

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

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-- 1 --

Marian and Alfred Yule: Which One the Child?

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Early in George Gissing’s novel *New Grub Street*, Marian Yule, “a girl” in a yellow straw hat, stands on a wooden bridge and exchanges conversation with Jasper Milvain.

“When I was here late in the spring,” he said, “this ash was only just budding, though everything else seemed in full leaf.”
“An ash, is it?” murmured Marian. “I didn’t know. I think an oak is the only tree I can distinguish. Yet,” she added quickly, “I knew that the ash was late” (58).

And with this description of the “late blooming” ash and the oak, George Gissing

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-- 2 --

symbolizes the changing character of Marian Yule and foreshadows the transformation of her psychological states — a transformation that a transactional analysis psychologist would identify as a maturation from highly *Adapted Child* to *Nurturing Adult*. Like the ash, Marian buds late, and yet she has the inner strength of the oak which is not easily broken.

In 1964 with the publication of *Games People Play*, Eric Berne introduced transactional analysis (TA), a new way of analyzing human interaction and the psychological ego states from which people relate to each other. Berne simplified highly complex psychological motivations

and behavior patterns. Muriel James and Dorothy Jongeward, students of Berne, further simplified the psychological principles in their bestseller *Born to Win*. The resultant principles of transactional analysis open the way for individuals to reach a better understanding not only of themselves but also of human relationship in general. The psychological growth of Marian Yule in *New Grub Street*, for example, can be better understood through a transactional analysis of her changing relationship with her father — a dominant influence in her life.

Transactional analysis¹ seeks to analyze intrapsychic conflict and interpersonal interactions. Such analysis determines the ego states from which people are motivated. James and Jongeward identify and describe the three ego states of TA from which people operate as *Parent*, *Child* and *Adult*. Unrelated to chronological age, these states are learned in childhood and internalized, ultimately they become the subconscious motivations for how human beings relate to themselves and to others.²

The *Parent* ego state contains the attitudes and behavior incorporated from external sources, primarily parents ... often critical or nurturing.

The *Adult* ego state is oriented to current reality and objective gathering

-- 3 --

of information. It is organized, adaptable, intelligent, and functions by testing reality, estimating probabilities, and computing dispassionately.

The *Child* ego state contains all the impulses that come naturally to an infant expressed as “old” (archaic) behavior from childhood (18).

Consider the relationship of Marian and Alfred Yule when reviewing some of the tenets of TA. The way a parent or parent figure relates to a child is important in the development of the child. For example, if a parent discounts a child’s feelings and needs with a lack of attention or negative attention, healthy development is thwarted (53). Cold or angry parental responses convey a sense of punishment and pain for wrong-doing (157). Thus children learn to adapt, to behave in ways to motivate positive strokes or at least to avoid negative attention. Unlike Natural Children who behave spontaneously, who laugh freely or cry freely, they become Adapted Children, complying with parental wishes even if the wishes are irrational. Long after a person has left the chronological age of childhood, the subconscious continues to play tapes learned from actual parent figures during childhood. The tapes that people have internalized will determine how they respond to others throughout their lives. People whose role models were Critical Parent figures will also be Critical Parents when relating to others and more importantly when relating to the self. They will unconsciously check personal behavior in response to the “Inner Parent,” thereby becoming Adapted Children, no matter the age of the individuals.

With its emphasis on poverty, on being trapped in circumstances beyond one’s control and on the struggle for wealth, power, romance and even survival, *New Grub Street* is ripe for a cast of Adapted Children as characters. To get what they want or to avoid pain, people adapt to others. But, “The inner Adapted Child is often the troubled part of the person, which wants to win but develops the self-image of a loser,” not an autonomous, free-thinking individual

-- 4 --

(James 163). In *New Grub Street*, “The action revolves around the problem of who will get the money and the mate. For every winner, there is a complementary loser: Jasper and Reardon, Amy and Marian, ... Fadge and Alfred Yule” (Poole 146) and the focus of this essay — Alfred and Marian Yule.

To counter and overcome feelings of self-defeat, the Adapted Child, Marian Yule, for example, must move to the Adult state, to make decisions on the basis of reason and conscious choice, and to no longer allow actual or subconscious critical parent messages to control her life. One who does not make intellectual, reasoned decisions is operating from an emotional state — that of Child or Parent.

Unlike the Adapted Child, the Natural Child is spontaneous. It can be playful, or it can be demanding and selfish, but it is always spontaneous. Alfred Yule, for example, usually behaves like a selfish natural child. "With his 'peculiar croaking' laugh and 'seamed visage', he inhabits an angular, desiccated world of his own ..." (Poole 143). On the other hand, the Adapted Child (Marian, for example, early in the novel) is controlled, adapting responses to comply with the Critical Parent. To move out of the state of *compliance*, the Adapted Child must *withdraw* or *rebel* from the Parent. The stages of *compliance*, *withdrawal*, and *rebellion* become obvious in the life and psychological development of Marian Yule who is ultimately able to function from an Adult state, consciously making decisions about her life. Poole asserts, "It was into Marian Yule that [Gissing] projected his deepest desires for emotional fulfillment ..." (153). As she changes, her behavior not only conditions but, in fact, *dictates* the psychological state from which her father, Alfred Yule, must operate.

Marian Yule is introduced in the novel, not as an individual in her own right but as "a girl of perhaps two-and-twenty ... and [a] daughter, obviously" (Gissing 45): this depiction of Marian Yule as a "child" does not belie the psychological state from which she is operating

-- 5 --

early in the novel. In Chapter 7, "Marian's Home," in concentrated attention, Gissing perpetuates Marian's "child" image. On the one hand, the chapter title, "Marian's Home," suggests a simple statement of possession, but on the other it suggests the contraction implying that Marian is "at home" with herself, her life and her environment — an ironic condition in that she is an Adapted Child, unrecognized for her talents. Miserable and alone, she adapts her behavior to comply with her Critical Parent. She is introduced as a writer for her father; she does not get credit for her work; and according to Jacob Korg, Marian serves as "a kind of literary slave" for her father (163).

Other characters in the novel view Marian in relationship to her father, Alfred Yule. In "Marian's Home" her first conversation is in the Museum Reading-room with Mr. Quarmby. Significantly he opens the conversation with "Where's your father, Miss Yule" (Gissing 112). He continues, "I wanted particularly to see him" (113); and he then instructs Marian to tell her father about Fadge's leaving the editorship of *The Study*. Upon Quarmby's departure, a second voice, that of Mr. Hinks, commands her attention: "I have been looking for your father ... Isn't he here? ... would you ... take a book for him?" (114). And the third individual she encounters in the Museum Reading-room, Jasper Milvain, ignores her; he does not even look at her although they are within a few feet of each other. Even that encounter is conditioned by her father as she wonders, "Did he take it ill that her father had shown no desire to keep up his acquaintance?" (115)

Such an introduction of Marian accentuates an irony: Marian Yule is the biological child of two psychological "Children," Mrs. Yule and Alfred. Ironically, Mrs. Yule, a highly Adaptive Child, looks toward Marian as a Parent figure and adapts her behavior to Marian. She is "never able to accept as a familiar and unimportant fact — the vast difference between

-- 6 --

herself and her daughter. Marian's superiority ... could never be lost sight of" (116). Marian is clearly the Nurturing Parent to Mrs. Yule. "Marian was always willing to listen sympathetically, and her mother often exhibited a touching gratitude for this condescension as she deemed it" (117).

On the other hand, Alfred Yule behaves not only as a Critical Parent but also oftentimes as a Natural Child with his frequent "mood of silent moroseness" (120) and his selfish demands for attention and getting his own way without regarding the feelings of others. Even in his marriage Yule has selected a Child as a mate, someone who could allow him to continue his own Childish behavior and his role as Critical Parent. John Halperin asserts that "Yule's financial and professional failure is traced directly to his marriage to an unsuitable woman, by

which he declassified himself at an early stage of his career” (148). Such an assertion seems not only unfair but also ludicrous. Given Yule’s own childish behavior and cruelty throughout the novel, to place the blame for his professional failure on anyone else, including his wife, seems unjustifiable. There is no evidence that Yule has maintained a professional attitude or strong professional relationships. On the contrary, much like his attitude towards his wife, his attitude toward other professionals reflects his air of arrogance and condescension. Yule does not view others as equals. Yule does not operate from an Adult base of “I’m okay, you’re okay,” a base from which all participants are equal and all are winners. Because Yule’s perspective and behavior are based on a win-lose philosophy, Yule would be incapable of maintaining a marriage or a professional relationship with anyone he perceived as an Adult or a winner. In his view, if someone else is a winner, then Yule must be a winner.

Given Yule’s dominant base of operation, Critical Parent and Natural Child, the only relationship in marriage that he is capable of is one to an inferior, a Child — despite Adrien Poole’s declaration and Yule’s own assessment that he had been “cursed by marriage with

-- 7 --

a social inferior” (151). Contrary to Poole’s assessment that “Mrs. Yule has only the redeeming qualities of kindness and gentleness” (152), her value to Yule is far greater than that. To him she gives importance and esteem, by comparison to her own perceived personal inferiority. She also gives him power, something that he does not experience in any other facet of his life outside of his own house. “Yule treats his hapless wife cruelly; he patronizes her, ignores her, enslaves her in domesticity, and rarely permits her to be seen by others. He never takes her out” (Halperin 147).

Alfred Yule is a Child: he does not take responsibility for his own actions. Instead he blames others. He blames his wife, poverty and lack of social standing for his failed career; he blames Jasper Milvain for having “an evil influence” on Marian when he fears that she will leave home; he blames Fadge for being successful while Yule is not. When evaluating one’s circumstances, it is only when one moves from blame to the pain of one’s own responsibility that one can grow. Such growth leads one to the Adult ego state. Alfred Yule chooses not to grow.

Throughout the novel, Yule vacillates from Child to Critical Parent. “To his wife Yule seldom addressed anything but a curt inquiry or caustic comment; if he spoke humanly at table it was to Marian” (12). He sabotages even the natural development of a relationship between his wife and his biological child — Marian. “He would scarcely permit his wife to talk to the child” (Gissing 125). And yet early in the novel Marian also responds to Yule from the psychological state of Adapted Child, adapting to please him. She “grew up everything that her father desired” (125). She “generally waited upon him...” “She was a valuable assistant...” (128-129). “Never yet had any conflict been manifested between his interests and Marian’s; practically he was in the habit of counting upon her aid for an indefinite period” (130), and she was able to count on him too, for verbal abuse. To Yule’s savage “take Mr. Hinks’s new book back to him, and tell

-- 8 --

him that I have quite enough to do without reading tedious trash,” Marian responds in fear and compliance as Child to Parent (120). She resents “this unreasonable anger, but she durst not reply” (120).

And yet, despite his “sullen silence” and his angry outbursts, a tender bond between Marian and Alfred Yule is revealed. For example, when Alfred is not named Fadge’s successor as editor of *The Study*, Marian unexpectedly becomes the Nurturing Parent to Alfred Yule.

Nor did Marian venture to speak directly of what had happened. But one evening, when she had been engaged in the study and was now saying “Good-night,” she laid her cheek against her father’s, an unwonted caress which had a strange effect upon him. The expression of sympathy caused his

thoughts to reveal themselves as they never yet had done before his daughter.

“It might have been different with me,” he exclaimed abruptly, as if they had already been conversing on the subject (136).

And then Yule pours out his heart to Marian of how poverty and a lack of social standing have kept him from success. She goes to her room and weeps for him and for “all their lives” (136). “She had no friends to whom she could utter her thoughts,” and “a taste of fog grew perceptible in the warm, headachy air,” symbolizing the isolation, despair and entrapment that Marian felt in her life (137). And “The fog grew thicker” as Marian began to feel more and more enmeshed in her father’s work and less and less able to get out from under his yoke (138).

As Volume I ends, clearly Marian’s psychological state is predominantly that of a dutiful adapted Child— *compliance*. Her life is controlled by her father. He does not allow her to sign her name to the work she does for him. She cannot encourage Milvain or his sisters, Dora and Maud, to visit in her home because her father has not granted his permission for such visits.

-- 9 --

Marian remains an Adapted Child, unrecognized for her talents – miserable, isolated, and alone, adapting her behavior to comply with her critical parent, her father.

However, the first chapter of Volume II, “A Warning,” foreshadows that change is coming. According to Adrian Poole, “This novel is as concerned with the disintegration of individual human unions as with the disintegration of general cultural unity” (148). Change in Marian’s psychological state is foreshadowed. Just as Alfred Yule “warns” Marian to beware of Jasper Milvain’s motives, she also in this chapter gives warning that she is not always going to comply with the demands of her father or to submit to her subconscious Critical Parent. She will ultimately *withdraw* or *rebel*. As mentioned earlier, the Child can respond to a Parent in one of three ways — *compliance*, *withdrawal*, or *rebellion*.

And ironically during Volume I, a period of compliance, the seeds of withdrawal are also planted. Marian’s sympathetic caress of her father, her having temporarily become Yule’s Nurturing Parent, seems to have released Yule’s hold on her, to have freed her to evaluate not only his life but her own from a different perspective. When she goes to her room, she *withdraws* and weeps for “all their lives”; she thinks of her isolation and loneliness; she thinks of Yule’s intolerance for her friends, and she *withdraws* in her tears. And that act of withdrawal sets the stage for what follows in Volume II: further occasions of *withdrawal* are inevitable, and the incipient stages of *rebellion* are about to begin.

Indifferent to the needs of others, the child is insatiable. Upon learning that Milvain has visited Marian in Yule’s absence, Alfred Yule becomes annoyed and begs that “the times and seasons of the household might not be disturbed. As her habit was, Marian took refuge in silence” (Gissing 201). She *withdraws*. “Nothing could have been more welcome to her than the proximity of Maud and Dora, but she foresaw that her own home would not be freely open to them” (201). Marian concludes: “He won’t change,” and embarrassed, she informs her friends

-- 10 --

that they are not welcome in her home; in sadness (*withdrawal*) she complies with her father’s wishes (202).

Then a subsequent episode further changes the course of their lives. As a compliant Adapted Child, moments later, Marian “left the sitting-room in obedience to her father’s summons” (202). To show her the unflattering notice of his book, which he deliberately and falsely attributes to Milvain, he summons Marian and goes “out of his way to show it [to] her and with ... peculiar acerbity of manner” (202). But moving from Adapted Child, Marian refuses to believe her father’s accusation of Milvain, “not at all Marian’s natural tone in argument with him. She was wont to be submissive” (203).

She could not trust herself to converse longer. A resentment such as her father had never yet excited in her — such, indeed, as she seldom, if ever, conceived — threatened to force utterance for itself in words which would change the current of her whole life. She saw her father in his worst aspect, and her heart was shaken by an unnatural revolt from him. His behavior was spiteful. A father actuated by simple motives of affection would never speak and look thus.

It was the hateful spirit of literary rancour that ruled him; the spirit that made people eager to believe evil, that blinded and maddened. Never had she felt so strongly the unworthiness of the existence to which she was condemned (203-204).

Such questioning and conscious analysis leads to rebellion, and Marian's incipient rebellion is clear. And just as clear is the reality that Alfred Yule does not assume the role of Nurturing Parent even after he has wounded his daughter. With his win-lose philosophy, he cannot foster a sense of well-being in her. To nurture the child is to allow the child to grow, and if she were to grow, he fears he would lose her.

The power has begun to shift; this episode serves as the catalyst. Marian is angry, and for

-- 11 --

once, she does not follow the leading of her Child which "all but caused her to say that she would rather not go down for the meal, that she wished to be left alone" (204). With such a response, she would have been sucked into her father's game — she the Child, he the Critical Parent. Instead she (her Adult) makes a conscious, reasoned choice, not to be cowed by Yule but to look "at the glass to see her face bore no unwonted signs, and [she] descended to take her place as usual" (204). But during a silent meal Yule's Child presses her in his game for power;

"Can you finish (your copying) to-night?"

"I'm afraid not. I am going out" (204),

was her cold reply. Marian's Child *rebels*. Or is it her Adult?

Adrian Poole asserts:

The most important single point about Gissing's portrayal of the literary world in this novel is his subtle intimation of power changing hands ... The possibilities of *power* are ranged on a new scale, and Gissing's narrative is patterned according to the efforts of characters either positively to grasp some of this power or at least to align themselves with its field of force (139).

While Poole makes the point about Gissing's portrayal of the literary world, the same observation can be made about the quest for power within human relationships, between Alfred and Marian Yule, for example. Given the novel's "schism between the lost and the saved, the key scenes of the novel should be ones of *confrontation* between individuals" (Poole 148).

Upon her mother's beseeching her not to quarrel with her father, Marian replies: "I can't be a slave, mother, and I can't be treated unjustly ... We *can't* live in terror" (Gissing 204). Mrs. Yule "had never dreamt that Marian, the still, gentle Marian, could be driven to revolt. And it

-- 12 --

had come with the suddenness of a thunderclap" (205). But her rebellion is not for long. Such vicissitudes are to characterize Marian's quest for power, for control over her own life. Her

Adapted Child returns, and she feels that perhaps she has been “robbed of her self-control and made [to] meet her father’s rudeness with defiance ... Gradually she was returning to her natural self” (her Adapted Child). “Fear and penitence were chill at her heart” when she spoke: “I behaved very ill-temperedly. Forgive me, father” (205). And when he, in his Child, refuses her apology and her help, she returns to her Adult momentarily and “in a sense of hateful injustice went away as quietly as she had entered ... But the freedom was only in theory; her submissive and timid nature kept her at home — and upstairs in her own room” (206). For hours thereafter her state is “troubled”; she is “pale and ill.” But by morning after discussing her assignment with her father, she goes to the Museum “in her usual way” feeling trapped, and as an emotionally Adapted Child, feeling “guilty of a childish outburst of temper and [that she] had perhaps prepared worse sufferings for the future” (206-207). But her reason, her Adult, returns, and she considers that

It was as well that her father should be warned ... She was not all submission, he might try her beyond endurance; there might come a day when perforce she must stand face to face with him, and make it known she had her own claims upon life. It was as well he should hold that possibility in view (207).

Alfred Yule has been warned, and his relationship with Marian has “suffered a permanent change though not in a degree noticeable by anyone but the two concerned” (309). As a Critical Parent, he makes Marian feel as if he no longer has confidence in her work, yet

Yule ... perceived too clearly that the girl was preoccupied with something

-- 13 --

other than her old wish to aid and satisfy him, that she had a new life of her own alien to, and in some respects irreconcilable with, the existence in which he desired to confirm her ... He feared to provoke Marian, and this fear was again a torture to his pride (309).

Her refusal to comply blindly with Yule’s wishes leads Marian further from the role of Adapted Child, and the farther away she grows from that role, the more Alfred Yule becomes the Adapted Child to Marian. He fears her.

Children need the security of a bond with their parents. Because Adapted Children fear rejection and losing the love of a parent, they comply. Toward Marian, Alfred Yule, “had more affection ... than for any other person, and of this he became strongly aware now that the girl seemed to be turning from him. If he lost Marian, he would indeed be a lonely man” (310). Thus, the more Yule fears losing Marian, the more likely he is to adapt to what he perceives her wishes or demands to be. “He could not bear to think that her zeal on his behalf was diminishing,” the inevitable “result of frequent intercourse with such a man as Milvain” (301). “It seemed to him that he remarked it in her speech and manner, and at times he with difficulty restrained himself from a reproach or a sarcasm which would have led to trouble” (310).

Fearful and compliant, Alfred Yule, the Adapted Child to Marian, fears “to lose that measure of respect with which she repaid him,” and he knows that “she could not submit to tyrannous usage” (311). Warned of that, according to Gissing, Yule does his utmost to avoid a clash with Marian — but he fails.

Fearing to attack Marian, he directs his ill-temper towards Mrs. Yule, who has to endure a double share of it, “that which was naturally directed against her, and that of which Marian was the cause.” Using Mrs. Yule’s involvement with her undignified relatives as an excuse, Yule

-- 14 --

storms and then turns his anger on his wife. When the scene “was over, Yule took his hat and went out,” and Mrs. Yule wept remorsefully (314). She wept, unleashing her misery to Marian, and despite her mother’s pleas to the contrary, Marian, the Adult, resolves “to front her father’s tyrannous ill-humour, and in one way or another to change the intolerable state of things” (316). Saying to her father: “I can’t see that mother was to blame,” she shrinks immediately into her Child at his response (317). “When he turned fiercely upon her, she shrank back and felt as if strength must fail her even to stand” (317). But momentarily stepping away from her Adapted Child, she defends her mother with: “it is cruel that you should make her suffer as she is doing” (317). Strengthened to resist, she continues: “I am driven to speak. We can’t go on living in this way, father ... I am not a child,” and “she saw that her father could not meet her look, and this perception of shame in him impelled her to finish what she had begun” (318). “His voice quavered ... and a tremor was noticeable in his stiff frame,” and he spoke to her “in a changed tone” (319-321). Such are the vicissitudes of the psychological relationships of Marian and Alfred Yule, each vacillating in and out of varying psychological states of *Parent*, *Child*, and *Adult*. But after their confrontation and discussion, Marian becomes the Nurturing Adult to Mrs. Yule, saying: “Don’t be afraid ... I think it will be better” (323).

Marian’s refusal to submit to her father’s intolerable dictatorship is genuinely moving ... [Her] bid for self-fulfilment makes unexpected demands on her instinctive compassion and gentleness toward others. It is rare indeed for a character in Gissing to transcend his or her innate passivity in this way (Poole 150).

--15 --

In trying to understand her father’s behavior analytically, from her Adult, Marian attributes his cruelty to the ill effects of poverty, and yet she fears “how wealth might affect her father,” a dark prospect (Gissing 326). Her fear is soon tested when Marian learns that she has inherited five thousand pounds from her uncle, and her father has inherited nothing.

Marian weeps to her father for the injustice, and he speaks “kindly to [her], far more kindly than he has done for a long time” (334). Marian shares the episode with Dora. When Dora insists that Alfred Yule must have been glad for Marian’s inheritance, “Marian delayed her reply for a moment, her eyes down [and] turned to another subject”(334-335).

But Yule continues, even increases, his ingratiating, “gravely gentle” behavior toward Marian and Mrs. Yule. To please Marian, Yule consciously begins to treat Mrs. Yule with less brutality. According to *George Gissing’s Commonplace Book*, Gissing himself once said, “One of the most pathetic things is the power of human nature to subdue itself to necessity” (Korg 22). Alfred Yule’s dramatic change in behavior, his almost total subduing of his usual self — unpleasant though it is — is pathetic because the change is obviously not sincere. The behavior of a highly Adapted Child usually is pathetic.

Inviting and welcoming Marian to join him and his cronies to discuss a literary venture as well, he gives Marian “the easiest chair” and exhibits other nurturant behavior toward her as he attempts to cajole her into financially backing the venture. In response, she “cast down her eyes, smiling,” her Natural Child’s response to her Adult’s analysis of what is taking place (344). The compliant Marian in Volume I more than likely would have relinquished the money to her father, but Marian Yule has changed. Having chosen not to heed her Adapted Child on previous

--16 --

occasions, Marian has become fortified additionally by her inherited money, and she “spoke with a steadier voice, walked with firmer step; mentally she felt herself altogether a less dependent being” (348). Her Adult questions her father’s softened behavior, and she cannot “say anything that would sound like a promise” to his request for her financial backing of a new review (350).

The more she functions from her Adult, the more driven Yule is to his Adapted Child. Dreaming of being editor of his own review, he says to Marian: “My dear, I am not a man fitted for subordinate places. The failure of all my undertakings rankles so in my heart that sometimes I feel capable of every brutality, every meanness, every hateful cruelty” (351). From his Adapted Child Yule has moved to his Natural Child which is brutal, mean, and cruel. And yet on one occasion he moves into his Adult (if his apology is sincere) as he apologizes to Marian for his deliberate cruelty to her, blaming it on his failure and humiliation. And again, suddenly the thought of his failures catapults him back into his Natural Child, furious at those who scorn him. He thinks of having his own review and using it for revenge: “Heavens! what I will write! How I will scarify!” (352). As he continues to discuss the event, Marian is “pained by the humility of his pleading with her,” and yet her Adult analysis tells her “that to yield would be as unwise in regard to her father’s future as it would be perilous to her own prospect of happiness” (353).

Yule’s ephemeral sense of security over the prospect of having both Marian and her money to work for him is dashed with Marian’s pronouncement of her intention to marry Jasper Milvain. He cannot share her joy. In response to her pronouncement, Alfred Yule threatens to disown her. Not being sucked in by his Child, choosing not to comply with her father’s game, Marian rationally makes an Adult decision to leave the house. In Yule’s Child, he refuses to

-- 17 --

speak of Marian, and he challenges his wife to make her choice, to choose Marian or himself. A Child, Yule bemoans Marian’s not supporting him in his old age. An Adult decision, however, would have involved his moving from blame to pain and accepting responsibility for his own future, not allowing his future to be dependent on someone else.

To nurture the Child in another is to allow the child to grow in healthy and positive ways. To comfort the pain of another is to nurture. When Alfred Yule opens the letter, however, and discovers that Marian will not receive the expected inheritance, he astonishes his wife with “a burst of loud, mocking laughter” (446), and he orders her to take the letter to Marian. Marian reads the letter and falls to the floor in unconsciousness (447). Yule refuses his wife’s request for help; he refuses to nurture Marian in her loss. “Attend to her,” Yule replies roughly, “I suppose you know better than I do what to do when a person faints” (447).

Psychological ego states — Parent, Child, Adult. They change. Their nature is recursive in that people slip in and out of the three states. And, attitudes, physical conditions, upbringing, and environment affect the ego state from which a person operates. At the beginning of the novel, Alfred Yule operates from a Critical Parent ego state, but Marian’s behavior and her inheritance cause him to move to the Adapted Child state. But when he learns that she has, in fact, not inherited any money, he returns to his Critical Parent — but not for long. Upon learning that he is going blind, he is driven back into a physical state of dependence, and when one is dependent on another, adopting the psychological state of Adaptive or Natural Child can become an automatic coping strategy — as it does for Yule.

The psychological ego states of Marian Yule have also changed — from highly Adapted

-- 18 --

Child to Nurturing Parent with ultimate growth into Adulthood. Upon having to deal with her father’s blindness, despite her own personal sorrows, Marian takes her role as Adult. Unlike her father, she does not resort to blame, but she assumes the financial responsibility for her parents, not out of fear or guilt and compliance as she might have done early in the novel, but because she has made a conscious decision — a decision to act as an Adult.

1. The explanation of transactional analysis has been simplified for the purposes of this paper. For more information, see James and Jongeward 1-46 and Berne.

2. In this essay, when the words *Child*, *Parent*, and *Adult* are capitalized, they refer to psychological states; if they are not capitalized, they refer to family relationships and/or physical stages.

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-- 19 --

Wakefield Associations in *Our Friend the Charlatan*

Anthony Petyt
Wakefield

I have come to think that some of the places and characters in *Our Friend the Charlatan* are based on locations and people from the Wakefield area, and that some of the situations described in the novel reflect events that occurred whilst Gissing was a schoolboy and still living in Wakefield.

On the first page we meet the Rev. Philip Lashmar, Vicar of Alverholme. Now Alverthorpe was a township within the Parish of Wakefield.¹ A church was built there in 1825, and in 1840 Alverthorpe became a separate parish. Alverthorpe is the village which Clifford Brook identifies with the imaginary Donniston in Gissing's short story "The Invincible Curate."²

Page 4. We read that Lady Susan Harrop was "a very remote relative of Mrs. Lashmar." Here Gissing must have thought of a family with a slightly different name, the Harraps, who had long been engaged in the woollen industry and had lived in Alverthorpe for several generations. In 1842 a Mark Harrap was a churchwarden at Alverthorpe, and a photograph of Alverthorpe Church Sunday School Teachers, circa 1900, shows no fewer than four Miss Harraps.³

Page 7. "By a stile he (the Rev. Philip Lashmar) passed into the highroad, at the lower end of the long village of Alverholme. He had an appointment with his curate at the church school". It happens that Alverthorpe *is* a long, straggling village with the vicarage at one end, the church a mile distant at the other end and the schools midway between.

Pages 7-9. The Rev. Lashmar meets Miss Constance Bride (a significant name), the daughter of a former curate, who has studied pharmaceuticals and become a dispenser in a Midlands hospital. Here again personal reminiscences crept into the narrative. In the summer of 1890, while he was trying in vain to write in his mother and sisters' home the book which eventually became *New Grub Street*, Gissing became highly enamoured of a local young woman named Connie Ash.⁴ His sisters persuaded him that she would not make a suitable wife. Gissing's father, of course, was a dispensing chemist.

Page 12. Dyce Lashmar offers to *walk* with Constance Bride to the railway station. In actual life it was about half a mile from the vicarage in Alverthorpe to the village railway station (now demolished) and the distance could easily be covered on foot. Going in the opposite direction it is approximately one mile to Westgate Station in Wakefield.

Page 19. "We've cut it rather close. Across the line; you'll have to run — sharp!" At Alverthorpe station, in order to get over to the opposite platform, one had to cross the line on a path of wooden sleepers laid between the rails. At Westgate Station there is a footbridge over the lines.

Page 59. Mrs. Gallantry says: "... now if, instead of a mill, you had built a training institution for domestic service ...". Gissing's reminiscences here are somewhat more complex. About three miles from Wakefield is the village of Walton. It was at Walton Hall that Charles Waterton, the famous naturalist (1782-1865), remembered for his *Wanderings*

in South America (1825), created his nature reserve, and bird sanctuary.⁵ We know that T. W. Gissing visited Walton Hall because he reports seeing mistletoe growing in the woods there,⁶ and the young George Gissing almost certainly accompanied his father on these botanical expeditions. The village school was under the patronage of a daughter of the local baronet and in 1869 she opened the Walton Industrial School to teach the village girls cookery. In 1871 a laundry department was opened.⁷ The object of the school was to ensure that the girls were well trained, and were enabled to obtain good positions in the larger houses. The head teacher at the day school was George Bott,⁸ who was a very keen amateur botanist, and there is little doubt he would have known T. W. Gissing. Doubtless Gissing was also aware of the existence of a Female Industrial School in Wakefield, which had been opened in 1818.⁹

As regards the choice of a name for Lady Ogram's house, Rivenoak, near the village of Shawe, Gissing must have had in mind the hamlet of Oakenshaw, near Walton. This hamlet was on the route of Gissing's favourite walk, from Agbrigg, through Heath Common, to Crofton.¹⁰ But even more interesting to me than Lady Ogram's place is the old lady herself. On page 17, Constance Bride says of her: "By birth she belongs to the working class." It was this that gave me the clue that Gissing was probably basing Lady Ogram's marriage on something which occurred during his boyhood. This event, which seemed so shocking for the times, was one which I am sure he remembered all his life.

On 28th May, 1868, a marriage took place at Horbury,¹¹ a village two miles from Wakefield, which astonished the population for miles around. This marriage

which so scandalised the area was between the Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould, a former curate of Horbury, and Grace Taylor, a mill-girl and daughter of a very poor family. Baring-Gould is said to have called at the Taylors' house to visit the mother, who was ill. He met Grace, who was only sixteen years old, and instantly fell in love with her. In the face of opposition from both families, and of the comments of the villagers, he determined to marry her.

Grace was almost illiterate, but with the help of his vicar, Baring-Gould¹² sent her away to be educated. For two years she was coached in the ways of the upper classes and no doubt was taught, also, how to speak well. During these two years Baring-Gould paid her parents the equivalent of her mill wages. They were married in Horbury Parish Church on 28th May 1868. No members of the Taylor or Baring-Gould families were present. Compare this with the following extracts from Gissing's book:

Page 98. "Naturally Sir Spencer and Lady Ogram were not bidden to the wedding."

Page 99. "... she had for parents a plumber and a washerwoman — poor but very honest people — ... their poverty of late considerably relieved by the thoughtful son-in-law."

Page 100. "To school, in very deed, she had been sent; that is to say, she had all manner of teachers, first in England and then abroad, during the couple of years before the birth of her child; and by this instruction Arabella profited so notably that her language made no glaring contrast to that of the civilised world."

On the death of his father in 1872, Baring-Gould succeeded to the family estates at Lew Trenchard in Devon, about thirty miles from Exeter. There he spent his time raising a family of fifteen children, and writing dozens of books. Certainly Gissing read some of

--23 --

his books, but was not always very complimentary about them. His diary for April 19th, 1888, records his "... running through (it is not worth reading) Baring-Gould's 'Red Spider'" and again on May 27th, 1892, we find him reading Baring-Gould's *Richard Gable, the Lightshipman*, published in 1888, which he pronounced "poor stuff." Baring-Gould also wrote many hymns. Amongst his best known are "Onwards Christian Soldiers," "Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow" and "Now the Day is Over," which was sung at his own funeral, in 1924.

The last allusion of local interest occurs on p. 406 of the novel. Here Dyce Lashmar raises the status of Alverthorpe Vicarage when, in a letter to Iris Woolstan, he writes: "If you would like me to come, please wire to Alverholme Rectory." Is this, I wonder, a case of forgetfulness on Gissing's part, or just another example of Lashmar's charlatanism?

All references are to the Harvester Press edition of *Our Friend the Charlatan* (1976).

1. Harold Speak and Jean Forrester, *St. Paul's Church, Alverthorpe, Parish and People* (1975).
2. "'The Invincible Curate' and Penny Readings at Wakefield Mechanics' Institution," *Gissing Newsletter*, January 1987, pp. 15-27.
3. Harold Speak and Jean Forrester, *ibid.*

4. See *London and the Life of Literature in Late Victorian England: The Diary of George Gissing, Novelist*, ed. Pierre Coustillas, Hassocks, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1978, p. 223.
5. See the entry on Waterton in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.
6. T. W. Gissing, *Materials for a Flora of Wakefield and its Neighbourhood*, London: J. Van Voorst, 1867. p 19.

-- 24 --

7. Walton School Log Book, 1867-1870.
8. *Ibid.*
9. J. W. Walker, *Wakefield, its History and People*, Wakefield: S. R. Publishers Ltd., 1967, vol. II, p. 378.
10. *London and the Life of Literature*, p. 155.
11. R. D. Woodall, *Some Horbury Yesterdays* (1973).
12. *Ibid.*
13. See the entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Book Reviews

Pierre Coustillas, *Brief Interlude: The Letters of George Gissing to Edith Sichel*, Edinburgh: The Tragara Press, 1987.

The name of Edith Sichel flits across a page or two of several books on Gissing, but she has always remained something of a shadow, one of those tantalising ghosts that stalk most literary lives. As with other such figures in Gissing's sad life, it has been left to Pierre Coustillas to provide us with the substance and he has done so with his customary meticulousness and lightly-worn scholarship. The amount of surviving material is relatively slight: an early review

-- 25 --

by Edith Sichel, "Two Philanthropic Novelists: Mr. Walter Besant and Mr. George Gissing," which appeared in April, 1888 in *Murray's Magazine* (and already available in the excellent Critical Heritage volume, edited by Pierre Coustillas and Colin Partridge); some entries in Gissing's diary (also edited by Professor Coustillas), and a clutch of hitherto unpublished letters from Gissing to Edith Sichel, now in the Berg Collection of the New York Public Library. Professor Coustillas prints these letters, which in itself is a service, but, just as importantly, presents them in their context, providing a narrative thread which allows us to get a strong sense of the correspondence between the two, the relationship between two very different kinds of people. Professor Coustillas' achievement is all the greater because none of Edith Sichel's letters appear

to have survived. This “Brief Interlude” could almost have been a short story from Gissing’s own pen.

Edith Sichel’s review of Gissing’s early fiction had been lengthy and painstaking, and after a year she prompted Gissing to respond to it. The juxtaposition of Gissing and Besant has its ironies, in view of their essential differences, and in view of the scorn with which Gissing was later to regard Besant, especially when he thought the latter had misunderstood *New Grub Street*. But Edith Sichel put her finger on one of the critical problems in Gissing’s fiction, when she said that although he gave us truth, “It is a diseased truth . . . , devoid of sweetness and devoid of faith and hope.” Gissing’s summary, in his diary, of his first letter to her, is succinct: “my books are in no sense philanthropic, but works of art.” The letter itself spells out at some length his position: he addresses head-on the vexed question of the relationship between truth and aesthetics, setting his own practice and theory against the French and Russian writers he admires: “My own masters are the novelists of France and Russia; in comparison I have given

-- 26 --

small study to those of England.” He disavows any “philanthropic motive,” which of course sets him immediately apart from Besant, but also hints at the basic difference between himself and Edith Sichel, who did what she could to combine practical help for the destitute with critical and fictional stories of various kinds. Several points of interest stand out in Gissing’s first letter to her, but two in particular call attention to themselves: “What attracts me is the striking juxtaposition of barbarism and civilization in our strange time; I hold that *there* is the artist’s opportunity now-a-days, the greatest of many opportunities”; and, secondly, “I put forth every effort to make a harmonious whole of my work, to make it subjectively and artistically a truthful transcript.” For Gissing (“forgive the frequent Ego”) subjectivity and aesthetics cannot be separated.

Eventually, the pair meet, none too auspiciously. “Miss Sichel,” writes Gissing, “did not greatly interest me.” But by the time he has finished *The Emancipated* in November 1889, he is “anxious to hear your critical opinion.” A letter written that month, prior to his leaving for the Continent, concludes in a way that is teasingly ambiguous: “Let me say good-bye to you, if it is possible. — I shall be in time to see the colours of the dead vine-leaves, but there will be nothing more wonderful than that tree of flame-colour that we saw on our walk in Surrey.” After their next meeting, Gissing is half thinking she is beautiful; and by the time he is abroad he is indulging in vague fantasies about her. However, when he returns in February 1890, he refuses an invitation to an “at home”: “English society is no more for me.” Once again, the social chasm has opened up beneath his feet, and he backs away. As Professor Coustillas says they both go their separate ways.

This small volume, beautifully printed, constitutes a most valuable addition to our

-- 27 --

knowledge of Gissing; it underlines the conflicts within his character and within his work; it demonstrates yet again what a good letter-writer Gissing was, how alert he was to the person he was addressing. The complete edition of his letters, which is now in progress, is something to which we must all look forward; in the meantime, it is appropriate that we should express our gratitude, again, to Professor Coustillas.

Mark Storey, University of Birmingham

Patricia Alden, *Social Mobility in the English Bildungsroman*, Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1986.

Late Victorian and Edwardian fiction is full of ambitious, tormented misfits — frustrated

young men who want to enter a community which does not want them and is therefore found wanting. The social predicament of such struggling figures is the essential subject of Patricia Alden's unentirely titled but fascinating book. Her argument is valuable for the light it casts on Gissing, Hardy, Bennett and Lawrence, but also for offering a working model of contemporary Marxist criticism.

The book's thesis is simple, cogent and persuasive. The Bildungsroman, or novel of formation, describing the hero's growth from birth to maturity, was a genre which flourished in European fiction in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Originally it was an optimistic form. Wedded to bourgeois humanism, it linked the individual's inner development to his social and

-- 28 --

material success, suggesting that self-fulfilment could be harmonised with social integration. But in the nineteenth century this comic form became problematic, satiric, or tragic. Disillusioned with bourgeois ideology, novelists increasingly imply that maturity brings not smiling wives and fat legacies but poverty and alienation. The protagonists of the later Bildungsromane — often intellectuals or artists *manqué* are caught in a cultural double bind. Ambitious to transcend their humble origins, they discover that whereas inertia means frustration, mobility involves betrayal and estrangement.

Though frequently discussing other works by her authors, Patricia Alden concentrates on four novels: Gissing's *Born in Exile*, Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, Bennett's *Clayhanger* and Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. All of these, she notes, feature protagonists who are partly authorial self-portraits: provincial lower-middle or working-class youths who aspire to self-betterment but encounter frustration. Perceptively, she lists their psychological attributes: passivity and diffidence coupled with pride and a strong sense of superiority; shame and anger mutating into self-disgust; intense self-consciousness; mingled resentment, envy and contempt for the classes above and below them. Ultimately, though, her account of these characters is not psychological but sociological. Indeed it is a class explanation. Victorian discourse about culture, she suggests, was really discourse about class. A key figure was Matthew Arnold, who erased the connection between the two terms by defining culture as an inward condition unrelated to material realities. The protagonists in question are all young Arnoldians who aspire to belong to a classless élite. But as Patricia Alden points out, Arnold's notion of a classless élite was only satisfactory "if one already enjoyed the middle-class advantages of material security, a good education, and a promising career." Accordingly, the naivety of the young

-- 29 --

heroes' hopes is exposed by their authors' irony. The conventions of the Bildungsroman turn sour as the heroes struggle against educational exclusion, a precarious economic position, and rejection by the privileged and powerful. Finally they discover that to gain social status is to lose integrity.

The theoretical orientation of this study, clearly apparent throughout the book, is made explicit in a "Note on Method." Alden has been influenced by Lukács, Goldmann, Williams, Eagleton, Jameson and Goode. Fundamental, in her view, to the books she discusses are contradictions in the bourgeois ideology of individualism, experienced first in the authors' lives, then depicted — perhaps obliquely — in their fiction. Whether the authors also saw it like this is a question over which she hesitates. Frequently, she admits, "the contradictions are not understood [by the authors] as effects of a particular social organization but as personal failure and psychological break up." However, the authors "help us to recognize" how thoroughly the characters' psychologies are related to their social situations: "We learn we must erase the distinction between external and internal factors." Apparently, then, the readers learn what the authors do not understand.

Patricia Alden sees *Born in Exile* as a paradigm of the kind of Bildungsroman she is attempting to characterise. Her excellent chapter on the novel (the revision of an article first

published in the *Gissing Newsletter* in July 1981) is indebted to both John Goode and Fredric Jameson but is arguably shrewder than either. Godwin Peak, she observes, combines character types formerly kept separate in Gissing: the alienated but worthy intellectual (such as Reardon) and the successful but corrupt materialist (such as Milvain). This combination successfully communicates the dilemma facing any educated working class youth at the end of the nineteenth century — the choice between failing to fulfil one's aspirations and fulfilling them at the cost of

-- 30 --

one's probity. For Alden, Peak's paradoxical self-consciousness — his arrogance grafted to a sense of inadequacy, his desire to belong to what he despises — is at bottom a consciousness of class. Her argument on this point is subtle and convincing. Scrupulously mapping Peak's emotional shifts, she shows how the collapse of his pushy project, cunningly pursued but cruelly aborted, only serves to undermine the conservative values he has fervently proclaimed. In *Demos*, Mutimer's aggression against the social order is punished by eventual failure and death. "Peak's aggression is similarly punished," writes Alden, "but unlike Mutimer, Peak is not an opponent but a defender of the social hierarchy."

Despite Peak's reactionary sentiments, then, *Born in Exile* is in some ways a "radicalizing" book. But for Alden it is still not radical enough. Worried that Gissing might not share her priorities, she does what she can with Jameson's "blank irony" and the Machereyan notion of gaps and silences about which the text "cannot bear to become aware." Ultimately, however, she suggests that Gissing is incapable of judging Peak adequately since Peak reduplicates his own contradictions. No doubt there is some truth in this; yet at times it seems that her impatience with Gissing provokes her to misrepresent him. For example, Peak's wistful response to the Warricombes needs, she suggests, to be more clearly condemned. She quotes a part of Peak's reflections during his first visit to the Warricombes' house:

Nothing easier than to condemn the mode of life represented by this wealthy middle class; but compare it with other existences conceivable by a thinking man, and it was emphatically good, it aimed at placidity, at benevolence, at supreme cleanliness, — things which more than compensated for the absence of higher spirituality.

-- 31 --

Alden comments: "This is surely a milquetoast ideal ... it is simply more comfortable compared with the life of materially disadvantaged classes." The first point that might be made in reply is that the passage forms part of a paragraph which opens by explaining how Peak's responsiveness "justified in the light of sentiment his own dishonour." The second point is that Gissing wrote "contemn" not "condemn". The idea that the Warricombes merit *condemnation* — moral censure on account of the class they represent — is not even canvassed by Peak, or Gissing. But that their lifestyle, despite its attractions — which need to be sensed to appreciate Peak's dilemma — might in many ways inspire *contempt*, is a hint sustained throughout the book. A third point is that Gissing himself makes clear that in the last analysis the Warricombes' lifestyle is "simply more comfortable." "'Comfort' ... No higher word should be used," admits Sidwell Warricombe in the penultimate chapter, describing the ideal to which she has been brought up.

The same chapter furnishes another example of Patricia Alden's impatience. Sidwell summons her friend Sylvia to the "glass house," "the retreat on the top of the house." Seated in warmth and light against an open glass door that offers a view of distant hills, she shows Sylvia the letter she is about to post to Peak, rejecting his offer of marriage. "In such a passage," writes Alden,

we may readily see how much Gissing shares Peak's enthusiasm for the Warricombes' luxury; "rural loveliness" remained a compelling feature of

the world of affluent decorum, and it is indicative of Gissing's own "double consciousness" that in his vocabulary, Sidwell's "retreat" refers not to a moral weakness but to a beautiful view.

But does it? The glass house, incongruously serene location for the final torpedoing of Peak's

-- 32 --

hopes, is the very place where, long before, tempted by the luxury of the Warricombes' mansion, he made that fatal announcement to Buckland which launched his perilous project. Lest the ironic symmetry escape us, Gissing has written of the two women: "they sat down on the chairs which on one occasion had been occupied by Buckland Warricombe and Peak." From the outset the lovely glass house is associated not only with the Warricombes' aesthetic refinement but also with their dilettantism, their lack of perseverance. It is where Sidwell "used to paint a little," Buckland tells Peak in the earlier scene, a point recollected in the later one ("Fitfully, she had resumed her water-colour drawing ..."), which actually opens with the sentence: "Up there on the roof Sidwell often found a retreat when her thoughts were troublesome." In the light of all this, and Sidwell's reference to "comfort," it seems strictly incredible that Gissing was blind to the connotations of "retreat".

In spite of such local weaknesses, Alden's essay on *Born in Exile* is impressive. So too is her chapter on *Jude the Obscure*, which she modestly hopes will add to the persuasiveness of Terry Eagleton's arguments in the New Wessex edition. Though Eagleton certainly needs all the help he can get — among other absurdities, he misattributes to Jude a declaration made by Sue — Alden's account is not merely ancillary. As usual, she grounds her interpretation in the author's experience of social displacement. Hardy is a philosophical pessimist and *Jude the Obscure* a cosmic tragedy, but underlying both philosophy and tragedy are the wounds of deracination. The notion that "ambition involves betrayal" is, Alden notes, recurrent in Hardy. Astutely, she uncovers the strategies by which he sought to camouflage his bitterness: his exaggerated disclaimers of polemical intention; his "edgewise" expressions of class hostility; the phlegmatic, relaxed persona he projected in his disguised autobiography. Alden

-- 33 --

acknowledges that the causes of Jude's tragedy go beyond the social and economic (natural and supernatural factors conspire with chance, coincidence, and personal character). But at the book's core she locates the predicament of a poor man in conflict with the social structure — once, — as she shows in detail, Hardy's own predicament. She also perceives what many critics miss — the novel's inconsistency about social ambition, sometimes stigmatised as "the modern vice of unrest." Her account of Hardy's baffled ambivalence helps explain such textual oddities.

Eagleton's essay on *Jude the Obscure* virtually ignores those features of the novel that fail to fit his interpretation: the hereditary curse, Little Father Time, the Schopenhauerian resonances. Alden deals with these directly but sees them as deflections and mystifications. This is consonant with her sociological approach, for which she provides good reasons. However, she also argues that *Jude the Obscure* becomes a tragedy of cosmic injustice only in its concluding section, being previously a social tragedy. It is true that the last section is heavily loaded with portentous, pessimistic implications, culminating in Jude's deathbed croaking of Job, which, says Alden, "tends to put his tragedy in the context of a metaphysical mystery of evil." But the fact is that nowhere in the novel does Hardy stick consistently to the social view of tragedy: long before the last section, there are references to cruelty being Nature's law, to "predestinate Jude," "malignant stars," family curses, ominous gibbets. Such elements are embarrassing to Marxist critics, and they crop up everywhere in Hardy. Alden argues well that they are not fundamental; but she cannot conjure them away.

"When you climb up to the middle classes | you leave a lot behind you," wrote Lawrence. Alden's chapters on Bennett and Lawrence pursue the same themes as her earlier ones and are

equally stimulating. Bennett, unashamedly ambitious, seeking and enjoying material success,

-- 34 --

creates in Edwin Clayhanger a protagonist who accommodates to the provincial world but ultimately finds a home among the upper middle classes. Bennett tries to show that this is consistent with the intense cultivation of subjectivity and to pretend that nothing essential has been lost. In *Lawrence* there is rather a reinterpretation of what the maturing hero has gained. *Sons and Lovers* obscures the literal details of its author's own upward mobility and substitutes a quest for psychic independence: "The story of how Lawrence left the Midlands becomes the story of how Paul left his mother." Making sexual experience the path to self-fulfilment, Lawrence rejects the cultural double bind only to recreate it in the sexual arena: though the ground has shifted, Alden argues, the essential dilemma remains the same: "how to achieve individuation while maintaining relatedness." A sharp insight — but one notes Alden's confidence that Lawrence's sublimation of his social experience is, as with Hardy, a "mystification." Her last paragraph on Lawrence is both observant and censorious:

For all his loathing of bourgeois civilization, Lawrence wanted to preserve social classes in order to maintain his own distinction from the working class. Thus he took his revolution inward, offering an experience of liberation and an expansion of the self through sex but not in the crucial areas of education, politics, or economy.

Such a statement, like several parts of Alden's book, rekindles the old question of how far Marxist criticism not only offers a sharp entry into art but also inserts its own values. For in Lawrence's view the "crucial areas" were *not* politics and economics: to insist that they should be would destroy his *oeuvre*. Alden is superb at burrowing down to those levels of class conflict and social indictment which are partially buried in the books she discusses, and on which they

-- 35 --

are arguably built. But the very concept that makes her perceive can also make her prescriptive. If only, she seems to say, those novelists had cooperated more enthusiastically with the processes of history — if only Bennett had not been so ready to compromise, or Lawrence to retreat into sex and self; if only Hardy had eschewed morbid metaphysics, or Gissing had more openly condemned the bourgeoisie. Would their work really have been superior? What one can say is that our understanding of it is sharpened by Alden's analysis. — David Grylls, Middlesex Polytechnic

Notes and News

The Times for 8 September published an obituary of Sir William Haley who died two days before in Jersey. He had been editor of *The Times* from 1952 to 1966 after occupying various important posts in journalism and broadcasting. He often wrote on Gissing, notably in *Books and Bookmen*, and was a discriminating appreciator of his fiction. Not all his reviews of books by or about Gissing are easy to identify as some were unsigned, others published pseudonymously. In the days when he was on the staff of the *Manchester Guardian* he was on familiar terms with Allan Noble Monkhouse, whose admiration of and many articles on Gissing are also well-known. Sir William Haley, *The Times* reports, was born in Jersey in 1901. Educated at Victoria College, Jersey, he went to sea in the First World War as a wireless operator in the merchant service. He was a self-made man and "an enemy of moral compromise

in the Press,” an untiring worker who had no use for small talk and who throughout his life evinced an unswerving sense of rectitude.

Shigeru Koike reports the publication, by a major Japanese newspaper publishing house, the Asahi Shimbun, of a book of some Gissing interest. *Reading, Seeing and Listening to 54 Masterpieces* (Vol. III) consists of fifty-four short articles by novelists, poets, critics, actors, musicians, etc, each contributor concentrating on his or her favourite book. The articles first appeared serially in the Sunday edition of *The Asahi Shimbun*. The third article of this third volume is entitled “Reading *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* with Akira Abe” (pp. 19-22, with a short biographical note on p. 23). Oddly enough (but in such books discontinuity is of course the rule) the piece on Gissing is sandwiched between “Reading/Seeing *Carmen* (by Mérimée/Bizet) with Yôko Matsuo,” who is a young lady conductor, winner of the “Grand Prix” at a conducting competition which took place in Besançon, and “Reading *The Naked Ape* (by Desmond Norris, a British biologist) with Yosuke Yamashita,” who is a jazz-pianist. In his piece on *Henry Ryecroft*, Mr. Abe does not say how he became interested in the book, nor does he seem to be familiar with other works by Gissing. Just like many book-lovers in Japan, he loves this book for its beautiful descriptions of nature in all seasons as well as for the author’s devotion to reading, especially of the classics. *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, Mr. Abe writes, “is not only a modern classic, but a book which sends out messages comprehensible only to those genuine book lovers in every age. It seems to me there are many who put this book on their esoteric altar, but will never share their appreciation of it” (p. 22). Professor Koike is also a contributor to this book, but as writing on Gissing was precluded by Mr. Abe’s choice, he opted for *A Christmas Carol* (pp. 188-191).

Recent Publications Volumes

George Gissing, *Denzil Quarrier*, edited and with an introduction by John Halperin, Brighton: Harvester Press, 1987. Pp. xx + 355. Pictorial paperback. £6.95.

George Gissing, *The Crown of Life*, edited and with an introduction by Michel Ballard, Brighton: Harvester Press, 1987. Pp. xx + 341. Pictorial paperback. £6.95.

Articles, reviews, etc.

Andrew Whitehead, “Short Notices,” *Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History*, Vol. 51 (1986), no. 3, pp. 50-51. Review of the Harvester edition of *Workers in the Dawn*.

David Rubinstein, *Before the Suffragettes: Women’s Emancipation in the 1890s*, Brighton: Harvester Press, 1986. Various references to Gissing and Clara Collet.

Robert L. Selig, “Unconvincing Gissing Attributions: ‘The Death Clock,’ ‘The Serpent-Charm,’ ‘Dead and Alive,’” *The Library*, Sixth Series, Vol. IX, no. 2, June 1987, pp. 169-172. This article was followed in the September number, pp. 274-277, by correspondence on the Dr. Vargrave trilogy between Pierre Coustillas and Robert Selig.

Francesco Badolato: "Veranilda: il romanzo storico di George Gissing," *Il Corriere di Roma*,

-- 38 --

Anno XXXVIII, 23 July 1987, pp. 3 and 12. Review of the Harvester Press edition.

Julian Symons, "Victorian Values Exposed," *Times Literary Supplement*, 24 July 1987, p. 803.
Review of *The Paradox of Gissing*.

Andrew Whitehead, "Free Thought in Fiction: (1) *Workers in the Dawn*," *The Free Thinker*,
Vol. CVII, no. 7, July 1987, pp. 108-109.

Wim Neetens, "'The thin crust of refinement': culture, socialism, naturalism," *Textual Practice*,
Vol. I, no. 2, Summer 1987, pp. 139-153. This article is largely concerned with Gissing.

David Grylls, "Urbs and Suburbs," *Times Literary Supplement*, 25 September 1987, p. 1044.
Review of the Harvester Press edition of *Veranilda*.

Laurel Brake, *et al* (eds.), *The Year's Work in English Studies*, Vol. 65: 1984, London: John
Murray for the English Association, 1987. Current work on Gissing is commented upon
briefly on pp. 469-70 and 519.

Anthony Curtis and John Whitehead (eds.), *W. Somerset Maugham: The Critical Heritage*,
London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987. Gissing is mentioned in a few
items reprinted from periodicals and newspapers.