

THE GISSING NEWSLETTER

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

Volume XV, Number 3
July, 1979

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Four Unpublished Letters

From Gabrielle Fleury to Alice Ward

Pierre Coustillas

In his article on “Alice Ward and the Gissings” (*Gissing Newsletter*, Oct. 1978 and Jan. 1979), Mr. R. D. Best mentioned the existence of four letters from Gabrielle Fleury to his cousin Alice Ward and he gave a brief summary of their contents. These letters, two of which only are complete, are well worth publishing. They throw some light on the atmosphere in which Gissing worked during the last few months of his life, and they help us better to understand Gabrielle and her mother, their activities and preoccupations. Besides they offer some additional information on Gissing’s and Gabrielle’s literary activities. Of course these letters represent but a tiny portion of

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Subscriptions:

Private Subscribers: £1.50 per annum
Libraries: £3.00 per annum

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the correspondence that passed between Gabrielle and her friend, but nothing whatever is known of the rest. The two women knew each other for about forty-four years. Some evidence of their lasting friendship is recorded in Gabrielle’s letters to Clara Collet (1899-1928), in which Miss Ward’s name occurs now and again, notably about the time Morley Roberts published his fictionalized

biography of Gissing, *The Private Life of Henry Maitland*.

The present letters must be read in connection with the thoroughly documented article by Mr. Best. The first of them, in which Gabrielle bitterly voices her disappointment at Alice's decision not to use the Gissings' flat in Boulogne, shows that she did not try to spare her friend's feelings, but it also indicates that their relations were on a very candid footing. The other three correct this potentially misleading impression. They also make tantalizing reading in the sense that they hint at matters which have not yet been clarified. For instance, the article written jointly by Gabrielle and Alice still has to be exhumed from the French or Swiss journal which accepted it. Also René Fleury's translation of *In the Year of Jubilee* may have appeared without any scholar being aware of it. Or again, one would like to know what were those "photos or cards" alluded to in the fourth letter. Above all – but isn't this asking too much? – one would rejoice to hear that Gabrielle was mistaken about "Among the Prophets," which Gissing requested Pinker to destroy and which Gabrielle here says he himself destroyed.

None of the four letters is fully dated, but three of them offer no difficulty in this respect. No. 1 and no. 2, written at St. Jean-Pied-de-Port in Gissing's lifetime, clearly date back to the autumn of 1903. No. 4, with the Montpellier address, can definitely be ascribed to 1906: the correspondence between Gabrielle and Eduard Bertz shows that she was staying there at the time. No. 3, the first sheet of which is missing, cannot be dated with perfect accuracy. Comparison with other letters from Gabrielle written in the same period as well as internal evidence suggest late January or early

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February 1904.

The first three letters have been translated from the French by Mr. C. S. Collinson, to whom warm thanks are due; the last has been allowed to stand as it is in Gabrielle's sometimes ungrammatical English.

I

Ispoure
St. Jean Pied de Port, B. P.

24 Sept. [1903]

Dear Alice,

I have just received your letter; we were beginning to be anxious about you and I had actually written a note to Mme Messmer (1) asking for news of you. Of course I shall not send it now. Would you be so kind as to look for the exact address of Fasquelle, the publisher (formerly Charpentier), to add it to the enclosed envelope and to post it as quickly as possible. *It is very urgent.* (2) I think you will not have much trouble in finding the address on one of their publications, on your shelves or on display at a bookseller's. We are astounded at your decision! We cannot understand why you have not seized the lucky opportunity to move all your furniture to our place at Boulogne, for 6 months, as we have proposed to you, and to travel during that time! With six months' rent free, you could have had enough to enjoy yourself, and in that case the distance between Boulogne and Paris would not have mattered much to you. You do not even talk of coming to see us in October, as you had mentioned earlier. What are your plans about coming here? We

should like to know, for if you decided not to come, we would invite someone else. Mother has told me specially to let you know that she is very cross with you for refusing her invitations every time.

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Truly, I should have thought you would be tempted to see this lovely spot. I have just returned from a trip of about 10 days in the Pyrenees, including Gavarnie, Cauteret, Luchon, Lourdes, Pau, etc. (3) And I had reserved a most beautiful and interesting area for a visit in your company, but I see you prefer the Left Bank. What a funny choice! Anyhow, you must tell me what you intend to do as regards the Basque country. If you see an article in *The Cornhill*, by Mrs. Woods about Guipuzcoa, please read it and send me your comments. (4) We have known since last year both Mrs. Woods and Guipuzcoa (which is one of the Basque provinces in Spain) and we are curious to know what she says about it. Very pleased to have good news of Mme de Musset. (5) Good-bye, dear Alice, we send you our affectionate greetings. Mother (6) is not in bad shape and she remained here contentedly during our absence, with Bijou! What will you do about our keys when you leave Passy? Do you intend to leave them with Mme M.?

Love from Gabrielle

1- The charwoman who did some occasional cleaning in the Gissings' small flat at no. 6, Rue de Billancourt, Boulogne (Seine). They had rented it in 1902, to store their furniture before moving to Ciboure, near St. Jean-de-Luz, for 675 francs a year, that is about £27.

2 - What the letter to Fasquelle was about is unknown – perhaps the translation of *New Grub Street* since the Editions de la Revue Blanche passed into Fasquelle's hands about that time. Beside this novel, Gabrielle had translated *The Odd Women* and *The Paying Guest* which were still unpublished. Fasquelle's address was 11, rue de Grenelle, Paris VIIème.

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3 - There is no reference to this trip in Gissing's own correspondence of the period, though he told various correspondents about his journey into Spain in August.

3 - This, together with Gabrielle's use of the first person singular ("I have just returned. . .") seems to indicate that George did not accompany her. Indeed he wrote to his brother Algernon and to his sister Ellen on September 12 and to Hardy on September 20 from St. Jean-Pied-de-Port. But Gabrielle later refers to her mother remaining at St. Jean with the little dog during "our" absence.

4 - Gissing had been in touch with Margaret L. Woods (1856-1945), the novelist and poet, in 1887, when Bentley published her short realistic and dramatic novel, *A Village Tragedy*. He had written to Bentley about it and this had led to an invitation from Mrs. Woods. She was the second daughter of George Granville Bradley, D.D., Dean of Westminster, and had married the Rev. H. G. Woods in 1879. In a letter of August 31, 1903 to Wells, Gissing wrote: "She came to see us at St. Jean de Luz early in the summer. A strange and rather uncanny person – with a good husband" (George Gissing and H.G. Wells, ed. R. A. Gettmann, pp. 215-16). The articles in the *Cornhill Magazine*, entitled "Guipuzcoa," appeared in September, October and

November 1903. They were subtitled: I The Basques: and an old sea port; II The Shrine of Loyola; III The Valley of Iraurgi and a Basque Wedding. They are in the same style as Gabrielle's own essay on the Basque country, "Une Enjambée sur les Pyrénées," which can be read in English in *The Letters of George Gissing to Edward Clodd* (1973).

5 - The poet's sister, Hermine Lardin de Musset (1819-1905). See Gissing's Diary and his correspondence with Gabrielle Fleury.

6 - Anna Senly-Fleury (1839-1910).

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II

Ispoure, St Jean Pied de Port
(BP)

6 Nov. [1903]

My dear Alice,

I have not been able to reply to you immediately, as I have been very ill, for several weeks, with laryngitis, and I am still far from being cured, as my voice is still hoarse and I am feeling very weak, but at last I am able to get up and attend to a few things. As for my poor Mother, she has got worse with all the worry on my account, and my husband's work has been upset and interrupted by anxiety and the dismal effect on the organisation of everyday life here. So you see our home is not a very cheerful place at the moment! I am consequently not in the best mood to reply to your proposal which was nevertheless of great interest to me. The suggestion of this club for women intellectuals (1) seems to me a happy one, and I should not have hesitated for a moment to send you my agreement if I were living a normal existence. But at present, tied down in the remote Pyrenees, with no prospect of going to London soon, and not even knowing when I shall be in Paris again for good, I really do not think that I could just now be an active or suitable member of the Club. I shall think matters over again, but that is my first impression. If I change my mind I shall not hesitate to let you know. This affair must have given you a lot of extra work but I quite realise that you find it full of interest. I am glad to know that our article has at last been accepted. (2) Never mind about the price, but I think it would be a good idea, when you correct the proofs, to re-insert the passage I had caused you to delete, relating to what you know. (3) Because I know that several articles about him, in Hungary, Germany and Norway, have mentioned it, with his approval – which would mean that ours would appear less well documented.

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You will remember the passage: "In 1892 the hitherto peaceful life of Mr. S. P. was marred by a painful event. He was about to be married to a young lady who had been attached to him for several years of mutual love when a very serious illness led to the severance of their poetic engagement and caused the remainder of the poet's life to be one of grief." Something like that. I can't think just now of anybody in France whom I could recommend as a possible member of the Club. Miss de Forest? Of course Mme Paul Bourget will already have been thought of, Mme. A.

Daudet? Mme Jean Bertheroy? Perhaps Mme de Pavloff de Tannenberg (née Funck-Brentano) might join. Mme Rostand, Mme Mary Duclaux? Perhaps they are already members. (4) I can assure you that I am most disappointed at not being able to comply immediately with your request, but you can realise what a bad state I am in and will understand that I am not in the mood to undertake anything. Tell me if you know *where* Mlle de la P. R. (5) has reached in her translation of *The Whirlpool* (if indeed she has started at all). You will remember her telling me, last year, that she wished to pay my husband half the royalties and was only awaiting the first opportunity for sending me the money. Since then, I have heard nothing about it. This is annoying for my husband has refused two other offers to undertake the work, and if she really does not do it herself, this would be a dead loss. Please speak to her about it, when you get the opportunity, as if it came from you personally. I do not know what to reply to you about the keys. Please keep them for the time being, if you don't mind. We can decide later. We should very much like Mme M. to go to the flat within the next few days (choosing a *sunny day*) and *open everything* and *air the place*, and see if the recent damp weather has done any harm. I was planning, if all went well here, to take a trip to Paris, on account of a cousin who is getting married on 17th; alas this plan has become impossible under present circumstances. If, by chance, things settled down, I might make the journey a little later, for I have lots to do and the visit would be useful. But I should really be vexed if I arrived just at the

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time of your own departure or during your absence. Do postpone this till next summer, otherwise we run the risk of missing each other, for my own journey might be very sudden, taking advantage of an improvement in M.'s health – if that does happen, as, really, just now it looks very doubtful. Mrs. Woods came to see us *with her husband* (what a miracle!) at St. Jean de Luz, where Miss Woods, her sister-in-law, lives. Her husband has come back several times to visit mine, but she had escaped to Guipuzcoa and only came to see her husband between trains! A funny sort of woman! Her articles (which we have seen) are rather feeble, very ordinary anyhow. My husband is delighted with yours in *The Author* (6) and he wants to congratulate you on them. Herewith is a list of his works which you asked for. We have discovered that Sarah Grand (7) lived for a long time at Cambo, near here, where the Rostands (8) are now living. Your new home must be very picturesque, and I should like to see it. Good-bye, dear Alice, we all join in sending you our most friendly greetings.

Yours affectionately,

Gabrielle

P.S. Have you still enough money to pay for all our expenses: Messmer, etc.?

1 - The Lyceum Club, of which Alice Ward was to be a most active member. For details see R. D. Best's article.

2 - An article on Sully-Prudhomme (1839-1907), the French poet to whom Gabrielle was engaged at one time. He became a member of the French Academy in 1881 and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1901. He wrote poems about her which are still unpublished. No

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mention of the article she wrote in collaboration with Alice Ward has been found in the French studies of the poet.

- 3 - An allusion to her relationship with Sully-Prudhomme, on which she enlarges further on. The explanation she gives – Sully-Prudhomme had suffered from a minor form of paralysis since the Franco-Prussian War – is only half-convincing, but the date is interesting as it certainly indicates the time when the engagement was broken. Fragments of his letters to her were published by Ernest Bovet in “Sully-Prudhomme (avec lettres inédites),” *Wissen und Leben*, September 1, 1913, pp. 672-89.
- 4 - Miss de Forest has not been identified. Mme Paul Bourget and Mme Alphonse Daudet were of course the novelists’ wives. Jean Bertheroy was the pseudonym of Mme Berthe le Barillier, author of dozens of novels and volumes of short stories. Claudine Funck-Brentano was the sister of Frantz Funck-Brentano, a famous archivist. She published *Les Appels, poésies* (Paris, 1906). Mary Duclaux (1856-1944) was a poet and biographer: see *English Literature in Transition*, 1967, vol. X, no. 1.
- 5 - Mlle Chevalier de la Petite Rivière. Gissing wrote in his diary that *The Whirlpool* was translated into French, but there is no record of publication.
- 6 - Alice Ward was the Paris correspondent of the Society of Authors, and in this capacity a regular contributor to the *Author*.
- 7 - Sarah Grand, pseudonym of Mrs. Frances Elizabeth Haldane McFall, the once famous Irish novelist (1862-1943), author of stories on the New Woman, notably *The Heavenly Twins* (1893). She was six times Mayor of Bath.
- 8 - Edmond Rostand, the poet and playwright (1868-1918), author of *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1897).

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Like Gissing he lived in the Pyrenees for health reasons. His home – the Villa Arnaga at Cambo-les-Bains – is now a Rostand museum.

III

[early 1904, late January or early February]

(...) recovered!) and then so extraordinarily cheap: 675fr. a year up to July 05! Please think of it and get busy with it, my dear friend, you will be doing me a very good turn. (1)

Now I have another service to ask of you, of a different kind. Here it is: you will recall that my odious brother (2) has translated *In the Year of Jubilee*. Well, he told us about six weeks ago that this translation had been accepted and was to appear towards April or May in the *Gil Blas*. (3) Now, it goes without saying that the royalties have not yet been paid; he had promised to pay them in the first week of the second month of publication; but we suspected him of trying to filch these sums

and to go ahead with publishing, hoping that we would know nothing about it or that we would hear of it too late. G. had already advised being cautious about this matter, as we had no intention of making him a present of the money. I am going to warn him (as agreed between my husband and me) that I shall be duly informed of the publication and that if he fails to pay the royalties we shall immediately put a stoppage on them. But I should like to try to receive definite information. And as one can always feel that he is not telling the truth, who knows whether it is really in the *Gil Blas* that the translation will appear, and who knows whether it may not appear in some other paper? Therefore, I want to ask you whether it would be possible for you to glance from time to time at

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several papers and to enquire here and there what is happening. Or, another thing, couldn't one write to the *Gil Blas* saying that one had heard that they were going to publish a novel by G. G. and that, wishing to read it, one would like to know when its publication will begin. That would be one way of making sure whether the person in question is telling the truth. The translation is to be entitled *Ces Demoiselles de Camberwell* – London life and manners.

I am busy with the poor grave, wondering how I can arrange things. It is so difficult, principally because it is necessary to look for something which would have appealed to my husband's tastes and ideas. But I cannot believe that the tomb is really his, that he should be lying there, or at least what remains of him, for evermore, and that never, never shall I see him again. I can't believe it! I can't at present really *believe* in this dreadful misfortune – it seems to me as if he were absent for a while and will return later. My dear Alice, what a pity it is that I can no longer invite you here, (4) as before, and that you cannot come. It would do me good to see you. I do not know exactly yet how long we shall remain or what we shall do later. I shall certainly have to go to Paris on business. Mother has been very ill but is rather better; she thanks you most sincerely for your kind letter and will reply to it as soon as she can. I have received, and am still receiving, heaps of letters of sympathy, some from complete strangers, from anonymous admirers of G. – and many which are so touching. The grave is covered with flowers, some sent from England or from his English friends here. From that very spot, there is a wonderful view of the Spanish mountains and all the countryside – a view which he loved so much. Good-bye, my dear friend and thank you again for your sympathy; I knew it would grieve you and also to be informed in such a horrible manner. I had not a moment and had not even time to think of telling his most intimate friends. You cannot imagine what those three weeks were for me, with nineteen days and nights unable to

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lie down, not even to undress once, with all this unutterable anguish.

Your very affectionate friend,

Glle Gg

- 1 - Gabrielle probably asked her friend to look for a tenant for the Boulogne flat, which had been rented in the summer of 1902 for three years.
- 2 - René Fleury (1876-1936), to whom she generally referred in unpleasant terms in her correspondence. He became an insurance inspector and spent years abroad, notably in Algeria and Canada where he died.

- 3 - *Gil Blas* did not publish the French translation of *In the Year of Jubilee*. The typescript is still extant. As late as January 1, 1913, Alice Ward announced in the *Author* that the French translation was shortly to be serialized (p.108).
- 4 - She was staying at Mlle Larréa's pension, 42 Quai de Ciboure, now Quai Maurice Ravel.

IV

2 avenue d'Assas
Montpellier
(Hérault)

Dec. 11th [1906]

Dear Alice,

Yr letter followed me here where I had to come in order to consult a great Dr (1) specialist for the nerves and all mental things, my state having become terrible and my mother and friends cld not allow me going on like that longer. So we are here in a Clinique and I am under strict and careful

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treatment, in the hands of one of our most eminent *savants* in physiological psychology. He generally does not treat patients himself, but he consented to do it for me, as my case probably interested him, for, he says, my *névrose* is absolutely *not* constitutional, but accidental and entirely due to moral causes, and it is certainly marvellous that moral causes can produce such a disorganisation and alterations as this of my nervous system. Now let me answer yr questions (tho' letter writing is not allowed to me!). I think *Denzil Quarrier* might do for the translation and purpose you speak of. It is less long than many others, a political novel and the plot rather dramatic. *The Town Traveller*, *Crown of Life*, *A Morning's Life* [*sic*], *Our Friend the Charlatan* are not yet disposed of. (2) I have no objection whatever to the articles you are intending on "G. G. in France." (3) Only I hope you wld let me see them before sending them to the editor. In case of yr writing them here is the list of the works he has written in France:

By the Ionian Sea, Paris June/July 1899, Trient (Suisse), Aug. 99.

Paris winter 99-1900 wrote a novel that he never published and even destroyed not being satisfied with it, entitled "Among the Prophets" which dealt with the occultists, spiritualists, mediums, etc. (Yr sister typewrote it, you remember perhaps). (4)

Our Friend the Charlatan St. Honoré en Morvan, June-Sept. 1900.

An Author at Grass (afterwards in book-form: *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*). St. Honoré Sept.-Nov. 1900 and Autun, Summer 1901.

Began his historical romance of *Veranilda* under the title of "A Vanquished Roman" in Paris, winter 1900-01.

Revision and abridgment of Forster's "Life of Dickens," Arcachon, winter 1901-02. And several

short stories.

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Will Warburton – St. Jean de Luz, winter 1902-03.

Veranilda (unfinished) St Jean Pied de Port, July-Dec. 03.

Had ready in his mind and was going to write it in the following spring, a new book in the style of *Ryecroft*, but quite in a different spirit and tone, “as it wld have been the outcome of his present life, just as the first one was the result of his past experiences” (his own words).

As for the photos or cards you ask of the places described in my little article, (5) I am sorry not to be able to give them at present, as I am not in the country, and those I (....)

1 - Dr. Grasset, who would have liked to marry her.

2 - According to Gissing’s diary, *The Town Traveller* was translated into French by Georges Art, who had translated *Eve’s Ransom* for the *Revue de Paris* (April-May 1898).

3 - These articles are still in Alice Ward’s papers; they do not seem to have been published.

4 - Sarah Ward, who lived at 47 Stanford Road, Handsworth, Birmingham.

5 - Perhaps “Une Enjambée sur les Pyrénées,” with photographs taken and postcards bought on the journey.

Gissing and Women: A Response

David B. Eakin
Arizona State University

At the December, 1978, convention of the Modern Language Association in New York a

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special session on “George Gissing and Women” generated a lively discussion. The discussion was in part triggered by the topicality of the subject and in part by the asseverations of Coral Lansbury in her paper on “Gissing and the Female Surrogate.” (1) The mixed reaction of the audience suggested that the subject of Professor Lansbury’s paper might profitably be explored further.

An immediate problem encountered by this member of the audience in listening to Professor Lansbury’s paper was the writer’s rather hazy view of Gissing and his world of fiction. Clearly the role of the critic is to distinguish between fact and fiction. Too often and too easily Professor Lansbury imposed Gissing’s personal life on his fictional world. Surely the attitudes expressed by all his male characters cannot be attributed to Gissing himself. The subject of women’s social, political, and economic emancipation was even less resolved then than it is today. Ambiguity was the keynote characteristic, and it is precisely this ambiguity which Gissing was trying to depict

when he published *The Odd Women* in 1893. It was a time when both men and women were endeavouring to explore and work out the ramifications of a relatively new social phenomenon which was quickly gaining a momentum not to be easily stopped.

Professor Lansbury would have been fairer to Gissing had she allowed him the intellectual license of ambiguity – or at the least ambivalence. Robert L. Selig, also on the panel in New York, stressed in his paper “The Gospel of Work in *The Odd Women*: Gissing’s Double Standard” that in fact Gissing was an “ambivalent feminist” because of his own preoccupation with social position, a preoccupation which led Gissing to conclude that his educated and “intelligent male self” entitled him to the position of gentleman. That women were not similarly educated and thus ostensibly less intelligent barred them at the outset from the leisured world of the gentleman. The double standard in *The Odd Women*, Selig points out, is found in the novel’s most apparent means of employment:

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“clerkship, a living hell for men and a feminist salvation for women.” The double standard is perhaps not so much Gissing’s as society’s. One need only look at Gissing’s feminist friend Clara E. Collet’s reports for the Royal Commission on Labour on the employment of women to realize the extent of drudgery endured by countless women in non-clerical work during the early 1890s. In “Employment of Women” (*British Parliamentary Papers*, London, 1893) and “Report on the Statistics of Employment of Women and Girls” (*British Parliamentary Papers*, London, 1894), Collet details the long hours, low salaries, and poor living conditions of women engaged in the positions of shop assistants, milliners, dressmakers, laundresses, and a variety of other non-clerical positions. Clearly Gissing was aware of the employment market for women and the discontent engendered by such deplorable conditions. Lansbury suggests that educated and emancipated women “grated” on Gissing, yet it is clear that he took measures to familiarize himself with the social work of such friends as Collet and other feminists, such as Louise Michel, the French radical whose lectures in France he attended as early as 1888. Alison Cotes has well documented how Gissing was not especially innovative in his subject for *The Odd Women*. (2) Gissing’s success in his novel lies with the poignant and revealing manner of treating an issue which was very much before the public’s eye. Emancipation for women was treated of extensively in contemporaneous novels, tracts, speeches, and pamphlets. That Gissing was well aware of the public’s concern is made clear in Ms. Cotes’s thorough investigation of the more general sources which might have proved useful to Gissing in writing the novel.

Lansbury does not question Gissing’s interest in the emancipation of women, yet she seeks to undermine the validity of his professed concern by pointing to his own psychological frailties. The liberation of women becomes for Gissing a means toward “a new meritocracy of the intellect”

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which will somehow mean little more than “brighter conversation” at the dinner table. Lansbury bases her argument on Gissing’s letter to Eduard Bertz : “My demand for female ‘equality’ simply means that I am convinced there will be no social peace until women are intellectually trained very much as men are. More than half the misery of life is due to the ignorance and childishness of women. The average woman pretty closely resembles, in all intellectual considerations, the average male *idiot* – I speak medically. That state of things is traceable to the lack of education, in all senses of the word.” The letter does not in any way imply that better educated women are only needed so that men can enjoy their intellectual companionship. What is suggested by the letter is that the educated woman will have a better chance at utilizing inner resources which have previously not

been allowed to develop. The sentiments of Gissing's remarks are best embodied in the characters of Alice and Virginia Madden, two women in whose lives men play no intimate part. Both women are failures because neither can profit from her uneducated self. The one turns to alcohol and the other to conventional, uninspired religion.

By comparison with the Madden sisters, Rhoda Nunn is an educated woman. She consequently becomes for Lansbury the "female surrogate" for the Victorian gentleman with no means of support, a figure, according to Lansbury, who is seen by Gissing as more oppressed than women. Lansbury does not suggest, fortunately, that Gissing consciously conceived Rhoda Nunn in this light. Instead, Rhoda Nunn is seen as an unconscious reflection of Gissing's wishful thinking because she could forswear sex and marriage yet enjoy "power and freedom." My failure in appreciating Lansbury's argument arises because I find no evidence in either her paper or in the novel for this rash conclusion. I concede that sufficient evidence exists to attribute to Gissing a keen sexual frustration during certain periods of his life as well as a disenchantment with uneducated women. I also concede that for Gissing such undesirable conditions were not conducive to the gentleman of leisure

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he would have liked to have been. But it is an unnecessary and unwarranted step to conclude that Rhoda Nunn thus becomes a "female surrogate." It seems more plausible, though by no means definite, to conclude that Gissing fell victim to the Victorian myth that the sexual instinct was less strong in women than in men. But what most needs to be remembered is Gissing's intention. Just as he presented an encompassing range of artist-figures in *New Grub Street*, he wanted to give his readers an equally encompassing gamut of "odd," unmarried women in late nineteenth-century Victorian society. It hardly seems implausible that women such as Rhoda Nunn existed, women who would willingly and consciously choose a celibate life. It is to Rhoda that Gissing gives the most psychological complexity in the novel, and for this reader she becomes the most believable of the many women in the novel. Surely she offers more than a "psychological and sexual manifesto," as Lansbury would have it. Her whole relationship with Everard Barfoot is continually imbued with her revolutionary cause of Emancipation. If Rhoda Nunn becomes for the modern reader an unbelievable character, it is perhaps because the values and attitudes of the modern feminist cannot be so easily transposed to late Victorian society. She must be seen in the context of an ambiguous time, a time when rapidly shifting values and attitudes did not allow for neat packaging of what the New Woman was supposed to become. Neither Gissing nor a real-life Rhoda Nunn could have seen specifically what direction emancipated women were to take. Instead the novelist provides a portrait of the radical feminist as she seemed in the 1890s, one who knew that the feminist cause was the paramount issue which must never become subordinate to those vaguer emotions which sought to cast her in the role of traditional woman. Occasionally weakened by sexual desire, she nonetheless finds counteracting strength in being part of a Movement. And it is this note of strength which concludes the novel when Rhoda proclaims "The world is moving!"

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1 - All the papers read on this panel at the MLA convention are printed in a supplement to the *Gissing Newsletter*, XV : 1 (January, 1979).

2 - "New Women and Odd Women," *Gissing Newsletter*, XIV : 2 (April, 1978), 1-20.

Notes on *The Odd Women*

P. F. Kropholler

[The edition referred to is the 1907 Nelson edition.]

- p. 4, 1. 10

“For, as the old hymn says, ‘tis their nature to.” From Isaac Watts: *Divine Songs for Children*, XVI. *Against quarrelling*. Properly speaking: “tis their nature *too*.”

- p. 5, 1. 12

“There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe.” From Tennyson : *Locksley Hall*.

- p. 7, 1. 8

“...childish things she had long ago put away...” 1 *Corinthians*, XIII.11 : “...but when I became a man I put away childish things.”

- p. 9, 1.14

“Let us along. Time driveth onward fast...” Tennyson : *The Lotos-Eaters*, Choric Song, IV.

- p. 23, 1. 30

“...one or the other house of bondage...” From Exodus, XIII.3 : “Out of the house of bondage.”

- p. 45, 1. 24

“... their loving-kindness to her.” The phrase comes from *The Book of Common Prayer*, Psalm XXIII.6.

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- p. 75, 1. 16

“We are both black but comely.” From the *Song of Solomon*, I.5 (“I am black, but comely.”)

- p. 77, 1. 10

“... the poor in spirit.” From St. Matthew, V.3: “Blessed are the poor in spirit.”

- p. 78, 1. 17

“The girl protests far too much...” Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, III.II.242 (“The lady doth protest too much, methinks”).

- p. 114, 1. 5

“Just a line, either of welcome or ‘get thee behind me!’” St. Matthew, XVI. 23. Again referred to on page 123, 1. 8.

- p. 123, 1. 13

“...it is human to err.” Pope: *An Essay on Criticism*, 1. 525 (“To err is human, to forgive, divine”).

- p. 131, l. 15
“... the main point with you is to have delivered your soul...” Perhaps a faint echo of Psalm XXII. 20 (“Deliver my soul from the sword”).
- p. 137, l. 31
“This lady – a very little lower than the angels – ...” Psalm VIII.5 : “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels...”
- p. 149, l. 13
“... forget all about the ‘so-called nineteenth century.’” The quotation marks suggest a quotation, so far unidentified.
- p. 150, l. 17
“To Everard, nothing female was alien...” An adaptation of “humani nil a me alienum puto.” (Terence: *Heautontimorumenos*, I.I.25).
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- p. 205, l. 4
“In using me to point a moral you were grievously astray.” The phrase comes from Johnson: *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, line 222 (“To point a moral, or adorn a tale”).
- p. 208, l. 27
“They also serve who only stand and wait.” From Milton: “On His Blindness” (Sonnet XVI).
- p. 209, l. 32
“Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows...” From Keats : “Ode on Melancholy.”
- p. 210, l. 14
“... and seemed altogether in a coming-on disposition.” Shakespeare: *As You Like It*, IV.I.117 (“... now I will be your Rosalind in a more coming-on disposition”).
- p. 211, l. 7
“She was armed at all points.” Shakespeare : *Richard II*, I.III.1-2 (Marshall : My Lord Aumerle, is Harry Hereford arm’d? Aumerle : Yea, at all points, and longs to enter in).
- p. 264, l. 21
“It isn’t a case of ‘Oh teach the orphan girl to sew.’” Tennyson : *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*, VI (“Oh! teach the orphan-boy to read, | Or teach the orphan-girl to sew”).
- p. 265, l. 11
“... did you ever read ‘The City of Dreadful Night’?” A reference to James Thomson’s famous poem.
- p. 276, l. 23
“...This morning I saw the woman – it was thus he always referred to his sister-in-law...” Later Gissing was to refer to his own wife in the same terms: “That woman has been *assaulting* her landlady” (letter to Bertz, Sept. 4, 1898); “... the woman had been found to be *insane*” (letter to

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Bertz, Feb. 24, 1902); “that woman has put into the Savings Bank no less than £115....” (letter to Gabrielle Fleury, Feb. 13, 1902).

- p. 302, 1. 29

“They will rise up and call me blessed.” *Proverbs*, XXXI .28: “Her children arise up, and call her blessed.”

- p. 306, 1. 14

“... – with my own fair hands, as the novelists say.” Swift : *Journal to Stella*, Jan. 4, 1711.

- p. 377, 1. 16

“I have chicken sandwiches, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man.” See Psalm CIV.15.

- p. 420, 1. 15

“...those poor of spirit.. .“ Cf. note to page 77.

- p. 428, 1. 38

“The ‘of course’ puzzled Monica for a moment, but she remembered that it was an unmeaning expletive much used by people of Miss Eade’s education.” From the *Commonplace Book* we know Gissing often noticed such linguistic peculiarities of the lower classes.

- p. 456, 1. 14

“... who possess their souls in quiet freedom.” Echoing St. Luke, XXI.19 (“In your patience possess ye your souls”).

- p. 477, 1. 32

“We will open a school for young children, either here or at Weston.” This situation – in which Miss Madden opens a school and undertakes to look after her little niece – is curiously reminiscent of what happened in Gissing’s own life, when his sisters, who ran a school, undertook the charge of their young nephew.

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- p.478, 1. 38

“We flourish like the green bay-tree.” *The Book of Common Prayer*, Psalm XXXVII.36 : “I myself have seen the ungodly in great power : and flourishing like a green bay-tree.”

* * * * *

Book Reviews

Jacob and Cynthia Korg, eds., *George Gissing on Fiction*, London : Enitharmon Press, 1978.

In his article on *New Grub Street* published a year ago in the present journal, John Peck observed : “Turn to any book on social history or cultural history in the Victorian period and

Gissing is almost certain to appear in the index. Turn to a book on novel theory and Gissing is more than likely to be omitted." No one who is familiar with Gissing criticism, which now covers a full century, will dissent from this view. Much comment has been passed on his achievement, on his personality and on the influence of the latter on his works, but very little attention has been paid to his ideas on fiction. The reasons for this state of things are not far to seek. Gissing did not write long prefaces to the new editions of his novels. Like Meredith he let his novels speak for themselves; he never seems to have contemplated weighting his books with any prefatory material of the kind we associate with Henry James, Hardy or Conrad. He was almost systematically disappointed by what reviewers had to say about his view of life and his technique, but he did little to point the way to them. His short prefaces to new editions of *The Unclassed* and *Charles Dickens* throw no light on his artistic aims except for his now fully acknowledged intention in the 1890's to

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remove from his novels all traces of "the impertinent ego." Besides, as Clara Collet testified, he did not expect his friends to send him appreciations of his novels, and when they did, he was usually content to thank them politely, indulging when the spirit moved him in a bout of masochistic confession. Still we are by no means short of information about what he thought of the art of fiction. And this valuable volume by Jacob and Cynthia Korg offers ample evidence of it.

Three kinds of material are available though they are so widely scattered as to discourage the neophyte : (1) a variety of statements in the correspondence, published and unpublished ; (2) miscellaneous contributions to books and periodicals; (3) a number of note-books, scrap-books or commonplace-books which all seem to have found their way to institutional libraries. True, these personal documents tell us more about his sources and working methods than about his notion or theory of fiction, but any clear-cut division between the two would be misleading and artificial. Jacob Korg once edited the commonplace-book in the Berg Collection and established its close link with *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*. In collaboration with Cynthia Korg he has now tapped the two other kinds of material and made a selection, with judicious comment. The selection from the correspondence is mainly based on the letters to Algernon, especially the Yale-held series (389 letters and postcards) with a few items in the Berg Collection and the Huntington Library. Naturally the editors have only printed those parts of the letters which deal with fiction. The series starts in mid-November 1880, when Algernon was an active member of a newly-founded debating society in Wakefield, and ends in early February 1897, shortly after the publication of Algernon's novel, *The Scholar of Bygate*, the first of his three-deckers to go into a one-volume edition. The commentary between the letters also offers much relevant material, most of it drawn from the letters to Bertz. Perhaps some letters to Morley Roberts, Edith Sichel and occasional correspondents might have been included without destroying the unity of the book, but then why not a selection of letters to

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Colles and Pinker, Gissing's literary agents? This would have been asking too much. Only a collected edition of the correspondence is likely to satisfy all requests. The substantial fragments of the correspondence printed here reveal aspects of Gissing with which very few scholars are familiar: they contain much advice given to Algernon in the days of his apprenticeship as a writer and subsequent criticism of his printed work. Nothing of all this was allowed to appear in the 1927 volume of letters to the family. These new letters offer a host of remarks on literary style, plot construction, characterization, negotiating one's manuscripts, etc. They all testify to Gissing's great artistic consciousness, also to his delicacy towards a brother who, on various occasions, did not

prove overscrupulous.

In addition to these letters on the craft of fiction, Jacob and Cynthia Korg have reprinted a number of texts which have so far been difficult of access. The letter to the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* on the "New Censorship of Literature" shows Gissing struggling with Mrs. Grundy in December 1884. As the editors note, "his remarks show that he was already beginning to develop the critical view of the state of literature which was to be more fully expressed in *New Grub Street*." This letter triggered *Punch*'s well-known scurrilous attack in early January 1885. Next among these miscellaneous writings comes the letter which George Bainton printed in *The Art of Authorship* (1890), then the response to William Archer's 1892 article on contemporary drama in the *Fortnightly* ("Why I Don't Write Plays," *Pall Mall Gazette*, September 10, 1892), a letter to the editor of the *National Observer* on the speech of characters in fiction, in which he took up the defence of a novelist who had been dealt with unfairly by a reviewer, and the piece on "Realism in Fiction" originally published by the *Humanitarian* in July 1895. Two other interesting pieces are offered as an appendix. The first, "The Coming of the Preacher," was commissioned by H. D. Traill, editor of *Literature*, and was published on January 6, 1900. In this short essay, Jacob and Cynthia

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Korg write, "he observes that a new time of unrest seems likely to impose upon the novel a moralizing function unsuited to it, and foresees that its artistic values – especially the delineation of character – will have to yield to competing emphases on ethical and spiritual matters." The other essay, hitherto unpublished, was composed as a college assignment while Gissing was at Owens College. It is entitled "The English Novel of the Eighteenth Century." The original is held by the Carl H. Pforzheimer Library. Together with other similar pieces in public or private libraries, it shows Gissing's budding literary gifts as an eighteen-year-old student. The first page of the original is reproduced in facsimile – one of four illustrations in this welcome addition to Gissing studies. The portrait of Algernon is the only good one which seems to have been preserved. The informal photograph of Gissing and George Whale at Marlow Station was also well worth reproducing. It shows Gissing at the window of a railway carriage in the summer of 1896. The last illustration is a facsimile of the title-page of *A Moorland Idyl* (1891), Algernon's fourth novel.

A word of advice to potential buyers of this capably edited, well printed and attractively produced volume : do not wait till the 450 copies are disposed of by the publisher. Only a few are still available, and when other (out-of-print) volumes in the same series appear in second-hand booksellers' catalogues, the original prices are usually multiplied by three or four – the consequence of inflation, no doubt, but also of scarcity.

Pierre Coustillas

Kate Taylor (compiler), *Wakefield District Heritage*, volume II, published by Architectural Heritage : Wakefield District Group.

The first volume (reviewed in the *Newsletter*, January 1977) was such a success that Kate Taylor

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was pressed to provide more accounts of notable Wakefield buildings for publication in the *Wakefield Express*, and to collect them in book form. In my earlier account I regretted that the members of the Gissing circle and buildings associated with them had received scant mention and

so it is very satisfying that here is a section of some eight pieces of special interest to this journal's readers, all enhanced by Simon Jenkins' fine photographs.

The seventy-three articles describe subjects covering the Wakefield Metropolitan District Council's local government area. A lot of people are burrowing away at aspects of the neighbourhood's past and Kate Taylor's pen has made public much from persons whose gleanings would otherwise have been known only to a small group of friends. Representative of Miss Taylor's own extensive research are studies of the town's workhouse and adjoining infirmary, and of the early days of the cinema in Wakefield, a topic that is almost untapped on the national scene.

I should like to make individual note of the following:

- p. 30 : "Home of talented city family" is a report on the Gissings' Georgian house in Thompson's Yard at the rear of T. W. Gissing's shop in Westgate, as well as a brief biographical picture of George's kinsfolk. This is the building that the Gissing Trust is aiming to refurbish and in which the Gissing Centre will be created.

- p. 32 : "Home of heroine of Gissing novel" features Stoneleigh Terrace where from 1880 to 1890 the widowed Mrs. Gissing occupied the house with a gable-front at the left of the accompanying illustration. It is the site of Emily Hood's parents' home in *A Life's Morning* but the specification there of "a row of two-storied dwellings, built of glazed brick" is of another terrace two hundred yards nearer Wakefield, though later in the book the expression "Bright sunlight made the bare garret with its outlook over the fields towards Pental (Sandal)..." applies to Mrs. Gissing's own house but not to the ones opposite to the "ecclesiastical edifice."

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- p. 34 : "Offices that once were home to Gissings" is concerned with the second of the two houses where Margaret and Ellen Gissing held their Boys' Preparatory School. With Mrs. Gissing they occupied Cliff Hill House from the year after their brother's death until about 1910 when, because of competition from the newly-opened Junior Department of Wakefield Grammar School, they left the town and settled in Leeds.

- p. 36 : "The vicarage that became a club" was the residence from 1855 to 1875 of the Reverend C. J. Camidge, Vicar of Wakefield. It was he who baptised George, though not his brothers and sisters, and buried his father. I have suggested elsewhere that the house was the model for the parsonage in "The Quarry on the Heath." It certainly would not have impressed the young George if he had called there with his father though we can't be sure what its face onto Zetland Street looked like in those days because of its many alterations. A second picture of it, a nineteenth century sketch by Dr. Clarke of the far side from the entrance, is a more attractive view of a structure, parts of which are possibly as old as any in the town.

- p. 42 : "Civic pride reflected in museum buildings" is a description of where the Wakefield Mechanics' Institution was accommodated for almost a hundred years. Allusions to Mechanics' Institutions abound in Gissing's writings and it is clear to me that this one had an important influence on him. The copy of an early engraving shows the immediate area in his childhood before the Town Hall came to dwarf it.

- p. 28 : "City victims of the gold fever" does not link the house, St. John's Lodge, with Samuel and Lucy Bruce who lived there for about twenty years until their deaths soon after George Gissing's. It

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is only recently that I have discovered that Algernon Gissing married one of their nieces and that as well as George calling upon them during his trips to the city, both his son Walter and Mrs. Gissing stayed there whilst his sisters were moving house. There is a most revealing sentence in one of Lucy's diaries: "22 March 1897. Gave Mrs. Gissing the needful to go to Ilkley" – a town twenty miles from Wakefield.

- p. 80 : "An epidemic puts city on its way to good health" tells of the origin of Wakefield public cemetery. George's father was interred there, and the scenes in *A Life's Morning* where Emily "passed part of every morning" by her parents' grave are obviously biographical. Gissing wrote the novel during the period when his mother was living a short distance away from the cemetery and so, knowing the customs of the day, I can imagine George making the pilgrimage with his own sister, Margaret Emily, to the spot of which fifteen years earlier the *Wakefield Express* had said: "It was a touching sight as one stood by the open grave, to see the orphan boys as they gave their last look at that which contained the remains of one whose like they never will see again." The photograph of the two chapels in the cemetery is as one would see them if standing fifty yards from them by T. W. Gissing's grave.

p. 64 : "Chapel linked with County's great men" discusses several persons known to the Gissing family. Particularly interesting are the details and likenesses of two of the men. Goodwin Barmby was a stalwart of the Mechanics' Institution and shared a love of poetry with T. W. Gissing, whom he called upon for help to recite at Penny Readings at one of his chapels after two seasons when both of them had been prominent at similar entertainments at the Mechanics' Institution. The name Barmby was used for an unpleasant character in *In the Year of Jubilee*, but surely it held happier memories in the context of his father's friend.

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Andrew Chalmers, who followed Barmby as Minister at Westgate (Unitarian) Chapel, first met George Gissing on 2 April 1895 and both of them have left accounts of the meeting. They had a common bond as authors, giving reason for the several entries in Gissing's diary telling of enjoyable evenings spent together.

The book can be obtained from Mr. E. L. Cathery, 30 Woodland Drive, Pledwick, Wakefield, price £3.00, including postage. – Clifford Brook.

Pierre Coustillas, Jean-Pierre Petit, and Jean Raimond, *Le Roman anglais au XIXe siècle*, Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1978.

This volume of 300 odd pages shows that in at least three French Universities, the study of English writing is of the highest order. These three writers have not only a deep knowledge of the English language but are thoroughly at home in a literature such as the English novel of the nineteenth century, which is so far removed from contemporary French manners and customs and seems so exclusively aimed at the British reader. The book is divided into two parts, the first containing a chapter on "le contexte social et socio-culturel" by Pierre Coustillas and a chapter on "l'évolution

du roman anglais au dix-neuvième siècle” by Jean Raimond, while the second part is devoted to thirteen chapters of critical analysis of important novels of the period, by the two authors already mentioned and by Jean-Pierre Petit.

The opening chapter by Pierre Coustillas shows very considerable reading and research on the gradual attempts to solve problems caused by the Industrial Revolution, with situations created almost overnight by the sudden extension of industry. It demonstrates in many cases what half-hearted endeavours were made to deal justly with the ever increasing mass of unskilled manual

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workers. Such early evils as the employment of young children in mines and factories were remedied with some urgency thanks to the outcry of public opinion. Slum-dwelling was the subject of various efforts to improve housing and sanitation, but the fight for fairer wages was engaged between underpaid workers and rapacious employers. The methods employed to attack these abuses were dilatory and many pressing reforms were left in the hands of charitable bodies and (what seems absurd at the present day) of archbishops who sat in the House of Lords. Meanwhile, however, successive governments had brought in legislation, sometimes reluctantly, but aimed at improving the workers' lot.

There were novels written to call attention to the various incidents which marked the workers' struggle for juster treatment. The Peterloo tragedy shook the nation's conscience, and M. Coustillas speaks of a novel, *The Manchester Man*, by Mrs. Linnaeus Banks, which describes faithfully this deplorable event. He also refers to the machine-breakers, known as the Luddites, and I am surprised that he has not quoted Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley* in this connection. That conditions had improved before the end of the century was partly due to many public-spirited writers such as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, but more organised progress occurred with the emergence of strong workers' unions and the foundation of the Trades-Union Congress. Looking back, one can see a panorama of what the British themselves called "muddling through," but if I have a small criticism to make on this chapter it is that it concentrates too much on the fate of the proletariat. The enormously increasing population of the "lower middle classes," due to activities such as commercial offices, banking and insurance, is mentioned but the problems and the grievances of this section of the community are not given so much attention.

It suffices to read George Gissing's grim novel *The Nether World* to have an illustration of the vices which prevailed in some slum districts in London, where drink, dirt, brutality and petty crime

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were rampant. There were, of course, splendid types of working men with all the major virtues. Those who conquered illiteracy were often Bible readers, and whether they practised religion or not, they had the wonderful advantage of reading some of the most superb English prose ever written.

The chapter by Jean Raimond on the evolution of the English novel in the nineteenth century is instructive. I am indebted to him for the interesting information regarding the enormous popularity, both at home and in America, of G. P. R. James, a name which is very rarely cited today. He also skilfully links up Scott-Ainsworth-Dumas in the realm of the historical novel. His information on the numerous rivals of Captain Marryat had added interest to me, as I have always looked upon Marryat as a much overpraised writer. M. Raimond's assessment of the principal English novelists is usually sound. While emphasising the importance of Dickens for his universal appeal, he gives a penetrating appreciation of Thackeray and of his brilliantly ironic vision of his times. He rightly complains of Meredith's deliberately enigmatic prose. It would not be possible in this review to

discuss his attitude to every important novelist of the century, but his three pages on Jane Austen (pp. 81-83) show the most sensitive understanding of her subtle art, which must elude many a reader, but of which he has written the best short appraisal that I have ever read. That the English novel of the nineteenth century owed a great deal to French influence cannot be denied, but French critics are sometimes inclined to claim too much in this respect. It is obvious that Peacock owed a lot to Voltaire, that Dickens's *Quilp* was an offspring of Hugo's *Quasimodo*, that Conrad's prose is modelled largely on Flaubert's, and that Alexandre Dumas is to be blamed for many of the cloak and dagger novels of Stanley Weyman, Maurice Hewlett and Anthony Hope, although the last named must be credited (or debited) with the creation of the "Ruritanian" novel. M. Raimond has done well to draw the curtain over the "best-sellers" of the eighties and nineties such as Ouida,

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Hall Caine, Marie Corelli, etc., but I do not agree with him when he writes that the early novels of H. G. Wells "semblent vouloir rivaliser avec Jules Verne." For Wells was a trained scientist, an original sociologist and a historian, whereas Verne was an amateur whose books do not deserve to rank as a high form of literature. It seemed to me a pity that Samuel Butler's very powerful *The Way of All Flesh* was given only a passing mention in Chapter 1, for although it was not published until 1903, the author had started working on it in the 1870s and had completed it long before his death in 1902. It has generally been treated as a typical Victorian novel. Scottish Writers, apart from Sir Walter Scott, do not seem to have been given all their due. Stevenson is referred to in three separate passages but his great influence on English letters is not duly acknowledged. Although he became a cosmopolitan, principally for reasons of health, his heart remained in his native Edinburgh, which is the scene of his masterpiece, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. It is true that the Scottish writers who followed Stevenson were the over-sentimental "Kailyard School," but perhaps J. M. Barrie's quiet humour deserved a mention. Finally, how can I forgive M. Raimond for the complete absence of the name of John Galt (1779-1839)? This man wrote several novels set in Scotland but they were far too good to be dismissed as regional literature. They contain a little dialect which is easily mastered. Galt's outstanding novel was *The Annals of the Parish* (1821), a delightful comic narrative. Galt was highly esteemed by Scott, who read *The Entail* (1823) three times, and also by Byron.

The thirteen chapters in Part II are all well worth reading. Jean-Pierre Petit has presented piecemeal the different episodes in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, but I prefer his more luminous analyses of the novels of the Brontë sisters, *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* in which he follows the narrative more closely from start to finish. Pierre Coustillas has given a very true picture

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of Mrs. Gaskell's *North and South*, which in some way supplements his work in Part I, chapter I. Mrs. Gaskell has always appeared to me an unequal writer, with the charming, delicate *Cranford* on the one side and the inferior *Sylvia's Lovers* on the other, but *North and South* is undoubtedly one of her best novels. I was waiting impatiently to see what M. Coustillas thinks of that prolific entertainer Anthony Trollope. He has certainly read *Barchester Towers* with some enjoyment, seeing all the humour in the formidable Mrs. Proudie, the slippery Mr. Slope, the snobbish arch-deacon Grantly and minor clergymen, their wives and friends. While exposing the tyranny, the cowardice, the hypocrisy flourishing in this cathedral town, Trollope is inclined to look upon it all with some benevolence, and instead of denouncing it sternly, he has preferred to make fun of it. It is rather a pity that no room could be found for a mention of Trollope's later sextet, the political or

Palliser novels, as by then he had become more censorious and perhaps closer to his master, Thackeray. Raimond's chapter on Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1860-61) is particularly enlightening, as it shows how well constructed is this novel, which appeared to herald a Dickens in a more mature and reflective mood, but this promise was not to be fulfilled, for after the somewhat repetitive and long-winded *Our Mutual Friend*, Dickens's health broke down, and we must be thankful for all the richness he gave us from his earliest efforts onwards. After M. Petit's very sound chapter on *Middlemarch* and M. Raimond's gallant attempt to unravel *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, M. Coustillas is naturally on safe ground when he writes of Gissing's *Born in Exile*. The plot of this novel was original and daring for its period, but the class differences which existed in Britain in the 1890s (and have still survived in a possibly different atmosphere) was a constant frustration to Gissing. *Born in Exile* is one of those rare novels in which discussions on serious subjects can be as exciting as any amount of drama. From *Born in Exile* to *Jude the Obscure* seems

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a long jump, but M. Coustillas has been able to demonstrate how near psychologically is Jude Fawley to Godwin Peak. Hardy treated his subject with outspokenness on sexual matters, while Gissing was more discreet. What I have always felt, and what M. Coustillas hints at strongly, is the disproportion between the heroine Sue's emotions at the ghastly murder of her children and her more intensely expressed horror at having to submit to co-habitation with her former husband Phillotson.

This section ends fittingly with Jean Raimond's fine analysis of Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* which was published in 1900 and is among the best novels of that truly extraordinary writer. – C. S. Collinson.

Notes and News

Alfred M. Slotnick has compiled detailed checklists of the variants of *New Grub Street* and *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* in the Modern Library. These checklists include an illustrated guide to spine types, cover logo types, title-page logo types (for *Ryecroft*), collation, end-paper types, and (for *New Grub Street*) half-title types. The advertisements are also taken into account. He has recorded some 40 copies of *Ryecroft* and 24 of *New Grub Street*. He would be pleased to send copies of these checklists to anyone who will request them. Communication with a few Gissing collectors has recently shown that many other variants still have to be recorded. It is highly desirable that any possessor of Modern Library editions of these two titles should get in touch with Mr. Slotnick, 2163 77th Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11214, U. S. A. He has also compiled a list of the errors and corrections in the early Constable/Dutton issues of the *Private Papers*, including a unique 1902 copy and a colonial issue for 1903. Owners of early impressions of this title are also invited to communicate with Mr. Slotnick.

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The *New York Times* for May 31, 1979 carried a review of a new book which mentions Gissing

and his home in Chelsea, *Literary Landscapes of the British Isles: A Narrative Atlas*, by David Daiches and John Flower. Illustrated. 287 pp. Paddington. \$12.95. The book has been written by Daiches. Flower has provided maps.

Peter Keating's well-known study of *The Working-Classes in Victorian Fiction* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), has just been reissued as a paperback, £3.50). Jacob Korg reviewed the first edition in the *Gissing Newsletter* (January 1972), together with the companion volume, *Working Class Stories of the 1890s*, which is available from the same publishers, also in paperback form, at £1.60.

Dr. Francesco Badolato reports on the visit he paid to Wakefield on April 18th in connection with the plans of the Gissing Trust for restoring the novelist's birthplace. His previous visit dated back to 1967 and he was struck by the great improvement in the physical aspect of the town which has occurred in the last twelve years. He was conducted on a tour of places of Gissing interest by that most knowledgeable and efficient guide, Clifford Brook, starting of course with the large Georgian house where the writer was born, and going on with such classical Gissing sites as Back Lane School, Sandal Castle, Stoneleigh Terrace, Heath Common and the Sharlston Long Row, which figures as "Pit Row" in "The Firebrand." Dr. Badolato was also taken to the Town Hall, where he had the great pleasure to meet another patron of the Trust, Councillor Noble, Mayor of Wakefield. The recently produced poster featuring some local and general aspects of the novelist's life and work displayed in the hall did not escape his notice as he went in. During his short stay in Wakefield Dr. Badolato was able to realize the growing interest in Gissing himself and his connection with the town shown by the inhabitants and to talk with various persons who locally

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have done and still are doing their best to promote Gissing's cause, among them, besides Clifford Brook, Mrs. Heather Lawrence and Kate Taylor. Dr. Badolato came away with a reinforced conviction that Gissing's birthplace should be restored and a Gissing Centre created under its roof, and with a feeling of gratitude to the public and private persons who kindly and hospitably welcomed him on that day.

From what he semi-jocularly yet appropriately calls the Gissing Centre in Brooklyn, Alfred Slotnick has sent a short paper which is intended as a supplement to a former piece from his pen entitled "Authors Pay Homage to Gissing." This time homage comes from Thomas Berger, the author of a novel called *Who Is Teddy Villanova ?* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1977). Answering the question put in the title is like solving a giant puzzle game, Al Slotnick remarks. "The book is written in the tradition, if not in the style, of *Finnegan's Wake* ; yet Louis Zukovsky's *Little* (published by Grossman Publishers, 1970), a sorely neglected book, is closer to Berger." The book contains games within the game and one of them concerns *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*.

Recent Publications

Volumes

George Gissing, *Denzil Quarrier*, edited and with an introduction and notes by John Halperin, Hassocks: The Harvester Press, 1979, pp. xx + 355 ; £8.50. Green cloth in light blue dust-jacket. Contains a bibliographical note on the book's publishing history, textual notes and a bibliography.

Michael Collie, *The Alien Art: A Critical Study of George Gissing's Novels*, Folkestone : Dawson;

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Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1979. 197 pp. £9.00.

Articles, reviews, etc.

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