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Membership includes a one-year subscription to the Newsletter.

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

I would like as always to express appreciation to those persons who help so quietly and usefully in the production of the OVSA Newsletter, and to those who contribute to it so generously.

This issue includes an article on "Military Morality" which reflects the continuing relevance of Victorian Studies - albeit perhaps also providing a controversial interpretation. It is the Editor's belief that a field as lively and vital as Victorian Studies can only profit from controversy. The Newsletter invites and welcomes responses to any of its publications and hopes to include "Discussion and Dialogue" as a feature of future issues - general discussion also of Victorian Studies: the state of the art, and its future.

This Victorian Studies Association depends upon its members and upon the Newsletter readership to share your interests with us so that we may be responsive to past and present and promote the well-being of this field. On these pages, through your news, reports of meetings and conferences, and contributions, we gain a sense of the variety and vitality of perspectives being brought to bear upon Victorianism.

As always, I warmly invite your communications and contributions - with the Fall issue in mind even now, as we anticipate the welcome blossoming of Spring.

Patricia Morton.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE, VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

This welcome gathering will be held 13 April 1985, at Glendon College (2275 Bayview Avenue, Toronto).

Registration: Commences at 9:20 a.m., Senior Common Room.
Lectures: Owen Chadwick (Regius Professor of Modern History, Cambridge), "Lord Acton, Victorian Religion, and Victorian History."

W. David Shaw (Victoria College, University of Toronto), "Philosophy and Genre in Victorian Poetics."

Lunch-time Entertainment:

"Heroine and Villain: Scenes from Victorian Melodrama," by Professor Ronald Brydon and Company, Graduate Centre for the Study of Drama, University of Toronto.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Conference: Research Society for Victorian Periodicals, 18-19 October 1985, University of Toronto.

Registration: Friday, 18 October, 5:00 - 7:30 p.m., Massey College; 8:00 p.m. Banquet, Massey College Great Hall, after-dinner speaker: Professor J.M. Robson.
Late Registration: 19 October , 8:30 - 9:15 a.m., University College, Croft Chapter House.
Papers to be given include Haldane & *The Record* by J. Altholz, Wm. Morris' Contributions to the Oxford & Cambridge Magazine by F. Boos, Thomas Carlyle from the *Edinburgh* to *Fraser's* by H. Degroot, Political journalism in 19th-century Wales by A. Jones, military journals and the Volunteer Movement by P. Morton, feminism and *The Monthly Repository* by A. Robson, Elbert Hubbard's *The Philistine*: the Muscular Journalism of an American Free-thinker by B. White, and a paper by J. Shattock.

For further information, contact Dr. Merrill Distad, University of Toronto Library.

Fall Meeting: Ontario Victorian Studies Association, 24 October 1985, 8:00 p.m., Winter's College, York University. (4700 Keele Street).

Programme: An open forum to discuss "Whence and whither Victorian Studies?"
Drinks and refreshments will be served; dinner can be arranged. For further information, contact Professor Ann Robson, Department of History, University of Toronto, Toronto M5S 1A1.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Merrill Distad (University of Toronto) has stepped down as Editor of the Victorian Periodicals Review after a decade as treasurer and business manager and six years as co-editor and editor.

Clifford G. Holland (English and Liberal Studies, George Brown College) has written an article entitled "Henry Mayhew's Art and Science." It is to be published in the Queen's Quarterly.

C.T. McIntire (Centre for Religious Studies, University of Toronto) is supervising a Ph.D. thesis in progress by John Roney on "Jean Henri Merle d'Aubigné, Historian of Christianity." D'Aubigné (1794- 1872) wrote histories of the Reformation which were influential among British and North American Protestants during the Victorian period.

REPORTS OF CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

North American and Mid-West Conferences on British Studies:

At the 1984 Conference held 19-21 October at the University of Toronto papers were given on: England's Wars of Religion, Late Victorian Politics, Tudor Biographies and Historiography, Major Victorian Historians Revisited, Crime and Poverty in 18th-century England, Four Publication Projects, Financial Strategies in Tudor England, and Orwell. As your Editor can attest, a delightful dinner and other pleasures complemented this enjoyable and successful gathering.

Richard Helmstadter (University of Toronto) co-ordinated the organizing of a conference in November 1984 on "The Victorian Crisis of Faith," the proceedings of which are to be published.

Executive Meeting, Victorian Studies Association of Ontario:

The Executive met 29 January 1985 at the home of the President, Ann Robson. The meeting included planning of the October 1985 meeting on "Whence and whither Victorian Studies?" and discussion of the format of the annual OVSA Conference.

COMMUNICATIONS

Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada:

The Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada, founded in 1972 to promote the interdisciplinary study of the Victorian age, announces its annual meeting to be held at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 26-28 September 1985. Already confirmed as one guest speaker is Professor Trevor Levere to speak on Science in Nineteenth-Century Arctic Exploration. For further information contact Professor Christopher Kent, Department of History, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatoon, S7N OWO.

Members of the Association are eligible to submit proposals and read papers. Applications for membership (individuals, $15.00 per year; institutions, $10.00 per year) should be addressed to Professor Judith Mitchell, Secretary-Treasurer, VSAWC, Department of English, University of Victoria, Victoria, B.C., V8W 2Y2. Membership includes a one-year subscription to the Association's _Newsletter_.

The Newsletter welcomes submission of articles, notes and queries, announcements, or other information of interest to our membership. All manuscripts should be sent to Isobel M. Findlay, Editor, _VSAWC Newsletter_, Department of English, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7N OWO.

Victorian Studies Association of Ontario: Meeting of Toronto Group, December 1984: Esther Fisher (Woodsworth College, University of Toronto) sends us her reflections on

"A 'Striking' Similarity"

Professor Martin Friedland's stimulating discussion at the December meeting of V.S.A.'s Toronto Group conveyed highlights of the Victorian murder case treated in his The Trials of Israel Lipski. Reading the book after Friedland's talk, I was intrigued by the similarity in wording between part of an account of a meeting held to decide Lipski's fate and lines from A.E. Housman's "Eight o'Clock."

Friedland notes that in 1921, an unnamed official of the Home Office was asked by a newspaperman about the most dramatic incident he could remember.[1] Without hesitation, the official cited the conference between Judge Stephen, who tried Lipski's case and Henry Matthews, Home Secretary. The meeting, held 21 August 1897, was to consider whether the death sentence might be commuted to penal servitude. Here is the unnamed official's vivid reconstruction of the event:

> I was then on the Home Office staff, and it was my duty to be in attendance while this critical conference was in progress. Time passed without a sound or a sign coming from the room where the argument of life or death was proceeding. In the quiet of the late Sunday afternoon the chimes of Big Ben sounded the quarters from the Clock Tower. Six o'clock struck. I was tired of sitting alone, and opening the door of the Secretary's room quietly I entered and took a seat in the shadow. It was a strange scene that I had broken in on, Absolute silence prevailed... I sat and waited.... Time passed...Seven o'clock struck, and we passed into a soundless quiet. It seemed that the strange scene might continue until the hangman slipped his noose next morning. I counted the quarters--one--two--three-- eight o'clock... [2].

Almost immediately after this, the Secretary received Lipski's confession. Next morning the bells of St. Sepulchre's church and of Newgate Chapel tolled for the prisoner.

The Home Office official's reference to the bells "sounding the quarters" and his explicit use of the words," One--two--three--eight o'clock" echo Housman's lines:

> He stood and heard the steeple
> Sprinkle the quarters on the morning town.
> One, two, three, four, to market-place and people
> It tossed them down.
> Strapped, noosed, nighing his hour,
> He stood and counted them and cursed his luck;
> And then the clock collected in the tower
> Its strength and struck.[3]

As with the poem, the official's counting of the quarters creates an atmosphere of suspense and impending doom. The poem may be twentieth century in composition, but the setting and mood are distinctly Victorian.

"Eight o'clock," written about 1912, was first published in _Last Poems_ (1920). The book was an enourmous success[4]; and it is possible that the Home Office official was familiar with the poem, but perhaps not aware that he was quoting Housman on a particularly apt occasion.

Mystery still surrounds the case of Israel Lipski, but it's no mystery that art often imitates life.

Footnotes:

1. Martin L. Friedland, _The Trials of Israel Lipsi_ (London; Macmillan, 1984), p.167.

2. _Ibid_., pp.167-168.

3. A.E. Housman, _Collected Poems_ (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1965), p.115.

4. Richard Percival Graves, _A.E. Housman: The Scholar Poet_ (New York: Scribner's, 1979), p.229.

Article

MILITARY MORAL INTEGRITY

By

A.W. Cockerill

In a collection of essays on social researchers and writers published under the title The Machiavellians,[1] the American writer James H. Burnham revealed an interesting principle of enquiry. Reviewing the work of Gaetano Mosca (The Ruling Class-1923), Georges Sorel (Reflexians sur la violence-1906), Robert Michels (Political Parties-1914), Vilfredo Pareto (Mind & Society-1916) and others, including Machiavelli, Burnham characterized these Machiavellians as original thinkers who studied past and present events for the purpose of predicting the most likely course of future events.

Burnham (a former Trotskyite who had broken with the Communist Party) applied the lessons he had learned to his own field, political economics, to forecast the general direction of western civilization over the next forty years. Many of the predictions set out in his major work, The Managerial Revolution,[2] have come to pass. There is evidence that George Orwell, who was familiar with and reviewed Burham's work, applied the same principle of enquiry when writing 1984[3] in which he described the managed society of Big Brother.

The point of these observations is, first, to credit Burnham with the important principle of enquiry and, secondly, to apply that principle to what I shall call the 'military moral integrity' of the Army of Queen Victoria. By providing a foundation for that integrity in a historical context, by reasoning that there was a real and substantial sense of morality in Victoria's Army, and by comparing some contemporary examples we can intelligently predict what the future holds in store for a given society. Further, by equating the institution of militarism with two other institutions of society, the Church and the body politic, it should be possible to measure a society's stability.

The moral integrity of Victoria's Army in the historical context, its immediate past roots, were to be found in the Great War with France, frequently referred to as the Napoleonic Wars. The Great War changed the political boundaries of Europe as never before and set the pattern of nationalism as we understand the word today (although a new pattern of international political-economic relationships began to emerge with the post-World War II creation of the European Economic Community basically a larger bargaining unit).

Anyone who considers the history of Napoleon's short-lived empire will be faced with a striking peculiarity, which is that Bonaparte was more the embodiment of the spirit of the Revolution than the creator of revolutionary ideas and activity. The soldiers of Revolutionary France had made huge territorial gains before he ever came to power: Belgium and the whole left bank of the Rhine, for example. Indeed, France lost more territory than it gained during Napoleon's reign. He was the instrument of the national will, so that the acts of lawlessness and wanton crimes inflicted on humanity were, therefore, carried out openly under his leadership, and justified by reasons of state.

Napoleon was no more immoral in his international behaviour than Frederick the Great, Ceasar, Attila or any other warlord who preceded him. His distinction was that he sanctioned and exercised immorality on a vaster scale than had hitherto been known. He adopted early and with great insight the maxim of the revolutionary age, that as long as the 'public good' was the object almost every act was permissible[4] or, as his near contemporary Mirabeau was fond of saying, "La petite morale est ennemie de la grande."[5] The relationship between the national will and military morality, the dependence of the latter on the former, is important when we consider this quality in Victoria's Army, and the lesson given by Napoleon in this regard has been taken seriously and with crushing effect by the warlords of the present century.

The officers who inherited the command of Victoria's Army were veterans of the Peninsular War and the final European campaign of the Great War.[6] They had experienced at first hand both the venom and the chivalry of France's revolutionary war machine and the lessons they learned were sobering cause for subsequent reflection.[7] Occasionally, however, Wellington's soldiers were guilty of the worst excesses of immorality perpetrated by Napoleon's veterans. The spoliation, pillage, rapine and bestiality of Wellington's troops following the storming of Badojoz[8] is only one example of the

lawlessness and complete disregard for accepted moral precepts with which disciplined soldiers can be afflicted even though they know that retribution will follow - as it did at Badojoz with unmitigated severity.

It might be argued that the pre-Victorian redcoat was characterized by a strong moral fibre that issued from the tap root of his national heritage. Perhaps so, yet it is also to be argued with equal conviction that the Napoleonic Wars heightened the awareness of those who shaped and moulded Victoria's Army. Critical as one might be of the gulf separating officers and men, the War narrowed that gulf.

Officers concerned themselves with the men's welfare and education (a revolutionary idea at the time);[9] in the Light Infantry Brigade field sports were conducted with mixed teams for officers and other ranks;[10] officers were not permitted to be absent from duty as they pleased.[11] The net effect of these and similar innovations resulted in a stronger bond between the leaders and the led, particularly at the regimental or battalion level, units which existed as closely-knit family groups.

The Church exercised an increasingly stronger influence on the life of the regiment, as a consequence of which the moral integrity of the regiment was strengthened. The development of the Army Temperance Society in the 1820s and 30s, under the guidance of the Church and Army chaplains, was to prove a strong stabilizing influence on military life.[12] This is not to suggest that early Victorian soldiers behaved like armed angels incapable of doing wrong. On the contrary, drunkenness was widespread and behaviour at times licentious, but it is necessary to draw a sharp distinction between how Victorian soldiers behaved among themselves and how they collectively behaved towards others. In comparison with the preceding age, Victoria's Army rarely went on the rampage to rape, pillage and deal ruthlessly with a beaten foe.

Pillage there was but it was highly organized and conducted for the benefit of higher authority.[13] This brings us to an important aspect of 19th century English society that helped strengthen the moral integrity of the Army as a whole and maintained it as a potent force in the expansion of the Imperial Empire. Regardless of fighting efficiency - though morale, as opposed to moral consciousness, confidence and a sense of selfworth are qualities that

determine the degree of such efficiency - an army must be the servant of the state if it is to exist and act for the good of the state. An army cannot act under its own will and be unaccountable to the state for its actions without dire consequences; if the military will dominatea the state's will then a dictatorship results. As a corollary, a dictatorship cannot exist without the consent of the military will.

Victoria's Army, behaving under the restraining influence of its sense of moral integrity, was subordinate to the national will as exercised by the other two well-developed institutions already noted, the Church and body politic. For the purpose of this discussion, the

collective political consciousness is referred to as "the state" whereas by "Church" is meant the spiritual consciousness of the nation. Again, to generalize, it may be said that Church, state and army give any society stability, when they are equally strong and in balance, as a three-legged stool. Remove or weaken any one of these legs and the structure will collapse; maintain the balance and a society will have a stable platform on which to develop.

Given that stability, and with the removal of French influence and competition on the international stage, British imperialism was able to expand for the entire duration of Victoria's reign. The United Kingdom's maritime and commercial interests flourished, territory was added to the growing empire, and the Country's foreign policy became the dominant influence in international affairs - all under the protective canopy of a thin scarlet coat.

Victorian society may be charged with jingoistic flag-waving, bellicosity, hypocrisy, and plain self-interest. All these charges may be true, yet it was an age largely free from the magnitude of conflagration that had so characterized and convulsed the Revolutionary era that preceded it. Victoria's Army was never involved in a conflict of anything approaching the same dimensions, nor were the Crimean (1853-56) and Boer (1899-1902) Wars exceptions to the rule. The state managed to avoid becoming involved in the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71). Other wars that occurred during Victoria's reign were invariably small affairs in which no more than a few thousand combatants took part.

With the possible exception of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 (confined to the State of Bengal but known to later generations as the Indian

Mutiny), Victoria's Army behaved with moral restraint in its dealings with vanquished foes. Even during the Sepoy Mutiny, at Cawnpore, when the Army did behave with unlicensed brutality it did so under extreme provocation when over 200 European women and children had been hacked to death by mutineers and dropped in a well.

The personal accounts of ordinary soldiers, by and large, can be accepted as evidence of the way the rank and file behaved towards their enemies. Those memoirs also present a reasonable account of how their enemies behaved towards them. In the sum there is ample evidence to substantiate the view that the Victorian soldier suffered harsh treatment from the foe when he was defeated or captured as compared with his treatment of a vanquished enemy. A few instances will illustrate the point.

Compare, for example, the massacre General Thesiger's 2800-strong force at Isandhlawana (1879) by the Zulu King's (Cetewayo's) Army of impis with the subsequent treatment of the Zulus by the invading British.[14] The Maoris of New Zealand, to whom history has given the reputation of bravery in battle, were not so forgiving. In one attack a regimental bugler who sounded the alarm was later found to have been dismembered.[15] In victory, the British acted with restraint. The Afghans throughout their wars with the British were particularly vengeful in their dealings with captives. Few prisoners who fell into Afghan hands survived; most where disembowelled or, worse, mutilated, castrated, their tongues slashed so that they swelled and choked the victim. On the retreat from Kabul (1842) the entire British force, including its camp followers, was slaughtered before it reached the Afghanistan border. It is, therefore, evident from the record of events throughout the Victorian age that the redcoats and those who served with them acted on the whole in a spirit of moral military integrity in the territories they occupied and controlled.

That this behaviour stemmed from an underlying sense of decency and regard for human life cannot be doubted. There were occasions - and the aftermath of the Sepoy Mutiny as well as the reprisals taken at Cawnpore was one - when the Army was censured for its lawlessness by humanitarians and hostile sections of the Press. But the Church and state restrained the Army from wide scale excesses.

Because the Army could be relied upon not to take the law into its own hands, even when half a world away, the state was able to exert its will internationally and the Church to extend its mission over a large part of the Empire. We may now contrast the equilibrium achieved by Church, state and the Army of Victoria with some post-Victorian societies.

Among communist societies the USSR is a prime example of imbalance, for the Church is non-existent for all practical purposes. Without a strong Church to exert its influence the result is totalitarianism. It is not sufficient to argue that in the USSR the Army is the state and viceversa. Whatever may be said in the west about Soviet society, the Soviet civil government is elected and separate from the Army. It does not matter that its political representatives are of a single party, that the choice of the electorate is limited. The fact is that there is a strong state. What it suffers from is an insufficient counterbalance to the Army and the state.

In contrast with the USSR, Polish society, in the shape of the Solidarity movement, has reacted to social conditions in the country. Poland is a committed member of the Communist bloc and has a strong army and well developed state apparatus. Poland also has a deeply religious population, which gives a different dimension to national life in comparison with other communist regimes. No other circumstances would seem to explain why Poland was not long ago subjected to the same treatment as had earlier been given to her neighbours, Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

The recent change in the political climate of mainland China has resulted in a relaxation of effort to suppress the Church. For the last thirty years the Communist Party in the Country held that there was no place in the Chinese Revolution for such feudal, superstitious beliefs. Why, then, are churches and temples all over China being allowed to reopen?[16] Some, such as the great temple Nanputon are even being restored at great expense to the State. It would seem that the reopening of temples is a conscious realization that the Church can contribute to the stability of society.

What might occur in a society where the church is dominant? To find the answer to this question it would be necessary to look to Iran, which is ruled by a powerful theocracy and compliant Army. The state (that is, the political voice) is to all intents and purposes

non-existent. The Church is the state. Other examples of two-legged stools come to mind. In all cases, without exception, we can see one form of totalitarianism or another: Chile, Bolivia, Cuba, Ethiopia, and Libya to name a few.

We may look for other examples of states that bear favourable comparison to the idea of the three-legged stool, to discover what happens when the balance is upset. In Israel, for example, there is a strong Church, a strong state, a strong Army. Relations with its Arab neighbours notwithstanding, the country is in religious, political and military equilibrium, and the moral integrity of the Army has been sustained in all the wars of its short life with the exception of the last - the invasion of Lebanon. There was no great objection to the invasion; the Army was executing the state's will.

Nevertheless, when the Israeli Army was believed to be implicated in the vengeful massacre of Palestinian villagers condemnation by society and retribution by the state was swift.

Religious leaders condemned the Army and rebuked it for its lapse of moral integrity, which produced results. The state, bowing to public pressure, rightly or wrongly, censured the military and so restored public confidence in its armed forces.

Canada seems to be one of the few countries in which Church and State exist alongside a weak military presence. The Canadian Armed Forces are understrength and without a strong voice in national affairs. Nevertheless, the military maintains its moral integrity by virtue of a fairly classless society, and can afford to be relatively weak because the country does not face any perceived imminent threat.

If, then, we use the military moral integrity of Victoria's Army, and the Army's relationship with Church and state, as a yardstick we can make reasonable comparisons with other armies. By applying Burnham's principle of enquiry, it should be reasonable to predict what sort of society will result when Church, state and the military become unbalanced by the weakening of one of these supports in a democratic society.

Notes

1. Burnham, James.: The Machiavellians (New York, 1943)

2. Burnham, James.: The Managerial Revolution (New York, 1941)

3. Orwell, George.: 1984 (New York, 1949)

4. Seeley, J.R.: A Short History of Napoleon The First (London, 1886)

5. Seeley, J.R.: Ibid.

6. Many officers who rose to high rank in Victoria's Army served in the Peninsular War including, to mention a few, Chaplain General G.R. Gleig, a Subaltern in the 85th Foot at age 17; General Smith (at the siege of Badojoz, 1812) after whose wife the Town of Ladysmith (South Africa) was named; General Sir Colin Campbell (of Sepoy Mutiny fame); and the Napier brothers.

7. Napier, Charles.: Battles of the Peninsular (London, 1904) Napier's reflections on the moral lessons of military behaviour are extensive.

8. Lieutenant Smith rescued two young Spanish women from rampaging troops during the sack of Badajoz. The younger became his wife. See note 6.

9. PRO (Public Records Office, UK) documents WO 14/485/76, 4/196/127, and 14/485/76, for example, deal with various aspects of education in the British Army.

10. Bryant, Arthur.: Jackets of Green (London, 1972)

11. Bryant, Arthur.: Ibid.

12. Bancroft, N.W.: From Recruit to Staff Sergeant (Calcutta, 1885)

13. Eden, Emily.: Up the Country (London), 1930. Elaborate and strict controls existed for the collection of, accounting for, and sharing of plunder as well as "gifts." Official Receivers were appointed. Up the Country contains a detailed description of the system.

14. Morris, D.R.: The Washing of the Spears (London, 1973)

15. Gurney, Russell.: The Northamptonshire Regiment (London, 1935)

16. Schell, Orville.: China's Other Revolution, essay in GRANTA 13, Autumn, 1984.

[Editor's note: A.W. Cockerill is the author of Sons of the Brave (London: Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd., 1984)]

Review Essay

Disraeli. By Sarah Bradford. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982; New York: Stein and Day, 1983. pp. xiii + 432.

Since Heracleitus, we have held to the metaphor of time as a stream. In this century the stream has become a torrent, charged with the elemental power of blind economic and sociological forces. We have learned, through bitter experience, to distrust the notion that events are set in motion by significant individuals, by Carlyle's modellers of destiny and creators of history. Yet still, in the mind's eye, the stream of time eddies and surges around the figures of the great men and women who have gone before us. Events, however prodigius, still revolve around the focal point of personality; great principles still wear human faces. Only when the universal is yoked to the particular can historical understanding occur, for that understanding is a synthesis, not an abstract construct. So it is that even today, even in the age of the cliometricians, biography remains a vital element in the exploration of the past. It continues to raise fundamental questions about the individual's relation to his age. Is he merely flotsam on the tidal flood of history, or can he, within limits, shape his environment, his reality?

Rarely has this relationship been more intriguing than in the case of Benjamin Disraeli, and rarely has an English politician proven more appealing to biographers. In addition to the six-volume *Life* by Monypenny and Buckle and Lord Blake's major 1966 biography, Disraeli has become familiar through an astonishing variety of academic and popular works. From J.A. Froude to Heaketh Pearson, Disraeli's life has been chronicled, romanticized by some and patronized by others. Popular historians like Arthur Bryant[1] have exalted him as the saviour of his nation, a heroic figure to be compared with Alfred the Great. Disraeli has been the subject of fiction, in books like Theodore Bonnet's *The Mudlark* or--on an earthier level--*Disraeli in Love*. Films such as "The Mudlark" and the recent B.B.C. television version of his life have translated his legend into a distinctly modern idiom. Outside academic circles, he has become something of a folk hero, like Churchill or Marlborough or Raleigh, part of the living English tradition he so admired and to which, during his lifetime, he was so alien. He was an adventurer and a courtier, a gutter politician and a master statesman, a radical novelist and a country squire. His life was a symphony of contradictions, knit together by courage, ambition and a profoundly romantic vision of life. His story is infinitely fascinating, and deserves to be retold. Sarah Bradford, in her new biography, re-tells it with elegance and insight.

Bradford's Disraeli will not replace Robert Blake's superbly detailed political biography. Blake's brilliant portrait of the Victorian political scene and his analysis of the tactical considerations that governed Disraeli's actions are unlikely to be superseded. But Blake's book concentrates, as political biography must, on what Disraeli did. Bradford's study offers a different approach. She takes the keynote of her theme from the editor of the Illustrated London News, who observed at the time of Disraeli's death that the secret of his "electric and universal posthumous popularity" was not what he had done but what he was as a man. To understand Disraeli's enduring appeal as well as his importance to Victorian England, Bradford examines what she calls the "integrity between the private life and the public career." Her book is "an attempt to explore [his] inner life...and to relate this to his often enigmatic public face." Accordingly, Bradford has produced an entertaining and very well written biography that stresses Disraeli's private life. It offers a most welcome complement to Blake's more comprehensive but less intimate study.

Bradford relies heavily on letters, diaries and memoirs to sketch a remarkable portrait of how Disraeli was seen by others and--more important--how he saw himself. Both perspectives offer worthwhile insights into the character of the Victorian age. Bradford has incorporated a good deal of new material which has been unearthed since the publication of Blake's book. Much of this is in the form of Disraeli's secret letters to his sister Sarah and his extensive correspondence with Selina, Countess of Bradford, and her sister, Lady Chesterfield. In addition, Bradford has used the journals of Lord Stanley, edited by J.R. Vincent, to throw light on Disraeli's political beliefs. It should be emphasized that most of the new material relates to Disraeli's personal rather than his public life.

Any good biography must be selective, and Bradford's emphasis is quite ligitimate. The intimate approach does, however, reveal certain shortcomings. There is a tendency to relate idle gossip about Disraeli at some length. This is sometimes colourful, but is usually not only unsubstantiated but repetitive. The temptation to quote extensively from Disraeli's letters to Lady Bradford proved irresistible as well. Unfortunately, it is mostly quotation for the sake of quotation and reveals very little of importance. Disraeli was in love with Selina, and the fact should indeed be noted; but the continual quotation from love-notes is unnecessary and somewhat distracting. In addition, there is a curious emphasis on an alleged "latent homosexual element in Disraeli's friendships with younger men." If this had been proven it would have been a gossipy revelation of the first order, but the suggestion is simply not

supported by any solid evidence. Friendship with the young was perfectly natural to Disraeli, with his love of vitality and his refusal to acknowledge the ravages of time.

There are other disadvantages to the intimate approach to biography. Bradford usually provides an adequate framework of historical narrative, and sometimes, as in her account of the Corn Law crisis of 1846, it is excellent. However, she tends to give election campaigns short shrift; this is true even of Disraeli's successful campaign of 1874. Since the electoral process so sparked Disraeli's genius, it would have been suitable to deal with that process, or at least Disraeli's role in it, in greater detail.

More seriously, the concentration on personal life seems to lead Bradford away from serious examination of Disraeli's novels. We are informed chiefly about which real-life figures provided the models for various fictional characters. This is interesting enough in its way but it dismisses important literary works that offer crucial insight into Disraeli's world-view. Sybil in particular is neglected, despite its significance as Disraeli's clearest diagnosis of the Victorian social dilemma. The importance of Disraeli's fiction has long been recognized. John Holloway ranked Disraeli beside Carlyle and Matthew Arnold as a "Victorian sage"[2] and, more recently, a wide range of challenging material has revealed new dimensions in Disraeli's writing.[3] The novels stress the power of genius and imagination to transform reality, and so present invaluable glimpses of the heroic self-image that made Disraeli such a courageous and indefatigable political personality. Even from the perspective of an intimate biography, they are of tremendous interest, and the wisdom of neglecting them--especially while chronicling Disraeli's senile infatuation with Selina at such length--is questionable.

In other ways, however, the intimate approach proves to be very rewarding. Bradford sheds new light on Disraeli's close relationships with his sister Sarah and his wife Mary Anne. The latter relationship especially is re-defined by Bradford's book. The traditional assumption that Disraeli's marriage was serene and untroubled, a model of Victorian wedded bliss, must be qualified. Twelve years his senior, Mary Anne supplied much that Disraeli needed. She offered emotional support that amounted to an almost maternal devotion, she gave him abundant, uncritical admiration, and her skills as a household manager were invaluable. She also possessed a small fortune that must have been attractive to the

debt-ridden Disraeli. Her sanguine temperament was a perfect foil for her husband's fits of melancholy, and he came to rely on her judgment in many matters. But Disraeli's disregard for money and his wife's intense interest in it led to interminable quarrels, and Disraeli took great pains to conceal his debts from her. Moreover, Mary Anne was temperamental, possessive and passionately jealous, especially of Sarah. Disraeli was frequently torn between his wife and his family and was forced to maintain a clandestine correspondence with his sister. Jealousy was apparently a characteristic of Mary Anne's family: her brother John was blazingly resentful of Disraeli for marrying Mary Anne, whom he called his "Little Whizzy." The strains in the marriage almost reached the breaking point in 1849, as a previously unknown letter from Disraeli to Sarah suggests. It indicates the possibility that, in addition to his financial irresponsibility and his letters to Sarah, Disraeli may have deceived his wife in other ways as well. The evidence for this is not decisive but Bradford presents clear proof of a serious rift between Benjamin and Mary Anne around 1850. Yet the revelation of fault-lines in the marriage serves only to make its success the more remarkable and touching. Disraeli worked hard to make his marriage a passionate romance, paying his wife extravagant compliments and demonstrating his affection in public. As a shocked Lord Robert Gower noted, "He often caresses her even before the servants!" For all its tensions, the marriage was genuinely satisfying. Speaking of her husband, Mary Anne once told Lord Rosebery, "I have no friend like him." The feeling was warmly reciprocated, and Disraeli would never allow anyone to slight her.

Surprisingly little is known of Disraeli's early years. He was born in 1804 to a remarkable family of Jewish bibliophiles. In 1817, he was baptised following a ferocious row between his father, Isaac D'Israeli, and the local synagogue. Despite his membership in the Established Church, Disraeli suffered from biting anti-semitic attacks throughout his career. As late as 1876, the historian Freeman still customarily referred to Disraeli as "that lying Jew" and to Disraeli's estate, Hughenden, as "the ghetto." Greatly to his credit, in the face of racial prejudice that certainly hampered his advancement, Disraeli never denied his Jewish heritage and never ceased to express his admiration for it. The fact of his birth prevented him from being a member of the English Establishment, a situation that would ordinarily have precluded any prospect of political success. But Disraeli, with his romantic belief in the capacity of the individual to trascend material limitations, was always prepared to challenge hostility and ridicule.

Bradford makes it clear that from an early age, Disraeli's ambitions were enormous. At school, he was interested in acting and entertained the younger boys by telling them exotic tales of robbers' caves. He was particularly inspired by the speeches of Demosthenes against Philip of Macedon. It was a technique that he would later employ against his parliamentary rivals. In adolescence, Disraeli developed a definite consciousness of his own genius and destiny. Not surprisingly, he was deeply attracted to the Romantic poets and he took Lord Byron as his role-model, carefully imitating Byron's appearance.

To Disraeli, as to most Romantics, imagination was as powerful a force in the affairs of men as wealth or property. It alone redeemed a life into which we are born only to die; it alone made action meaningful. Reality was shaped as much by imagination as by reason. "Man is only truly great," wrote Disraeli, "when he acts from the passions; never irresistible but when he appeals to the imagination."[4] Bradford rightly emphasizes this as one of the prime assumptions on which Disraeli's career was founded. Disraeli believed that vision in government was at least as important as logic, and that statesmen must address the imagination as well as the rational self-interest of their constituents. Many Victorians shared this view, and it is worth remembering that even Walter Bagehot, who was no Romantic, based _The English Constitution_ on a similar perception. Closely related to Disraeli's belief in the importance of imagination was his burning faith in the power of the human will to overcome material obstacles. The individual will could transform a prosaic and stifling reality into something sublime. The "great men"--prophets, legislators and conquerors--created "a vast public opinion," molding that opinion as a sculptor shaped marble; for the "Spirit of the Age is the very thing that a great man changes."[5] Disraeli's concern, Bradford reminds us, was never to achieve a specific set of legislative goals, and this accounts, in part at least, for his flexibility on issues like franchise reform. His overriding objective was vaster than ten shilling qualifications, cloudier and more grandiose: he sought to model the very mind of England. Disraeli saw himself as a great man, a Byronic hero, and this deeply held self-image enabled him to cope with the pain and frustration of being a perpetual outsider. It is also instrumental in understanding his phenomenal capacity to survive political disaster. The Byronic hero could expect rejection at the hands of lesser souls; but in the end his incandescent genius, refined rather than dimmed in the crucible of defeat, would triumph.

Bradford rightly notes the importance of Disraeli's romantic idealism, but the overall portrait she presents is a balanced one. Disraeli sought power to fulfil what he felt was his destiny, but he also craved acceptance by the Establishment. He made extravagant efforts to live like a country squire at Hughenden, and though he was bored to distraction by country-house parties, he worked assiduosly to obtain invitations to them. His attempts to cultivate aristocratic friends were tireless, especially early in his career; sometimes they bordered on the absurd. Powerful tensions clearly existed between his awareness of intellectual superiority on the one hand and his sense of social inferiority on the other. Like Churchill, he was subject to periodic fits of discouragement and depression. His ego was nevertheless formidable, and his overconfidence frequently betrayed him. While in his twenties, impulsive financial speculation left him deep in debt, and on several occasions he narrowly escaped arrest for failure to pay irate creditors. Indeed, financial problems continued to hound him for most of his life. In politics, too, Disraeli displayed a marked tendency to strike too soon and to over-rate his support in Parliament.

Disraeli's career, his unlikely rise to the summit of earthly power in Britain, is outlined with insight and sensitivity by Bradford. She underscores the difficulties that he faced. In addition to social prejudice and ceaseless financial crisis, Disraeli was plagued by ill health, suffering at various times from diseases of the gums, lungs and kidneys, not to mention gout.

In the 1830s, Disraeli achieved a certain notoriety as a writer of "society" novels, as a dandy, and as a participant in several scandals. Defeated in three attempts to enter Parliament, he was successful in the fourth, in 1837. He would remain a member of the House of Commons until 1876. In Parliament he was flamboyant and soon developed a reputation for brilliant invective.

From the first, Disraeli's method was essentially negative. He defined his political position in terms of opposing certain ideas, interests and individuals. Consistently, he attacked the rule of the Whigs, whom he branded "the Venetian oligarchy." Delineation of his own principles was less important than the need to combat what he saw as the brooding spirit of the age: the poisonous materialism of the laissez-faire revelation. It was an era when the principles of political economy formed a kind of dogma for politicians, even such able politicians as Peel and Gladstone. In such an environment, it

was enough for Disraeli to attack their policies, for in so doing he was also attacking their assumptions. He thereby expressed, more fully than any other political figure, the uneasiness and discontent bred by the dessicated philosophy of the ledger-book. Disraeli's dislike of the utilitarian vision was quite genuine. It was expressed not only at the political level, but also in the "Young England" novels, particularly Coningsby and Sybil. In addition, his hostility to liberal ideology was reinforced by the personal hatred he felt toward its great spokesmen, Gladstone and Peel.

In the 1840s, Disraeli gained the attention, if not the respect, of his Parliamentary colleagues with a series of brilliant and brutal philippics directed against the Conservative leader, Sir Robert Peel. The issues around which the attacks revolved were the repeal of the Corn Laws and Peel's "betrayal" of his party's principles. Disraeli pressed his assault relentlessly, and his performance was instrumental in shattering Peel's career. It also split the Conservative party (the majority of which was Protectionist in sentiment) and gave Disraeli an opportunity to reach for control of the party.

Disraeli's background as a novelist and a radical alarmed prominent Conservatives. He was viewed with tremendous suspicion by his own party, and one of his most remarkable achievements was to seize its leadership. In 1847, his novel Tancred was published. It was a mystical story that emphasized the civilizing influence of the Jewish race, and it sparked a wave of antisemitism in Conservative circles. Soon after the novel appeared, Disraeli aggressively supported a Jewish Disabilities Bill despite opposition from his own benches. It was a courageous stand, for he faced vicious personal attacks from bigoted ultra-Protestant Tories. The Protectionist leader, Lord George Bentinck, loyally stood by his lieutenant, however, and the crisis passed. But the aristocratic distrust it revealed -- and generated -- was to undermine Disraeli's position in the party for two decades. Again and again, the antipathy of the Tory squires would erupt into open hostility.

Despite the rumblings of the aristocrats, it was soon apparent that only Disraeli could provide effective leadership for the Conservatives. Only Disraeli could meet the Whigs and Peelites on even terms in debate. In 1849, he became the Conservative leader in the House of Commons. Ironically, he found himself in the same position as Peel in 1835, when Sir Robert had issued the Tamworth Manifesto. If the Conservatives were to have any sort of electoral

future, it was necessary for them to develop a more positive, more dynamic identity. In the face of the passionate opposition of most Tory leaders, Disraeli weaned the party from the futile cause of Protection. As he later told Lady Dorothy Nevill, his job was "to drag an omnibus full of country gentlemen uphill." It was a Herculean task. Disraeli was determined to create a new, progressive image for the party, to create an ideology for it. These efforts frequently left him isolated, and he suffered discouraging setbacks throughout the 1850s. But he persisted, walking a political tightrope within his own party while honing his parliamentary skills to a fine edge. By 1858, he had even induced the Conservatives to present--and vote for--a Reform Bill. The Bill was tentative in nature and complicated by "fancy franchises," and it was defeated; but Disraeli's achievement in bringing the Tories to the point of advocating any measure of reform at all was nothing short of spectacular.

The decade from the mid-1850s to the mid-1860s was dominated by the eccentric, hugely popular figure of Lord Palmerston. Palmerston's effective invocation of English patriotism prevented Disraeli from fulfilling his plan to establish the Conservatives as the "national party." Palmerston's death in 1865 opened new possibilities, and the political scene was soon dominated by Disraeli and his enemy Gladstone. The political rivalry between the Liberals and the Tories was personified in the bitter personal duel between the two Commons leaders. Disraeli came to loathe Gladstone, whom he once described as "a vindictive lunatic." But Gladstone provided Disraeli with something that Palmerston had never really offered: a target, a principle against which Conservative doctrine and Conservative virtues could be defined. The two men were soon locked in oratorical battle over the issue of reform.

Bradford's outline of the Reform crisis of 1866-67 is a gripping narrative that demonstrates Disraeli's parliamentary genius. He exploited--indeed, virtually co-ordinated--the Whig opposition within the Liberal party that led to the defeat of Gladstone's Reform legislation. Then, rallying his own ranks and making a series of brilliant tactical retreats, Disraeli piloted a Conservative Reform Bill through Parliament. He displayed superb skills in debate and in the management of men. In the course of debate, Disraeli outmaneuvered Gladstone, who seemed, said one observer, to be "in awe of Dizzy's diabolical cleverness." Satisfying as this was, it was by no means Disraeli's only Reform triumph. He had humiliated his old enemies the Whigs and revealed their political impotence, and most

important of all, he had shown his mastery over his own party. He had also endowed it with a new image, an image of flexibility, pragmatism and political expertise. He had indeed and at last established the Conservatives as a viable alternative to the Liberals, as a national party dedicated to orderly change. It was very much a personal victory; even Gladstone's supporters conceded that. One of them observed, "Alone he did it, ...and with what wonderful skill none but those who watched him from night to night can know...for tact, adroitness and skill the man that conquered all these difficulties has no superior and scarcely an equal in Parliamentary history."

In the 1870s, despite increasingly poor health and Mary Anne's tragic death, Disraeli achieved his apotheosis. He produced two best-selling novels, and in 1874 he presented the Conservatives with their first parliamentary majority since Peel. He taught his party the importance of political organization; he gave it an ideology of sorts, and a platform. In ringing public speeches he outlined the new Conservative position, stressing social welfare and the preservation of the British Empire. He moved in the highest social circles, and enjoyed the absolute confidence of the Queen. Most remarkable of all, in his late sixties, Benjamin Disraeli found himself to be a popular hero, in Bradford's words "almost a public pet." The Queen felt that the English responded to the fact that he was "a man risen from the people," and there was a strong element of familiar affection in the universal nickname "Dizzy." He was cheered in the streets, the centre of attention wherever he went. As one Tory M.P. remarked at this time, "In spite of it all, damn the fellow! One cannot help loving him!"

Disraeli's health declined. Subject to gout, bronchitis, asthma and Bright's Disease, he lacked the energy to formulate legislation, to deal with its interminable detail. Nevertheless, he actively supported the work of able Cabinet members like Richard Cross, and ensured the introduction of important social legislation. In 1876, Disraeli was made Earl of Beaconsfield, continuing his role as Prime Minister in the less physically demanding environment of the House of Lords.

After 1875, Disraeli's attention was focused on the world of international diplomacy, whose glamour and excitement had always appealed to his imagination. In a coup worthy of Sidonia, he was able to purchase the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal Company. While Disraeli's calculations were basically financial and pragmatic,

the public saw the incident as a daring affirmation of British interests. In 1878, he scored a stunning success at the Congress of Berlin. Britain had been diplomatically isolated for more than a decade, but at the Congress Disraeli dramatically re-asserted his country's role as a Great Power. He outmaneuvered Bismarck, broke the Dreikaiserbund, and utterly frustrated the ambitions of Russia. At home, the public saw him as the very incarnation of English patriotism, while Europeans, including Bismarck, came to admire him as a world statesman.

In his last years, Disraeli was more than a politician to the English. Lady Randolph Churchill noted that he was an object of awe, moving among the peers of Britain "like a black sphinx." He had become a national icon--so indeed he remains to this day--and an oracle sought out even by the radical socialist H.M. Hyndman.

In 1881, Disraeli died, mourned by his sovereign and his nation. Even Gladstone felt obliged to acknowledge his rival's importance, personally delivering the parliamentary eulogy. The ordeal gave the Grand Old Man diarrhoea, which would have delighted his departed foe. Disraeli's career, as he would have wished it, was recognized as a testimony to the power of imaginative vision and the triumph of the will in the face of enormous odds. In many ways, he did fulfil his Byronic self-perception, extravagant though it was. Without him, the shape of British politics would have been different, a fact realized and emphasized by his contemporaries. All this, and more, is sketched with stylistic grace and careful scholarship by Sarah Bradford. Her story of Disraeli's life is a passionate tale, full of drama and colour and revelation.

Notes

Unless otherwise noted, all quotations are from Bradford's book.

1. Sir Arthur Bryant, *English Saga* (London: Collins, 1940)

2. John Holloway, *The Victorian Sage* (London: Macmillan, 1953)

3. See, for example, Robert O'Kell, "Disraeli's "Coningsby": Political Manifesto or Psychological Romance?," *Victorian Studies*, 23, 1979-80, and Donald Stone, "Benjamin Disraeli and the Romance of the Will," in *The Romantic Impulse in Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1980)

4. Benjamin Disraeli, *Coningsby*, Book IV, ch. 13, in *The Bradenham Edition of the Novels and Tales of Benjamin Disraeli, 1st Earl of Beaconsfield* (London: Peter Davies, 1927)

5. *Coningsby*, Book III, ch.1

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BOOK REVIEWS

Ruari McLean, Victorian Publishers' Book-Bindings in Paper. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1983 [sic, 1984]. pp. 112 with 83 b.&w. & 123 colour illus. US$39.50.

So accustomed are we to viewing the past through documents and printed texts, and the nineteenth century, in particular, through the medium of black and white photographs, that well-preserved colours from the past almost have the power to shock. Beyond the veil of perennial mourning for the dead, the black frock coats and endless black bombazine, Victorians revelled in the use of colour, and this is nowhere more apparent than in the development and widespread employment of various colour printing processes. Ruari McLean, the greatest authority on the history of nineteenth-century colour printing, has produced a long-awaited sequel to his Victorian Book Design and Colour Printing (2nd ed. 1972) and Victorian Publishers' Book-Bindings in Cloth and Leather (1974).

In the brief introductory text McLean explains the chief appeals of paper as a binding material -- cheapness and decorative adaptability -- as well as its principal drawback -- flimsiness. Therefore, before the second quarter of the nineteenth century paper was used only for protective wrappers to guard the unbound sheets of a book from soiling on the trip from the stationer's shop to the bookbinders. In printed, decorative form intended to serve as binding for the life of a publication, paper later found its chief employment covering children's books and, to a somewhat lesser extent, cheap reprints of books for adults. However, McLean's earliest examples of decorative paper bindings are not juveniles, but some of the ubiquitous annuals and gift books of the 1820s and 1830s. Unlike their heavily decorated cloth-bound counterparts, the paperbound gift books were often issued in protective sleeves, which might themselves be heavily decorated.

The tradition of expensive gift books led to experiments with embossing and stamping of paper and foils, techniques which reached their apogee in the Victorian Valentine, and to the use of more outré materials for book covers such as papier mâché and Mauchline ware (panels of sycamore wood bearing decorative transfers). However, these extravagant applications were, albeit interesting curiosities,

a small and unimportant offshoot. Juveniles and cheap adult books predominated.

The use of hand-coloured illustrations in children's books prevailed long into the nineteenth century, but lighography and chromolighography increasingly supplied the covers and then replaced the internal illustrations. By the 1860s firms such as those of Routledge and Warne (who between 1851 and 1865 had been partners) began the large scale mass production of children's coloured books. Along with other publishers such as Chatto & Windus and Ward, Lock, they were also responsible for the "Yellow-back" reprints of adult books, mainly novels, so-called because they were bound in yellow glazed paper over boards. Featuring dramatic -- even lurid -- woodcut engravings on their front covers, and adverts for Pear's Soap or Fry's Cocoa on their back covers, they were sold by the million by dealers such as W.H. Smith at two shillings a copy, and made many a traveller's railway journey less wearisome.

Though triumphant in the production of cheap books for the masses, paper bindings were not wholly devoid of excellence in design, and McLean pays tribute to the work of such designers as Owen Jones (1809-74) -- best known for <u>The grammar of Ornament</u> (1856) -- and Henry Shaw (1800-73). However, the chief glory and interest in McLean's book lie in its more than two-hundred illustrations, more than half of them reproduced in colour! These provide the next-bet-thing to handling the books themselves, at least for the sake of admiring the covers, and recapturing some of the lost colours of Victorian material civilization.

Readers of this journal need not stop there, for Ruari McLean's own collection -- which supplied upwards of half of the book's illustrations -- was as long ago as 1970 installed in the library of Masey College, at the University of Toronto. If you are not entirely satiated by the McLean Collection, a walk across the road to the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library will lead to an enourmous collection of yellow-backs (nearly all in pristine condition), while a further jaunt two blocks south on St. George Street leads to the Toronto Public Library's Boys' & Girls' House, which houses the celebrated Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books.

For those who cannot conveniently visit these treasure houses in Toronto, McLeans's newest book, like its predecessors, provides a mounth-watering taste of what you are missing.

Barbara Maria Stafford, Voyage into Substance: Art, Science, Nature, and the Illustrated Travel Account, 1760-1840. Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1984. Pp. xxvi, 645, 270 b.&w. illus. US$39.95.

From the Renaissance, down through the whole of the Nineteenth century, books of travel and exploration stood out as perhaps the most popular of non-fiction genres. Although beloved by casual readers, armchair geographers, bibliographers, booksellers, and collectors, remarkably little scholarly attention or analysis has been focused upon these books as a genre. To remedy this oversight Professor Barbara Stafford of the University of Chicago has produced a magisterial study based upon a close analysis of literally hundreds of travel accounts from the golden age of the scientific expedition.

The "scientific" distiction is a crucial one to Stafford's argument, for she sees in the self-consciously scientific voyages of discovery the emergence of a new aesthetic and a whole new way of viewing nature and natural phenomena. The largest motive behind the commissioning of scientific expeditions by governments -- in which process Great Britain was pre-eminent -- was to promote the extension of geographical knowledge and the accurate recording of factual information. This pursuit of knowledge and the accurate portrayal in prose and picture of "an unmediated nature" stood in marked contrast to its antithesis and rival, the much-studied cult of the Picturesque.

Stafford ransacked the classic voyages -- folios, quartos, and octavos, texts, plates, and atlases -- for evidence of traits of mind common to all of the great scientific explorers, from Cook to Kotzebue. "The enjoyment and evident relish mirrored in these narratives," she maintains, "is based on the idea that the scientific traveler is usefully, not trivially, engaged." She thus sees a kind of virtue adhering to the scientific explorers which elevated them above "the followers of the Grand Tour or the mere seekers after Picturesque, produced a remarkable body of geographical literature, and also brought forth the nineteenth-century realistic landscape.

By adopting a forthright interpretation, and closely focusing upon this particular intersection of art, geography, literature, and science, Stafford has produced an important if sometimes difficult book. It is one that will richly repay the reader for the time and effort required to surmount the artistic and philosophic metaphor and jargon which occasionally obstruct the way. The 270 black and white

illustrations are delightful, and inspire a final commendation for this most handsome volume which has been produced at what appears, these days, to be a very reasonable price.

Virginia Surtees, The Ludovisi Goddess: The Life of Louisa Lady Ashburton; Wilton, Salisbury: Michael Russell Ltd., 1984. Pp. xiii, 210. £9.95.

Louisa Caroline Stewart-Mackenzie, the second Lady Ashburton (1827-1903), though celebrated in her day as a hostess, philanthropist, and patroness of the arts and intellect, spent much of her life in a restless flight from boredom. Her extravagances in collecting art, building houses, and showering friends with affection and gifts (while quarrelling with tradesmen over unpaid bills) were so typical of the nineteenth-century European aristocracy, that to further discredit her class by writing her biography may seem superfluous. Her significance, however, stems wholly from the celebrity of the friends she entertained and the artists and writers she patronized.

This book is a Victorian name dropper's delight: the index reads like Debrett's, the D.N.B., and the D.A.B. Louisa jilted the painter Landseer to marry the elderly widower Lord Ashburton. The author presents new evidence regarding exactly who spurned whose offer of matrimony in Louisa's celebrated row with the poet Robert Browning (she proposed, he refused). The book is also rich in details of Louisa's long and close friendship with Thomas and Jane Carlyle. The title, incidentally, stems from a friend's comparison of Louisa "to the celebrated head of Juno in Rome, the Ludovisi Goddess."

In a sense this worthy book is the victim of the ruthless economics of today's publishing business. Had it been compiled at the time of Louisa's death, it would have been at least a double-decker "tombstone" biography replete with a leisurely narrative, long extracts from letters, diary entries, and scraps of verse. Virginia Surtees, an experienced biographer and editor of the diaries of George Price Boyce and Ford Madox Brown, has unfortunately been forced to the opposite extreme. Ours, alas! has become the age of the two-hundred page book, and parts of this one are so jam-packed and breathless that they read as if the aforementioned double-decker

had been subjected to a committee of Reader's Digest "condensers." Louisa was a stout (if somewhat frivolous) woman, and this publisher's corset is far too tight.

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August Strindberg by Olof Lagercrantz; trans. Anselm Hollo; New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1984, p. 399, Illustrations, Can$37.95

One aim of every modern biographer may be to find the essential shaping myth by which his subject secretly defined himself. If so, Olof Lagercrantz faces the difficulty that Strindberg existed "in the most intimate visceral contact" (24) with not one, but several mythical and literary figures. Still, his association with Hamlet may be isolated as one of the dominant archetypes in Strindberg's inner pantheon. At least, Lagercrantz thinks Strindberg's commentary on Shakespeare's play to be "a confession in disguise" (346). Strindberg's destructive effect on the series of women who acted the part of Ophelia for him strengthens the parallel. But more important is that Strindberg's well known fondness for the antic disposition went so far as to create serious doubt about whether his madness was merely assumed.

Lagercrantz's August Strindberg rests on the conviction that this great Swedish playwright was mad in craft, or more accurately, nearly allied to madness for the sake of his craft. When the wind was southerly, he knew a hawk from a hand-saw. In developing such a thesis, Lagercrantz has no wish to underestimate the degree of torment Strindberg suffered. But he believes this inner turmoil to be the necessary agency of his genius. In order to write, Strindberg had to keep himself and his loved ones in a constant state of agitation. Strindberg once asked himself in his diary:

> is it possible that all the terrible things
> I have experienced were specially staged for
> me so that I could become a playwright,
> capable of describing all manner of psychic

> conditions and situations? I was a play-
> wright at the age of twenty, but if my life
> had proceeded in a calm and orderly fashion,
> I would not have had anything to render into
> drama (381-2).

Penetrating beneath the popular legends Strindberg fostered about his own lawless nature, Lagercrantz notices the command on the part of the author "who guides his pen with such a firm hand" (210). Lagercrantz insists on the universal significance of Strindberg's vision, arguing against the perception of his works as simply "a battleground for forces he could not control" (366). Were he no more than a helpless reporter of his own mental confusion, his plays would not resonate so powerfully through twentieth-century experience and our theatre.

In this biography, Strindberg comes alive as a posturing, suspicious and utterly outrageous person who cultivated his own misery. From his self-incendiary enterprise issued over fifty volumes in an astonishing variety of forms. About the creative achievement, Lagercrantz also provides valuable insights. Although his acknowledgments to other Strindberg scholars are unfailingly generous (since he refers by name only to critics he admires), he unfortunately includes no secondary bibliography or footnotes. Having been published in Swedish in 1979, the book is now available to English readers through the work of Anselm Hollo. A sentence like this one about Miss Julie assures us that little has been lost in the translation: "Strindberg...keeps his audience in a state of uncertainty as to what has been calculated and what is the result of a moment's inspiration -- and the play is, therefore, still tinged with some of the darkness that prevailed on the face of the deep before the act of Creation" (193).

We may need help from other sources to gauge the full extent of Strindberg's influence on modern drama in Europe and America, since Lagercrantz stresses the intrinsic fascination of his life and works. Even so, this book will be interesting not only to specialists in Strindberg or modern drama, but also to anyone concerned about the movement away from nineteenth-century values.

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