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## I. LEADING ARTICLES

### TWO COMMENTARIES ON DICKENS

#### A. DICKENS AND THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS OF MELODRAMA

Charles Dickens is the most important of those English storytellers who frequently used obviously melodramatic incidents and situations. Modern studies of Dickens by Edmund Wilson, Edgar Johnson, and others have removed any doubts about the sophistication of Dickens's art, so the work of Dickens is a logical point at which to begin to examine, with a view toward re-evaluation, the story motifs almost universally despised as melodrama. In this article I shall examine certain ideas about life which Dickens held and suggest how they form a philosophic basis for his choice of these motifs (there may have been a technical convenience to some of them also, but that is not relevant here). In brief, I suggest that melodrama is the inevitable artistic result of an extension of the cult of sensibility, which flourished in Europe from the late Renaissance to about 1850. As I see it, the task is fourfold: to define melodrama, to explain briefly how it evolves from the logical corollaries of the sensibility cult, to indicate some occasions where Dickens used melodrama patterns, and to show that Dickens seriously held the supporting corollaries. If I can do this to the reader's satisfaction, I shall succeed in suggesting strongly that for a century people of refined literary taste have despised a kind of art because it presented a view of life with which they did not agree. I. A. Richards said once that one could dispense with certain of one's beliefs momentarily in appreciating a poem which contained ideas in which one did not believe.<sup>1</sup> This article is intended to suggest that historically no such happy tolerance has existed among the readers of stories and that if one damns the melodrama one must damn the philosophy on which it was based, the age in which it flourished, and the side of man to which it appealed.

The motifs most commonly associated with melodrama probably are those of the man threatened with financial ruin by a villain, the virgin pursued by a villain, the hard man or the harpy whose heart softens and whose conduct becomes kindly, the calamity prevented by an odd and unexpected rescuer, escape from a supernatural or supernaturally awful imprisonment or environment. There are many more; they are listed and described at length in M. Wilson Disher's book *Melodrama*.<sup>2</sup> Now, while it is obvious that sensibility and the pursued virgin motif can be related in the work of Richardson, Mrs. Radcliffe, Dickens, and other English novelists, it is not perhaps apparent that the crucial relationship in all these motifs is that of the villain or hardship to the sympathetic character (sometimes the same person) and that recurring in this relationship is the double picture of the normal person as a passive being and of event or change as in itself an oddity. Now these motifs in combination with or alongside of others of *basically* different kinds existed in ancient times, in the Middle Ages, and generally all through literary history, but this particular group reflecting the peculiar double picture is associated with what we call melodrama, a genre which became definite and popular toward the end of the eighteenth century in Europe (Scott described it as the stage counterpart of the novel of terror,<sup>3</sup> a definition which helps date it somewhat, and the name "melodrama" was first applied in England in 1802<sup>4</sup>).

I suggest that this double picture of man as normally passive and of event as in itself an oddity, and even the specific ideas of villainy and softening of the heart, are part of or derive easily and logically from the cult of sensibility. The basic tenets of the cult, already vigorous a century before Rousseau, were that every man could find truth and moral guidance by



listening to his heart, that society tended to restrain and corrupt one's emotions and senses (the two were often confused), that reason was the most social and hence the worst part of man and emotion was the least social and hence the best part of man; that sensibilities could be refined by consciously encouraging reactions to love, beauty, pain, God, experience; that bad men were hard and cold.<sup>5</sup> These basic tenets lead logically to certain others: they imply the assumption that man is basically good; hence they leave society, environment, or men who are mysteriously and abnormally hard as the explanation for the obvious fact of the existence of evil and pain; they imply that man is ordinarily passive (Kant pointed out the passivity of views of man before his own) and hence leave human action pretty much up to the hard, evil individuals or to organized society (centuries before Marx).

In the last half of the eighteenth century sensibility became a pervasive attitude toward life.<sup>6</sup> Its triumph is roughly contemporary with that of the melodrama. This historical co-incidence and the parallels in the pictures of the world suggest that melodrama developed out of sensibility (the connection of the parallel novel of terror with sensibility is frequently spoken of).

The novels of Dickens are full of the incidents and situations which are the stock of melodrama. Examples of the main melodrama motifs listed above are easy to find. Men threatened with financial ruin by villains are important in the plots of *Pickwick Papers*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Our Mutual Friend* and occur in several other novels. Virgins pursued by villains are important in *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Edwin Drood* (and the similar motif of the pursued child is fundamental to *Oliver Twist* and perhaps others). Hard men whose hearts soften are vital to *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Dombey and Son*, *Hard Times*, *Great Expectations* (the related motifs of the harpy who softens and the prostitute who becomes sympathetic are important in *Oliver Twist*, *Barnaby Rudge*, *Dombey and Son*, *David Copperfield*, *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations*, and *Our Mutual Friend*). Calamities are prevented by odd and unexpected rescuers in *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *David Copperfield*, and *Hard Times*. Escapes from supernaturally awful imprisonments could perhaps be said to take place in *Oliver Twist*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *David Copperfield*, *A Tale of Two Cities*. And there are many more examples of these and other melodrama motifs.

The bulk of this article must be devoted, however, to the most important part of the subject: the evidence that Dickens accepted the most important corollaries of sensibility, that normal men are passive and that action and evil individuals are associated (the association of evil and society though sometimes accepted by Dickens is much less relevant to the basis of his melodrama). This is of course evidence that therefore he believed in the odd-world-picture presented by the melodrama motifs he used. Much of the evidence which I present comes from speeches, articles, letters, and direct lectures in the novels, but we must remember that Dickens said in a speech that "his political opinions had... been not obscurely stated in an 'idle book or two.'" <sup>7</sup> In another speech he had said that though he doubted that one could tell the "character" of a writer from his books he was sure that one could tell a "writer's moral creed and broad purpose, if he" had one. <sup>8</sup> One reason that these statements apply to his own work is that very often he directly tells the reader whether he approves or disapproves of certain characters and certain behavior.

It is clear that Dickens thought of normal man as passive. His friend and literary adviser, John Forster, in speaking of *David Copperfield* says, "Take autobiography as a design to show that any man's life may be as a mirror of existence to *all* men, and the individual career becomes altogether secondary to the variety of experiences *received* and rendered back in it [my italics]." <sup>9</sup> Dickens's belief in heredity; <sup>10</sup> his praising women only for unselfishness and sensitivity <sup>11</sup> (the last three books are somewhat different here); an article on shipwrecks; <sup>12</sup> the statement in 1856 that all disasters are nobody's fault; <sup>13</sup> his picture of *history* in *Barnaby Rudge*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and elsewhere as engulfing individuals; his insistence that the poor (with whom he identified himself <sup>14</sup> and who he felt at times were good and had the best values) <sup>15</sup> are unable to help themselves, <sup>16</sup> his continual favoring of innocence, <sup>17</sup> and Christian unselfishness, his belief in the power of environment <sup>18</sup> and vague forces are more evidence of the same picture of man.

At times Dickens seems almost to have believed that individual action did not exist, was impossible; at others, especially later on, that it was futile. The attacks on work as drudgery suggest this idea. <sup>19</sup> His use of a kind of compensatory psychology in statements like the one in *Great Expectations* that children from broken homes are eager for marriage <sup>20</sup> suggests a picture of the world as static normally. His feeling that action is futile is seen in his early antagonism to government help for the poor, <sup>21</sup> his doubts about the effectiveness of reform on the grounds that it might just be tinkering, <sup>22</sup> his feeling that customs are hard to change, <sup>23</sup> his questioning of the power of charity, <sup>24</sup> his picture of the powerlessness of men of good will (like Meagles), <sup>25</sup> and his lifelong tendency to emphasize emotional reactions to, not specific political actions against, social evils.

The few areas in which Dickens is in favor of action actually offer little contradiction to the idea that normal man is passive. Dickens is for work <sup>26</sup> and against loafing <sup>27</sup> (almost all his characters have jobs and are busy) <sup>28</sup> but he suggests most people work (in the *vague* sense of holding a job and earning a living). <sup>29</sup> He is for giving and loving, for charity, kindness, pity. <sup>30</sup> (Good



men in Dickens's books, says House, love three "activities": job, home, social work.)<sup>31</sup> He was at times annoyed that the English let social evils continue,<sup>32</sup> he felt no abuse was unimprovable,<sup>33</sup> and he eventually favored straight government help for many.<sup>34</sup> But these latter actions have, like the rescues in his books, the quality of being exceptions to the general rule and one made necessary only when someone other than the acting person(s) has suffered extraordinary misfortune, and hence also involved the assumption that normal man is passive.

Dickens believed that active men were villains. He was against businessmen most of the time and has constant sermons against commerce.<sup>35</sup> The exceptions are businessmen who have obviously worked hard for their money or who are extremely charitable.<sup>36</sup> In other cases the businessman is made out to be selfish (Dombey, for example), emotionally or intellectually interested in money or gambling (Trent, for example)—usually a Medieval figure of greed, pride, and hardheartedness, even hate. He is just as much against the toady,<sup>37</sup> against the spendthrift<sup>38</sup> or the man living on invested money or living off the work of others,<sup>39</sup> the aristocrat protected by tradition and law,<sup>40</sup> and against the boastful, snobbish, irresponsible, complacent self-made man<sup>41</sup> and the *nouveau riche* taste<sup>42</sup> and Nonconformist religion<sup>43</sup> that often were part of him. He also hated the American who talked of an aristocracy of ability.<sup>44</sup> Apparently he felt all these committed or aided villainy or crime and were indifferent to the suffering of many. He went so far as to say that virtue is more common among the poor than the rich<sup>45</sup> and to denounce in 1855 the selfishness in England and the indifference to spreading poverty.<sup>46</sup> He was against class war and hate and devoted much work to bringing the classes together<sup>47</sup> and preventing people from closing their eyes and hearts to the poor.<sup>48</sup>

He hated people with causes.<sup>49</sup> He considered them fanatics, who along with businessmen are the main troublemakers in his books. He didn't like foreign missionary work. Such activity was impractical and wrong, for it neglected the real problems of the less civilized and involved indifference to vast problems among the English themselves.<sup>50</sup> He hated also the hypocritical and the unconsciously selfish people who used ideas, especially religious or economic, to get their way at the expense of others.<sup>51</sup> Dickens seems to have felt that pride or hypocrisy were usually behind fanaticism. He has an article against "whole hogs," as he calls them.<sup>52</sup> He attacked fanaticism in schools<sup>53</sup> and attacked fanatic Socialist dogma and the whole tendency to fanaticism in the "lower gentility," which he felt was the cause of much social mischief.<sup>54</sup>

Dickens was against theories which supported businessmen or fanatical positions: Malthusian notions;<sup>55</sup> talk of the "deserving" poor;<sup>56</sup> extreme utilitarianism;<sup>57</sup> Manchester economics and the supposedly hardboiled attitude toward wage scales, business regulation, self-help, poor houses, etc.<sup>58</sup>

Twice in his novels, in *Barnaby Rudge* and *A Tale of Two Cities*, he toyed with revolution as a way of removing such people from power, and in some speeches and articles the idea is present as a kind of threat.<sup>59</sup> Dickens's treatment of revolution and mob violence in his two historical novels, in his article about the French Revolution,<sup>60</sup> and in his speech about the dreadful danger posed by the ignorance of most of the population,<sup>61</sup> however, indicates that he was horrified by the idea. So do his statements and suggestions, in his novels and out, that the dirt of the slums creates criminals.<sup>62</sup> In his mind, in other words, loomed the threat of the poor becoming villains by changing from a helpless, pitiable mass to an active mob. Dickens was against force.<sup>63</sup> He said in *Our Mutual Friend* that "the people are always unreasoning."<sup>64</sup> Thinking of himself as living on top of a powder keg, he hated people who did anything which might arouse the poor.<sup>65</sup> He was against people who tried to bring evangelical religion to them;<sup>66</sup> he was against what he felt were labor agitators,<sup>67</sup> against fighting labor,<sup>68</sup> against labor unions until late in life.<sup>69</sup> In fact he seems often to have been against collective action, though he supported Chartist demands in the 1850's, when the threat of an English revolution was over.<sup>70</sup>

Dickens seems to have felt that relatives and women were aggressive and to have disliked them (he admits to disliking the latter virtually).<sup>71</sup> There is little external evidence of this but he does display a fondness for motifs which involve women as bullies, pleasure seekers, religious fanatics, and complainers (though a somewhat different picture emerges in the last three books).

Some of his characters appear to be sadists virtually. And Dickens often seems to feel that these several kinds of villains are winning. The idea that no abuse is unimprovable<sup>72</sup> certainly suggests they are as yet. And in various places Dickens says life is dark, in *Hard Times* for instance,<sup>73</sup> though elsewhere he says people who feel this way see reflections of their own minds.<sup>74</sup>

Dickens, then, was against action and the things he associated with it: pride, selfishness, hardness, separation, theory, force, hypocrisy, cruelty (Jackson shows Betsy Trotwood makes the forswearing of these last two a kind of test of virtue).<sup>75</sup> As a result he was in favor of certain things. Anyone who pictures all action except charity as selfish and harmful is in favor of a static society, of self-restraint or discipline,<sup>76</sup> and of police.<sup>77</sup> He loved the rescuers in his books who restored order. His cure for most evils, as many have noticed, was mainly kindness and the spirit of the New Testament. He clearly favored long suffering to the point of masochism. The sympathetic young women whom he directly praises and sets up as ideals are usually pictured as vague, little, suffering, cheerful, peaceful, quiet, kittenish beings—but usually as essentially



inactive even in their homes. Eventually he came to favor education for women.<sup>78</sup> He came to favor state interference in, or state regulation of, business in the 1850's<sup>79</sup> and even proposed workers' managing plants.<sup>80</sup> In the end he favored unions<sup>81</sup> and labor political action.<sup>82</sup> So toward the end of his life some of these positions were modified.

The main thing Dickens favored was a rather Christian internal individual reform. The mechanics of individual internal reform were simple. Lack of sympathy was the main cause of evil.<sup>83</sup> He felt that even whole social classes could not do much apart.<sup>84</sup> Work and love, which encouraged work also,<sup>85</sup> tended to put one back in touch with others (the working individuals are separate from the loafers in *Our Mutual Friend*, and Wrayburn is led from one to the other—compare Martin Chuzzlewit, Pip, and others). But the most eventful part of the reform was the restraint of activity and the pounding of the individual into sensitivity from pain and loneliness.<sup>86</sup> Man was to drop action, drop one whole side of himself to reform. All problems apparently were solved when man changed and became emotional and passive.

Dickens got himself involved in a contradiction here. The most important of the instruments of this reform was misfortune, but the people Dickens felt most needed reform were those least likely to be unfortunate. So he had to create sensational and somewhat unlikely calamities for them, and in so doing of course revealed a basic suspicion that this kind of reform was improbable and haphazard.

On the specific problem of reforming the criminal and immoral, Dickens wrote articles containing much good sense and experienced observation. About reforming criminals Dickens had several ideas. He attacked capital punishment as a debilitating and degrading spectacle which did not discourage crime but made much of criminals. He said the condemned man was involved in an egocentric drama. He attacked experimental prisons as encouraging the wrong things also in a land with many poor and said that pattern penitence was common. He believed disagreeable work should be done in jails and said that so much work and good conduct should be required of a criminal instead of so much jail time.<sup>87</sup>

He has a long, detailed article about the rehabilitation of women at a place called the House for Homeless Women. The women are carefully selected, taught a respectable trade, and reformed by firmness, patience, quiet advice, restrained sympathy, equal treatment, avoidance of emphasis on past guilt, maintenance of a moral standard in the present, avoidance of prying (except for one autobiography required at the start), orderly schedule, decent and intelligent example, and placement with sympathetic families afterwards.<sup>88</sup>

As for the opposite process, moral degradation, Dickens had a series of articles studying so-called moral disintegration in all the historical emergencies he could find relevant evidence about—mostly shipwrecks. He came to the conclusion that the kind of degeneration into animals or cannibals which occurred on the famous wreck of the *Medusa* happened only when the people involved had been obviously unreliable, undisciplined, even criminal before the disaster and that historically decent, disciplined men did not tend to break under stress.<sup>89</sup>

Modern man does not share all of Dickens's views. For this reason it is easy to call Little Nell and Scrooge "just melodrama" and to think of them as the cheap tricks of the worst sort of hack or as the nightmares of a child. But they are creations of one of the many adults who, led by theologians and philosophers, believed in them and in people like them. Though we can see problems Dickens's ideas could not handle and can see, stemming from his ideas, distortions of what we consider reality, the fact of Dickens's belief suggests that literary forms are based on philosophies (however amateurish) and that even in fiction men do not lie about what they picture as existence as much as we sometimes think.

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FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> I. A. Richards, "Science and Poetry," *Criticism the Foundations of Modern Literary Judgment*, ed. Mark Schorer and others (New York, 1948), pp. 505-523, esp. 517.
- <sup>2</sup> M. Wilson Disher, *Melodrama* (New York, 1954).
- <sup>3</sup> Sir Walter Scott, "Mrs. Ann Radcliffe," *The Lives of the Novelists*, Everyman edition (London [no date]), p.225.
- <sup>4</sup> Samuel C. Chew, "The Nineteenth Century and After," *A Literary History of England*, ed. A. C. Baugh (New York, 1948), p. 1266, note 5.
- <sup>5</sup> The best brief discussion is to be found in J. R. Foster, *History of the Pre-Romantic Novel in England* (New York, 1949), Chapter 1.
- <sup>6</sup> George Sherburn, "The Restoration and Eighteenth Century," *A Literary History of England*, pp. 967-969.
- <sup>7</sup> Charles Dickens, *The Works of Charles Dickens* [no general editor named], National Library Edition (New York, 1923), 33 volumes in 20, XIX, 580. This edition hereafter is referred to as NLE.
- <sup>8</sup> Dickens, NLE, XIX, 380.
- <sup>9</sup> John Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens*, ed. J. W. T. Ley (New York [no date]), p. 554.
- <sup>10</sup> Forster, p. 636 in the note.
- <sup>11</sup> Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *The Works of Charles Dickens*, ed. A. Lang (London 1897-1908, 1911), p. 109 (all later references to the novels, unless otherwise noted will be to this edition); *Dombey and Son*, I, 35; *The Old Curiosity Shop*, I, 238; *Pickwick Papers*, I, 482.



- <sup>12</sup>Dickens, "The Long Voyage," *NLE*, XVII, II, 240-252.
- <sup>13</sup>Charles Dickens, "Nobody, Somebody, and Everybody," *NLE*, XVIII, II, 126-130. The article is partly ironic.
- <sup>14</sup>Forster, p. 39.
- <sup>15</sup>As in a speech in Boston in 1842. See Dickens, *NLE*, XIX, 376. See also Edgar Johnson, *Charles Dickens, His Tragedy and Triumph* (New York, 1952), II, 1042.
- <sup>16</sup>See Dickens, *NLE*, XIX, p. 449 and Forster, p. 348, 540.
- <sup>17</sup>In one hero after another in his books. See *The Old Curiosity Shop*, II, 82, 84. *Bleak House*, I, 283, 284 and II, 493; the preface to *Oliver Twist*.
- <sup>18</sup>See Forster, p. 540, for instance, and a speech of Dickens's, *NLE*, XIX, p. 476. See also Humphry House, *The Dickens World* (Oxford, 1941), p. 220.
- <sup>19</sup>*Our Mutual Friend*, I, 116; the pictures of Carton's work for Stryver, of Traddles's work in *David Copperfield*, of Jasper's work. See also House, p. 167.
- <sup>20</sup>*Great Expectations*, p. 292.
- <sup>21</sup>House, pp. 50, 175, and esp. 213. See also plot of *Oliver Twist*.
- <sup>22</sup>Jack Lindsay, *Charles Dickens: A Biographical and Critical Study* (New York, 1950), p. 264.
- <sup>23</sup>Dickens, "The Niger Expedition," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 62; see also House, pp. 163 and 213.
- <sup>24</sup>House, pp. 78, 91, 168, but see pp. 39, 52, 206.
- <sup>25</sup>House, pp. 166 and 206.
- <sup>26</sup>Dickens, in speeches, *NLE*, XIX, 551, 576, 582 (esp. 576).
- <sup>27</sup>*Our Mutual Friend*, II, 490-491; in the persons of Verisopht in *Nicholas Nickleby* and Gowan in *Little Dorrit* and elsewhere. See also *Little Dorrit*, I, 253-254.
- <sup>28</sup>House, p. 55.
- <sup>29</sup>Dickens, "The Sunday Screw," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 205.
- <sup>30</sup>House, pp. 39, 41, 52, 85, 168, 206.
- <sup>31</sup>House, p. 160.
- <sup>32</sup>Johnson, II, 842, 858, 893. And see Dickens, "A December Vision," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 246-249, and Forster, p. 826.
- <sup>33</sup>Forster, p. 826.
- <sup>34</sup>Johnson, II, 654.
- <sup>35</sup>Some of the attacks on business: *Pickwick Papers*, I, xviii and 105; *Nicholas Nickleby*, I, 70-79, 147, 154, 484, II, 180-181, 331-332; *Hard Times*; the person of Merdle in *Little Dorrit*, of Dombey in *Dombey and Son*, etc.
- <sup>36</sup>House, pp. 39, 52, 164, 166, 167, 168.
- <sup>37</sup>For example, see John Butt and Kathleen Tillotson *Dickens at Work* (Fair Lawn, New Jersey, 1958), p. 225; see also Forster, p. 635.
- <sup>38</sup>In the persons of Verisopht, Mantalini, Nell's brother, Chester, Pip, many others, if we may judge from the tone of remarks made directly by the author when these characters appear.
- <sup>39</sup>House, pp. 164, 167, 168.
- <sup>40</sup>As in *Barnaby Rudge*, *Bleak House*, *A Tale of Two Cities*. See also Johnson, II, 868-869.
- <sup>41</sup>As in the cases of Ralph Nickleby, Bounderby, Veneering, Podsnap—again judging from remarks made directly by the author to the reader when these characters appear.
- <sup>42</sup>As in the case of Veneering; see T. A. Jackson, *Charles Dickens: The Progress of a Radical* (London, 1937), pp. 189-192.
- <sup>43</sup>House, p. 75.
- <sup>44</sup>See the American sections of *Martin Chuzzlewit*.
- <sup>45</sup>In a speech, *NLE*, XIX, 376.
- <sup>46</sup>Jackson, p. 248.
- <sup>47</sup>Forster, p. 348.
- <sup>48</sup>The phrase about closing one's eyes and heart to the poor is perhaps a quotation, but I have been unable to trace it.
- <sup>49</sup>House, pp. 50, 52, 68-69.
- <sup>50</sup>Mrs. Jellyby; Mrs. Weller, Sr. "The Niger Expedition," *NLE*, XVIII, 62, 63. See also *Pickwick Papers*, I, 441.
- <sup>51</sup>Murdstone, the Chadbands, among others. But Dickens has direct attacks on ranting religion, for this and other reasons in *Pickwick Papers*, I, xvii; *Nicholas Nickleby*, I, 70-79; *The Old Curiosity Shop*, I, 219-220; *Dombey and Son*, I, 254; *Great Expectations*, p. 24.
- <sup>52</sup>"Whole Hogs," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 295-302 (1851).
- <sup>53</sup>In a speech, *NLE*, XIX, 473.
- <sup>54</sup>"The Sunday Screw," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 205. He has a number of other attacks on spoil sports: Grub in an inserted tale in *Pickwick Papers*; the second inserted tale in *Nicholas Nickleby*; *Our Mutual Friend*, II, 337.
- <sup>55</sup>Ellis N. Gummer, *Dickens' Works in Germany, 1837-1937* (Oxford, 1940), p. 153; House, pp. 83-85.
- <sup>56</sup>House, pp. 83-85.
- <sup>57</sup>The Address in the first number of *Household Words*.
- <sup>58</sup>Lindsay, pp. 102, 243-246.
- <sup>59</sup>*NLE*, XIX, 387-393, esp. 390; see also 409-414, esp. 411; Dickens, "Judicial Special Pleading," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 71-76, esp. 74; see also Dickens, "Railway Strikes," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 255-256 and Forster, p. 328.



- 60 "Judicial Special Pleading," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 71-76.
- 61 *NLE*, XIX, 387-393, esp. 390.
- 62 Dickens, "Crime and Education," *NLE*, XVII, 401-407; "Ignorance and Crime" [full of statistics], XVIII, I, 34-37; "Cruikshank's 'The Drunkard's Children,'" XVIII, I, 41-45; "Judicial Special Pleading," XVIII, I, 71-76; "The Tooting Farm," XVIII, I, 89-92; "Home for Homeless Women," XVIII, I, 348-364; and elsewhere.
- 63 House, p. 200.
- 64 *Our Mutual Friend*, II, 109.
- 65 Bad lecturing by judges, for instance, "Judicial Special Pleading," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 75-76.
- 66 Mrs. Pardiggle and Mr. Chadband are examples. See also a speech, *NLE*, XIX, 473.
- 67 See *Hard Times* and the article referred to in note 65.
- 68 George Gissing, *Charles Dickens* (New York, 1924), pp. 242-243, 258-259.
- 69 Johnson, II, 714.
- 70 House, quoted in Johnson, II, 898.
- 71 In a speech, *NLE*, XIX, 371.
- 72 Forster, p. 826.
- 73 In *Hard Times* Dickens says that material reality is evil in the title and symbols and more directly perhaps on pp. 24-27, 45, 70-71, 123-125, 154-155, 163, 166-167, and elsewhere. See also *Our Mutual Friend*, I, 173-174.
- 74 *Oliver Twist*, p. 313.
- 75 Jackson, p. 166.
- 76 Dickens, "The Sunday Screw," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 206; "The Lost Arctic Voyagers," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 462-492 (the whole double article). And Forster on Dickens's personal orderliness (p. 836).
- 77 *Bleak House* and many articles admiring police work show this.
- 78 In a speech, *NLE*, XIX, pp. 393-398.
- 79 House, p. 213.
- 80 Lindsay, p. 300.
- 81 See note 85.
- 82 Johnson, II, 826-827.
- 83 So it would appear from Slearý's remarks on love, quoted in *Dickens at Work*, pp. 220-221; see also Forster on the purpose of *A Christmas Carol*, p. 317.
- 84 In a speech, *NLE*, XIX, 449.
- 85 See a letter to Maria, quoted by Ley, in his edition of Forster, p. 57, note 69. See also sources cited in note 86 below.
- 86 See the description of the purpose of *A Christmas Carol* and the other Christmas Books and the plan for *Dombey and Son*. See Forster, pp. 217, 472.
- 87 See the articles cited in note 62 above and also Dickens, "Capital Punishment" [in three parts], XVII, 407-437.
- 88 Dickens, "Home for Homeless Women," *NLE*, I, 348-364.
- 89 Dickens, "The Lost Arctic Voyagers," parts I and II, *NLE*, I, 462-492. Dickens was against the idea of the noble savage also; see "The Noble Savage," *NLE*, XVII, 232-240.

## B. DICKENS AND THE HEART AS THE HOPE FOR HEAVEN

### A STUDY OF THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS OF SENSATIONAL LITERARY TECHNIQUE

It is well known that Dickens used an exceptionally sensational literary technique involving vivid descriptions, dramatic presentations, unusual incidents. Ordinarily a sensational technique, whether admired or condemned, is seen as merely a matter of device. I have suggested in other articles a few of the people from whom Dickens learned some of these devices.<sup>1</sup> But a good storyteller chooses such things to communicate something more fundamental: a vision of existence. And Dickens constructed his elaborate sensational technique to present a view of life which is a combination of philosophic idealism, sensibility, and traces of organicism. This combination may be said to be a basis of much of his art, and, if my discussion below of its relationship to sensational technique is accepted, the combination is worth examining for two reasons. First, it demonstrates that Dickens's art was in his eyes not the insincere charms and stunts of a hack, but a holy instrument of revelation and improvement. Second, it suggests that literary discussion of the form and style of an individual book apart from discussion of the contemporary history of ideas is likely to be incomplete and inaccurate.

Dickens was not the only writer of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to develop a sensational technique on the basis of a combination of idealism, sensibility, and organicism, and so I believe my task of relating his sensational technique to this basis will be best fulfilled by a partly general procedure. I shall define idealism, sensibility, and organicism briefly (they are familiar quantities), sketch the manner in which they encourage the use of sensational technique, and then present detailed evidence that Dickens held the relevant ideas.



The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw the adoption by numbers of people of several different philosophic idealisms: Kant's, Hegel's, Fichte's, among others. And then the English poets were part of one of the almost periodic revivals of Plato and Plotinus. The average person influenced by idealism of some kind appears less to have adopted any one of these philosophies in detail than to have accepted features which several of them shared and which seemed easy to combine with Christianity. This kind of informal idealism involved the belief in two realms, material and ideal, the latter being glimpsed or reached primarily by non-rational mental behavior. The ideal realm was considered to be reached by part of a person, the soul, after the body's death or in its sleep or when its operation had been suspended, conflict and commerce and selfishness being associated with the body while love, instinct, the unconscious mind (long before Freud), charity, sympathy, memory, imagination, mental peace, and often sex were associated with the soul and the ideal. In roughly this arrangement these matters are to be found in the novels of M. G. Lewis, Mrs. Radcliffe, Dickens, and the Brontës and in the poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and some of Blake. To be more precise, this kind of idealism is like an extension of the ladder of love in Plato's *Symposium* until merely to react vigorously to material things and people is viewed as a path to an ideal realm.

This last statement suggests that the public adopted those parts of formal idealisms which seemed to build on an earlier way of thought which was in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries very widespread indeed: the cult of sensibility. If I may remind the reader, those who believed in sensibility felt that every individual could reach truth and moral guidance by obeying his heart, which would teach him to love people and things, that environment was important because society restricted and corrupted one's emotions and senses, which were confused, that reason was social and bad and emotion was the freest and best part of man, that man could refine his personality and become more aristocratic and more Christian (in an Arminian sense) by self-consciously cultivating his reactions.<sup>2</sup>

The third philosophy mentioned, and least pertinent to this discussion, was organicism, a view of the universe, of the individual's character, of the society, of the work of art as alive and growing like a plant; as having a key or seed which exerted a control over all the rest; as needing freedom for proper development; as proceeding in a way involving little attention to formal patterns of morality and reason. Such a view could be easily combined with the hatred of formal organization and the belief in personal development and the dislike of reason involved in sensibility to create an argument for near anarchy. And it could be combined with the sensibility cult's view of society as vague and independent and oppressive to create a belief in general historical trends which swept individuals along, and in the particular trend called progress.

The sensibility cult is associated historically with the works of Marivaux, Richardson, Sterne, Rousseau, and the early Goethe, in which there is much examination of a sensitive individual's reactions to experience and events initiated outside of oneself, stimuli, often unpleasant and uncommonly intense. The author who was also interested in idealism found himself with a problem, however: unlike the man of sensibility the idealist did not assume that all other men had easy access to the psychological source of truth and salvation; he felt that they had often to be taught. The man who believed in pure sensibility found contemporary Lockean materialism and science congenial; the absolute idealist, more common among German writers than English, could reject this altogether; but the man who tried to combine sensibility and idealism ended by deciding that sensitive reaction was a bridge to the ideal and found himself maintaining the value of material as stimuli and of the ideal as destination. When such a man was an author, he was not always impelled to examine an individual's reactions minutely; he might take for granted that these tended toward the ideal and emphasize the salvation-giving stimuli as being more compelling forces on his perhaps skeptical and materialistic audience: thus Mrs. Radcliffe, Coleridge, Keats, Dickens were led to unusually concrete and sensational description and incident, and Dickens, carrying the process further, was led to dramatic presentation, which cut through thought and convention to the reader's heart. Lacking any working distinction between imagination, emotion, sense impressions, reason with a capital *R*, etc., and lacking any theoretical check on the validity of emotion or on its automatic equality to art, these authors could descend to sentimentality easily. On the other hand, every detail of the material world became charged with a kind of significance and life, and the writer became a kind of magician who showed his audience the evidence of the glad tidings that existence was full of the ideal or a guide who led his audience pleasantly to salvation (by encouraging its reactions).

The writer who was also influenced by organicism was confident about eventual progress and salvation. He tended to feel that everything except the individual's development toward the ideal by means of reactions was to be fought as a deadening restriction and tended to accentuate the writer of sensibility's interest in unpleasant and intense stimuli. He might feel that these very "unnatural" restrictions, if producing a violent contrast with an intense emotional reaction called the sublime, led to the ideal. For Wordsworth, this restriction meant city life and formal learning; for Keats, it meant the "irritable reaching after fact and reason"; for Mrs. Radcliffe, it meant religious tyranny; for Shelley, it meant law and institutions and tyranny. Writers of this kind also tended to be fond of narratives of education or degeneration, of healthy or unhealthy growth.



It is evident from the above account that large portions of organicism and some aspects of the other philosophies are not relevant to the matter under discussion. Matters of influence are difficult to establish, and all I have wished to do was to show how these familiar clusters of ideas could be combined to lead to sensational literary technique. The remaining pages show that Dickens held the basic ideas, divided roughly into idealism, sensibility, belief in progress, hatred of restriction.

That Dickens was some sort of idealist is certain. A man called Townshend taught Dickens the art of hypnotism, which Dickens used and was always interested in (even as early as 1838) and was "ardently" studying in 1841. Townshend believed "spirit controlled matter, and... mind was the sole source of power."<sup>3</sup> In 1838 Dickens said he hoped his dreams of his dead sister-in-law Mary and the actual Mary in an ideal world were connected. He always believed his dreams were sacred truths.<sup>4</sup> After seeing Niagara, he said that Mary "has been here many times, I doubt not, since her sweet face faded from my earthly sight."<sup>5</sup> Later in life Dickens said in regard to the deaths of some friends that death might be an awakening.<sup>6</sup> These facts and Forster's insistence that Dickens always believed in the main Christian doctrines<sup>7</sup> are evidence that Dickens believed in an ideal world independent of the material, that he felt dreams and death and beauty and hypnotism (and the unconscious mind it reached) were connected with that ideal world.

Early in his career, about the time of *Oliver Twist*, Dickens spoke of being "anxious to find... in evil things, that soul of goodness which the Creator has put in them."<sup>8</sup> In the autobiographical *David Copperfield* he speaks of books as having "kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place in time."<sup>9</sup> These and many other pronouncements in and out of his fiction show that he felt stories in general and the descriptions and plots of his in particular were a way of increasing his audience's contact with the ideal.<sup>10</sup> There were other links, too: memory,<sup>11</sup> fun, illusion, make-believe, the imagination (especially that of the artist).<sup>12</sup>

Related to these beliefs was the idea of the importance of the inner man—hence an interest in depth psychology and a scorn of material things (especially evident in the later novels when he was prosperous and in such phrases as "grim realities" in the Address at the start of *Household Words*).<sup>13</sup> Mr. Winter and Mr. Lindsay have shown that Dickens's books are full of pictures of psychological phenomena. He worked here from his own experience and observation, portraying states (and occasionally processes) as he had known them. Insanity, hallucination, split personality, dreams, unwilling memory, the cleansing of memory, the formation of neurosis and expression in a metaphor, the free flow of associations in certain kinds of speech, hypnotism, compulsion are some of the phenomena he pictures or describes. He also was aware of repressed conflicts and of the Aristotelian idea that any virtue pushed too far became a vice.<sup>14</sup>

Dickens also clearly believed in sensibility. His own words describe at least two novels as involving the education of the heart of one of the characters.<sup>15</sup> Several other stories are associated with this process: the plan of *Dombey and Son* describes a similar education;<sup>16</sup> *A Christmas Carol* and the other Christmas Books were intended to lead their readers to love one another;<sup>17</sup> *The Old Curiosity Shop* was to lead those readers who had ever lost a relative to emotional peace and a love or acceptance of the universe as it is and the will of God, as it were.<sup>18</sup> A similar effect was described in and intended to be produced by the following remarks in a letter to Forster about the death of Forster's brother: "When you write to me again, the pain of this will have passed. No consolation can be so certain and so lasting to you as that softened and manly sorrow which springs up from the memory of the Dead... I know, my dear friend."<sup>19</sup> The importance of the heart and love are described by Sleary at the end of *Hard Times* as follows:

'one, that there ith a love in the world, not all Thelf-interetht after all, but thomething very different; t'other, that it hath a way of ith own of calculating or not calculating, with thomehow or another ith at leatht ath hard to give a name to, ath the wayth of the dogth ith.'<sup>20</sup>

In the same book this educated heart is clearly associated with idealism because of the phrase in which it is described: "*Dawn of Knowledge* of her immaterial self"<sup>21</sup> (and Sleary's remarks about the mystery of love suggest the same connection).<sup>22</sup> Furthermore Forster, Dickens's close friend and literary adviser, says Dickens always strove to encourage love and knowledge: he thought "to set class against class... odious" and "thought it righteous at all times to help each to a kindlier knowledge of the other." And Dickens in a letter about a boy named after him said, "If I could ever learn that I had happily been the means of awakening within him any new love of his fellow-creatures... I should feel much pleasure from the knowledge."<sup>24</sup>

Then there is abundant evidence that Dickens considered environment important and society and other things emotionally restrictive. Since these matters are related to the sense of personality and society as organic, I shall reserve proof of this fact until a little later.

Dickens had that belief in progress as a vague, irresistible flow which is common among organicists (Herder, Schelling, Carlyle, for example). In effect he saw history as a material escalator toward the ideal world until his last three books, in which he seems to attack external



and material improvement. In one article he attacked blindness to the progress that had occurred already.<sup>25</sup> Other articles show a clear distinction between the savage and the civilized man (in favor of civilized man, thus *implying* progress).<sup>26</sup> And Dickens was in favor of such things as railroads,<sup>27</sup> historical criticism of the Bible, and modern science<sup>28</sup> and indulged in a journalist's hopeful cheering of everything new. Dickens considered reform part of progress and pushed several reforms energetically.<sup>29</sup> He felt also that his books would help make people and therefore the world better,<sup>30</sup> but by and large he seems to have thought of progress (outside of reform) as something vague which took place by itself.

Finally, Dickens exhibits a violent hatred of, and a preoccupation with, a large number of things which he considered emotionally restraining, a hatred and preoccupation characteristic of people who combined sensibility and organicism. His hatred of the restricting and merely material led him to say that the persecuted were justified (as if their mere emotion or their suffering were something forceful and positive, a view to which all people believing in sensibility perhaps tended).<sup>31</sup> His novels, letters, speeches, and articles reveal fourteen main interests aside from his art: oppression by relatives, bitchery, fanaticism, pride, conformity, savages, avarice, crime, charity, bad government, the poor, education, religion, and psychology. A large number of these are emotional restraints and repulsions. The details of these follow.

Dickens was by and large against organization.<sup>32</sup> Marriage, theory, law, tradition, institutions, political organization, all seemed bad to Dickens because they confined the individual and restrained his natural emotions and reactions. The dislike of marriage is apparent in most of his books and in his later life and letters.<sup>33</sup> His hatred of theory can be seen in the fact that he avoided declaring himself an idealist or Transcendentalist or anything else much; in his continued shying away from all theories of reform or about life in general; in his attempt to deal with social and economic matters in an individual way;<sup>34</sup> in his opposition to any one man's interpretation of the New Testament;<sup>35</sup> in his rarely using logic in his articles and speeches.

His hatred of law can be seen in the many attacks on it and lawyers throughout his novels, especially in *Bleak House*, in his statement of agreement with Buckle that lawgivers are obstructors of the popular will,<sup>36</sup> in his long opposition to government help for the poor and regulation of business, in a kind of vague anarchistic spirit which his novels exude. His hatred of tradition which seemed to him to delay reform mainly can be seen in the frequent attacks on law, convention,<sup>37</sup> and institutions. The chief institutions attacked are English courts, the poorhouse, most English forms of education, Parliament, English business life, American democracy, aristocracy, debtors' prison, government administration, the Anglican church, Nonconformist religion. His hatred of political organization is seen in his long opposition to Parliament and labor unions and in his being a lone wolf in politics. Yet, for all his hatred of theories and organizations, he worked for several specific reforms. But he saw no political power or theory he could wholly approve.<sup>38</sup>

At times he even seems to see all of society as an evil organization or system: as business in *Dombey and Son*; punishment in part of *Barnaby Rudge*; Law in *Bleak House*; economic theory and industrial activity in *Hard Times*; government administration and other things in parts of *Little Dorrit*; society as a jail or cage symbolically in *Oliver Twist*, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Little Dorrit*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Great Expectations*, and *Edwin Drood*; in the article on the French Revolution; and in occasional uses of the phrase "the system." In these cases he is against society because it represents action and selfishness, organization, or authority, but the system attacked is not constantly the same, and it often does not equal the whole of society or the whole of the world in the novel: a great deal of *Dombey and Son* for instance is not about business.

A great many facts show that Dickens did not consistently feel that society was an evil system and hence did not feel that this system should be his main subject. Dickens's speeches and articles are not systematic attacks on all of society: Dickens in one article in 1848 was already for "the whole system" and against forces which might upset it;<sup>39</sup> Dickens in his articles about the police was clearly in favor of law and order; Dickens's article on the Home for Homeless Women clearly considered society virtuous and good; government is only rarely the direct and specific subject of his writing; Dickens was against revolution and against systematic or theoretical reform; his books, partly because he was a novelist not a philosopher, focus on things happening to individuals not on forms of organization as Orwell's 1984 does; Dickens attacked Socialist dogma by name;<sup>40</sup> his private memoranda book shows he thought in terms of individual people. Theories like this one about society's being evil and the fixed terms involved in them tended to annoy Dickens, who would try to disintegrate them. Much of his life was devoted to trying to destroy the idea of the "economic man";<sup>41</sup> he also attacked the idea that there was only one group of people who were "workers" or of the "working class";<sup>42</sup> he recoiled from the "stereotyped terms" used by both sides about the Preston Strike.<sup>43</sup>

Dickens was a great believer in the harmfulness of a bad environment.<sup>44</sup> He was horrified by slums and poverty and ignorance, and he suggested that murder, drunkenness, revolution, disease, and the twisting of character were caused by these things.<sup>45</sup> He made tours of the slums and insisted that education and religion could do no good for the poor until "cleanliness and decency" were given them.<sup>46</sup> He worked hard for sanitation laws and admired American provisions for the poor and the industrial worker and for public education.<sup>47</sup>



He was in favor of education for all<sup>48</sup> and very much angered at the unwholesome schools in England (in Yorkshire and elsewhere). He thought schools should be like homes and should emphasize the New Testament and not be saturated by harsh religious fanaticism.<sup>49</sup> He liked the democratic atmosphere of Eton<sup>50</sup> and believed in an education which included (as well as facts) fables and literature<sup>51</sup> (to encourage the imagination and sympathy). He believed women should be educated.<sup>52</sup>

He felt that there were more subtle influences of environment, too. He felt that wealth and leisure could pervert (as in *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Little Dorrit* and *Our Mutual Friend*). He felt that men who could harden their hearts against children had been made hard by missing "humanizing experiences of innocence and tenderness."<sup>53</sup> He felt that fanaticism and social pressure together could twist and distort people. He felt that to civilize African Negroes, white men would have to work through African ideas and customs.<sup>55</sup> He felt that Englishmen had their idea of what was realistic in art created by their own island customs.<sup>56</sup> He said that criminals have private worlds that they strive to please.<sup>57</sup>

Despite all this, Dickens's stories contradict the influence of environment and so do some of his articles. For instance, although in one place he says that civilized man can be made a savage,<sup>58</sup> he has two long articles on disasters showing that they usually remained civilized if they were truly so in the first place.<sup>59</sup> Then he says worldly men see reflections of their own minds<sup>60</sup> (indicating surely a limit to the power of environment). At times, however, as in *Hard Times*, the horror at bad environment grows so strong that Dickens says that reality is evil and suggests that romance and mystery are necessary as palliatives or escapes.

Dickens was very much against authority.<sup>61</sup> Like environment, authority often seemed active and evil. Like organization and environment, authority often seemed all embracing and crushing. Always it seemed to be harmful to the emotions. He seems to have thought of government in general, governing groups, and law courts as primarily punishing tyrants. They appear as such in *Pickwick Papers*, *Oliver Twist*, *Barnaby Rudge*, and *A Tale of Two Cities* and at times in *Bleak House*. During *Oliver Twist*, before *The Old Curiosity Shop*, and in 1848, as well as at other times he seems to have had a special dislike of magistrates. He even applied for a position as a paid judge himself. He had throughout his career a horror of prisons, which had a double fascination for him as the habitat of terrifyingly active individuals and the doom of tyrannically punished victims of a society which in part encouraged crime.<sup>62</sup> He visited all the prisons in London and many others in the countries he toured, and his books are crammed with scenes in jails of all kinds.

He hated social groups or forces which allied themselves with punishing government or by themselves virtually formed such. The French nobility, whose activities he somewhat too simply made the only cause of the French Revolution,<sup>63</sup> Nonconformist preachers or fanatics, social barriers and snobbery—all for this reason were objects of his hatred. The last of these caused Dickens himself to speak and act intolerantly, Forster says,<sup>64</sup> and are clearly partly responsible for Miss Wade's curious character.

Dickens also hated poorhouses and most schools because they were conducted like prisons. Almost all the teachers in his books are tyrants. In *Dombey and Son*, *David Copperfield*, *Bleak House*, *Our Mutual Friend*, and elsewhere, Dickens is against the "forcing" of knowledge into pupils' heads, whether by the teacher or by the student himself (as in Headstone's case).

The dreadful results of punishing authority in government, society, and school are shown in the crippled personalities of some victims, as in Manette, Miss Wade, and Smeke for example. There is in *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Barnaby Rudge*, Dickens's articles against capital punishment, and elsewhere in his work the suggestion that punishment does not achieve the effect the punisher desires, but breeds more trouble.<sup>65</sup> For all this hatred of punishing authority, Dickens favored the detective police and criminal-catching activity, for this preserved order and peace.

Dickens was against seven other related things which he associated with emotional restraint: conflict, the useless, convention (and form), pessimism, humbug, progress under certain circumstances, discomfort. His hatred of conflict (which he thought of as destructive, oppressive, or empty) was responsible for his dislike of the notions of business competition and class struggle and his feeling that they led nowhere, for his dislike of Parliament, elections, party divisions, religious discussion, religious sects. Jackson says that his hatred of Parliament kept him out of touch in political affairs, as in the agitation in 1865-1867 in favor of the English governor of Jamaica.<sup>67</sup> One suspects that there were many other things he was out of touch with as a result of this hatred of conflict. Mr. Ley shows, however, that Dickens would have entered Parliament if he had felt rich enough to do so.<sup>68</sup>

Dickens saw the useless, Lindsay says, as always setting "fire to something or other."<sup>69</sup> In regard to public health and other specific issues Dickens had Utilitarian ideas.<sup>70</sup> His hatred of large numbers of charities,<sup>71</sup> of incapable or phony governing officials, of people's love of the past, of social butterflies, and of many foolish institutions is related to this dislike of the useless. He disliked the education given in an English public school as not adapted to the individual and his vocation (he felt the right choice of a career and the finding of one's vocation were very important). He attacked the teaching of useless skills, especially in *Bleak House*, and liked the practical attitude toward education he found at Harvard.<sup>72</sup>



In article after article and book after book Dickens attacks convention (and mere form) in social life and the arts. His phrase the "constraints and forms" of court,<sup>73</sup> among other evidences, shows he felt convention repressed emotion and was useless. His hatred of red tape and government inefficiency and virtually all government administration is on much the same grounds.

Dickens did not like pessimism. In life and in periodicals he believed in cheerful views. We have seen how many rather gloomy ideas he had; this optimism was really an emotional position, not an intellectual one, and it was adopted because it was constructive. Intellect, reason, analysis, "facing facts" (especially economics "facts") too often seemed to lead to a bludgeoned surrender to an oppressive world as it was. Dickens wanted to keep alive people's power to reorder the world in their minds as they wanted it, as it might be, as it ought to be. Pessimism helped prevent reform.

In this it was like other deadening and obstructive ideas or poses which Dickens attacked or avoided as humbug: Podsnappery, toadyism, smugness, ornate religious language, the deification of the poor by dogmatic Socialists, stereotyped terms, the teaching by public schools that life is a lottery,<sup>74</sup> illusions about love being the only thing necessary in marriage (in *David Copperfield*), and the false aristocracy of *nouveaux riches*.

He even attacked progress when it was inhuman and merely material, as in the declaration of purpose for *Household Words*, the picture in *Hard Times* of what education might become if certain groups got hold of it; the pictures in *Dombey and Son* of destruction by the railway. Dickens was against many reform theories because they lacked decent emotion, were inhuman, and because many proposed mere change (Dickens was in a sense against fundamental change, but for improvement in details). One development in his thought, suggested by Jackson,<sup>75</sup> is that after he came back from America Dickens was against the middle class itself (his villains earlier are aristocrats or criminals or individual people like misers or lawyers or people like Quilp; afterwards they are "typical"<sup>76</sup> characters like Pecksniff, Dombey, Scrooge as well). Progress and the reform theories and a kind of inhumanity were apparently associated in his mind with this class.

Dickens was against discomfort; such things as drudgery, the government provisions for the poor, the conditions of the French peasants before the Revolution,<sup>77</sup> all horrify him because they seem uncomfortable. For the same reason he was against the Sabbatarians, who wished to forbid amusements on the one day of the week the average man was not working.<sup>78</sup>

More detailed discussions of Dickens's opinions on many of these subjects can be found by means of the index to Johnson's monumental biography, but I think I have indicated their general nature sufficiently to suggest strongly that idealism, sensibility, and organicism were part of Dickens's thought and probably formed the philosophic basis of his sensational literary technique.

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#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> A. C. Coolidge, Jr., "Dickens's Humor," *Victorian Newsletter* (New York), Fall, 1960; "Dickens's Complex Plots," accepted by *The Dickensian* (London), for publication in 1961.
- <sup>2</sup> See the brief account given by J. R. Foster in his *History of the Pre-Romantic Novel in England* (New York, 1949), Chapter I.
- <sup>3</sup> John Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens*, ed. J. W. T. Ley (New York [no date]), pp. 192, 253, 504; Ley in the same book, p. 506, note 324; Jack Lindsay, *Charles Dickens, A Biographical and Critical Study* (New York, 1950), pp. 206, 209, 256, 397; Dickens wrote an article on extrasensory perception, "To Be Read at Dusk," *The Works of Charles Dickens*, National Library Edition ([no general editor named] New York, 1923), 33 volumes in 20, XVII, II, 439-454 (this edition is hereafter referred to as *NLE*); there was a tradition of clairvoyance in his mistress's family (see Lindsay, p. 326).
- <sup>4</sup> Lindsay, p. 134. Forster on p. 348 discusses dreams of Mary and insists he always believed that his dreams were sacred truths. See also Forster, pp. 841-842. Dickens, for all this, has an article attacking spiritualism, which he probably thought was "humbug"; see Dickens, "The Spirit Business," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 365-373.
- <sup>5</sup> Lindsay, p. 132.
- <sup>6</sup> Lindsay, p. 298.
- <sup>7</sup> Forster, pp. 298-299, 818-819.
- <sup>8</sup> In a speech, *NLE*, XIX, 370.
- <sup>9</sup> Quoted in Forster, p. 5.
- <sup>10</sup> The addresses at the start of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*; the purpose of *A Christmas Carol* and the other Christmas Books (Forster, p. 317); Sleary's remarks on the need for amusement, quoted in John Butt and Kathleen Tillotson, *Dickens at Work* (Fairlawn, New Jersey, 1958), p. 221; discussions of imagination and illusion and romance, *Hard Times*, *The Work of Charles Dickens*, Gadshill Edition, ed. A. Lang (London, 1897-1908, 1911) esp. pp. 52-53, 55 (all later references to Dickens's novels will be to this edition unless otherwise noted); *David Copperfield*, I, 66-67, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, II, 157-159, *Pickwick Papers*, I, 40, the preface to *Bleak House*.
- <sup>11</sup> Lindsay, p. 41.
- <sup>12</sup> Many of the passages cited in notes 4, 9, 10 are evidence of this fact also. See in addition Dickens on unseen sides of character and on exaggeration (Forster, pp. 311, 721 and preface to *Martin Chuzzlewit*).
- <sup>13</sup> In *Hard Times* he says material reality is evil in this title and the symbols and on pp. 24-27, 45, 70-71, 123-125, 154-155, 163, 166-167, and elsewhere. See also *Our Mutual Friend*, I, 173-174.



- <sup>14</sup>See Lindsay, pp. 256, 291, 323, 325, 327, 331, 332, 360, 363, 397, 398, 407, 411; W. Winters, "Dickens and the Psychology of Dreams," *PMLA*, LXIII, number 3 (September, 1948), 984-1006. See also Edgar Johnson, *Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph* (New York, 1952), I, 283, 544, II, 658. He also mentions the death-wish: *A Tale of Two Cities*, p. 328. On repressed conflict and Aristotelian extremes, see Kathleen Tillotson, *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties* (Oxford, 1956), pp. 165, 166, 169, note 4.
- <sup>15</sup>In a number plan of *David Copperfield* (see *Dickens at Work*, p. 161) and in one of *Hard Times* (see *Dickens at Work*, p. 212-213).
- <sup>16</sup>Forster, p. 472.
- <sup>17</sup>Forster, p. 317.
- <sup>18</sup>Forster, p. 151.
- <sup>19</sup>Forster, p. 367 in the first note.
- <sup>20</sup>*Dickens at Work*, pp. 220-221.
- <sup>21</sup>*Dickens at Work*, p. 213.
- <sup>22</sup>*Dickens at Work*, p. 221.
- <sup>23</sup>Forster, p. 348.
- <sup>24</sup>Monroe Engel, *The Maturity of Dickens* (Cambridge, Mass., 1949), p. 27.
- <sup>25</sup>Dickens, "Old Lamps for New Ones," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 193.
- <sup>26</sup>Dickens, "The Niger Expedition," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 62, 63; "The Lost Arctic Voyagers," parts I and II, *NLE*, XVIII, I, 462-492, esp. 491.
- <sup>27</sup>Lindsay, p. 284. See also *Novels of the 1840's*, p. 188, where a quotation from Chapter XX of *Dombey and Son* demonstrates that Dickens does not feel railroad and progress have caused evil, but does feel they have revealed it.
- <sup>28</sup>Johnson, II, 1016, 1132.
- <sup>29</sup>Johnson, II, 715, 1136.
- <sup>30</sup>Forster, p. 762.
- <sup>31</sup>*Bleak House*, II, 137.
- <sup>32</sup>His love of regularity in his work, his support of the police, his later supporting of organized charity are evidence of an opposite tendency.
- <sup>33</sup>For attacks on marriage and wives, see *Oliver Twist*, pp. 14, 39; *Nicholas Nickleby*, I, 31-32 and the second formal inserted story; *The Old Curiosity Shop*, I, 37-50; *Bleak House*, I, 157-158, II, 169; *Great Expectations*, pp. 132-133, *Our Mutual Friend*, I, 41; and elsewhere.
- <sup>34</sup>Forster, p. 347.
- <sup>35</sup>See Dickens's will, Forster, p. 859. See also Forster, p. 298-299. See also the statement of *Our Mutual Friend* that he had no cure for England's ills—*Our Mutual Friend*, I, 173-174.
- <sup>36</sup>Dickens, *NLE*, XIX, 580.
- <sup>37</sup>Dickens, "Court Ceremonies," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 109; "Insularities," *NLE*, XVIII, II, 87 ff; Forster, p. 618. See also *Oliver Twist*, xiii-xiv; *Dombey and Son*, II, 254-256; *Bleak House*, I, 194-195; *Little Dorrit*, II, 25-26; *Our Mutual Friend*, I, 160 and 172-175.
- <sup>38</sup>Humphry House, *The Dickens World* (Oxford, 1941), p. 182.
- <sup>39</sup>Dickens, "Judicial Special Pleading," *NLE*, XVIII, I, pp. 75-76.
- <sup>40</sup>Dickens, "The Sunday Screw," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 205. He says he is against the "stupidest socialist dogma which seeks to represent that there is only one class of labourers on earth." He goes on to say that most men work hard for their living and need Sunday recreation.
- <sup>41</sup>Compare the remark of G. K. Chesterton in his book *Charles Dickens: A Critical Study* (New York, 1926), pp. 146-147; see also pp. 130-132.
- <sup>42</sup>See note 40.
- <sup>43</sup>Dickens, "On Strike," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 414.
- <sup>44</sup>It is interesting that in a few places he denies this influence—among others: *Dombey and Son*, II, 470; *Our Mutual Friend*, II, 390. But the main evidence points the other way. See *Nicholas Nickleby* II, 331-332; *The Old Curiosity Shop*, II, chapter 45, esp. 72-75, 77; *Dombey and Son*, II, 63-65, 254-256; *Bleak House*, I, 202-203, 266-268, II, 224-225; *Our Mutual Friend*, II, 389-390 and elsewhere.
- <sup>45</sup>Dickens, "Crime and Education," *NLE*, XVII, 401-407; "Ignorance and Crime", [full of statistics] XVIII, I, 34-37; "Cruikshank's 'The Drunkard's Children,'" XVIII, I, 41-45; "Judicial Special Pleading," XVIII, I, 71-76; "Capital Punishment," [in three parts] XVII, 407-437; "The Tooting Farm," XVIII, I, 89-92; "Home for Homeless Women," XVIII, I, 348-364; speeches on the danger of ignorance, XIX, 387-393, esp. 390 and 409-414, esp. 411; and elsewhere; see also Johnson, II, 1043.
- <sup>46</sup>Forster, p. 540. See the speeches in *NLE*, XIX in note 45 and also those on pp. 393-398, 420-423, 431-433, 470-476.
- <sup>47</sup>Johnson, I, 371-373, 404.
- <sup>48</sup>Dickens, *NLE*, XIX, 387-393, 409-414.
- <sup>49</sup>Dickens, *NLE*, XIX, 473. He has an article attacking Oxford as conservative and conventional; see "Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the conditions of the persons variously engaged in the University of Oxford," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 29-34.
- <sup>50</sup>Dickens, *NLE*, XIX, 520-521.
- <sup>51</sup>Dickens, *NLE*, XIX, 494-502.
- <sup>52</sup>Dickens, *NLE*, XIX, 393-398.
- <sup>53</sup>Dickens, *NLE*, XIX, 476.
- <sup>54</sup>Miss Wade's story (and Tattycoram) are examples.



- 55 Dickens, "The Niger Expedition," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 63.
- 56 See his discussion of English opinions of French art above (Forster, p. 618).
- 57 *Nicholas Nickleby*, I, 431-432.
- 58 "Judicial Special Pleading," XVIII, I, 71-76.
- 59 "The Lost Arctic Voyagers," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 462-492.
- 60 *Barnaby Rudge*, I, 287.
- 61 Lindsay, p. 73.
- 62 See K. J. Fielding, *Charles Dickens in Writers and their Work*, ed. T. O. Beachcroft, Number 37 (London, 1953), p. 37; Lindsay, pp. 214-215.
- 63 See the article on the French Revolution in *An Encyclopedia of World History*, ed. W. L. Langer (Cambridge, Mass., 1948).
- 64 Forster, p. 635.
- 65 See the remark on *A Tale of Two Cities* in Johnson, II, 974.
- 66 Forster, pp. 298-299 and elsewhere prominently.
- 67 T. A. Jackson, *Charles Dickens: The Progress of a Radical* (London, 1937), pp. 256-257.
- 68 Ley, in his edition of Forster, pp. 180-181, note 173.
- 69 Lindsay, p. 103.
- 70 House, p. 91.
- 71 House, p. 191.
- 72 See Johnson, I, 371-373, 404 and *Bleak House*, I, 203, 275-279.
- 73 Dickens, "Court Ceremonies," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 109. See also "Insularities," *NLE*, XVIII, I, pp. 87 ff.
- 74 Mentioned in *Bleak House*. See note 72.
- 75 Jackson, p. 111.
- 76 Forster talks of the "notion" of Pecksniff as a "type" (Forster, p. 291).
- 77 He actually talks of their lack of "physical comforts," "Judicial Special Pleading," *NLE*, XVIII, I, 74.
- 78 See note 40.

#### THE HAWTHORNE AND BROWNING ACQUAINTANCE: INCLUDING AN UNPUBLISHED BROWNING LETTER

Nathaniel Hawthorne and Robert Browning and their families became well acquainted during the 1850's.<sup>1</sup> Besides a lively personal friendship, there seems to have been some literary influence involved in their relationship: I have found one probable instance of Browning's indebtedness to Hawthorne's writing, and it seems likely to me that there were many indirect and indefinable influences in both directions. Browning was more impressionable than Hawthorne; hence, it is natural that his respect for the American should be easy to demonstrate. Hawthorne liked Browning very much and wished, as he did with many of his acquaintances, that he could know him better, although he could not appreciate his poetry. But for one as independent of contemporary literature as Hawthorne, it is significant, I think, that his *The Marble Faun*, begun during his acquaintance with the Brownings in Florence (1858), should be perhaps the subtlest, the most fanciful, and the most diffuse of his novels. Even the whole attitude toward Italy in *The Marble Faun* impresses me as Browningsque.

There are many circumstances that ought to have made for a close friendship between Hawthorne and Browning and that can give us an insight into the character of the friendship. In the first place, Browning, as well as his wife, was a most genial conversationalist, and Hawthorne was an equally agreeable listener. Though the optimism of the one and pessimism of the other seem to conflict, both men were interested in examining the profundities of human nature; both had a passion for studying crimes, especially mysterious ones and ones that gave them a chance for psychological speculation (this is significantly discernible in *The Marble Faun*). Both were—or thought they were—exceedingly practical and rational in their attitudes toward life and at the same time insisted upon a spiritual truth vastly more important than actualities. Both believed that love was the greatest power in the universe and that it alone could transform man into a spiritual reality. The similarity of their marriages is remarkable. Both married delicate invalid women who were physically improved by their marriage. And both marriages were among the most idyllic on record.

#### I.

The earliest knowledge we have of any connection between the two men is the record of Hawthorne's withdrawals from the Salem Athenaeum Library. Between March 27 and April 13, 1850, he was reading Browning's *Poems*—the Boston edition of 1850, including *Paracelsus* and *Bells and Pomegranates*.<sup>2</sup>

In 1851 Browning remarked to the American publisher James T. Fields that Hawthorne was "the finest genius that had appeared in English literature for many years."<sup>3</sup> In 1853, the year after *The*



*Blithedale Romance* was published, Mrs. Browning read Hawthorne's book,<sup>4</sup> and very likely Browning did too. At least he had probably read all three of Hawthorne's completed novels by the time he met the writer in 1856; otherwise he would not have been able to tell Hawthorne that *The Blithedale Romance* was the best book he had written.<sup>5</sup>

Browning's poem "Mesmerism," published in *Men and Women* in 1855, shows striking similarities to Hawthorne's story of Alice Pyncheon in *The House of the Seven Gables*. Internal evidence as well as circumstances suggests that the poem was inspired by the episode in the novel. In the novel,<sup>6</sup> a young daguerreotypist relates the tale of his ancestor Matthew Maule, a mesmerist who managed to subject under his strange power the young and beautiful Alice Pyncheon. His tyranny over her was absolute.

. . . He beckoned with his hand, and rising from her chair,—blindly, but undoubtingly, as tending to her sure and inevitable centre,—the proud Alice approached him. . . . Seated by his humble fireside, Maule had but to wave his hand; and, wherever the proud lady chanced to be,—whether in her chamber, or entertaining her father's stately guests, or worshipping at church,—whatever her place or occupation, her spirit passed from beneath her own control, and bowed itself to Maule. . . .

One evening, at a bridal-party (but not her own; for so lost from self-control, she would have deemed it sin to marry), poor Alice was beckoned forth by her unseen despot, and constrained in her gossamer white dress and satin slippers, to hasten along the street to the mean dwelling of a laboring-man. There was laughter and good cheer within; for Matthew Maule, that night, was to wed the laborer's daughter, and had summoned proud Alice Pyncheon to wait upon his bride. . . . It was an inclement night; the southeast wind drove the mingled snow and rain into her thinly sheltered bosom; her satin slippers were wet through and through, as she trod the muddy sidewalks.

Alice sickened and died because of this excursion, to the consternation of Maule. "He meant to humble Alice, not to kill her; but he had taken a woman's delicate soul into his rude gripe, to play with—and she was dead."

In the Browning poem the speaker is the mesmerist (Hawthorne's narrator is also a mesmerist, though, unlike Browning's, he is not the chief character of his own story), who is telling his secrets to a friend. He is not necessarily a daguerreotypist, but the art of photography crops up in one of his figures of speech:

Having and holding [his victim], till  
I imprint her fast  
On the void at last  
As the sun does whom he will  
By the calotypist's skill.

He boasts of his absolute power over "the woman." Like Matthew Maule, he can merely wave his hand as he sits at home, and she must come to meet the vision of her that he has dreamed up before him. In Hawthorne's words she must "tend toward her sure and inevitable centre." In Browning's poem:

Then,—if my heart's strength serve,  
And through all and each  
Of the veils I reach  
To her soul and never swerve,  
Knitting an iron nerve—

Command her soul to advance  
And inform the shape  
Which has made escape  
And before my countenance  
Answers me glance for glance—

I, still with gesture fit  
Of my hands that best  
Do my soul's behest,  
Pointing the power from it,  
While myself do steadfast sit. . . .

And [she] must follow as I require  
As befits a thrall,  
Bringing flesh and all,  
Essence and earth-attire,  
To the source of the tractile fire:

The victim, like Alice Pyncheon, is drawn out into the night—a night of snow, wind, and rain:

Making through rain and wind  
O'er the broken shrubs,  
'Twixt the stems and stubs,  
With a still, composed, strong mind  
Nor a care for the world behind—



Swifter and still more swift,  
As the crowding peace  
Doth to joy increase  
In the wide blind eyes uplift  
Through the darkness and the drift!

Mesmerism, of course, was a commonplace subject in the 1850's, but Hawthorne's attitude toward it was a rather peculiar one;<sup>7</sup> that is, that the mesmerist committed a mortal sin if he overpowered the divine conscience of his subject with his own will. This is an important point in the Alice Pyncheon story; it is the main point of Browning's poem.

It was characteristic of Browning that he take the story of some other writer and, applying his own fertile imagination, develop it into something of his own. *The House of the Seven Gables* was published by Bohn and by Routledge in London in 1851, the same year that the first edition appeared in America. Browning probably read one of the London editions shortly after it appeared, though he might have got an edition from his American publisher, who was also Hawthorne's, James T. Fields. We know that Mrs. Browning read *The Blithedale Romance* the year after its initial publication, and it is significant that she was especially interested in the handling of spiritualism and mesmerism in it.<sup>8</sup> Browning probably wrote "Mesmerism" at about the time he was reading *The House of the Seven Gables*,<sup>9</sup> for it appeared in his very next book of poems (1855).

Hawthorne first met the Brownings at a breakfast given by Monckton Milnes in London, July 11, 1856. His impression of Browning is worth reproducing here in its entirety:

After we got up from table, and went into the library, Mr. Browning introduced himself to me; a younger man than I expected to see, handsome, with dark hair, a very little frosted. He is very simple and agreeable in manner, gently impulsive, talking as if his heart were uppermost. He spoke of his pleasure in meeting me, and his appreciation of my books; and (which has not often happened to me) mentioned that the *Blithedale Romance* was the one he admired most. I wonder why. I hope I showed as much pleasure at his praise as he did at mine; for I was glad to see how pleasantly it moved him.<sup>10</sup>

Hawthorne was not one to exaggerate. We may infer, I believe, that both writers were familiar with each other's works and had developed a respect for them by 1856. Hawthorne was probably the least demonstrative of this respect: for one thing, his reticence held him back, and for another, he often protested an inability to read poetry. But he had a particular, and not unusual, objection to Browning's poetry: "I have tried to read him, but without much success. I wish the poets now-a-days would not sing in such devilish queer measures. It bothers me horribly; and as regards these poems, I cannot understand a tenth part of them. There is something in the English atmosphere and diet that unfits a man for the comprehension and enjoyment of all transcendentalisms and of whatever passes a certain limit of common sense. In America, very probably, I might have enjoyed these poems."<sup>11</sup> However this may be, Mrs. Hawthorne's notes confirm the fact that he was pleased by this meeting.<sup>12</sup>

Nor was his impression of Mrs. Browning any less pleasant, "for she is of that quickly appreciative and responsive order of women with whom I can talk more freely than with any men; and she has, besides, her own originality wherewith to help on conversation; though, I should say, not of a loquacious tendency." His comments on her writing, however, were not complimentary: "I like her very much—a great deal better than her poetry, which I could hardly suppose to have been written by such a quiet little person as she."<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, the following winter Hawthorne read Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh* to his wife;<sup>14</sup> and by 1858 he and Mrs. Hawthorne had read Browning's "The Statue and the Bust."<sup>15</sup>

## II.

The families did not meet again until 1858 in Florence, Italy. The Hawthornes arrived there on May 31. In October they left for Rome, where they remained from October 16 to May 5, 1859. The Brownings were in Florence when the Hawthornes arrived, but on July 1 they departed for a summer tour of France. They returned to Florence in October, after the Hawthornes had gone, but presently went to Rome, arriving there November 24, 1858, where they again saw the Hawthornes. They too stayed in Rome until May. There were only six months in which they could possibly have seen each other—one month in Florence and five in Rome—but during this time they met more than ten times.<sup>16</sup> When we consider that Hawthorne was somewhat reclusive, that a great deal of his and his wife's time was occupied with sight-seeing and with writing and a great deal more with the critical illness of their daughter Una in Rome, and when we consider that there were undoubtedly several more meetings, unrecorded in the notes except in general terms, then we can begin to realize the extent of this friendship.

On June 8, eight days after the Hawthorne family arrived in Florence, Browning called to invite them to Casa Guidi for the evening—an invitation which they accepted.<sup>17</sup> On June 10 Mrs. Hawthorne and her two daughters called on Mrs. Browning. About June 22 Mrs. Hawthorne saw Browning at Harriet Hosmer's. On the twenty-fifth the Hawthornes again visited Casa Guidi. On the



twenty-sixth the two families were together at Isa Blagden's villa. On July 2 Mrs. Hawthorne recorded in her *Notes in England and Italy*, "The Brownings went to France yesterday morning, and there seems to be nobody in Florence now for us." The desultory character of the notes on the Hawthornes' stay in Rome (a result of Una's sickness) precludes any attempt to catalogue the meetings there. The Brownings, nevertheless, were genuinely concerned over Una, and they offered what they could in the way of sympathy.<sup>18</sup>

Both families traveled in the same circle of friends in Florence, among them Isabella Blagden and the Hiram Powerses. It was a very gay time for Hawthorne. Probably at no other time in his life was he so much in society, and, if we can credit his son's statement, he was at no other time so happy.<sup>19</sup>

The biographers of Hawthorne almost inevitably emphasize the mutual interest of the Hawthornes and the Brownings in spiritualism, and many of them repeat an erroneous story of their attendance at one or more spiritualistic seances. During their acquaintance in Italy, the only recorded mention of spiritualism was on the first evening (though Mrs. Browning had talked about it with Hawthorne when they met in London), when the Brownings related their story about Daniel D. Home, the American medium, whom Browning thought he had detected in fraud. The incident with Home had happened three years before. In the meantime the Brownings were, of course, interested in the subject and they no doubt spoke of it several times to the Hawthornes, but it was not the only topic of conversation and there were no seances.

The error arises from a confusion of dates. On August 24, 1858, fifty-six days after the Brownings had left Florence on their summer tour, the discovery was made that Ada Shepard, the governess of the Hawthorne children, was a medium. She transmitted a message from Mrs. Hawthorne's mother.<sup>20</sup> It was, of course, impossible that the Brownings could have witnessed this; they did not return to Florence until October, after the Hawthornes had gone to Rome. And Miss Shepard ceased her spiritualistic activities long before the families met again in Rome.

The mistake is attributable to Julian Hawthorne, Hawthorne's son, who was twelve years old in 1858. In *Hawthorne and his Wife*, published in 1884,<sup>21</sup> Julian related:

In the year of 1858 Nathaniel Hawthorne was living with his family in the Villa Montauto, just outside the walls of Florence. Among his near neighbors during that summer—the summer of Donati's Comet—were Mr. and Mrs. Robert Browning; and they were often visitors at Montauto. Mrs. Browning was at that time deeply interested in spiritualism; and in the course of some discussions on the subject, it was accidentally discovered that the governess in Mr. Hawthorne's family, a young American lady of great attainments and lovely character, was a medium,—the manifestation of her capacities in this direction being by writing. If she held a pencil over a sheet of paper for a minute or so, her hand would seem to be seized, or inspired with motion, and words, sentences, or pages would be written down, sometimes rapidly, sometimes slowly, and in various totally dissimilar styles of handwriting, none of which bore any resemblance to the lady's own. She herself had no belief in the spiritual source of the phenomenon; she ascribed it to some obscure and morbid action of the minds of the spectators upon her own mind; and the process was so distasteful to her, that, after experimenting a week or two, the matter was finally abandoned, with the cordial concurrence of Mr. Hawthorne and Mr. Browning, who had both abominated it from the beginning.

The falsity of this statement is obvious when we know that the Hawthornes did not take the Villa Montauto until August 1, when the Brownings had already left. When Browning saw the statement he probably interpreted it, perhaps rightly, as a slur against him and especially against his wife. In a letter to W. W. Story, December 28, 1884, he said:

Mr. Hurlbert has just written to me concerning the Hawthorne calumnies. I can have no objection to anybody hearing that I think them monstrous. The bringing in my wife and myself as witnesses of the spiritualistic experiments at Villa Montauto is absurd—as might have been known by Mr. Julian had he looked at his father's "notes"—wherein no mention of our names will be found, though he dwells on the minutest incidents: we had left Florence a month before he took the Villa, nor returned there until long after he was out of it. This piece of inexactitude—the first bit of the book I fell upon,—warned me effectually off the premises. So much may be said "on my authority"—but I object to making any statement which may give Mr. Julian the happy chance of an altercation in the newspapers: letters and letters!<sup>22</sup>

In her later books, *Hawthorne and his Circle*, 1903, and *Shapes that Pass*, 1928, Julian persisted in the error and proceeded to vent his rage on all three members of the Browning family; for example: "Mrs. Browning seemed to me a sort of miniature monstrosity; there was no body to her, only a mass of dark curls and queer, dark eyes, and an enormous mouth with thick lips; no portrait of her has dared to show the half of it. Her hand was like a bird's claw."<sup>23</sup> Imagine Browning's anger at seeing such a passage, had he been alive.



Julian's Boswellian bluntness would have been cause enough for a quarrel between him and Browning. He said: "I once asked him, in 1879, why he made his poetry so often obscure, and he replied, frankly that he did so because he couldn't help it; the inability to put his thoughts in clear phrases had always been a grief to him. This statement was, to me, unexpected, and it has a certain importance." Browning's retort sounds very much like sarcasm.

While in Italy, Nathaniel Hawthorne was writing and collecting material for *The Marble Faun*. It has been suggested that his characterization of the faun, Donatello, may reflect the exuberant personality of Robert Browning. This seems reasonable for the faun was about as Italian as Browning, though there is certainly no direct portraiture. It remains something that cannot be proved.

Browning's exuberance was his most striking quality according to Hawthorne: "Browning's nonsense is of very genuine and excellent quality, the true babble and effervescence of a bright and powerful mind; and he lets it play among his friends with the faith and simplicity of a child. He must be an amiable man. I should like him much, and should make him like me, if opportunities were favorable."<sup>24</sup> Hawthorne underrated the friendship, perhaps because of his frequent inability to enter into a friendship as fully as he would like. He certainly underrated his ability to make Browning like him.

Browning's opinion of Hawthorne may best be seen in a letter from an American in England to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: "Browning asked after you and George Curtis, and spoke with much feeling of Hawthorne, whom he knew well. He evidently has the very highest opinion of his abilities."<sup>25</sup> The comment is especially valuable since there was no motive for either Browning or his auditor to exaggerate the estimation.

Nathaniel Hawthorne never saw the Brownings again after 1859. A letter from Browning to Mrs. Hawthorne, May 5, 1864 (now in The Huntington Library), enclosing a photograph, indicates that there was some correspondence between the families. Mrs. Hawthorne saw Browning once more, shortly before her death in 1871, and Browning attended her funeral. Julian met him in London in 1879.

### III.

In 1871, seven years after Hawthorne's death, his daughter Una edited and published his unfinished novel *Septimius Felton*. In the Preface she acknowledged the editorial assistance of Browning: "My earnest thanks are due to Mr. Robert Browning for his kind assistance and advice in interpreting the manuscript, otherwise so difficult to me." Browning's assistance must have been very small. He had just finished *The Ring and the Book* and was producing poems rapidly, while, at the same time, he was engaged in social activities. There are no markings on the manuscript of *Septimius Felton* identifiable as Browning's.<sup>26</sup> The following letter, previously unpublished, corroborates the conclusion that Browning's part was not great:

19, Warwick Crescent, W.  
June 26, '72

Dear Miss Hawthorne,

The only drawback to the otherwise entire pleasure I should have had in receiving your present of the Book yesterday, was that the present's bearer would not enter the house for a moment to be thanked by a spoken rather than a written word. You must therefore put up with a cold assurance that I was most proud and grateful to be associated with you in that true labor of love last year,—and am now deeply—shall I say, affected?—by your caring to mention my insignificant help so kindly in the preface. If one could, in a manner, deserve such an honor, my admiration for the genius, and respect for the personal qualities of the great author, would somewhat excuse my receiving it. But I think you must know that I would gladly be of the least possible service to you on any other occasion than this wherein the work was its own reward and far more.

Pray believe me ever,  
Dear Miss Hawthorne  
Yours most truly  
Robert Browning<sup>27</sup>

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James C. Austin

### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> John D. Ingram's *Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (Boston, 1890) and Louise Greer's *Browning and America* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1952) contain the only extensive studies of this relationship.

<sup>2</sup> Marion L. Kesselring, "Hawthorne's Reading, 1828-1850," *Bulletin N.Y. Public Lib.*, LIII (April 1949), 175.

<sup>3</sup> From a letter from James T. Fields to Hawthorne, cited in Elizabeth Porter Gould, *The Brownings and America* (Boston, 1904), p. 65.



- <sup>4</sup> Letter to Miss Mitford, August 20 and 21, 1853, *Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, ed. Frederick G. Kenyon (London, 1897), II, 132. There is a resemblance between Mrs. Browning's character Romney in *Aurora Leigh* (1856) and Hawthorne's Hollingsworth in *The Blithedale Romance*. Ingram believes that this resemblance may indicate a literary influence.
- <sup>5</sup> See the quotation from Hawthorne's notebooks below.
- <sup>6</sup> I am using the Riverside Press edition of *Hawthorne's Works* (Boston, 1883), III, 246-253, and the Cambridge Edition of *The Complete Poetic and Dramatic Works of Robert Browning* (Boston, 1895), pp. 255-256.
- <sup>7</sup> See Arno L. Bader, "Those Mesmeric Victorians," *Colophon*, III (1938), 335-353.
- <sup>8</sup> See above, footnote 4.
- <sup>9</sup> William Clyde DeVane is "inclined to date the composition of *Mesmerism* in March, 1853," but he finds no clear evidence to fix the date. *A Browning Handbook* (New York, 1935), p. 201.
- <sup>10</sup> *The English Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne*, ed. Randall Stewart (New York, 1941), pp. 382-383.
- <sup>11</sup> Cited in Howard M. Ticknor, "Hawthorne as Seen by his Publisher," *The Critic*, XLV (1904), 53. The quotation is evidently from a letter from Hawthorne in England to W. D. Ticknor; no date is given. The opinion expressed here is typical of Hawthorne's conservatism in matters of literary form.
- <sup>12</sup> In Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, *Memories of Hawthorne* (Boston, 1897), p. 323.
- <sup>13</sup> *English Notebooks*, p. 382.
- <sup>14</sup> Lathrop, p. 398.
- <sup>15</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Passages from the French and Italian Note-Books, Works*, X, 359. Sophia A. Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy* (New York, 1869), p. 444. Both references describe the Hawthornes' visit to the Piazza Annunziata in Florence where they saw the statue and the palace of Browning's poem.
- <sup>16</sup> The sources of information about the Italian period are the following: Hawthorne's *French and Italian Note-Books*, Sophia Hawthorne's *Notes in England and Italy*, Lathrop's *Memories of Hawthorne*, Kenyon's ed. *The Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*. The material in the *French and Italian Note-Books* "suffers considerably from Mrs. Hawthorne's revisions," according to Randall Stewart; however, most of the information in this paper has been verified in Newton Arvin ed., *The Heart of Hawthorne's Journals* (Boston, 1929), which is wholly reliable as far as it goes. I have also examined the important entries in the original manuscript of the French and Italian journals, kindly copied out for me by Professor Norman Pearson of Yale. Professor Pearson also generously reported to me on the unpublished letters of Ada Shepard, which contain nothing very pertinent.
- <sup>17</sup> Hawthorne's journal entry for June 9, 1858, contains a description of the Browning household in Florence that is considered the best. See William Lyon Phelps, *Robert Browning* (Indianapolis, 1932), p. 23. The original unexpurgated entry may be found in Malcolm Cowley ed., *The Portable Hawthorne* (New York, 1948), pp. 601-605.
- <sup>18</sup> Gould, pp. 62-63. Edward C. McAleer ed., *Dearest Isa: Robert Browning's Letters to Isabella Blagden* (Austin, Texas, 1951), pp. 9, 24.
- <sup>19</sup> Julian Hawthorne, *Hawthorne and His Wife* (Boston, 1885), II, 190.
- <sup>20</sup> Lathrop, pp. 397-398. *French and Italian Note-Books*, pp. 392-396.
- <sup>21</sup> Julian Hawthorne, I, 30-31. It was evidently published, as many books of the time were, late in 1884 and given the 1885 date. Browning's letter, quoted below, was dated December 1884 and must have been written after the publication. Very likely, Julian's error derives from a rather ambiguous passage in one of Mrs. Hawthorne's notes (Lathrop, p. 397), where she juxtaposes without much reason an account of the proceedings of August 24 (see above) and some comments on Mrs. Browning's belief in spiritualism.
- <sup>22</sup> *The Letters of Robert Browning, Collected by Thomas J. Wise*, ed. Thurman L. Hood (New Haven, 1933), p. 234.
- <sup>23</sup> Julian Hawthorne, *Hawthorne and His Circle* (New York, 1903), p. 341. See also pp. 340-342, 344, and 348, and Julian Hawthorne, *Shapes that Pass: Memories of Old Days* (London, 1928), p. 140 and passim.
- <sup>24</sup> *French and Italian Note-Books*, p. 336.
- <sup>25</sup> Letter from T. G. Appleton (Longfellow's brother-in-law) to Longfellow, June 28, 1864, in Samuel Longfellow, *Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (Boston, 1891), III, 39.
- <sup>26</sup> This is the finding of Professor Edward H. Davidson, who has examined the manuscript. However, Maria S. Porter, *Recollections of Louisa May Alcott, John Greenleaf Whittier, and Robert Browning* (1893), p. 46, quotes Browning: "After Mrs. Hawthorne's death I went very often to see Una and Rose, to assist them in arranging their father's manuscript for publication."
- <sup>27</sup> For permission to print this letter I am indebted to Sir John Murray, who owns the copyright, and to the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of the New York Public Library. I am also grateful to Professor Davidson, who brought the letter to my attention and who contributed valuable suggestions concerning this paper.

## II. NOTES AND BRIEF ARTICLES

### THE SCARLET LETTER AND ADAM BEDE

George Eliot's account of the background of *Adam Bede* makes no reference to other works but cites only her recollections of some points in her father's early life and character and, of course, the story of Elizabeth Evans' visit to a condemned child-murderess—"how she stayed with her praying, through the night and how the poor creature at last broke out into tears, and confessed her crime."<sup>1</sup> Critics have suggested that *Adam Bede* shows the influence of Goethe's *Faust*,<sup>2</sup> and it is true that both plots feature an abandoned woman, infanticide, and a prison scene climax. Scott's *The Heart of Midlothian* has probably been named more than any other work as, if not a source, at least notably similar to *Adam Bede*. But the likenesses to *Faust* or *The Heart of Midlothian* are simply of plot; a comparison of *Adam Bede* and *The Scarlet Letter* reveals points of similarity of situation and common ground in technique and theme as well.



In 1852, two years after the publication of *The Scarlet Letter*, George Eliot called Hawthorne a "grand favourite of mine."<sup>3</sup> Just seven months before she began to write *Adam Bede*, she and Lewes reread *The Scarlet Letter* together.<sup>4</sup> Her interest in Hawthorne continued, and in May of 1860, we find her complaining of being unable to get a copy of *The Marble Faun* in Florence.<sup>5</sup>

Although *The Scarlet Letter* is set in seventeenth-century New England and *Adam Bede* in early nineteenth-century England, both deal with the life of a small, settled rural community. "The Prison Door," "A Forest Walk," "The New England Holiday"—these are some of Hawthorne's chapter titles. *Adam Bede* includes chapters called "In the Prison," "In the Wood," and "The Games." Both novelists, for the most part, restrict the action of each chapter to a single scene; the novels proceed through a series of tableaux, often returning to play a different scene in a setting already used. The Chase of *Adam Bede* is like the forest of *The Scarlet Letter*, and though George Eliot never defines its symbolism so frankly as Hawthorne (he uses the phrase "the moral wilderness" more than once), it is clear that both are working with the same figure. In both novels, "maze" and "labyrinth" are key words. It is not hard to find a sermon or a prison or a scaffold scene in nineteenth-century fiction, but all are elements common to the two novels.

At first glance, quiet, clinging Hetty Sorrel may seem to have little in common with Hester Prynne beyond good looks and an illegitimate child. But both have what Hawthorne calls a "rich, voluptuous, Oriental characteristic—a taste for the gorgeously beautiful" which their environments force them to suppress. Hetty's silence at her trial could be compared with Hester's refusal to reveal Arthur Dimmesdale though it is more easily explained by the historical background of *Adam Bede*, the silence of Mary Voce, the original of Hetty.

We can find no one like Mrs. Poyser in *The Scarlet Letter*, and though Roger Chillingsworth may fit somewhere in the ancestry of Edward Casaubon, he has no descendants in *Adam Bede*. Arthur Donnithorne owes little to Arthur Dimmesdale, but it is a coincidence worth noticing that their initials and their Christian names are identical. The coincidence is the more striking when we remember that Hetty's real name is Hester, though she is so called only once—when she is sentenced to death. One might speculate ingeniously on the relevance of the surnames Dimmesdale and Donnithorne to the Adamic myth. The significance of this myth to Hawthorne has already been illuminatingly studied;<sup>6</sup> when George Eliot chose to call her hero Adam and to refer to Hayslope as a "land of Goshen" she was certainly aware of what these terms suggested.

Finally, the novels share several important themes: the fortunate fall, the doctrine of consequences, and the humanizing power of sorrow. An article in *The North British Review* in 1860, doubtless the first comparison of Hawthorne and George Eliot, noticed Hawthorne's concern with the "crime of yesterday . . . curiously inter-wrought with the retribution of today."<sup>7</sup> There is hardly a novel of George Eliot to which this phrase does not apply. Hawthorne's "So it ever is . . . that an evil deed invests itself with the character of doom" is, in *Adam Bede*, "the sort of wrong that can never be made up for." The moral growth of Hawthorne's Pearl and of *Adam Bede* is brought about by the humanizing power of suffering: "The great scene of grief in which the wild infant bore a part, had developed all her sympathies; and as her tears fell upon her father's cheek, they were the pledge that she would grow up amid human joy and sorrow, nor forever do battle with the world, but be a woman in it." The development of *Adam Bede* is more fully detailed, but the end is the same: "Doubtless a great anguish may do the work of years, and we may come out from that baptism of fire with a soul full of new awe and new pity."

Much has been said about the influence of Hawthorne and of George Eliot on the works of Henry James. A likeness to Hawthorne in the works of George Eliot may be part of the story.

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#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> George Eliot's "History of *Adam Bede*" is reprinted in *The George Eliot Letters*, ed. Gordon S. Haight (New Haven, 1954), II, 502-505.

<sup>2</sup> See Oscar Browning, *The Life of George Eliot* (London, 1890), Chapter V.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 52.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 311, fn.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 300.

<sup>6</sup> See R. W. B. Lewis, *The American Adam* (Chicago, 1955), Chapter 6.

<sup>7</sup> "The Author of *Adam Bede* and Nathaniel Hawthorne," *North British Review*, XXXIII (August, 1860), 183.

### BROWNING AND WORDSWORTH: THE ARGUMENT FOR IMMORTALITY IN "SAUL"

The purpose of this note is to set forth the possibility that it was the reading of a letter by William Wordsworth that gave Robert Browning the suggestion which enabled him to write the



last ten sections of "Saul" and to leave the poem as it has been known to readers since the publication in *Men and Women* in 1855. The chronology of the composition of "Saul" is pretty well known. Browning wrote the first nine sections of the poem in the spring of 1845; during the summer he showed what he had written to Elizabeth Barrett; she encouraged him to complete the poem, but he was not satisfied with the conclusion. At Miss Barrett's suggestion he published the poem as a fragment in *Dramatis Personae* (1845). The last ten sections were "probably written in the winter of 1852-3," and the completed poem was published in *Men and Women*.<sup>1</sup>

There have been several speculations about sources for the first part of "Saul," the most convincing among them being Professor DeVane's suggestion that Browning drew from Christopher Smart's "Song to David" and "On the Goodness of the Supreme Being" for his presentation as lyric-dramatic-monologue of the story as he found it in *I Samuel* 16:14-23. But Professor DeVane's further suggestion that the second part of the poem "owes its matter and substance to *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*" and that the writing of that volume gave Browning his clue to the conclusion of "Saul" is less convincing. The two poems in that volume do show Browning attempting to solve some religious questions and thus indicate a shift in subject matter, but there is no hint in them of the distinctive ideas that appear in "Saul."<sup>2</sup>

We do know that in the winter after the publication of *Christmas Eve and Easter Day* Browning read Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. On December 12, 1850, Mrs. Browning wrote to Mr. Westwood, "... we have only this moment finished reading *In Memoriam*," and the next day she wrote Miss Mitford, "As to *In Memoriam*, I have seen it, I have read it—dear Mr. Kenyon had the goodness to send it to me by an American traveller—... I think it full of deep pathos and beauty."<sup>3</sup>

The argument for a belief in immortality implicit in *In Memoriam* may be most briefly summarized by the quotation of two stanzas, one from the Proem and one from Section LV of the poem:

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:  
Thou madest man, he knows not why;  
He thinks he was not made to die;  
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

. . . .  
The wish, that of the living whole  
No life may fail beyond the grave,  
Derives it not from what we have  
The likest God within the soul?

That is, we believe in a just and loving God, and He would not implant in us an instinctive belief in immortality and an intense desire for it if the belief were a delusion and the desire were not to be fulfilled. This argument would, no doubt, be impressive to Browning, but it was not one he could turn to account in working the theme of immortality into "Saul"; nor would he have wished to use an argument so recently used by Tennyson.

We can not be sure that Browning read the *Memoirs of William Wordsworth* published in 1851, but most probably he did. It is the sort of book the Brownings would be interested in; they frequently had books sent out to them in Italy; and they were in London for visits of some length in August, 1851, and again in June, 1852, when they easily could have seen it. If Browning did read the *Memoirs* he saw these sentences from a letter which Wordsworth had written to Sir George Beaumont in 1805, shortly after the death by drowning of the poet's brother, John Wordsworth:

A thousand times have I asked myself, as your tender sympathy led me to do, 'why was he taken away?' and I have answered the question as you have done. In fact, there is no other answer which can satisfy and lay the mind at rest. Why have we a choice and a will, and a notion of justice and injustice, enabling us to be moral agents? Why have we sympathies that make the best of us so afraid of inflicting pain and sorrow, which yet we see dealt about us so lavishly by the supreme governor? Why should our notions of right towards each other, and to all sentient beings within our influence, differ so widely from what appears to be His notion and rule, if everything were to end here? Would it not be blasphemy to say that, upon the supposition of the thinking principle being destroyed by death, however inferior we may be to the great Cause and Ruler of things, we have *more of love* in our nature than He has? The thought is monstrous; and yet how to get rid of it, except upon the supposition of *another* and a *better world*, I do not see.<sup>4</sup>

If Browning read this letter, he had all he needed for David's triumphant exclamation in the single line of Section XVI of "Saul":

Then the truth came upon me, No harp more—no  
song more! outbroke —

The statement which follows in Section XVII, of David's complete belief in immortality



because he sees that God can not have less of love in His nature than one of His creatures, parallels what Wordsworth had said. The correspondence is particularly close between the last sentence quoted from the letter and these lines from Section XVII:

Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate gift,  
That I doubt his own love can compete with it? Here  
the parts shift?  
Here, the creature surpass the Creator,—the end,  
what Began?  
Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for this man,  
And dare doubt he alone shall not help him, who yet  
alone can?  
Would it ever have entered my mind, the bare will,  
much less power,  
To bestow on this Soul what I sang of, the marvellous  
dower  
Of the life he was gifted and filled with? to make  
such a soul,  
Such a body, and then such an earth for insphering  
the whole?  
And doth it not enter my mind (as my warm tears attest)  
These good things being given, to go on, and give one  
more, the best?

I suggest that Wordsworth's sentiment may well have given Browning the impetus to a satisfactory conclusion to "Saul." If it is not a source, it is at least an interesting parallel.

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#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> William Clyde DeVane, *A Browning Handbook* (New York, 1935), pp. 226-227.
- <sup>2</sup> See DeVane, *A Browning Handbook*, p. 227, and DeVane, *Browning's Parleyings* (New Haven, 1927), pp. 116-119.
- <sup>3</sup> *Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, ed. F. G. Kenyon (London and New York, 1898), I, 468, 470.
- <sup>4</sup> *Memoirs of William Wordsworth*, ed. Christopher Wordsworth (London, 1851), I, 292; the letter has more recently been published in *Early Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*, ed. Ernest de Selincourt (Oxford, 1935), p. 460. The italics are Wordsworth's.

### BROWNING: "MAGE" AND "MAKER"—A STUDY IN POETIC PURPOSE AND METHOD

"... my stress lay on the incidents in the development of a soul" Browning said of *Sordello*, in language heavy with Victorian and Platonic overtones. Browning had in mind, however, the whole inner life of a character, his interest being psychological rather than moral or philosophical. "Little else," he continued, "is worth study." His exploration of states of consciousness and his attempt to render them emotionally and sensuously recall John Donne and anticipate Ezra Pound and the twentieth century. Like Donne and Pound, Browning carefully manipulated his material and structural devices to create the actual sense of an interior—"soul"—experience in the process of being shaped. His poetry is neither sensation, nor emotion, nor idea recollected in tranquility, but all these immediately, dramatically perceived.

In short, Browning *renders* rather than writes about a subject; he is maker, not philosopher. The speaker in the poem "Transcendentalism" echoes Browning's own preferences when he chooses the magician over the philosopher, saying,

Then, who helps more, pray, to repair our loss—  
Another Boehme with a tougher book  
And subtler meanings of what roses say,—  
Or some stout Mage like him of Halberstadt,  
John, who made things Boehme wrote thoughts about?

Browning did not merely write thoughts about things; he *made* things and his favorite material was the "soul"—the whole psychic life—of a character.

We can go one step further and characterize the particular kind of "soul" which most attracted him. Although his interests were diverse and his achievements relatively broad, he returned again and again to the subject of man's intellectual and moral limitations which, counterpointed against his aspirations, produced frustration and often despair. The speaker of "Two in the Campagna" speaks for a host of other frustrated men and women from Browning's poetic world:

Only I discern—  
Infinite passion, and the pain  
Of finite hearts that yearn.



"Infinite passion" and "finite hearts"—this is the pervasive theme of all Browning's poetry.

Browning illustrated repeatedly both these characteristics: his interest in rendering the whole psychic life of a character and his preoccupation with failure and frustration. Perhaps I can best make my point clear by discussing in detail a single, representative poem.

"Cleon" is characteristically illustrative, I believe. I should like to study the poem primarily to demonstrate Browning's distinguishing purpose and method as a poet and, secondarily, to throw light upon the poem itself.

Let us begin with the subject. What is Browning "saying" in the poem? What is his "message"? "Cleon" appears superficially to represent a clash between Greek humanism and Christianity. It has been so interpreted often. But it is not a philosophical or religious treatise. Herein lies one of the distinctive characteristics of the poem—and of Browning's poetry in general. Ideas here are means, not ends. Browning concerns himself with "soul," leaving philosophizing to Boehme and his ilk. Christianity is really not the issue. Cleon would have rejected a revealed Zeus as readily as a revealed Christ. In fact, Browning might have had it that way without altering his real meaning. He distinguishes here, as in "The Statue and the Bust," between moral and psychological concerns, indicating his greater interest in the latter.

Nor is the poem biographical. Rather it is about Cleon's frustrations resulting from unbelievable tensions, a paradox—the conflict between "infinite passion" and "finite hearts." Cleon is torn between sensitiveness to beauty and awareness of its fragility; joy in the physical life and his increasing debility; respect for the mind and the discovery of its limitations; a desire to eternalize time and the sense of its transience; instinctive longings for a revealed religion and his inability to accept one. In short, the central concern of Browning is the psychological conflict in the character—something he once referred to as action in character rather than character in action.

Cleon assumes contradictory roles: the rational, humanistic philosopher and the imaginative, intuitive poet; the decaying body and the aspiring spirit. Unable to eliminate either or to reconcile the two, he falls into despair, like so many other of Browning's characters, becoming incapable of saving action.

Browning's subject then is conflict in character and his purpose is to *render* the actual sense of frustration and despair. Let us observe now what it means structurally in a Browning poem for him to "make," "render," rather than to write thoughts about something.

We begin with the rhetorical structure of the poem. In itself it is meaningful. Browning states little explicitly. Rather he permits Cleon to be acted upon, drawn out, dramatically exposed by both the other characters in the poem and by his intellectual and cultural milieu. In short, the poem is dramatic rather than expository.

Yet it is drama of a kind almost peculiar to Browning. Cleon undergoes no change, experiences no deepening insights which lead to purgating action. The movement consists rather in the steady heightening of the reader's sense of Cleon's frustration, reaching peak intensity in Cleon's total incapacity for action.

Browning initiates this movement by placing Cleon against two other figures: the king and St. Paul. Each interacts upon the other, rendering more nearly complete the portrait of Cleon. There is a constantly shifting perspective, a deepening of reader insight, a heightening of irony. In the first section (lines 1-42), Cleon is the poet-philosopher, and the king, the generous giver. Greek civilization is idealized. In the central section (lines 43-335), the king becomes the seeker and Cleon the giver, who, in his exposition, betrays the decadence of Greek humanism. Finally (lines 336-353), St. Paul assumes the role of giver, offering Christianity to both the king and Cleon.

Cleon is additionally drawn out by his intellectual and cultural surroundings. Idealized Greece is first juxtaposed against the decadent Greece of Cleon's day, and finally both are set against the new order which Christianity will bring.

The sub-title of the poem, "As certain also of your own poets have said," recalls the intellectual and spiritual unrest described in the seventeenth chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*. "For all Athenians," the account states, "and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but to tell, or to hear some new thing." This intellectual dalliance suggests the decadence of Greek philosophy and the spiritual hunger which prepared for the Christian triumph.

Cleon reminds us, in fact, of Matthew Arnold's portrait of Marcus Aurelius:

What an affinity for Christianity had this persecutor of Christians! The effusion of Christianity, its relieving tears, its happy self-sacrifice, were the very element, one feels, for which his soul longed; they were near him, they brushed him, he touched them, he passed them by.... We see him wise, just, self-governed, tender, thankful, blameless; yet with all this agitated, stretching out his arms for something beyond,—*tenden-temque manus ripae ulterioris amore*.

Or perhaps Cleon reminds us of Arnold himself, "Wandering between two worlds, one dead / The other powerless to be born." Here then as in so many other Browning poems, meaning is communicated through the rhetorical structure.



Let us now look at a related matter—the dialectical movement of the poem, noting how Browning turns what might be philosophical rumination into the rendition of a psychological state. In the first forty-three lines Cleon is depicted as the poet who, the King thinks, must have attained the “very crown and proper end of life.” And he has attained something. Like Marcus Aurelius, Cleon has the depth and sensitivity that make his final negation tragic.

In the second section, however, he displays another—and in many respects a contradictory—side of his nature: that of the rationalistic philosopher. Unlike other animals, he states, man has the power of introspection and self-evaluation and should be able to appropriate life’s joys; but such, he has discovered, is not the case. His faculties—and here Cleon is the perceptive analyst of his own condition—do not equal his vision. Art and learning cannot assure happiness because they can neither substitute for experience nor promise personal existence after death. Already experiencing physical decline and facing death, Cleon concludes that it would be better if he did not have the vision since, because of his inadequate faculties, perceptiveness only contributes to his greater unhappiness. His advice to the king is:

Live long and happy, in that thought die:  
Glad for what was!

But Cleon, dissatisfied with his own advice, faces a paradox. On the one hand, he has intimations of a spirit world; on the other, he is limited by his concept of man. He cultivates his mind and art but finds them ineffectual against old age and death. He advances a theory of progress only to realize “Most progress is most failure. . . .” His conflict produces a disintegration fully dramatized in the last section. We see Cleon successively as poet, philosopher, and cynic. Actually he is all three, simultaneously rather than chronologically. The divisions within him create the tense dialectic of the poem—as do, indeed, those divisions within Browning’s other characters: Andrea, Fra Lippo, and Bishop Bloughram, for example.

The final episode brings the whole man into focus. In a situation which makes new demands on him, he displays a proud, querulous, and provincial, if not petty, outlook. Of the new religion, he says, “Their doctrine could be held by no sane man,” failing to realize or refusing to admit the ironic similarity between that insanity and his own intuitive longings.

He does not suffer from satiety, for he is yet sensitive to physical pleasures (“Every day my sense of joy / Grows more acute”). He realizes his increasing incapacity to experience life (“while every day my hairs fall more and more. . . .”). Enthusiastic over the king’s gift of the “one white she-slave,” he nevertheless despairs because

. . . she turns to that young man,  
The muscles all a-ripple on his back.

Having failed in mind and body, he needs a new set of values. In spite of his self-knowledge, however, he lacks the power to act. He cannot, on the one hand, because of psychological and cultural barriers, and, on the other, because of intellectual and moral limitations—an inescapable part of the “human condition” as Browning understands it. He *cannot*—the imperative constitutes Cleon’s tragedy. Browning’s achievement in Cleon is to communicate an immediate sense of this failure through the rhetorical organization and the dialectical movement of the poem.

Here, as elsewhere, Browning skilfully uses other devices—sentence structure, sound, rhythm, imagery—to render his subject with emotional and sensuous immediacy. On the surface, Cleon’s discourse is rational and logical rather than imaginative and emotional; that of the philosopher. He states, elaborates, illustrates, and summarizes. Appropriately, his sentences are tightly and logically constructed, his syntax rarely admitting inversion or any other poetic dislocation. He avoids sudden shifts in thought, incoherences, asyntactical elements, ellipses, and exclamatory statements.

But against these prosaic elements, Browning juxtaposes others of sensuous and emotional import, particularly sound. Frequent repetition of long sustained vowels gives “Cleon” a limpid, flowing movement. The relaxed, sustained, basically passive quality and dirge-like tone of the long *i*, *o*, *a*, and *e* functions metaphorically to render Cleon’s passivity: “I know not, nor am much troubled to know.” Additionally, they slow the movement and heighten the effect of the deliberate, rationalistic argument. The lightness of stress, the frequency of shared stress, and the tonal and emotional unity of the line produce a free, forward, though unemphatic movement, which characterizes the major portion of the poem.

In the central section, however, something important happens—materially and structurally. Cleon’s idea is rationalistic in the beginning. The movement of the lines is relatively broken. But with the triumph of emotion over concept toward the conclusion of the section, the movement changes. Beginning with line 301, Cleon drops his argumentative tone and becomes intensely personal. The lines become more lyrical, regular, and precise:

Say rather that my fate is deadlier still,  
In this, that every day my sense of joy  
Grows more acute, my soul intensified



By power and insight: more enlarged, more keen;  
 While every day my hairs fall more and more,  
 My hand shakes, and the heavy years increase—  
 The horror quickening still from year to year,  
 The consummation coming past escape  
 When I shall know most, and yet least enjoy—  
 When all my works wherein I prove my worth,  
 Being present still to mock me in men's mouths,  
 Alive still, in the praise of such as thou,  
 The man who loved his life so overmuch,  
 Sleep in my urn.

The pattern here is closer to iambic pentameter than in the earlier part of the section. There are departures from the regular pattern but the irregularities are fewer and they serve emotional rather than conceptual ends. *Sleep*, for instance, is thrust into prominence by an unexpected emphasis, bringing the passage to a powerful climax.<sup>1</sup> The line which follows, "It is so horrible. . . ." is adequately introduced and proceeds effectively on a lower and quieter pitch. Clearly, manipulation of meaning, rhythm, and sound helps render an acute sense of the "horrible" in this passage.

Here Cleon, for a moment, exposes a part of his nature he has previously suppressed. He is probably unaware of this self-betrayal, resulting from a temporary relaxation of his rational faculty, and in the last paragraph, the outburst having exhausted itself, he becomes once more the cultivated philosopher. With the resumption of his dominant role, the rhythm becomes again that of the main body of the poem.

We look for a poet's sensitivity especially in his imagery. Cleon's figurative bareness results from and produces the sense of his emotional and sensuous atrophy. His images are of two kinds: the short metaphors and similes and the extended comparisons. The first are decorative bits of stock rhetoric; they stand alone, rarely combining with each other to form either a conceptual or symbolic pattern. They betray the imprecision of Cleon's perception and his inability to treat experience imaginatively and synthetically. He uses his extended comparisons to clarify and heighten abstract generalizations. Primarily intellectual, they appeal only incidentally to the emotions and senses, representing the fragmentation of his personality, the triumph of his mind over his emotions, the suppression of his senses. Both the shorter and the extended figures are functional, however, illustrating, indeed rendering, Cleon's emotional and sensuous atrophy.<sup>2</sup>

Finally his suppressed emotions overpower him momentarily, and in the passage ending "Sleep in my urn," he expresses unrelievable despair. His gloom is as profound as that of Arnold's *Empedocles*.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, however, Cleon is incapable of even suicidal action.

This is not the entire poem, for Browning characteristically takes an ambivalent attitude toward his materials. Against Cleon's despair, which might so easily become sentimental, Browning counterposes a dry, intellectual irony. More a pattern involving the entire poem than individual lines, the irony, nevertheless, works frequently on two levels simultaneously. The discrepancy between literal and ironic meaning is rarely that of complete opposites, the meaning fluctuating along a scale from absolute positive to absolute negative. Also characteristic is the fact that the total meaning is revealed progressively. Individual statements take on additional meaning as the poem develops, achieving completeness only after the entire poem is finished.

Irony takes many forms. Between Cleon's "truth" and that perceived by the reader there is a discrepancy. His thinking has hardened into a system, and he accepts or rejects as absolutes things clearly capable of ambivalent meaning. Infrequently totally wrong, he is generally partial or inconclusive. Being right on one level and wrong in varying degrees on a more important one makes his position particularly ironic. The reader is constantly cutting back and forth between two possibilities.

The ironic elements are brought together and given final meaning by the last section of the poem. The dramatic quality of the poem is conceptual and emotional (psychical) rather than narrative (biographical); spatial rather than temporal. Step by step Cleon enumerates the characteristics of a religion which he thinks might give life the meaning which he wishes it had; he dismisses each as incompatible with reason. His intuition reaches in the direction of Christ only to be frustrated by conscious will:

Long since, I imaged, wrote the fiction out,  
 That he or other god descended here  
 And, once for all, showed simultaneously,  
 What, in its nature, never can be shown,  
 Piecemeal or in succession. . . .

And prove Zeus' self, the latent everywhere!

It is so horrible  
 I dare at time imagine to my need  
 Some future state revealed to us by Zeus.  
 Zeus has not yet revealed it; and alas,  
 He must have done so, were it possible.



These lines, preparatory to the final section, give the poem both formal and conceptual unity. They make possible also the emotional impact of Cleon's rejection. Lines and situation, which taken out of context seem sentimental, are preserved in the whole poem by the balance between concept and emotion which irony maintains. Irony, the only device strong enough to bring together the disparate elements, is the chief unifying force in the poem.

When we finish "Cleon" we know a great deal: specifically, the nature and cause of Cleon's frustration. If Browning's purpose were philosophical and moral, this might be enough. But it isn't. Because "Cleon" is a "soul" study and a poem, we more than *learn about*—we are made to *experience* the despair itself. Browning has given us a sense of what it means for a man to be frustrated and paralyzed by his "infinite passion" and his "finite heart."

By poetic use of all the material and structural devices available to him, Browning has rendered intellectually, emotionally, and sensuously the psychic life of one of his characteristic failures. He has demonstrated himself the Mage and the Maker. This is Browning's characteristic role.

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#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Browning obviously intended this effect. The line just before is iambic pentameter. In the first edition of the poem, the last line read "Shall sleep..." continuing the iambic movement. The change throws emphasis upon the word and gives it the effect which I have noted.
- <sup>2</sup> It would further illustrate my point to observe that Browning uses an entirely different kind of imagery—stronger, more imaginative, more masculine—in "Fra Lippo Lippi" where he is, of course, treating a different type of character.
- <sup>3</sup> For the relation between "Cleon" and Arnold's "Empedocles" see A. W. Crawford, "Browning's Cleon," *Journal of English and German Philology*, XXVI (October, 1927), 485.

### HUXLEY AND KINGSLEY

A study of the relationship between T. H. Huxley and Charles Kingsley illustrates in miniature one way by which a *via media* between rationalism and religion can be approached: the way of personal friendship which by transcending may serve to obscure ideological differences. Though Huxley was active in attacking the apologists of orthodoxy—Gladstone, Dr. Mivart, the Duke of Argyll, etc.—he was conciliatory towards Kingsley, even though Kingsley at times revealed an antipathy to rationalism which was almost as censorious as that of Bishop Wilberforce. An investigation of why this was so throws light upon the two principals involved, upon one aspect of the effect of Darwinism and upon the universal problem of the chemistry of compromise.

Those who are predisposed to discover similarities between the two can point to several items which support the proposition that two different world-views met amicably in the figures of Huxley and Kingsley, a point often made by Huxley's biographers.<sup>1</sup> They both spoke the same "moral idiom"; they both popularized the methods and results of science; they both approved of determinism and Stoicism; they both disliked Positivism; and, not the least of the similarities which may be adduced between them, they were both subject to the charge of unorthodoxy. Yet the belief that the concord between the militant agnostic scientist on the one hand and the Muscular Christian on the other is an example of the Victorian compromise between rationalism and religion requires examination. It is possible that subterranean differences are more significant than the surface accord implies. First of all, their attitudes towards social affairs underwent diametrically opposed developments: Kingsley, though commencing his career as a humanitarian, ended as a supporter of caste democracy and Governor Eyre, while Huxley progressed from invertebrate mechanisms to social mechanisms and at the end of his career reinterpreted his service as one dedicated to the betterment of the poor.

More important, with respect to their attitudes towards science, Kingsley's understanding of the scientific method and appreciation of the scientific world-view differed considerably from Huxley's. Though Kingsley did engage in a number of activities conducive to the enrichment of science, he was vigorous in support of certain propositions which, carried to their legitimate conclusions, tend more to delimit the discipline than to advance it. For example, he countered to evolution, devolution; to mechanism, vitalism; to the germ theory of disease, demoniacal possession; to an orderly nature, miracles; to mortality, immortality; to gravity, a "refutation" demonstrated by his holding a stone in his hand. He defined "modern Pantheism" (what Huxley called the "New Reformation") as a "homeless and bottomless pit of immoral and unphilosophical private judgment," from which he hoped God would deliver him and all mankind.<sup>2</sup> Such a belief as that in these various varieties of transcendentalism—devolution, vitalism, demonology, immortality—is anathema to rationalism; they were, further, precisely the points which Huxley combatted throughout his life.

Essentially, an appraisal of Kingsley's position suggests that he was content to force the old wine of Christianity into the new bottles of science. Huxley employed this very metaphor to urge as one of his primary contentions that the latter is not generous enough to contain the former. While



Kingsley believed that human welfare is founded upon conscience and that the universe is operated by the deity of Christianity, Huxley asserted that both human welfare and the universe are to be regarded from the frame of reference that posits man as the measure of all things. Basic to Kingsley's apprehension of nature was the effort to discover God behind mechanism; basic to Huxley's was the effort to describe the machine. Their attitudes towards some of the most important subjects for reflective thinking differed considerably.

Huxley tended to gloss over social, philosophical, and religious differences in order to arrive at the opinion whereby he could consider Kingsley not merely a personal friend, but a spokesman for enlightenment. Kingsley was successful in transferring to his philosophical outlook the good opinion that Huxley held of him as a personal friend. It was with a letter of condolence written in 1860, upon the death of Huxley's son Noel, that Kingsley first attracted Huxley's attention. Kingsley pointed out that a belief in immortality is necessary to the sustenance of a sane life; Huxley affirmed in his reply the agnostic way of thought.<sup>3</sup> From this point on, the two corresponded on such matters of mutual interest as science and education, the spread of Darwinism, the sterility of hybrids, spermatozoa, spiritualism, the Athanasian creed, the Jamaica Committee, positivism, Berkeley. Huxley assumed on this and related issues a closer correspondence of thought than in fact existed. In his letters and elsewhere, he generously observed that Charles Kingsley was a leader in the movement to make science meaningful, that Kingsley was to be congratulated for striving to get at the truth "through a region of intellectual and moral influences" so different from those to which Huxley was exposed, and that Kingsley could even show up the superstitions of men of science. In 1892, he answered a query by his grandson Julian, who was perplexed about water babies, that

My friend who wrote the story of the Water Baby, was a very kind man and very clever. Perhaps he thought I could see as much in the water as he did—There are some people who see a great deal and some who see very little in the same things.<sup>4</sup>

For Huxley to select Charles Kingsley as one of the "great-seers" discloses a naivete on his part. *The Water-Babies* has as its thesis a principle antipathetic to the establishment of the scientific mode as the best instrument for the analysis of nature: "No one has a right to say that no water-babies exist, till they have seen no water-babies existing..." Such a fatuous blunting of Occam's razor would be merely amusing, and not very amusing at that, were it not an expression of Kingsley's hostility to the important scientific notion that credulity is superfluous and to Huxley's ethical notion that to believe without evidence is immoral. Huxley himself is specifically satirized as Professor Pttmlnsprts, a naturalist knowing in weird subjects, whose chief fancy in life is to collect "nasty" things on the shore and whose chief ambition is to affix his name to them. To Ellie's suggestion that water-babies, though uncollected and unnamed, do in fact exist, Professor P. objects, for he "had not the least notion of allowing that things were true, merely because people thought them beautiful,"<sup>5</sup>—which is a summary of a point Huxley made in a letter to Kingsley, that we must teach our aspirations to conform to facts. Professor P. had even got up once at the British Association to prove that apes, like human beings, have "hippopotamus majors" (hippocampus minors) in their brains, a structure more important, Kingsley notes sarcastically, than qualities such as speech or machine-making and prayer-rendering faculties. The Professor's demise is a sad one. Despite previous successful debunking of nymphs, satyrs, fauns, etc., he catches in his net a real live water-baby—which he throws into the water and forgets about. That Professor Pttmlnsprts, though a compound of a number of Victorian scientists, is mostly Huxley is proven by his redaction of Huxley's point about the need of discarding beautiful theories when brute facts shatter them and by his defense of the existence of the hippocampus minor in the brains of apes, basic evidence in Huxley's thesis that man descended from ape-like ancestors. That Kingsley was hostile to the interpretation of the ways of science which Huxley promulgated is at least implied by the whole water-baby story, the point of which is that we might as well believe in the existence of the unseen and the tone of which, particularly in the Professor's dishonest refusal to admit pertinent evidence, is anti-scientific.

This anti-scientific approach to science, although it ran along with an approbation of particular scientific developments, is very clearly demonstrated in a letter which Kingsley wrote to Sir William Cope in 1858:

My doctrine has been for years . . . that below all natural phenomena we come to a transcendental—in plain English, a miraculous ground. I argued this once with Professor H., who supported the materialist view and is a consummate philosopher: and I did not find that he shook me in the least.

This belief was first forced on me by investigating the generations of certain polypes of a very low order. I found absolute Divine miracle at the bottom of it all; and no *cause*, save that of a supremely *imaginative* (if I may so speak), as well as Almighty *mind*, carrying out its own ideas.<sup>6</sup>

When Huxley studied the generations of polypes, he came to no such conclusion. Kingsley invariably sought for the miracle while Huxley dissected for the natural explanation of things. Although Kingsley did consider Darwin his "dear and honored master," although he did respect Huxley (to the



extent of advising him to publish one of his "materialistic" treatises—"On our Knowledge of the Causes of the Phenomena of Organic Nature"), and although he did contribute in his small way to the advance of Darwinism, he was not comfortable in his self-appointed role; a transcendentalist, at heart, perhaps he could not be comfortable with descentalism. His sarcastic comment that Huxley "is a consummate philosopher," his mild observation that Huxley's teaching was a "strange beacon," and his belief that Darwinians had to choose between "the absolute empire of accident, and a living, immanent, ever-working God"—these points prepare the reader skeptical of the possibility of reconciliation for this evaluation by Kingsley of the insuperable barrier between his and Huxley's ways of apprehending the universe:

A passage between me and \*\*\*\* (we are most intimate and confidential, though more utterly opposed in thought than he is to the general religious or other public), may amuse you. He says somewhere, 'the ape's brain is almost exactly like the man's, and so is his throat. See, then, what enormously different results may be produced by the slightest difference in structure!' I tell him, 'not a bit; you are putting the cart before the horse, like the rest of the world. If you won't believe my great new doctrine (which, by the bye, is as old as the Greeks), that souls secrete their bodies, as snails do their shells, you will remain in outer darkness....'<sup>7</sup>

F. D. Maurice may have been amused by this; chances are Huxley would not have been, nor would he have concurred in Kingsley's great new doctrine or in his contention that there was no alternative other than chance or God.

A study of the correspondence between Huxley and Kingsley and of other pertinent materials leads to a qualification of the view that Huxley and Kingsley were "close" in temperament and attitude. Closeness is, of course, a relative thing, and both did agree that scientific investigation was significant, had an impact upon religious thought, and could help fashion a healthier and better world. But Charles Kingsley was, after all, a self-confessed Christian who believed in the credenda of Christianity; and Huxley was not. Kingsley felt a need to be solaced with mystical or transcendental interpretations:

...I am the strangest jumble of superstition and of a reverence for scientific induction which forbids me (simply for want of certain facts) to believe heaps of things in which I see no impossibility. I want to believe all Jung Stilling's pneumatology, all Elliotson's mesmerism. Yea, I would gladly believe in devils and peris, elves and fairies, if I could. I would even gladly believe half of those monk and nun miracles and visions with which I have gorged myself more than perhaps most men in England, and which (as psychological and physiological studies) have been invaluable to me—but I can't. What is a poor wretch to do, who, disbelieving the existence of matter far more firmly than Bishop Berkeley, is accessible to no hints from anything but matter? A mystic in theory, and an ultra-materialist in practice—who, if I saw a ghost to-morrow, should chat quietly with it, and take out pen, ink, and paper to get an exact description of the phenomenon on the spot, what shall I do?<sup>8</sup>

Kingsley did not fully realize that Darwinism, or perhaps science in general, necessarily leads to a dilution of belief in the unproven or unprovable. The Darwinian experience had radically altered the intellectual landscape, making it impossible for scientific thinkers to move back into old habitations. Huxley did his best, in his lectures, essays, scientific and popular books, as a teacher and director of professional organizations, to raze the out-worn edifices of the past. But Kingsley wished to refurbish the old buildings. Huxley would write:

...the longer I live and the more I learn the more hopeless to my mind becomes the contradiction between the theory of the universe as understood and expounded by Jewish and Christian theologians and the theory of the universe which is every day and every year growing out of the application of scientific methods to its phenomena.<sup>9</sup>

But as for Kingsley, to quote a passage from a lecture at Sion College, on "The Theology of the Future":

We might accept what Mr. Darwin and Professor Huxley have written on physical science, and yet preserve our natural theology on exactly the same basis as that on which Butler and Paley left it. That we should have to develop it, I do not deny. That we should have to relinquish it, I do.<sup>10</sup>

Considering that Kingsley was a materialistic mystic and a pious follower of Darwin as well as Christ, one cannot be sure whether to conclude that Kingsley did not make any great contribution to reconciling science or religion (as Stanley Baldwin maintains) or that it was precisely in his exposition of Darwinism that he did make his most valuable contribution to progress (as Guy Kendall maintains). A study of the relationship between Huxley and Kingsley suggests that while friendship



can provide a forum for the cordial debate of ultimate issues, ideological differences, however obscured by social amenities, prevail as barriers to the reconciliation of irreconcilable world-views.

Southern Illinois University

Charles S. Blinderman

#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Cyril Bibby speaks of Kingsley's correspondence as one demonstrating his "characteristic kindness" (*T. H. Huxley*, p. 58); Clarence Ayers says that Huxley "strongly sympathized" with Kingsley (*Huxley*, p. 112); and William Irvine, comparing the two to Glaucus and Diomedes, concludes that "a great similarity of character and outlook" existed between them (*Apes, Angels, and Victorians*, p. 131).
- <sup>2</sup> Mrs. C. Kingsley, ed., *Charles Kingsley: His Letters and Memories of His Life*, II, p. 32.
- <sup>3</sup> Kingsley's letter is in *The Huxley Papers* collection, 19.162, Huxley's reply in Leonard Huxley's edition of *Life and Letters* and elsewhere; Edward Clodd calls this reply "very remarkable" (*Professor Huxley*, p. 13), and Houston Peterson says, "In the abundant religious literature of that age, there is no more poignant nor sincere confession than this of the 'irreligious' Huxley. In his own works there is not another passage so touching and revealing. It is the apologia pro vita sua." (*Huxley: Prophet of Science*, p. 133).
- <sup>4</sup> Leonard Huxley, ed., *The Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley*, II, 463-64; see also I, 259 and 297.
- <sup>5</sup> *The Water-Babies*, p. 68 and 153.
- <sup>6</sup> *Letters and Memories*, II, 66.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 172.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 19.
- <sup>9</sup> *Life and Letters*, I, 258.
- <sup>10</sup> *Letters and Memories*, II, 347.
- <sup>11</sup> Stanley Baldwin, *Charles Kingsley*; Guy Kendall, *Charles Kingsley and His Ideas*.

### III. ENGLISH X NEWS

#### A. THE CHICAGO MEETING

Chairman, George H. Ford, *University of Rochester*; Secretary, Francis G. Townsend, *Florida State University*.

##### I. Business

##### II. Papers and Discussion

1. "The Fourth Dimension of Victorianism," Jerome H. Buckley, *Harvard University*. (25 min.)
2. "Victorian Self-Consciousness," W. Stacy Johnson, *Smith College*. (22 min.)
3. "Matthew Arnold's Letters: A Brief Pre-Publication Report," Arthur K. Davis, Jr., *University of Virginia*. (5 min.)

*Advisory and Nominating Committee:* Chairman, Carl R. Woodring, *Columbia University* (1961); William E. Buckler, John T. Fain (1960-61); A. McKinley Terhune, J. Hillis Miller (1961-62); Robert C. Slack, G. Robert Stange (1962-63); \*George H. Ford (*ex officio*).

*1961 Program Committee:* Chairman, A. Dwight Culler, *Yale University*; Walter Houghton, Elvan E. Kintner.

*Bibliography Committee:* Chairman, Robert C. Slack, *Carnegie Institute of Technology*; Oscar Maurer; R. A. Donovan; C. T. Dougherty; D. J. Gray; R. C. Tobias; R. E. Freeman.

*Editor, Victorian Newsletter:* William E. Buckler, *New York University*.

*1962 Officers:* Chairman, Francis G. Townsend, *Florida State University*; Secretary, Donald Smalley, *University of Illinois*. (Nominations to be voted on.)

#### B. THE VICTORIAN LUNCHEON

After the meeting of Group X on Friday morning December 29, 1961, there will be a luncheon in Room 17 of the Palmer House. A bar, serving cocktails on a cash basis, will be opened in room 17 at 12 noon. Luncheon will be served at 12:45. Price for the luncheon will be \$3.75. Please send checks or money orders to Professor Martin J. Svaglic, Department of English, Loyola University, 6525 North Sheridan Road, Chicago 26, Illinois. Such reservations should reach Professor Svaglic by December 15, 1961. Anyone planning to attend the luncheon is urged to make his reservations before this date in order to prevent the kind of disappointments that have occurred in previous years when last-minute reservations could not be arranged.

#### C. THE ENGLISH INSTITUTE

The following papers of special interest to Victorianists were read at the twentieth session of the English Institute at Columbia University on September 5-8:



"The Victorian Sensibility"  
William A. Madden, *Indiana University*

"Arnold's Humanism: Poetry As a Criticism of Life"  
Wayne Shumaker, *University of California (Berkeley)*

"John Ruskin"  
Gabriele Bernhard, *Yale University*

"George Saintsbury"  
Rene Wellek, *Yale University*

"Gothic Versus Renaissance: Morris and Browning"  
Wylie Sypher, *Simmons College*

#### D. PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A JOURNAL OF VICTORIAN POETRY

1. *Title of Proposed Journal:* VICTORIAN POETRY
2. *Sponsorship:* West Virginia University and the West Virginia University Foundation, a non-profit corporation established to provide support for the educational and cultural objectives of the University, are seeking a foundation interested in the promotion of literature and the arts to be associated with them as a co-sponsor.
3. *Description:* A scholarly journal devoted to Victorian poetry, poetics, and criticism (9" x 6", 50-75 pp., of conventional format) to be published quarterly.
4. *Need for the Journal:* Despite a widespread revival in recent years of scholarly and public interest in the literature of the Victorian period, including much attention to the poetry, journals currently devoting themselves to the nineteenth century (*Victorian Studies*, *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, *Victorian Newsletter*) have given, for various reasons such as limitations of space and purpose, comparatively little attention to Victorian poetry. The need for a journal which would be concerned specifically with Victorian poetry and criticism is strongly felt by the leading Victorianists the committee has approached.

Encouraged by this kind of response, we have planned a journal in which special emphasis will be given to the artistic merits of Victorian poetry, an emphasis which we feel has hitherto been neglected in favor of approaches stressing social and other non-aesthetic factors. In addition to the usual general articles of analysis and criticism, we plan to include in each issue a study of a single significant poem by a leading scholar and a section of notes and comments giving fresh insights into certain short poems and separate passages of longer poems. By doing so, we hope to make the journal a resource for teachers of Victorian poetry as well as for scholars. Added scope will be given to the journal through the publication of studies in the criticism of the Victorian period.

#### 5. *Advisers and Consultants:*

William E. Buckler, Professor of English, New York University and Acting Dean, Washington Square College of Arts and Science, New York University. Editor of *Victorian Newsletter* and *Prose of the Victorian Period*.

Jerome H. Buckley, Professor of English, Harvard University. Author of *The Victorian Temper* and *Tennyson: The Growth of a Poet*.

Basil Willey, Fellow of Pembroke College and King Edward VII. Professor of English Literature in the University of Cambridge. Author of *The Seventeenth Century Background*, *The Eighteenth Century Background*, *Nineteenth Century Studies* and *More Nineteenth Century Studies*.

A. Dwight Culler, Professor of English, Yale University. Author of *The Imperial Intellect: A Study of Newman's Educational Ideal*.

William C. DeVane, Dean of Yale College. Author of *A Browning Handbook*, and *Browning's Parleyings*, *The Autobiography of a Mind*.

Frederic E. Faverty, Professor of English, Northwestern University. Editor of *The Victorian Poets; A Guide to Research* and author of *Matthew Arnold the Ethnologist*.

John Holloway, Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge and presently Byron Professor of English, University of Athens, Greece. Author of *The Victorian Sage*.

Walter E. Houghton, Professor of English, Wellesley College. Editor of *The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals* and author of *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870*.

Clyde K. Hyder, Professor of English, University of Kansas and Director of the University of Kansas Press. Author of *Swinburne's Literary Career and Fame* and *A Concordance to the Poems of A. E. Housman*.

E. D. H. Johnson, Professor of English, Princeton University. Author of *The Alien Vision of Victorian Poetry*.

Cecil Y. Lang, Professor of English, Syracuse University, Editor of *The Swinburne Letters*.

G. Robert Stange, Professor of English, University of Minnesota. Author of many articles on Victorian Poetry and co-editor of *Victorian Poetry and Poetics*.

Lionel Stevenson, Professor of English, Duke University. Author of *The Showman of Vanity Fair*, *The Ordeal of George Meredith*, *Darwin Among the Poets*, and *The English Novel*.

William D. Templeman, Chairman, Department of English, University of Southern California. Co-editor of *Victorian Prose* and of *Bibliographies of Studies in Victorian Literature*.

Donald Smalley, Professor of English, University of Illinois. Editor of *Browning's Essay on Chatterton*.

Paull F. Baum, Professor Emeritus of English, Duke University. Author of *Tennyson Sixty Years After*.

#### *Editors:*

Gordon M. Pitts, Department of English, West Virginia University

John F. Stasny, Department of English, West Virginia University

#### *Editorial Board:*

Patrick W. Gainer, Department of English, West Virginia University

Charles Samuels, Department of English, Utica College, Syracuse University

Thomas D. Claeson, Department of English, College of Wooster



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 8. *All correspondence and manuscripts should be addressed to*:

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#### IV. RECENT PUBLICATIONS: A SELECTED LIST

MARCH, 1961 — AUGUST, 1961

##### I. General

- ART. Finberg, A. J. *The Life of J. M. W. Turner, R. A.* Rev. Hilda F. Finberg. Oxford. Enlarged second edition of an authoritative *Life*.  
 Glog, John. *Victorian Comfort: A Social History of Design, 1830-1900*. Black. Rev. *TLS*, 21 April, p. 246.  
 Godden, Geoffrey. *Victorian Porcelain*. Jenkins.  
 Scott-Elliot, A. H. "The Etchings of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert." *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, March, pp. 139-153. A brief descriptive catalogue of sixty-two etchings by Victoria and twenty-five by Albert.
- CRITICISM AND LITERARY HISTORY. Fletcher, Ian. "The 1890's: A Lost Decade." *Victorian Studies*, June, pp. 345-354. A review-article that emphasizes the multiplicity of forces operative in the 1890's.  
 Gray, Donald J. "Arthur, Roland, Empedocles, Sigurd and The Despair of Heroes in Victorian Poetry." *Boston University Studies in English*, Spring, pp. 1-17. The failures of the four heroes reflect increasing Victorian disillusionment in the possibilities of the Great Man.  
 Orel, Harold, ed. *The World of Victorian Humor*. Goldentree Books. Appleton-Century-Crofts. An anthology that ranges from *Punch* cartoons to Wilde and Swinburne.  
 Peters, Robert L., ed. *Victorians on Literature and Art*. Goldentree Books. Appleton-Century-Crofts. A collection of thirty significant documents, complete and in excerpt.  
 Pizer, Donald. "Evolutionary Ideas in Late Nineteenth-Century English and American Literary Criticism." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Spring, pp. 305-310. Evolutionary concepts affected some criticism by discouraging impressionistic evaluation in favor of historical and comparative approaches.
- ECONOMICS AND POLITICS. Chambers, J. D. *The Workshop of the World*. Oxford. Economic change in England, 1820-1880.  
 Larkin, Emmet. "The Roman Catholic Hierarchy and the Fall of Parnell." *Victorian Studies*, June, pp. 315-336. Closely studies the forces and motives that determined the course taken by the Irish Bishops in the deposing of Parnell.  
 Prest, John. *The Industrial Revolution in Coventry*. Oxford. Economic and social effects for the years 1830 to 1860.
- EDUCATION. Davie, George. *The Democratic Intellect*. University of Edinburgh. The role of Scottish universities in the nineteenth century.  
 Fowler, W. S. "The Influence of Idealism upon State Provision of Education." *Victorian Studies*, June, pp. 337-344. By encouraging the state to take a hand in education, the proponents of Hegelian idealism in England provided an effective counter to the laissez-faire urgings of the Utilitarians.
- HISTORY. Angus-Butterworth, L. M. *Ten Master Historians*. Aberdeen. Includes discussions of Southey, Macaulay, Froude, and Green.  
 Clark, G. Kitson. "The Making of Victorian England." *Listener*, March 16, 23, 30; pp. 479-481, 521-523, 560-562. Three talks on the forces—industrial, moral, political—that controlled the changing character of Victorian England.  
 Gash, Norman. *Mr. Secretary Peel: The Life of Sir Robert Peel to 1830*. Harvard. Rev. *TLS*, 16 June, p. 365.  
 Hibbert, Christopher. *The Destruction of Lord Raglan: A Tragedy of the Crimean War*. Longmans.  
 Read, Donald and Eric Glasgow. *Feargus O'Connor*. Edward Arnold. Rev. *TLS*, 5 May, p. 274.  
 Robinson, Ronald and John Gallagher. *Africa and the Victorians*. Macmillan. The nature of late nineteenth-century British imperialism. Rev. *TLS*, 11 August, p. 494.  
 Tsuzuki, Chushichi. *H. M. Hyndman and British Socialism*. Oxford. Rev. *TLS*, 2 June, p. 334.
- MISCELLANEOUS. Buckler, William E., ed. *Novels in the Making*. Houghton Mifflin. Reprints Dickens's "Number Plans" for *David Copperfield* and the second part of George Eliot's *Quarry for Middlemarch*.  
 Rosenbaum, Robert. *Earnest Victorians*. Hawthorne. Major events in the lives of Darwin, Elizabeth Browning, Dante Rossetti, Newman, Lord Ashley, and General Gordon—in their own words.
- RELIGION. Chadwick, Owen, ed. *The Mind of the Oxford Movement*. Black. A selection of Tractarian poetry and prose, 1833-1841. Rev. *TLS* (Religious Books Supplement), 17 February, p. xi.
- SOCIAL. Ashby, M. K. *John Ashby of Tysoe, 1859-1919*. Cambridge. Life and times of a Warwickshire village radical.  
 Buck, Anne. *Victorian Costume*. Jenkins.  
 Read, Donald. *Press and People, 1790-1850*. Edward Arnold. A study of selected provincial newspapers, representing principally the middle-class reform movement.

##### II. Individual Authors

- ARNOLD. Coulling, Sidney M. B. "Matthew Arnold and *The Daily Telegraph*." *Review of English Studies*, May, pp. 173-181. The causes of Arnold's changing relations with one of his principal targets.  
 Culler, A. Dwight, ed. *Poetry and Criticism of Matthew Arnold*. Riverside Edition. Houghton Mifflin. An abundant selection.



- James, D. G. *Matthew Arnold and the Decline of English Romanticism*. Oxford. Rev. *TLS*, 14 April, p. 235.
- Wallace, John. "Landscape and 'The General Law': The Poetry of Matthew Arnold." *Boston University Studies in English*, Summer, pp. 91-106. An interesting study of the conflict in Arnold between his will and what he thought to be the general laws governing man.
- BRONTE. Gérin, Winifred. *Branwell Bronte*. Nelson. Rev. *TLS*, 28 July, p. 462.
- BROWNING. Green, David Bonnell. "Elizabeth Barrett to Hugh Stuart Boyd: An Additional Letter." *PMLA*, March, pp. 154-155. The letter touches on religious matters.
- Honan, Park. *Browning's Characters: A Study in Poetic Technique*. Yale. The development of Browning's method of portraying character, from *Pauline* through *The Ring and the Book*.
- Kelley, Lachlan Phil. "Robert Browning and George Smith: Selections from an Unpublished Correspondence." *Quarterly Review*, July, pp. 323-335. Reviews Browning's very cordial relations with Smith, and includes fifteen unpublished letters from a large collection in the possession of John Murray.
- Lewis, Naomi. "The Genius of Elizabeth Barrett Browning." *Listener*, July 20, pp. 91-92. A sketch of the life, emphasizing the image of a vigorous woman.
- Litzinger, Boyd. "Incident as Microcosm: The Prior's Niece in 'Fra Lippo Lippi'." *College English*, March, pp. 409-410. The "niece" is really the Prior's mistress, and as such is used to discredit the Prior's views on art.
- Schweik, Robert C. "The Structure of 'A Grammarian's Funeral'." *College English*, March, pp. 411-412. The advance of the disciples to the mountain top is a concrete symbol of the grammarian's own progress in his pursuit of knowledge.
- Truss, Tom J. "Browning's 'Childe Roland' in Light of Ruskin's *Modern Painters*." *Studies in English* (University of Mississippi), 1961, pp. 13-21. "Childe Roland" is an allegory of the artist's struggles with his materials, and also expresses Browning's own difficulties in composition.
- BULWER-LYTTON. Fradin, Joseph I. "The Absorbing Tyranny of Every-day Life': Bulwer-Lytton's *A Strange Story*." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, June, pp. 1-16. Bulwer's concern with the occult was one way of avoiding the image of a scientific-mechanical universe.
- CARLYLE. Sanders, Charles Richards. "Carlyle and Tennyson." *PMLA*, March, pp. 82-97. This thorough review of a long and rich friendship includes some hitherto unpublished correspondence.
- "Retracing Carlyle's Irish Journey (1849)." *Studies*, Spring, pp. 38-50. How Ireland struck Carlyle in 1849, with remarks on changes since then. Based on Carlyle's *Reminiscences of my Irish Journey* and his letters at the time.
- DARWIN. Fleming, Donald. "Charles Darwin, the Anaesthetic Man." *Victorian Studies*, March, pp. 219-236. Darwin's hatred of pain and rejection of religion help explain his drift from a state of buoyancy and feeling to one of insensitivity.
- DAVIDSON. Townsend J. Benjamin. *John Davidson, Poet of Armageddon*. Yale. Biographical and critical study.
- DICKENS. Atthill, Robin. "Dickens and the Railway." *English*, Spring, pp. 130-135. The symbol of the railway in some Dickens novels, principally *Dombey and Son*.
- Cockshut, A. O. J. *The Imagination of Charles Dickens*. Collins.
- Collins, P. A. W. "Queen Mab's Chariot Among the Steam Engines: Dickens and 'Fancy'." *English Studies*, April, pp. 78-90. The importance to Dickens of Fancy, as a relief from the effects of science, statistics, and industrialism.
- Deen, Leonard W. "Style and Unity in *Bleak House*." *Criticism*, Summer, pp. 206-218. Style (as a means of recreating reality), rather than plot or point of view, establishes the unity of the novel.
- Forker, Charles R. "The Language of the Hands in *Great Expectations*." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, Summer, pp. 280-293. Dickens's various uses of the hand-gesture in the novel, but particularly as a unifying device.
- Manheim, Leonard F. "Thanatos: The Death Instinct in Dickens's Later Novels." *Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Review*, Winter, pp. 17-31. Varieties of the death wish in *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Bleak House*, *Our Mutual Friend*, and *Edwin Drood*.
- Van de Kieft, Ruth M. "Patterns of Communication in *Great Expectations*." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, March, pp. 325-334. Dickens's characters share the basic "communion" of those related by "guilt and sorrow," "forgiveness and love."
- A Review of English Studies*, July, provides a "Dickens Number" that includes articles on his heroes and heroines (Angus Wilson), his language (Randolph Quirk), his humor (Sylvère Monod), his use of proper names (C. A. Bodelsen), his relations with Jeffrey (D. Cleghorn Thomson), his periodicals (P. A. W. Collins); and studies of *David Copperfield* (Arnold Kettle), *Great Expectations* (K. J. Fielding), and *Our Mutual Friend* (Robert Barnhard).
- DISRAELI. Graubard, Stephen R. *Burke, Disraeli, and Churchill: The Politics of Perseverance*. Harvard.
- Lewis, Clyde J. "Theory and Expediency in the Policy of Disraeli." *Victorian Studies*, March, pp. 237-258. Disraeli's shifts in policy are best seen as shifts in tactics which enabled him to fight for the preservation of traditional institutions.
- DOBELL. Preyer, Robert. "Sydney Dobell and the Victorian Epic." *University of Toronto Quarterly*, January, pp. 163-179. The conception of the epic that Dobell offers in his "Nature of Poetry" throws light on Victorian poetic theory and surprisingly anticipates some modern views.
- ELIOT. Greenberg, Robert A. "The Heritage of Will Ladislav." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, March, pp. 355-358.
- Hagan, John. "Middlemarch: Narrative Unity in the Story of Dorothea Brooke." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, June, pp. 17-31. A step-by-step tracking of Dorothea's story, noting especially parallel events and situations.
- McKenzie, K. A. *Edith Simcox and George Eliot*. Intro. Gordon S. Haight. Oxford. The strange adulation of Edith Simcox for George Eliot, as revealed in Miss Simcox's previously unpublished autobiography.
- Thomson, Fred C. "Felix Holt as Classic Tragedy." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, June, pp. 47-58. George Eliot sought to shape the Transome part of the novel according to the principles of Greek tragedy.
- GISSING. Gettmann, Royal A., ed. *George Gissing and H. G. Wells: A Record of their Friendship and Correspondence*. Illinois. Rev. *TLS*, 7 July, p. 416.
- HARDY. Carpenter, Richard C. "Thomas Hardy and the Old Masters." *Boston University Studies in English*, Spring, pp. 18-28. Hardy's use in his fiction of the methods of painting, principally those of the Dutch realists.
- Clifford, Emma. "The Impressionistic View of History in *The Dynasts*." *Modern Language Quarterly*, March, pp. 21-31. Hardy's view of history is predominantly impressionistic and intuitive rather than philosophic or scenic and realistic.
- Hynes, Samuel. *The Pattern of Hardy's Poetry*. North Carolina.
- McCann, Eleanor. "Blind Will or Blind Hero: Philosophy and Myth in Hardy's *Return of the Native*." Schoenhauer, Oedipus, and elements in Hardy's own life help in understanding the split personality of Clym Yeobright.



- HOPKINS. Miller, J. Hillis. "'Orion' in 'The Wreck of the Deutschland'." *Modern Language Notes*, June, pp. 509-514. Medieval and Renaissance Biblical commentary clarify the reference to Orion in stanza twenty-one.
- NIST, John. "Gerard Manley Hopkins and Textural Intensity: A Linguistic Analysis." *College English*, April, pp. 497-500. On the tension and compactness of language in Hopkins's poetry, especially in "Spring and Fall: To a Young Child."
- LOCKHART. Hart, Francis Russell. "Proofreading Lockhart's *Scott*: The Dynamics of Biographical Reticence." *Studies in Bibliography*, Charlottesville, 1961, pp. 3-22. This study of the corrected proofsheets of the *Life of Scott* throws light on the degree and nature of Lockhart's "reticence."
- MACDONALD. Wolff, Robert Lee. *The Golden Key: A Study of the Fiction of George MacDonald*. Yale.
- MILL. Pappé, H. O. *John Stuart Mill and the Harriet Taylor Myth*. Cambridge. Mill's indebtedness to Miss Taylor was not nearly so large as recent assessments have indicated.
- NEWMAN. Dessain, C. Stephen. *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*. Vol. XI. Nelson. This first volume to appear of the complete letters covers the crucial period, October 1845 to December 1846.
- Pett, Douglas E. "The Newman-Kingsley Dispute Continues." *TLS* (Religious Books Supplement), 17 February, p. xvi. Raises several questions about the validity of some of the evidence Newman offers in the *Apologia*. (But see the controversy between Pett and C. Stephen Dessain that followed, *TLS*, Feb. 24, March 3, 10; pp. 121, 147, 153.)
- OLIPHANT. Lochhead, Marion. "Margaret Oliphant, a Half-Forgotten Victorian." *Quarterly Review*, July, pp. 300-310. Comments on the life and character.
- PUSEY. Father Hugh. *Nineteenth Century Pamphlets at Pusey House*. Faith Press. An introduction to the 18,500 pamphlets in the Pusey House Library at Oxford.
- SWINBURNE. Dobree, Bonamy, ed. *Poems*. Penguin. A selection with introduction.
- TENNYSON. Kendall, J. L. "A Neglected Theme in Tennyson's *In Memoriam*." *Modern Language Notes*, May, pp. 414-420. Tennyson's progress from despair to faith includes a previously neglected stage—failure and the acceptance of failure.
- Paden, W. D. "Twenty New Poems Attributed to Tennyson, Praed, and Landor." *Victorian Studies*, March, pp. 195-218; June, pp. 291-314. This two-part article makes new attributions of eleven poems to Tennyson, eight to Praed, and one to Landor; and reprints the entire twenty. (See *VS*, June, pp. 409-410, for two corrections in the printing of the Tennyson poems, and for R. H. Super's objections to the Landor attribution.)
- THACKERAY. Davies, Phillips George. "The Miscegenation Theme in the Works of Thackeray." *Modern Language Notes*, April, pp. 326-331. Relates Thackeray's various references to miscegenation to his concern with his own half-sister, Sarah, born in India in 1804.
- Hagan, John. "A Note on the Napoleonic Background of *Vanity Fair*." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, March, pp. 358-361. The Napoleonic setting is one way that Thackeray intensifies his treatment of human vanity.
- Worth, George J. "The Unity of *Henry Esmond*." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, March, pp. 345-353. The novel is seen as a *Bildungsroman* in which the hero comes to maturity by rejecting the romantic alternative for its sober, solid counterpart in the realms of religion, politics, love, and military matters.
- THOMPSON. Thomson, Paul Van Kuykendall. *Francis Thompson: A Critical Biography*. Nelson.
- WELLS. Ray, Gordon N. "H. G. Wells's Contributions to the *Saturday Review*." *The Library*, March, pp. 29-36. Includes both a listing of Wells's contributions for the years 1894 to 1898, and a brief account of his relations with the *Review*.
- WILDE. Burke, Rev. Edmund. "Oscar Wilde: The Final Scene." *London Magazine*, May, pp. 37-43. An account of Wilde's deathbed conversion, based on the papers of Father Cuthbert Dunne, who had ministered to Wilde in his last hours.

## PROJECTS -- REQUESTS FOR AID

- CHARLES DICKENS. Madeline House, Philip Collins, and Graham Storey make a final request for autograph letters to be used in the Pilgrim Edition. (The first volume will appear in 1962; in all, the editors will include some 11,000 letters, fully annotated.) *TLS*, 21 July, p. 449.
- ERNEST DOWSON. Desmond Flower is preparing the *Collected Letters* and is interested in hearing of Dowson correspondence not already sent to him. *TLS*, 12 May, p. 298.
- MRS. GASKELL. J. G. Sharps is searching for out-of-the-way material relating to Mrs. Gaskell, especially letters and manuscripts, for a study.
- ELIZABETH ANNA HART. Verb Amber Gabbert (620 Sheridan Street, Chilburn, Maryland) is gathering information about the author of *The Runaway* - one of the memorable children's books of the 1870's.
- THOMAS HOOD. Peter F. Morgan would like information about Hood's letters for an edition of the correspondence. *NYTBR*, 3 September, p. 16.
- WALTER PATER. For a study of Pater's life and works, Lawrence G. Evans wishes unpublished materials, especially letters. *TLS*, 24 March, p. 190.
- JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS. Mrs. P. M. Grosskurth wishes information about unpublished letters and manuscripts, and particularly about the location of Symonds's unpublished autobiography, left to his executor, Horatio Brown. *TLS*, 24 March, p. 190.
- Robert L. Peters and Herbert M. Schueller (Wayne State University) are preparing an edition of the letters and would like to hear of any Symonds correspondence.
- ALFRED TENNYSON. Joanna Richardson desires information for the writing of a biographical and critical study. *TLS*, 24 March, p. 190.
- OSCAR WILDE. G. E. Houdard wishes to locate the manuscripts and original typescripts of the 1890 and 1891 versions of *Dorian Gray*, and wishes also letters and unpublished material referring to the novel. *TLS*, 23 June, p. 387.

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