

THE VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

No. 1 March 1968.

Ontario, Canada

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Editorial

This Newsletter appears as a precursor of the first meeting of the Victorian Studies Association. Because of this, the issue is largely concerned with the formation of the Association and with information for the forthcoming meeting. We hope, however, to settle down to the more mundane but perennially useful job of acting as a medium for distributing news items and information among members; the possible range of content is discussed later on.

We also wish, as earnestly as only editors can, to draw your attention to the aims and proposed bye-laws. The business meeting at the Conference is necessary and important; at the same time it will go very much more smoothly and quickly if suggestions or comments can be received beforehand.

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The Victorian Studies Association

Last year a group of people from various Ontario universities met at York to discuss the possibility of establishing in Canada a Victorian Studies Centre similar to those in the University of Leicester, England, and the University of Indiana. It was soon realized that we lacked the physical resources to consider a Centre, but, after talking about the establishment of a Victorian Studies Association and a Victorian Newsletter, we appointed a pilot committee to make enquiries during the summer and to report to a second meeting at the beginning of the present academic year. The committee consisted of Professors Robson and Helmstadter of the University of Toronto, and Professors Eisen and Collie of York University.

Early in the summer we sent a questionnaire both to those who had attended the first meeting and to many others. We realized that if there were indeed to be an association of people with nineteenth-century interests it ought not to be exclusive: we therefore wrote to architects, curators of museums, civil servants and so on, as well as to colleagues with university

posts. The result of this questionnaire was telling. Replies came from all over Ontario, and it became clear both that there was considerable interest in the proposed Association (though this interest was cautiously expressed), and that there was a very real need for it, since we discovered that none of us were particularly well-informed either about the work being done in Victorian Studies in this part of the country, or about the resources that would facilitate it. An architect writing a book on a certain subject in Toronto did not know that someone was doing precisely the same thing thirty miles away; a member of a University who announced she was the only person with an interest in such-and-such a subject was startled to discover that two other people in Ontario had recently covered the same ground, and indeed had the materials she needed; and so on. The committee felt justified in calling the second meeting that had been mooted in the Spring. This "founding" meeting was held in Massey College on 7th October, sixty or seventy people attending despite the fact that it was the Saturday of a long week-end.

From the meeting in Massey College came the decision to launch trial issues of a Victorian Studies newsletter, to enlarge the committee so that there could be serious thinking about the form the Association should take, and to hold a conference in the Spring of 1968, at which time the Association would formally come into existence. Dr. Wright and Dr. Peake of Laurentian, and Mr. Biswas and Mrs. Pilgrim of York, are the temporary committee which will produce issues of a Victorian Newsletter this winter, with financial assistance from Laurentian University. Dr. Wright of Laurentian, and Professor Tucker of Glendon College have been added to the guiding committee to form a constitution for the Association. Professor Collie has been charged with the responsibility of organizing a conference at York at the end of the academic year, and the Canada Council has agreed to provide financial help for the purpose of inviting one or two distinguished guest speakers. Details of this appear on page 6.

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### Formal Organisation

The provisional committee is anxious that the views and wishes of all potential members shall be reflected in the organisation that will, it is hoped, finally evolve. Any suggestions about the nature of such an association, or about the draft bye-laws which are printed below, will be gladly received by the provisional



3. The Recording Secretary will be chosen by the Executive Committee for one two-year term.

#### IV. The Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee will be composed of the following: the President, the Executive Secretary, the Treasurer, and the previous President (for one two-year term), and three members elected by the membership.

2. The three members elected by the Association will be chosen by a majority of the members present at a duly called meeting. Each will serve for a three-year term, and their terms will be staggered. (Of the three members chosen at the first meeting, one will be elected for a one-year term, one for a two-year term, and one for a three-year term). The Nominating Committee will present nominations. Any member may make other nominations from the floor.

3. A Quorum of the Executive Committee will be four members present in person at a meeting. The Committee will reach decisions, when necessary, by a majority vote of those present.

4. The President of the Association will serve as Chairman of the Executive Committee and shall call meetings of the Committee on his initiative and at the request of the Executive Secretary or of three Committee members.

5. The Executive Committee will appoint the Editor of the Newsletter for a term of two years. The Editor is eligible for an additional two-year term.

6. The Executive Committee will appoint an Editorial Board for the Newsletter of not more than three members.

#### V. Committees

1. The Nominating Committee will consist of three members, each for a two-year term. The function of the Committee is to nominate candidates for election to the Presidency, the Executive Committee, and the Nominating Committee. Its nominees, along with any candidates nominated from the floor, will be voted upon at a duly called meeting, and the persons with the highest number of votes from members of the Conference present will be duly elected.



The Newsletter will act as a medium for circulating news and information to members of the Association. We hope also to be able to provide certain "services" to subscribers. One of these, which we will start with the next issue if support and requests are forthcoming, will be a section listing books wanted or books available for sale or exchange. We feel there may be many cases when an enquiry will locate a much needed item, or where a duplicate can be usefully traded.

We shall also print enquiries of a more general nature, and requests for specific information. Items such as the news of the Victorian Library, given below, will of course be included. It is our hope that individual members will pass on any news of general interest and will keep us informed of particular projects, meetings etc. Reports or announcements will be welcomed.

This issue is being circulated primarily to those who supported the Massey College meeting. We apologise in advance to anyone who feels that he should have received a copy but didn't. Future issues will go out automatically to members of the Association and to subscribers.

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VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

This will be held on Saturday, March 30th at York University, in the Colloquium Room in the Lecture Hall. As the programme below shows, this will be a very special event for Victorianists at a purely nominal cost.

- 9.45 a.m. - Registration and coffee in the Lecture Hall
- 10.30 a.m. - Mr. David Newsome, Senior Tutor of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and University Lecturer in Divinity  
 Title: "The Early Victorian World Picture"  
 Chairman: Professor Eisen, Department of History, York University
- 12.30 p.m. - Lunch in the Hall of Vanier College
- 2.00 p.m. - Business Meeting
- 3.00 p.m. - Dr. George Ford, Professor of English, and Chairman of the Department of English at the University of Rochester  
 Title: "Dickens and the Eternal Moment"  
 Chairman: Professor H. Girling, Department of English, York University
- 5.00 p.m. - Cocktail Party.



- A History of the Gothic Revival C. Eastlake, with an introduction by J.M. Crook
- Contrasts A.W.N. Pugin, with an introduction by Henry-Russell Hitchcock
- History of the English Railway J. Francis, with an introduction by Jack Simmons
- The Bitter Cry of Outcast London W. C. Mearns, edited by A.T. Wohl
- Phases of Faith F.W. Newman
- Medical and Legal Aspects of Sanitary Reform A.P. Stewart and E. Jenkins, with an introduction by Michael Flinn
- Twice Round the Clock G.A. Sala, with an introduction by Philip Collins
- Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation Robert Chambers
- A Discourse on the Studies of the University Adam Sedgwick

This year's Visiting Professors are J.B. Schreewind (Department of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh) and Steven Marcus (Department of English, Columbia). Other visitors during the coming months include Sir Charles Tennyson, Simon Nowell-Smith, and - to the Victorian Studies Group - Arthur Pollard, Lionel Lambourne and E.P. Hennock. The University staff dramatic group is performing, in honour of the Centre, Bulwer Lytton's Richelieu; or, The Conspiracy, the first of what it is hoped will be a series of Victorian revivals.

One of the most important activities of the Centre will be the work of the Bibliographer, Mr. J.L. Madden. He describes this, in a separate note.

Philip Collins



Victorian Studies Bibliography in Leicester

The Bibliographer to the Victorian Studies Centre, appointed from August 1967, is responsible for conducting research and teaching in the whole field of information work within the Victorian period. After examination of a large number of possible research projects, a few have been selected as meriting special attention and work on these is now proceeding. The two most significant projects currently being pursued are the compilation of subject lists of bibliographies of use to research workers within the period and assessment of Victorian periodical holdings in local libraries. The first marks an attempt to codify in a readily accessible form information about basic bibliographical guides, and is designed for eventual publication as a handbook for students of the period. It will list general bibliographies, including those which, though not limited to the Victorian period, are useful to students, bibliographies of specific subjects and of individual Victorians. The second involves a detailed study of the availability of Victorian periodicals within the Leicester area which, it is hoped, will aid local students and provide a basis for the intelligent augmentation of local holdings. Other projects to be undertaken include an international guide to research locations for the period, comprising a list of published guides and a subject list of important printed and manuscript collections.

As part of the Centre's teaching programme, lectures and seminars have been organised to cover problems of information retrieval in Victorian research, with exercises on literature searching and the use of basic bibliographical tools, methods of descriptive bibliography and subjects of general interest to students of the period, such as copyright law and the development of printing and publishing techniques. Individual instruction is offered to research students on bibliographical matters relating to the composition of theses and dissertations and a general information service is provided for all staff and students associated with the Centre.

Lionel Madden.

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News from Indiana

Those who subscribe to Victorian Studies will have had their copies of the first issue of the Victorian Periodicals Newsletter.

This is a stimulating and important new addition to specialised research aids in Victorian scholarship; the 'march of mind' into Victorian intellectual penetrabilia continues. Those who have not yet seen it should write to Miss Dorothy Deering, Associate Editor, Victorian Periodicals Newsletter, Department of English, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47401, U.S.A.

We also learn that Professor Wolff will be moving into an official academic position in the Victorian Studies programme, which will in addition include a Visiting Professor for the year. Victorian scholarship seems to stimulate a Victorian energy for development at Indiana.