

Recent Studies in Nineteenth-Century English Literature

G. ROBERT STANGE

THE FIRST reaction of the surveyor of the year's work in the field of the nineteenth century is dismay at its sheer bulk. The period has obviously become the most recent playground of scholars and academic critics. One gets a sense of settlers rushing toward a new frontier, and at times regrets irrationally the simpler, quieter days. At first glance the massive accumulation of intellectual labor which I have undertaken to describe seems to display no pattern whatsoever, no evidence of noticeable trends. Yet, to the persistent gazer certain characteristics ultimately reveal themselves. There is a discernible tendency, for example, to apply the concepts of post-Existential theology to the work of the Romantic poets; and in general these poets are now being approached with an intellectual excitement which is very different from the diffuse "romantic" enthusiasm of twenty or thirty years ago. It must also be said that the Victorian novelists continue to come into their own. The kind of serious attention that it is now assumed Dickens and George Eliot require was a rare thing a decade ago; it is undoubtedly good that this rigorous—though sometimes over-solemn—analysis is now being extended to some of the lesser novelists of the period. It is also still to be noted as an unaccountable oddity that reliable editions of even the most important nineteenth-century authors are not always available. Of the novelists only Jane Austen has so far been critically edited. The Victorian poets, with the exception of Arnold, are in textual chaos, and though critical editions of Arnold's and Mill's prose are forthcoming, other prose writers have not been much heeded. Accompanying this unfortunate neglect of textual studies has been a puzzling neglect of the periodical literature of the century. Much of the most interesting writing in nineteenth-century periodicals was never reprinted, and too much of this material remains buried. Finally, and speaking loosely, I should say that nineteenth-century studies are weak in the area of general topics. There are a

great many works on one aspect of the writings of one man, but there has recently been nothing good on, for example, the relations between literature and the visual arts, or between English and French literary theory. And there is a scarcity of studies of themes and issues that run through a long stretch of time and are significant to the work of a number of writers. The reason for these lacks is probably obvious: more than half of the work that a reviewer is called on to survey has been produced by young men qualifying for their Ph.D. degrees; a person in such a position cannot be expected to have the knowledge or scope to deal with a synthetic topic. But, the weary reviewer is sometimes moved to ask, why is it assumed that the young academic has an inborn gift for critical analysis? The young man who is judged unready for the labors of exact scholarship is encouraged instead to sharpen his teeth on the flintiest and most precious of critical questions.

In the pages that follow I concern myself only with studies of nineteenth-century literature published in 1960. I have taken account of—though I have not found it necessary to mention—all books that fall into this category. Though I comment on a number of periodical articles, I have not tried to deal with all periodical literature (which runs to many hundreds of items). I suspect that I have neglected many excellent articles; I know that I have mentioned some that might better have been ignored.

I

Of the few books on general literary topics that were published in 1960, Ellen Moers's *The Dandy: Brummell to Beerbohm* (London: Secker and Warburg) is by far the most extensive in range. For years there has been place for a book on the Dandy as a literary as well as social phenomenon. Miss Moers's study is the first intellectually sophisticated work on this topic and it is, in spite of certain faults, amazingly good. The difficulties for the author are in dealing with the concepts of dandyism in both England and France, and in treating both the living embodiments of the idea and its reflections in literature. Miss Moers's discussion of the influence that passed from England to France, and back again, from the years of the Regency to those of the Decadence, is both artful and learned. I think she does less well in distinguishing the true-life Dandys (such as Brummell) and *Dandysme* as a literary gesture (as in the works of d'Aureville and Baudelaire) from the mere man of fashion. Miss Moers errs from her central theme into

overly long discussions of the French scene around 1830, of Dickens and Thackeray or the Prince of Wales. Usually, however, though some important literary material is omitted, this author is remarkably just in her emphases and accurate in her statements. She has the ability to seize the significant aspect of a situation or character and, without distorting it, dramatize it in such a way that new aspects of the most familiar material are revealed to us. *The Dandy* is both a contribution to literary history and a thoroughly readable book.

A study that promised to be even more rewarding than Miss Moers's is, alas, a serious disappointment. Enid Starkie's *From Gautier to Eliot: The Influence of France on English Literature, 1851-1939* (London: Hutchinson) is an embarrassingly bad book. Miss Starkie asserts that she has not written for the specialist and, since there are no notes and only a sketchy list of "Suggestions for Further Reading" in place of a bibliography, one is inclined to believe her. But it is difficult to imagine what audience she did have in mind. The book is crammed with textbook facts (not all of them accurate) and written in a schoolmistressy style. It displays an occasional ignorance of English literature which, though not reprehensible in a French specialist, would—it might be thought—inhibit an eminent critic from attempting a survey of this sort.

The vast collections of nineteenth-century material in the library of the University of Illinois continue to yield products. Royal A. Gettmann's *A Victorian Publisher: A Study of the Bentley Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) is both an account of the activities of the firm of Richard Bentley and Son and an essay in the sociology of literature. By close study of the operations of this single publishing house, Mr. Gettmann is able to furnish a good deal of information about the kinds of relations that existed among author, publisher, and reader during the second half of the century. For readers more concerned with literature than with the history of publishing, the chief interest of the book will be in the last two chapters, "The Publisher's Reader" and "The Three-Decker," where the author indicates some of the ways by which publishers' activities and expectations influenced not only the marketing but the production of both commercial and serious fiction. Reports of publishers' readers provide a uniquely dependable method of defining the tastes that writers were expected to satisfy. The final chapter on the three-decker is only the second published

attempt to study the rise of this bizarre form and to speculate on the ways in which it influenced the composition of fiction. Mr. Gettmann has some interesting things to say about the institution of the circulating library, and suggests several lines of inquiry that other researchers might profitably follow.

II

Last year's only real book on Wordsworth is a monograph that, in a less inflationary period than ours, might have been boiled down to a brief pamphlet. In *Wordsworth and Schelling: A Typological Study of Romanticism* (New Haven: Yale University Press) E. D. Hirsch, Jr. traces the remarkable similarities between the views of the English poet and the German philosopher. Mr. Hirsch does not believe that there is any possibility of direct influence on Wordsworth, but rather that "both shared the same type of *Weltanschauung*." In a manner that is sometimes pretentious this author then sets out to define what he calls the "type constructs" of the two writers. Then, to demonstrate the utility of his "typological" study, he concludes his book with a discussion of some of the concepts that inform the "Immortality Ode," and in this chapter he succeeds, I think, in illuminating several of the more puzzling paradoxes of the poem.

Elton F. Henley's pamphlet, *Wordsworthian Criticism, 1945-1959* (New York: New York Public Library), supplements the bibliographical portion of James V. Logan's *Wordsworthian Criticism* (1947). The new brochure provides a chronological list of works with brief descriptive comment; the editor does not attempt, as Logan did, an estimate of trends in the criticism of Wordsworth, though the list is made more usable by the addition of a topical analysis of the entries.

Bennett Weaver's "Wordsworth: Poet of the Unconquerable Mind" (*PMLA*, LXXV, 231-237) is worth attention as an interestingly old-fashioned essay which assumes that Wordsworth is not popular with "modern" readers, and attempts to explain why. In a passionate strain that recalls the Romantic specialist of an earlier generation, Mr. Weaver outlines the Wordsworthian characteristics that moderns presumably find unpalatable: originality, emphasis on the elemental, the celebration of nature, and the moral character of the poems. As these terms suggest, there is a sweeping quality to this essay which conduces more to broad appreciation than to close reading. The argument, however, has utility, if only in suggesting

to us its countertruth. Perhaps a quarter of a century ago one could have said with Mr. Weaver: "There are those among us who prefer the Freudian chaos. Wordsworth is hale; they gather under the elms to savor disease." But today such a remark only provokes us to think of the considerable number of advanced young poets who find Wordsworth's poetry enormously suggestive and strangely beautiful. Indeed, I should find an interesting theme for speculation in the suggestion that Wordsworth has never been held in such high regard, has never been so sensitively studied and explicated, as he has been in the last ten years.

In considering Coleridge I must pass over—for reasons of space—more than a dozen scholarly and critical articles on the poet and his thought in order to concentrate on the one book that appeared in 1960. Marshall Suther's *The Dark Night of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (New York: Columbia University Press) is a short and uneven book, obviously the work of a young critic, but one that is suggestive in important ways. Mr. Suther attempts to answer the familiar question, "What happened to Coleridge?", by tracing the poet's spiritual biography through and in relation to his poetry. The argument of the book is based on M. and Mme. Maritain's definition of the poetic experience and its mystical bearings: Coleridge's "problem" this critic sees as a religious one, "that of a highly conscious soul in struggle with its spiritual destiny." He quite convincingly maintains that Coleridge unsuccessfully sought a mystical experience of the absolute in both love and poetry. Mr. Suther has some penetrating things to say about the nature of this compulsion and about the heroic qualities of the poet's failure. In spite of the critically modish aspect of this argument, the book is not cranky or ostentatious; its chief substance is an extended analysis of "Dejection," which is led up to by a study of the symbols of the moon and of storm as they run through Coleridge's poetry. There is also a first-rate chapter on "Love and the Poetic Experience." I find the book important not only because it illuminates certain aspects of Coleridge's work, but because it demonstrates a fruitful application of theological concepts to literary criticism. Coleridge is, of course, an eminently suitable subject for this kind of investigation. Other studies of other Romantic poets (for example, the book on Byron which I discuss below) seem to show that a critical method based on theology may not be equally relevant to all types of literary experience.

It is, perhaps, notable that the existence of Leslie Marchand's

masterly biography of Byron seems not to have discouraged other students of the poet's life. William H. Marshall's *Byron, Shelley, Hunt, and The Liberal* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press) is a model study of a brief episode in a major writer's career. This tale has been told frequently before, but never so meticulously. Mr. Marshall's account is systematic, complete, and thoroughly documented, and though the events he describes are not earth-shaking, and the four numbers of *The Liberal* that finally came out are not literarily priceless, there is a value merely in having a story so completely told. A brief biographical study is Frederick L. Beaty's "Byron and the Story of Francesca da Rimini" (*PMLA*, LXXV, 395-401) in which Byron's knowledge of Dante's works is thoroughly explored as a preliminary to the author's suggestion that Byron identified himself and Augusta Leigh with Paolo and Francesca. Mr. Beaty claims that Dante's story haunted Byron "with the persistence of a recurrent dream," and concludes by finding another reflection of the story in the temptation scene in Canto I of *Don Juan*. This essay in biographical criticism is worth attention because it is typical of many such studies: it arrives at conclusions which may very well be true, but which—once accepted—do not enhance our understanding either of the man or of his poetry.

Two critical books on Byron require consideration. Paul West's *Byron and the Spoiler's Art* (London: Chatto and Windus; New York: St. Martin's Press) is the sort of book that kind reviewers call "provocative" or "stimulating." It is a literate essay that attempts an appreciation of the special quality of Byron's poetry. Mr. West believes that everything Byron wrote involved an "essential act of repulsion," that he needed to feel "unobliged" to poetical subject matter, to friends, to the universe, and that the achievement of this state of mind produced a psychological condition that equipped him for literary farce. The book is at its best when it resembles an intelligent, free-ranging conversation about the poet and his art, or captures the spirit (as it only occasionally does) of the acutely perceptive obligatos upon a poet's work which French Existentialist critics delight to sound. However, Mr. West's book is more irritating than it is dazzling; though it is always readable it is diffuse; the author's flashy allusions (e.g., "*Marino Faliero* anticipates *Death of a Salesman*"; Byron is compared continually to Hemingway and also to Errol Flynn) are too irresponsible to enforce an argument. In fact, since the book ends with

some very conventional statements about the superiority of the late satire over the romances and early dramas, I do not believe that it really contains an argument.

A book that must be taken more seriously is George M. Ridenour's *The Style of Don Juan* (New Haven: Yale University Press), which may be defined as a set of good close readings of certain passages of the poem, along with several highly suggestive stylistic analyses, all in search of an organizing principle. The various procedures which Mr. Ridenour follows are discernibly part of the *Zeitgeist* of modern Yale: under the twin lamps of Rhetoric and Religion several key sections of *Don Juan* are subjected to close analysis of a New Critical sort. Mr. Ridenour's thesis is that *Don Juan* is structurally organized by means of two themes, the Christian myth of the Fall, and the classical rhetorical theory of the styles (that is, of the plain, middle, and high styles). The satirical manipulation of high and low in the poem, and the recurrent employment of concepts of sin, a fall, and man's fallen state are, according to the author, evidences of Byron's use of a unifying Christian theme. However, it is further observed that the poem involves a fundamental paradox in that the Christian soul, by the act of writing, participates in the original sin of pride and revolt. Mr. Ridenour carefully refrains from discussing either Byron's intention in regard to these organizing themes, or the nature of his belief. If one accepts this critic's point of view in regard to poetic creation, and to the primacy for the poetic imagination of what he calls "Christian myth," such questions are, of course, inappropriate. I do not, however, believe that the orthodox conception of the Fall was available to Byron as archetypal myth. It is more likely to have appeared to him as an item of dogma and consequently as an object to be assaulted through irony (see *Cain* or, for that matter, *Don Juan*). Mr. Ridenour attempts to support his theses by several skillful and sensitive analyses of significant passages. But, in spite of the author's repeated declarations, I cannot see that they support his general view of the poem. In spite of Byron's latent Calvinism and his obsession with sin, the sort of employment of Christian concepts that is here ascribed to him is simply not in the spirit of his deeply skeptical humanism.

To turn abruptly from Mr. Ridenour's book to Edward Bostetter's "Byron and the Politics of Paradise" (*PMLA*, LXXV, 571-76) is to evoke a pleasant irony. The article is a study of the major theme of *Cain*, the work of the late period that explicitly employs

Christian myth. Mr. Bostetter defines a Byron who speaks through the character of Lucifer and challenges not only the rational optimists of the eighteenth century, but the orthodox Christians of his own day. The underlying pattern is to be found, he suggests, in its social implications, and he proceeds to show how the play may be read as "an ironic prophecy that the future belongs to Lucifer and the sons of Cain." The conservative reviewers and orthodox readers were apparently right in regarding the play as subversive and impious. Since *Cain* is an important and neglected work, it is good to have this modest but instructive study of its themes and general bearings.

The single book on Shelley which was published last year is worth anyone's attention. Desmond King-Hele's *Shelley: His Thought and Work* (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's Press) is an appreciation of all Shelley's poetry, written for the reader "without special knowledge." The discussion of individual works follows a chronological order and is strung on a thread of biography. This is the sort of book that the reader with some special knowledge is prepared to distrust, but it turns out to be lucid, well-informed, and balanced. Inevitably in such a work the critical analysis of the poems is too brief, and there is no attempt to present new biographical material or significantly original literary interpretations. However, Mr. King-Hele has read and absorbed both Shelley's writings and the secondary material on them, and has produced a book that the young or common reader, particularly, may depend on as a one-volume account of "the man and the poet."

The fact that the only book on Keats to be published last year was a fictionalized biography suggests a surprising decline in interest in the poet who, a few years ago, received more attention than any other Romantic. I attempt no explanation of this phenomenon, but point to three articles as being not exciting, though worth attention. Bernice Slote's "The Climate of Keats's 'La Belle Dame sans Merci'" (*MLQ*, XXI, 195-207) is a study in the background of the poem. Miss Slote describes the events of the "Scottish year," and particularly of the few months that preceded the composition of the ballad. In her estimate, it was both the journey to Scotland and a strengthened interest in ballad literature that moved Keats to write "La Belle Dame." Perhaps the most interesting suggestion of the article, though one that is not developed, is that this late ballad offers a key to the greater poems of 1819: the entry into

the deeper poetry, Miss Slocum implies, was by song. An intelligent reading of one of the great odes is to be found in Max F. Schulz's "Keats's Timeless Order of Things: A Modern Reading of 'Ode to Psyche'" (*Criticism*, II, 55-65). Mr. Schulz asserts that in this poem "we can live Keats's rediscovery of the immutable correspondence between the material and immaterial worlds." Paying tribute to the imaginative unity of the ode, he calls it (almost too eloquently) "an endlessly repeated hymnal celebrating the imaginative insight." Finally, we have in Thomas P. Harrison's "Keats and a Nightingale" (*ES*, XLI, 353-59) a rather strange article defending the thesis that the "Ode to a Nightingale" is designed to imitate the qualities of that bird's "music." We are given a careful description of the nightingale's song, and then it is shown how the characteristics of the bird song are related to the movements and mood changes of the poem. There is undoubtedly some truth in Mr. Harrison's central idea, but his study appears to me to be lacking in negative capability.

III

The publication of Jerome H. Buckley's *Tennyson: The Growth of a Poet* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press) was an event for students of Victorian poetry. The book is a relatively brief study of the poet's whole career, and has been heralded as the long-awaited "standard work." It is divided into twelve chapters which partition Tennyson's career with justice and insight; one chapter, for example, is given to Arthur Hallam and the 1832 *Poems*, another to the silent years. *In Memoriam* and the *Idylls of the King* get a chapter each, and these discussions are by far the best parts of the book; indeed, the treatment of the *Idylls* is the most thorough, extensive, and sympathetic that the work has had in modern times. Those who are interested in critical approaches to Tennyson are likely to be disappointed by the unavoidable thinness of Mr. Buckley's analyses; when a poetic career of sixty-five years must be covered there is no space for involved discussion, and the treatment of the briefer poems is consequently quite uneven. The virtue of this book is in presenting a balanced, accurate, carefully estimated view of the poet's total accomplishment. Thus, though the specialist may not find much that is new or stimulating, the book may be very serviceable to younger students.

Critical Essays on the Poetry of Tennyson, ed. John Killham

(London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; New York: Barnes and Noble) should be most helpful to the reader who is trying to "place" Tennyson. With the exception of the editor's own contributions (an introductory review of modern criticism of Tennyson and a study of *Maud*), all the essays have been printed elsewhere. Among them are such classics as G. M. Young's "The Age of Tennyson" and T. S. Eliot's "*In Memoriam*"; but the selection was made not only on the basis of intrinsic value, but to indicate the various kinds of critical investigation that Tennyson's work has recently evoked. The essays reveal great disparities of interest, approach, and subject matter, but it is curious—and, considered *sub specie aeternitatis*, a bit disquieting—to find how much these critics hold in common.

Edgar F. Shannon's "The History of a Poem: Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* (SB, XIII, 149-177) is, as far as scholarship is concerned, an exhaustive account of a single poetic work. Mr. Shannon gives all the details of the poem's composition, of its critical reception, of Tennyson's probable responses to criticism and of the revisions and "corrections" to which the poem was subjected. A long appendix to the article recounts "The Development of the Text." The whole piece is a fine example of the kind of background material one would like to have available for every significant poem. The casual critic will undoubtedly find the detail excessive; but all the information is there for the reader to use as he will and for the future editor to build on.

It should be noted that the third and fourth volumes of Cecil Y. Lang's six-volume edition of *The Swinburne Letters* (New Haven: Yale University Press) were published in 1960. These volumes cover the years 1875-1877 and 1877-1882. The fourth volume takes us well into the period of residence at The Pines (begun in 1879) and conveys the sense of almost comic pathos that surrounds the poet's retreat from the world.

The industry of Hopkins exegesis was almost as brisk last year as in the recent past. There were a good dozen of articles presenting a study of imagery or a reading of an individual poem; there was also the annual "new word" on "The Windhover." Rather surprisingly, however, there was only one book, and that more concerned with Bridges than with Hopkins. Jean-Georges Ritz's *Robert Bridges and Gerard Hopkins, 1836-1889: A Literary Friendship* (London: Oxford University Press) is a *thèse secondaire* by the Professor of English Literature at the University of Lyons,

and is characterized by the solidity and scholarship that such an effort requires. It is a book that anyone interested in either poet will find worth reading, but I discover that, after having digested M. Ritz's carefully assembled material, my original impressions of this literary relationship are barely altered. The author is not concerned to tell us anything new about Hopkins; his principal aim is to trace with complete impartiality the course of "the strange friendship between the doctor-poet and the Jesuit-poet." He has thus been able to emphasize all that the good doctor did for Hopkins. But as the study proceeds, Bridges is revealed—to this reader, at least—as conceited, narrow, and priggish. M. Ritz is reluctant to conjecture as to the psychological bases of this attachment; he contents himself with convincing us of what we already knew, that Bridges was—alas!—Hopkins's best friend.

IV

If we can judge from mere quantity of scholarly and critical work, Dickens now looms as the most important nineteenth-century writer. It would take a long article to describe all that was published on him in 1960; like Shakespearian studies, work on Dickens is now so varied that every year provides some significant contribution in every department of investigation. The one important book last year was K. J. Fielding's edition of *The Speeches of Charles Dickens* (Oxford: Clarendon Press). In this fine and scholarly volume Mr. Fielding makes available the texts of about 115 of Dickens's public speeches. Previously only half as many speeches were published, and they in the Nonesuch edition, which was unfortunately based on the pirated edition of 1870. Judged by the standards we apply to ordinary literary texts, the texts of these speeches are insecure; when there are several versions of a passage, for example, Mr. Fielding has chosen the one that sounds best to him; and of course in almost every case the editor must depend on a transcript or report that is far from infallible.

F. W. Dupee edited *The Selected Letters of Charles Dickens* in the Great Letters Series (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy) and published his introduction to this volume as an essay, "The Other Dickens" (*PR*, XXVII, 111-122). Since Dickens was decidedly not a reflective, Keatsian correspondent, a brief selection of his letters is not remarkably interesting. However, in his introductory essay Mr. Dupee attempts to define the significance of the correspondence to our estimate of Dickens, and achieves an eloquent

statement on the special qualities of the man and his letters (in both senses of the word). Mrs. Humphry House has made a progress report on the Pilgrim edition of the Dickens letters (see Herbert Cahoon, ed., "News and Notes," *PBSA*, LIV, 299). The total number of letters is now estimated to be 11,000, and 1500 originals are still untraced. The edition is expected to run to ten or eleven volumes, with the first volume (covering the period up to 1839) appearing in 1962.

Angus Wilson's essay, "Charles Dickens: A Haunting" (*CritQ*, II, 101-108), is a finely written piece which has extrinsic importance as a description of the influence of the Dickens world on Mr. Wilson's own fictional practice. Since he feels that Dickens's greatness is in the symbolic unity which informs the novels, he considers the best work to be *Little Dorrit*. Mr. Wilson rejects Dr. Leavis's high opinion of *Hard Times*, considers *Great Expectations* to be not quintessential Dickens and *David Copperfield* to be too complacently middlebrow. The "atmosphere" which haunts readers of Dickens is, in Mr. Wilson's view, a function of the recurrent symbols and images throughout the novels, which are in turn the product of an attempt, often near to despair but never wholly forsaken, to retain something of the [Christian] vision of *Pickwick Papers* against the influx of the knowledge of evil's power." Contemporary views of Dickens as a social critic are best seen in two essays on the late novels. R. D. McMaster's "Birds of Prey: A Study of *Our Mutual Friend*" (*DR*, XL, 372-381) considers the ways in which Dickens's social criticism is expressed by the symbolic pattern of his novel. He finds the main themes to be "sinister unreality" and "rapacity . . . in the form of scavenging," a theory that gives significance to the diverse allusions to scavengers and birds of prey in the novel, as well as to the plot devices of disguise and social deception. Mr. McMaster reminds us that Dickens was principally concerned with individual moral regeneration rather than with social reform. Stanley Cooperman has written an article called "Dickens and the Secular Blasphemy: Social Criticism in *Hard Times*, *Little Dorrit* and *Bleak House*" (*CE*, XXII, 156-160) in which he emphasizes the fact that Dickens was not only a critic but a member of the middle class, and that all his virtuous characters happen to come to their financial reward. Mr. Cooperman maintains that Dickens was bourgeois enough to believe that "blasphemy against property" was an unnatural crime, and that evil was the failure to be productive. The study, though I think

it is overstated, is helpful in reminding us how consistently Dickens's satire remains within the framework of the middle-class Victorian ethos. More work needs to be done on the latent religious and social attitudes that, in spite of their symbolic transmutations, shaped Dickens's world view.

Robert Bernard Martin's life of Charles Kingsley, *The Dust of Combat* (New York: W. W. Norton), is worth remark because it raises questions about the nature of literary biography. Kingsley, however unattractive one may find him, managed to typify a large class of Victorian attitudes. We have had since 1877 his wife's pious *Letters and Memories*, and since 1937 Mrs. Thorp's good, scholarly biography. If we need anything now it is a shrewd, sophisticated reevaluation of the man based on newly acquired knowledge of his period. Unfortunately, Mr. Martin's study is workmanlike rather than illuminating or analytic. He has consulted primary sources, but there is very little in the book that cannot be got from Mrs. Kingsley or Mrs. Thorp. Kingsley's most notable deficiency was, surely, his complete lack of ironic detachment; in this respect, at least, his latest biographer resembles him; he tends to accept Kingsley's own evaluation of his experience. If we measure Victorian biography on a scale of which one extreme is Hallam Tennyson and the other Lytton Strachey, Mr. Martin's biography is only a few degrees above Hallam.

Compared to 1959, this last was a quiet year in the flood of the George Eliot revival. It is good to have Jerome Beaty's "*Middlemarch*" from *Notebook to Novel: A Study of George Eliot's Creative Method* (ISLL, Vol. 47 [Urbana: University of Illinois Press]). This is a detailed study of the "Quarry" for *Middlemarch*, the relevant passages in George Eliot's notebooks, journals, and letters, and of the corrected MS. and proof sheets of the novel. In order to study revisions in detail, the author performs a minute analysis of the composition of Chapter 81. This is not a book that one reads at a sitting. Since the information it provides does not significantly change one's estimate of the novel, its value is in making material available for the reader's own use and in providing some insight into the courses the novelist chose or rejected in constructing her plot.

The student of George Eliot can save time by ignoring Margaret Crompton's *George Eliot: The Woman* (London: Cassell). The title should warn us that the author's interest is not in the novelist and, in fact, this is a biography of what might be called the "hidden

fires" type. The "story" of this remarkable woman is retailed without new research, without notes, and with little insight. Interspersed in the biographical account are a few stale phrases about each of the novels.

There are three interesting articles on George Eliot: D. R. Carroll's "An Image of Disenchantment in the Novels of George Eliot" (*RES*, IX, 29-41) defines as an archetypal pattern in several of the novels the movement on the part of a central character from illusion through disenchantment to a realistic knowledge of the self and ultimate regeneration. The author finds this progression expressed by certain ruin images that permeate the novels. F. R. Leavis's "George Eliot's Zionist Novel" (*Commentary*, XXX, 317-325) was written as an introduction to a paperback edition of *Daniel Deronda*. In the essay Dr. Leavis withdraws his notorious suggestion (made in *The Great Tradition*) that a truncated version of the novel be published under the title *Gwendolen Harleth*. He now says, "in the re-reading that preceded the present note, my already growing sense that the surgery of disjunction would be a less simple and satisfactory affair than I had thought has been reinforced." This "present note" has an irritatingly *ex cathedra* tone, but though it is diffuse and sometimes pompous, it has fine things in it. Dr. Leavis's discussion of George Eliot's "case"—by which he means the pattern of the artist's life that modifies our critical understanding of his work—attacks with precision a recurrent question of literary study. If one needs to be reminded that, with all his obliquities, Dr. Leavis is one of the genuine critical minds of our time he need only read in this essay the eloquent definition of George Eliot's "Tolstoyan" qualities.

Robert Preyer's "Beyond the Liberal Imagination: Vision and Unreality in *Daniel Deronda*" (*VS*, IV, 33-54) is further evidence of the inevitable shift of interest from *Middlemarch* (on which so much has been done) to the massive last work. Mr. Preyer defends the novel against Dr. Leavis's original strictures and interprets it as George Eliot's attempt to find in the wisdom literature of the mystics a means of extending and refining "her account of the actual workings of sympathy and repulsion within the psyche." He considers *Daniel Deronda* the most ambitious of George Eliot's novels, the one in which she most consistently attempted a spiritual affirmation of the creative side of liberal humanism.

It is a sad fact that, though Trollope appears to be getting more—and more intelligent—critical attention than ever before, the

third attempt to publish a collected edition of his work has had to be abandoned. In 1959 the Oxford Press announced that there had not been enough demand to warrant their publishing more than the nine volumes that were already out. This leaves the reader with the small print of the World's Classics edition and the hope that some well-subsidized American press will take up where Oxford left off.

The two articles on Trollope that appeared last year, though not substantial in themselves, suggest an important shift in critical attitude. The popularity of twentieth-century novelists of the school of Trollope—most notably C. P. Snow—has helped to break down the image of Trollope as a Merrie-England escapist celebrating the joys and mild conflicts of the cathedral close and the vicarage garden. I suspect, too, that the comparative clumsiness of these modern realists' studies of power relations and institutional structures has reminded readers how deft and artful Trollope usually was. Certainly, Hugh Sykes Davies in "Trollope and His Style" (*REL*, I, 73-85) takes his subject seriously. Mr. Davies directs our attention, with good sense and discrimination, to features of Trollope's art which have been shamefully overlooked. He takes issue with those critics who have blandly asserted that Trollope had "no style at all" and, by bringing together a large sample of passages from several novels, defines a Trollopien "cadence" that depends on a turn of words as well as a turn of thought. It is significant that Mr. Davies can derive from his examination of style alone a characterization of Trollope that fits our independent analysis of his themes: he defines Trollope not as a great moralist, but as "a passionate casuist, an observer of the relation between principles and practice." Jerome Thale's "The Problem of Structure in Trollope" (*NCF*, XV, 147-157) presents unexceptionable conclusions, but labors an argument that does not require much discussion. Mr. Thale studies *The Last Chronicle of Barset* to demonstrate that a typical Trollope novel is not structured by plot, but rather by "parallels, contrasts, repetitions with slight variations." The point, of course, is well taken; a careful reader of Trollope knows that he manipulates his characters in relation to issues, and thus achieves perspectives through a kind of moral re-positioning rather than through linear plot development. But such a method is simply a special kind of plotting: What we need in order to understand Trollope's achievement is not a new set of terms but some subtle and rigorous analysis.

V

Anna Jean Mill has edited *John Mill's Boyhood Visit to France: Being a Journal and Notebook Written by John Stuart Mill in France, 1820-21*. The manuscript material that Miss Mill has discovered is not unusually interesting, but represents, as she says, "some of the raw material" from which was compounded the mellow account of Mill's French experience as we have it in the *Autobiography*. The documents, surprisingly enough, reveal a boy who is certainly very well educated, but who displays the normal obtuseness of a young Englishman abroad. Jack Stillinger has published a learned note on "The Text of John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography*" (*BJRL*, XLIII, 220-242). He describes minutely the three existing MSS. of the book and concludes that the recently discovered Rylands MS. provides the necessary evidence for establishing a proper text based essentially on the draft that is now at Columbia. Mr. Stillinger reminds us of the hazards we face in relying on "accepted" editions of Victorian classics, and reports that the University of Toronto Press is about to prepare a scholarly edition of Mill's collected works.

For some time there has been a need for an extensive study of Mill as a critic and theorist of poetry. John M. Robson's "J. S. Mill's Theory of Poetry" (*UTQ*, XXIX, 420-438) provides a beginning for future work. Mr. Robson gathers up many of the scattered references to poetry in Mill's formal and informal writings, organizes the remarks in a workmanlike way, and concludes that Mill's theory of poetry was, from the 1820's on, consistent and sustained and that in his view art centered upon humanity and was dedicated to morality.

For the Arnold scholar, who was treated in 1959 to an electronically prepared concordance to the poems, 1960 brought boons of a different kind. The complete critical edition of Arnold's prose works has been begun with a volume called *On the Classical Tradition*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press). Mr. Super's edition will run to ten volumes and will include all the writings that Arnold either published or prepared for publication in books or periodicals. The pieces are to be printed in the order in which they appeared, an arrangement which, the editor tells us, will not do as much violence to Arnold's final order as the reader of *Essays in Criticism* might have expected. This first volume begins with the 1853 Preface and concludes with "On Translating Homer." The editor has prepared elaborate explanatory and textual

notes and a complete index. I should judge that even the most captious Arnoldian could not find serious fault with Mr. Super's efforts. I have so far discovered one error in his notes and two points with which one might quarrel—which suggests that the critical apparatus of this volume is just fallible enough to provide harmless occupation for scholars who like to potter.

Fraser Neiman's collection, *Essays, Letters, and Reviews by Matthew Arnold* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), has been eclipsed by the appearance of the first volume of the critical edition. Mr. Neiman's handsome book is a somewhat random collection of fugitive pieces which have been out of print or difficult to come by. Each selection is preceded by a headnote and well annotated; consequently, though the book lacks any definitive quality it is pleasant to have.

There appeared last year no important work on any of the chief figures of the nineties. Three papers on "The Late Victorians" that were delivered at the English Institute in 1958 are now available in the volume, *Edwardians and Late Victorians*, ed. Richard Ellmann (English Institute Essays [New York: Columbia University Press]). The first paper was Graham Hough's "George Moore and the Nineties," a clever and provocative essay in which Mr. Hough defined "a period extending from about 1880 to 1914, a period distinct in spirit from what we usually think of as Victorianism, a period in which all the foundations of modern literature were being laid." He finds in this period—as other have before him—a development of what can be called "realism," a "confused set of tendencies that cluster round the notion of art for art's sake," and "a conscious reaction against the English literary tradition." Mr. Hough then proceeds to examine George Moore's early work as the best reflection of these disparate tendencies. The nonchalant air of this paper seems to imply that only a tiresome pedant would dispute the author's sweeping generalizations. It is best simply to smile, nod, and pass on.

The second paper, Ruth Z. Temple's "The Ivory Tower as Lighthouse," is a statement of Pater's importance as a critic and a brief estimate of his followers, Wilde, George Moore, and Symons. Miss Temple's emphases are designed to show the close connection between the critical theories of the nineties and the dominant critical modes of the twentieth century. Her points are good and valuable, but she has made them elsewhere with greater force and economy. Helmut Gerber in "The Nineties: Beginning, End, or

Transition?" writes unabashedly as a literary historian. He surveys the writings on the nineties up to about 1925 in order to discern the various theories and conceptions of the period. Since the author manages to mention almost all the significant works on the subject and offers suggestions for future study the paper has considerable bibliographical interest.

Katherine Lyon Mix's *A Study in Yellow: The "Yellow Book" and Its Contributors* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press) is chiefly useful for reference. It is a book in which the paragraph is the unit of composition. Proceeding in a cliché-ridden style from one number of the *Yellow Book* to the next, the author touches briefly on the contributions and supplies information and entertaining anecdotes about the contributors. Thomas Jay Garbáty has made a brief study of "The French Coterie of the *Savoy*, 1896" (*PMLA*, LXXV, 609-615) in which he tells the story of the founding of that interesting magazine and defends the notion that it can be considered an "Anglo-French periodical," and the first of its kind. Though Mr. Garbáty shows no sureness of judgment when he strays into literary topics, his short article does manage to evoke a certain *fin de siècle* flavor. He has had access to some unpublished material and so is able to trace a full and poignant portrait of the publisher Smithers and to add a datum or two to our knowledge of Symons and Dowson.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA