." Shairp, from another angle, had spoken of a "glimpse," "a mere indirect hint," a haunting "glance"—words that become "at once a revelation and a veil" of the self. And yet, paradoxically, the thoughts and style are so perfect that "more of the man" survives in the sermons than in most discourses, and they are "full of his individuality." Church had similarly remarked that Newman's "very light, strong, easy touch"

13. See R. H. Hutton, *Criticisms on Contemporary Thought and Thinkers* (London, 1894), II, 277. One can hardly suspect John Morley of being party to a pro-Newman "conspiracy"; but Hutton (*Spectator*, 16 August 1890: rpt. *Criticisms*, II, 270-79) paraphrases Morley speaking, "two or three months ago," of Newman's style as "an illustration of the perfect style." I have not found Morley's text. As part of his own glib undergraduate velleities about joining the Roman Catholic Church, Oscar Wilde was quick to pick up the sentimentalities about Newman, "that divine man" (14 March 1877; *The Letters of Oscar Wilde*, ed. Rupert Hart-Davis [New York, 1962], p. 33). As he wrote at the time of Newman's death in August 1890, "In what a fine 'temper' Newman always wrote! the temper of a scholar. But how subtle was his subtle mind" (p. 274). Wilde called for several of Newman's works while in prison (pp. 399n., 405n.), and was described as "reading Pater and Newman lately, one book a week" (p. 409). Probably the best discussion of Newman the artist and stylist written during his own lifetime is Hutton's essay in the *Contemporary Re-*

view for March 1866; rpt. in *Essays on Some of the Modern Guides to English Thought in Matters of Faith* (1887). Some of the shrewdest qualifications about Newman's style come from one of his chief admirers and disciples. See *Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. C. C. Abbott, 2nd ed. (London, 1956), p. 380.

14. *The Art of Authorship*, ed. George Bainton (London, 1890), pp. 293-94. Newman is singled out by several as a model: see pp. 168, 176, 195, 228, 244, 297. Pater's "rule" of style there (p. 293)—"Truthfulness—truthfulness, I mean, to one's own inward view or impression," "the exact propriety with which language follows or shapes itself to the consciousness within"—is simply another paraphrase of Newman's lectures in *The Idea of a University*.

15. Pater, *Essays from "The Guardian"* (London, 1910), p. 16.

16. *Appreciations*, p. 18.

17. *The Idea of a University*, ed. C. F. Harrold (New York, 1947), pp. 240-41; and see *Hebrew and Hellene* (n. 3, above), p. 333.

was seemingly "negligent" and "unconscious" and "without effort"—though in fact it required "hard labour and honest persevering self-correction." Newman's "uncared-for" simplicity and richness and "delicate music," then, were designed to *seem*, precisely, "quite instinctive and unsought for." The result was a tone of "effortless freedom."

This, I think, is the kind of "presence and personality of the speaker," to use Shairp's words, that both Saintsbury and Pater would endorse. For Pater's own "aristocratic" ideal comes down finally to an impression of *distinction* and *tact*, achieved with the least possible sign of effort or revelation of means or overt calling attention to itself—"personal" for the most part in the sense of being, on close inspection, "suggestive" of the author's own implied restraint and careful workmanship and delicacy of perception. Though perhaps only Pater of the late-century the-

orists of style had Newman himself so continuously in mind, Pater was extremely influential as both theorist and practitioner, and only Newman's style and embodied personality completely filled the new bill. Of course distinctions should be noted. What was primarily a matter of spiritual integrity and power for Newman's religious admirers like Shairp, Church, and Hutton, became—in a line starting with Matthew Arnold and culminating in Pater—more centrally a matter of "aristocratic" aesthetic tact and distinction. Nevertheless, the cult of Newman the supreme artist in prose not only fills in some of the essential background of the later stylism but establishes one more crucial line of that still rather puzzling continuity descending from Newman and the Oxford Movement to aestheticism.¹⁸

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Contrasting Pictorial Representations of Time: The Dual Narration of *Bleak House*

Devra Braun Rosenberg

THE DUAL NARRATION of *Bleak House* expresses a developing split in mid-nineteenth-century conceptions of time. The first-person narrator, Esther, tells a Victorian story of human relationships in which she depicts time, in retrospect, as a linear progression of pictorial moments. These synthetic picture-moments resemble in a number of ways the moments of kinetic summary depicted in nineteenth-century genre and narrative painting.

The third-person narrator of *Bleak House*, in contrast, builds his scenes incrementally out of fragmentary glimpses of time. Time is seen not as a linear series of fixed pictures, but rather as a growing present that continuously changes shape with the accretion of new visual fragments. The narrator's mode of pictorially representing time is unlike that of the nineteenth-century narrative

painters; it more closely parallels and anticipates the mode of the contemporaneously developing early impressionist painters, who depicted the experience of time in fleeting, fragmentary visual impressions.

In the first installment of *Bleak House*, Dickens sets up a deliberate contrast between his narrator's impressionistic apprehension of reality and Esther's synthetic and more conventionally "Victorian" vision. In her first chapter, Esther renders time retrospectively in a synoptic sequence of narrative pictorial scenes. The impersonal narrator, in contrast, opens the novel by rendering the ongoing experience of time in his instantaneous description of glimpse after momentary glimpse of foggy London.¹

In Esther's first chapter, "A Progress," she chronicles the course of her first twenty years of life by juxtaposing

18. The adulation of Newman, though no doubt tapering off, did not cease with his death. Even the severe Saintsbury speaks of Newman as "one of the greatest masters of exquisite prose the world has ever seen," marked by a "clear, cool, silvery note," and remarks that "the wand of Newman had its influence on many after mid-century." See *A History of English Prose Rhythm* (1912; rpt. Bloomington, 1965), pp. 388, 411, 417.

1. While I see a sharp duality in the analogy of *Bleak House* to painting, it is interesting that two outstanding critics each support one facet of the analogy exclusively: Mario Praz argues in *The Hero in Eclipse in Victorian Fiction* (London, 1956), that Dickens' novels can be compared with genre painting. J. Hillis Miller comes to a contrasting conclusion after his perceptive syntactic analysis of the implied time frame of *Bleak House*'s fog scene in his fine book, *Charles Dickens: The World*

of *His Novels* (Cambridge, 1956), pp. 164-65. Miller maintains that "the initial paragraphs of *Bleak House* and indeed the characteristic 'atmosphere' throughout Dickens' work, can be by no means accounted for by . . . [Praz's] analogy, however apt it may be for certain scenes in Dickens. Dickens' descriptive art is much more accurately described as impressionist painting in prose than as analogous to genre painting" (pp. 161-62). Perhaps Miller's emphasis on "the initial paragraphs of *Bleak House*"—that is, the narrator's paragraphs—accounts for his disagreement with Praz's analogy with genre painting. Miller draws virtually all of his support for the impressionist analogy from the impersonal narrator's narrative, devoting very little discussion to Esther's narrative, despite the fact that it takes up 33 of the book's 67 chapters. All references to *Bleak House* in this essay are to the Oxford University Press edition (London, 1971).

a series of synthetic scenes that depict central moments in her life. The most important scene is probably the recollection of that childhood birthday when Esther's godmother speaks the words that will echo in Esther's mind throughout the course of the book: "Your mother, Esther, is your disgrace, and you were hers" (ch. 3). The incident that triggers this utterance is transfixed in Esther's memory as a scene that serves more as a pictorial condensation of the significance of her whole relationship with her godmother than as a depiction of appearances at a given moment:

Dinner was over, and my godmother and I were sitting at the table before the fire. The clock ticked, the fire clicked; not another sound had been heard in the room, or in the house, for I don't know how long. I happened to look timidly up from my stitching, across the table, at my godmother, and I saw in her face, looking gloomily at me, "It would have been far better, little Esther, that you had had no birthday; that you had never been born!" (ch.3)

It is no fortuitous instant, isolated from its context in time, in which Esther "happens" to read such a complex and significant thought in her godmother's face, but a moment that encompasses all that has passed before, and much that is to develop out of this scene. What does develop out of the scene, Esther implies, is nothing less than the selfless, almost self-effacing humility that is to become Esther's lifelong characteristic:

I felt the distance between my godmother and myself so much more after the birthday, and felt so sensible of filling a place in her house which ought to have been empty, that I found her more difficult of approach, though I was fervently grateful to her in my heart, than ever. I felt in the same way towards my school companions; I felt in the same way towards Mrs. Rachael, . . . and Oh, towards her daughter, of whom she was proud. . . . I was very retired and quiet, and tried to be very diligent. (ch.3)

This scene of awakening to her sense of "original sin," then, spans an important moment during which past flows into future in the development of Esther's identity and character. Esther has chosen to depict a moment that—in keeping with G. E. Lessing's eighteenth-century definition of the proper sort of "moment" to be depicted in painting—"is at once expressive of the past and pregnant with the future."² Lessing's aesthetic reveals a premodern confidence in the artist's actual ability to isolate and apprehend the meaning of the present and to envision, in that same moment, the shape of the future. It also implies a traditional assurance in the artist's ability to make his ap-

prehension of the passage of time available to the reader through descriptive or illustrative detail.

Esther's conventional attitude toward the representation of time provides some of the key distinctions between her vision and that of the impersonal narrator, just as temporal attitude provides one of the principal distinctions between the fundamentally traditional nineteenth-century narrative painters' vision of reality and the innovative vision of the impressionists. The art historian Linda Nochlin discusses the latter distinction in terms that can be applied to the different visions of the two narrators of *Bleak House*: "In pre-nineteenth century art," she notes, "time was never a completely isolated instant but always implied what preceded and what would follow. In classical art and all schemata based upon it [and Nochlin contends that narrative painters are, in this respect, in the classical tradition³], the passage of time is condensed and stabilized by means of a significant kinetic summary." In contrast, innovative nineteenth-century painters,

like Degas, destroyed this paradigm of temporal continuity in favour of the disjointed temporal fragment. . . . The appearance of a single moment is painted from a viewpoint which makes its discreteness, its lack of significant compositional or psychological focus most apparent. Time is seen as the arrester of significance not—as in traditional art—the medium in which it unfolds.⁴

Esther's synthetic tableaux condense and stabilize the passage of time through significant kinetic summary. The impersonal narrator, on the other hand, does not share Esther's implicit confidence in the ability to apprehend time through descriptive detail. Time—the visual instant—is seen as the arrester of significance, capturing "Chance people on the bridges peeping over the parapets . . . with fog all round them, as if they were up in a balloon, and hanging in the misty clouds" (ch. 1). This pictorial glimpse is from the "fog scene" that opens *Bleak House*, a scene the narrator builds out of the disjointed fragments of time and space arrested in his visual scanning process:

Smoke lowering down from chimney-pots, making a soft black drizzle. . . . Dogs, undistinguishable in mire. Horses, scarcely better; splashed to their very blinkers. Foot passengers, jostling one another's umbrellas. . . .

Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping. . . . Fog on the Essex marshes, fog on the Kentish heights. Fog creeping into the cabooses of collier-brigs; fog lying out in the yards, and hovering in the rigging of great ships. . . . (ch.1)

2. G. E. Lessing, *Laocoon: Or the Limit of Poetry and Painting*, trans. William Ross (London, 1836; first published, 1764), p. 152.

3. Linda Nochlin, *Realism* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1972), pp.

147, 150.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31. I am indebted as well for much of the artistic and temporal terminology I use in this essay.

In the fog scene, Dickens uses a series of temporally indefinite (that is, verbless), staccato sentence fragments to render the process of perception. This technique conveys the innovative idea that we perceive time as a series of elusive temporal fragments. This idea remained dramatically new two decades later when Walter Pater remarked in his controversial conclusion to *The Renaissance*

that those impressions of the individual mind to which, for each one of us, experience dwindles down, are in perpetual flight; that each of them is limited by time, and that as time is infinitely divisible, each of them is infinitely divisible also; all that is actual in it being a single moment, gone while we try to apprehend it. . . .⁵

The narrator of *Bleak House* builds his fog scene out of those fleeting impressions that Pater considered the substance of experience. Or, in other words, the fundamental unit of experience rendered in the fog scene resembles the impressionist painters' disjointed temporal fragment, not the retrospective, completed moment of kinetic summary which is the elemental unit of experience ordinarily depicted in narrative painting.

By recording even his disjointed temporal impressions in the ongoing process of visual scanning, the narrator causes the reader's perception of the whole scene to continuously alter as each sentence fragment adds to and transforms the verbal montage of images and actions that make up the scene. Dickens implies through this technique that the experience of the present cannot be readily apprehended and pinned down, that time is a continuous present that seems to change shape unpredictably with every instant of its movement, like the fog that pervades the novel's imagery, or like the mud that accretes in ever-changing form on London street-corners as sliding pedestrians add "new deposits to the crust upon crust of mud. . . . sticking . . . and accumulating at compound interest" (ch. 1).

II

Esther does not share the impersonal narrator's vision of the evanescence of time; she sees the development of present into future as a steady, linear progress rather than as an uneven, incremental growth. She does not regard the present as transforming our apprehension of the past and future; the present leaves her perceptions of the past fixed and unchanged. Memory is for her a series of fixed pictures that she can juxtapose against the configurations that occur in the present in order to measure the time that has passed.

Esther's entire narration coheres around the serial pictures that she uses to apprehend each milestone in the

uniform passage of time. She records the stages in the progress of Ada's and Richard's love for each other (the main subplot in her narration) through a sequential series of narrative scenes. In the first of the series, describing the night the young people arrive at Bleak House, Esther frames Ada and Richard at a moment (in keeping with Lessing's traditional specifications) "which is at once expressive of the past and pregnant with the future":

Ada sat at the piano; Richard stood beside her, bending down. Upon the wall, their shadows blended together, surrounded by strange forms, not without a ghostly motion though reflecting from motionless objects. Ada touched the notes so softly, and sang so low, that the wind, sighing away to the distant hills, was as audible as the music. The mystery of the future, and the little clue afforded to it by the voice of the present, seemed expressed in the whole picture. (ch. 6, emphasis mine)

Esther uses this synthetic representation not only to apprehend a stage in Ada's and Richard's relationship, but also—as she herself explains below—to frame herself and her guardian during a moment of observation:

. . . It is not to recall this fancy, well as I remember it, that I recall the scene. . . . Though Mr. Jarndyce's glance, as he withdrew it, rested for but a moment on me, I felt as if, in that moment, he confided to me—and knew that he confided to me, and that I received the confidence—his hope that Ada and Richard might one day enter on a dearer relationship. (ch. 6)

This picture-like scene functions for the reader as a verbal-visual condensation and crystallization of an entire temporal stage in the emotions of Ada and Richard, and also of Esther and Jarndyce toward the couple. And the scene functions to condense meaning for Esther and for her guardian in the same sense as it does for the reader. It is because the scene represents to Esther and Jarndyce the crystallization of an entire emotional stage, that Esther recalls it to Jarndyce's mind when she wishes him to envision the transition toward a new stage in the young couple's relationship:

"Guardian," said I, "you remember the happy night when first we came to Bleak House? When Ada was singing in the dark room?"

I wished to call to his remembrance the look he had given me then. . . . I saw that I did so. . . .

"Because," said I, "Ada and Richard have fallen in love." (ch. 13)

Directly after this conversation, Esther and her guardian are joined by Ada and Richard; and Esther records

5. Walter Pater, *The Renaissance* (London, 1888), from the second paragraph of the "Conclusion."

the progress of the couple's love through a second emblematic tableau:

The door stood open, and *we both followed them with our eyes, as they passed down the adjoining room on which the sun was shining, and out at its farther end.* Richard with his head bent, and her hand drawn through his arm, was talking to her very earnestly; and she looked up in his face, listening. . . . *So young, so beautiful, so full of hope and promise, they went on lightly through the sunlight, as their own happy thoughts might then be traversing the years to come, and making them all years of brightness. So they passed away into the shadow, and were gone.* It was only a burst of light that had been so radiant. *The room darkened as they went out, and the sun was clouded over.* (ch. 13, emphasis mine)

When Esther next recalls these two scenes, peculiarly frozen and transfixed in her imagination, she juxtaposes them with an ongoing scene in order to measure the change in her guardian's feelings about the couple:

This was the first time I ever saw him follow Ada with his eyes, with something of a shadow on their benevolent expression. *I well remembered the look with which he had contemplated her and Richard, when she was singing in the firelight; it was but a very little while since he had watched them passing down the room in which the sun was shining, and away into the shade; but his glance was changed,* and even the silent look of confidence in me which now followed it once more, was not quite so hopeful and untroubled as it had originally been. (ch. 17, emphasis mine)

Toward the end of the novel, Esther superimposes her memory of the two initial tableaux on another, ongoing scene to create a single pictorial condensation of the past and present course of Ada's and Richard's love that at the same time depicts the ongoing course of Esther's own love:

Arriving at home. . . . We were in the very same room into which I had brought my blushing girl, when her youthful lover, now her so altered husband, was the choice of her young heart; the very same room, from which my guardian and I had watched them going away through the sunlight, in the fresh bloom of their hope and promise.

We were standing by the open window, . . . when Mr. Woodcourt spoke to me. I learned in a moment that he loved me. (ch. 61)

Esther has used her synthetic pictorial imagination to chronicle in this single superimposed scene the changes wrought by time on human relationships.

Esther uses similar tableaux to record other significant stages in her narrative of human relationships. She depicts Richard's progressive consumption in serial pictures, recalling, for example, a picture of Richard with the parasitic lawyer, Vholes, which epitomizes for her

and for the reader a stage in the process by which Chancery and Vholes are draining Richard's vitality:

I never shall forget those two seated side by side in the lantern's light; Richard, all flush and fire and laughter, with the reins in his hand; Mr. Vholes, quite still, black-gloved, and buttoned up, looking at him as if he were looking at his prey and charming it. I have before me the whole picture of the warm dark night, . . . the dusty track of the road closed in by hedgerows . . . the gaunt pale horse with his ears pricked up, and the driving away at speed to Jarndyce and Jarndyce. (ch. 37)

The journey and the road in this picture symbolize both Richard's life and the linear course of Esther's story about Richard's life. It is with both of these meanings in mind that this road imagery again enters Esther's reflections later that warm dark night:

I look along the road before me, where the distance already shortens and the journey's end is growing visible; and, true and good above the dead sea of the Chancery suit, . . . I think I see my darling. (ch. 37)

Esther's tendency to conceive of her pictorial representations in relation to a defined road of time is what finally distinguishes her sensibility from the narrator's, in spite of Dickens' occasional confusion or blending of the two narrative voices. Admittedly, Dickens blurs the pictorial contrasts between the two narratives: he allows the narrator's visually "naive," impressionistic vision progressively to infiltrate Esther's rendering; and, in turn, he sometimes uses the impersonal narrator to create symbolic narrative tableaux, as, for example, when the narrator portrays Richard, in Vholes' office, as a meticulously detailed "portrait of Young Despair" (ch. 39).

Despite Dickens' occasional confusion of the two representational modes, however, there remain predominant distinctions in sensibility and attitudes toward time that underlie the characteristic pictorial contrasts and that ultimately define the two narrative voices. So, although the narrator creates individual verbal pictures that could fit into Esther's Richard/Vholes serial representations, the overarching significance of Esther's pictures differs from that of the narrator's; and it is only Esther who creates the linear temporal framework within which Richard's story gains whatever meaning it comes to have.

It is fitting, then, that the final scene in the Richard/Vholes serial is Esther's, for it is a scene colored by Esther's vision of the temporal finiteness and finality of Richard's life. It occurs in Chancery after the last session of Jarndyce vs. Jarndyce, a few hours before Richard's death. As Vholes leaves the courtroom, he favors Esther with "that slowly devouring look of his," and then, remarks Esther, "he gave one gasp as if he had swallowed the last

morsel of his client, and his black buttoned-up unwholesome figure glided away" (ch. 65). Esther pictures Vholes almost as if he were time, or Chronos himself, devouring and finally swallowing and ending human life.⁶ Esther has used this concluding tableau and the series of pictorial scenes that lead up to it to measure some of the developments in human relationships that cause her story to move along its defined linear course from beginning to resolution.

III

Continually intertwining with and overlapping Esther's conventionally told story, however, is the narrator's more modern story that is without milestones and without beginning or end. The narrator's tale is colored by his vision of time as a series of simultaneously occurring processes that make up a large process of continual change. Even when he tells the linear stories of Jo's, Lady Dedlock's, or Tulkinghorn's journeys from life to death, he always keeps them in their perspective as segments of a larger, changing shape of time. So Jo, whose linear story is much like one that Esther might tell, is also seen in the perspective of the larger social progress of Tom-All Alone's. When Jo dies the narrator does not convey the sense of well-defined, enduring change within the progress of human relationships that Esther emphasizes with the death of Richard. Instead, he reminds us that in the perspective of ongoing time, Jo is merely "Dead! dead. . . . And dying thus around us every day" (ch. 47).

And the narrator chooses to depict both Tulkinghorn's and Lady Dedlock's journeys from life to death not through defined progressions of fixed pictures but through kinetic imagery whose meanings seem to grow and develop with the process of time. No "milestone" images summarize the stages of their lives. Instead, the imagery tends to be diffuse and elusive, and only when Tulkinghorn's and Lady Dedlock's lifetimes are complete can its correspondence with their lives be understood.

The painted figure of the Roman, "Allegory," for example, points at the meaning behind the narrator's fragmentary pictures of Tulkinghorn. It is a meaning that neither the reader nor the characters are able to grasp, however, because the fragments of meaning have not yet been pieced together in synthetic retrospect, as they might have been in Esther's narrative. Allegory points insistently at Hortense, Tulkinghorn's future murderer, but neither Tulkinghorn nor the reader understands why. And Allegory points at Lady Dedlock, as she passes by, disguised as Hortense, in search of Hawdon's grave:

From the ceiling, foreshortened Allegory, in the person of one impossible Roman upside down, points . . . obtrusively towards the window. Why should Mr. Tulkinghorn, for such no reason, look out of window? Is the hand not always pointing there? So he does not look out of window.

And if he did, what would it be to see a woman going by? (ch. 16)

Of course, there is a real reason why Tulkinghorn should look out the window: if he could read the symbolic pictorial meaning of the scene—if he could see why the finger is pointing at the disguised lady—he could possess Lady Dedlock's secret and perhaps even discover its connection with his own fate. The narrator shows us scene after scene of Allegory's pointing; but like Tulkinghorn and the other characters, we are not at first able to read these pictorial glimpses. Only after Tulkinghorn's death, in imaginative retrospect, can we piece together the possible correspondence between the pointing finger and Tulkinghorn's journey from life to death:

For many years, the persistent Roman has been pointing, with no particular meaning, from that ceiling. It is not likely that he has any new meaning in him to-night. Once pointing, always pointing—like any Roman, or even Briton with a single idea. There he is, . . . pointing, unavailingly, all night long. Moonlight, darkness, dawn, sunrise, day. There he is still, eagerly pointing, and no one minds him.

But, a little after the coming of the day, come people. . . . And either the Roman has some new meaning in him, not expressed before, or the foremost of them goes wild. . . .

So, it shall happen surely, through many years to come, . . . that the Roman, pointing from the ceiling, shall point, . . . with far greater significance than he ever had in Mr. Tulkinghorn's time, and with a deadly meaning. For Mr. Tulkinghorn's time is over for evermore; and the Roman pointed at the murderous hand uplifted against his life, and pointed helplessly at him, from night to morning, lying face downward on the floor, shot through the heart. (ch. 48)

The death of Lady Dedlock and the downfall of the Dedlocks are depicted, like the death of Tulkinghorn, in pictorial glimpses that gain meaning incrementally. The narrator describes Chesney Wold—its park, its Ghost Walk, and its drawing room—again and again (just as he described Allegory again and again) to sketch the gathering atmosphere he perceives enveloping it. His technique and treatment of time here resemble Monet's, when two decades later he conveyed a sense of the elusiveness of perceived reality and the falseness of composite visual detail by using dozens of canvases to capture the sequential transformations of light on Rouen Cathedral. Of course, atmospheric effects and visual detail in *Bleak House* have

6. I am indebted for this observation to Professor Steven Marcus. I would like to thank Professor Marcus and Professor Martin

Meisel for their perceptive suggestions and indispensable encouragement.

symbolic associations that they only infrequently have in impressionist painting, but the notions of time implied in the technique are similar. The narrator's need for repeated description implies that we can perceive the deeper realities beneath appearance only through the accretion of fragmentary impressions.

The narrator's repeated impressionistic descriptions of Chesney Wold contrast with Esther's treatment of Bleak House. Esther describes Bleak House only once, the first time she sees it. Her retrospective vision allows her to synthesize the whole process of her apprehension of Bleak House into a single, fixed, symbolic tableau. The narrator, on the other hand, finds that his vision of Chesney Wold grows and changes in meaning with every instant of perception. So not only must he describe Chesney Wold again and again, but in each description he conveys a sense of the scene's continual kinesis. In his two-page impressionistic rendering, for example, of the process of "Sunset in the Long Drawing-room at Chesney Wold" (as Phiz's illustration is entitled), the narrator renders consciousness of the scene's continual transformation with the process of time, employing the same staccato phrases he used in the fog scene.

The metaphorical meanings that attach to the scene's atmospheric impressions and fleeting visual images become more and more apparent as the images accrete with each perceptual instant. At first, the meaning behind the transformation of the portraits in the sunset is far from clear; we first imagine the process to be an ordinary shadowy sunset to be followed in due course by sunrise:

Through some of the fiery windows, beautiful from without, and set, at this sunset hour, . . . in a glorious house of gold, the light excluded at other windows pours in, rich, lavish, overflowing like the summer plenty in the land. Then do the frozen Dedlocks thaw. . . . Down into the bosom of a stony shepherdess there steals a fleck of light and warmth. . . . One ancestress of Volumnia . . . —shoots out into a halo and becomes a saint. A maid of honour . . . seems to bathe in glowing water, and it ripples as it glows. (ch. 40)

At first the sunset seems rich, lavish, and bountiful, and transforms the Dedlocks with glorious golden halos. But as the details accrete, their metaphorical associations build up to suggest that the sun of the house of Dedlock will soon set forever:

. . . it ripples as it glows.

But the fire of the sun is dying. Even now the floor is dusky, and shadow slowly mounts the walls, bringing the Dedlocks down like age and death. And now, upon my Lady's picture . . . a weird shade falls from some old tree, that turns it pale, and flutters it, and looks as if a great arm held a veil or hood, watching an opportunity to draw it

over her. Higher and darker rises shadow on the wall—now a red gloom on the ceiling—now the fire is out.

All that prospect, which from the terrace looked so near, has moved solemnly away, and changed—not the first nor the last of beautiful things that look so near and will so change—into a distant phantom. . . . Now the moon rises, . . . to make the avenue a pavement of light among high cathedral arches fantastically broken.

Now, the moon is high; and the great house, needing habitation more than ever, is like a body without life. . . . Now is the time for shadow, when every corner is a cavern, . . . when anything and everything can be made of the heavy staircase beams excepting their own proper shapes, when the armour has dull lights upon it not easily to be distinguished from stealthy movement. . . . But, of all the shadows in Chesney Wold, the shadow in the long drawing-room upon my Lady's picture is the first to come, the last to be disturbed. At this hour and by this light it changes into threatening hands raised up, and menacing the handsome face with every breath that stirs. (ch. 40)

The approaching fall of the Dedlocks through the disgrace of Lady Dedlock can be glimpsed in this picture, but the characters in the novel are little better able to piece together the visual signs and read this prophetic tableau than they were able to read the meaning of Allegory's pointing finger. Only when the end of the Dedlock story is imminent can the narrator look back over the whole in imagined retrospect and begin to apprehend the correspondence between the fluctuating, and finally darkening, shadows and the fate of the Dedlocks:

. . . Sir Leicester holds his shrunken state in the long drawing-room . . . and reposes in his old place before my Lady's picture. Closed in by night with broad screens, and illumined only in that part, the light of the drawing-room seems gradually contracting and dwindling until it shall be no more. A little more, in truth, and it will be all extinguished for Sir Leicester; and the damp door in the mausoleum . . . will have opened and relieved him. (ch. 66)

In the course of the narrator's scenes, the reader finds himself repeatedly attempting to apprehend the meaning of the fluctuating impressions out of which the story develops incrementally. The narrator's technique in this way causes the reader to participate in discriminating the shape of the story, just as impressionist painters left for the eye and mind of the viewer a role in the blending of their juxtaposed dabs of pure color into meaningful forms. It would be misleading, however, to pursue the impressionist analogy further in this direction; for though the reader does have a more active interpretive role in relation to the narrator's scenes than he does in relation to Esther's retrospectively crystallized sequences, neither narrative is made up of authentically naturalistic impressions of reality; beneath the surface details in both narrators'

pictures lies Dickens' underlayer of presynthesized symbolic meaning.

Nonetheless, valid historical distinctions between the sensibilities of the two narrators can be made. Esther controls and defines the meaning of her pictures within a linear temporal framework characteristically Victorian in conception. In contrast, the impersonal narrator's elusive and diffusely suggestive pictures function within a temporal context that has some of the qualities of spatial form. In this way, the distinctions in sensibility and temporal attitudes that underlie the contrast between Dickens' narrative styles parallel a developing schism in the mid-nineteenth-century sensibility—a schism that was already evidenced in the visual arts in the conflict between the views of time and experience held by narrative paint-

ers and other associates of the Dutch school of "realists," and the innovative views of Turner and of the early impressionists.

We might even speculate that Dickens' choice of these two contrasting pictorial techniques reflects a half-conscious desire to imaginatively possess the experience of time in both modes of perception—one the historically accepted mode, and one yet emerging in importance in the history of art and culture. Perhaps Dickens' choice of the unusual and difficult technique of the split narration reflects an unconscious need to come to terms with the experience of historical tension and transition between two modes of apprehending reality.

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Swinburne's Craft of Pure Expression

Antony H. Harrison

SWINBURNE'S POETRY has repeatedly been attacked for vagueness, diffuseness, and emotional as well as prosodic extravagance.¹ Although the imagery of his verse is generally concrete and graphic, readers are frequently baffled or dismayed by the apparent dissolution of meaning that seems inevitably to occur in the Swinburnean lyric. And although his techniques of composition clearly constitute an intentional "style," critics often insist that Swinburne's "rhapsodic vagaries" can be properly understood only in psychological or biographical terms.² They suggest that because of its idiosyncracies, his poetry is not susceptible to the usual kinds of critical analysis at all. Such reactions, though precipitate, are understandable, for it was often characteristic of Swinburne, as it was of the French symbolists, to use the versatility of grammar to undercut the possibilities in language for precise meaning. In fact, the diffuse effect of Swinburne's verse is a result of both its subject matter and Swinburne's craftsmanship.

John D. Rosenberg describes Swinburne's poetry as deliberately diffuse: "No single word in a Swinburne poem

quite corresponds to a given thing. . . . The adjective floating freely away from its substantive in a Swinburne poem is equivalent to the blob of pigment that is neither sea nor foam nor sky, but all of these, in a Turner painting. Such an art prizes color over outline . . . music over meaning."³ This seems an accurate general characterization of Swinburne's verse, but it does not begin to deal in adequate detail with the technique and final effect of the poems that are so often dismissed as vague. As Rosenberg implies, the charge of vagueness results from the correct initial response to Swinburne's deliberately expansive rather than reductive use of language. But to appreciate the complexity of Swinburne's achievement as a poet, we must extend and supersede first responses by means of patient inquiry. Such inquiry is best begun by determining Swinburne's attitude toward his medium of expression and is completed only when we have become sensitive to the extraordinary effects of his characteristic exploitation of the evanescent properties of language.

In the fourth major chorus of *Atalanta in Calydon*,

and *Ballads*, First Series, he admonished: "I desire that one thing should be remembered: the book is dramatic, many-faceted, multifarious; and no utterance of enjoyment or despair, belief or unbelief, can properly be assumed as the assertion of its author's personal feeling or faith. Were each poem to be accepted as the deliberate outcome and result of the writer's conviction, not mine alone but most other men's verses would leave nothing behind them but a sense of cloudy chaos and suicidal contradiction." Hyder, p. 18.

3. *Swinburne: Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed. John D. Rosenberg (New York: The Modern Library, 1968), p. xxx.

1. As if anticipating such criticism, Swinburne provided in the "Dedicatory Epistle" to the 1904 edition of his collected poetry a vociferous self-defense. "Except to such ears as should always be kept closed against poetry," he inveighed, "there is no music in verse which has not in it sufficient fullness and ripeness of meaning, sufficient adequacy of emotion or of thought, to abide the analysis of any other than the purblind scrutiny of prepossession or the squint-eyed inspection of malignity." The best edition of this essay appears in *Swinburne Replies*, ed. Clyde K. Hyder (Syracuse, 1966). This quotation appears on p. 105.

2. Swinburne would have execrated such critics. In "Notes on Poems and Reviews" (1866), replying to the public reception of *Poems*

Swinburne deals by implication with the ponderous and precarious subject of the relations between language, life, and death. The chorus concludes with the assertion that "words divide and rend; / But silence is most noble till the end."⁴ And it opens with a passage that powerfully suggests the complexity of Swinburne's attitude toward language:

Who hath given man speech? or who hath set therein
A thorn for peril and a snare for sin?
For in the word his life is and his breath,
And in the word his death,
That madness and the infatuate heart may breed
From the word's womb the deed
And life bring one thing forth ere all pass by,
Even one thing which is ours yet cannot die—
Death. (IV, 284)

Language here is represented as symbolic action ("From the word's womb the deed"). Moreover, in Swinburne's early monism the end of all action is represented as implicit in its beginning ("in the word his life is . . . / and his death"). Indeed, life cannot be conceived without man's mad and "infatuate heart" at once conceiving of death, because no action can be conceived as perpetual. Speech is symbolic of both life (desire) and its necessary counterpart, death (relief), as well as of man's passion to be simultaneously possessed of both. Of course, language is, at the same time, the primary vehicle for the expression of all our contradictory passions, of our desire for consummations to every action we initiate. Whereas George Eliot conceived of a "roar on the other side of silence," Swinburne perceives it on this side; it consists in man's inevitable attempts to express passion in language, including the passion for immortality, as well as the passionate and contradictory desire for an end to passions. The possibility of redemption from our cravings and yearnings exists only when those attempts are silenced. As Swinburne insists in "Ilicet" and throughout his early poems, the ultimate, imperturbable silence is found solely in "The poppied sleep, the end of all," where "the heart of wrath is broken, / Where long love ends as a thing spoken" (I, 78).

Of all things transient, Swinburne repeatedly suggests, speech is the most fleeting. Even poets, the supreme masters of speech, are bound to perish. Sappho in "Anactoria" sustains a suspiciously long assertion that she will be made immortal through the affinities of her "song" with man's inescapable passions and the objects of nature. She claims that,

... in the light and laughter, in the moan

And music, and in grasp of lip and hand
And shudder of water that makes felt on land
The immeasurable tremor of all the sea,
Memories shall mix and metaphors of me. (I, 63-64)

But the memory of her passions and her song will necessarily diminish as the generations pass. At the crescendo of her increasingly desperate monologue, Sappho envisions her posthumous union with all natural things and "all high things forever"—a result of "my songs once heard in a strange place" which shall "cleave to men's lives." She insists that she shall not die,

For [men] shall give me of their souls, shall give
Life, and the days and loves wherewith I live,
Shall quicken me with loving, fill with breath,
Save me and serve me, strive for me with death. (I, 66)

However, as David Cook observes, "the extravagant claims the poetess makes for her art contain their own negation. Far from transcending earth's 'deadly works of death and birth,' Sappho's song will be dependent upon them for survival."⁵ Further, in spite of Sappho's yearning for immortality, she cannot conceive of eternal existence in her perennial state of unfulfilled sexual desire for Anactoria. And her song, through which she hopes to remain immortal, is merely the expression of passions which, she is aware, can be finally quelled only in death:

Alas, that neither moon nor snow nor dew
Nor all cold things can purge me wholly through,
Assuage me nor allay me nor appease,
Till supreme sleep shall bring me bloodless ease. (I, 66)

Like "Anactoria," nearly all of the poems in *Poems and Ballads*, First Series, simultaneously illustrate the power of men's passions and the impossibility of adequately and permanently gratifying them. At the same time, these lyrics embody young Swinburne's preoccupation with the fact of mortality, and, as a reflection of it, the evanescence of man's self-expression in language. As a result, much of Swinburne's early verse, while straining language in the attempt to describe states of intense passion, forces upon the reader an awareness of the impermanence of things spoken, the weightless qualities of language that can be worked poetically to leave no definable impress on even the most receptive mind. In most of these poems, expression imitates idea. Often, our perception of syntactical structure dissolves into preoccupation with rhythm and sound. Indeed, perhaps unique in Victorian poetry is Swinburne's ostensibly unlimited resourcefulness in making a poetic virtue out

4. *The Poems of Algernon Charles Swinburne*, 6 vols. (London: Chatto and Windus, 1904), IV, 289. Hereafter all references to poems by Swinburne will appear in the text and cite volume and

page numbers from this standard edition.

5. "The Content and Meaning of Swinburne's 'Anactoria,'" *Victorian Poetry*, IX (1971), 91.

of an acknowledged deficiency of the medium in which he is working. In the following pages I shall use partial explications of several poems from *Poems and Ballads*, First Series, to illustrate techniques used consistently by Swinburne to suspend or dissolve precise meaning in his poems while magnifying their expressive force.

II

"Anactoria" can be seen as both a thematic and technical model for the pieces in *Poems and Ballads* that deal with human yearning for a complete passionate consummation described as impossible to attain in life. In "The Triumph of Time," "Phaedra," and "Hymn to Proserpine," for example, death is described as the ultimate anodyne and an alternate, if not ultimate, consummation to passion. For Sappho all pleasure is mixed with pain, and perfect pleasure is death:

O that I

Durst crush thee out of life with love, and die,
Die of thy pain and my delight, and be
Mixed with thy blood and molten into thee! (I, 61)

In spite of the concrete manner in which desire is portrayed here, the craving for relief from human passions, as expressed by Swinburne's poetic personae, is always uncontainable and its infinite, immedicable nature is always reinforced by the language in which yearning is expressed. In spite of the graphic imagery of the above passage, we feel compelled to suspend belief and assume that its meaning is metaphorical rather than literal. Yet the problems of interpretation with which it forcefully confronts us are not dissolved by describing the statement as merely a hyperbolic expression of consummate sado-masochism. Sappho is yearning (desperately, bitterly) for real pain, real delight, and real death simultaneously—not for merely metaphorical or vicarious oblivion. The words *literally* characterize the intensity and nature of Sappho's complex passion in the vivid description of an impossible act. We are forced here to accept the impossible to the extent that it is realized in language. As in this passage, Swinburne's verse is frequently nonmimetic, but purely expressive. We are, after all, incapable of visualizing the act Sappho describes. Yet, the powerful physicalness of Sappho's yearning to be "Mixed with thy blood and molten into thee" prevents either a metaphorical or a mimetic reading and forces us to receive her words as we would the ravings of a mad woman, as pure expression and exclusively symbolic action.

From almost every piece in *Poems and Ballads* we can cull illustrations of other techniques Swinburne employs to break down the reader's apprehension of explicit meaning in the process of heightening emotional force. The

most impressive examples occur in poems where death is hailed as an anodyne and the possibilities for dissolution in death are explored through the dissolution of meaning in language (a representation of the dissolution of consciousness). In these poems Swinburne's language is, finally, always grammatical; literal meanings are decipherable, but resonances can be pursued until they dissolve just beyond intelligibility, as they do in the poem "Hermaphroditus." For Swinburne the statue of Hermaphroditus in the Louvre constitutes a mythical but palpable representation of that insatiable state of desire expressed by Sappho in "Anactoria." Because of his sexual duality, the mythical Hermaphroditus is not merely sexually impotent, but impotent as well for action in the world, a still birth, suspended between sleep and life in a perpetual state of yearning, possessed of the *combined* desires of man and woman. The statue is the physical representation of insupportably intense, insatiable human passions.

With delicate empathy, in the first sonnet of the "Hermaphroditus" sequence, Swinburne is able to induce in the reader a state of being and yearning—a state of suspended action—approaching that which the statue projects; but, in order to do so, he must temporarily dissolve the possibility for meaning to be derived from the language he uses:

Lift up thy lips, turn round, look back for love,
Blind love that comes by night and casts our rest;

Two loves at either blossom of thy breast
Strive until one be under and one above.
Their breath is fire upon the amorous air,
Fire in thine eyes and where thy lips suspire:
And whosoever hath seen thee, being so fair,
Two things turn all his life and blood to fire;
A strong desire begot on great despair,
A great despair cast out by strong desire. (I, 79)

The last two lines define the relationship of the viewer (and the reader) to the statue as one of helpless identification. The rhetorical structure and effect here is that of a paradox: the second line inverts the order of the subject and object of the first. "Cast out," of course, meaningfully replaces "begot on," as we become aware on closer scrutiny, and although the initial effect is the same as that of a paradox, i.e., intellectual immobility, the final effect is to heighten our sense of the statue's desire. Literally, the despair concomitant with Hermaphroditus' dual sexuality *generates* a desire (for unisexuality and the possibility of sexual gratification) powerful enough to overthrow and effectually abolish despair. But in order to explain the process verbally, "despair" must remain in visible equipoise with "desire," its child. Here syntax

imitates the passion represented, while seeming at first to undermine meaning because of our expectations of such a rhetorical structure. These last lines leave us in a momentary state of intellectual suspension parallel to Hermaphroditus' suspension in a purgatory of sexual yearnings which "shall not be assuaged till death be dead." Here, as in "Anactoria," Swinburne uses accepted mechanical properties of language to undermine its potential for precise meaning, and to approach the pure and perfect expression of an ostensibly ineffable emotional state.

Swinburne employs similarly simple but subtle grammatical structures expansively to define the impermanence and contradictions inherent in conceptual states as well. "Ilicet," for example, is a lyric in which an anonymous persona attempts conceptually and negatively to describe the nature of death. The subject is the same as in Swinburne's poems of atheistic iconoclasm: the relationship of death to life and to the passions and pretensions of the living. Yet it is written not in the context of reproach to the "Pale Galilean" or any other god, nor as an apostrophe to an ultimate god, but rather as a credo of consummate fatalism. The poem is sometimes ironically patronizing, sometimes elaborately critical of human yearnings for an afterlife and the wretchedness endured by those who believe in gods that allow "this dust" to "gather flesh hereafter":

They find no fruit of things they cherish;
The goodness of a man shall perish,
It shall be one thing with his sin.

Nay, where the heart of wrath is broken,
Where long love ends as a thing spoken,
How shall thy crying enter there? (I, 77-78)

Death is hailed not as an anodyne or recompense, but rather as both the locus of nonbeing and a supreme fact:

There is an end of joy and sorrow;
Peace all day long, all night, all morrow.

Outside of all the worlds and ages,
There where the fool is as the sage is,
There where the slayer is clean of blood,
No end, no passage, no beginning. (I, 74)

The only "god" the persona of this poem acknowledges is relentless Fate, which he characterizes by means of deft but gentle inversions of New Testament figures:

Shall these grave-clothes be rent in sunder;
He that hath taken, shall he give?
He hath rent them: shall he bind together?
He hath bound them: shall he break the tether?
He hath slain them: shall he bid them live?

A little sorrow, a little pleasure,
Fate metes us from the dusty measure
That holds the date of all of us. (I, 77)

Ironically, in the process of articulating his alternative credo, the speaker manages to apotheosize death. While he admonishes the world for its futile yearning for salvation and afterlife, for its unjustified faith in "high gods," Swinburne dextrously subverts the speaker's stance and suggests that, in spite of himself, the persona yearns for something beyond death:

Not for [the high gods'] love shall Fate retire,
Nor they relent for our desire,
Nor the graves open for their call.
The end is more than joy and anguish,
Than lives that laugh and lives that languish,
The popped sleep, the end of all. (I, 78)

The syntactical ambiguity of the last three lines allows them to be read in two ways. Both phrases of the last line can be perceived in apposition to "the end" of the fourth quoted line. However, alternatively, the comparative "more" can be read as applying not only to "joy," "anguish," and both instances of "lives," but also to "the popped sleep, the end of all." So that "the end" becomes "more than" the "end of all," and the very notion of absolute death is undercut, as is the finality of the poem's ending, whose grammatical ambiguity forces us back into the labyrinth of language used to accomplish it. Moreover, characteristically, the music of the verse—particularly the internal rhymes of "anguish," "laugh," and "languish"—serve to break down the distinctions between very different emotional states. Swinburne's use of assonance here strives to imitate the speaker's skeptical *ennui* by subverting any attempt simply to reduce language to definable meaning. We do feel the power of the speaker's fatalism and his sense of life's, as death's, monolithic character. At the same time, however, we are made aware that the speaker's admonitions are merely "things spoken," transient and artificial. By the poem's conclusion our faith in the possibility that there in fact exists an "end" which is "more than joy and anguish" is undermined, as is our conviction that there exists any end at all to our equivocal and passionate yearning for ends.

III

Swinburne's use of complex and purely expressive grammatical constructions in this poem and the others cited from *Poems and Ballads*, First Series, constitutes a kind of prelude to his later practice. In major (and egregiously neglected) works, such as *Erechtheus*, "Thalassius," "On the Cliffs," *Tristram of Lyonesse*, and "The Lake of Gaube," Swinburne employs intentionally diffuse and

involved grammar with significantly greater frequency than in the lyrics of *Poems and Ballads*. The standard explanation is that his dithyrambic and vacant later poems were written in his premature dotage, when in the protective custody of Theodore Watts-Dunton. Yet, if the effect of Swinburne's prosody in the later poems is examined with the care we have applied to the lyrics treated here, his practice at Putney is logically seen as an extension of expressive techniques developed in his early works. For instance, in the second stanza of "The Lake of Gaube" (1899) Swinburne describes the salamanders that densely inhabit the mountains around the lake. Having stressed, in the first stanza, how all elemental creation beneath the sun-god lies "prone in passion, blind with bliss unseen," Swinburne proceeds to depict the exuberant life of the beautiful salamanders:

And living things of light like flames in flower
That glance and flash as though no hand might tame
Lightnings whose life outshone their stormlit hour
And played and laughed on earth, with all their power
Gone, and with all their joy of life made long
And harmless as the lightning life of song,
Shine sweet like stars when darkness feels them strong.
(VI, 284)

This passage employs some prosodic techniques similar to those already discussed. The most conspicuous are separation and accretion. The simple grammar of this single sentence is that "living things . . . Shine sweet like stars." As in much of Swinburne's later poetry, however, our perception of grammar dissolves as we attempt to absorb the accretion of highly expressive, descriptive detail between the subject and predicate.⁶ Here Swinburne's intent is to demonstrate the "Glad glory, thrilled with sense of unison" that, in the first stanza, he perceives as characteristic of every object in the passively receptive world of nature. Therefore, as the description of the salamanders is extended, these "living things" undergo a series of metaphoric transformations that demonstrate their intricate and organic relationship to a constellation of natural phenomena. In brief, the salamanders are like "flames in flower," a metaphoric reduction of multi-forked "lightnings" whose "joy of life" is like

the "lightning life of song." Moreover, the salamanders shine "sweet like stars," as the flowers of the stanza's first line do. Because we lose track of grammar in the course of these transformations, the series affects us as a group of appositions, so that, in effect, flames, flowers, lightnings, song, and stars become identified. The stanza as a whole creates a powerful sense of the essential interrelations among all objects and all experience, which is Swinburne's central philosophical preoccupation. Appropriately, this description precedes the poet's own "rapturous plunge" into the lake where he undergoes a kind of self-dissolution and integration with both organic nature and the spiritual world beneath it. For the poet the lake of Gaube becomes "a symbol revealed" of "infinite heaven."

The prosodic techniques discussed here, along with those treated earlier, mark Swinburne as a central transitional figure between the Romantic and Symbolist movements in poetry. On the one hand, Swinburne's purely expressive use of language stresses the total involvement of the self with human passions, with nature, and with some ultimate reality beyond both. On the other hand, it allows him to enforce on the reader the essential unity and interchangeability of all phenomena. Throughout his career Swinburne was interested in poetry as a vehicle for the expression of both passion and ideas, as the political lyrics of *Songs Before Sunrise* and *Songs of Two Nations* adequately demonstrate. Yet he perceived clearly that ideas embodied in language are, in effect, reductive distillations of feeling; and poetry, he believed, is properly the vehicle for expressing passions, whether sexual, political, or aesthetic.⁷ Swinburne adhered to one basic precept in his best poetry: that all areas of human thought and feeling are ultimately indivisible and irreducible, that language—and verse, as the supreme form of language—is, at its best, purely expressive of the "multitudinous unity" of man's vibrant and ineluctably synthetic life. In Swinburne's characteristic philosophical monism, passion, politics, and aesthetics inevitably merge into metaphysics.

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6. Elsewhere Swinburne uses multiple extended subjects in union with multiple extended predicates, each of which can and does complete all of the subjects. Meanings thus become multiplied by permutation and combination.

7. For instance, Swinburne revered Shelley and admired Byron enormously. In their poetry he observes that the "passion is

perfect, a fierce and blind desire which exalts and impels their verse into the high places of emotion and expression. . . . Description melts into passion and contemplation takes fire from delight" ("Byron," *The Complete Works of Algernon Charles Swinburne*, ed. Edmund Gosse and Thomas J. Wise, 20 vols. [London, 1925-27], XV, 127.)

Heart of Stone: An Emblem for Conversion

C. S. Vogel

IN POPULARIZING THE MODERNIST SENSIBILITY, critics of a prior generation inappreciatively dismissed much of Victorian literature as "soft and wet." Great literature, they argued, was "hard and dry." There can be no denying them that much of the literature in the period is "soft and wet"; no denial, however, is necessary when the "softness and wetness" is appreciated within its contexts. Over a generation ago, Jerome Buckley considered the "wetness" in its emblematic and thematic contexts; emblematically, water signifies baptism in many texts; and thematically in those same texts, baptism plays a part in the arch plot, perhaps, of Victorian fiction—what Buckley refers to as "the pattern of conversion."¹ What follows is a consideration of the other half of the formula, an examination of the "softness" of Victorian literature within the emblematic and thematic context of the pattern of conversion.

Like images of desert and dryness, images of stone and hardness are universal descriptions for despiritualization. As an example, take John Stuart Mill's often quoted account of his conversion while reading Marmontel's *Memoires*:

... I was moved to tears. From this moment my burden grew lighter. The oppression of the thought that all feeling was dead within me was gone. I was no longer hopeless. I was not a stock or stone.²

Needless to say for the nineteenth century, the experience of conversion may not be an orthodox Christian change from a state of sin to a state of grace; as for Mill and for many, it may be a shift of sensibility from being a man of intellect to becoming a man of sentiment. But whether the conversion is ortho- or heterodox, the experience itself seems similar. Again, as an example, take Mill's *Autobiography*:

I was in a dull state of nerves, such as everybody is liable to... the state, I should think, in which converts to Methodism usually are when smitten by their first "conviction of sin."³

A similarity in experience produces a similarity in vocabulary; hence it is that writers describing both religious and nonreligious conversions would use the same terms. Their ultimate source-book for these terms is, nat-

urally, the Christian Bible. In passages that are too legion to cite, the Bible describes the state of despiritualization in terms of "hardness," particularly in terms of "hardness of heart." A key text for many conversions comes from the Book of Ezekiel, in which the prophet compares sinfulness (or the old law of Moses) to a heart of stone and godliness (or the new law of love) to a heart of flesh:

A new heart will I [Adonai] give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you an heart of flesh. (32:26)

In II Corinthians (3:3) Paul alludes to Ezekiel's contrast between hearts of flesh and stone: "not in tablets of stone but in fleshly tablets of the heart." Paul is not the last to allude to this strange spiritual transplant; in the Victorian period its citation is an almost infallible mark that the author has been associated with Evangelicalism. As an instance, Ruskin uses the allusion to structure his digressive discussion on architectural values in *Traffic*:

You will know then how to build, well enough; you will build with stone well, but with flesh better; temples not made with hands, but riveted of hearts; and that kind of marble, crimson-veined, is indeed eternal.⁴

What now needs to be shown is how this emblem of hardness, especially hardness of heart, figures in several specific conversions in Victorian literature—notably in Tennyson's *Maud*, in Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, and in George Eliot's *Adam Bede*.

Despite its kinship to that most appealing of Victorian verse forms for moderns, the dramatic-monologue, *Maud* is still awaiting the literary attention it merits; even a first reading reveals veins of imagery so rich that explicators have scarcely begun to mine them. Commentators continue to take all too uncritically Hallam Tennyson's reading, wherein the hero

... is the heir of madness, an egotist with the makings of a cynic, raised to sanity by a pure and holy love which elevates his whole nature, passing from the height of triumph to the lowest depths of misery, driven into madness by the loss of her whom he loved, and, when he has at length passed through the fiery furnace, and has recovered his

1. Jerome Buckley, *The Victorian Temper* (New York, 1951), pp. 87-108.

2. John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography* (New York, 1973), p. 141.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

4. John Ruskin, *Unto This Last and Traffic* (New York, 1967), p. 127.

passion, giving himself up to work for the good of mankind through the unselfishness born of a great passion.⁵

Hallam Tennyson to the contrary, a careful reader may believe that the hero did not recover all his reason, that he may never have had any to recover. From first line to last, the poetry characterizes the hero as a man more or less mad—a hysterionic who suffers from delusions under the sufferance of which he fancies himself now a cynic, now a sentimentalist, and now a jingoist. Tennyson may have intended his hero to follow a pattern of conversion, but whatever the authorial intention, the poetry does not effect that pattern. To suggest that the hero goes to glory unregenerate, it is necessary to trace the emblem of hard-heartedness throughout *Maud*, where the quality of stoniness is as negative as it is elsewhere in Tennyson—such as in his most celebrated of conversion poems, *In Memoriam*:

I will not shut me from my kind,
And, lest I stiffen into stone,
I will not eat my heart alone
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind. (CVIII)

In Victorian fiction reprobates have a way of disappearing down pits: Duncan Cass in *Silas Marner* is the notorious example. In *Maud* it is an indication of the Father's despair that he killed himself upon rocks, that as he fell a stone fell with him:

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was found
His who had given me life—O Father! O God! Was it well?
Mangled, and flatten'd, and crushed, and dinted into the
ground;
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.⁶
(I, 5-8)

Whenever Maud's brother, the villain of the piece, appears, Tennyson describes him in terms of stone:

That jewell'd mass of millinery,
That oiled and curled Assyrian bull. (I, 232-33)

Layard's *Ninevah* having impressed him as strongly as Rossetti, Tennyson glosses his own metaphor as meaning "with hair curled like that of the bulls in Assyrian sculpture."⁷ Another antique comparison for the brother is the gorgon:

But while I past he was humming an air,
Stopt, and then with a riding-whip
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,
And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorgonized me from head to foot
With a stony British stare. (I, 460-65)

The hero is indeed under the influence of a gorgon; the fatuity of his time as personified in the brother threatens to calcify his heart, while the charity of Maud strives to keep it in the flesh. For a while the outcome of the rival influences remains uncertain, with the hero speculating upon the precise mineral content of his heart:

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print
Of the golden age—why not? I have neither hope nor trust;
May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as flint.
(I, 29-31)

A curious aggregate of two scriptural allusions, the last quotation does little credit to the speaker. A description of the heart of Leviathan, the first allusion is from Job: "His heart is as firm as a stone, yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone" (41:24). The second allusion is from Isaiah, revealing the hero in a Carlylean pose as a self-righteous prophet to his generation: "For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint" (50:7). Continuing in his comparison, the hero lived aloof:

Til a morbid hate and horror have grown
Of a world in which I have hardly mixt,
And a morbid eating lichen fixt
On a heart half-turn'd to stone. (I, 264-67)

Only Maud can de-gorgonize his hard heart:

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and caught
By that you swore to withstand?
For what was it else within me wrought
But, I fear, the new strong wine of love. (I, 269-71)

Maud's antipathy to anything that is stone has a delicate illustration in the juxtaposition between her and the church monuments:

She came to the village church
And sat by a pillar alone;
An angel watching an urn
Wept over her, carved in stone;
And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely blushed
To find they were met by my own;
And suddenly, sweetly my heart beat stronger
And thicker. . . . (I, 301-9)

Maud's regenerating influence upon the hero, however, is either incomplete or transitory, for upon her death the hero can apostrophize his heart in these words:

Courage, poor heart of stone.
I will not ask thee why
Thou canst not understand

5. Hallam Tennyson, *Memoir* (London, 1905), p. 334.

6. Christopher Ricks, ed., *The Poems of Tennyson* (London, 1967),

p. 1040.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 1054.

That thou art left for ever alone;
 Courage, poor stupid heart of stone—
 Or if I ask thee why
 Care not thou to reply;
 She is but dead, and time is at hand
 When thou shalt more than die. (II, 132-40)

Annotating this verse, Ricks says "the sadness is tempered by Ezekiel 11:19."⁸ Rather the opposite seems true. Ezekiel 11:19 (whose import is almost identical to Ezekiel 36:26) steels the sadness, for the love who could transform the heart to flesh has died; and thus the hero must die the double death, must die not merely physically but spiritually. From his personal associations, there is never a sign that the hero has his wits about him or that he is restored through a great passion. The first association that he makes

I hate the dreadful hollow behind the little wood;
 Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,
 The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of blood.
 (I, 1-3)

does not differ from the last association in any great degree:

And now by the side of the Black and the Baltic deep,
 And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames
 The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.
 (III, 51-53)

The reader leaves the hero in hot pursuit not of a heart of flesh—but of a heart of fire.

In *Jane Eyre* one can invariably divide sympathetic from unsympathetic characters by their descriptive tags; Charlotte Brontë always describes her unamiable creations in terms of hardness and stoniness: "Hard-hearted" Mrs. Reed has a "stony-eye—opaque to tenderness," an "eye of flint." Mr. St. John-Rivers is more like "a statue instead of a man," has a face "more like chiselled marble."

The marble monument *par excellence* is Mr. Brocklehurst, "the black marble stranger," the "stony stranger." In the most satiric scene of the book, Brontë tartly describes Jane's first encounter with the obnoxiously Pharisaic Brocklehurst:

I looked up at—a black pillar!—such at least appeared to me, at first sight, the straight, narrow, sable-clad shape standing erect on the rug; the grim face at the top was like a carved mask, placed above the shaft by way of capital.⁹

Ellen Moers cites this very passage, commenting: "His maleness more than anything else is 'symbolized' by Brontë's remarkably raw metaphor."¹⁰ While there can

be no disputing the Freudian shape which Brocklehurst cuts in a modern's eyes, in a child's eyes (the point-of-view that Brontë here is adopting), the description is accurate and realistic; to someone the size of little Jane Eyre any adult would appear pillar-like, all legs. What Brontë's figures of speech are emphasizing is not so much Brocklehurst's maleness as his stoniness, as additional descriptions indicate. Brocklehurst is not only petrified, he is petrifying. In his immediate vicinity everything turns into stone. Mrs. *Harden*, his housekeeper, begrudges bread and butter enough for three, proving herself "a woman after Mr. Brocklehurst's own heart, made up of equal parts of whalebone and iron" (p. 70). The effect extends to the good-natured Miss Temple in Brocklehurst's presence:

Miss Temple had looked down when he first began to speak to her, and her face, naturally pale as marble, appeared to be assuming also the coldness and fixity of that material; especially her mouth closed as if it would have required a sculptor's chisel to open it, and her brow now settled gradually into petrified severity. (p. 61)

In Brocklehurst's presence everything turns to stone—except Jane Eyre; here and elsewhere is she a breaker of stone:

Hitherto, while gathering up the discourse of Mr. Brocklehurst and Miss Temple, I had not, at the same time, neglected precautions to secure my personal safety; which I thought would be effected, if I could only elude observation. To this end I had set well back on the form, and while seeming to be busy with my sum, had held my slate in such a manner as to conceal my face: I might have escaped notice, had not my treacherous slate somehow happened to slip from my hand, falling with an obtrusive crash, directly drawn every eye upon me. (p. 63)

In Jane's premonitory dream about Rochester and Thornfield Hall, she wanders with an unknown child through the ruins with "shell-like walls" and stumbles over "a marble hearth" and a "fragment of a cornice." Hearing the sounds of Rochester's departure, Jane scales the dangerously ruined walls in order to reach a place of vantage:

... the stones rolled from under my feet, the ivy branches I grasped gave way, the child clung around my neck in terror, and almost strangled me: at last I gained the summit. I saw you like a speck on a white track, lessening every moment. The blast blew so strong I could not stand. I sat down on the narrow ledge; I hushed the scared infant in my lap; you turned an angle in the road; I bent forward to take a last look; the wall crumbled; I was shaken;

8. *Ibid.*, p. 1082.

9. *Jane Eyre*, ed. Mark Schorer (Boston, 1959), p. 31.

10. *Literary Women* (New York, 1976), p. 252.

the child rolled from my knee, I lost my balance, fell, and woke. (p. 268)

Mr. Brocklehurst's hardness has penetrated into his heart, and it is this hardness of heart that gives an impish irony to his first interview with Jane the lithoclast. If the expression may be allowed, the scene shows him who is guilty of stoniness casting the first stone. To her comment that the "Psalms are not interesting," he replies:

That proves you have a wicked heart; and you must pray to God to change it: to give you a new and a clean one: to take away your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. (p. 32)

As a little girl, Jane is puzzled by this allusion to Ezekiel—evidently one of the books she does not like to read—and as a grown woman she is still puzzled by the allusion, as when Rochester prologuizes:

"... I once had a rude tenderness of heart. When I was as old as you, I was a feeling fellow enough; partial to the unfledged, unfostered and unlucky; but fortune has knocked me about since; she has even kneaded me with her knuckles and now I flatter myself I am hard as an India-rubber ball; previous, though, through a chink or two still, and with one sentient point in the middle of the lump. Yes, does that leave hope for me?"

"Hope of what, sir?"

"Of my final transformation from India-rubber back to flesh?"

"Decidedly he has had too much wine," I thought. (p. 127)

This introduces the issue of Mr. Rochester's eventual retransformation back to flesh. It has been called unconvincing because it is sudden, but it is as much in the nature of conversion to be quick as it is in the nature of lightning. The precipitance of a convert is not a literary convention, but a religious experience. In literature or in life, with a Mr. Rochester or a Saint Augustine, there comes a sharp moment that cuts the past from the present—a moment of spontaneity not deliberation.

While a sudden change of heart is not limited to either Evangelical or Catholic Christianity, the Evangelical believes the abruptness to be the substance of a true conversion; the Catholic holds it little more than a sign. The question then is whether Rochester experiences an Evangelical or a Catholic conversion. While the moment of conversion is sudden, does that moment arrive with or without previous expectations? The answer is that Brontë prepares us for Rochester's change of heart through his intimate conversations with Jane about his troubled past. Conversations such as the one just quoted

reveal him to have felt the world-weariness and despair which the nineteenth-century apologist Hutton thought the prerequisite for a true conversion:

... the best explanation of Conversion is to be traced to the supreme weariness of self which is apt to be felt even more intensely by strongly controlled natures.¹¹

When Mr. Rochester's conversion finally comes, it comes through the destruction of his pride which is built into the very stones of Thornfield Hall. Like Rochester's heart, it, too, is stony; it, too, is Satanic. The master speaks of his hall as

this accursed place—this tent of Achan—this insolent vault, offering the ghastliness of living death to the light of the open sky—this narrow stone hell, with its one real fiend. (p. 285)

As Buckley notes, Rochester's conversion is by fire rather than the more conventional water; but it is a legitimate conversion nonetheless.¹² The destruction of Thornfield Hall is Rochester's loss of "mortar and marble." But it is his gain of a fleshly heart.

Adam Bede contains the conversions of two women; one, Hetty Sorrel, has a conversion in the traditional sense, that is, an inclining toward a religion centered in God. The other, Dinah Morris, who instigates her cousin's conversion, has a conversion in the special Eliot sense, a turning toward a religion centered in humanity.

On the exterior, Hetty is all that is soft; Eliot's comparisons of her to a fluffy kitten and a downy peach are typical. The latter comparison is telling since despite her outside downiness, within herself Hetty has a fruit stone:

Before you despise Adam as deficient in penetration, pray ask yourself if you were ever predisposed to believe evil of any pretty woman—if you ever *could*, without hard head-breaking demonstration, believe evil of the *one* supremely pretty woman who has bewitched you. No: people who love downy peaches are not apt to think of the stone, and sometimes jar their teeth terribly against it.¹³

With her customary pithy penetration, Mrs. Poyser joins the author in knowing her niece to have a heart "no better than a cherry wi' a hard stone in it. It's my belief her heart's as hard as a pebble" (p. 133).

On her journey of despair, Hetty Sorrel becomes as hard in the face as in her heart:

A hard and even fierce look had come into the eyes, though their lashes were as long as ever, and they had all their dark brightness. And the cheek was never dimpled with smiles now. It was the same rounded, pouting, childish prettiness, but with all love and belief in love

11. Richard Holt Hutton, *Criticisms on Contemporary Thought and Thinkers* (London, 1908), I, 375.

12. Buckley, p. 97.

13. *Adam Bede*, ed. John Paterson (New York, 1968), p. 131.

departed from it—the sadder for its beauty, like that wondrous Medusa-face, with the passionate, passionate lips. (p. 322)

Hetty ends her journey, Niobe-like, all stone:

I don't know what I felt till I saw the baby was gone. And when I'd put it there, I thought I should like somebody to find it, and save it from dying; but when I saw it was gone, I was struck like a stone, with fear. I never thought o' stirring, I felt so weak. I knew I couldn't run away, and everybody as saw me 'ud know about the baby. My heart went like a stone: I couldn't wish or try for anything; it seemed like as if I should stay there forever, and nothing 'ud ever change. (p. 380)

In her ministrations, Dinah recognizes Hetty's state of unregeneracy and pleads to her God in a scriptural paraphrase:

She is clothed round with thick darkness; the fetters of her sin are upon her, and she cannot stir to come to thee: she can only feel her heart is hard, and she is helpless. She cries to me, thy weak creature . . . Saviour! it is a blind cry to thee. Hear it! Pierce the darkness! Look upon her with thy face of love and sorrow that thou didst turn on him who denied thee; and melt her hard heart. (p. 377)

And Hetty's hard heart, presumably, melts. Like the albatross hanging on the Ancient Mariner, or the millstone in the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the weight that she felt around her neck drops as she repents her crime.

Dinah Morris' displacement of her love in the divine demands a conversion as much as Hetty Sorrel's misplacement of her love in self instead of others. Dinah's transformation from hardness to softness takes place in the chamber not of the heart but of the home; the stoniness of *Stonyshire* which is her native place before her change of heart shifts to the lushness of Loamshire, her residence

after her marriage. We may notice throughout *Adam Bede* an emblematic contrast between Stonyshire and Loamshire:

That rich undulating district of Loamshire, to which Hayslope belonged, lies close to a grim outskirts of Stonyshire, overlooked by its barren hills as a pretty blooming sister may sometimes be seen linked in the arm of a rugged, tall, swarthy brother; and in two or three hours' ride the traveller might exchange a bleak treeless region, intersected by lines of cold grey stone, for one where his road wound under the shelter of trees. (p. 16)

Though Dinah is associated fairly obviously with the region of Stonyshire, she has a place-name for an additional patrinomic: she is Dinah Morris of Stonyshire or Dinah Morris of Stoniton throughout most of the novel. Her story is a "Come Down, O Maid" from Stonyshire to Loamshire, for human love is of the valley of Hayslope, not Stoniton. It is in Loamshire that Seth meets and woos her; it is to Stonyshire she goes when she jilts him. It is in Loamshire that Adam courts her; it is to Stonyshire that she returns when she cannot grant him her hand. Finally, it is from Stonyshire that Adam leads his bride, down the mountains to her home in Loamshire.

Precisely how many Victorian writers used the emblem of hard-heartedness in the systematic and conventional way this article has analyzed is difficult to estimate. But assuredly the usage is widespread enough to suggest that critics should not, within the context of the pattern of conversion, describe literature as soft and wet as opposed to hard and dry. The true contrast is not between soft and hard but between regenerate and de-spiritualized.

University of Maryland

Thomas Hardy's Correspondence with Sir George Douglas

M. D. Wilkie

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND'S collection of the private papers of Sir George Brisbane Scott Douglas contains letters from Thomas Hardy to Douglas covering the years 1888 to 1924.¹ This series has familiar features of Hardy's literary attitudes as well as occasional critical

judgments. Although Hardy consistently avoids literary or critical theory, the letters extend our meager knowledge of his self-criticism and of the standards he applies in judging the work of other writers. Such comments about his own and other authors' writings are, however, concise often

1. The Trustees of the Hardy Foundation have granted permission to use this material. I appreciate the courteous consideration given

by the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland in allowing their use.

to the point of being cryptic. The personal context is more revealing, offering glimpses of Hardy's relationships with his friends. Replies to Douglas' invitations to visit Scotland and references to their meetings suggest an intimacy and an ease in their relations rare for Hardy and significant because their friendship spans the greater part of his years as a prominent author.

Throughout their long correspondence, Hardy encourages his friend's work by interest and perception. His literary advice to Douglas, like that throughout his letters to Florence Henniker, accurately defines the nature of his friend's talents yet implicitly recognizes their limits. At first he assumes, albeit diffidently, that Douglas' literary gift is poetic. "Without venturing to express an opinion as to the ultimate results I feel that verse is your more natural form of utterance." His characteristic preference for poetry also appears in this first letter:

It sometimes occurs to me that it is better to fail in verse than to succeed in prose—at any rate more mental satisfaction is to be got out of verse—if you have not to cover so many pages a year, like some of us. (21 Dec. 1888)

Apparently in reply to Douglas' fears over the current status of poetry, Hardy continues, "poetry certainly has not had its day. You must remember that the muses have occasionally to 'draw back for a spring' . . . & they may have been doing so lately." After this encouragement Hardy offers specific suggestions to Douglas: he praises the title, *Poems of a Country Gentleman*, offering a homely definition of Eliot's "objective correlative" in the process:

The image it raises is that of a meditative man walking about his fields and hills and writing down what is suggested by the natural objects before his eyes—their relations to mankind, & the like: a sort of Thomson's Seasons with the added force of all the modern spirit we have acquired since Thomson's day.

In particular Hardy praises one couplet for striking a genuinely pathetic note:

Singing—uncared for and unheard—
A song that's all too hard for me.

On publication of this volume in 1897, Hardy offers more specific comments on five poems whose titles, "The Fragment of a Reverie," "Omen," "The Waning Year," "On the Roman Wall," and "A Love Missive," might be his own, although the merits of this "dignified and suggestive" poetry, as Hardy describes one poem, lie in these minor achievements of tone. The restraint and precision of Hardy's comments indicate an awareness of the limits to Douglas' work.

In 1891, Douglas published *New Border Tales*, which Hardy read prior to publication, encouraging him to con-

tinue in this vein. From 1895 to 1898 Douglas was working on his *History of the Border Counties*, which interested Hardy because of its local quality: "A county history is, I know, a heavy piece of work, though I have often thought it would be a reposeful and delightful labour, if one had plenty of time" (3 Mar. 1895). In marking out the literary effects of repose and delight, Hardy shows perception of Douglas' attitudes, at the same time revealing a touch of weariness over his own financial motives for writing. He warns Douglas of the book's probable lack of popular appeal when it is finished:

It is an interesting sort of work (if one has any local interests) & the pleasure of doing it has to be its reward for the public fight shy of works that are painstaking and of permanent value as records. I have brought out, as you may have seen, those *Wessex Poems* . . . & they have probably, as your history may have, an unspoken disqualification in being local—as if humanity could not be sampled as readily in a western county as in, say, a Fleet Street Office. (13 Jan. 1899)

In the same letter, referring to Douglas' biography of James Hogg in the Famous Scottish Authors series, Hardy admits that he was not impressed by Hogg's poetry but he intends to reread it because of Douglas' work.

Another set of meditative personal essays, entitled *Diversions of a Country Gentleman* (1902) wins higher praise from Hardy:

I don't agree with you about sport, but you were as humane as you could be on the subject, that I admit. I liked the essays on the old places about the Border—that old road, for instance: one felt the very presence of the lonely scenes you describe. (22 May 1902)

Again Hardy marks the slight, elegaic, and sentimental note as Douglas' vein, a poetic mood he well could appreciate. In his own work it is considerably toughened by irony and his sense of the inevitable tragedy of life.

In spite of recognizing Douglas' affinity for sentiment and reverie, Hardy praises his friend's choice of biography for the next literary venture and he commends Douglas' determination to complete the manuscript of the *Life of General Wauchope* before making his usual annual visit to London.

Gaps in the correspondence exist between 1905 and 1910, 1910-1913, and again from 1915-1919, but the letters of May 7 and September 11, 1919, indicate enthusiasm over literary projects that promise to use Douglas' personal background and academic training. Sir George was born at Gibraltar, and his mother, Doña Juana Petronila de Pina, was of Spanish nobility. Throughout his life he corresponded with his mother and her relatives in Spanish and he read widely in Spanish literature, classical as well

as contemporary. Hardy always encouraged him to make use of this heritage: "Your turning to Spanish literature is, I think, a step of great wisdom. Very few English readers really know much about it, & you will be quite an authority on its productions" (7 May 1919). Similarly, he praises the intention to write about Goethe, on whom Douglas had concentrated in two years of study at Weimar: "Goethe has certainly sunk into neglect over here and in fact I have heard him belittled." In every instance, Hardy seems anxious to point out his friend's opportunity to add an individual note to the English literary scene.

Upon receiving a copy of the *Hibbert Journal* with the Goethe article, Hardy extends his praise and offers a brief but informed response to Douglas' approach:

I did not know till I read the article from your pen that you were so well acquainted with the writings of Goethe—you have kept that light under a bushel hitherto. I wish writing were not too irksome to let me enter into the many interesting points you raise. I will only remark on his tendency to moralize, to which you rightly draw attention, as being a defect. Don't you think it was their way in those days? Just along at that time they seem to have forgotten that a writer can be more emphatic without pointing a moral, & by leaving the reader to draw it for himself, than by stating it. (11 Sept. 1919)

Although Hardy's arguments with his own critics over morality in literature influences this comment, the gentle warning to consider Goethe's historical context suggests awareness of Douglas' tendency to overlook this factor and to judge a writer by his own aesthetic desires rather than appreciating another's individual literary temperament. The same letter repeats enthusiastic encouragement of Douglas' Spanish criticism:

I had nearly forgotten to reply to the most important thing you tell me—most interesting rather—your doings in Spanish. You will remember I used to have great faith in your possibilities in that direction. I shall be looking out for the article on the Picaresque novel. Both that subject and Don Juan are exceedingly *fresh* ones.

In this letter Hardy comments that writing is too irksome for him to discuss in detail the points that interest him. His handwriting is noticeably shaky and looser, and more so in the last two letters of the correspondence. Nevertheless he continues to enter into Douglas' literary schemes, to offer advice, encouragement, and tactful criticism, but, more important, to see where Douglas' own capacity marked out a line of writing different from his own, and indeed different from the poetic achievements that Hardy had first forecast for his friend. This same tact and sensitivity to a writer's individual gifts and preferences mark his letters to Florence Henniker on the subject of her writings.

Hardy's few comments on other writers, in his notebooks and in letters, offer mere glimpses into his standards for literary judgments and enjoyment. These literary judgments are confident pronouncements but never analytical and they suggest that his personal reading was less eclectic than is usually claimed. In this correspondence, reacting to Tennyson, J. M. Barrie, Poe, and Hugo, he consistently measures the author's stature by the force of his thought.

Barrie's *Little Minister* earns rejection for failure to fulfill its initial promise:

Up to the 8th or 9th chapter it is excellent—after that it grows second-rate, & the ending is as bad as a novel can be. He had a fine chance, & threw it away—for orthodoxy's dear sake, I suppose—bless its soul. (8 Nov. 1891)

Tennyson also comes under criticism as "a great artist but a mere Philistine of a thinker," implying that Hardy demands rigorous thought from writers who make philosophy any part of their theme or aim. But Poe's verse wins highest praise in a letter of November 20, 1901:

That you have taken up Poe delights me; his too small sheaf of verse has genius in every line, as well as music. By the way his circumstantial prose account of how he came to write "The Raven" I believe to be pure fiction, written to get a crust of bread.

Hardy's delight in grotesque incidents and anecdotes that often became kernels for the stories in both his prose and poetry makes this discrimination superficially surprising, but it is consistent with his critical taste. This distinction between what is realistic and convincing and what is artificial appears again in his comments on Hugo, although he simultaneously appreciates the roles of artifice and realism in literature:

I am a Victor-Hug-ite still. If he often crosses the line into the extravagant his ideas are so arresting even when he does so cross that they never fail to hold me. As you say, his miserables are not so real as Dickens', but they show, to my mind, one great superiority, that of universality, while those of Dickens express the particular only. Dickens in his details of things is, however, without a fellow, so special is his view. (31 Oct. 1903)

Clearly Hardy draws a line between verisimilitude and exaggeration, but the power of impression and the essential humanity he finds in Hugo's characters apparently balance, though not necessarily supersede, Dickens' realism of particulars. As in his own descriptive prose, discrimination and definition of qualities are the hallmarks of his literary judgments of other writers.

Of course, Hardy's references to himself and to his work in progress, or to the critical reviews of his publications, are of greater importance to us than these brief

critical judgments. Part of his indignation over the reception of *Tess*, *Jude* and, to a minor extent, *The Well-Beloved*, derives from his expectation of similar objectivity from his critics. His inability to regard his ideas as themes apart from their fictional realization explains this somewhat cryptic statement in his response to Douglas' letter on *Jude*:

The marriage question was made the vehicle of the tragedy, in one part, but I did not intend to argue it at all on its merits. I feel that a bad marriage is one of the direct things on earth, & one of the cruellest things, but beyond that my opinions on the subject are vague enough. (20 Nov. 1895)

Here Hardy distinguishes between opinions that he regards as philosophical abstractions and so open to debate, and impressions that are the substance of reality and fiction alike for him. Therefore, his sense that *Jude* failed to fulfill his artistic intentions takes the form of dissatisfaction over the force of his characterization of Sue: "I am glad you like Sue. So do I—depressed as I am at the feebleness of my drawing of her." Critical charges of immorality in the book surprised as well as angered him, for he felt that morality was part of any sincere expression of reality, dependent only on the completeness and integrity of the author's portrait:

Someday perhaps it will be seen that the purpose of the story was no ignoble one, though in this, as in others, I have let the moral take care of itself—as it always will, if one writes sincerely. . . . The truth is that an author's means shd. be judged by the light of his aims and end. If I say to a lady "I have met a naked man" and no more, it is indecent. But if that is only a part of what I say, & I add "he was mad with sorrow," there has been no indecency. And so with telling the ruin & defeat of man's spiritual aims: the details alter the initial force. [Hardy cancelled this last clause.] (5 Jan. 1896)

While it would be too partial to overlook the shrill and naive elements in Hardy's comments about the *Jude* criticism, this just perception of the critics' failure to see the novel's center in *Jude*'s failed ambitions surely mitigates his defensiveness. The most obtuse of his cavils is his surprise over the reactions to his handling of religion:

I fancied that, having made Sue become a Christian, and recant all her "views" at the end, I shd. be deemed High-Churchy in tone: you can imagine my surprise at the *Guardian* saying that everything sacred is brought into contempt, &c, in the Novel! (20 Nov. 1895)

Since the same annoyed surprise appears in his letters to Edmund Gosse at this time, Hardy is at least consistent in his naiveté over public response to unconventional handling of major institutions. His charges that many outcries

against the novel are prompted by the journalists' desire to capitalize on sensationalism are more perceptive and just: "everybody knows that silence is the remedy in the case of immoral works. But they advertise it with sensational headings, because that advertises their newspapers—a far more important matter with them than so-called immorality" (5 Jan. 1896). Because Douglas himself enshrined sentimental notions of Beauty and Joy as his literary touchstones, he was temperamentally unsuited to appreciate *Jude*. In reverence for the conventions, he came close to the moral stance of the critics, an irony that adds interest to Hardy's explanation of his intentions.

Although the last published novel, *The Well-Beloved*, appealed to Douglas, who promptly and enthusiastically reviewed it, the book deserves Hardy's dismissal of a "whimsical and slight performance." *The World's* discovery of "sexual and disgusting" features (qualities difficult to discern from a late twentieth-century perspective) suggest a reviewer whose findings were predetermined by his expectation of an extension of *Jude*'s moral offenses. Hardy's response, his most indignant reference to critics in this correspondence, indicates the complete breakdown of his patience with critics and possibly further evidence of his waning interest in prose publications:

That fanciful, tragi-comic half-allegorical tale of a poor visionary pursuing a vision should be stigmatized as sexual and disgusting is I think a piece of mendacity hard to beat in the annals of the press, & the low cunning with which the charge is insinuated rather than asserted would be shocking if it were not a trifle comic. (25 March 1897)

These experiences with the press caused Hardy to expect further critical misunderstandings and to greet them, when they arose, with asperity mixed with resignation. An oblique reference to the dispiriting effect of adverse criticism appears in the letters' first reference to *The Dynasts*, October 31, 1899:

the drama I told you of—(I think?) It is at last about to see the light, but it had been an unconscionable time on the stocks, or rather on & off, for though I sketched it with fair completeness years ago I have only taken it up at odd moments till since my last volume of poems was published, never feeling sure that I was really going to finish it. This view I may hold yet, in one sense, for while the drama is sufficiently self-contained, it is but the first of a trilogy that I may not get to the end of except under favoring circumstances, one of which would be a welcome to this part that it may not get.

The following year, in response to Douglas' query about the progress of Part II, a letter dated October 26, 1904, hints at other distracting circumstances (probably personal) delaying his work, but Hardy asserts that the delays are unintentional, the work itself being thoroughly con-

genial and absorbing when he can turn his full attention to it.

The sparse letters from the last years of the correspondence gradually become less informative as Hardy mentions his growing disinclination or inability to discuss profound matters in detail. Never very analytical, he becomes even less so in his last decade. Comments on Douglas' literary projects, occasional mention of Hardy's social relationships with other writers of the period, and brief references to his own composition appear together, unfortunately with the emphasis occurring where the modern reader is least interested. His characteristic depreciations of his own works state the failure of certain ones to fulfill his artistic intentions. Referring to poems printed in periodicals and collected in 1910, and to the 1913 edition of short stories, Hardy repeats his judgment of his own work as ephemeral in intention and therefore deficient in execution. Nevertheless, there is a disappointing absence of definition of his intentions or of detail about the precise nature and causes of his failure.

"The Queen of Cornwall," like *The Dynasts*, proved more satisfactory in realizing his artistic purposes. The last letter of the series, January 4, 1924, notes that "it has been obstructing the way for a long time & I am glad it is finished—though I own I liked doing it, the place and its associations being so familiar." Even this satisfaction, however, tells us little about the author's thoughts on literature; a matter-of-fact statement of his pleasure in the memories aroused by the writing has to content us.

From so consistently and deliberately reticent an author as Hardy, even scraps of information on the compilation of his autobiographical record, *The Life*, published after his death, are welcome. On December 7, 1915, he obviously responds to a query or suggestion that he should

write his memoirs by saying: "My reminiscences: no, never!" The final form of his (auto) biography attests to the persistence of his rejection of the customary role of self-revelation or analysis in such a work. But letters of May 7 and September 11, 1919, reveal him at work collecting, sorting, and sifting the autobiographical materials. "I have not been doing much—mainly destroying papers of the last 30 or 40 years, & they raise ghosts. Kipling, by the way, whom I met in London, said that we all seem ghosts nowadays" (7 May 1919). This same note of finality in clearing his records of the personal material of a lifetime appears even more strongly in the later letter: "I have been occupied in the dismal work of destroying all sorts of papers which were absolutely of no use for any purpose, God's or man's." And this attitude is consonant with his disapproval, twenty-five years earlier, of critical analysis of his works:

Both Lionel Johnson's book and another on my novels by Miss Macdonell were unauthorized by me, as you will suppose—while his is too pedantic, and hers too knowing, & both are too laudatory, they are not in bad taste on the whole, if one concedes that they had to be written, which I do not quite. Indeed I rather dreaded their appearance. (16 Nov. 1894)

This brief comment combines many of Hardy's characteristic attitudes—suspicion of academic theories of literature, fastidious distaste over anyone, even literary admirers, approaching him or his work with too familiar an air, humility over the ultimate merit of his writings, and a resolute sense of privacy. Throughout the letters to Douglas, as in his career, these feelings and opinions never deserted him.

University of Alberta

Recent Publications: A Selected List

Arthur F. Minerof

AUGUST 1976—JANUARY 1977

I

GENERAL

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Conolly, L. W., and J. P. Wearing. "Nineteenth-Century Theatre Research: A Bibliography for 1975." *Nineteenth Century Theatre Research*, Autumn, pp. 89-111. Some annotation.

"Guide to the Year's Work in Victorian Poetry: 1975." *Victorian Poetry*, Autumn, pp. 205-45.

McFarland, Thomas. "Recent Studies in the Nineteenth

Century." *Studies in English Literature*, Autumn, pp. 693-727.

Roe, Jill. "Modernisation and Sexism: Recent Writings on Victorian Women." *Victorian Studies*, Winter, pp. 179-92. Review-article.

Wolff, Michael, John S. North, and Dorothy Deering, eds. *The Waterloo Directory of Victorian Periodicals 1824-*

1900. Phase 1. Wilfrid Laurier. Rev. *TLS*, 14 January, p. 35.
- CRITICISM AND LITERARY HISTORY. Ball, Patricia. *The Heart's Events: The Victorian Poetry of Relationships*. Athlone. Selected poem-sequences of Tennyson, Browning, Patmore and Meredith. Rev. *TLS*, 15 October, p. 1299.
- Bischoff, Brigitte. "Tennyson, Mrs. Gaskell, and the Weaver Poet." *Victorian Poetry*, Winter, pp. 356-58. Mrs. Gaskell was responsible for Tennyson sending a copy of his poems to Samuel Bamford, the Weaver poet.
- Calder, Jenni. *Women and Marriage in Victorian Fiction*. Thames and Hudson. Rev. *TLS*, 27 August, p. 1055.
- DeLaura, David J. "Hopkins and Mrs. Gaskell: Margaret, Are You Grieving?" *Victorian Poetry*, Winter, pp. 341-45. Parallels between *North and South* and "Spring and Fall."
- Kendrick, Walter M. "Balzac and British Realism: Mid-Victorian Theories of the Novel." *Victorian Studies*, Autumn, pp. 5-24. The problem of Balzac's unsavory but convincing realism.
- Kincaid, James R. "Antithetical Criticism, Harold Bloom, and Victorian Poetry." *Victorian Poetry*, Winter, pp. 365-82. Review-article.
- Shattock, Joanne. "Spreading It Thinly: Some Victorian Reviewers at Work." *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, September, pp. 84-87. Some reviewers made a little go a long way.
- Vernon, Sally. "Trouble up at T'Mill: The Rise and Decline of the Factory Play in the 1830s and 1840s." *Victorian Studies*, Winter, pp. 117-39. The failing appeal of the factory theme was due to diversification of working-class concerns.
- Weintraub, Joseph. "Henley Puffing Stevenson." *Modern Philology*, November, pp. 201-3. Henley helped promote Stevenson.
- Wiener, Joel H. "The Journalism of Richard Carlile." *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, September, pp. 75-80. Carlile's best writings are in the central tradition of early nineteenth-century radical politics and religious unorthodoxy.
- Williamson, Audrey. *Artists and Writers in Revolt: The Pre-Raphaelites*. David and Charles. Rev. *TLS*, 14 January, p. 27.
- ECONOMICS AND POLITICS. Cameron, R. H. "The Melbourne Administration, the Liberals and the Crisis of 1841." *Durham University Journal*, December, pp. 83-102. 1841 was a year of reckoning for the Melbourne Government.
- Fraser, Derek. *Urban Politics in Victorian England*. Leicester University. Rev. *TLS*, 31 December, p. 1626.
- Helfand, Michael S. "T. H. Huxley's 'Evolution and Ethics': The Politics of Evolution and the Evolution of Politics." *Victorian Studies*, Winter 1977, pp. 159-77. Far from depoliticizing evolutionary science, Huxley used "Evolution and Ethics" to justify the laissez-faire social policy of late Victorian Liberals.
- HISTORY. Baker, E. C. *Sir William Preece F.R.S.: Victorian Engineer Extraordinary*. Hutchinson. Rev. *TLS*, 5 November, p. 1398.
- Fulford, Roger, ed. *Darling Child: Private Correspondence of Queen Victoria and the Crown Princess of Prussia, 1871-1878*. Evans. Rev. *TLS*, 3 December, p. 1518.
- George, W. R. P. *The Making of Lloyd George*. Faber and Faber. Rev. *TLS*, 10 December, p. 1539.
- Woodall, Robert. "Orsini and the Fall of Palmerston." *History Today*, October, pp. 636-43. Palmerston lost office in 1850 during the Anglo-French controversy over Orsini's bomb plot.
- Ziegler, Philip. *Melbourne*. Collins. Rev. *TLS*, 27 August, p. 1045. Biography.
- RELIGION. Bradley, Ian. *The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians*. Cape. Rev. *TLS*, 8 October, p. 1284.
- Prickett, Stephen. *Romanticism and Religion: The Tradition of Coleridge and Wordsworth in the Victorian Church*. Cambridge. Rev. *TLS*, 22 October, p. 1338.
- Ward, W. R., ed. *Early Victorian Methodism: The Correspondence of Jabez Bunting 1830-1858*. Oxford. Rev. *TLS*, 6 August, p. 978.

II

INDIVIDUAL AUTHORS

- ARNOLD. Forbes, George. "The Reluctant Lover and the World: Structure and Meaning in Arnold's 'Resignation' and 'Stanzas in Memory of the Author of Obermann.'" *Studies in English Literature*, Autumn, pp. 661-76. The relation between speaker and the world.
- Dietrich, Manfred. "Arnold's *Empedocles on Etna* and the 1853 Preface." *Victorian Poetry*, Winter, pp. 311-24. The poem becomes a public sacrifice because it fails to meet the strict demands of the Preface.
- Malder, Francine B. "Matthew Arnold and the Circle of Recurrence." *Victorian Poetry*, Winter, pp. 293-309. Arnold explored various ways in which man might break out of the circle of recurrence.
- Rowse, A. L. *Matthew Arnold: Poet and Prophet*. Thames and Hudson. Rev. *TLS*, 8 October, p. 1270.
- Savory, Jerold J. "Matthew Arnold and 'The Author of *Supernatural Religion*': The Background to *God and the Bible*." *Studies in English Literature*, Autumn, pp. 677-91. *God and the Bible* is, in large measure, a reply to the anonymously published *Supernatural Religion*.
- Smidt, Kristian. "The Beaches of Calais and Dover: Arnold's Counterstatement to Wordsworth's Confession of Faith." *Victorian Poetry*, Autumn, pp. 256-57. Arnold had Wordsworth's sonnet in mind when he wrote "Dover Beach."
- BAGEHOT. Tener, Robert H. "Walter Bagehot: Some New Attributions." *Studies in Bibliography: Papers of the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia*. Vol. XXIX, pp. 346-59. Attributes seven articles in the *Inquirer* to Bagehot.
- BRONTËS. Grudin, Peter. "Jane and the Other Mrs Rochester: Excess and Restraint in *Jane Eyre*." *Novel*, Winter, pp. 145-57. Bertha is used to show why Jane must act as she does.
- Rosengarten, Herbert J. "Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley* and the *Leeds Mercury*." *Studies in English Literature*, Autumn, pp. 591-600. Brontë made extensive use of the materials in the *Mercury* but modified them when necessary.
- Shelston, Alan. "Biography and the Brontës." *Critical Quarterly*, Autumn, pp. 67-72. Review-article.
- BROWNING. Vogel, C. S. "Browning's Salomé: An Allusion in

- 'Fra Lippo Lippi.'" *Victorian Poetry*, Winter, pp. 346-48. The direct comparison of the Prior's niece to Herodias.
- CARLYLE. Seigel, Jules. "Carlyle's Model Prison and Prisoners Identified." *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, September, pp. 81-83. Suggests Tothill Fields Prison.
- CLOUGH. McGrane, Paul. "Unpublished Poetic Fragments and Manuscripts of Arthur Hugh Clough." *Victorian Poetry*, Winter, pp. 359-64. Annotated.
- DARWIN. Bowler, Peter J. "Malthus, Darwin, and the Concept of Struggle." *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Oct.-Dec., pp. 631-50. The significant difference between the ways Malthus and Darwin used the idea of struggle.
- DICKENS. Bandelin, Carl. "David Copperfield: A Third Interesting Penitent." *Studies in English Literature*, Autumn, pp. 601-11. The Penitents chapter plays an important part in the novel.
- Cohan, Steven. "'They Are All Secret': The Fantasy Content of *Bleak House*." *Literature and Psychology*, Vol. XXVI, No. 2, pp. 79-91. The importance of a disguised fantasy of sexual guilt.
- Costigan, Edward. "Drama and Everyday Life in *Sketches by Boz*." *Review of English Studies*, November, pp. 403-21. The importance of the theatre.
- Dunn, Richard J. "The Imaginative Dickens: A Review-Article." *Studies in the Novel*, Summer 1976, pp. 223-33.
- Jefferson, D. W. "The Moral Centre of *Little Dorrit*." *Essays in Criticism*, October, pp. 300-17. Blandois exists to support the illusion that the novel has a plot.
- Librach, Ronald S. "The Burdens of Self and Society: Release and Redemption in *Little Dorrit*." *Studies in the Novel*, Winter 1975, pp. 538-51. Little Dorrit as the agent for Arthur Clennam's "release."
- McDonald, Andrew. "The Preservation of Innocence in *Dombey and Son*: Florence's Identity and the Role of Walter Gay." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, Spring 1976, pp. 1-19. Walter plays a central part in the near loss and eventual finding of Florence.
- Thurley, Geoffrey. *The Dickens Myth: Its Genesis and Structure*. Routledge and Kegan Paul. Critical. Rev. *TLS*, 29 October, p. 1359.
- DISRAELI. O'Kell, Robert. "The Autobiographical Nature of Disraeli's Early Fiction." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, December, pp. 253-84. Disraeli's early fiction embodies his fantasies about himself.
- ELIOT. Blake, Kathleen. "Middlemarch and the Woman Question." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, December, pp. 285-312. A great feminist work.
- Dunham, Robert H. "*Silas Marner* and the Wordsworthian Child." *Studies in English Literature*, Autumn, pp. 645-59. Wordsworth's influence.
- McCobb, E. A. "Aaron Bernstein's *Mendel Gibbor*: A Minor Source for *Daniel Deronda*?" *English Language Notes*, September, pp. 42-43.
- Wiesenfarth, Joseph. "Legend in *The Mill on the Floss*." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, Spring 1976, pp. 20-41. The story is built on the legend of St. Ogg and the legend of the flood.
- GASKELL. Gill, Stephen. "Price's Patent Candles: New Light on *North and South*." *Review of English Studies*, August, pp. 313-21. A probable influence.
- GILBERT. Head, Thomas. "Gilbert, Sothorn, and *The Ne'er-do-Weel*." *Nineteenth Century Theatre Research*, Autumn, pp. 63-72. The form of the romantic comedy was inadequate for Gilbert's satiric questioning.
- HARDY. Gibson, James, ed. *Thomas Hardy: The Complete Poems*. Macmillan. Rev. *TLS*, 17 September, p. 1186.
- Giordano, Frank R., Jr. "A Source for Thomas Hardy's 'Valenciennes.'" *Victorian Poetry*, Winter, pp. 349-55. Suggests Southey's "The Battle of Blenheim."
- Gordon, Jan B. "Origin, History and the Reconstitution of Family: Tess' Journey." *ELH*, Fall, pp. 366-88. As a transitional figure, Tess combines past and present.
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Victorian Group News

*The recent announcement (*MLA Divisions*, Spring 1977) of the transfer of operations at VNL to Queens College has proved premature. Editorial and business offices remain at New York University, and all correspondence should be addressed, as in the past, to William E. Buckler, New York University, Washington Square, New York, N.Y. 10003.

*One obvious benefit of the general MLA structuring has been the encouragement of long-range planning, especially as to the shaping of the annual convention program. It is possible now to look ahead to the next three meetings: for 1977, the Program Chairman is J. Hillis Miller (Yale) and the topic open; for 1978, the Program Chairman will be Jerome Buckley and the topic, "Religion and Victorian Literature"; for 1979, the topic will be "The Pre-Raphaelites and Their Circle," the Program Chairman yet to be nominated.

*Charles L. Proudfit writes that *English Language Notes* has scheduled a special winter 1978 issue devoted to nineteenth-century English literature. Contributions should run no longer than 5,000 words and must be received by April 15, 1978. Manuscripts should be sent to Professor Proudfit, Editor, *ELN*, Hellems Building 101, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo., 80309.

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