

Victorian Studies Association Newsletter



NUMBER 24, FALL 1979

Ontario, Canada

THE VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Number 24, Fall, 1979

Ontario, Canada

Edited for the Victorian Studies Association of Ontario

Editors: Allan Austin and Elizabeth Waterston,
Department of English, University of Guelph,
Guelph, Ontario, Canada

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EDITORIAL

"What news?" -- How Victorian that cry!

In 1837, Anna Jameson, on a summer ramble through Western Ontario, hailed "a great heavy-built schooner, painted black, . . . going up the lake against wind and current . . . 'What News?' . . . And the answer was that William the Fourth was dead, and that Queen Victoria reigned in his place! We sat silent looking at each other, and even in that very moment the orb of the sun rose out of the lake, and poured its beams full in our dazzled eyes . . . Even here, in this new world of woods and water, amid these remote wilds, to her so utterly unknown, her power reaches and her sovereignty is acknowledged."

Well, here is our budget of appropriate news from Ontario, 1979. Some ascensions, some coronations, some sun beams; some voices across the water; an acknowledgment of the continuing power of the Victorian age.

FORTHCOMING

Victorian Studies Association of Ontario

The Victorian Studies Association of Ontario will hold its annual conference for 1980 on Saturday, 12 April, at the Glendon College campus of York University.

The 1980 VSA Conference
will present

Leland Lyons
on "Yeats and Victorian Ireland"

William Whittle
on William Morris

Victorian Studies Association, Toronto Group

Two meetings of the Toronto Group of the Victorian Studies Association are upcoming: Thursday, 6 December: Lovat Dickson will talk on a "Victorian Publishing House: Macmillans" at the home of Michael and Jane Millgate, 75 Highland Ave.; Wednesday, 6 February: a discussion evening on Rudyard Kipling's Kim to be led by Archie Thornton and Henry Auster - location to be announced.

George Eliot Centennial Conference

The English Department of the University of Puget Sound is sponsoring "The George Eliot Centennial Conference" April 10-12 at Tacoma Washington. The keynote speaker will be Gordon S. Haight. Papers are invited and should be sent to Dr. Rosemary T. VanArsdel, English Department, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington 98416. The deadline is December 15.

Thomas Carlyle Material

Members of the Victorian Studies Association attending the MLA Conference in San Francisco in December are invited to visit the Norman and Charlotte Strouse Collection of printed works, letters, and manuscripts of Thomas Carlyle, which is housed in Special Collections of the McHenry Library, University of California at Santa Cruz. The collection contains 270 manuscript letters by Thomas and Jane Carlyle, and 20 books from his library. UC Santa Cruz is approximately 75 miles south of San Francisco and the Special Collections will be open by appointment only. Contact Rita Bottoms at the University Library, UC Santa Cruz, CA. 95064, or call 403-429-2547.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Alan H. Adamson (Concordia) has published "The Twilight of Gentility: Class and Character in the Palliser Novels", Europa, vol. 1, no. 1. November, 1977.

Marcia Allentuck (City University of New York and Wolfson College, Oxford) has a review of Nature and the Victorian Imagination (ed. Knoepfelmacher) in the forthcoming issue of Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians. She also has an article, "Francis Palgrave as Art Critic" in The Humanities Association Review.

Christina Duff (Book Selector for Graduate Research in English and Drama, U of T Library) has provided the introduction and biographical notes for Ann Taylor Gilbert's Album. New York: General Press, 1979. pp. xxxiv, 689.

P. Enros (Toronto) completed a thesis, "The Analytical Society: Mathematics at Cambridge University in the Early Nineteenth Century", this year at the University of Toronto.

George Ford (Rochester) has an essay, "Felicitous Space: The Cottage Controversy", in Nature and the Victorian Imagination. He was editor of the Norton Critical Edition of Bleak House and when the International Society of the Study of Time met this summer in Austria, he was elected President of the Society, the first non-scientist to hold this office. Professor Ford read a paper at the Victorian Society conference at the University of Richmond, Virginia, October 12, 1979. He also reminds us that E. D. H. Johnson is giving a series of lectures on Victorian paintings at Pierpont Memorial Library in New York, October through November. Ray Kalgan's thesis, "Critical Study of Dickens' Late Novels", is being directed by Professor Ford.

H. R. Girling (York) has an article, "A Toot of the Trumpet against the Scholarly Regiment of Editors", in Bulletin of Research in the Humanities (Autumn, 1978). A second article, "The Pragmatics of Henry James's The Ambassadors: A Comment", appeared in The Canadian Journal of Research in Semiotics (Fall/Winter, 1978-79) and was followed by Vladimir Krysin's "Réponse à H. R. Girling".

Brian Heaney (Trent) will spend his sabbatical (1979-80) in Oxford as a visiting fellow at Jesus College.

Shamsul Islam (Vanier College, Montreal) will be reading a paper on Kipling at the fifth triennial conference of the Commonwealth Language and Literature Association to be held at the University of South Pacific, Fiji, from January 3-8, 1980. Macmillan of London have just published his book, Chronicles of the Ring: A Study of Literary Reaction to the Imperial Idea towards the end of the Raj, which deals with the work of Kipling, E. M. Forster, E. J. Thompson, George Orwell, and John Masters. The work will be published by Gage in Canada and by Rowman and Littlefield in the United States.

Sara Keith's paper on Carlyle, Mill, and Mudie's Select Library, presented at ACUTE in 1969 and published in the Colorado Quarterly, Winter, 1973, has been commended in the 1978 Victorian Fiction.

Bruce Kinzer (Toronto) has an article, "J. S. Mill and the Secret Ballot" in Historical Reflections (Summer, 1978).

Bernie Lightman (Queen's) successfully defended his thesis, "Henry Longueville Mansel and the Genesis of Victorian Agnosticism" last fall. In April of this year, he delivered a paper, "Evolution and the Development of the Victorian Agnostic Theory of Knowledge", at the Joint Atlantic Seminar on the History of Biology and Medicine held at the University of Toronto. His article, "John Stuart Mill and Immanuel Kant on Nature", appeared in The Mill Newsletter XIV, 2 (Summer, 1979).

C. T. McIntire (Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto) will present his paper, "Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian English Diplomacy" at the Conference on Faith and History in New York City, December 27, 1979.

Mary O'Connor (Zola Research Program, Toronto) completed her thesis, "John Davidson: A Critical Study of his Poetry", this year at the University of Toronto.

John Unrau (York) is preparing a book on Ruskin's study of the basilica of San Marco in Venice, and would be most grateful for information concerning the whereabouts of manuscripts, sketches, and drawings that might be relevant to this subject.

REPORTS

The VSA 1979 Conference

The eleventh annual conference of the Victorian Studies Association of Ontario was held at Glendon College on Saturday, 7 April 1979. The first paper, on "Victorian Things," was given by Asa Briggs, Provost of Worcester College Oxford; the afternoon paper by James Cameron, University of St. Michael's College, Professor Emeritus, was on "Dickens and the Angels." Trevor Levere and Jan McTavish prepared a fascinating exhibition of Victorian scientific instruments, on display in the Senior Common Room throughout the conference, and after lunch in the Principal's Residence (thanks to the kind hospitality of Principal David McQueen) conference members were much

diverted by a Victorian Parlour Entertainment arranged and introduced by Tony Stephenson, of the Theatre Department, York University. At the business meeting Al Tucker was elected to the Executive and Bill Westfall agreed to stay on for an extra year to serve out the term of Maurice Elliott, who is going on leave in 1979-80.

Summary of "Dickens and the Angels"

Professor Cameron began by arguing that the idea of the angel had by Dickens's period been degraded from its traditional high status. In Dickens the angel belongs to the undemanding and sentimental part of religion and is associated with pure children such as Oliver Twist and virginal young women (e.g. Rose Maylie in Oliver Twist) and with the deaths of children. He holds the novel view that children, and perhaps older people who are restored to the condition of childhood in death, actually turn into angels when they die. Dickens was comfortable with such ideas; but faced with dogmatic or historical claims for Christianity he was angry and resentful and even, as in his response to Millais' "Christ in the Carpenter's Shop", hysterical. From Dickens we learn almost nothing about English religion, whereas George Eliot, the Feuerbachian unbeliever, is shown to have a strong appreciation of the phenomena of Anglicanism and dissent by her work in such novels as Adam Bede and Felix Holt, and this is seen even in her treatment of the religious components of landscape. Religious themes nevertheless haunt Dickens's imagination and where they can be treated as making no, as it were, existential claims on men, then they can become in his work powerful in the symbolic structure. Examples given were his use of the theme of the Flood in Ch. XLII, paragraph 3, of The Old Curiosity Shop, and of Resurrection in Ch. I of Great Expectations and in the early chapters of David Copperfield. Professor Cameron also argued that on the surface Dickens's model of salvation is Pelagian: salvation comes through striving and is bestowed in recognition of merit. But the deep grammar, so to speak, of salvation is Calvinist: the damned and the saved are so from the beginning. Only in the later novels, and most of all in Great Expectations, does he take questions of moral choice, and the development of character consequent upon moral choice, seriously. And in Little Dorrit he is able to give us an innocent, chaste young woman who has almost no trace of Rose Maylie; and when Little Dorrit and Arthur Clennam go down into the roaring streets, Dickens is by now too wise to call upon factitious choirs of angels to accompany them.

BOOK REVIEW

By D. S. Hair (English, Western Ontario)

Norman A. Anderson and Margene E. Weiss, eds. Interspace and the Inward Sphere. Essays on Romantic and Victorian Self. An Essays in Literature Book. Macomb, Illinois: Western Illinois University, 1978.

It is conventional in most English departments in North America to divide the nineteenth century into Romantics and Victorians, and to study the two as distinct periods. There are good practical reasons for doing this, but often the result, for students and teachers alike, is a fragmented sense of the century. This collection of essays attempts to see the century as a whole, to define and illuminate "the continuity between works of Romantic and Victorian prose writers." Interesting as many of the essays are, however, there are inherent limitations in a collection of this sort. The points of view of the various contributors will necessarily differ; the central concerns of one may be less central for others; and, while many of the essays are excellent in setting in a wider context a particular writer or book, some focus narrowly on one figure or even one work, and the reader is left to make connections himself.

The editors define the "focusing theme" or the "unifying concept" of the collection as "the search for or the construction of self." The title, which seems at first glance to be jargon from literary criticism of the 1970's, is in fact the bringing together of jargon from the two presiding deities of the collection, Coleridge and Carlyle. "Interspace" is Coleridge's term for an interval in space or time, and the apparent discontinuity is necessary if we are to become aware of the continuity and, ultimately, the identity of all things. "The inward sphere" is Carlyle's term for the same kind of awareness, which is achieved through the exploration of the powers of one's own mind, and the nature of one's own experience. As a unifying theme, this idea works well enough, though some of the most interesting things in this collection are subdivisions of this theme, or concepts related obliquely to it.

Take, for instance, the idea of renunciation, which Ira Bruce Nadel explores in "Renunciation and the 'Perfect

Freedom' of the Victorians." We are familiar enough with the value which the Victorians placed on self-denial and sacrifice, but it is good to have this ideal explored in so many writers (Carlyle, Mill, Arnold, Ruskin, Newman, George Eliot, F. H. Bradley, and Beatrice Webb), and to have the shift of selflessness from a religious to a social ideal explained so clearly. Equally interesting is E. Michael Thron's argument, based on Harold Innis's thesis, that the technological advances of the nineteenth century produced in De Quincey a "disproportion" with himself, and a gap between the world and the writer ("Speed, Steam, Self, and De Quincey"). And in "Idolatry for the English: Carlyle's Lecture on Paganism", Barry V. Qualls treats Carlyle as a mythographer, concerned, like Faber, Davies, Ruskin, Symonds, Pater, and others, with the language and ideas of myth. The work of James Kissane and Janet Burstein has done a great deal to make the nineteenth-century understanding of myth accessible to us, and Qualls' essay, which focuses on "The Hero as Divinity" in On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History, is a fine contribution to our knowledge of this fruitful area of investigation.

The essays range widely, so that there is something here for almost everyone who has a specialized interest in nineteenth-century prose. The four essays at the beginning deal with Coleridge and De Quincey. In "Coleridge's Biographia Literaria and the Evidence for Christianity", C. Miles Wallace explores the pressures put on the self with the shift, from external to internal evidence, of the proof for the truths of Christianity. Anya Taylor examines Coleridge's struggle to define the truly human, and to distinguish human from animal life, in "Continuities and Chasms: Coleridge on Beasts and Men". "De Quincey's Magnificent Apparatus" is his "dreaming organ" or "sleeping mind", and Robert Ready defines it through De Quincey's language and his concept of rhetoric.

As one might expect from the unifying theme of this collection, autobiography is a central concern, and Mill's Autobiography and Ruskin's Præterita are the subjects of two essays. Jonathan Loesberg's essay, "Free Association: Mill's Autobiography as the Fiction of a Philosophy", is particularly good. His argument is that Mill made his life an exemplary tale, and, through the Autobiography, tried to "resolve problems in his philosophy by using his life as empirical evidence." Loesberg focuses

on Mill's problem of finding "a place for free will within the unbreakable chain of cause and effect created by associationism", explores Mill's attempts to make up for the deficiencies of his father's philosophy, and analyzes in an illuminating way the crises in the Autobiography itself. In her essay on Praeterita ("The Autobiographer's Dilemma: Ruskin's Praeterita") Gail B. Griffin begins with the age's ambivalent view of an account of one's own life. While it is true, as she argues, that Ruskin was concerned with autobiography as "process rather than product", it is not true that "the autobiography was unplanned". E. T. Cook's introduction to Volume XXXV of The Works gives the evidence for forethought and design on Ruskin's part, and one should not assume that such careful planning is inconsistent with his desire to avoid a systematic account of his life.

Two essays remain: Ina Rae Hark's "Samuel Butler and the Gospel of No Gospel", and James D. Woolf's "'In the Seventh Heaven of Delight': the Aesthetic Sense in Gosse's Father and Son". Hark focuses mainly on Butler's The Fair Haven, and on the conflict which it reveals between satirist and sage in Butler himself; Woolf analyzes the aesthetic temperament of the son in Gosse's novel, and argues convincingly that one should take the subtitle, "a study of two temperaments", more seriously.

In spite of the inevitable discontinuities in a collection of this sort, there is much that is illuminating, and much to remind us how valuable it is to have the developing ideas and forms of the whole century as part of our working knowledge.

JOURNALS

International Hopkins Association has been founded as a society for those interested in the lives and works of Gerard Manley Hopkins and his circle: Robert Bridges, Richard W. Dixon, and Coventry Patmore. In addition to hosting seminars on and celebrations of the poets, IHA will publish a directory of members, a newsletter (twice yearly), and a monograph series. Other benefits of membership in IHA include a subscription to The Hopkins Quarterly and discounts on books by and about the poets (when allowed by publishers). The Monograph Series will publish works on Hopkins, Bridges, Dixon and Patmore. Works of critical, biographical, textual, and bibliographical

nature, ranging from 35 to 150 typed pages in length, will be considered for publication. IHA is especially interested in works on Hopkins' circle but welcomes any material pertaining to the poets. Editions of the poets' works will also be considered. For further information or to submit work for consideration, write: Richard F. Giles, The Hopkins Quarterly, The International Hopkins Association, Department of English, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario N1G 2W1.

The Pre-Raphaelite Review

The Pre-Raphaelite Review, now into its third year of publication, invites contributions ranging from 500 to 5,000 words. The journal is published semi-annually (May and November) from Box 422, RFD 1, Peterborough, New Hampshire 03458. Here is a statement from the editor, Francis Golfing:

The term 'Pre-Raphaelitism' remains a difficult one. Mediaevalism, "long necks and pomegranates," the dreaminess of Burne-Jones, the unseemly rhythms of Swinburne's poetry, Morris's designs for wall-paper, Ruskin's espousal of sincerity and fidelity to nature, all this and the like are evoked by the word. Keeping in mind what has already been written both by advocates and by adversaries on Pre-Raphaelitism, and struck by the overriding self-consciousness and radical uncertainty of such writing in the main, The Pre-Raphaelite Review aims to throw open the whole matter of this modus cogitandi, for that it is a 'way of thinking' rather than a 'way of feeling' seems clear from the pronouncements of the members of the original Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood founded in 1848. (However, we must beware of the 'intentional fallacy' even here.) Whatever pertains to Pre-Raphaelitism is grist for the mill of The Review--analysis of a particular work, comparative literature, literary or other influence, exegesis, items of historical milieu deemed maieutic to a better understanding of the subject, the bearings of philosophy, psychology, theology, aesthetics, etc. While acknowledging the "germinal" importance of the P.R.B. and its contemporary constellations, The Review feels strongly that bonafide precursors and heirs are of equal importance and substantively part of the movement. To limit Pre-Raphaelitism to the 19th Century is to miss the point that articulations have a Janus-power, derived from the past and launched towards the future.

NOTE

By Juliet McMaster

"Jam Every Other Day"

"The rule is," says the White Queen to Alice in Through the Looking-Glass, "Jam to-morrow and jam yesterday - but never jam to-day."¹ I think most of us have always assumed that that immortal rule was invented by the White Queen, or rather by Lewis Carroll. It fits in delightfully after the queen's less than generous offer of wages to tempt Alice to become her lady's-maid: "Two pence a week, and jam every other day." When Alice says she doesn't particularly care for jam, or as she corrects herself politely, "I don't want any to-day, at any rate," the White Queen quickly retorts, "You couldn't have it if you did want it." Then she delivers her rule, as above.

Neither Martin Gardner, in The Annotated Alice,² nor Donald J. Gray, in the Norton Critical Edition of Alice in Wonderland,³ offers any note at this point: apparently they too assume that the White Queen is inventing her inspired nonsense, since otherwise they would provide a source.

Her rule has other applications, however, than to wages for lady's-maids. It has been used, as I have been informed by a gentleman who was a schoolboy in Victorian days, as a mnemonic aid for remembering the difference between the Latin nunc, meaning "now" - or "at this present point in time," as the politicians say - and iam, meaning "now" or "already," usually used with the past or future perfect tense, of events past or yet to come. "Caesar is now at the gates" would be rendered by nunc, whereas "Caesar had now reached the gates," or "Caesar will already have reached the gates by morning" would be rendered by iam. Hence, the rule is, "Iam to-morrow and iam yesterday, but never iam to-day."

The erstwhile schoolboy who told me this piece of classroom lore assumed that the rule was derived from Carroll, and that the iam of the mnemonic aid for Latin prose was a witty derivation from the jam you spread on bread, which is the White Queen's concern. However, so did many of us assume that the Cheshire cat was original with Carroll, instead of being, as it is, a brilliant expansion of an expression already existing. From the authority with which

the White Queen delivers her rule (and the White Queen is not usually given to authority) I'm inclined to believe that she is quoting rather than inventing, and that the rule about "iam" was the folklore of many generations of schoolboys at their Latin primers before Carroll raided it to give to the White Queen.

So if you think so too, please add another note to your annotated Alice.

NOTES

¹ Through the Looking-Glass (1872), chapter 5.

² (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1960), p. 247.

³ (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1971), p. 150.

REPORT OF THESES (CONTINUED)

Theses Completed, U. of T., 1975-1979

Butler, Samuel.

Goodhue, Douglas James. "A Study of Samuel Butler's Contribution to the theory of Evolution." Supervisor: Professor H. Kerpneck. Ph.D.

Dickens, Charles.

Dudar, Eleanor Joan. "The Family in the Later Novels of Charles Dickens." Supervisor: Professor J. M. Robson. Ph.D.

Morton, Thomas Lionel. "Language and Reality in Dickens's Later Novels." Supervisor: Professor J. M. Cameron. Ph.D.

Dougherty, Charles M.

Tucker, John Arthur. "A Study Towards an Edition of The Dawn in Britain by Charles M. Dougherty." Supervisor: Professor W. F. Blissett. Ph.D.

Eliot, George.

Linkovich, Stanley A. "The Romantic Image in the Novels of George Eliot." Supervisor: Professor H. Auster. Ph.D.

McMullen, Bonnie S. "Daniel Deronda: A Study of its Genesis and Form." Supervisor: Professor H. Auster.

Hardy, Thomas.

Brady, Kristin M. "The Short Stories of Thomas Hardy: A Study by Volumes." Supervisor: Professor M. Millgate. Ph.D.

Wright, Janet B. "Hardy's Jude the Obscure: A Critical and Contextual Study." Supervisor: Professor M. Millgate. Ph.D.

Meredith, George.

Masterson, Mariana. "A Study of the Duel in Meredith: The Duel as Framework, Metaphor, and Theme in the Novels of George Meredith." Supervisor: Professor H. Kerpneck. Ph.D.

Meade, Ethel. "Fantasy and Fiction in Meredith's Novels." Supervisors: Professors B. Hayne and H. Kerpneck. Ph.D.

O'Grady, Jean. "Role of Narrative in George Meredith's Fiction." Supervisor: Professor H. Kerpneck. Ph.D.

Patmore, Coventry.

Platt, Fr. Phillip W. "The Spiritual Vision of Coventry Patmore: A Study of His Religious Faith and Its Expression in His Work." Supervisor: Professor P. Morgan. Ph.D.

Trollope, Anthony.

Knelman, Judith. "Trollope, Journalist and Novelist." Supervisor: Professor P. Morgan. Ph.D.

Various Authors.

Heidemann, August Wm. "The Literary Ballad in the Nineteenth Century: Ballads of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and Rossetti." Supervisor: Professor H. Kerpneck. Ph.D.

Jones, Grania Frances. "Aspects of Time and Eternity with reference to Some English Poetry from Wordsworth to Eliot." Supervisor: Professor M. T. Wilson. Ph.D.

Simpson, Peter Alan. "Wordsworth to Hardy: Lines of Relationship and Continuity in Nineteenth Century English Poetry." Supervisor: Professor W. J. Keith. Ph.D.

Theses in Progress, Waterloo

Arnold, Matthew.

Braden, Carole. "The Influence of Spinoza and Carlyle
on Arnold." M.A.

Teheriani, Feri M. "Arnold and Persian Poetry." M.A.

Hardy, Thomas.

Schiffer, Marg. "Rural England in Hardy." M.A.

Tennyson, Alfred.

Clarkson, Pamela. "Merlin and the Grail in Tennyson's
Idylls of the King." M.A.

Winters, Victor. "Meaning and Form in Tennyson's
Maud." M.A.

Various Authors

Zinyemba, Moses. "Imperial/Commonwealth/Late
Victorian." M.A.