

# The Gissing Journal

Volume XLI, Number 2, April 2005

“More than most men am I dependent on sympathy to bring out the best that is in me.”  
*Commonplace Book*

---

## **Bertziana in Victor Ottmann’s *Litterarisches Echo*: the Rediscovery of a Rare File**

Wulfhard Stahl  
Bern

Gissing scholars, especially the editors of *The Collected Letters of George Gissing*, have long but fruitlessly attempted to locate copies of the short-lived *Litterarisches Echo* edited and published by Victor Ottmann, at Leipzig, in 1891-92. Gissing mentions this periodical several times either in his letters to Bertz or in his diary, leaving today’s reader wondering what in particular he alluded or reacted to. Bertz supplied his friend with copies of the *Echo* each time an article written by, or in one case on, him had been published; a few issues Gissing received directly from the publisher.

In spite of an initial print run of 20,000 copies (as proudly proclaimed on the cover of No. 1), this “Review of Reviews” seemed to have vanished for good, as a search begun as early as 1978 did not produce any positive results; in fact, not a single important library in Central Europe was known to hold any copy, let alone the entire first and only volume of this magazine. It was not until the Berlin Wall came down that an easier exchange of information between East and West by mail and telephone allowed the author of this article eventually to trace the one surviving copy of the first number of the *Litterarisches Echo* held by the Germanisches Nationalmuseum at Nuremberg. This issue remained the only one to be retrieved, until after years of futile further efforts an exploratory mouse click in late spring 2004 linked me to the site of an Austrian antiquarian bookseller, who was offering a set of thirteen issues, in perfect condition and bound in one volume, most probably representing the single complete record of this obscure periodical.

Unfortunately, all front and back covers of the individual issues are missing, with the exception of number 13 which, according to its pagination, opens part 2 of Volume 1. Therefore, neither the exact issuing dates nor the amount and substance of the advertisements (e.g. with the extracts

from reviews of *Glück und Glas* Gissing referred to in his letter to Bertz on 7 August 1892; see *Collected Letters* [CLGG], Vol. 5, p. 46) can be given, nor can Bertz's portrait be described, which appeared in the second or third number ("Sorry your portrait did not turn out better": GG to EB, 19 November 1891, CLGG 4, p. 337). It is only from sheet marks and from Gissing's letters or diary entries that the surviving issues can be dated as follows:

No. 1:	pp. 1-[64]: 15 Oct. 1891
No. 2:	pp. 65-[128]: 2 Nov. 1891
No. 3/4:	pp. [129]-[176]
No. 5/6:	pp. [177]-[224]: last issue in 1891
No. 7:	pp. [225]-[296]: March 1892
No. 8:	pp. [297]-[352]
No. 9:	pp. [353]-[416]
No. 10:	pp. [417]-[464]: June 1892
No. 11/12:	pp. [465]-[576]
No. 13:	pp. [1]-[64]

Contrary to an announcement printed on the cover page of No. 1 (Nuremberg copy), the *Litterarisches Echo* appeared only once as a fortnightly, i.e. with its second issue. All following numbers came out later than scheduled or at monthly intervals. According to a misleading entry in the *Gesamt-Verlags-Katalog des Deutschen Buchhandels* (c. 1894), 24 numbers of the *Litterarisches Echo* should have appeared during the first year of its publication: issues 1-6 between October and December 1891, issues 7-24 between January and September 1892. A printers' strike, however, made the punctual appearance of No. 3 impossible (see publisher's note, *ibid.*, p. [129]) and may have contributed to aggravate Ottmann's financial difficulties, which he seems to have faced almost from the very start of his publishing company. In any case, he was forced to delay the forthcoming issues of the *Litterarisches Echo* and change their volume – and his firm, founded on 3 August 1891, was struck off the trade register in 1893 due to bankruptcy.

Bertz became a valued contributor to this *Review for Literature and Popular Science* as the *Litterarisches Echo* was subtitled soon after its first appearance. As announced in No. 1, the second number contained a six-page review by Bertz of *Die Cis-moll-Sonate*, a novel written by a fellow writer from Potsdam, Gerhard von Amyntor. The seventh number was a

veritable Bertz issue, containing, along with a woodcut made from his portrait taken in the summer of 1891, an autobiographical sketch, a long review by C[arl]. Spielmann of Bertz's first novel *Glück und Glas* published on 10 September 1891, and his short story entitled "Victoria Schulze." The tenth number of the *Litterarisches Echo* must have particularly pleased Gissing as it carried Bertz's portrait of his English friend, originally published as "George Gissing. Ein Real-Idealist" in three instalments in a late 1889 number of the *Deutsche Presse*. It was illustrated by a woodcut made from Gissing's photograph taken on 22 August 1888. Its new title was abridged simply to "George Gissing", but the original article was expanded by one and a half pages with references to the novels that were published after 1889.

A few remarks on the editor of this rare periodical may serve to illustrate Bertz's literary milieu. Victor Ottmann was born on 17 April 1869, in Breslau (today Wrocław in Poland) and he probably died in the autumn of 1944. Living in Leipzig, Berlin, München, and Stuttgart, he was the author of books about literature, e.g. *Taschenbuch für Schriftsteller und Journalisten* (1893), *Was soll ich lesen?* (1894), *Handbuch für Bücherfreunde* (1900), *Jakob Casanova von Seingalt. Sein Leben und seine Werke* (1900), modern languages, travels (about twenty travel narratives), popular science and arts and crafts. He published under his own name, but occasionally used the pseudonym of Jens Laren or Larsen. He was also a prolific translator from Danish, e.g. Andersen's *Bilderbuch ohne Bilder. Erzählungen* (1890), and Drachmann's *Verschrieben. Roman* (1892), French, Italian, Norwegian, e.g. Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler. Drama* (1893), *Baumeister Solness. Drama* (1894), Swedish as well as from Dutch and English. His editorial efforts included such important and voluminous series and works as *Ottmanns Bücherschatz. Bibliothek zeitgenössischer Schriftsteller* (1891-92), *Litterarisches Echo* (1891-92), *Das grosse Welt-Panorama der Reisen, Abenteuer, Wunder, Entdeckungen und Kulturthaten in Wort und Bild. Ein Jahrbuch für alle Gebildeten* (17 volumes), *Das goldene Buch der Weltliteratur* (1901, 1912), *Das goldene Buch der Kunst* (1912), *Das goldene Buch des Theaters* (1915), and *Das deutsche Buch für die männliche Jugend* (1923). No detailed record, let alone a history of Ottmann's publishing company is available, and only a few documents relating to the firm are kept by the "Börsenverein des deutschen Buchhandels" in Frankfurt am Main.

The *Litterarisches Echo* aspired to be a mirror of influential contemporary literature. In the section called "Critical and Biographical Articles" we



find author portraits of Max Nordau, Holger Drachmann, Paolo Mantegazza, Guy de Maupassant, and Mark Twain; Paul Lindau is represented by some pages on the latest trends in literary France and Paul Lafargue by an excerpt from an article on Emile Zola. Under "Varia" we are offered "Thoughts of a Bookdealer on Bookbuyers", views on "Cheap Books" and "Book and Reader"; we read about "Carlyle on Dickens," "The Future of German literature," "Literature of the Future," "The Abuse of Books," and we are grateful for a "Satire on the Vanity of Authors." The section "Notes and News" provides us with interesting facts and figures and a bit of gossip, too, about what makes the literary world go round: Mrs. Humphry Ward and Hall Caine, respectively, receiving enormous royalties for their latest publications, and Lord Spencer netting £225,000 for the sale of the Althorp Library.

In what follows we shall give translations and/or summaries of the textual contributions made by Bertz and of texts relating to Bertz written by other contributors to the *Litterarisches Echo*.

### **Text 1:**

Eduard Bertz: "Gerhard von Amyntor's *Cis-moll-Sonate*" (Leipzig: Verlag von Victor Ottmann. Ottmann's Bücherschatz Nr. 3-5, 1891). 128 pp. Review, published in *LE*, No. 2, pp. 65-70. Summary.

In his review Bertz compares and contrasts Amyntor's short novel with Tolstoy's *The Kreutzer Sonata* published in German one year prior to the Russian original, and he comes down strongly in favour of his Potsdam fellow writer.

At first Bertz unreservedly admires the authenticity of the Russian author in the description of the marital relations and sexual love of his contemporaries, which almost without exception lead to profoundly unhappy marriages. But very soon he calls Tolstoy's viewpoint "insane, abnormal, perverse." He comes to the conclusion that the famous writer is a moralist rather than an artist who turns the psychologically subtle narration of a human drama into a social pamphlet criticizing sensual love and lust. Tolstoy's ideal of chastity and continence is the logical outcome of his definition of sexual intercourse as unnatural, and it justifies his advocacy of asceticism, which, in turn, may lead to a woman's liberation from sensuousness and to celibacy. According to Bertz Tolstoy's basic assumption requires an intelligent and persuasive refutation and he goes on to praise Amyntor for having achieved this.

Amyntor, a free and independent thinker, with clean hands and a pure will, has the courage to stand up against the injustice and absurdity of Tolstoy's ideal and to speak in favour of the "rights of the flesh." He writes from the point of view of a Christian, but first of all from that of a human being, claiming that God "also wanted the storm of a true, sensual and spiritual love," and that "nature demands matrimony." This rather polemical and abstract argument proves Amyntor also to be a "creative poet," who examines Tolstoy's doctrine through a concrete literary invention of his own. On the basis of Zola's roman expérimental, Amyntor "places his hero who has an effusive nature in an environment that has embraced Tolstoy's theory of renunciation, and using him as an example, he shows the inevitable results of the Russian's doctrine under the law of natural humanity in its practical application."

The hero, Dr Stetter, a pure soul dedicated to his studies and his friendships, falls deeply in love with a charming maiden, of robust health and noble purity. Her clear, unspoilt character of a simple believer makes the young scholar long for a belief of his own, which he tries to find by way of speculative thought. Philosophy, particularly the works of Schopenhauer, Hartmann and Nietzsche, however, fail to help him achieve this goal. One day, Dr Stetter comes upon the *Kreutzer Sonata* which he adopts as his guide, only to discover that it will lead him astray. Having made Tolstoy's belief his own, Stetter marries, trying to live up to the Russian author's moral values.

In spite of the hero's growing awareness of living against the natural desire for his wife, on the very morning after their wedding, he sticks to his "unnatural behaviour" towards her. The latter, humble and patient, suffers from the fictitious marriage in silence, putting up with her husband's continence for over a year. She finally manages to make him abandon his ideological stubbornness by her strong longing for nearness and tenderness, but when Stetter comes to his senses, realizing that "each true woman ... wants ... to have children" and that he has been "the helplessly blind fool who did not see that," it is too late for the couple to stay together and achieve marital happiness.

Bertz does not want to impose his interpretation upon the reader; taking his cue from Amyntor's words he concludes that Stetter is a madman and that his madness is the only possible key to render this story credible, and that this ending is the most effective refutation of Tolstoy's "unnaturalness." In his story Amyntor fights for the rights of (natural) marriage without being blind to the social damage partly arising out of the inter-

course of the sexes. But he does not view them in such a distorted fashion as the Russian prophet-novelist, and therefore he does not require a similarly crazy and radical cure.

**Text 2:**

Eduard Bertz: "Eduard Bertz"

Autobiographical sketch, published in *LE*, No. 7, pp. 227-28. With a woodcut portrait of Bertz on p. 226.

Translation.

Eduard Bertz was born on 8 March 1853, in Potsdam. His school days were repeatedly interrupted by a nervous disease which never quite left him. Already as a pupil at a grammar school he began publishing poetical trifles in reviews.<sup>1</sup> His academic studies in Berlin, Leipzig, Tübingen and Paris<sup>2</sup> were mainly devoted to philosophy; besides his literary activities as a student<sup>3</sup> he also found time to involve himself in social life. In Tübingen he often visited Ottilie Wildermuth's house<sup>4</sup> and he became familiar with other Swabian poets, too; he was particularly well-acquainted with Albert Dulk.<sup>5</sup> He drafted the letter in which 125 students at Tübingen protested against Eugen Dühring's dismissal,<sup>6</sup> however, after he got to know in private conversations the latter's presumption of infallibility, he took a public stand against him.

After a one-year stay in Paris, which was rich in experiences, he left for England, in the autumn of 1878,<sup>7</sup> where at first he worked as a teacher in a boys' school. Educational matters<sup>8</sup> would remain an enduring concern of his. After some time, though, he began to occupy himself exclusively in the literary field. Besides his essays on English poetry, he wrote a number of fairy tales for children.<sup>9</sup> In his earliest days in London he was fortunate in becoming acquainted with the English novelist George Gissing,<sup>10</sup> with whom he has been keeping up the most cordial friendship. His always keen interest in philosophical research led him to become a member of the Aristotelian Society.<sup>11</sup> He also entertained close relations with James Cotter Morison, author of *The Service of Man*.<sup>12</sup>

In 1881 a severe relapse of his nervous disease forced him to interrupt his intellectual work temporarily. He was thus prompted to join the pedagogic Utopia founded in Tennessee by the English author of books for young people, Thomas Hughes.<sup>13</sup> He stayed there for two years, spending the first lonely year in a log cabin, which he built on the farm in the primeval forest that he had bought for himself, the second as the librarian

of a public library which he set up and catalogued<sup>14</sup> and which had been established by American publishers in honour of the colony's founder.

In the spring of 1883, he returned from America to England, where he wrote his tale for boys: *The French Prisoners*.<sup>15</sup> The book, which was published the following year by Macmillan & Co. in London, was favourably received by the critics and especially praised for its pure English style.<sup>16</sup>

Yet he was finally drawn back to Germany. At Easter 1884 he went to Stuttgart<sup>17</sup> for one year where, in a circle of well-known poets, he also established contacts with Friedrich Theodor Vischer.<sup>18</sup> During that period he completed his translation of Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*, which he had begun in America and has now been published, with a literary historical introduction, in Reclam's Universalbibliothek.<sup>19</sup>

For the next five years he lived in his hometown of Potsdam, having nonetheless regular contacts with Berlin, where the German Writers' Association invested him with the honorary offices of secretary and arbiter and where he temporarily edited the organ of this association.<sup>20</sup> His writing activities during these years and the following one which he spent at Friedenau,<sup>21</sup> mainly focussed on essays; his chief work, though, was in the field of philosophy, especially the modern problems of ethics and aesthetics. But he concerned himself also with the study of historical sources which, among other things, resulted in an extensive description of the *History of the Potsdam Fishing Trade*.<sup>22</sup>

In the meantime, the condition of his health made it desirable for him to retire to the quiet<sup>23</sup> of the countryside, which he has found, since Easter 1891, at Frankfurt on the Oder where he is now living all by himself, in a small house among gardens.<sup>24</sup> While staying there his novel *Glück und Glas*<sup>25</sup> appeared, written during his stay at Potsdam, with the finishing touches added at Friedenau. The presentation of himself with this work to the German public as a belletristic author for the first time marks a new phase of his activities.

### **Text 3:**

C. Spielmann: "Eduard Bertz'[s] *Glück und Glas*"

Carl Spielmann's<sup>26</sup> review published in *LE*, No. 7, pp. 229-34.

Summary.

Gissing's brief characterization of this review as "sympathetic" in a letter to Bertz acknowledging the receipt of the *LE*'s latest issue must be



regarded as an understatement: a careful reading of Spielmann's review of Bertz's first novel, which was published in September 1891, reveals it to be a veritable paean of praise. The critic emphasizes the publisher's courage – a true “deed”, as he puts it – in introducing to the reading public an accomplished “new” author, i.e. one who does not belong to those “fashionable poets” that catch the eye and the literary taste of the mass of people.

Adhering to neither idealistic nor naturalistic models, Bertz's approach to the presentation of “modern problems” is that of *medio tutissimus ibis*; in other words, “he places himself, with noble intellectual objectivity and a modest eclecticism, above all opinions and relies on his own purified independent views, whenever the need arises, unobtrusively, yet grippingly and convincingly, so that this first novel of [Bertz] appears as a little piece of art with a healthy ideal realism.”

Spielmann goes on to point out Bertz's “clean, fluent style and the conscientiously polished diction,” and defines the general theme of the novel as “the frantic pursuit of happiness and pleasure that animates most of our contemporaries and to which they sacrifice everything, above all the highest good – contentment.”

The hero Felix Lubrecht, a rather weak young man, both physically and mentally, is a victim of that modern disease: looking for happiness in things intellectual, he lacks moral willpower and the ability to make decisions on his own and for himself. Well aware of his failings and his misspent life, he is incapable of choosing the right means, or of listening to his friends' advice, in order to find a positive direction in life. Even his writing proves unsuccessful, as it is based on day-to-day inspiration rather than on a sense of vocation. Spielmann's summing up of Lubrecht as “a dilettante intellectual proletarian” typifies *in nuce* the hero's vital dilemma, notwithstanding Gissing's mild rejection of the term.

Lubrecht's opposite is Martin Gugelhopf, a true friend of his until his death, although they are rivals in the pursuit of a young woman's love. Martin has set himself a clear goal; he knows what he has to do in order to pursue and achieve it; he is full of energy, yet considerate and respectful towards others. Bertz's description of Martin's study of English language and literature “shows the author at his best, and his reflections and opinions especially on Carlyle and Shelley are worth the attention of educated people and provide food for thought.” Praising Bertz for his creativity Spielmann goes on: “Most touching is the apology that Martin delivers at the funeral of his unhappy and pitiful friend; in it he keeps an admirable balance between the words of the orthodox-conservative sermon upon

damnation delivered by the priest who buries Felix, and the facile phrasemongering of the revolutionary party leader. After all, the funeral scene is one of the most powerful in the whole novel.” [This is hardly surprising, the present writer may be allowed to observe, as these two speeches reflect Bertz’s rival convictions, held between the autumn of 1877 and 1879-80 and testifying to his political change of mind. Though he had once, however briefly, been a believer in the social-democratic idea, to which he committed himself as a freelance journalist – in consequence of which he was sentenced to a five-month prison term which he avoided serving by fleeing from Germany – Bertz must have increasingly become aware of the party’s moral corruption and its inability to bring about changes in social conditions (see his letter to Heinrich Rehfeldt, 30 August 1880; Bertz quotes from it *verbatim* in *Glück und Glas*). That may have tempted him to seek happiness and salvation of whatever sort in religion (see *The French Prisoners*, in which a German soldier begins reading the Bible during his stay in Paris).]

In his concluding remarks, Spielmann refers to an essentially Bertzian preoccupation in quoting Martin Gugelhopf: “Education to duty is the focal point, and only that kind of learning is of any value which converts itself into strength and which ethically steels one’s own character.” Spielmann admits a feeling of relief in reading this, and he continues by insisting on the importance of education and knowledge – it is as if he had read Bertz’s letters to Heinrich Rehfeldt and as if he had known in advance Bertz’s two other novels and some of his other publications explicitly dealing with pedagogic questions. Indeed, in that respect *Glück und Glas* is a modern book; Spielmann emphasizes, in a positive sense, its non-entertaining and non-sensational qualities as well as the “lack of nerve-racking suspense... But they who think simply and clearly – and love thinking – will find pleasure in this book.” He thanks Bertz for not having cared about the taste of fashionable readers, and with an “Excelsior!” he wishes him good luck for his further career.

#### **Text 4:**

Eduard Bertz: “Victoria Schulze. Erzählung.”  
Published in *LE*, No. 7, pp. 245-56. Summary.

This is a short story about a girl whose first name results from her father’s fondness for things heroic, after his return as a victorious German soldier, in 1866, from the battle at Königgrätz (Bohemia). The girl suffers

terribly from her name; rather shy and lacking a strong physique, she is bullied and ridiculed at school, as she is held to be pretentious and proud. It is for the same reason that Victoria does not find a job until after her third attempt; when the well-meaning wife of a teacher who senses the wounding wit of her guests and who notices “the comical contrast between the name and its bearer,” suggests rather to call her Auguste, after Victoria’s mother, Victoria gladly agrees, rejoicing that “now I will be, after all, a girl like all the others!” She feels released from the burden of the “shining crown” of her real name, as her gentle employer put it.

Three years later, Victoria meets a journeyman joiner, Fritz Müller, who falls in love with her and gradually wins her attention and affection. On the day that he asks her to become his wife, Auguste, as she is still called, discloses to him her real name Victoria, whereupon he begins to laugh heartily and loudly, and he feels compelled also to disclose to her his real name, Napoleon, which causes her to join him in laughter, thus easing her own long-felt pains. Later she learns that it has been the wish of Fritz’s grandfather to give him that peculiar name. “The old man had retained from his youth the enthusiasm for the protector of the Rheinbund, for the imperial warlord, proudly remembering his own deeds of arms, and now that his youngest grandson was born, just when the second Empire was in the heyday of its power, the poor boy had to pay for it.” He, too, has suffered from the mocking patriotic taunts of his fellow pupils and journeymen in the joiner’s workshop.

Victoria’s and Napoleon’s intended marriage amuses people, but soon after they disappear. The omniscient author, however, informs us that “from then on, he [Fritz] was only the Fritz of his Gustchen, and she, the daughter of Auguste Schulze born Müller, lived in her new world as the happy Auguste Müller born Schulze. A splendid clover leaf, the children who were not denied to this union are better off than their parents; for they have short, common, Philistine names.”

This “tale” is written in a style which is typical of Bertz. We read heart-rending little scenes of both evil and good will, contempt and tenderness, the phrasing of which at times verges on the sentimentalism of the Biedermeier period (something to be found also in Bertz’s three novels); at the same time we may enjoy ironic remarks made by an author who subtly yet unmistakably criticizes the narrow-mindedness of his fellow countrymen and their habit of compensating for their own mediocrity, e.g. by christening their children with names suggestive of grandeur. Whether this is a Dickensian influence may be left to others to judge; Bertz’s humour,

however, bridges the gap between his aims as an educator *par excellence* and his warm compassion for human weakness.

**Text 5:**

Eduard Bertz: "George Gissing"

Coda added to the original text first published in *Deutsche Presse*, published in *LE*, No. 10, pp. 441-43. Translation.

With a woodcut portrait of GG on p. 433.

Last year I had the privilege of introducing George Gissing to German readers through the translation of his tale "Phoebe";<sup>27</sup> but as early as November 1889 I made the literary world aware of his existence by way of the article printed above and published in the weekly of the "German Writers' Association."<sup>28</sup> The other day *Demos*, which already appeared in a French edition two years ago,<sup>29</sup> was published in a German translation by Mrs. Clara Steinitz, in "Ottmanns Bücherschatz,"<sup>30</sup> and at the request of this journal's editor, I present my essay – intended as a preface to the book<sup>31</sup> – to a wider circle of readers. But I cannot allow it to appear without a postscript; for by now, my argument has in essence been overtaken by Gissing's further development: an author who is still working at full stretch cannot yet be summed up definitively; we have to be content with following him step by step. And besides, over the past years the modern spirit has been gaining much ground in English literature; to an ever increasing degree the latter is participating in the aesthetic revolution that is taking place under the influence of growing scientific advances and the social disturbances in the European countries of culture, and in England George Gissing is its most outstanding pioneer.

Since the publication of *The Nether World* three new novels of his have appeared, *The Emancipated*, *New Grub Street* (the latter already translated by Adele Berger in the *Pester Lloyd*<sup>32</sup>), and *Denzil Quarrier*; a fourth, *Born in Exile*, is just out. With these works we would have enough material to draw a portrait of the author in a new phase of his development; for he has not stood still; he has not repeated himself; in each book he has revealed new facets of his character and created new subjects with his shaping pen. Just as his external life has moved away from London's sooty and foggy atmosphere, just as he has now set up his home at Exeter in lovely Devonshire after long stays in Italy and Greece, so has his creative work, since he left "the nether world" behind, not yet returned to the depiction of the so-called proletariat. But he has remained a social writer; however, it is the

proletarians of the pen that he now deals with in *New Grub Street*, that provide him with the characters for one of the most touching modern tragedies. Nevertheless, for readers who first got to know him through *Demos*, the most important thing may well be to regard him as the author of a working-class novel praised by critics for its classical beauty, by Dr. W. Wendlandt, for instance. In Gissing, the latter writes, “the realistic manner of representation may have reached its finest bloom, far superior to the great Zola who is merely creeping on the ground; for here we are confronted for the first time with the entire living conditions of our age, connected with the full range of philosophical ideas of all ages.”<sup>33</sup>

To those who set the highest value on modern technique, his latest novel *Denzil Quarrier* will seem to take an important step forward by consistently maintaining the impersonal style; for in this respect, the English mode of narration has not hitherto given up its familiar, comfortable ways. For all that, Gissing did not aim in it [i.e. in *Denzil Quarrier*] at that kind of objectivity in which the author disappears entirely behind his subject. And quite rightly so. For it is a vain attempt to describe the world as it is; the artist can only portray it as it appears to him. It is, indeed, the vocation of art to show us life as it is reflected in the artist’s eye. From the writer realism requires truth; but the only truth accessible to him is that with which he is personally confronted. He must have the courage to be his own self, the courage of a self-contained individual. Only by following this path can he, in my opinion, free himself and find the possibility of being both a poet and a realist. The hope of literature does not lie in aesthetic theories, but in the artist’s personality. George Gissing is aware of that.

<sup>1</sup>Bertz’s first publications were six poems published in *Jahreszeiten. Zeitschrift für Literatur, Kunst und gesellschaftliche Unterhaltung*. Hamburg. Vol. 30, 2<sup>nd</sup> part (July-December 1871), p. 792; *ibid.*, Vol. 31, 1<sup>st</sup> part (January-June 1872), pp. 31-32 and 376; *ibid.*, 2<sup>nd</sup> part (July-December 1872), pp. 536, 808.

<sup>2</sup>At Berlin, there are no university records confirming Bertz’s studies. At Leipzig, Bertz was registered only during the summer term of 1875, for the study of state administration (incl. national finances and economics); the lectures he attended were: “Entire theoretical national economy. History of political and social theories. Introduction to philosophy and logic. On the teleological view of nature. History of philosophy until the present.” Bertz answered the question whether he intended to continue his studies in the negative. At Tübingen he studied philosophy, although there are no university records (see endnote 4).

<sup>3</sup>No publication known.

<sup>4</sup>Ottilie Wildermuth (1817-1877), author of novellas, tales, stories for children, memoirs; Bertz portrayed her in his article “Ein Wort für Ottilie Wildermuth,” published in *Deutsche Presse*, Vol. 2, No. 51, 15 December 1889, pp. 404-406. Bertz had become acquainted with her in the summer of 1876, but the precise circumstances of their friendship are not yet known. The only passing references to her meeting with Bertz are to be found in two letters

of Otilie Wildermuth to her son Hermann: “Tuesday evening Mr. Bertz came along who beforehand had sent me again a sheet-long epistle on how he intends to cure his welt-schmerz by doing his military service” (7 July 1876), and: “Bertz now wants to serve his voluntary year in order to do some good to his body and his stomach spoiled too early by philosophy” (20 August 1876). Indeed, on 1 October 1876, Bertz enlisted as a fusilier in the 12th Company of the 7th Infantry Regiment at Tübingen, his civil status being that of a “student of philosophy.”

<sup>5</sup>Albert Friedrich Benno Dulk (1819-1884), German poet, playwright, natural scientist, philosopher, socialist, critic of religion and church; in 1875, joined the Social Democratic Party in Stuttgart; favoured a socialism based on the ideal of reason rather than on that of justice and became a symbolic figure of the Württembergian social democracy; in 1880, co-founder of the International Freethinkers’ Association in Brussels, and in 1881, of the General German Freethinkers’ Association. In late summer 2004, Prof. Dr. Ilse Walther-Dulk confirmed to the present writer that Bertz portrayed Dulk in *Glück und Glas* as “Dr Bessel the socialist” who had persuaded, or even seduced, the hero Felix Lubrecht to join the social-democratic movement (see *ibid.*, pp. 261ff.) and who, amidst his comrades, delivered a speech at the latter’s funeral (see *ibid.*, pp. 358f.). An apparently close friendship did indeed exist between Dulk and Bertz, the circumstances of which are not yet fully known. In his lists of correspondence, Dulk kept a record of his letters to Bertz (“1877 Potsdam: 27.11.; 1879 London: 23.1./20.2./26.3./19.5./21.6./15.7./30.10./7.12. [with a presentation copy of Dulk’s *Stimme der Menschheit. Ein Lehrbuch für kirchenfreien Religionsunterricht in Gemeinde, Schule und Haus. 2. Theil: Positive Glaubenslehre oder ideelle Religion*. Leipzig, 1880]; 1881, London: 12.1./21.3./5.6.; 1882, London: 30.3./16.9.”), and what he simply recorded as “Stud[ent]. Bertz” in his diary for the period between 1 July and 4 August 1877, may refer to their first meeting.

<sup>6</sup>Eugen Dühring (1833-1921), philosopher and national economist; from 1863 to 1877 professor of philosophy at the University of Berlin; was removed from office for having severely criticized both members of the faculty and the general conditions of life in the University. Bertz’s prose poem of protest against Dühring’s dismissal, “reverently dedicated to Herrn Dr. Eugen Dühring,” was simultaneously published on 6 July 1877, in *Vorwärts. Central-Organ der Sozialdemokratie Deutschlands* and in the *Berliner Freie Presse*, the manuscript being abridged by one stanza.

<sup>7</sup>The exact date of Bertz’s arrival in England is not known.

<sup>8</sup>See George Gissing’s remark on Bertz to Algernon Gissing, 2 May 1880: “...his favourite work,— education” (*CLGG* 1, p. 266); see also letters to Algernon of 6 February 1879: “Bertz has gone off to Worthing, near Brighton, where he has secured a place in a school” (*ibid.*, p. 147), and of 15 March 1879: “Bertz has left his school in disgust, & is again living in London” (*ibid.*, p.162; note 3, *ibid.* says that Bertz taught at Worthing in a girls’ school). The letters from Bertz to Heinrich Rehfeldt show his serious concern about his half-brother Friedrich’s educational and mental well-being (*Zeitschrift für Germanistik. Neue Folge* VI, No. 2/1996, pp. 414-27).

<sup>9</sup>No record of publication of either literary activity.

<sup>10</sup>George Gissing mentioned Bertz for the first time in his letter to his brother Algernon of 19 January 1879 (*CLGG* 1, p. 141); see also chapter VI (“An advertisement”) in *The Unclassed*.

<sup>11</sup>“The Aristotelian Society does not hold an archive; somehow the papers became the personal property of a former editor and were sold at auction when he died. We have no record of where they ended up, or even if they survived.” (e-mail from the Society’s

Honorary Secretary to the present writer, 7 June 2004).

<sup>12</sup>James Augustus Cotter Morison (1832-1888), wealthy barrister and author, one of the leading Positivists of his time; *The Service of Man: An Essay towards the Religion of the Future*, published in 1887, “attempts to show the ethical inadequacy of revealed religion and is marked in parts by much bitterness” (<http://71.911encyclopedia.org/MORISON>). The German translation appeared as *Menschheitsdienst. Versuch einer Zukunftsreligion. Mit einem Vorwort von Ludwig Büchner* (Leipzig 1890). Gissing must have known Morison well: “To-morrow night I dine with J. Cotter Morison, a prominent Positivist” (letter to Algernon, 21 February 1881, *CLGG* 2, p. 17) – “I dined at Morison’s last night” (letter to Algernon, 1 June 1881, *ibid.*, p. 40). A few years later, Gissing conveyed to Bertz his latest judgements on Morison, maybe reacting to his German friend’s own estimation of Morison: “I have not seen Morison’s book, but certain quotations from it that I read were very nauseous. I cannot tell you how much I loathe that positivism at present. Morison certainly is not dead yet. I did not even know that he was ill” (letter of 17 April 1887, *CLGG* 3, p. 104) – and: “Poor old Morison! There was a man who at all events might have done much more than he did; but *he* was ruined by luxury. He had not the divine ardour which becomes lord over circumstance. He was one of those who have to answer for the wasted talent” (letter of 22 September 1895, *CLGG* 6, p. 29).

<sup>13</sup>Thomas Hughes (1822-1896), novelist most famous for his *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* (1857); elected to Parliament in 1865; appointed county court judge in 1882. In 1881, he published the book which may have induced Bertz to leave London: *Rugby, Tennessee. Being Some Account of the Settlement Founded on the Cumberland Plateau by the Board of Aid to Landownership*. Selected books covering Hughes’s experiment include: John Egerton, *Visions of Utopia. Nashoba, Rugby, Ruskin, and the “New Communities” in Tennessee’s Past*. Knoxville, 1977; Brian L. Stagg, *The Distant Eden: Tennessee’s Rugby Colony. A history of the English colony at Rugby, Tennessee, with a guide to the remaining original buildings*. [s.l.] 1973/1977, Paylor Publications; T. D. Toswill, *Annals of a village: The History of Rugby, Tennessee* [privately published].

<sup>14</sup>See letter from Bertz to Mary Percival, his successor as a librarian, 18 February 1886, in Ben Harris McClary, “Not for the moment only,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No.1, Spring 1965, pp. 55-61. Bertz’s activities as a librarian are reflected in a substantial number of letters held by the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville (Rugby Papers), in his speech “Laying the corner-stone of the Hughes Public Library” delivered on 5 June 1882 (published in *The Rugbeian*, Vol. 2, No. 39, Saturday, 10 June 1882, p. 2), and in particular in his “Report of the Librarian of the Hughes Public Library, to the Board of Trustees, for the year from 15<sup>th</sup> May 1882, to 15<sup>th</sup> May 1883”(TSLA[RP]). His experiences at Rugby are fictionalized in *Das Sabinergut* (1896; reprinted 1902, and 1909 as *Amerika, du hast es besser*). See also M. D. Allen’s article on “Eduard Bertz’s Rugby, Tennessee” in the January 2005 number of the *Gissing Journal*, pp. 1-12.

<sup>15</sup>The composition of *The French Prisoners* was completed in late March 1884, the book appeared in early October of the same year (see letter from Gissing to his brother, 12 October 1884: “I have just got a copy of Bertz’s book,” *CLGG* 2, p. 262). Bertz received £25 for the copyright, a sum which enabled him to return to Germany (see *CLGG* 2, pp. 201, 204-206; *CLGG* 9, pp. 255-256; the *Gissing Journal*, January 1996, pp. 4-22). Only six reviews of this book are known. The second edition, with six illustrations, appeared in 1902.

<sup>16</sup>The *Academy* for 1 November 1884 wrote: “... the narrative is vivid, realisable, and perfect in tone and temper” (p. 287).

<sup>17</sup>Bertz here omitted the fact that he first went to Ilmenau, Thuringia, where he spent a

few weeks with his close friend Hermann Mahr.

<sup>18</sup>Friedrich Theodor Vischer (1807-1887), Protestant theologian, critic of literature, art and culture, philosopher, journalist, aesthetician and author. From 1866 through 1877, he was a professor in Tübingen and also held a chair for aesthetics and German literature at the Royal Württembergian Polytechnic in Stuttgart.

<sup>19</sup>Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de la Brède et de (1689-1755) published his satirical *Lettres persanes* anonymously in 1721. Bertz began the translation in May 1883, shortly before leaving New York City for London; he had taken over this task from his friend Robert Habs, the translator of Montesquieu's *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence* (1734). Bertz finished the translation with a foreword and comments in Stuttgart, on 30 November 1884; the book was published in the autumn of 1885. To date, not a single German review of this edition has been found.

<sup>20</sup>Bertz was elected secretary-in-chief of the *Deutscher Schriftsteller-Verband* in December 1888; whether his function as arbiter was automatically connected to this position or whether he was appointed to it, is not known. Bertz must have cooperated with Theodor Fontane (see unpublished letter from Bertz to a "Dear Colleague", 31 October 1892; this letter, mentioned again in note 22, and the letter referred to in note 24 are to be found in the Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Manuscript Division). In 1889, Bertz edited the association's organ, the weekly *Deutsche Presse*, issues 22 to 26 (26 May through 23 June), because of the editor-in-chief's illness. The latter, Heinrich Steinitz, warmly thanked Bertz for his job executed "with great dedication and selfless diligence," in Number 27, 30 June. Bertz's own contributions to *Deutsche Presse*, all published between November 1888 and May 1890, consisted of eleven articles, including the above-mentioned portrait of Gissing plus a review of *The Emancipated*, and seven reviews of reviews.

<sup>21</sup>In April 1890, Bertz moved from Potsdam to Friedenau (near Berlin); in the spring of 1891, he moved to Frankfurt on the Oder, where he changed his address twice within the next seven or eight months.

<sup>22</sup>An apparently similar or identical work was hinted at by Bertz in an unpublished letter dated 31 October 1892, to a "Dear Colleague"; in it the article was called "Researches on the History of the Havel Fishing Trade." The printed version has not yet been found.

<sup>23</sup>From the correspondence between Gissing and Bertz we know of the latter's sensitivity to noise. The remoteness of his garden house from the centre of Frankfurt may, though on an altogether different level, be comparable to that of the log cabin inhabited by the hero of *Das Sabinergut* from the centre of fictional Wimbledon. It is striking to see the parallels between Bertz's "nervous disease" and Karl Steffen's often-mentioned state of nervousness which he tries to overcome by buying farm land literally in the middle of nowhere. The hero of *Der blinde Eros* suffers from the noise of piano-playing, and in his *Philosophie des Fahrrads* Bertz tries to show that cycling can be an effective cure against nervousness, obviously the disease of his age (see Joachim Radkau's ground-breaking study *Das Zeitalter der Nervosität. Deutschland zwischen Bismarck und Hitler*. München/Wien, 1998).

<sup>24</sup>In an unpublished letter to a "Dear Colleague", dated 3 November 1892, Bertz alluded to his abode at Bergstrasse 52: "I am living outside the town among gardens, all by myself, in a small house as a placid bookworm."

<sup>25</sup>*Glück und Glas* was published in late summer 1891 (see letter from Gissing to Bertz, 21 September 1891: "The last three days I have given almost continuously to your book," *CLGG* 4, p. 324). Victor Ottmann printed 4,000 copies of Bertz's first novel containing 365 pages plus 3 pages of ads, as Nos. 12-16 in his series "Ottmann's Bücherschatz. Bibliothek zeitgenössischer Schriftsteller." Four reviews of this edition are known. A "new edition"



must have been announced in the August number of *Litterarisches Echo* (see letter from Gissing to Bertz, 7 August 1892, *CLGG* 5, p. 46), and Gissing “thanked [Bertz] for sending the new edition of your book – alas! only two volumes. The illustrations are not ... worthy of the text” (15 January 1893, *CLGG* 5, p. 83). A catalogue of printed books listed this edition under “Ottmann’s Bücherschatz. Neue Ausgabe. Band 1 und 2 [1. und 2. Theil (128+260 Seiten)],” no copy of which has been seen and checked by the present writer. On 29 September 1893, Gissing acknowledged to Bertz receipt of “the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Vol. of the second edition of *Glück und Glas*.” Bertz bought back the copyright of Ottmann’s edition in late 1892 or early 1893 as the latter’s firm had gone bankrupt in October 1892, and sold it again to the Leipzig-based publishing company of Carl Reissner. The book (“372 Seiten [3 Theile in 1 Band]. Zweite Ausgabe”) came out under that imprint in the summer or autumn of 1893; there are at least two variants of the hardcover edition, and a paperback edition is also known to exist. A short review was published on 28 January 1894, in the Swiss *Sonntagsblatt des “Bund.”*

<sup>26</sup>Carl Spielmann: pseudonym of the prolific author Carl Friedrich Kerkow (1828-1909). Bertz may have known Spielmann, who was born and died in the small town of Friedland, in the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg, since Bertz lived in Friedland for an unknown length of time, prior to his commencing his studies of state administration in Leipzig, in April 1875.

<sup>27</sup>“Phoebes Glück,” in *Aus fremden Zungen. Eine Halbmonatsschrift*. Herausgegeben von Joseph Kürschner. Stuttgart, Leipzig, Berlin, Wien, 1891. Vol. 1, Part 2, No. 18, pp. 872-79; reprinted in *Bibliothek der fremden Zungen*. Vol. 3. (Stuttgart, Leipzig, Berlin, Wien, 1892), pp. 13-51.

<sup>28</sup>“George Gissing, ein Real-Idealist”, in *Deutsche Presse*, 2 (1889), No. 45, 3 November, pp. 357-59 [part 1]; No. 46, 10 November, pp. 366-67 [part 2]; No. 47, 17 November, pp. 374-75 [part 3]; reprinted in *Gissing. The Critical Heritage*. Edited by Pierre Coustillas and Colin Partridge (London and Boston: Routledge, 1972), pp. 149-56.

<sup>29</sup>Paris, 1890; translated by Fanny Le Breton.

<sup>30</sup>Published in three volumes, Leipzig, 1892. Verlag von Victor Ottmann (Ottmann’s Bücherschatz. Bibliothek zeitgenössischer Schriftsteller. Nr. 29-33 [pp. (1)-239], Nr. 34-38 [pp. (1)-240], Nr. 39-43 [pp. (1)-246]).

<sup>31</sup>See Gissing’s diary entry for 27 July 1889: “Letter from Bertz, saying he is about to write an article on me, to serve as introduction to the German transl[atio]n of ‘Demos’.” *London and the Life of Literature: The Diary of George Gissing, Novelist*. Edited by Pierre Coustillas (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1978), p. 158.

<sup>32</sup>Adele Berger (1866-1900), a prolific Austrian translator (among others of Galitsin, Maartens, Mantegazza, Moore, Tolstoy, Zangwill, Zola) saw her work published as “Ein Mann des Tages”, after the title of the novel’s first chapter, from 29 December 1891, until 30 April 1892. The 101 instalments appeared in book form, based on the authorized abridged French translation *La Rue des Meurt-de-faim* and, slightly revised, as volume 13 of “Die Andere Bibliothek” edited by Hans Magnus Enzensberger (Nördlingen, 1986).

<sup>33</sup>Wilhelm Wendlandt. “Der litterarische Markt”, in *Deutsche Presse*, 2 (1889), No. 50, 8 December, p. 397.

\*\*\*

## Gissing, Tolstoi, and the Victorian Vegetarian Movement

AYAKA KOMIYA  
Meiji University, Tokyo

Among the many things that grew out of Victorian England, one of the most interesting is “vegetarianism.” The history of modern vegetarianism is usually said to have begun in 1847, when a Vegetarian Society was established in Manchester. The avoidance of flesh, fish, and fowl for a cause apart from religion had been gaining popularity since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, but it was not until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century that it came to be recognized as something more than a personal eccentricity.<sup>1</sup> An article in *Punch* in 1848 recognized the emergence of a “vegetarian movement.”<sup>2</sup> Then, a new word was coined to refer to this new dietary habit, and the Oxford English Dictionary lists the first appearance of the word “vegetarianism” in 1851. In 1876, the first vegetarian restaurant was opened in London. The number of such restaurants increased rapidly, and in 1889 amounted to 34 within London alone.<sup>3</sup> Not only were there vegetarian restaurants, but also vegetarian schools, vegetarian hotels, and even a vegetarian insurance company. Vegetarianism is indeed a truly Victorian heritage.

George Gissing was a keen observer of his age, and he was a significant chronicler. His novels bear witness to many contemporary social issues such as poverty, socialism, and the Woman Question. Of the vegetarian movement, too, Gissing left us a good description. Obvious references are found in his short story, “Simple Simon,” which was later reprinted in *The Harmsworth Magazine* under a different title, “Vegetarianism v. Love.”<sup>4</sup> Gissing also wrote some passages on vegetarianism in *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*.<sup>5</sup>

*The Crown of Life*, too, contains some important references to vegetarianism, although they are fewer in number. At first, these references to vegetarianism seem insignificant. Yet actually, they are very important, as this novel was written as a reaction to Leo Tolstoi, one of the most famous figures of the Victorian vegetarian movement.

Although Tolstoi was Russian, he had a special connection with the English vegetarian movement. He had been an inconsistent vegetarian since 1884, but a book by an English vegetarian converted him to complete vegetarianism in 1891.<sup>6</sup> This book was *The Ethics of Diet* by Howard Williams (1883).<sup>7</sup> Tolstoi was so impressed by Williams’s book that he had it translated into Russian, and published it in Russia with his own preface in 1892. The preface that Tolstoi provided was later translated into English, and

published on its own in England as “The First Step” (1892).<sup>8</sup> The tract is now sometimes called the “Vegetarian’s Bible.”

In the 1890s, Tolstoi came to have an increasing influence in England, as his polemical works, being banned in Russia by tsarist censorship, were being published in England in English translations. His writings turned many English readers into committed Tolstoians, and these Tolstoians established vegetarian communities to live according to the principles he set forth.<sup>9</sup> When Tolstoi requested help for the Doukhobors, an ancient sect of Russian Christians who, influenced by his writings, publicly refused enlistment and were facing persecution for it, English Tolstoians were quick to answer his plea and gave financial help, allowing them to emigrate to Canada in 1898.<sup>10</sup> Thus, there was a strong relationship between Tolstoi and England through the shared ideal of vegetarianism.

Tolstoi’s works certainly found adherents in England, but there were also anti-Tolstoian responses. And it was these negative responses that often turned out to be fruitful as they inspired a number of English novelists. For example, D. H. Lawrence’s negative reaction to *Anna Karenina* (1874-76) was useful in his creation of novels such as *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928).<sup>11</sup> Joyce Cary admits that *The Moonlight* (1946) was first written in a violent reaction to Tolstoi’s *The Kreutzer Sonata*.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, when Gissing wrote *The Crown of Life* in 1899, he gave substance to his reaction to Tolstoi. In the previous year, in 1898, Gissing read *The Kreutzer Sonata*, from which he drew strong inspiration. He wrote a long letter to Gabrielle Fleury, his French translator, soon to become his third wife<sup>13</sup>:

I have just read Tolstoi’s “Sonate de Kreutzer.”<sup>14</sup> I had to read it, because it is concerned with the subject I am treating in my new novel. (3 Oct. 1898, *Letters* VII, p. 204).

Indeed, in *The Crown of Life*, the “new novel” he refers to in the letter, we can find homages to Tolstoi. For instance, Gissing gives a sympathetic description of a Russian who has joined the Doukhobors; the protagonist’s father was friends with Herzen, a famous Russian radical exiled in England; the protagonist goes to Odessa, a port in Russia, where Tolstoi had once lived; finally, when *The Crown of Life* was published, Gissing actually sent a copy to Tolstoi.<sup>15</sup> The book, with an inscription, is still to be found in Tolstoi’s library at Yasnaya Poliana.<sup>16</sup>

Although it is true that Gissing had great admiration for Tolstoi’s earlier novels, his reaction to *The Kreutzer Sonata* was utterly negative. In the

same letter to Gabrielle, he calls the novel “a disgusting outrage” and continues:

I fear Tolstoi meant it really as an expression of his ascetic philosophy—the old philosophy which maintains that the body is evil. [...] In that case, the book is detestable, brutal, vile. No spiritual aim can save it from utter condemnation. (3 Oct. 1898, *Letters* VII, pp. 204-05)

Gissing’s achievement as a novelist does not bear comparison with Tolstoi’s, yet his strong response to Tolstoi retains its interest as an example of Tolstoi’s impact on his English contemporaries. In the present paper, I am going to take up Tolstoi’s *The Kreutzer Sonata* and Gissing’s *The Crown of Life*, and see on what grounds Gissing condemned Tolstoiism. A particular emphasis will be put on the analysis of their treatment of vegetarianism, as that is precisely where the disagreement is revealed.

The narrative of *The Kreutzer Sonata* takes the form of a confession by Pozdnyshev, who has just come out of jail.<sup>17</sup> He relates how he had killed his wife in a mad rage of jealousy, suspecting her of a relationship with her violin teacher, with whom she played Beethoven’s *Kreutzer Sonata*.

*The Crown of Life*, on the other hand, is a love story that ends in a happy marriage between Piers Otway and Irene Derwent.<sup>18</sup> Piers Otway is the illegitimate son of a man who used to be a well-known radical, but because his father had not been married to his mother, Piers receives no inheritance when his father dies intestate. Piers makes his way in life by himself, first, as a business correspondent in Odessa, and then in a business of his own in London. Despite his worldly success, he is dissatisfied because he sees no hope of being loved by Irene. He has been in love with Irene for more than ten years, but because she is socially above him, he does not dare ask her to marry him. However, in the end, Irene sees the value of true love, and breaks her engagement with Arnold Jacks, an imperialist MP, whom she could not truly love. She realizes that it is Piers who truly loves her. She returns his love, and they marry.

On reading *The Crown of Life*, it is difficult at first to see in what way *The Kreutzer Sonata* provoked Gissing. We see no resemblance of the plots between the two novels. However, analyses of vegetarianism in these works reveal a significant disparity.

In *The Kreutzer Sonata*, Pozdnyshev, now a vegetarian, firmly asserts that it was the food he had been eating that led him to the beastly act of murder. He says that “the stimulating, superabundant food [...] amounts to nothing but a systematic arousal of lust,” and continues:

[L]ook at us: every day each of us eats perhaps two pounds of meat, game and all kinds of stimulating food and drink. Where does it all go? On sensual excesses. (KS, p. 46)

In the earlier version of *The Kreutzer Sonata*, Pozdnyshv, or Tolstoi, puts it more bluntly: “All of our love affairs and marriages are, for the most part, conditioned by the food we eat.”<sup>19</sup> Thus, *The Kreutzer Sonata* can be read, indeed, as the story of a tragedy triggered by the meat-eating habit, written by a vegetarian author.

In Gissing’s *The Crown of Life*, also, vegetarianism plays a notable role. But, interestingly, Piers’s change is in the opposite direction to Pozdnyshv’s — i.e. from being a vegetarian to being a meat-eater. His vegetarianism is introduced in the very first chapter, in a chance conversation with his brother:

‘You smoke?—I am very glad to hear it. I began far too young, and have suffered. It’s too early to drink—and perhaps you don’t do that either?—Really? Vegetarian also, perhaps?—Why, you are the model son of your father. (CL, p. 4)

Piers’s vegetarianism is referred to a number of times after this, but midway through the novel, he abandons his vegetarian creed:

Asceticism in diet had failed him doubly; it reduced his power of wholesome exertion, and caused a mental languor treacherous to his chief purpose. Nowadays he ate and drank like any other of the sons of men, on the whole to his plain advantage. (CL, p. 99)

After he has given up vegetarianism, Piers looks all the more healthy for it, and his speech gains manly confidence (CL, p. 103). In the end, his love for Irene is requited. Thus, *The Crown of Life* is a story of love attained through the hero’s change from being a vegetarian to being a meat-eater.

What lies at the root of this disparity of their vegetarian characters is the novelists’ view of love and marriage. Tolstoi’s attitude to love and marriage can be found in Pozdnyshv’s monologue. He has come to the conclusion that there cannot be such a thing as true, eternal love “any more than two marked peas can turn up next to one another in a pea-cart” (KS, p. 34). What looks like love, according to Pozdnyshv, is actually no more than sexual lust. This notion of love raised a controversy among the people who read the novel, and Tolstoi had to write a postface to explain himself fully.<sup>20</sup> In this postface, Tolstoi preaches that total chastity is the ultimate ideal towards which mankind must strive:

[W]e must give up thinking of carnal love as something particularly exalted, and must understand that a goal worthy of man, whether it be the service of mankind, of one’s country, of science or of art (not to mention the service of God) is, as soon as

we consider it as such, not attained by means of union with the object of our love either inside marriage or outside it; on the contrary, love and union with the object of that love (no matter how hard people may try to prove the opposite in verse and prose) never make the achievement of a goal worthy of man any easier, but always render it more difficult. (*KS*, p. 271)

In Gissing's novel, on the other hand, love is revered as the "crown of life." Piers Otway shows an almost religious aspiration for true love:

Suddenly he was wide awake, and a horror of great darkness enveloped him. [...] What is life without love? And to him love meant communion with the noblest. Nature had kindled in him this fiery ambition only for his woe. (*CL*, p. 113)

This view of love can be read as Gissing's own view of love. At the time he wrote the novel, Gissing, after two matrimonial failures, was in love for the first time in his life, with Gabrielle Fleury. Therefore, when he came across Tolstoi's negation of true love in *The Kreutzer Sonata*, he felt it his duty to refute it. His letter to Gabrielle continues thus:

This book will not be a piece of cheap & foolish idealism; but I think it will exhibit the great truth that Love is the purifier of hearts; & that where Love exists there is no such thing as base sensualism. Men & women are not spirit only; there is body as well as soul; & the senses have their just part in sexual love. How vast is the distinction between love & sensuality, I hope to make very clear. I abhor that creed of asceticism. [...] In true love, body & soul are indivisible; there can be no perfect love without surrender of both. (3 Oct. 1898, *Letters VII*, p. 205)

In order to make clear that body as well as spirit is necessary for the attainment of true love, Gissing has Piers abandon vegetarianism. In addition, after he has abandoned vegetarianism, Piers starts to train himself physically:

His cold bath in the early morning was followed by play of dumb-bells. He had made a cult of physical soundness; he looked anxiously at his lithe, well-moulded limbs; feebleness, disease, were the menaces of a supreme hope. Ideal love dwells not in the soul alone, but in every vein and nerve and muscle of a frame strung to perfect service. Would he win his heart's desire?—let him be worthy of it in body as in mind. (*CL*, p. 98)

Through Piers's change from being a vegetarian to being a meat-eater, we should not conclude that Gissing was anti-vegetarian, for this is simply not the case. On the contrary, Gissing himself had tried vegetarianism and was thoroughly familiar with it. In March 1879, he had become a vegetarian, his wife having been advised by the doctor to try lentils for her rheumatism. This diet worked well for them both, and he wrote enthusiastically to his brother Algernon to recommend vegetarianism:

I enclose a specimen of Egyptian split lentils. They make emphatically a *thick & most delicious soup*. You could not believe there was not meat in it. If you boil a few onions with them all the better. Nell says that she never felt better in her life than during the last month, & during that time we have not eaten meat—only lentils.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, his vegetarian phase did not last very long, as he wrote in a letter to the editor of *Life and Beauty*:

More than once I have tried to do without meat, for a month or two together; the result, each time, has been such a serious loss of vital force, and such irritation of the temper, that I found it impossible to persevere. I cannot do mental work on a vegetable diet, however good and varied. Neither can I eat *much* flesh. A moderate mixed diet is indispensable to my health and spirits.<sup>22</sup>

But even after he had himself given up vegetarianism, he continued to raise his sons on a vegetarian diet. In his letter to his son Walter, Gissing writes:

I suppose you don't eat meat yet? I am sure I don't want you to, if you find you have quite enough without it. Meat is not very good for people.<sup>23</sup>

As these instances show, Gissing was not at all hostile to vegetarianism. He admitted its economical and healthy merits. But when vegetarianism was inseparable from asceticism, as in the case of Tolstoi, he found it unbearable.

Indeed, for Tolstoi, vegetarianism was not a positive dietary reform. Vegetarianism was an act of self-renunciation. In his vegetarian tract, "The First Step," Tolstoi never says that vegetarianism is good for health, or that meat is poisonous. He only says that if one wants to live a good life, vegetarianism is naturally "the first step," because "virtue is incompatible with beefsteaks."

I only wish to say that for a good life a certain order of good actions is indispensable; that if a man's aspiration toward right living be serious, it will inevitably follow one definite sequence; and that in this sequence the first virtue a man will strive after will be abstinence, self-renunciation. And in seeking to be abstinent a man will inevitably follow one definite sequence, and in this sequence the first thing will be abstinence in food, fasting. And in fasting, if he be really and seriously seeking to live a good life, the first thing from which he will abstain will always be the use of animal food, because, to say nothing of the excitation of the passions caused by such food, its use is simply immoral, as it involves the performance of an act which is contrary to the moral feeling—killing; and is called forth only by greediness, and the desire for tasty food. ("The First Step," pp. 59-60)

As Ronald D. LeBlanc has justly asserted, "[a]lthough 'The First Step' was written as the preface to a book on vegetarianism, it turns out that Tolstoi's introductory essay is hardly about vegetarianism at all."<sup>24</sup> Just as Tolstoi

had preached the necessity for us to abstain from sexual pleasures and make ourselves “voluntary eunuchs,” he was preaching the way to curb our basic animal craving for food by vegetarianism.<sup>25</sup>

Although it is true that the world figure of Tolstoi bears significance in modern vegetarianism, Gissing’s aversion to Tolstoian vegetarianism, as we have seen in *The Crown of Life*, shows that it was not totally in accord with the Victorian vegetarian movement. It was Gissing’s insight into and his knowledge of vegetarianism that made him see the root of Tolstoi’s vegetarianism. By focusing on vegetarianism in *The Kreutzer Sonata* and *The Crown of Life*, it is possible to confirm the reality of modern vegetarianism.

\* This essay is based on a paper presented at “Cooking Culture: Food and Consumption in the Nineteenth Century,” a conference held at Senate House, University of London, in July 2004.

<sup>1</sup>Vegetarianism was viewed as an outrage in England, where people possessed a strong national pride in English roast beef. For the significant connection between beef and English national identity, see Ben Rogers, *Beef and Liberty: Roast Beef, John Bull and the English Nation* (London: Vintage, 2003).

<sup>2</sup>“The Vegetarian Movement,” *Punch* 15 (1848), p. 182. For a history of the Victorian vegetarian movement, see Julia Twigg, “The Vegetarian Movement in England, 1847-1981: With Particular Reference to Its Ideology” (Diss., London University, 1981).

<sup>3</sup>Colin Spencer, *Vegetarianism: A History* (London: Grub Street, 2000), p. 257.

<sup>4</sup>George Gissing, “Simple Simon,” *Idler* 9 (1896), pp. 509-14. See also Bouwe Postmus, “Mr. Harmsworth’s Blue Pencil: ‘Simple Simon’ Revisited,” *Gissing Journal* 31.1 (1995), pp. 1-10.

<sup>5</sup>Winter IX, *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* (1903. Brighton: Harvester, 1983), p. 245.

<sup>6</sup>Janet Barkas suggests three reasons for Tolstoi’s resolve to go on a vegetarian diet: “it aided his health, which was precarious from overwork and depression; it served his lack of teeth; and it alleviated his troubled conscience over his personal wealth in contrast to the conditions of the Russian peasants.” *Vegetable Passion: A History of the Vegetarian State of Mind* (London: Routledge, 1975), p. 157.

<sup>7</sup>Howard Williams published 3 editions of *The Ethics of Diet* in 1883, 1896, and 1907. It was the first edition that Tolstoi was given in 1891 by Chertkov. See Carol J. Adams’s introduction to *The Ethics of Diet: A Catena of Authorities Deprecatory of the Practice of Flesh-Eating* (1883, rptd Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), pp. xx-xxi.

<sup>8</sup>Leo Tolstoi, *The First Step: An Essay on the Morals of Diet*, Trans. Aylmer Maude, Introduction by William E. A. Axon (Manchester: Broadbent, 1900). See also R. F. Christian, “Tolstoy and The First Step,” *Scottish Slavonic Review* 20 (1993), pp. 7-16.

<sup>9</sup>The first Tolstoian colony was established at Purleigh in Essex in 1897. For a history of such ventures, see W. H. G. Armytage, “J. C. Kenworthy and the Tolstoyan Communities in England,” ed. W. Gareth Jones, *Tolstoy and Britain* (Oxford: Berg, 1995), pp. 135-51.

<sup>10</sup>Tolstoi published an anonymous article in the *Times* under the title “The Persecution of



Christians in Russia in 1895.” He also encouraged his disciple Chertkov and his son Sergey to go to England to get help. Tolstoi himself published *Resurrection*, and gave the \$225,000 he received for the book to the Doukhobors.

<sup>11</sup>George Zytaruk, *D. H. Lawrence’s Response to Russian Literature* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), pp. 64-103.

<sup>12</sup>M. V. Jones, “An Aspect of Tolstoi’s Impact on Modern English Fiction: *The Kreutzer Sonata* and Joyce Cary’s *The Moonlight*,” *Slavonic and East European Review*, 56.1 (1978), pp. 97-105.

<sup>13</sup>Gissing met Gabrielle in July 1898. In May 1899, he left England to join her in France.

<sup>14</sup>The French title is *La Sonate à Kreutzer*, not “de Kreutzer.” Gissing was writing to a French woman, so it is likely that he translated the title into French himself.

<sup>15</sup>“Of my new book I am sending copies to Tolstoi, Ibsen & Björnson!” Letter to Clara Collet, 22 Oct. 1899, *The Collected Letters of George Gissing*, ed. Paul F. Mattheisen, Arthur C. Young and Pierre Coustillas (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1990-97), VII, p. 387.

<sup>16</sup>The inscription reads: “To Count Leo Tolstoi with sympathy and respect. | G. Gissing October 1899.” Quoted in note 5 to his letter to Clara Collet, *Collected Letters* VII, p. 387.

<sup>17</sup>Leo Tolstoy, *The Kreutzer Sonata and Other Stories* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985). Quotes will be from this edition, with the references cited parenthetically in the text.

<sup>18</sup>George Gissing, *The Crown of Life* (1899. Brighton: Harvester, 1978). Quotes will be from this edition, with the references cited parenthetically in the text.

<sup>19</sup>Quoted in Ronald D. LeBlanc, “Tolstoy’s Way of No Flesh: Abstinence, Vegetarianism, and Christian Physiology,” *Food in Russian History and Culture*, eds. Musya Glants and Joyce Toomre (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1997), p. 87.

<sup>20</sup>*The Kreutzer Sonata* was officially banned in Russia, but the text of the 8<sup>th</sup> draft in handwritten, lithographed and hectographed copies had widely circulated even before Tolstoi finished writing the 9<sup>th</sup>, final draft. For the history of the illegal circulation of *The Kreutzer Sonata*, see Peter Ulf Møller, *Postlude to The Kreutzer Sonata* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988).

<sup>21</sup>Letter of 23 March 1879, *Collected Letters* I, p. 163. It is interesting to compare this with a letter to the editor of the *Times* by William Gibson Ward, then president of the Vegetarian Society:

The cheapest and best soup, pleasant, nutritious and wholesome, needs only two articles—water and lentils, well cooked. The Egyptian lentils are preferable to Italian ones, and others. They have only to be washed, soaked and boiled furiously three or four hours to make the best soup possible. Put before an epicure, without remark or information, it would be eaten as a fine gravy soup. [...] No vegetables are required to thicken it; but there is no reason why onions, carrots, or celery should not be added if easily accessible. (“A Vegetarian on Cheap Soup,” 24 Dec. 1878, p. 8.)

<sup>22</sup>“To the Editor of *Life and Beauty*,” Sept 1900, *Collected Letters* VIII, p. 82.

<sup>23</sup>19 June 1896, *Collected Letters* VI, p. 144.

<sup>24</sup>LeBlanc, pp. 81-102.

<sup>25</sup>LeBlanc, p. 89. For the relationship between Tolstoi’s food and sex, see also “Unpalatable Pleasures: Tolstoy, Food, and Sex,” *Tolstoy Studies Journal* 6 (1993), pp. 1-32; John M. Kopper, “Tolstoy and the Narrative of Sex: A Reading of ‘Father Sergius,’ ‘The Devil,’ and ‘The Kreutzer Sonata,’” *In the Shade of the Giant: Essays on Tolstoy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 158-86.

## Book Reviews

Pierre Coustillas, *George Gissing: the Definitive Bibliography*, High Wycombe: Rivendale Press, 2005.

Though the author of this astonishing feat of bibliographical scholarship cannot quite remember if and when the conscious desire awoke in him to compile a comprehensive record of all of Gissing's publications in their successive editions, we had what perhaps amounts to the first casual announcement of its anticipated publication in a "Biographical notice of the editor" of the 1969 Harvester edition of Gissing's *Isabel Clarendon*: "Dr. Coustillas [...] is at present preparing a comprehensive bibliography of [Gissing]." In the thirty-six years that have passed since then Coustillas has made an unparalleled contribution to the study of Gissing's works and his life and times. To the readers of *The Gissing Newsletter*, which became *The Gissing Journal* in 1991, his unflagging editorial efforts, not to mention his own contributions of a consistently high quality, have been a quarterly delight since 1969, a constant source of inspiration and a model of dedication. However, he has been a force to reckon with, not just as the editor of *The Journal*, but also as the exemplary editor of ten out of the 20 Harvester editions of Gissing's novels, which appeared between 1970 and 1987, of Gissing's *Diary* and as a member of the editorial team responsible for the prize-winning nine-volume edition of *The Collected Letters of George Gissing*, which confirmed his reputation as the leading Gissing scholar of his generation.

With the publication of *George Gissing: the Definitive Bibliography* Coustillas proves that he has not been tempted to rest on his laurels, but has finally turned his mature attention to the completion of the project so dear to his heart. No one could have been better placed and qualified to undertake the task. The frequent references to the "Coustillas Collection" make clear that most of the rarest items, including Gissing's own copies and many of the copies inscribed by him, have found their way to his own bookshelves, so that the reader of this study may confidently conclude that this bibliographer has seen, held and handled (with one or two exceptions) each and every item included in this definitive survey. Covering the years from 1874, when Gissing saw his prize poem "Ravenna" in print in the *Owens College Magazine*, to the centenary of his death in 2003, the bibliography falls naturally into three parts: the first (1874-1903), dealing with the works published in the author's lifetime, the second (1904-1938), with the works published posthumously while family members of his own generation were

still alive, and the last (1939-2003), seeing the publication of the various private papers and the ongoing stream of new editions seen through the press by the Gissing scholars across the world.

The format adopted by Professor Coustillas does not differ materially from the traditional bibliographical classification: books and pamphlets, contributions to books, contributions to periodicals: short stories, contributions to periodicals: poems, contributions to periodicals: articles and reviews, contributions to periodicals: letters to editors, correspondence and selections. Under these eight headings all the products of Gissing's painstaking pen have been assigned to their appropriate categories. Unsurprisingly, about 80 per cent of the book is taken up with the bibliographical descriptions of the books and pamphlets. From a rough count I have concluded that the total number of separate descriptions/editions in this category amounts to over 1,140 items. *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* has without any doubt been the best-selling Gissing title, with 182 editions. Of these 100 alone appeared between 1918 and 1942 under the imprint of the Modern Library in America, and one of the most remarkable sections of the bibliography is Appendix A in which the different Modern Library editions of *The Private Papers* and *New Grub Street* are distinguished and described with enviable subtlety and admirable clarity.

The popularity of *The Private Papers* is further confirmed by the number of pages (67) required by the bibliographer to describe and analyse the various editions, whether they be English, American, Colonial, Continental, or translations (in that order). To the 54 pages of the main entry for *The Private Papers* are added another 13 from Appendix A, specifying the Modern Library editions of the same title, which makes it the longest entry by far. The second title whose complex publishing history is unravelled in impressive detail is *New Grub Street*, with 33 pages of bibliographical description of its 139 editions (including the ones put out by the Modern Library). More surprising perhaps is the fact that the publishing history of *By the Ionian Sea* is the third longest with 25 pages for its 58 editions, followed by *The Odd Women*, with 22 pages and 83 editions. The publishing particulars of *Demos* and *Born in Exile* require the same space: 18 pages, while the bibliographer needs the same space for *The Unclassed*, *The Nether World*, *The Whirlpool* and *Charles Dickens: A Critical Study*: 14 pages each. But this purely numerical specification does not begin to do justice to the ingenuity and comprehensiveness of the individual entries. Each published Gissing item is identified by its own letter and number and it does not take long before the reader begins to recognize individual titles

by these. A25 refers to *The Private Papers*, A25.1 specifies the first edition of the work, while the numbering A25.1, a, b, c, d, makes the further distinction between four variants of the first edition. Sometimes these variants are dissimilar only through the absence or presence of pages of advertisements, sometimes the distinction hinges on the differences in the text of the publishers' advertisements, at other times two seemingly identical copies must be distinguished because in the one the second 'i' in the roman numeral 'vii' has been inadvertently dropped from the table of contents. It takes the trained and thoroughly practised eye of a bibliographer like Coustillas to spot these minimal (yet cardinal) distinguishing traits.

As for these distinctive features, it would be tempting to invite some additional enlightenment on the question of the stylized wolf's head, which the Hogarth Press used as its publishers' device on the covers and spines of the five Gissing titles they brought out between 1984 and 1987. For this reader there is a certain ambiguity in the descriptions of the various covers, in that only in the case of *In the Year of Jubilee* the presence on the cover of the stylized wolf's head as "overlapping the twin thin and thick black rules round the pink frame" is specifically and systematically mentioned. This is potentially confusing, because all the Hogarth editions in my possession without exception show the stylized wolf's head on their front covers and the same publishers' device is found on all spines as well. One would have thought that such consistency of appearance demanded a similar consistency in the bibliographical descriptions of these items.

Another detail that may be expanded a little is to do with the omission of a reference to the jacket in the description of the August 1921 Dutton edition of *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*.

Quite apart from such bibliographical niceties, the study proves its great value in putting paid to a number of publishers' dirty tricks. In 1912 Dutton in America published the equivalent of Constable's 1912 "presentation edition" of *The Private Papers*. However, Dutton instead of properly dating the edition 1912, printed on the verso of the title page: FIRST EDITION PUBLISHED IN 1903. This was tantamount to passing it off as a true first edition, which had indeed appeared under the imprint of E. P. Dutton & Co. in 1903. To this day booksellers in England and America are wittingly or unwittingly perpetuating this myth. One hopes that it has now been exploded for good. Another charge of a cultivated confusion may be laid against Dutton in its publication of the first American edition of *The House of Cobwebs* in August 1906. Dutton had imported the book in quires from Constable & Co., but by the time the printers set to work, the book was in

its second impression for the British market, so that the first American edition erroneously reads SECOND IMPRESSION on the title page.

In the final paragraph of his introduction Coustillas claims to have written the book for “Gissing’s admirers, for booksellers, librarians and collectors.” Professionals, like booksellers and librarians, will naturally consult the book again and again for its unparalleled bibliographical knowledge in the specialist sense of the word, but Gissing’s admirers or purely and simply, his readers, should turn to this study for its unprecedented information about the composition and publication of each individual title. If some of us felt that Coustillas had told us all he knew about a novel like *Born in Exile* in his introduction to the Harvester edition of the book in 1978, we have been proved unduly rash in our conclusion by the extensive and most illuminating “*Notes on composition and publication*” (of *Born in Exile*) in this bibliographical study. The author effortlessly weaves a colourful tapestry of biographical, professional and topographical strands, culminating in the claim that for Gissing “*Born in Exile* remained to the end one of his favourites, if not *the* favourite among his own novels.” To which Coustillas adds in his inimitable fashion: “Its intellectual distinction need not be demonstrated: it has been acknowledged on an international scale.”

We read about Gissing’s domestic circumstances in the Fleury family flat in Paris and their effect upon the progress of *Our Friend the Charlatan* in the *Notes on composition and publication* for that novel. When Coustillas refers to some of the causes of Gissing’s unhappiness and depression at the time, such as his disgust and despair about the Boer War and the frequency of begging letters sent by his brother Algernon, one remembers having seen them mentioned in the letters and elsewhere, but when in this context we come across the phrase “Gissing’s mental discomfort,” which he is said to have suffered “in the Fleurys’ home,” we suspect the careful author of the phrase of having articulated an insight that he had not uttered before. It is only one instance among many others that illustrates the unexpected breadth of the bibliographer’s approach.

Breadth of approach though is always combined with depth. One dare not estimate the hours spent by Coustillas on retrieving the notoriously hard to come by information concerning the print runs of the various editions. But in many cases he did discover and uncover them, despite mysteriously disappearing publishers’ ledgers, which forced the inventive bibliographer to resort to printers’ records, and the revealing results of his time-consuming enquiry have finally allowed us to answer questions, like “Why is a copy in light blue cloth of the 1984 Harvester edition of *A Life’s Morning*

so hard to find?” Because, so Coustillas tells us, only 150 copies were bound in cloth.

That the appearance of a book matters is proved by a generous selection of 22 photographs of (rare) early and later editions in black and white and in colour and two Gissing portraits. The pictorial addition greatly enhances the general attractiveness of the book. One registers with a touch of regret that the picture of the first editions of *The Emancipated*, *New Grub Street*, and *The Odd Women* is so clearly less sharply focussed than the one that immediately precedes it. But then one feels abundantly compensated by the picture of the four remaindered “three-deckers”: surely these are the stalwart works that underpin and will continue to underpin Gissing’s fame.

The present title may well be regarded as the crowning achievement upon a long and distinguished career of Gissing’s foremost scholar, who was recently praised as the “keeper of the [Gissing] flame.” In his “Acknowledgements” the author thanks his wife Hélène for “her constant collaboration,” fully aware that without her “a good deal less would have been achieved.” Her crucial and tireless efforts on Gissing’s behalf are worthy of the recognition of the wider Gissing community.

This is a study that no responsible academic librarian nor any dedicated student of his works could afford to ignore, and it will remain an inexhaustible source of instruction and delight to the still growing circle of enthusiastic Gissing readers. One does not have to be a prophet to predict that this book will provide a most solid and lasting bibliographical foundation for Gissing studies in the years to come.

Bouwe Postmus, University of Amsterdam

James Haydock, *Portraits in Charcoal: George Gissing’s Women*, Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2004.

This book is a difficult one to review because it is a book of a most uncommon kind. As was said in the January number of this journal, James Haydock published several articles on Gissing, notably in the old *Newsletter*, over thirty years ago, then turned to other writers and apparently ceased to show signs of interest in Gissing. In his notes to the present book, which contains no bibliography, not a single volume published after the *Letters to Gabrielle Fleury* is mentioned. Perhaps the Tragara Press booklet on Gissing’s letters to Edith Sichel was consulted by the author and, more plausibly, Paul Delany’s article on Gissing in prison, which was published

in this journal in October 1996. By and large *Portraits in Charcoal* could have been written about 1970, that is when some publishers, in particular the Harvester Press, began to reprint Gissing's novels and shortly before the many critical studies published in the 1970s and 1980s attracted public attention to the bulk of the novelist's fiction, with the partial exception of the short stories. As we read James Haydock's volume, we find ourselves in a situation like that described by Washington Irving in "Rip Van Winkle" or by Max Beerbohm in "Enoch Soames." Fortunately this is not a posthumous publication, but we are nevertheless seriously puzzled because it is the latest avatar of a PhD thesis we read in the 1960s, and we look in vain for a preface or an afterword which would throw some light on the why and wherefore of this belated resurrection. All the work, biographical, critical, textual, bibliographical, genealogical, topographical, done by scholars in recent decades on an international scale is deliberately ignored.

So one opens the book with great curiosity and not a little apprehension concerning the novelty of the enterprise, pictorially introduced on the front cover of the paperback edition by the photographs of eight women reproduced on either side of the well-known lithograph drawing of Gissing—obviously contemporaries of ladies such as Florence Henniker or Emma Hardy. The book contains six chapters: 1. Women and the Study of Women 2. Marianne Helen Harrison and London 3. Female Friends and Sisters 4. Edith Underwood and Domestic Life 5. The Woman Question and Gissing 6. Gabrielle Fleury and the Quest. There follows a chronological list of Gissing's novels which repeats some old errors concerning the order in which the two 1886 and the three 1895 titles were issued. Appendix A consists in a Gissing chronology and some entries show rather negatively where James Haydock's knowledge stops. Thus no really competent scholar since Vincent Starrett published the first collection of Gissing's American short stories (1924) would have written that he published "several" short stories before leaving Chicago. Among other factual mistakes in the chronology we must note that *Workers in the Dawn* was not published in March 1880 and that Gissing did not live for two full years in Chelsea. Nor was his home at 7K Cornwall Residences when he began to tutor young James Gaussen. *A Life's Morning* was certainly not published in volume form in February 1888, the date of the second instalment in the *Cornhill*. In late 1889 Gissing went to Greece and came back through southern Italy; he did not visit the two countries in the reverse order. *In the Year of Jubilee* was not published in October, but in December 1894, and only the first version of *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* was written in 1900.

Ispoure being a village near Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, how could it possibly be *in* it?

These, however, are only minor errors compared with a number of serious confusions which reveal that when his old thesis was being submitted to revision, the author no longer had sufficient command of all the plots of Gissing's novels. Amy's brother John is confused with Jasper Milvain (we are further on instructed in round brackets to believe that Amy Reardon was "*née* Milvain"), a mistake only made possible by the critic's silence about the ending of *New Grub Street*. A mistake of lesser gravity is the declared sisterhood of Marcella Moxey and Janet Moxey; still it deprives of all sense the part of the plot of *Born in Exile* in which Christian Moxey is involved. A few additional slips will be found in Appendix B, a list of the main female characters in the novels and the best known short stories which could have been made more helpful to non-specialists if the titles of the short stories in which the characters appear had been given before or after those of the volumes concerned. The common reader appreciates being told, for instance, that Mrs. Argent, the cleverly named bicycling young mother so characteristic of the 1890s, occurs in *A Victim of Circumstances and Other Stories*, but he would surely not object to being reminded that the story concerned is entitled "The Schoolmaster's Vision." Further on we are pleased to come across Laura Lindon, a character in *The Sins of the Fathers*, but disappointed to find that she is the only young woman selected from among the half dozen to be found in the volume. Why Ada and her mother Mrs. Wolstenholme are exhumed from "An Heiress on Condition," a story first published in 1923 by the Pennell Club in a limited edition of 48 copies and never collected, is a question which James Haydock answers nowhere in his book.

But what about the study of the subject announced on the front cover? So long as the critical analysis is a discussion pure and simple of Gissing's art of feminine portraiture we are carried along by the lively treatment of the subject and the pleasant narrative manner. The book is elegantly written and happily free of all the jargon that has made some modern critical studies such an ordeal to go through. There is in Gissing's works more than enough material for a detailed study of the kind we are offered. Where things go wrong—in a way that brings to mind superseded work of the interwar period when academic critics were obsessed with the degree to which Gissing's novels were autobiographical—is at the meeting point of biography and critical study. Only the broad lines of the novelist's life as they appear with serious distortions in *The Private Life of Henry Maitland*



and in the disastrously edited volume of letters to the family are apparently known to the author of this outmoded volume. Behind most female characters Professor Haydock is anxious to find a model. Unfortunately he is poorly informed from the biographical point of view—has he seen even from afar Gissing's private papers except the American notebook? Has he read a single letter that was still unpublished in the mid-sixties? He feels obliged to invent resemblances, when he cannot find the details he so desperately needs. Factually the book teems with inaccurate statements. Because it serves his purpose he declares that neither William nor Algernon ever met Nell although actually both Bertz and Roberts met her. The truth is that Nell stayed with William at Wilmslow for several weeks in May and June 1879 and that we have a description of her by Algernon; also that Roberts said he had only seen a photograph of her. Conjectures are often presented as facts. On p. 51 we read that in *The Unclassed Harriet Smales* is modelled after Nell. "In many ways she is quite similar to Carrie [Mitchell], and together they form an authentic picture of Gissing's first wife." In a note on p. 124 we read that the author of *The Odd Women* was perhaps thinking of his own father when he related the circumstances of Dr. Madden's death, and in another place we are told that Thomas Gissing died suddenly, a supposed fact which is contradicted by all the obituaries that have been traced in the local press. Although he has no evidence to offer, the narrator boldly writes that Edith Sichel was perhaps willing to become Gissing's wife. He seriously believes that Edith was not more than eighteen when Gissing met her in a place he tries hard to identify, but eventually fails to name because, to all appearances, he has never heard of the Scrapbook. Clara Collet's testimony about her disposes once for all of the fanciful speculations and tendentious opinions past, present and future on the subject. James Haydock, who has done no biographical research on Gissing's life, is determined to offer a pleasant image of Edith. On several occasions he verges on the rapturous. Is he confusing her with some other young woman when he describes her "laughing, talking, hooting—in search of wild flowers [...] for surely she wanted the marriage to work," or when he refers to what he calls "her democratic attitudes" (pp. 136-37)? Sometimes we feel that the narrator's intentions are at odds with his common sense. Such is the case when it is said of Edith on p. 157 that she was not stupid, a judgment corrected on p. 224 where she is described as "empty-headed," and somewhat aggravated in note 68 when apropos of the new kind of wife, "the trashy, flashy, selfish shrew," the narrator, with a

typical adverb, adds this afterthought: “perhaps Gissing was thinking of Edith.”

Considering that the rate of factual errors per page increases in the last few pages of the book (the idea expressed on p. 280 that in France Gissing lived in “expensive resort towns” will not bear discussion), one is led again on closing it to ask oneself why this anachronistic, poorly documented, error-ridden volume has been published at all. The blurb on the back cover warns the prospective purchaser that the book is for the general reader. Indeed no specialist is likely to be satisfied, but does the general reader deserve to be treated as he is implicitly through these 313 pages? His curiosity should be respected—and rewarded. Gissing’s life should be evoked with accuracy. Ignoring in 2004 all the work that has been devoted to it in the last forty years is methodologically unjustifiable. Nor is it viable from a purely intellectual standpoint. Just as the author has ignored the vast majority of his predecessors, he is likely to be ignored by his more knowledgeable successors.—Pierre Coustillas

Kate Taylor (ed.), *Worthies of Wakefield*, Wakefield Historical Publications (19 Pinder’s Grove, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF1 4AH), 2004.

A considerable number of books about Wakefield have been published in the last few decades and an exhaustive list of their authors and editors would show that the names of Kate Taylor and John Goodchild are those that recur most frequently. If the present volume is edited by the former writer, the majority of the hundred or so entries have been contributed by the latter, whose collection of documents about local people and activities, past and present, is impressive. Only experts could have assembled such a wealth of material, both factual and pictorial, for this is a copiously illustrated volume, and the sources for each entry are given briefly at the end of each biographical notice. But even experts may be aware of their own limitations and most certainly Kate Taylor in her introduction and in the description of the book’s contents on the back cover shows that she is. “The collection,” she writes, “is inevitably eclectic (some may wish to say eccentric); the book includes figures from a range of spheres, embracing the arts, business and commerce, the church, the law, medicine, sport and teaching—and there is even a chimney-sweep. [...] Some will be critical of our omissions (and perhaps some critical of our inclusions!); there is, clearly, scope for further volumes.” Well, local reviewers will probably

pounce on such a suggestion, bearing in mind, it is to be hoped, that most of the biographical sketches first appeared in the *Wakefield Express* in 2002 and 2003 and that the editor of the newspaper may have been partly responsible for the selection. Still we wonder, after duly consulting reference books for definitions of the substantive “worthy,” whether Wakefieldians have approved of the inclusion of John George Haigh, “the acid bath murderer” (1909-1949), who was executed by hanging after killing at least half a dozen men and women. Haigh’s inclusion in this biographical dictionary of “persons of some distinction” (*OED*) must have been decided upon before the title of the book was chosen. To him anyway the word “worthy” cannot possibly be applied.

Gissing appears, with his portrait by Russell and Son which we easily date 1895, on pp. 74-75, but unfortunately the entry about him is not above criticism. Regrettably some old mistakes are repeated. Thus, Owen’s College should be Owens College, since it was named after John Owens, the Manchester merchant. Also Gissing did not die in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, where he is buried, but at Ispoure, a village close to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. As most readers know, *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* is not a novel; nor did Gissing’s mother and sisters live in Wakefield until 1912.

Several genuine local “worthies” known to Gissing’s father and to himself have entries (sometimes with photographs): William Stott Banks, solicitor and historian; Andrew Chalmers, Unitarian minister and activist; John Shepherd Eastmead, whose niece, Mrs. Lucy Bruce, was a relative of Algernon Gissing’s wife; and W. H. Leatham, the Liberal M.P. Other names of local, if not national fame that Gissing was familiar with, have received the editor’s attention: Sabine Baring-Gould, the novelist whose singular matrimonial situation was remembered in *Our Friend the Charlatan*; William Walsham How, the first bishop of Wakefield, who made himself ridiculous in the eyes of emancipated people when he declared that he had indignantly thrown his copy of *Jude the Obscure* into the fire, so shocked he was by Hardy’s hostility to the Church; and Charles Waterton, the traveller and naturalist, whom Gissing mentions in his diary and in a letter to his son Walter.

If ever one or several more volumes are published in the series, let Kate Taylor or her successor bear in mind that Gissing’s papers and correspondence suggest a number of “worthy” candidates whom one had expected to find in this volume: Thomas Waller Gissing, *primus inter pares*, his friends John Binks, Samuel Bruce, William Ralph Milner and Matthew Bussey Hick, who were all honourable men, actively concerned with public

welfare. Also since several Liberal M.P.s have been included, why isn't R. B. Mackie among them? Would he be acceptable, together with George Mander? We suppose that Henry Benington's modesty would tell against his posthumous candidacy.

Despite the above reservations about some aspects of it, this is by and large a very interesting book, well-researched and attractively illustrated, which is bound to find many readers locally. It is therefore a pity that proof-reading has been so defective and that the printers still obviously have so much to learn about the art of typography. The blurb on the back cover offers painful evidence that word division is a problem to which they are blankly indifferent.— Pierre Coustillas

\*\*\*

### Notes and News

Eric Stevens, the well-known London antiquarian and second-hand bookseller, tells us that his next catalogue will contain about 70 Gissing items. He will be happy to send a copy free of charge to anyone interested. Postal address: 74 Fortune Green Road, London NW6 1DS; e-mail: [belleric@dircon.co.uk](mailto:belleric@dircon.co.uk)

A surprise is awaiting any reader of this journal who is prepared to consult the following website:

[http://www.geocities.com/summerhillroad2002/george\\_gissing.htm](http://www.geocities.com/summerhillroad2002/george_gissing.htm)

Not only will he or she find an excellent article not to be found elsewhere in print or on the net, but he will see a house that Gissing visited more than once in what some people would call his salad days. On the photograph the house concerned is that behind the white wall.

Robin Woolven, who lives in the heart of the Algernon Gissing country and who will be remembered as the guide who took a number of us around London in July 2003, reported in late February that a sign advertising "Bed and Breakfast" had just been erected outside Smallbrook Cottage, Broadway. So if anyone would like to spend a night and take his or her breakfast in Algernon's former home, a genuine opportunity now exists. Dr. Woolven adds that Algernon's residence in Willersey (Rose Cottage) has again been sold and is now a "weekend cottage" for a family living in the London area.

If the International Penguin Catalogue is to be trusted, *New Grub Street* will soon be available with a new cover, but nothing is said on the Penguin website of the critical apparatus, which was still practically unchanged in the last impression (2003) although the first edition was published in 1968.

A number of new books of Gissing interest have been announced. A selection of the papers that were read at the 2003 London Conference will be published by Palgrave Macmillan later this year. The volume will be edited by John Spiers, one of the organizers of the Conference. Ashgate are to publish *George Gissing: Voices of the Unclassed*, a collection of new essays to which Patrick Parrinder and Simon James have contributed. Four more titles to appear under the Palgrave imprint will assuredly contain chapters or a number of pages on Gissing: *The Rise of the Office Clerk in Literary Culture, 1880-1939*, by Jonathan Wild, in which the author of *The Town Traveller* will be found in the company of Trollope, Thackeray, Dickens and Forster; *British Aestheticism and the Urban Working Classes, 1875-1900*, by Diana Maltz; *The Busiest Man in England: Grant Allen and the Writing Trade, 1875-1900*, by Peter Morton; *Marketing the Author: Authorial Personae, Narrative Selves and Self-Fashioning, 1880-1930*, by Marysa Demoor.

Gissing will also be celebrated in Greece and Italy. Maria Dimitriadou is completing her book on the novelist which will include a Greek translation of the diary pages on Greece and of the letters he wrote in that country. Lamprini Michou is still busy translating *The Odd Women*. Rubbettino Editore, the Calabrian publisher of *La terra del sole: Lettere dall'Italia e dalla Grecia*, ed. Francesco Badolato, have agreed to publish a selection of Dr. Badolato's articles about Gissing, which originally appeared in a variety of newspapers and periodicals. Like Daniele Cristofaro's book, announced earlier, Maria Dimitriadou's and Francesco Badolato's volumes will contain forewords by Pierre Coustillas.

Readers interested in both Gissing and Thomas Hardy will certainly care to see William Greenslade's recent publication *Thomas Hardy's "Facts" Notebook: A Critical Edition* (Ashgate, 2004). In many respects, it reminds one of Gissing's Scrapbook.

\*\*\*

## Recent Publications

### Volumes

Pierre Coustillas, *George Gissing: The Definitive Bibliography*, High Wycombe: Rivendale Press, 2005. Pp. xxxv + 604. Plum-coloured cloth. ISBN 1 904201 02 4. Price £50 or \$90.00.

Christine DeVine, ed., *Abridgement of Forster's Life of Dickens*, Volume III of *Collected Works of George Gissing on Charles Dickens*, with an Afterword by James A. Davies. Grayswood: Grayswood Press (Rockfield, Ash Tree Close, Grayswood, Surrey GU27 2DS), 2005. Pp. vi + 291. Purple cloth. Contents: 7,500 word Introduction; reprinting of full text from the last known publication in the 1920s; first full identification and annotation of all Gissing's incorporations to the Forster text; comprehensive notes. 6,000 word Afterword by James A. Davies. Three appendices consisting of selected contemporary reviews of Gissing's Abridgement, of the first reprinting of G. K. Chesterton's 1927 Introduction to Forster's *Life of Dickens*, and first reprinting of Davies's essay "Striving for Honesty: An Approach to Forster's Life." ISBN for hardback 0 9546247 4 2, for paperback 0 9546247 5 0. Price £30 or \$55 for the hardback, £15 or \$28 for the paperback.

### Articles, reviews, etc

Paul Delany, "Book Reviews," *Victorian Studies*, Summer 2004, pp. 690-92. Review of Simon James's *Unsettled Accounts*.

Sophie Fuller and Nicky Losseff, eds., *The Idea of Music in Victorian Fiction*, Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, 2004. Gissing, especially *Thyrza*, is discussed on pp. 3-25.

Marco Pustianaz and Luisa Villa, eds., *Maschilità decadenti: La lunga fin de siècle*, Bergamo : Bergamo University Press, 2004. Gissing appears on pp. 103, 322, 324-25 in an article by Scott McCracken.

Anon., "Campaign for Gissing Prize gets big boost," *Wakefield Express*, 11 February 2005, p. 4. Yorkshire Forward gives a £3,000 grant. Louis

Kasatkin, poet-in-residence, Wakefield Cathedral, alludes in a letter to the editor, on p. 11, to the possibility of creating a Gissing day locally.

David Lodge, “Revenge of the Wage-Slave,” *Guardian*, 26 February 2005 (Guardian Review Section, pp. 6 and 8). Passage on Gissing and Wells to appear in the introduction to the forthcoming Penguin edition of *Kipps*. Lodge writes that the latter part of *Kipps* shows signs of the intellectual strain Wells was under when he struggled to define his political philosophy and reconcile it with Fabianism. Surviving drafts testify that Masterman, a character based on Gissing, was originally given opportunities to expound the doctrine of socialism to Kipps. In the finished novel, Masterman is given much less scope. David Lodge is puzzled by Wells’s unsympathetic portrayal of a character based on Gissing. Readers who are familiar with Wells’s disloyalty to Gissing after the latter’s death will not be surprised.

George Gissing, “Comparisons,” *Dickens Magazine*, Series 3, Issue 3. February 2005, p. 22. A long quotation from Gissing’s *Critical Study of Dickens’s works* accompanying an article by Michael Hollington on Balzac. Other articles about Dickens’s contemporaries and successors known to Gissing by name and/or through their work are to be found in this number devoted to *A Tale of Two Cities*: Quiller Couch, C. H. Spurgeon, Hablot K. Browne and Conan Doyle.

D. J. Taylor, “The 100 favourite fictional characters...as chosen by 100 literary luminaries,” *Independent on Sunday*, 3 March 2005. As seen on the internet, D. J. Taylor chooses Godwin Peak.

\*\*\*

### Tailpiece

[Eduard Bertz’s novel *The French Prisoners* (Macmillan, 1884; rptd 1902) being very scarce, we reprint the opening paragraphs so as to give our readers evidence of his excellent command of English. In our days of easy scanning a new impression—of necessity privately printed—would be desirable, as would be a translation of *Das Sabinergut*.]

The berries were red on the mountain-ashes that spread their branches over the village street, for it was high summer tide. Before the yard gate of the Vicarage an old man was standing, looking down the road. ‘There they are at last!’ he exclaimed, talking to Mr. Enderlein, the parson of Bockelow,

who sat with a book under the vine-covered porch, and lifting his thin old hand in welcome.

Two lads came marching along the shady avenue, waving their light-coloured schoolboy caps, and nodding merrily to the village people who greeted them from their cottage doors. Over their shoulders they carried knapsacks, and strong buckthorn sticks were in their hands, for they were just returning from a walking tour through the Thuringia mountain forests.

It was at the end of the summer holidays of 1870. In Germany, where the mental drill of schoolboys is regarded as a kind of gymnastic exercise, and every classical public school is called a gymnasium, the merciful rulers in the educational council interrupt, in the heat of the dog days, those brain athletics of their pupils by four weeks' vacations, which close with the first week in August.

This year the holidays had witnessed the outbreak of the Franco-German war. It was peace when the boys threw off for a season the yoke under which they had been sweating, and laid away the ancient classics for a full month's sleep on dusty shelves. Now, when they were about to resume their study of the Peloponnesian war and of Cæsar's tactics, there was the noise and enthusiasm of real war all around them.

On their journey they had first met with the glorious news that the whole German nation was rising in arms to defend their homesteads and the honour of their country against threatened invasion. They were full of all the great things they had seen and heard on their tour, and eager to tell their father, who had risen from his seat under the porch, and had called to his wife that the boys had arrived. Smiling, the parents rested their pleased looks on the flushed young faces, and listened to their story, while, as the first refreshment and welcome home, cooling curded milk, with grated brown bread and sugar, was set before them on the porch table.

'Oh, Jockel, whom do you think we met on the line? Can you guess?' Fritz, the younger of the two brothers, in his clear ringing voice, eagerly said to the old man, who had also come to the verandah and shaken hands with them.

'Met? have you met him? Is it Wilhelm?' he asked, looking anxiously into the boy's blue eyes.

'Yes, it was he, your own grandson,' Fritz replied. 'It was in Halle, where we passed a full day, for all the trains were going westward; we couldn't get on. There we saw him in the station, and spoke to him, and he sent you his best love, and said he wouldn't forget that his grandfather is a veteran of Waterloo.'



