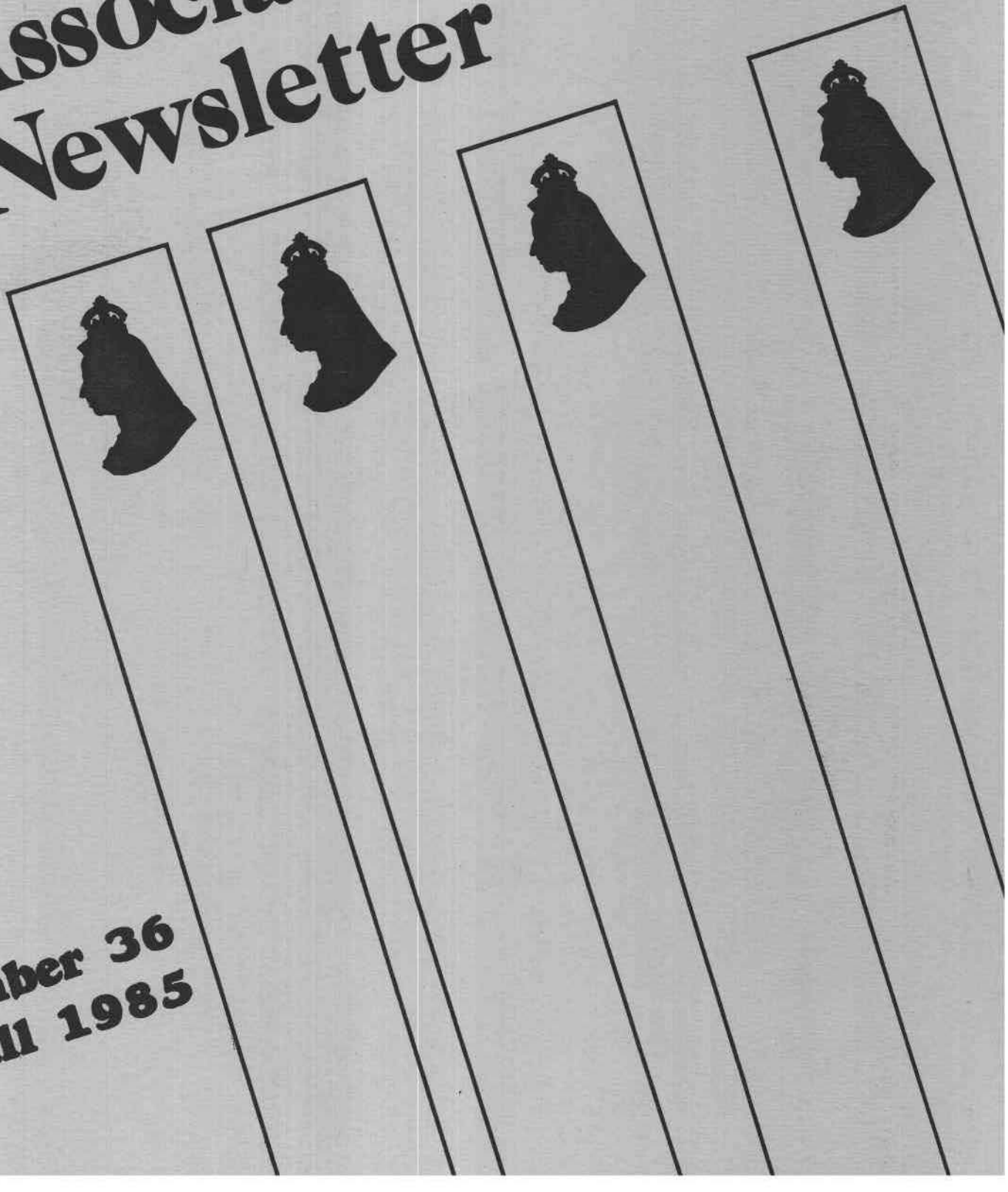
Victorian Studies Association Newsletter



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THE VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Edited for the Victorian Studies Association
of Ontario

Editor: Patricia Morton

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Enquiries concerning membership in the Victorian Studies Association of Ontario (currently $5.00 per annum) should be addressed to the Secretary, Mary O'Connor, c/o English office, Victoria College, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 1K7.

Membership includes a one-year subscription to the Newsletter.

C O N T E N T S

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

I am delighted by both the quality and quantity of submissions to this Newsletter, not only for its sake but also as a demonstration of the vitality of Victorian Studies. As a teacher too, I find a continuing fascination amongst students with this field and with modern Britain in general. I and this Association would be interested in your impressions of the state and status of Victorian Studies at other institutions and Universities. Please send news of this to me (by 15 February) for inclusion in the Spring issue. In that issue we shall also hear news of "Gladstone in Australia" from our member "down under."

As always, I look forward to any and all news, communications, and contributions, and am appreciative of those persons who provide such generous assistance in the production of this Newsletter.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE, VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

The 1986 Conference will be held at Glendon College, York University, Saturday April 12. Lord Noel Annan will speak on "The Victorian Age" and Richard Rempel will speak on "The Development of Bertrand Russell's Liberal Theory and Practice: 1888-1918."

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

J.E. Chamberlain (University of Toronto) reports publication of his Degeneration: The Dark Side of Progress, co-edited with S.L. Gilman, by Columbia University Press.

Barry M. Gough (Wilfrid Laurier University) reports that his recent book Gunboat Frontier: British Maritime Authority and Northwest Coast Indians 1846-1890, has been awarded the following prizes: The British Columbia Lieutenant Governor's Medal, 1984; the British Columbia Historical Federation's Certificate of Merit for Historical Writing, 1985, and the John Lyman Award of the North American Society for Oceanic History. He is now working on two books: The Royal Navy and Canada, 1815-1914, and the Pax Britannica: Illusions and Realities.

Sara Keith reports that the chapter she contributed to Loyal She Remains differed substantially from the chapter which now appears in this recently published U.E.L. book.

W.J. Keith (University of Toronto) informs us that his Canadian Literature in English (London: Longmans, 1985) contains chapters concerned with Literature in Canada in the nineteenth century.

Juliet McMaster (University of Alberta) is supervising a Ph.D. thesis in progress by Glennis Stephenson on "The Concept of Love in Elizabeth Barrett Browning." Her book, Dickens the Designer, is now in press with Macmillan of London. Her recent publications include articles on Nicholas Nickleby (Dalhousie Review) and Barnaby Rudge (the Dickens Studies Annual). She is currently the General Editor of the new Nineteenth-Century English Studies series at UMI Research Press.

Michael Millgate (University of Toronto) has published volume 5 of the Clarendon Press edition of The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy (of which he is co-editor) and a new edition of Hardy's Life, formerly published as the work of Florence Hardy but now edited and issued--under the title The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy (London: Macmillan; Athens: University of Georgia Press)--as the work of Hardy himself. Millgate's Thomas Hardy: A Biography, first published in 1982, has recently been reissued as an Oxford University Press paperback.

Hans Ostrom (The University of Puget Sound) reports publication of his Leigh Hunt: A Reference Guide, co-authored with Tim Tulofs, by G.K. Hall. His article on "Richard H. Horne," will appear in Victorian Britain, ed. Sally Mitchell (Garland Press, forthcoming).

Patricia Morton informs us of publication of her article in a non-Victorian field, "From Invisible Man to 'New People': the Recent Discovery of American Mulattoes," Phylon: The Atlanta University Review of Race and Culture, Vol. XLVI, no. 2, 1985. In the Victorian field she has articles forthcoming in Historical Reflections and in Victorian Britain, ed. Sally Mitchell.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

The UMI Research Press, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, has recently launched a Nineteenth-Century English Studies Series. The General Editor is Juliet McMaster, and the consulting editors are James Kincaid (fiction), Carol Crist (poetry), G.B. Tennyson (nonfiction), and

George P. Landow (interdisciplinary studies). The press is looking for proposals for books, based on theses or other research, in the major areas of nineteenth-century British, American and Canadian studies. For further information Christine B. Hammes may be contacted. She is Acquisitions Editor, UMI Research Press, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48106, U.S.A.

Current exhibitions at the Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books, Toronto, are "The Brothers Grimm: A Bicentennial Tribute" (November-December), and "The Painted Devil" (January-February 1986). For further information Jill Shefrin may be contacted at the Osborne Collection.

The Newsletter of the Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada invites contributions to its new critical forum section. With the next issue the Newsletter will feature a forum for discussion of the influence of recent critical thought (structuralist, post-structuralist, feminist, historical, interdisciplinary, etc.) on teaching and writing about the Victorian period. Submissions as notes, articles, or letters to the editor should be no more than 1000 words.

The Newsletter continues to publish articles, reviews, 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 BRITAIN: An Encyclopedia

Intended as a single-volume reference work useful to students, scholars and general readers, Victorian Britain: An Encyclopedia will have brief entries on persons, works, events, institutions and artifacts in Great Britain between 1837 and 1901. Signed articles written by experts in the field will provide key facts, interpret their significance, and supply bibliographies that guide the reader to sources for further research. The volume will be interdisciplinary, all entries will draw on current scholarship, and particular attention will be paid to subjects that have not as yet been well represented in standard references, including health, popular arts, and women's issues. It will be published by Garland Publishers (New York), should be available in 1988, and is edited by Sally Mitchell (English Department, Temple University, Philadelphia).

That rather formal statement--which many members of the Ontario Victorian Studies Association have seen, since you are among the contributors to the volume--may well raise as many questions as it answers. The project originated with Garland, and when asked to serve as editor-in-chief my first reaction was "Do we really need another reference work in Victorian Studies?" I believe the answer is "yes," and partly because (not in spite of) the wealth of specialized studies and authoritative references on particular subjects that have appeared during the past fifteen or twenty years. Even those of us who are active scholars in the period find it hard to keep up, and particularly because so much of what we do is interdisciplinary. Our graduate training, for the most part, has equipped us to pursue a single discipline, but if we find (for example) that our interest in a certain theological controversy requires us to know something about the details of geological thought or property law, we may not know where to begin. Thus, for graduate students and accomplished scholars, the volume should be useful primarily as a way in to new fields. Because the entries are necessarily short, the art historian will probably not find anything unfamiliar in the entry on the arts-and-crafts movement, but the novel-reader or student of economics or religion or music who needs to know something about the arts-and-crafts movement should find both a quick explanation of the significant names and dates and a reference to the authoritative sources that the art historian would use.

The second function of the volume, as I see it, is to provide basic explanations of the kind of information that is often not easy to discover in specialized works. Because I am in a literature department I find this easiest to conceptualize as "the questions about Victorian contexts that puzzle undergraduates when reading novels." (I'm particularly looking forward, for example, to receiving the entry on "Money and Banking"--maybe at last I'll be able to really understand the crises in some of Trollope's novels.)

And finally, the volume has been designed to incorporate material that has been the subject of scholarship only in the last fifteen or twenty years. This consideration made the decisions about biographical entries particularly difficult. The publisher has decided that 500,000 words is the maximum for a single volume that will be both liftable and legible--a total that only looks big until one begins to parcel it out. At one moment I decided to omit biographical entries altogether and include only topical articles. The problem, however, is that may people we now want to know about (especially feminists, radicals, and figures important in popular culture) are not in the DNB. Then--briefly--I considered including only "lesser" figures, until I was struck by the absurdity of publishing something called "Victorian Britain: An Encyclopedia" that had no entry for Dickens, Disraeli, or Queen Victoria. Many contributors are frustrated that it is "impossible to do justice" to a major figure in 500 or 800 words. I hope, however, that it is possible to give very basic information interpreted in the light of recent scholarship, and (in the bibliography) to point to the authoritative sources for further research --we do all know that undergraduates who depend only on the card catalogue to find a book on a major figure are often misled by an outdated or quirky or inadequate treatment.

In establishing the entries, I went through the last ten years' worth of bibliographies in Victorian Studies, making note of topics, names, and ideas. I also turned to the index of standard references in various fields. Then I offered lists of subjects to consulting editors in art, science, religion, history, etc. and to anyone else who would listen, and noted suggestions, objections, and ideas for combining smaller topics into larger, more informative essays.

At this point, almost all of the assignments have been made and about 20% of the entries have been received. They will continue to come in until October, 1986. I'm doing basic copy-editing (and having a graduate student verify titles, date, etc.) as the entries are received; when they are all in hand I will have until September 1987 to do cross-reading and cross-checking so that information is not needlessly duplicated and unforseen gaps between topics can be filled. (That, for contributors who wonder, is why something you have submitted in 1985 will not see print until 1988.)

A few topics remain unassigned: I have not yet found anyone to write about the civil service, dentists/dentistry, drugs and patent medicines, county society, gambling, the iron and steel industry, the legal profession (including training and qualification), occupations and wages, population and demographics, popular songs and music, swimming and bathing, or the Young Women's Christian Association. In a few other cases, I'm still waiting for answers from people who have been suggested by other

people, and yet a few more topics are falling vacant as the contributors receive research grants for major studies, or are appointed dean, or for other reasons want to disentangle themselves. I'd like, therefore, to hear from Ontario VSA members who can write about the topics I've named or who have rather broad interests and would be interested in answering cries for help on short notice.

Sally Mitchell, English Department
Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122

REPORT OF 1985 ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO:

The 1985 Conference was held 13 April at Glendon College, York University. Papers were presented by Owen Chadwick (Selwyn College, University of Cambridge) and David Shaw (Victoria College, University of Toronto). Lunch-time entertainment was "Heroines and Villains: Scenes from Victorian Melodrama," presented by Ronald Bryden and Company from The Graduate Centre for the Study of Drama.

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS PRESENTED:

"Lord Acton, History, and Religion," by Owen Chadwick.

We still have no definitive biography of Lord Acton. We have very good studies of certain aspects of the man (for example, by Himmelfarb, Altholtz, Macdougall and others).

There is a well-known puzzle - the deeply devout Roman Catholic who was anti-papal - against at least the Popes of his time, Leo XIII rather less than Pius IX. He ran a learned and intelligent Catholic periodical 1858-64; was a layman in Rome at the time of the First Vatican Council 1869-70 and was one of the leaders of the campaign to stop the definition of infallibility. When he failed he retired into an intellectual solitude, and read, and read, and ended as the regius professor of modern history at Cambridge.

He believed that men were only thought great because we do not know enough about them. He believed that no one's stature can survive the opening of the archives. And now we have started to see Acton's own archives and may ask what difference is made to his stature.

In 1956 Conzemius became interested in the life of Acton's historical master Döllinger of Munich, and realized that the letters between the two existed. He came to England to see Acton's grandaughter Mia Woodruff, at Abingdon near Oxford, and was excited by the richness of the materials which he found. He proved to be a superb editor of texts. First volume 1963, third 1971. Father Damien McElrath and Professor Holland used the material for other important texts. The Library of Cambridge University is now the home of an extensive and important Acton collection. All this material makes much difference to our understanding.

First: the deep emotional nature of the man; the language of profound affection which he used not only to his wife but to his wife's mother; a marriage in turmoil at times, though it came right in the end.

Secondly; the extent to which he was the point of the Liberal Catholic sword during the First Vatican Council.

Thirdly, the extent of the breach with his master Döllinger in 1879-82. Döllinger the priest was excommunicated for his resistance; Acton the layman was not. Yet Döllinger was much more ready to make allowances for good men who compromised. Acton was not ready at all, and came to feel that Döllinger compromised because he still respected some who compromised. This deep-dyed Catholic felt that he could not send his son to a Catholic school. He had a sensation that his early intellectual idols had feet of clay.

Fourthly, the new material shows something very surprising; and that is the extent of his intellectual radicalism after the breach with Döllinger. Though still a famous Catholic, and outwardly part, ever more a part, of the English Catholic establishment, his interior mind moved sharply away from Catholic orthodoxy.

He adopted radical positions about the criticism of the Old Testament, long before such positions were conceivable for other loyal Catholic minds. He paid less and less importance to doctrine, and more and more importance to ethics. He came to feel that the doctrines on which Protestants and Catholics differed, or even between Catholics and an ethical agnostic like George Eliot, were much less important than he supposed earlier in his life. Through George Eliot he could even come to say that atheism competed with theism as a means of ennobling humanity. In 1886 Acton's friend Charlotte Blennerhassett wrote to Döllinger a crucial letter about Acton - to the effect that doctrine, as distinct from morality, was now to him a matter of indifference. He always thought of himself as alone, intellectually. Historians have supposed that this was self-deception by a Liberal Catholic up against the hierarchy of his Church. But we can now see that it was not self- deception. The posture of mind was not shared, and could not be shared, by anyone else. His unique development ended in a unique outlook upon God, the Church, and the world.

"Philosophy and Genre in Victorian Poetics"
by David Shaw.

Because a wide and rough but genuine consistency of outlook is manifest equally in the poetry, the theories of history, and the philosophy of the Victorian period, it is rewarding to see what changes in one field coincide with changes in another. I examine two key episodes in the history of the Victorian transformation of the representational mirror of nature, first into a picture which 'represents' an action in a medium of the artist's or historian's choice, and then into purely presentational forms which make no pretense of representing anything. I conclude with a brief consideration of the consequences for Victorian generic theory of the shift away from representation toward new presentational axioms.

I look first at F.H. Bradley's parable of the fresco painter in the appendix to his pamphlet, The Presuppositions of Critical History. Bradley often uses the same metaphors and illustrations that Browning had used six years earlier in The Ring and the Book. Historical representation seems to be a simple, self-evident process. But both Browning and Bradley show that the more closely we examine it, the more complicated it becomes. Every observer has to interpret what the optic nerves transmit. And every historian has to read what the documents in the archives say. But contrary to the assumptions of scientific historiographers like Von Ranke and Buckle, the moment the historian tries to 'represent' the past he generates a fiction. I suggest that in combining the tortures of the Roman murder trial with a real trial of the reader's own endurance, Browning makes each reader of The Ring experience the inconclusiveness of history and the anxiety of Bradley's critical historian.

In studying the ascendancy of presentational forms, I concentrate on H.L. Massel's unjustly neglected Prolegomena Logica (1851), a treatise which Pater admired, but whose influence on him and on Victorian formalism in general has not been explored. Pater's assimilation of the intuitions of ethics to the intuitions of art, as when he speaks of the 'virtues' of 'a herb, a wine, a gem,' can be traced back to Mansel's argument that we either have an immediate intuition that an action is virtuous or vicious or we do not. In his view, no further analysis seems helpful. Mansel retains Kant's test of sensory intuition. But unlike Kant, for whom sensory presentations are privileged, Mansel believes that moral presentations of right and wrong, for example, though just as direct and intuitive as perceptions of colour or as the irreplaceable impressions we receive from a painting or a poem, no longer depend upon the senses.

The last part of the talk poses more questions than it answers. The criticism of genres is by definition a labelling and naming. If new

poetic genres try to chart and even cross the boundaries of what can be represented or named, then a Victorian critic of genres like E.S. Dallas would seem to be in the indefensible position of denying the essence of what he names. Since the evolution of genres is a historical process, and doubts about the validity of generic study tend to coincide with doubts about the concept of historical cause or historical continuity, the best antidote to the scepticism of contemporary critics like Geoffrey Hartman and Jacques Derrida, who would abolish generic study altogether, may be a keener sense of literary history and of what it properly entails. To ignore such questions in the name of literary or of historical purity seems to me a philosophical mistake. By studying the history of how representational axioms are transformed into presentational forms in many branches of Victorian thought, the student of Victorian culture may be better able to relate the unknown to the known without making either the poetry or the mysterious trouble spots of knowledge any stranger or less strange than they really are.

In some circles historical scholarship now seems out of date. But should we be cowed by such distrust into abandoning historical research? Or should such distrust of history be viewed itself as a historical phenomenon? Perhaps historical scholarship is the best safeguard against mere slavery to current fashions in literary study.

BOOK REVIEW ESSAY

Policing the Victorian Community, the Formation of English Police Forces, 1856-80, by Carolyn Steedman; pp. xi + 215.
London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984, £8.95.

The minutes of the Cambridge Town Council said in 1854: "We have the power of making our own rulers, and expending our local taxes, and retain in our hands the entire management of our...local affairs.... The greatest privilege is the power of appointing our police." That power remained intact after passage of the County and Borough Police Act of 1856, the piece of legislation that is central to Ms. Steedman's remarkable and admirable book. She has produced a study which throws light on a host of issues for the social historian of mid-Victorian England.

Physically, the book has been cheaply produced in a form that does not do justice to the author's presentation. Nevertheless, what emerges forcefully from the book is a consistent focus on reinterpretation of the Victorian police, one that supersedes the standard works of Charles Reith and T.A. Critchley. Both men gave to their books a survey character that was distinguished neither by conception nor by scholarly detail. By contrast, the Steedman book raises and answers specific questions about the nineteenth century on the basis not only of rigorous research into police and county records, but also of nearly ten years' digesting and reading on the sociology of police after deposit of her M. Litt. thesis in the Cambridge University Library in 1975.

Review and reflection from those years have added to the quality of the book. When discussing the origins of police recruits into county forces, for example, she comments: "the image of rural class relations dominated lawkeeping and policing in Victorian England, in both city and country." (p.70) But the image is not static or fixed in time. Few "labourers" who became provincial constables were recruited directly from agriculture; many of those who applied as workers on the land proved unable to pass the most elementary literacy tests. Most successful recruits had been shoemakers, wheelwrights, grocers, artisans from declining trades who might then have worked on the railways before enlisting in the county constabulary. "These were skilled men, craftsmen, many of whom still defined themselves by their trade years after becoming policemen." (p.70) The author makes clear, however, that origins of work were directly related to local conditions, to "the employment pattern of the locality." In the Black Country recruits came from mining and industry while a material context of village crafts determined the background of most recruits in a county such as Buckinghamshire.

Once enlisted, whatever this variety of origins, they had to fit readily into a hierarchy that seemed a natural emanation from rural society. Those who became chief constables were frequently members of a gentry family; they might or might not have had military experience as commissioned officers; but it mattered seriously that they should know the functions of the lord lieutenant, the claims of the large landowners and the powers and connections of the justices sitting in quarter sessions. In the counties, said the Home Secretary in 1873, "it is... most essential that the chief constable... should be a person of equal standing to the justices... and in a position equal to that of chief constables of neighbouring counties." (p.49) Reasons for this preference were not simply those of social prestige; they related also to the considerable powers of the chief constable. He relied on the magistrates for financial decisions but in the appointment, discipline, regulation and dismissal of policemen, the chief constable was virtually autonomous. His position reinforced the class character of hierarchy in the county forces, as well as certain substantive continuities in the work of local government.

Because of political and social confidence in the status of the constabulary, administrative duties could be placed on the county and borough police forces in ways that remind one of Halevy's description of the wide-ranging functions of the justices of the peace into the early nineteenth century. After mid-century the magistrates and the Home Office could increasingly assign to the constabulary such various duties as Inspectors of Nuisances and Poor Law Relieving Officers, duties which might extend to the regulation of common lodging houses and the supervision of vagrants, a term that might even include destitute children. The function of maintaining order and controlling crime, in other words, tended to merge into social and administrative tasks that tied the police snugly into the continuity of local government. Through her findings in this area the author is able to contrast the English with the European systems where the promotion of order was "centrally designed" while that of England grew from a vital system of local government based on "locally conceived theories of the management and control of populations." (p.55)

If that argument is not entirely new, it seems nevertheless to enlarge and to place in context the more specific point that the county and borough police owed little to the metropolitan force of London in terms of a model for their organization or function. The provincial constabulary was rooted in local government and drew its vital character from the traditions and needs of local society. Here, the book must be fitted into some of the most recent interpretations of the mid-Victorian period, into a growing corpus of historical writing associated with names such as Olive Anderson and John Vincent in the general area of the liberal state; David Philips, Victor Baily and Robert Storch on the police;

J.J. Tobias and B.J. Davey on crime and London; F.C. Mather on public order and Roland Quinault on the county magistrates. The work of these historians cannot be fragmented or isolated; their accounts are interrelated, so that riot, crime and order all seem a part of the larger subject without being hidebound to orthodox statements of class or ideology. The Steedman book adds to this literature on a number of grounds, three of which seem most relevant to this reviewer.

It helps, for example, to clarify further the tension between the metropolitan centre and the parochial, county or borough unit. In the tradition of the Poor Law Amendment Act and the Factory Acts of the 1830s, the County and Borough Police Act of 1856 established three inspectors and allowed for supplementary grants from the centre while leaving rates, regulation and appointments in the hands of local councils. The result was to sustain a degree of variety and of vested interest as distinct from the uniformity of central direction. If the Cambridge Town Council was expressing its pride in "the entire management of our... local affairs," it was also asserting an interest that would resist standardization and centralization, especially in the management of its police.

A second feature that keeps the book in this main stream relates to the issue of public order and security of property. Some ten years ago David Philips pointed to the 1850s as marking the end of any threat of a national insurrection. He based his remark on a case study of the specific industrial area of the Black Country where the Staffordshire county police force had to cooperate with the borough police of Wolverhampton "to anticipate and prevent trouble." About the same time Roland Quinault argued convincingly that provincial police were the agents of the county magistrates. Concentrating on their role in Warwickshire as a case study, he concluded that "formation of a county police force in 1857... marked something of a watershed in the history of public order in the county," yet within the county he had to acknowledge the autonomous place of the borough of Birmingham and the resentment of its citizens at paying rates for the use of a county force.[1]

Ms. Steedman elaborates this distinction between county and borough, seeing the borough policeman as a servant of the ratepayers, an employee of the watch committee, "the most prestigious of all a corporation's sub-committees," while the county constabulary served the magistrates in a more general, territorial defence of property. Tension between these units of local government never prevented cooperation of police forces at times of serious disturbance such as riot over elections or strikes, but social friction was nevertheless deeply rooted in the historical evolution of borough and county society.

In the boroughs the power of the watch committee sometimes led its members to functions as a tribunal, a small arbitrary court, reproving citizens presented by the police as guilty of misdemeanors and thereby bringing a reprimand from the Home Office for exceeding legal authority. Businessmen on town councils managed municipal costs in the interest of the owners of mines and industries, many of whom sat themselves as magistrates. To them the borough constabulary were seen as paid sevants of local ratepayers for whom policemen were classed as another group of wage-earners. Over mere workers who kept the peace it was necessary to appoint head constables "as faithful head servants to whom certain powers could be delegated, and who had specialized knowledge about the business of social control and discipline." (p.46)

In the counties by contrast the social position of the chief constable enabled him gradually to supersede the powers of the county magistrates, a transition that leads into the third feature of the book's significance. Most of the 47 chief constables in the counties for this period came to their positions from military experience and they therefore readily adapted to gradual replacement by the constabulary of functions formerly performed by the army.

Military force had traditionally been accepted by county and borough magistrates as a reserve to be summoned for the quelling of riot. At the Home Office and the Horse Guards this domestic role of the regular army was integrated into perceptions of military policy and deployment of troops. After Peterloo, however, magistrates at every level were cautious, and their apprehensions at precipitating unnecessary violence were encouraged by successive Home Secretaries. At the local level, constabularies might be more burdensome on municipal and county rates, but they were also more visible, more regular and less sporadic in their presence. Above all, they could be maintained under local supervision by those who paid the rates and who wished to encourage the local labouring population towards order, routine, and rational recreation in their daily lives, helping to ensure what Peter Bailey has called "a socially tractable working class in a fluid and anonymous urban society."[2] These advantages of borough and county police became particularly apparent after the Chartist outbreaks, the Plug Plot, the Rebecca and the Murphy riots, so that local police forces by the 1870s had become normal substitutes for the previous despatch of regular military force.

Even on this subject, however, Ms. Steedman does not draw too fine a line. Policemen into the 1860s might act as soldiers with troops in the background. By the eighties, however, the borough and county police had become actors as well as agents in a social process which over half a century brought Victorian society closer to what had once been

speculative and ideal. Order and restraint were gradually generated within the historical continuity of local traditions rather than of imposition from a centralized, coercive and efficient state.

Notes:

1. See R. Quinault and J. Stevenson, eds., Popular Protest and Public Order. London, 1974.

2. Peter Bailey, Leisure and Class in Victorian England. London, Toronto and Buffalo, 1978, p.37.

Albert Tucker
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ESSAY

Four Stages by which a Personal Ideal May Evolve into a Social Ideal: a Speculation.

Four Victorians, Arnold, Newman, Marx and Ryerson illustrate four stages in how their own personal ideal evolved into a social ideal. In this paper, I am speculating that this process may be general.

Even though the Victorian period is not long past, its close examination for the past eighty-four years, and its intense self examination ought, it seems to me, give material to provide a general answer to the question, "How does a personal ideal become a social ideal?"

Four stages, I suggest, can be discerned in the four men whose ideals, to some extent, revitalized a part of the Victorian world. Newman and Arnold wrote for England, Marx and Ryerson, while connected to England, wrote for different communities.

First, a person of reflective temperament, immersed in the dominant culture of his time and place, notices that his community is declining or is inadequate to inspire the youth.

Secondly, by chance, the idealist stumbles upon a sub-community which, in a limited way, has the vitality which the larger community lacks.

The third stage might be called the prophetic one. The idealist formulates, through his own intuition, a statement of his communal ideal.

Finally, and most necessarily, he works to embody his communal ideal in an institution.

All four, Arnold and Ryerson who succeeded, and Newman and Marx who failed, erected institutions to embody and enshrine the ideal each offered to his community. Of course, in each case the community was a different segment of the Victorian population.

Arnold provides, perhaps, the best illustration of this process, although the other three illustrate enough features of it to suggest that it may be more than a singular, Arnoldian development.

In his poetic period, Arnold gave ample illustration of how deeply disturbed he was by his society. As T.S. Eliot said of "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse, "It was the classic expression of a moment of

historical doubt." It is this deep disturbance, and reflective nature, which combine to provide the conditions that create a social idealist.

At the time of his marriage, Arnold began a thirty-five year acquaintance with dissenting schools--among them the Methodists. The late Fred Walcott, in The Origins of Culture and Anarchy, has suggested how it was in his work with the children of dissenters that Arnold was inspired by the social ideal which he names "culture."

Shortly after Arnold published Culture and Anarchy in 1869, he intensified his demand for a free, compulsory and universal secondary school system. His speech on his retirement in 1886 is vigorous on this need for an institution to embody the state ideal.

Ryerson, in Colonial Canada, had already established a school system that met Arnold's requirements, - free, compulsory and universal. In November 1847, Ryerson dined with Arnold and Lord Landsdowne at Landsdowne House. During the course of that dinner, the Lord President of the Council encouraged the young Superintendent of Schools by telling him that he could wish for no greater improvement in the education of British children than that the Canadian (sic) system of education could be brought to England. What Lord Landsdowne was perhaps unaware of was that the "Canadian" - or Methodist - system was already there. In the dissenting schools of the British Wesleyans, the essentials of the "Canadian" school system were flourishing. Ryerson's ideal might be roughly described as providing a method of using the mind that opened the door to a wider world. The Masseys, Pearson and Henry Ford are examples of those who applied the Methodist ideal to the twentieth century.

Marx and Newman are both examples of idealists who reflected on their own culture, found it inadequate and prophesied that a better inspiration could be found. However, each was largely a failure in his own time because he could not design a suitable institution to enshrine his ideal and provide the votaries and exemplars that it needed.

Newman's attempt to create a university in Ireland failed because an institution with different ideals already existed, the Catholic hierarchy. Marx failed because the institution which he sought to create, the first international, lacked local supporting centres.

If these four Victorians are characteristic, then the stages by which a personal ideal becomes a social ideal culminate in the creation of an institution to embody it. This is, of course, speculation, but, I hope, fruitful speculation.

John Atkin,
Toronto

BOOK REVIEW

Neil Philip, Between Earth And Sky, London: Penguin Country Library, 1984. pp 265 $7.95

In an early edition of Hymns Ancient And Modern, copies of which are still to be found in English country churches where impoverished parishioners cannot afford to replace them, there is a comprehensive index of first lines. If the curious turn to the well-known hymn All things bright and beautiful the following verse may be found.

> The rich man in his castle,
> The poor man at his gate.
> He made them high and lowly,
> He ordered their estate.
> All things bright and beautiful....

These lines have, of course, been expunged from modern hymnals to avoid offending our egalitarian sensibilities but were still being sung lustily by congregations well into the early 1950s. I mention this because All things bright and beautiful is a hymn of the Victorian age, which helps to reinforce the notion that traditions and influences from one era seep deeply into the fabric of the next. More than this, the verses seem to epitomise all that was good and bad but thoroughly acceptable in the social stratification of Victorian life.

There is no mention of hymns, ancient or modern, in Neil Philip's Between Earth And Sky, a fascinating anthology of prose and poetry of English rural life between the Enclosures and the First World War, but the 'poor man at his gate' speaks for himself in this volume with both power and pathos. The anthology contains a wide selection of writing drawn mainly from an intriguing source, the men and women of the agricultural labouring class. It conveys admirably the flavour of life below the salt in Victorian England and, in the jargon of contemporary educationists, will be an 'important resource document' for scholars and writers alike.

The hardy 19th century agricultural labourer, limping from crisis to crisis on the crutches of hope, has left us a rich store of his (and, too rarely, her) innermost thoughts on living, loving, starving and dying. These writers, who for the most part were uneducated but not ignorant, wrote not to idealize their age but to express hope and despair, to explain their happiness and to decry their deprivation. 'Well, 'tis only for life. If 'twas for longer than that I don't know if we should hardly be able to bear it,' said an old woman quoted by George Bourne, an early chronicler of rural life, at the turn of the century.

On 7 February 1872, three farm labourers arrived at the cottage door of Joseph Arch, then living near the Village of Wellsbourne in Shropshire to ask him to address a meeting. They wanted to start a union because, they said, conditions could not be worse and nothing but starvation lay before them unless the farmers raised their wages. Arch, a self-educated man and former farm worker who years before had left nine shillings a week behind him, agreed to help. That evening he walked to Wellsbourne to address the meeting under a vast chestnut tree, expecting a gathering of thirty or forty at the outside, and was astonished to find that almost two thousand had come to hear him speak. He called them the white slaves of England who 'were like the children of Israel waiting for someone to lead them out of the land of Egypt.'

Agricultural work and rural life is hard in any age. The Victorian farm labourer lived a life of crushing poverty and yet, by and large, accepted his 'ordered estate' with stoicism and fortitude. Although there were sporadic outbreaks of unrest and, at times, fierce riots during the Victorian era there could hardly be said to be at any time a national undercurrent of insurrection. This is evident from the total absence of rebellious lines in Philip's anthology as compared with, say, the recurrent theme of rebellion in Irish folk literature of the same period or the rumblings of Czarist serfdom.

Against what, in any case, was the English agricultural labourer to rebel? The farmer? the lord of the manor? the system? This is neither the time nor the place to make a comparison of national revolutionary movements, though one might note that social reformers often fail to realize that systems cannot be put on trial in any objective sense. A class or stratum of society has often been the scapegoat for the mob's anger against a system for the creation of which the class attacked was not directly responsible.

Between Earth And Sky helps us understand both the acceptance and spiritual rejection of the system by those who today would be referred to as the 'underprivileged' and to realize that Victorian rural life was conditioned by the social, economic and political forces of an earlier era. The Enclosures, begun in the eighteenth century and still under way in Victoria's reign, improved agricultural production but dispossessed the labourer of the land. They did not dispossess the land of the labourer, as Philip implies by choosing Rudyard Kipling's A Charm as his first selection.

> Take of the English earth as much
> As either hand may rightly clutch.
> In the taking of it breathe
> Prayer for all who lie beneath -

Not the great nor well-bespoke
But the more uncounted folk
Of whose life and death is none
Report of lamentation.
   Lay that earth upon they heart,
   And thy sickness shall depart!

Anthologies by their nature do not lend themselves well to literary criticism. One is left with commenting on the choice of excerpts, the order of presentation, and the compiler's purpose. One can more easily question the affect that results from the quality and divisioning of the material selected. The appeal of Between Earth And Sky lies in its earthiness and utter lack of sentimentality.

Although the anthology has no specific divisions or sections it has been organized in a chronological order, beginning with the birth of day, youth, with the Cock Crow by Edward Thomas:

'Out of the wood of thought that grows by night
To be cut down by the sharp axe of light -'

There is no noticeable transition from subject to subject: from the beginning of the rural day to the labourer's income, work, festival days, women, education, union organization, superstition, courtship and old age. One is only conscious of the development after the transition has been accomplished, which makes the anthology a delight to read.

By far the largest contribution to the work is from "traditional" sources, or lines which are sometimes rather pretentiously ascribed to A.N. Other. These ballads, verses, and country songs are drawn from far and wide. They chronicle the life of the Victorian labourers (men, women and children) in all their pursuits: field work, crow scaring, poaching, sheep shearing, loving eating and dying.

If one has any criticism of Philip's selection it is in the somewhat excessive number of quotations from the works of Thomas Hardy. Hardy was an expressive chronicler of West Country life but his view was moulded by an artistic necessity which often lacks the spontaneity demonstrated by more ingenuous observers.

More than eighty years have passed since Queen Victoria was laid to rest ('in her eternity box' would be the descriptive phrase in 19th century rural idiom), yet her age did not die with her. It lived through the brief Edwardian years and the carnage of the Great War in which, as Philip notes in his introduction, "Many of the countrymen who fought...had scarcely left their villages before."

It is not surprising that as the Victorian era slips from living memory there is a growing passion for recollections of the age - a passion not confined to scholarly circles. The younger generation is particularly interested in exploring the Victorian nursery in which Empire and imperialism flourished as never before or since. Neil Philip, born in 1955, is of the rising generation that has become absorbed in Victoriana. His excellent anthology whets the appetite, for he has provided us with rich fare that all can enjoy.

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