"No Arnold Could Ever Write a Novel"

A. Dwight Culler

"NO ARNOLD could ever write a novel." The remark is quoted by Max Müller as having been frequently in the mouth of Matthew Arnold, and although Müller goes on to say how gloriously it has been disproved by the work of Mrs. Humphry Ward, I am not sure whether we should consider Robert Elsmere as evidence for the prosecution or the defence. Nonetheless, of Matthew at any rate, I am sure we would all agree, "No Arnold could ever write a novel." The reason is that he was so thoroughly the type of what Keats calls the Egotistical Sublime that he was unable to project himself into character and situation. Indeed, I have always held that the strongest evidence for the historicity of Marguerite is the simple fact that Arnold was incapable of inventing her. Still, a certain type of novel, I think that Arnold could write, and that is a historical novel where all the characters were aspects of his own personality and where the issues were intellectual or cultural ones. In other words, I think he could write a novel like Marius the Epicurean, and I think that in the first series of Essays in Criticism he approximated that form. In any case, what I should like to do today is to examine this volume with reference to its imaginative structure, not, indeed, claiming that it is a novel, but claiming that it has certain elements of imaginative unity, in its characters, its situation, and the progressive unfolding of its theme, that give it the aspect of a novel of ideas like Marius.

We recall that most of the essays were originally lectures which Arnold delivered as Professor of Poetry at Oxford. All were then published in periodicals, and it was not until July 1864 that Arnold suggested to Macmillan the idea of collecting them into a volume. After listing several of the essays, he added, "I am not at all clear that the papers should be printed in the order in which I have put them down." The order in which he had put them down was simply the chronological order of their composition and publication. But when the volume actually appeared, their order was very different. Ignoring "A Persian Passion Play," which was added many years later, the order was as follows: "The Preface," "The Evolution of Criticism at the Present Time," "The Literary Influence of Academies," "Maurice de Guérin," "Eugenie de Guérin," "Heinrich Heine," "Pagan and Medieval Religious Senti-

one of the various phases of the human spirit. It is upon this
evolution that his poetry is based, and it is my sug-
gestion that the Essays in Criticism are based upon it too.

In order to make this clear I need to repeat very briefly
what I have said elsewhere about Arnold's imaginative
world. It is a world divided into three regions which we
may call the Forest Glaed, the Burning or Darkling Plain,
and the Wide-Glimmering Sea. The first is an idyllic re-
gion in which youthful games live joyously in harmony
with nature. From it comes the music which we
associate with the region of maturer suffering and
isolation; and the third is a region in which suffering
subsidies into Calm and then grows up into a new Joy,
the joy of active service in the world. Connecting these
three regions is the River of Life or Time, and the thought
is that, whether his individual life or in human
history, moves from childhood faith and joy, through a
period of skepticism and the understanding, to a final syn-
thesis that reconciles the two.

If this is so, then the function of the opening essay in
Arnold's collection, "The Function of Criticism at the
Present Time," is to establish the historical setting of
Arnold's novel. For this essay presents the same concep-
tion of the function of the poetry, that of vital or organic
periods alternating with mechanical or critical periods,
and it declares that this is a critical period. In the famous
opening sentence: "Of the literature of France and Ger-
manny, many, many, years ago, I have been a keen
reader, for now many years, has been a critical effort." In
the past, in the England of Elizabeth and the Athens of
Pericles, there were great creative efforts, and there will be
creative efforts in the future. But as the moment we are in an
age when it is impossible to write great poetry, and there-
fore the function of criticism at the present time is to pre-
pare the current of true and fresh ideas that will make possible
the creative effort.

The hero of Arnold's novel, then, is simply the person
who does this, the seeker after Truth, and he is presented
in the Preface, "To try," says Arnold, "and approach truth
on one side after another, as he may persist in pressing
forward, on any one side, with violence and self-
will—it is only itself, it seems to me, that mortals may
hope to gain any vision of the mysterious Goddess, whom
we shall never see except in outline, a face that is always even in
outline. Our hero finds himself among a people who do not wish to seek after truth in this
way but who conceive that they already possess it. Arnold
calls these people the Philistines, and indeed the setting of
this novel is the scene. The action of the novel cannot be
removed from the frequency with which Arnold refers to the Philistines and
the children of light but also from the way in which he re-
fers to himself as a kind of Moses, leading the children of
Israel out of the wilderness into the promised land. At
the very end of the first chapter, referring to the true life of
literature, he says, "There is the promised land, and
therefore the wilderness: but to have desired to enter it, to have saluted it
from afar, is already, perhaps, the best distinction among
contemporary thinkers. To give himself to it, to put himself into it, to
be in that, and to distinguish it from all minor currents, is one of the critic's highest functions." This is the more
necessary because when the River of Life descends to
the Wide-Glimmering Sea its course is divided into many
cannels, and Carlyle has said that the true
channel in modern German literature, that which descends
directly from its great source in Goethe, is the roman-
cic-adventure—Trech, Novals, Richter. This Arnold denies.

Heine is the greatest connoisseur of Goethe in the modern
generation, a "brave soldier in the war of liberation of humani-
ty." In order to illustrate this he shows for several pages
how the "gallantry of Goethe's "Musik" passing
into the society of Lamennais—which reminds us
of Newman's group at Littlemore—to see if he had a
religious vocation, but ultimately discovering that he did not,
that he needed the free, fuller life of nature. Thus, he
entered the world but was unable to live there by writing
or teaching and slowly died of consumption. At this point
Arnold returns to his generalization. Poetry is the inter-
pretation of natural life and the moral world.

At the very outset he almost fell into a trap. For as he
crossed over the channel into France (Philistia is England)
he encountered an institution that had as its very function
to distinguish the excellent from the common, the
biblical from the merely provincial, and as he observed how it had
operated in France to make impossible the shoddy journey-
man-work of literature which was the plague of his own
nation, he was almost tempted to give up. But then,
remembering his own youthful remark that "a Code-G.
Sand would make G. Sands impossible," he quickly
wavered and decided that the true need was not to settle down
in this or that French academy but to create an academy
within one, "happier far." In this way, escaping from his
own peculiar brand of Philantilism, he reaffirmed his
original role, to be a seeker still.

This initial essay, beginning with the idea of his
quest, aroused great hope in me, for to this day, I
remembered him in my mind, as if I had shared in
him, an inquietude, an ennui. True, her religion did
not have the meanness and provinciality of its counterpart
in England, but it did share with Protestantism the dogma of
the one and only way to salvation. For this reason, just
as Marius momentarily rested with this, that, and the
other philosophy and accepted what each had to offer in

the development of a many-sided culture, so too will
Arnold. And he will begin with Maurice de Guérin.

In the essay on Maurice de Guérin, Arnold is returning
to a youthful enthusiasm. He makes this clear in the open-
ing paragraph of the essay, explaining how he first en-
countered Guérin some fifteen years before at the end of
one of George Sand's novels, and how he used to pester
his friends by declaiming, in the strongest possible pro-
nunciation, sentences from his prose poem the "Centaur.

Now, the philosophy of Maurice de Guérin's Religion have
been written about and published, and Arnold has a chance to test his youthful
enthusiasm. He begins by laying down a generalization—
that poetry has a grand interpretive power, a power of so
dealing with nature as to awaken in us a full and intimate
sense of it. He adds that "Poetry interprets in another way
besides this," but at this point he does not mention what it is. Rather he goes on to give an account of Guérin's life and
character. He views him as "the great self-taught philos-
opher, entering into the society of Lamennais—which reminds us
of Newman's group at Littlemore—to see if he had a
religious vocation, but ultimately discovering that he did not,
that he needed the free, fuller life of nature. Thus, he en-
tered the world but was unable to live there by writing
or teaching and slowly died of consumption. At this point
Arnold returns to his generalization. Poetry is the inter-
pretation of natural and moral world.

Therefore, Arnold passes on, and he comes to an essay
that is too little known and too little regarded in this book,
for it may properly claim to be the pivotal essay in the en-
tire work. It is called "Pagan and Mediaval Religious
Sensibility, or the Ideal of the Middle Ages." It is an essay on
the religious sentiment of the pagan world, as ex-
emplified in Theocritus' fifteenth idyl and that of the me-
dieval world, as exemplified in St. Francis' "Canicile of the
Sun." The former is the religion of Ypsilanti, passionate,
cheerful, and it is all very well, says Arnold, so long as
things are going well. It served Heine beautifully during
the early years of his life, but in old age, when he was
under the influence of séances and satire. This
is, however, a refuge for the few, not the many, and it is
now asserted that the test of the satisfactoriness of
a philosophy is its ability to minister to the many. In
this, Christianity, the religion of sorrow, is vastly superior,
but the period in which it is written is the
period in the normal limits of humanity. Monte Alverno is as far from
us as Pompeii, the Reformation as the Renaissance. For
though "the poetry of later paganism lived by the senses
and understanding," and though "the poetry of medieval

5. Poetry and Criticism of Matthew Arnold, ed. A. Dwight Culler
(Boston, 1941), pp. 34-45. The view is developed in my Imagina-
Joubert becomes the type of the subterranean river, or Buried Life, which was forced underground in its own uncongenial day but is now reemerging to flow happily on to the sea.

The last two essays, on Spinoza and Marcus Aurelius, carry us on even further. That on Spinoza begins with the thunderous curse of excommunication pronounced upon him by the Jews of Amsterdam and so established him as a child of modern Europe.6 It then continues with Arnold's complaint of the unsatisfactions of his writings on religion because he will not speak out and say clearly what he thinks about the Bible, and because he insists on putting his thoughts in an arid metaphysical form that will not appeal to the generality of men. But, says Arnold, if one turns to his Letters and the Ethics, then one learns what the real spirit and tendency of his work is. For he is not, as one critic has suggested, a member of the post-Hegelian scientific orthodoxy. This is evident from the fact that he makes the summum bonum of life the love of God. On the other hand, neither is he a Fra Angelico, for the love of God, for him, is a purely intellectual transplant. He combines the heart and imagination with the senses and understanding into the imaginative reason, and because of this Arnold suggests that his works will soon be recognized for what they are—the central point in modern philosophy.

Marcus Aurelius goes beyond Spinoza by supplying the element of joy which was lacking in his arid metaphysical treatment. He was, says Arnold, "perhaps the most beautiful figure in history." Moreover, he was so, not in an age of medieval Catholicism, which made it easy for a Saint Louis or a King Alfred to be beautiful, but in an age essentially like our own, an age of imperial paganism. In such an age Epicurus could attain to morality but not Marcus Aurelius, condensing his life with morality something like the emotion of Christianity. Still, though he could subsume morality with emotion, he could not light it up with emotion, as does the New Testament. In this respect he was imperfect, and Arnold ends the essay by noting that it is through this very imperfection that Marcus Aurelius appeals to men today. It is because he, too, yearns as they do for something unattained by him. What if he had been able to enter into Christian? "Vain question!" says Arnold, "yet the greatest charm of Marcus Aurelius is that he makes us ask it. We see him wise, just, self-governed, tender, thankful, blameless; yet, with all this, agitated, stretching out his arms for something beyond—tendemtum manus rupis ulterioris amore."

This is the last sentence in the essay, and it is also the last sentence in the book. We are struck by its resemblance to the last sentence in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," where Arnold says, "There is the promised land, towards which criticism can only beckon. That promised land it will not be ours to enter, and we shall die in the wilderness."7 As was this last sentence to be written by Arnold (apart from the Preface) one may say that Arnold had arrived in his quest at the point at which Marcus Aurelius had arrived in his. That point was Mt. Pisgah. Looking out over the valley, he sees in the distance the promised land which it will not be his to enter.

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Matthew Arnold's Empedocles on Etna
Charles Berrymann

Empedocles on Etna is a better poem than Matthew Arnold thought it to be. The poem should be accepted and praised as a dramatization of Empedocles' complex and powerfully despairing mind. In 1853, Arnold was not willing to value a poem that was merely a "dialogue of the mind with itself."8 Arnold's reason for the exclusion of Empedocles on Etna from the 1853 edition of his poems is explained in the well-known Preface. The poet describes the situation of the poet "in a state of suffering minds" in action; in which a continuous state of mental distress is prolonged, unresolved by incident, hope, or resistance; in which there is nothing to be endured, nothing to be done. Arnold therefore concludes that "no poetical enjoyment can be derived" from such a poem.9

Arnold's readers have often come to the opposite conclusion. Robert Browning was greatly pleased with Empedocles, and requested Arnold to have it reprinted in the 1867 edition of his poems.10 Modern readers tend to agree with the judgment of Browning. Lionel Trilling argues that Arnold's rejection of the poem was motivated by personal considerations, and supported by faulty arguments.11 Frank Kermode argues that Arnold's attitude regarding the poem is "exasperating.12 Walter Houghton has recently stated that "Empedocles on Etna is the most impressive poem of its length written in the Victorian period."

Such praise would probably have embarrassed Arnold. The mere existence of the poem seemed always to discomfit him. Arnold's repeated disavowal of the poem's philosophy, and his repudiation of any similarity between himself and his protagonist, merely dramatize the separation of Arnold the poet and Arnold the critic. In the summer of 1849 one of Arnold's friends declared confidently that the poet was using Empedocles "for the drapery of his own thoughts."13 Arnold later protests this view too loudly:

I have now, and no doubt had still more then, a sympathy with the figure Empedocles presents to the imagination; but neither then nor now would my creed, if I wished or were able to draw it out in black and white, be by any means identical with that contained in the preachment of Empedocles.14 Arnold makes this protest in 1867, and it is necessary for him to do so if he wants to support his transformation from a modern poet to a critic of "The Modern Element in Literature." The latter role demands, according to Arnold's own standard, the adoption of an impersonal mask. The despairing philosophy and the dramatic suicide of Empedocles could only embarrass the author of "Literature and Dogma." Arnold felt, or wanted to feel, that he had outgrown his frustrated and "morbid" poet. Perhaps he could understand the vexatious plight of Goethe, whose readers continued to identify him as the hero of The Sorrows of Young Werther.

The identification of Goethe with his desperate hero

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2. Ibid., p. xvii.


would be just as false as the simple equation of Arnold and Empedocles. Both fictional characters have biographical relevance, but each figure is carefully separated from the full sympathy of his author. The place to look for the separation is not in the subsequent life of the author, but in the design of the particular work of art.

The cold and flat style chosen for the scene of Werther's suicide conveys Goethe's criticism of the deed and his conscious separation from the character. The style is restrained to suggest judgment rather than sympathy.

Arnold's separation of a character hero can be seen in the poetic context designed to limit Empedocles. Lionel Trilling has described the poem as a dramatic juxtaposition of two contrasting styles of verse. The prosaic diction and the harshly regular verse form of Empedocles are dramatically contrasted with the highly musical and gently persuasive poetry of Callicles. Empedocles laments man's limitation:

In vain our penns will flers.
And would the world subdue.
Limits we did not set.
Condition all we do;
Born into life we are, and life must be our mould.

(II, 118-26)

Against this bare and disillusioned philosophy Arnold places the lyric affirmation of Callicles:

For 'tis the last Of all the woody, high, well-water'd dells On Etna; and the beam
Of noon is broken there by chestnuts-boughs Down its steep verdant ascent; and the air Is fresher'd by the leaping stream, which throws Eternal showers of spray on the moss'd roots Of trees, and veins of turf, and long dark shoots Of ivy-plagued boughs, and fragrant hanging bells Of hyacinths, and on late anemones, That muffle its wet banks.

(II, 41-51)

The lyric of Callicles has long been justly praised, but apparently no one has pointed out its agreement with the substance if not the sound of Empedocles' philosophy. Empedocles declares that "Limits we did not set / Condition all we do," and Callicles' description of the mountain confirms the limitation of life to a certain altitude. Callicles describes the "last of all the woody, high, well-water'd dells on Etna." The dell is vibrant with life and proactive energy: "verdant sides, freshen'd air, leaping streams, eternal showers," etc. But Callicles warns us explicitly about the inhuman reach of the mountain that rises above:

... but glade,
And stream, and sward, and chestnut trees,
End here; Etna beyond, in the broad glare
Of the hot noon, without a shade,
Slope behind slope, up to the peak, lies bare.

(II, 51-55)

Thus Callicles shows his own awareness of limitation.

But Callicles, unlike the hero of the poem, is willing to accept the limitation. He climbs up the mountain until he reaches the side of the stream, where he stops and contemplates in the shade of the chestnut boughs. His acceptance of the resting place is unequivocal: "What mortal could be sick or sorry here?" The question, of course, brings Empedocles to mind. He is the one who cannot be content with the verdant shade of the well-water'd dell. He must climb up to the barren peak of Etna. Although Empedocles preaches the philosophy of limitation, he refuses himself to accept the limits.

Born into life we are, and life must be our mould,
Empedocles himself chooses death.

His choice must be understood in the dramatic context of the poem. The long philosophical speech of Empedocles is delivered to Callicles halfway up the mountain. They stand just above the dell where Callicles is singing, and they can still hear the hark of Callicles and his lyric affirmation. Empedocles advises Callicles to descend the mountain, and to resume a life of virtuous compromise. But Empedocles clearly does not intend to follow his own advice. The dramatic position halfway up the mountain between the life-suggestive dell and the death-threatening peak reveals the conflict within Empedocles.

The drama loses vitality if Empedocles' decision is made before he starts up the mountain. Then Arnold is correct in describing the situation as "a continuous state of mental distress ... unrelied by incident, hope, or resistance." If the determined mind of Empedocles precludes the chance of psychological drama, the poem may still be considered dramatic, because the decision of Empedocles must be regarded with a double perspective. First, it is justified as necessary by Empedocles, it is criticized as madness by Callicles. Arnold's poem is a drama of these contrasting views.

Callicles is asked to denounce the poem's desperate hero. He first refers to Empedocles as "half mad with exile, and with brooding on its wrongs." Callicles would therefore condemn the final suicide as an act of madness. And madness is defined in the poem as the mistaken attempt to transcend the prescribed limitations. When Pausanias blames the hostile age for Empedocles' embittered mind, Callicles transfers the blame to the man himself:

... there is some root of suffering in himself,
Some secret and unfollow'd vein of woe,
Which makes the same look black and sad to him.

(II, 149-53)

Callicles is quick to condemn the "man-hating mood" of Empedocles, and even accuses him of deceiving the people whom he scorcs. Thus Empedocles is first presented in a light that is far from sympathetic.

Despite their criticism of his attitude, both Callicles and Pausanias desire to save Empedocles. Their enduring regard for him, despite their disagreement that he is mad, shows the reach of human loyalty that Empedocles must reject as he chooses his isolation. The image of the hill-mountain peak: He renounces all human sympathy when he leaves below him the last water'd dell on Etna.

The error of attempting to be superior to sympathy is explained by Callicles in the story of Apollo and Marsyas. The young Apollo cruelly demands the death of the faun as his reward for having won the contest. The Mænads plead for the poor faun to be spared, but the haughty Apollo to will not listen to their plea. The superior figure is thus shown as inhumanly cruel. The same attitude of superiority is characteristic of Empedocles. He even says that he has loved the scornful enmity of Apollo. In telling the story Callicles instinctively takes the side of the poor faun, and thereby criticizes the proud and haughty Empedocles.

It is ironic that Callicles should be the one to criticize Empedocles, because the young man with the harp corresponds to the lost youth of the despairing hero. Empedocles confirms this relationship when he looks back nostalgically to the days when he was young:

... there could still enjoy, then neither thought Nor outward things were closed and dead to us;
But we received the shock of mighty thoughts... Our hearts with a pure natural joy.

(II, 340-43)

Although critics often mention the influence of Wordsworth in these lines, and it is certainly there, Empedocles is significantly looking at a past that is now dead to him. If Empedocles did experience the pure romantic joy in his youth, he is condemned in his old age to the mid-century Victorian "dialogue of the mind with itself."

Spring 1966

The separation of youth and age lends further irony to the criticism of despair offered by Callicles. If Callicles represents the youth of the hero, it follows that Empedocles has already passed through that stage, and it also follows that Callicles himself will gradually inherit the despairing attitude that he now condemns. "Joy and the outward world must die to him, / As they are dead to me." Callicles is not yet aware that someday he himself will stand on the edge of Etna's crater. Arnold's poem thus implicitly dramatizes the progression from Romantic to Victorian, the loss of the "pure natural joy," and the final inheritance of doubt and despair. For Arnold the familiar romantic mountain top has become the setting of Empedocles' suicide.

Although Callicles accepts temporarily the limits controlling life, he also reveals the contrary motivation ruling Empedocles. In the lyric describing the fate of Cadmus and Harmonia it is shown why Empedocles cannot be content with the verdant dell halfway up the mountain. The blissful resting place of Cadmus and Harmonia is analogous to the last water'd dell on Etna. Arnold confirms the analogy with corresponding descriptions of the two places. Callicles pictures the happy retreat of Cadmus and Harmonia as "buoyant and fresh" with "mountain flowers / As virginal and sweet as ours."

A further analogy exists between the careers of Cadmus and Harmonia and that of Empedocles. Cadmus and Harmonia have:

- stayed long enough to see, In Thebes, the blight of calamity. Over their own dear children roll'd
Curse upon curse, pang upon pang.

For years ... (II, 444-48)

and Empedocles also has outlived his power, and has suffered a corresponding isolation in Agrigentum. In his outline for the poem Arnold describes Empedocles—"his friends are dead; the world is all against him." Cadmus and Harmonia choose to retire from their fate in the happy glen. But the cost of their peace is great. They are free of "their first sad life ... and all that Theban woe," but their freedom is "placid and dumb." Resting in the wooded dell on Etna would thus be a way of preserving life, but the form of life preserved would be a poor compromise. Empedocles is not willing to continue life on such terms. He advises Pausanias to do so, but compromise is more suitable to the obliging character of Pausanias.

"Refusal of limitation" is what Arnold wrote in his
The George-Amelia-Dobbin Triangle in the Structure of Vanity Fair

Myron Tunnel

There are several reasons why Vanity Fair has been thought to have no plot, or worse, no plan. The novel appeared first in serial form, and it is possible that "the spasmodic writing of monthly installments prevented good integration."34 Thackeray himself wrote in the "Preface" to Pendennis that the serial novel "constantly does and must" fail in art, "although it may have the "advantages of a certain truth and honesty, which a work more elaborate might lose."35 A novel of the size of Vanity Fair, published in the way it was, some critics say, "could hardly be symmetrical in form."36 Moreover, Thackeray's emphasis was not on plot but on the revelation of character, on the development of the novel through the personal relationships of the characters. Time and time again, Thackeray told others that he felt toward his characters as toward real people, that he let them lead their own lives. He told John Cordy Jeaffreson, "I don't control my characters. I am in their hands and they take me where they please."37 And James T. Fields wrote of Thackeray: "He told me that when he began a novel he rarely knew how many people were to figure in it, and..."
to use his own words, he was always very shy about their moral conduct. He said that sometimes, especially if he had been dining late and did not feel in remarkably good-humor next morning, he was inclined to make his characters villainously wicked; but if he rose serene with an unclouded brain, there was no end to the lovely actions he was willing to make his men and women perform.8

Certainly, this view could even be supported by a statement Thackeray made in the “Preface to Pendennis: “Perhaps the lovers of ‘excitement’ may care to know, that this book began with a very precise plan, which was entirely put aside.” In fact, “up nine o’clock” of the last day of writing, “my poor friend, Colonel Alastom, was doomed to execution, and the author only relented when his victim was actually at the window” (Works, II, xlviii). A statement like this an author in a literary world that, since Henry James, has been most aware of conscious intent and form—whatever this latter may be.

However, to accept these few statements as the word on the subject would be critical acceptance of what can be shown to be just the opposite. The fact of the matter is that for Thackeray, as for Henry James, the act of creation was a mystery that no amount of self-analysis would reveal. Despite James’s highly conscious attempt, his explanations of his works as clear indications of his own genius, development, and critical value—really tell us very little about artistic creation. Thus it was with Thackeray. When a friend congratulated him on the thrill of admiration Becky felt when Rawdon gave Lord Styeve the punishment that led to her own downfall, Thackeray said, “Well, when I wrote the sentence, I slapp’d my fist on the table and said, ‘That was a touch of genius!’” There can be little questioning of an artist’s inspiration; it comes from deep within, as a gift from a hidden source. As unsympathetic a critic as Greg saw this, too:

When Thackeray surrendered to the excitement of creation, his unconscious mind often took control. He once told Whitwell Elwin: “I have no idea where it all comes from. It is often assisted by myself to read it after I have got it on paper.” This is as it should be; at any rate, as it seems to be with the most of the greatest artists, whether men of letters, painters, sculptors, or musicians: they draw from a well that is deeper than conscious memory.9

We must remember that by 1846, when Thackeray began to do serious work on Vanity Fair, he had been writing for almost a dozen years, and he knew the tricks of the trade. He could establish conflicts quickly, make a character come alive with a few quick strokes, and set a story in his head, so that when the time came to write it, he would have no trouble at all. Austin Dobson comments, “No doubt Thackeray must often have arranged in his mind precisely much that he meant to say. Such seems indeed to have been his habit.”10 This kind of mental composition is not unknown. John Milton, who was not a professional author in the same way that Thackeray was—he did not “earn a living” by writing, composed his verses the same way, when Milton built up a reservoir of poetry, he called his amanuensis, “saying he was going to be milked.” Once, when Frederick Locker-Lampson met Thackeray “in the Green Park, Thackeray gently begged to be allowed to walk alone as he had some verses in his head which he was finishing, supposing that Thackeray composed in his mind a complete monthly issue of three or four chapters. However, we do feel that while writing his chapters and monthly parts, Thackeray still had in his mind the over-all pattern and design for the development of the novel as he knew in which direction it was going, and what it had to do.

We will analyze one part of Vanity Fair, the George-Amelia-Dobbin triangle, and try to show that Thackeray had a plan, that he knew what had to happen. One of Thackeray’s many anti-fiction-of-the-age devices was the death of the “hero,” George Osborne, about half-way through the novel. This climax of Chapter 32 (Number IX), the death of George is foreshadowed as early as Chapter 13 (Number IV). George visits Amelia and stands in the doorway a moment:

He leaned on her from the drawing-room door—magnificent, with ambrosial whiskers, like a god. Sambo, whose face as he announced Captain Osbín (having conferred a brevet rank on that young officer) blazed with a sympathetic grin, saw the white lids start, and flush, and jump up from her watching-place in the window; and Sambo retreated; and as soon as the door was shut, she went fluttering to Lieutenant George Osborne’s heart as if it was the only number home for her to nestle in. Oh, thou poor panting little soul! The very finest thread in the whole for-

Yet as early as George and Amelia’s honeymoon, Thackeray tells us that the marriage is not the end, that Amelia’s relationship with Dobbin will change greatly. After telling Old Osborne of the marriage, Dobbin returns to Brighton.

Little Amelia, it must be owned, had rather a mean opinion of her husband’s friend, Captain Dobbin. He looked—he was very plain and homely-looking; and exceedingly awkward and unsightly. She liked him for his attachment to her husband (to whom she was very little in that), and she thought George was most generous and kind in extending his friendship to his brother officer. George had mimicked Dobbin’s limp and queer manners many times to her, though, to do him justice, he always spoke most highly of his true friend. In her little daily triumph of, and not knowing him intimate ly as yet, she made light of honest William—and he knew her opinions of him quite well, and to be caustic on the subject. A time came when she knew him better, and changed her notions regarding him; but that was distant as yet (Chapter 25).

Years later, when Dobbin takes Amelia and George to Pumpernickel, Thackeray uses almost the same phrases he had used before to indicate that this was the time he had predicted:

He [Dobbin] had very long legs, a yellow face, and a slight lip, which at first was rather ridiculous. But his thoughts were just, his brains were fairly good, his life was honest and pure, and his heart was warm and humble. He certainly had very large hands and feet, which the two George Osbornes used to caricature and laugh at; and their jeers and laughter perhaps led poor little Amelia astray as to his worth. But have we not all been misled about our heroes, and changed our opinions a hundred times? Emmy, in this happy time, found that hers underwent a very great change, in respect of the merits of the Major (Chapter 62).

We know that Thackeray had a plan for Amelia’s life from the time between these two opinions of Dobbin. When Number VII appeared (Chapters 23-25), Thackeray wrote to his mother that Amelia would get humiliated “when her account of a husband is well dead with a ball in his odious bowels; when she has had sufferings, a child, and a religion.” This certainly bears our contention

8. Yesterdays with Authors (Boston, 1955), pp. 17-56.
that the death of George did not just happen, and that Thackeray planned his story. George is killed at the end of Number IX (Chapter 32); Amelia's child is born in Number X (Chapter 33); she begins to suffer because of her selfishness in Number XI (Chapter 38): her greatest financial, social, and familial difficulties occur in Number XIII (Chapter 46); and her greatest emotional trial—the surrender of George to his paternal grandfather—occurs in Number XV (Chapter 51). Thackeray himself dodged during her stay in Pumpenricvel (Number XVIII, Chapter 62).

Dobbin is brought back to England from India because of a remark in a letter from his sister that Amelia "is about to marry a reverend gentleman, the Rev. Mr. Binny, one of the curates of Brompton. A poor match. But Mrs. O. is getting old, and I saw a great deal of grey in her hair—she was in very good spirits." This letter ends Chapter 43 (the first chapter of Number XIII); but Dobbin does not appear again until the end of Number XVI (Chapter 56), when he arrives at Mr. Veal's academy. His entrance serves as a contrast to Dobbin, for Thackeray's idea of the gentleman, appears at the end of the chapter entitled "Georgy is Made a Gentleman." Dobbin, who had served as a contrast to the dandyism of George the father, now serves as a contrast to the dandyism of George the son. Because of his concern with the time and its effect on life and character, Thackeray creates a George the son who is a beginning again of George the father, with the concomitant feeling of life having been lived and being lived over. When George's sister Jane, who has had the life squeezed out of her by her father, first sees little George, she comes home quite upset:

The woman burst into tears. "Oh, sir," she said, "I've seen little George. He is as beautiful as an angel—and so like him!" The old man opposite to her did not say a word, but flushed up, and began to tremble in every limb (Chapter 42).

Later, when the boy moves to his grandfather's house, he later toward all about him exactly as his father did twenty years before. As a result, everybody was afraid of Mr. Osborne, and Mr. Osborne was afraid of Dobbin. The boy was changing manners, and offhand rattle about books and learning, his likeness to his father (dead unreconciled in Brussels yonder), awed the old gentleman, and gave the young boy the mastery. The old man would start at some hereditary feature or tone unconsciously used by the little lad, and famishing that George was again before him. He tried by indulgence to the grandson to make up for harshness to the older George (Chapter 56).

Old Osborne's crumbling before the assumed airs of his grandson instantly reminds us of the scene in which the old man cringed before the boy's father after he had disobeyed orders and spoken out warmly in Amelia's favor.

The difference between the pair was, that while the father was violent and a bully, the son had thrice the nerve and confidence of the parent, and could not merely make an attack, but resist it; and finding that the moment was now come when the contest between his father who was to be decided, he took his dinner with perfect coolness and appetite before the engagement began. Old Osborne, on the contrary, was nervous, and drank much. He floundered in his conversation with the ladies, his neighbours: George's coolness only rendering him more angry. It made him half mad to see the calm way in which George, flapping his napkin, and with a swaggering bow, opened the door for the ladies to leave the room; and filling a glass of wine, smacked it, and looked his father full in the face, as if to say, "Guiden of the Guard, fire first." The old man also took a supply of ammunition, but his deceiver clinked against the glass as he tried to fill it. . . .

Whenever the lad assumed his haughty manner, it always created either a terror or great irritation in the parent. Old Osborne stood in secret terror of his son as a better gentleman than himself; and perhaps his readers may have remarked in their experiences of this Vanity Fair of ours, that there is no character which a low-minded man so much mistrusts as that of a gentleman (Chapter 44).

Thackeray reinforces the idea that young George is his father beginning again by reproaching in the people who surround him the same emotions they felt with his father. Thus, when George comes to live with his grand father, he is given the same room his father had before him. But it is a room in which time has stood still, just as in the reestablishment of the son-father relationship between George and his grandfather, we have the feeling that despite the passage of time, we have moved back in time, that in a sense he has again stood still. When George is to come, the novel becomes a novel of metaphors.

It was George's room. It had not been opened for more than ten years. Some of his clothes, papers, handkerchiefs, ships and caps, fishing-rods and sporting gear, were still there. An army list of 1814, with his name written on the cover; a little dictionary he was wont to use in writing; and the Bible his mother had given him, were on the mantelpiece; with a pair of spurs, and a dried

inkstand covered with the dust of ten years. Ah! since that ink was wet, what days and people had passed away! The writing-book still on the table was blank in his hand (Chapter 50).

But George is not another George only to his grandfather; he is also another George to his mother. And here again we observe Thackeray's control of what E. K. Brown calls "the rhythm" of the novel.13 When George and Amelia are in his room, he points out something he has just observed:

"Look here, mother," said George, "here's a G.O. scratched on the glass with a diamond; I never saw it before; I never did." "It was your father's room long before you were born, George," she said, and she blushed as she kissed the boy (Chapter 61)."}

Early in the novel, George writes a letter about the Cuff-Dobbin rivalry to his father: "Dear Mama,—I hope you are quite well. I should be much obliged to you to send me a cake and five shillings... . He [Cuff] has a white Pony to come and fetch him, and a groomsman in livery on a bay mare. I wish my Papa would let me have a Pony, and I am your dutiful Son. George Sedley Osborne.

P.S.—Give my love to little George, I am cutting her out a Coach in cardboard. Please not a seedcake, but a plum-cake (Chapter 5).

Years later, Amelia treasures a composition by George on selfishness. And here again is the irony with which the entire book is suffused: both Georges and Amelia are motivated by self-blinding selfishness. Amelia shows the composition to Dobbin. "This great effort of genius, which is still in the possession of George's mother," contains the following remarks:

"Of all the vices which degrade the human character, Selfishness is the most odious and contemptible. An undue love of Self leads to the most monstrous crimes; and occasions the greatest misfortunes both in States and Families. As a selfish man will impoverish his family and often bring them to ruin; so a selfish king brings ruin on his people and often plunges them into war... . We see by these examples [Achilles and Napoleon] that selfishness not only involves itself but others, and that our attention to our own interests and ambition, but that we are to consider the interests of others as well as our own (Chapter 58).

Early in the novel, George borrows money from Dobbin to buy Amelia a present:


14. For a fuller discussion of Amelia's psychology, see my article, "The Character of Amelia in the Meaning of Vanity Fair" in The Victorian Newsletter, XVIII (Fall 1980), pp. 5-7.

And I dare say he would have bought something very handsome for Amelia; only, getting off the coach in Fleet Street, he was attracted by a hand- some shirt-pin in a jeweller's window, which he could not resist; and having paid for that, had very little money to spare for indulging in any further exercise of kindness (Chapter 13).

Years later, this episode is repeated when, burdened by debt, Dobbin has to cancel an order for Christmas clothes for George:

Hardest of all, she had to break the matter to George, who made a loud outcry. Everybody had new clothes at Christmas. The others would laugh at him. He would have new clothes. She had promised them to him. The poor widow had only kisses to give him. She darned the old suit in tears. She cast about among her little ornaments to see anything to procure the desired novelties. There was her India shawl that Dobbin had sent her. She remembered in former days going with her mother to a fine India shop on Ludgate Hill, where the ladies had all sorts of dealings and bargains in these articles. Her cheeks flushed and her eye shone with pleasure as she thought of this remission, and she kissed away George to school in the morning, smiling brightly after him. The boy felt that there was good news in her look (Chapter 46).

What Amelia surrendered unwittingly in the first episode, she gave willingly in the second; in both cases, she is the victim of a George Osborne, caught in the grip of a selfishness that she cannot or will not fight against. And we see the irony in Amelia's ecstatic statement to Dobbin:

"O William," she added, holding out her hand to the Major—"what a treasure Heaven has given me in that boy! He is the comfort of my life—and he is the image of—of him that's gone!" (Chapter 51).

And for Dobbin Geoegy is also a beginning again of the old George. When first introduced in Chapter 5, Dobbin is defending little George Osborne against the bully Cuff; after George's death, Dobbin serves as protector for the second George Osborne. He is the voice of conscience for both, and therefore attempts to contrast to their dandyisms and boorishness. But time produces changes, and so there cannot be a perfect superimposition of one life upon the pattern of an earlier one. For example, the older George complained about Dobbin's "sermonizing" (Chapter 13).
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but the young George is never preached to, and for good reason:

He was always respectful to Major Dobbin, however, and more modest in his demeanour when that gentleman was present. He was a clever lad, and afraid of the Major. George could not help admiring his friend's simplicity, his good-humour, his various learning quietly imparted, his general love of truth and justice. He had met no such man as yet in the course of his experiences that he had not a high opinion of for a gentleman. He hung fondly by his godfather's side; and it was his delight to walk in the Parks and hear Dobbin talk. William told George about his father, about India and Waterloo, about everything but himself. When George was more than usually pert and conceited, the major made jokes at him, which Mrs. Osborne thought very clever (Chapter 60).

Here we see another George Osborne starting life, a different—but also very similar—George Osborne. The return of George in the person of his son thus continues the George-Amelia-Dobbin triangle. Just as Dobbin is forced to protect Amelia's interests in the first part of the novel, so he protects her and George's interests in the last half of the novel. True, he does so partially because of natural inclination and partially because of the wills left by both George and Old Osborne. But in both triangles, Dobbin is the outsider. After the death of George, Amelia relates to her dead husband. As long as Amelia refuses to accept the truth about George's real character—done partly because of repression, partly because of ignorance—there can be no marriage to Dobbin. And it was fairly easy for a sensitive Victorian novel reader that Dobbin was to marry Amelia. Abraham Hayward, who reviewed the novel after about twelve numbers, wrote:

Mr. Thackeray has kept his science and political economy (if he has any) for some other emergency, and given us a piece of old-fashioned love-story, which any genuine novel of the old school may honestly, plentifically, and conscientiously cry over. As regards Mrs. George Osborne, no interruption is needed; the does not love or marry her should have been selected obviously in store for her. She is to marry Major (or is may be Lieutenant-general, Sir William) Dobbin. 15

So conscious was Thackeray of how the novel had to develop, that he prepared two different ways of disposing Amelia of her infatuation with the dead-live George. And although the first revelation, by Dobbin, is made inadverently, the second, by Becky, is made almost gratuitously; both are carefully prepared for and developed throughout the novel. In fact, the failure of Dobbin's revelation to shock Amelia into awareness necessitates the shift of scene from London to Pumpernickel, and the need for the trip (Number XVIII) was prepared for as far back as Number V (Chapter 17), and no later than Number VIII (Chapter 29).

Chapters 17, 18, and 59—'How Captain Dobbin Bought a Piano.' 'Who Played on the Piano Captain Dobbin Bought?' and 'The Old Piano—all in deal some in way with the piano Dobbin bought at the bankruptcy auction of Sedley's household goods and sent to Amelia. This bankruptcy had a strange double effect:

Of all Sedley's opponents in his debates with his creditors which now ensued, and harassed the feelings of the humiliated old gentleman so severely, that in six weeks he olden more than he had done for fifteen years before—the most determined and obstinate seems to be John Osborne, his old friend and neighbour—John Osborne, whom he had shown up in life—what was under a hundred obligations to him—and whose son was to marry Sedley's daughter. Any one of these circumstances would account for the bitterness of Osborne's opposition (Chapter 18).

Osborne broke off the engagement of Amelia to George, and as the poor girl's happiness and perhaps character were compromised, it was necessary to show the strongest reasons for the rupture, and for John Osborne to prove John Sedley to be a very bad character indeed' (Chapter 18). And John Sedley felt a reciprocal hatred for Osborne:

Whenever old John Sedley thought of the affair between George and Amelia, or alluded to it, it was with the bitterness as much as Mr. Osborne himself had shown. He cursed Osborne and his family as heartless, wicked, and ungrateful. No power on earth, he swore, would induce him to marry his daughter to the son of such a villain—a man who had banished George from her mind, and to return all the presents and letters which she had ever had from him (Chapter 18).

Because of these antagonisms, the arrival of the piano, a tangible symbol of George's affection, causes some agitation. However, Dobbin does not enlighten the Sedleys about the source of the gift:

The good-natured fellow had found Mrs. Sedley only too willing to receive him, and greatly agitated by the arrival of the piano, which, as she conjectured, must have come from George, and was a signal of amity on his part. Caspian did not correct this error of the worthy lady.

And when Amelia sends back her few presents from George, she adds as postscript, 'I shall often play upon the piano—your piano. It was like to you send it' (Chapter 18).

Dobbin's emotional involvement throughout the first two piano chapters, Thackeray makes us feel that he is fighting involvement. He achieves this effect by making Dobbin suppress his own emotions, and by making him move in the background of the action, while focusing on the emotional relationship between George and Amelia. Thus, after the auction, 'when Rawdon and his wife wished to communicate with Captain Dobbin at the sale, and to know particulars of the catastrophe which had befallen Rebecka's old acquaintances, the Captain had vanish ed; and such information as they got was from a stray porter or broker at the auction.' And the chapter ends with a discussion between Rawdon and Becky of what will happen next to the two lovers:

'What day—call 'em—Osborne, will cry off now, I suppose, since the family is smashed. How cut up your pretty little friend will be; hey, Becky?'

'I dare say she'll recover it,' Becky said, with a smile—and they drove on and talked about something else (Chapter 17).

Likewise, despite the fact that Dobbin had bought the piano and carried messages back and forth to get Amelia and George together, the climatic action of Chapter 18 focuses not on Dobbin, but on George.

Thus we see that the piano has two different values, depending on which story it is part of; the Amelia-George or the Amelia-Dobbin. Amelia saves the piano because of its emotional value for her, even when she gives away all her other possessions:

Emmy, when she went away from Brompton, endowed Mary with every article of furniture that the house was only taking away her pictures (the two pictures over the bed and her piano)—that little old piano which had now passed into a pristine jingling old age, but which she loved for its associations of her own. She was a child when first she played on it: and her parents gave it her. It had been given to her again since, as the reader may have observed, when her father's house was gone to ruin, and the instrument was recovered out of the wreck.

She values the piano in its Amelia-George context. When Dobbin sees it, and hears how much Amelia values it, he accepts it in its Amelia-Dobbin context. Thackeray uses this double-value symbol to produce a revelation of prime importance:

When the men appeared then bearing this old music-box, and Amelia gave orders that it should be placed in the chamber aforesaid, Dobbin was quite elated. 'I'm glad you've kept it,' he said in a very sentimential manner. 'I was afraid you didn't care an inch for it'.

'It value it more than anything I have in the world,' said Amelia.

'Do you, Amelia?' cried the Major. The fact was, as he had bought it himself, though he never said anything about it, it never entered into his head to suppose that Emmy should think anybody else was the purchaser, and as a matter of course he fancied she would have known the gift came from him. 'Do you, Amelia?' he said; and the question, the great question of all, was trembling on his lips, when Emmy replied—

'Can I do otherwise—did he not give it me?'

'I did not know,' said poor old Dob, and his corners filled.

Amelia does not understand the meaning of this episode until some time later. Her response is a classic type of rejection:

then it struck her, with inexpressible pain and mortification too, that it was William who was the giver of the piano; and not George, as she had fancied. It was not George's gift; the only one which she had received from George, as she thought—the thing she had cherished beyond all others—her dearest relic and prize. She had spoken to it about George; played his favourite airs upon it; sat for long evening hours, touching, to the best of her simple art, melan choly harmonies on the keys, and weeping over them in silence. It was not George's relic, it was valueless now. The next time that old Sedley asked her to play, she said it was shockingly out of tune, that she had a headache, that she couldn't play (Chapter 59).

Thackeray here shows a keen insight into Amelia's psychology. When she decides that the piano is valueless, Amelia is really making a judgment on her past life; she is admitting that the man she married was not what she seemed to be, just as the piano, 'her dearest relic and prize' was 'George's relic'; it had changed because of this revelation, only Amelia's attitude toward it. Unwilling to accept the value of the piano in its

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15 Edinburgh Review, LXXXVII (January 1848), pp. 53. 60.
Amelia-Dobbie context, for she would thereby have to ac-
cept the truth of George's character. Amelia rejects the
piano: "It is out of tune." And the psychic tensions caused
by the repression of the old truth that again forces itself
into her awareness cause her pain. Notice, when she ap-
gizes to Dobbin:

"About—about that little square piano. I never
thanked you for it when you gave it me; many,
many years ago, before I was married. I thought
something else I had given it you. Thank you, Wil-
liam." She held out her hand; but the poor little
woman's heart was bleeding; and as for her eyes,
of course they were at their work.

These psychic pressures are not without physical symp-
toms: "she had a headache... she couldn't play." (Chap-
ter 59).

This rejection of Dobbin by Amelia was not unex-
pected. Thackeray had planned it, and had also prepared
another means of making Amelia see the truth. But she
had to go to the continent. Why? Because Becky Sharp is
there. After the great discovery scene, in which Rawdon
finds Becky and Lord Steyne together, Becky is an outcast.
The only alternative to "scandal, separation, Doctors' com-
mons," was Becky's exit; "it was Mr. Wemmish's business,
Lord Steyne's business, Rawdon's, everybody's—to get
her out of the country, and hush up a most disgraceable
affair" (Chapter 64). Since social pressures dictate that
Becky leave the country, it is inevitable that Amelia will
soon follow; inevitable, that is, because of the way that
Thackeray structures the story. For we know that Becky
has in her possession a document that will reveal to
Amelia the true nature of her deceased husband's charac-
ter.

At the ball the night before the battle of Waterloo,
George leaves Amelia sitting alone while he fawns and
flutters over Becky. Finally, George comes back, but not to
see his wife:

... George came back for Rebecca's shawl and
flowers.... George went away then with the
bouquet; but when he gave it to the owner, there
lay a note, coiled like a serpent among the flowers.
She had been used to deal with notes early in
her. She put out her hand and took the nosey-

He said by her eyes as they met, that she was
aware she what she find there... George

16. We remember Becky's correspondence with the Rev. Mr. Crisp
while she was at Chiswick (Chapter 23) and the wonderful scene in
which Rawdon and Becky have a little discussion about the moralities
in which Becky is playing. She stops, and "rising and looking him steadily
in the face, took up the triangular missive daintily, and waved

bowed over the hand, said nothing in reply to a
remark of Crawford's, did not hear it even, his
brain was so throbbling with triumph and excite-
ment, that they allowed them to go away without a
word (Chapter 29).

Thackeray makes no secret about Becky's possession
of the letter. When the troops move out to fight at Waterloo,
Becky too prepares for action. She

was still in her pretty ball-dress, her fair hair
hanging somewhat out of curl on her neck, and
the circles round her face dark with washing.
"What a fright I seem," she said, examining her-
self in the glass, "and how pale this pink makes me
look." So she divested herself of this pink raiment;
in doing which a note fell out from her corsage,
which she picked up with a smile, and
locked into her dressing-box. And then she put
her bouquet of the ball into a glass of water, and
went to bed, and slept very comfortably (Chap-
ter 30).

When Becky smiles, we know why she keeps the letter:
it gives her power over Amelia and George. And we re-
member back some twenty chapters to the self-evaluation
Becky had made:

"I am alone in the world," said the friendless
girl... "Well, let us see if my wits cannot pro-
vide me with an honourable maintenance, and
if some day or the other I cannot show Miss
Amelia my real superiority over her. Not that I
dislike poor Amelia: who can dislike such a
handsome, good-natured creature? only it will be
a fine day when I take my place above her in
the world, as why, indeed, should I not?" (Chap-
ter 10).

The day after the ball, Becky visits Amelia and finds her
in a state close to hysteria:

"Why are you here, Rebecca?" she said, still
looking at her solemnly with her large eyes.
These glances troubled her visitor.

"She must have seen him give me the letter
at the ball." Rebecca thought. "Don't be ap-
tated, dear Amelia," she said, looking down.
"I came but to see if I could—if you were well." "Are you well?" said Amelia, "I dare say you
are. You don't love your husband. You would not
be here if you did. Tell me, Rebecca, did I
ever do anything but kindness?"

"Indeed, Amelia, no," the other said, still
hanging down her head.

"When we were quite poor, who was it that
befriended you? Was I not a sister to you? You
saw us all in happier days before he married me.
I was all in then to him; or would he have
given up his fortune, his family, as he nobly
did to make me happy? Why did you come between
my love and me? Who sent you to separate those
whom God joined, and take my darling's heart
from me—my own husband? Do you think you
could love him as I did? His love was every-
thing to you. You know it, and wanted to rob me
of it. For shame, Rebecca; bad and wicked
woman—false friend and false wife." Amelia,
I protest before God, I have done my husband no
wrong," Rebecca said, turning from her.

"Have you done me no wrong, Rebecca? You
did not succeed, but you tried. Ask your heart
if you did not." She knows nothing, Rebecca thought (Chap-
ter 33).

Thackeray carefully points out the importance of the
letter. In the next day, Becky does not feel like visiting
Amelia:

She clipped the bouquet which George had
brought her, and gave fresh water to the flowers,
and read over the letter which he had sent her.
"Poor wretch," she said, twirling round the little
bit of paper in her fingers, "how I could crush
her with this!—and it is for a thing like this
to crush her heart, forsooth,—for a man who
is stupid—a coxcomb—and who does not
care for her. My poor good Rawdon is worth
ten of this creature." And then she fell to think-
ing what she should do—what if anything hap-
pened to poor good Rawdon, and what a great
piece of luck it was that he had left his horses
behind the night before (Chapter 32).

Years later, as Becky moves up in the world and becomes
involved with Lord Steyne, Thackeray refers twice in
the same chapter to the secret hiding place in the desk:

The diamonds, which had created Rawdon's ad-
miration, never went back to Mr. Poltolonis, of
Cowenby Street, and that gentleman never ap-
plied for their restoration; but they retired into
a little private repository, in an old desk, which
Amelia Sedley had given her years and years
ago, and kept a number of useful and,
perhaps, valuable things, about which her
husband knew nothing (Chapter 48; notice also the last paragraph of the chapter).

Thackeray again reminds us that Becky has the letter in
her desk when Rawdon ransacks Becky's room after the
discovery scene:

Rebecca gave him all the keys but one: and she
was in hopes that he would not have re-
marked the absence of that. It belonged to the
little desk which she had given her in early
days, and which she kept in a secret place. But
Rawdon flung open boxes and wardrobes, throw-
ing the multifarious trumpery of their contents
here and there, and last he found the desk.
The woman was forced to open it. It contained
papers, love-letters many years old—all sorts of
small trinkets and woman's memoranda (Chap-
ter 53).

When Becky is forced to leave Paris, she goes to Brussels:

She went to Waterloo and to Laeken, where George
Olliver found her, and underwent much much
suffering. She made a little sketch of it. "That poor
Cupid," she said; "how dreadfully he was in love
with me, and what a fool he was! I wonder
whether little Emmy is alive" (Chapter 64).

Later, Becky understands the mistake Amelia makes in
rejecting Dobbin. When Amelia says she could not for-
get George, Becky rebukes her:

"Look there, you fool," Becky said, still with
provoking good humour, and taking a little pa-
er out of her belt, she opened it and flung it in
to Emmy's lap. "You know his handwriting.
He wrote that to me—wanted me to run away
with him—gave it me under your nose, the day
before he was shot—and served him right!"

Becky repeated.

Emmy did not hear her; she was looking at the
letter. It was that which George had put in-
to the bouquet and given to Becky on the night
of the Duchess of Richmond's ball. It was as
she had said: the foolish young man had asked her
to fly (Chapter 67).

There can be little doubt that the George-Amelia-Dob-
bin story was carefully constructed. At the beginning—
before the novel begins, in fact—is the engagement
of Amelia to George; at the end is the marriage to Dobbin;
and in the middle is the death of George and the begin-
ing again of George in his son. And woven into the nar-
rative are the devices to bring the novel to a "happy con-
clusion." In this respect, Vanity Fair differs from most
serial novels, of which Kathleen Tillson writes, "often the
end was not even written, perhaps not premed-
Browning's Duke as Theatrical Producer

W. David Shaw

“My Last Duchess” occupies the same position in Browning's canon as Hamlet does in Shakespeare's. Its power resides in its endless suggestiveness, its play of enigmatic forces that continue to seduce and inspire its subtler critics. Some of the poem's best commentators believe that the Duke delivers his speech as a warning that he wants the envoy to convey to his future wife. Professors Brown and Bailey summarize this view when they state that the Duke “expects from his bride single-hearted, worshipful loyalty, and will tolerate no less. He tells the story of his last duchess as a sublime means of making this point.” But other penetrating critics have objected that the Duke is more interested in obtaining a dowry than a submissive wife, and if the envoy were to report this speech to the Count’s daughter it is unlikely that the dowry would be forthcoming. It is possible, of course, that the daughter would have no choice in the matter, since Italian women of the sixteenth century were still treated as chattel on the marriage market. But if this is the case, there would then be even less reason to suppose that the Duke is delivering a speech. To do so would be to demonstrate that, under such circumstances would be to grant the possibility of an unruly chivalry and that the marital rights of a duke do not necessarily express any objective reality. On the other hand, the Duke is too hot-blooded to be seduced into plain effrontery. It would not be in character for the Duke cruelly and openly to challenge the envoy to report this story if he dared.

Thomas Asaad argues that the Duke stoops to reveal a domestic frustration because it enables him to demonstrate his knowledge of art. But the role of art is not as important in “My Last Duchess” as it is in “Fra Lippo Lippi” or “Andrea del Sarto.” One cannot help feeling that Mr. Asaad has misunderstood a subtheme for the primary one. After all, could a mere taste for appreciating art make the Duke do what “he claims he never chooses to do, and that is to stoop?” Neither B. R. Jerman's thesis that the Duke is written nor Robert Langbaum's hypothesis of the Duke's insanity  can explain convincingly why the Duke should volunteer all the shocking information that he does. As in a portrait of Pontormo, there is a presumption of superiority in the Duke's manner that will accept no question from the outside world, nor admit any satisfaction of our curiosity. Indeed the usual role of speaker and reader is reversed: the reader, like the envoy, feels that he, not the Duke, is being inspected. The critic's inquiring gaze into the Duke is at first rejected, nor does it disclose any simple explanation of his motives.

I believe that the clue to this mystery lies in the area that other critics have indicated, but that no one seems to have explored at sufficient length. Commentators have sensed that the Duke is staging a "show" for the envoy by drawing and closing curtains and speaking rhetorically. But because they have paid too little attention to the Duke's language and gestures, they have not generally recognized the full extent to which the speaker is involved in the act of a ceremonial speech. His gesture of receiving the envoy, his words, acting, and verbal artifice. The ceremony is part of the stagecraft. The Duke has been like the producer of a play till life (in the form of his Duchesses' admirers) moved into his theatre and set up its counter-play. Isolated by the greedy idolatries of his producer's art, the Duke's theatrical self has fiercely willed the extinction of every other self. Now, in the perfect theatre of the dramatic monologue, with the envoy as his captive audience, the Duke must re-stage the unequal drama of his domestic life in the form most flattering to his producer's ego. He is at last ready to give the faultless performance that, as we gradually infer, he has never had the absolute mastery to stage in real life.

Our recognition of the Duke's theatrical art depends, in the first place, upon a sensitivity to his style. His ceremonial rhetoric stages a succession of disdainful, grandly arbitrary displacements of the sensitive, spontaneous, and rationally humane. Each of these stylistic displacements is also a stroke of dramatic art; and, together, they unite within a shell of singular refinement the hauteur of an emperor, the dehiscence of a devious negotiator, the arrogancy of a god.

The opening lines have a sweep of godlike omniscience. The Duke's lordly gesture "calls" into being, as though by a fiat of divine creation, an acknowledged "wonder." Duke says: "I call

That piece a wonder, now: Tre Randolph's hands Worked busily a day, and there she stands.

The paratactic syntax sounds impressively oracular. Like Bellinda's echo of Genesis ("Let Spades be trumps! she said, and trumps they were"), the very grammar invites a Biblical parody. The Duke has dazed his auditor with a magnificent opening, and fully conscious of the effect he has made, he can now afford to descend from this plateau of ceremony, with its operatic pointing at the picture, to a drawing-room atmosphere of mere formality. In exposing his civilities to the envoy, this autocratic spellbinder, while choosing "Never to stoop" himself, becomes a subservient and abject Christian God of Browning's St. John who "stoops to rise . . . Such ever was love's way."  The Duke pretends to "stoop," not out of love (for his melodic pretensions exclude the imagination of love), but only out of a selfish desire to dramatize his own importance.

6. Pope, "The Rape of the Lock," Canto III: cf. "Let there be light: and there was light."

The repetition of the definite article, reinforced by the use of "alike," "all," and "each," are highly suggestive of those robot-like mechanisms that completely define it in social terms and emotional vacuity of the Duke and the fabricated conventionality within which the Duchess is trapped. Hence the mechanical feel of the monologue as a whole: the dramatic persona is puppets obediently interwining themselves in patterns set by the Duke’s "despotical" theatrical ideal. Even the grammatical structure of the sentence, implying by its additive mode of simple enumeration the failure of any ranking among the parts, clashes ironically with the Duke’s punctilious gradation of the content, ranging from his all-important "favor at her breast," through the "dropping of the daylight" and the "bough of cherries," to the "white mule" at the end. In scrupulously ordering the stage properties from the greatest to least in dignity the Duke is using the rhetorical figure of catachresis to emphasize the Duchess’ failure of dramatic sense. But because the list exaggerates the dependence of the Duke’s patronizing manners upon hierarchical forms, it inadvertently redounds on his own egoism.

What is most repulsive in the Duke’s manner is the calloquial precision of an insane rationalist. The Duke cashes his critique of the instinctive and humane into the baldly analytic mode of a social geometrist.

The speaker has the hypersensitive nerves of an infallible producer and rejects as vulgar any rational discussion with his star performer. His moral calculus transforms the rationality of the Duchess into the impudence of a saucy schoolgirl, "plainly" setting "Her wins to [his]," as though chopping logic with her master. By way of a transitory "Oh stir," as though to anticipate and forestall the mingled outraged and ammunition of his auditor, the Duke passes to a fleeting reminder, in the two words "she smiled," of the Duchess’ instinctive humanity. The jealous producer finds intolerable the spontaneous warmth of an actress who dares move beyond the role in which he has cast her by extending to others "Much the same smile." The third and final use of the word "smile" communicates in a lightning stroke of theatrical darning the full extent of the Duke’s composition, "This grew, I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together." At this point the reader realizes he has been tricked by the appearance of syzygical progression. The Duke conceals his deviation from an expected line of reasoning till the reversal comes at a single blow. His dissertation of logical forms like the syllogism from their human content is a striking

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9. Langbaum, p. 84.

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"absolutely silly," as the Duke’s revelations would seem to be in view of his negotiations for another wife. Though such apparent "silliness" has led critics like B. R. Jerman to call the speaker "bizarre," the Duke’s character seems far closer to the personality of the obsessive neurotic as Freud describes him. He is "originally always a person of a very energetic disposition, often highly opinionated and as a rule intellectually gifted above the average." Laurence Perrine’s excellent analysis of the Duke’s shrewdness, "a valuable sense of compulsion on this aspect of his character. He is over-conscious, and more than usually correct in extending his courtesies to the envoy. In keeping with Freud’s diagnosis the Duke’s genius in controlling the responses of the envoy, and his use of that response, are evidence of superior intellect. But he devotes these powers to such ostensibly "silly" ends that, as Freud observes of the neurotic, "it is a sufficiently arduous task to find one’s bearings in this maze of contradictory character-trait and mortified situations. Only one thing is open to him ... instead of one silly idea he can adopt another of a slightly milder character." This is precisely what the Duke does at the end of the poem when he identifies himself—sensibly and the lucky Neptune and sees the woman as the sibyl. He can displace his theories of compulsion, but he cannot dispel it. He must repeat and correct the traumatic domestic situation that has given rise to his ceremonial compulsions.

These last hypotheses are admittedly speculative, but are not crucial to the use of the poem. Evidence of a Freudian analysis, which perhaps emphasizes the sexual motivation, the Duke’s rhetorical "seduction" of the envoy is certainly a grotesque form of social courtesies, involving as it does communication between two historically related elements. "Neurotic" as an inferior embodies the hierarchical principle of which the Duke is so conscious, and it is a surrogate for the rhetoric of sexual courtship, much of whose "mystery" likewise proceeds from inequalities of social status. The Bishop's Order of His Tomb" offers a similar parallel of courtship when the old ecclesiastic turns his death bed into a marriage bed, acting out in pantomime a kind of sexual seduction of his late mistress, but failing in his "courtship" of the heaven-borne while in the "courtship" of the earth-born. The result of the disparity between the two kinds of "courtship," the Duke’s substitution of a verbal and dramatic mode of "seduction" provides him with a vicarious thrill. It is to
that extant a "mystery," and inseparable from the psychosis of domination and ownership that compels the Duke to treat the envoy, like his last Duchess, as another stage property.

If this argument is correct, then the Duke's spellbinding performance before his auditor enables him to glory in what Kenneth Burke has called "an aesthetic of crime which is infused, however perversely, with the 'mystery' of aristocracy." He represents "aristocratic view," crime that has the appeal of dramatic style. This is because the Duke has seen the Duke as the outrageous producer of a social play that must bring into harmony with the prejudices of the speaker's own taste every spontaneous action of the Duchess. The Duke's theatrical sense, finely adjusted, as it seems, and revealing no more than a shade of concern with the nominal purpose of his interview, results in the removal and elevation of the speaker, and in the willful isolation of his person. He is the compulsive producer who must reenact on a stage more flattering to his thwarted ego the drama of his past domestic life, and who, with all the craft of the spellbinder's art, deliberately sets out to control the responses of the envoy. I have tried to show how the Duke's treatment of his auditor is strikingly rhetorical, what Mr. Burke would call a "pantomomic" morality always on the alert for slight advantages. Even his self-abasement before his visitor is a form of self-exal,

Thus to see Browning's Duke as a theatrical producer is not to suspend our moral judgement of him. For beneath the surface lies the deeper irony of the doom of Auden's "intellimants without love." The last phrase, "for me," re-establishes the whole proprietary nature of the Duke, and rules out any possibility of a final redemption before he disappears forever by descending the staircase into what is at once a literary immortality and an insolent courting hell of personal damnation. Only an interpretation of this kind can account for the complex moral and aesthetic response that Browning's Duke arouses. The present reading does not pretend to change existing ideas about the poem, but to enrich them in a detailed way by linking a disciplin,

Wilkie Collins: Heart and Science and the Vievision Controversy

Doulgard B. MacEachern

In number of words written and amount of emotion generated, few Victorian controversies can compare with the one that arose over vivisection in the seventies and eighties. And like other problems that arose in the Victorian era, this one, although decided by law, was never settled to anyone's satisfaction. It was bequeathed to later generations and will not cease to be a problem so long as science continues to experiment with animals and there are men of feeling in the world.

The use of animals in physiological research was first brought to the attention of the general public in England in the sixties, but it was not until the mid-seventies that vivisection in the broadest sense became a political issue. The story of the struggle in the British press, and that thoughtful of articles on the subject appeared in major periodicals. By 1873 the opponents of vivisection were numerous and influential enough to have bills to control experiments on animals introduced into Parliament and to have a commission appointed to investigate the practice.

Late in 1873 Frances Power Cobbe, an energetic and able crusader for various causes, founded the Society for Protection of Animals Liable to Vivisection. The efforts of Miss Cobbe and her supporters resulted in the passing of a law in 1876 by which experiments on live animals in Britain are regulated by the government. The publicity given to vivisection by these events in 1875 and 1876 was responsible for the appearance of a number of articles in the contemporary, Fortnightly, Macmillan's, and the Nineteenth Century magazines in which the subject was debated at length and in depth. Another gate of articles appeared in these periodicals in late 1881 and in 1882, stimulated by the introduction into Parliament of a bill to prohibit vivisection. After 1882 vivisection, so far as important English periodicals are concerned, was practically a dead issue, but of course not for its opponents, and the antivivisectionist societies carried on an uncaring warfare against it by means of advertisements in the press, pamphlets with inflammatory illustrations taken from physiology laboratory manuals, lectures, public meetings, private appeals to influential individuals (Queen Victoria, Disraeli, Cardinal Manning). In 1884 the Rev. Ward Freeman, Benjamin Jowett, R. H. Hutton, Carlyle, Browning, Tennyson, Lewis Carroll, Christina Rossetti, Ruskin, Wilkie Collins, and G. B. Shaw supported the cause), and a magazine called The Zoophilist.

It was inevitable that once the practice of performing experiments on live animals became established as a common method of acquiring physiological and medical knowledge, opposition to it should have arisen. The right to freedom from pain was one of the basic assumptions of Victorian sensibility. On every hand strenuous efforts were being made by humanitarians and philanthropists to lessen the sum of human and animal suffering. The animal pro-
tection acts of 1822, 1835, and 1849 were major victories in the campaign to eliminate cruelty to animals. By mid-century the humanitarians seem to have realized that they could rest on their laurels for a while and that domestic animals, at least, were well protected by British law from the wanton infliction of pain. The use of animals in science laboratories posed a brand-new threat, and humanitarians were under-
standably alarmed and anguished. A study for the cure and treatment of disease... "This argument was hardly likely to appeal to men possessed of the passion for scientific knowledge, but it could appeal to others."

Another such argument against vivisection was that it dehumanized the moral sensibilities and made the vivisector indifferent to pain and cruelty: it had a damaging effect on the character. Lewis Carroll, for whom the real evil of vivisection was its supposed demoralizing effect on the individual, even raised the bogey of a vivisector, who would cut up live human beings in the interest of science. He foresaw the advent of a day when "successive generations of students, trained from their earliest years to the repression of all human sympathies, shall have developed a new and more hideous Frankenstein—a soulless being to whom science shall be all in all."


6. Neither the practice nor the word, meaning a surgical operation on a live animal for research purposes, are Victorian inventions. The first citation for vivisection in the O.E.D. is dated 1877.

Physiologists accepted the word, but some of them resented its use. They preferred "animal experimentation." 2. Frances Power Cobbe described her part in the antivivisection movement in her autobiography, Life of Frances Power Cobbe as Told by Herself (London, 1904).


-- Forsythian Review, XXIII (1883), 874.


-- Forsythian Review, XXIII (1883), 874.
An argument used by some antivivisectionists who accepted evolution was that since evolution had demonstrated the common origin of man and animals, vivisection was an abuse of man's "power over the animals whose chief man has gradually risen to be—a power which is limited both in time and place by the kindred nature of these animals." Thomas Hardy as late as 1909 stated the evolutionist antivivisection position in its most extreme form to an inquirer: The discovery of the law of evolution, which revealed that all organic creatures are of one family, shifted the crime from the plant to the human to the whole conscious world collectively. Therefore the practice of vivisection, which might have been defended while the belief ruled that men and animals are essentially different, has been left by that discovery without any logical argument in its favor. And if the practice, to the extent merely of inflicting slight discomfort now and then, be permitted, it is sometimes held (by no one) on grounds of it being good policy for animals as well as men, it is nevertheless in strictness wrong, and stands precisely in the same category as would stand its practice on men themselves.

The defenders of animal experiments had to meet the arguments of their opponents by whatever means they could, and, in general, their exposition of the practice were temperate and well considered. They had little choice of strategy; they were forced to answer attacks. They defended vivisection on the grounds of necessity and utility: they showed that hundreds of lives had been saved and human and animal suffering relieved by methods developed by experiments on laboratory animals. They denied that vivisection demonstrated the innocence of such surgery debased the surgeon. They asked why they were so singled out for reproach whereas those who inflicted pain in needless hunting were allowed to go scot-free. They were urged to prove the scientific truth, the highest and most civilized and most comprehensive work in which a man can engage. If at a small expense of pain it will give man knowledge to "prevent or mitigate pain much more severe and lasting—or even to ward off peril to life, or to prolong life—in a human being, surely vivisection is more than justifiable." They denied that vivisection, when carried on in such a way as to keep suffering to a minimum, was in any way immoral or religious.

It was against this background of attack and defense that Wilkie Collins' "Heart and Science" made its appearance. "Heart and Science is especially noteworthy as a work of fiction devoted to the cause of antivivisection by an outstanding novelist. Collins entered the controversy in its second phase, when efforts were being made to outlaw vivisection altogether. Heart and Science was serialized in Belgravia in 1882 and was published as a three-decker novel in 1883. Collins had passed his peak by this time, but he could still truthfully say that in "Heart and Science "I am writing to a very large public both at home and abroad." He could feel assured that his attack would have some effect. In this quite readable propaganda novel, an attack on science in general and on vivisection in particular, Collins, who had consistently incorporated attacks on cruelty to animals in his fiction, created the character of Dr. Benjulia to show what might happen to a scientist who persisted in vivisection.

Collins was aided by Frances Power Cobbe to the extent that she sent him a supply of antivivisectionist literature, which he gratefully acknowledged by asking her to come and look him on his table, and grant his grand discovery in days, instead of months. Collins gives the final touches to his portrait of the vivisectionist in the next to last chapter in his novel. But before that point in Benjulia's story is reached, Dr. Ovid Vere, who serves as a foil to Dr. Benjulia and who is the ideal doctor, arrives with a manuscript treating of a brain disease that will prove research by vivisection to be useless.

From this manuscript, which he had acquired from a dying doctor, Dr. Vere learns a new method for treating brain disease. He applies it to his cousin and fiancée, Carmina Graywell, who has a nervous breakdown in his absence. His incompetent physician, Dr. Null, has been giving her the wrong treatment, encouraged by Dr. Benjulia, who, although he knew the treatment to be wrong, had allowed it to continue because he wanted to observe the practice of his computer. The conclusions to be drawn from his observations are more important to him than the recovery of a sick human being. To this doctor pervaded by vivisection and greed for scientific knowledge Carmina is only a subject of experiment. When Dr. Vere discovers what has been going on, he confronts Benjulia, calls him a villain, and threatens him with death should Carmina die. It is not necessary for him to carry out his threats, however, for the method of treating brain disease is developed by the otherwise innocent visitor. Not until Chapter XXXI does the reader learn that Benjulia is a vivisectionist. Up to that point the doctor's activities have been envelopes in a haze of mystery. In XXXI Collins argues through Benjulia's brother Lenmel that if the law protects men from the evil of vivisection, it ought to protect animals also since both man and animal share the same physical nature. Lenmel also offers evidence to prove the uselessness of vivisection as a source of medical discoveries. Dr. Benjulia's answer to his brother's arguments is to make a shocking confession:

Am I working myself into my grave, in the medical interests of humanity? That for humanity! I am working for my own satisfaction—for my own pride—for my own unutterable pleasure in beating other men from the fame that will keep my name living hundreds of years for its own sake, is the one god I worship. Knowledge is its own justification and its own reward. The roaring mob follows us with its cry of Cruelty. We pity their ignorance. Knowledge sanctifies cruelty. The old anatomist stole dead bodies for knowledge. In that sacred cause, if I could steal a living man without being found out, I would take.
Jude, the Obscure and Pagan Self-Assertion

Ward Hallstrom

I CANNOT agree with Robert F. Feinser that Jude the Obscure is "indeed a pre-Christian document" or that the novel in any way implies "that, whether or not the Saints will intercede, they surely CAN."

One need not accept Feinser's claim that Father Time is a Christ figure and that through him Hardy symbolically indicts Christianity (though Holland's supporting evidence is hard to dispute) in order to document the novel's anti-Christian bias.

The anti-Christian bias of the novel owes much to Hardy's reading of On Liberty, which he tells us that he knew, as a young man, "almost by heart."28 Sue quotes Mill: "who les the world, or his portion of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation," and later paraphrases Mill's quotation in Family Happiness.29 Simpler development is "in its richest diversity" (to quote your Humboldts) to my mind far above respectability.30 Two other passages in On Liberty are underscored in Hardy's copy and may be used as commentary on the above passages:

Christian morality (so called) has all the charac-
ters of a reaction; it is, in great part, a protest against Paganism. Its ideal is negative rather than positive, enhancing rather than active; Innoc-
ence rather than Nobleness; Abstention from Evil, rather than energetic Pursuit of Good: in its precepts (as has been well said) "thou shalt not" predominates unduly over "thou shalt." In its horror of sensuality, it made an idol of asceti-
cism, which has been gradually compromised in-
to one of legality. (Chapter II).

and

"Pagan self-assertion" is one of the elements of human worth, as well as "Christian self-denial." There is a Greek ideal of self-development, which the Roman Christian ideal of self-
government blends with, but does not supersede. It may be better to be a John Knox than an Al-
chabades, but to be a Pericles rather than ei-
ther; nor would a Pericles, if we had in these days, be without anything good which belonged to John Knox. (Chapter II).

Hardy apparently saw "Human development in its rich-

diversity" as a Pagan distinctly opposed to a Christian assertion, and comments on the contrast: "Of course the book is all contrasts ... e.g. Sue and her heathen gods set against Jude's reading the Greek Testament; Christ-

minister accepts the church of the slums; Jude the

saint, Jude the sinner; Sue thePagans, Sue the saint; marriage, no marriage; etc., etc."31

That Sue is a Pagan who becomes a Christian is ob-

vious: the reasons for this apparent transformation and the attitude toward Christianity which they imply are per-

haps not so obvious. Sue's acceptance of Christianity is not only prepared for, but is inevitable. Hardy prophetically

suggests this acceptance when Sue is first introduced to the novel: Jude sees her in her ecclesiastical workshop lettering "Alleluia" on a scroll (p. 123). The second time he sees her, while she herself is alone, though she purchases Pagan divinities—Venus and Apollo—she is embarrassed by their nakedness and sub-

sequently informs Miss Fontover that they are statues of St. Peter and St. Mary Magdalene. In so doing she is sym-

bolically denying the Pagan for the Christian, denying self-assertion and accepting self-denial.

More importantly, Christianity satisfies Sue's psycho-

logical need: Sue is a masochist, as are many Hardy hero-

ines; she causes injury so that she can suffer for the misery it produces. There are many examples of this in the novel, but perhaps two early ones will suffice: Sue asks Jude to give her away in marriage to Phillotson; Jude questions whether "Sue is [to] simply so perverse that she willfully gave herself and him pain for the odd and mournful lux-

ury of practising long-suffering in her own person. . . .

(p. 209). Later after allowing Jude to kiss her, Sue has free

feeling of remorse and determines not to "write to him any feel-

ings, or more, or for at least a long time. . . And I hope it will

hurt him very much—expecting a letter to-morrow morn-

ing, and the next, and the next, and no letter coming. He'll suffer then with suspense—won't he, that's all—and

I am very glad of it!"—Tears of pity for Jude's appren-

sion suffering at her hands mingled with those which had surged up in pity of herself (p. 263). Sue's

masochism is the outlet for her obviously sublimated

sensuality. What better place for Sue than a Church which in

its horror of sensuality, [had] made an idol of asceti-

ism? The irony of course is that Hardy sees the Church as repression normal sexuality in order to satisfy the con-

sequent perversion. Hardy's awareness of the sexual mo-

tivation of Sue's "conversion" is obvious in Jude's remark that it is "fanatic prostitution" (p. 438). Jude's transformation from Christian to Pagan is per-

haps not so obvious, but it is no less real. Though Jude ap-

pears as a Christian early in the novel, his "conversion" to Paganism is foreshadowed: he knows to the Pagans divin-
ities and repeats the hymn beginning, "Plange et

varumque potens Diana!" Jude then comments that his "fanatic superstition" may be "irresistible" (p. 36). Later, when Jude sees Sue in church and assumes that she is "probably a frequenter of this place, and, steeped body and soul in church sentiment as she must be by occupa-

tion and habit, had, no doubt, much in common with him," Hardy comments, "Though he was loth to suspect it, some people might have said to him that the atmos-
phere of such a church had distinctly blinded him from Cyprus as from Galilee" (p. 307). Hardy seems to be sug-

gesting that it is the Hellenic element of the church that appeals to Jude rather than the Christian, that Jude is at heart a Pagan.

The structure of the novel involves the exchange of posi-

tions between Jude and Sue. As we have seen, this ex-

change is the pattern of revelation rather than a trans-

formation of character, but it does occur. Even before the death of the children, Jude realized that "he was mentally apprising himself of what he had occupied when Sue had occupied where he first met her" (p. 373). After the death of the children and Sue's "hysterical conversion," the allusions to the re-

versal are many. Jude ultimately finds it strange "that time and circumstance, which enlaje the views of most

men, narrow the views of women almost invariably" (p. 484), and in so finding he echoes Mill's views about Christian-

ity, which Mill calls "a narrow theory of life" (On Liberty, Chapter III).

The novel's rejection of Christianity is suggested in a hundred ways32 but is perhaps most explicit in Jude's re-

jection of Sue. He tells her, "Sue, Sue, you are not worth a man's love" (p. 470) and later does not wish to see her again (p. 483). It is what Sue represents, what she has re-

vealed herself to be, that Jude rejects; he rejects Christian self-denial, which he sees as hysterical, fanatic, perverse, in favor of Pagan self-assertion. Of course Jude commits suicide, and it may be argued that suicide is hysterical, fanatic, perverse, but such an argument is a conventional Christian one. Jude's death as a form of self-assertion, as a form of affirmation, can perhaps best be illustrated by a quotation from Kierkegaard: in the words of Judge Wil-

liam In Either Or, "to despair truly one must truly will it, but when one truly wills it one is truly beyond despair, when one has willed despair one has truly chosen that which despair chooses, i.e., oneself in one's eternal valid-

ity,"33 and Kierkegaard has often been cited as an example of despair with Pagan Stoicism.34 Surely Jude despairs, but his despair is a dentant one and he has freely chosen it. Jude's static self-assertion is then opposed to Sue's pathet-

ic self-denial; it is positive as opposed to her negative; active as opposed to her passive; Pagan as opposed to her Chris-

tian. Jude's death is an affirmation of his individuality as much as anything else, and it is through this affirmation that Christianity would deny. The novel is neither nihilis-

tic nor, I think, pessimistic; but it is certainly anti-

Christian.

University of Florida

Trabb's Boy and Orlick

Barry D. Bort

TWO RECENT CRITICS of Great Expectations have seen Orlick as a character who bears a peculiar relationship to Pip, the hero of the novel. Julian Moynahan (Essays in Criticism, X [January 1960], 60-79) sees Orlick as a "monstrous caricature of the tender-minded hero, insisting that the hero has had enough of the same ends, and that the hero has been through similarly predatory and criminal means." And

8. Jude sees the masochistic nature of Sue's "conversion" when he asks whether she is not "indulging in the luxury of the emotion raised by an affected belief" (p. 479).


10. To suggest only a few random examples: there is in Physician Morte d'Arthur, when his remedy from Mount Saint John, whose center is Christenhorst, and who deals in love potions, a portrait of Orlick by way of analogy to Phillotson and Jude and the second marriage to Arbuthnott are endorsed with enthusiasm by a visit (p. 459) and a prison (p. 459) respectively; St. John's vision

Harry Stone (Kenyon Review, XIV [Autumn 1962], 682-

91) says Orlick is both an objectified fragment of Pip's self, a projection of Pip's darker desires and aggressions, and a manifestation of primal evil.

Trabb's character is similar in the novel who also exists as a reflection of at least a portion of Pip's character, Trabb's boy. Lacking a name, this young man is present

of the City of God is described as that of a diamond merchant (p. 10); and finally Sue's quoting of St. Paul, "Charity seeketh not her own" and Jude's answering, "Is that chapter we are not one" (p. 437), is unequivocally and terrifically ironic as her whole "con-

version" materializes.31

Recent Publications: A Selected List

Arthur E. Minerof

September 1965—February 1966

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ARTS


CRITICISM AND LITERARY HISTORY


Griest, Guinevere L. "A Victorian Leibitian: Madle's Select Library." Nineteenth-Century Fiction, September, pp. 103-106. The growth of Victorian circulating libraries and the part played in their dissolution by the extinction of the three-volume novel.


of English language and literature from its beginnings to the founding of the Oxford English school in 1894.

Rev. TLS, 13 January, p. 22.

Schuyler, R. "Longman's "The Theme of Conversion in Late Victorian Fiction." Victorian Studies, September, pp. 29-44. The reasons for the "lack" and the nature of the "narrative" in several writers, including Mrs. Ward and William White.


ECONOMICS AND POLITICS


Fisher, Walter R. "John Bright: Hawk of Holy Things." Quarterly Journal of Speech, April, 1965, p. 567-59. Bright was one of the few statesmen who had the courage, moral conviction, and rhetorical skill to challenge a popular (Crimin) was.


Spring 1966

Ward, T. J. "Young England." History Today, February, pp. 120-27. Romantic views of the Middle Ages and a dis- like for the negative effects of industrialism inspired a group of young Conservatives in the House of Commons during the 1840's.


The "Great Depression" years were ones not only of crisis but also of new growth.

Whyte, L. "Land Reform at Elections in Ireland, 1760-1885." English Historical Review, October, pp. 740-60. Traces the rise of this influence, and its decline and neglect in English history.


HISTORY


Macay, Rev. M. "The Allakui Acts Administration, 1863- 84: The Emergence of the Civil Scientist." Victorian Studies, December, pp. 85-112. The Administration represents one of the most fruitful examples of Victorian social policy.


RELIGION

Anderson, Oliver. "The reactions of Church and Dissent towards the Crimean War." Journal of Ecclesi- astical History, October, pp. 252-261. The Crimean War prompted the clergy to express varied concepts of war.


between Tait and Gladstone over legislation to reform the administration and worship of the Church.


Huntzback, Robert A. "G. A. Hardy and the Imperial Stereotype." Huntington Library Quarterly, November, pp. 63-77. Hardy's books for the young, in which he drew a bright imperial image, helped color the attitudes of generations of British schoolboys.


INDIVIDUAL AUTHORS


Carruthers, Gale H. "George Eliot and the Women of Dover Beach." Modern Language Quarterly, June, pp. 264-66. Uncertainty as to the nature of the speaker and the lady week-


Stempel, Daniel. "Browning's Sorrelto: The Art of the Maker." MLA Prose, December, pp. 252-63. The poem is a dramatic narrative, a three-act proclam that cannot be fitted into the "two-dimensional limits of ordinary narration."


Blount, Trevor. "The Ironmaster and the New Acquisitiveness: Dickens' Views on the Rising Industrial Classes as Exemplified in Bleak House." The Pickwick Review in Criticism, October, pp. 414-37. There are similarities as well as differences between the power of tradition (Sir Leicester) and that of the new industrial potential (The Ironmaster).


Vangenkrukh, Edward. Dickens and the Socialism. Oklahoma. Exemplifies in the novel. The main es say contends that Dickens and Ellen Ternan were not lovers. Rev. TLS, 27 January, p. 64.


Lauterbach, Edward S. "An Annotated Bibliography of Writings about Rudyard Kipling: First Supplement." English Literature in Transition; Vol. 8, No. 3 and Vol. 8, No. 4, pp. 156-202 and 203-41. Supplement to the three-volume bibliography published in 1906 by ELT.


MILL, Alexander, Edward. "Mill's Theory of Culture: The Wedding of Literature and Democracy." University of Toronto Quarterly, October, pp. 75-88. Mill's definition of poetry's moral function—its ability to arouse imaginative sympathy—is the bridge between his theory of literature and his notion of a democratic culture.


Hamburger, Joseph. Intellectuals in Politics: John Stuart Mill and the Philosophic Radicals. Yale. The rise and decline of this group. Rev. TLS, 17 February, p. 120.


RUSKIN, Gledsone, Robert F. "Ruskin and Byron." English Language Notes, September, pp. 47-51. Ruskin's praise of Byron's The Island demonstrates the consistency of his aesthetic values and critical tenets.


SYMONS, Munro, John M. "Arthur Symons and W. B. Yeats: The Quest for Compromise." Danzouli Review, Summer, pp. 137-52. Symons sets the stage for our failure was; Yeats', however, was successful.


Maya, J. C. ""In Memoriam: An Aspect of Form." University of Toronto Quarterly, October, pp. 22-46. To understand its form, we must turn to the attitudes toward form expressed in the poem itself.


Ricks, Christopher. "Hallman's 'Youthful Letters' and Tennyson." English Language Notes, December, pp. 120-21. Even in the end of his life, the poet was sensitive to the memory of Arthur Hallam.

Ricks, Christopher. "Tennyson: 'Armageddon' into 'Timbucco.'" Modern Language Review, January, pp. 9-24. One draft of "Armageddon" shows that about half of it was incorporated almost verbatim into "Timbucco."

THACKERAY, B.V. "William, Fiction, December, pp. 488-95. Palliser's portrait is based on the career and personality of Russell.


The reference directly contradicts the passage. Ransell goes on to use the idea that Thaddeus wished to be regarded as a saint: e.g. "The saint who held himself above the community has become part of it, a housewife..." (p. 12). He makes this the basis for his comparison of all George Eliot's girl-tragedies, assimilating Dianah's self-sufficiency to Maggie's and Dorothea's subtly self-seeking desires, both to be, and to be thought, saintly, and to Gwendolen's selfishness. Dianah quotes a passage from The Mill on the Floss about the way 'Nature reaps her ravages' three times in his article without remarking that in the next paragraph George Eliot says, 'But not all.' Since the chief exception is the life of the heroine herself, the ending would seem to be tragic in a different way from the endings of the other stories. The passages which Mansell quotes from Hegel could have been given a much subtler application to George Eliot's novels if he had not missed and misquoted in this way. Many novelists before George Eliot had portrayed characters with a mixture of good and evil qualities; it is her originality to show the very same quality, in an individual or in the community, as both good and evil. Both of the principles in the conflict are valid. It is worth knowing that she may have derived this moral and artistic sophistication from her reading of Hegel. But the point is lost if the sublerry and variety of her use of these ideas is missed through careless quotation.