

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*.

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Gissing’s Experience in Japan:
a little known sidelight

Gillian Tindall

In a short story written after he was British Council representative in Japan, the English novelist Francis King produced the following engaging vignette:

Evan stood outside the class-room ... He was giving a huge yawn when Professor Ono emerged crab-wise from a class-room further down the corridor, his chin resting on top of a pile of copies of Gissing’s *By the Ionian Sea*. He was the Japanese authority on Gissing. Seeing Evan, he gave the small, twitching smile which always made it appear as if he were a small boy bravely fighting back tears.

“Good afternoon, Dr. Wallace.” The “Doctor” was an undeserved

Editorial Board

Pierre Coustillas, Editor, University of Lille
Shigeru Koike, Tokyo Metropolitan University
Jacob Korg, University of Washington, Seattle
Editorial correspondence should be sent to the Editor:
10, rue Gay-Lussac, 59110 La Madeleine, France,
and all other correspondence to: C. C. KOHLER,
12, Horsham Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 2JL, England.

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honorific which Professor Ono was alone in employing ... (Longmans, 1964).

It is, of course, a literary in-joke. “Professor Ono,” whom one imagines to be diminutive by gross western standards, is an Oriental version of one sort of Gissing *alter ego*, the shy, peace-loving Gissing of *Henry Ryecroft*, dreamer of far shores, little-boy-lost in a harsh world, one who nevertheless “preferred that he himself should suffer rather than bring suffering upon others.” The British have always been irrationally entertained by the idea of Japanese scholars

cultivating such a relatively esoteric figure as Gissing, but whether they are at such moments laughing at the assiduous Japanese, at uncosmopolitan Gissing or at their parochial selves I have never been quite sure. All three, perhaps – bolstered by a rooted conviction as to the *differentness* of Japan from Britain.

Yet even a brief visit to Japan and a cursory look at her nineteenth century history reveal numerous links or coincidences of interest; and anyone familiar with modern Japanese literature will recognise the prevalence there of the Gissing-style central character, sensitive, introspective and semi-autobiographical. Was Gissing himself, indeed, one is tempted to wonder, really a displaced Japanese soul, with his uneasy mixture of reverence for tradition and enthusiasm for new ideas, his politeness and his inner violence? ... I think of Lafcadio Hearn, that other socially displaced and paranoid Englishman of Gissing's generation, who found a measure of peace and happiness with an understanding Japanese wife in the rapidly evolving Japan of the Meiji era.

When, in April this year, the *real* Gissing expert, Shigeru Koike, and I finally met in Tokyo, this was the sort of topic we might profitably have discussed. If we failed to do so, that was because we were enjoying ourselves too much. Professor Koike, with three of his

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colleagues, entertained my husband and me to dinner in a traditional Japanese restaurant in the Shinjuku area of the enormous, futuristic city that is late twentieth-century Tokyo; which means that although there were neon-lit sky-scrapers in the street, inside we sat behind paper screens on *tatami* mats before a doll-height table where a succession of dishes were beautifully served. (Oh dear, I'm afraid that, after a few weeks' initial enthusiasm, Gissing's roast-beef-and-Yorkshire-pudding tastes might have asserted themselves and he would have become fractious about foreign food, as he did in France.) Out of pure kindness, Japanese politeness or – I do hope – because they found the subject interesting anyway, the three colleagues chosen for their own stake in Gissing allowed us to spend most of the meal questioning them about modern Japan. They were Professor Fumio Hôjoh (Mrs.), Assistant Professor Ryôko Ota (Mrs.), who has translated *The Odd Women* and *The Whirlpool* into Japanese, and Mr. Ryôta Kanayama, who is a post-graduate student and has co-translated Gissing's book on Charles Dickens.¹

We also talked about religion, family ties (Mrs. Ota was particularly helpful in explaining the Japanese concept of *ai* – loving dependence – to my husband, who is a child psychologist), modern English and American novelists, films – and trains. I had heard before I left England that, in his native country, Professor Koike is celebrated not only for his interest in Gissing and Dickens but also for his expertise on trains. His nickname, in fact, is “Railway Koike” (railway being one of the many British words that have escaped into Japanese, along with *rushawara* and *salaryman*) and he owns a nineteenth-century locomotive which lives on a short stretch of track in one of the less populated parts of Japan. How short, we wondered? Oh, really quite short! (Well informed mirth from the assembled company.) But it is nevertheless possible for Professor Koike to drive the engine up and down. Wearing white cotton gloves like a real

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Japanese engine driver. Yes – but it still sounded to us rather an impressively idiosyncratic hobby. Almost British, in fact.

I should perhaps add that Shigeru Koike does not in the least resemble Francis King's fictional evocation of “the Japanese expert on George Gissing.” He is rather above the average size of his countrymen, with an untypical if distinguished head of grey hair and a command of very slightly old-fashioned English idiom worthy of Pierre Coustillas himself. He was inclined

to describe the very pleasant if unassuming restaurant he had taken us to as “seedy” till we rushed to suggest more appropriate alternatives. All in all a delightful evening, for which we were warmly grateful. We hope to meet again in the not too distant future either in Tokyo or in London.

1. The translations of *The Odd Women* and *Charles Dickens, a Critical Study* are part of “The Selected Works of George Gissing” published by Shûbun International Ltd, under the general editorship of Professor Shigeru Koike. The other “selected works” are *New Grub Street*, *Born in Exile*, *Sleeping Fires* and *By the Ionian Sea*. Mrs. Ota’s translation of *The Whirlpool* is to appear next year under a different imprint.

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Gissing and the Shakspeare Scholarship

Pierre Coustillas

The brilliant success achieved by Gissing in 1875 when he won the Shakspeare scholarship stands out in his college career. Although altogether different in nature from his success in the Oxford Local Examinations, it marked in retrospect one of the major stages in his march towards further predictable distinctions. That his fourth year at Owens College ended in disgrace does not affect his academic record. If anything the disaster which brought it to a close enhances it by contrast. However, with the exception of his prize poem “Ravenna,” which has been printed at least three times,¹ and his essay on the English novel in the eighteenth century,² his scholastic feats have remained abstractions. When his biographers mention the Shakspeare scholarship at all, they offer no comment. Now, short of offering Gissing’s examination paper, which does not seem ever to have appeared in sale rooms, one can answer a number of single questions such as the following: What was the status of the Shakspeare scholarship? What kind of subject had the competitors to deal with? What was the subject in 1875? What financial reward was attached to success? The answers are intended as a contribution to a larger subject – Gissing’s formal education from his early school days at Back Lane School, Wakefield, to his truncated fourth year at Owens.

The Shakspeare scholarship had been founded in the previous decade. Joseph Thompson,

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the historian of the College and a resident of Wilmslow to whose children William Gissing gave music lessons, explains how “in the movement to celebrate the tercentenary of Shakspeare’s birth Manchester took an active part. At a meeting of the Shakspeare Commemoration Committee, held in the Mayor’s Parlour on Monday, 14th, December, 1863, the Mayor of Manchester in the chair, the following report was read:

The committee appointed on the 16th. October last, with instructions ‘to inquire into and report upon the best means of effecting some worthy commemoration of Shakspeare,’ having given consideration to the various proposals suggested to them, are of opinion that the three hundredth anniversary of Shakspeare’s birth in April, 1864, would be most fitly commemorated in Manchester by the foundation of two scholarships, to be called ‘Shakspeare Scholarships,’ for the promotion of the study of English language and literature, in connection with Owens College and the Free

Grammar School.”³

The committee had two other aims which are an index to the importance of the overall scheme: the production of a marble bust of the poet and playwright to be placed in the Manchester Town Hall and a liberal contribution to the fund that was being raised for the erection of a monumental Shakespeare memorial at Stratford. Expectations, however, were to be frustrated and, instead of the £4,000 which the committee had hoped to realise, only £2,117, after payment of all expenses, proved to be available. £1,071 went to Owens College, furnishing a scholarship of the annual value, of £40. The scholarship was tenable for two years and the competition open to all candidates, whether previously students of the College or not, whose age should not exceed twenty-one years on the first of January of the year in which the competition was to

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take place. There were consequently competitions every two years, but it would seem that if the Shakspeare Scholar left the College after one year he forfeited the second year of tenure, and a new competition was organised. Each candidate had to give the registrar, J. Holme Nicolson, on or before an appointed day in September, a written notice of his intention to compete. The curriculum varied according to competitions, but of course not in such a manner and to such an extent as to prevent a student who failed at the first attempt from having, however slightly, the advantage of other competitors when he tried his luck again. Every year the history of the competition for the scholarship was published in an updated form in the Calendar of the College, so that students knew over two months beforehand the nature of the subjects in which they would be examined and whose distinguished performances they would have to equal.

Gissing's letters to his friend Arthur Bowes (1858-1925), a former student at Lindow Grove, Alderley Edge, convey something of the frantic atmosphere in which he read for the 1873 competition. He knew that, if he won, he would succeed William Summers on the official record. After Charles Sheldon in 1866, Alfred Hopkinson in 1868 and Henry Spenser Wilkinson in 1870, Summers, one of James Wood's most brilliant alumni of late, had won the scholarship in 1872, the year when Gissing passed the Oxford Local Examinations, and Gissing looked up to Summers. The curriculum included: a) the history and grammatical structure of the English language including its earlier stages b) the history and criticism of English dramatic metres c) a view of opinion on Shakespeare in England and abroad up to the close of the eighteenth century d) the literary developments of the story of Troy from Homer to Shakespeare e) Shakespeare, *The Tempest*; Marlowe, *Edward II*; Gray, Poems (exclusive of posthumous, translated and Latin pieces). An essay would also be required on some subject suggested by the preceding heads of examination.

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Gissing set to work in July, when he was still relishing his successes in the end-of-year examinations, with some sixteen volumes of prizes on his shelves. On 13 July 1873 he wrote to Bowes from Ilkley, where he was on holiday with his family, that, as soon as he got home he would begin “to sweat for the ‘Shaksp.’ like fury,” and he reminded himself of Edward Young's dictum that “procrastination is the thief of time.” But he was not too hopeful. He worked hard in Wakefield and at Lindow Grove, where he still boarded though no longer a student of James Wood and his handful of masters. He also collected information in the Manchester libraries and read the whole of Shakespeare three times. When in early September Bowes suggested they might go and see *Twelfth Night* in Manchester, he first declined the offer, objecting that he was too busy, but he eventually yielded and attended a performance at the Prince's Theatre. After that he must have worked till the examination, which took place on 15 and 16 October.

The series of subjects the four competitors had to deal with was a daunting one, and not of a nature to appeal greatly to late twentieth-century students. It can be read in full in the Owens College Calendar for the academic year 1874-75, pp. vi-xii. It was divided into four parts, the first signed by T. Northcote Toller, M.A., a lecturer who taught English language and became a Professor in 1880, the last three by A. W. Ward, who held the chair of English Language and Literature. The first part included a sequence of twelve questions ranging from the origins of English to characteristics of the language in the Elizabethan age, with a passage in old English to translate into modern English and special questions on middle English grammar and the distinction between the three principal English dialects. Part II was concerned with the lyrics in Shakespeare's dramas, the main bases of speculations as to Shakespeare's political opinions, and Shakespeare's prosody. If some of the questions could be answered by any student

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thoroughly acquainted with the plays – the whereabouts of such lyrics as those beginning “Full fathoms five thy father lies” or “Blow, blow, thou winter wind” – others, for satisfactory treatment, required a solid knowledge of the history of the period. For example these under (8): “What references have been sought in Shakspearean plays to Essex's plot? Is *Richard II* a play to be included among those in which such references may be found? Can any conclusions as to Shakspeare's political views be drawn from *Henry VIII*, and if so, by what considerations must these conclusions be limited?” In Part III, the candidates were requested to deal with, for instance, the employment of the device of “the play within the play” and to trace it to its earliest occurrence in English literature or to paraphrase in clear prose Shakespearean passages which the passing of time has rendered particularly abstruse. This third part also contained an invitation to explain such words as *mobled*, *romage* and *cautel* within a short context and to criticize the characters of *Edward III* with reference to the question of Shakespearean authorship. And, as though all this were not enough to test the learning of boys of fifteen to eighteen, the fourth part consisted in an essay which could be devoted either to “Shakspeare and Puritanism” or to “The rules of dramatic construction exemplified from an examination of Shakspeare's *Hamlet*.”

Gissing, whose appetite for knowledge was prodigious, enjoyed the whole test because there was in him – in certain moods at least – something of the pedantic leanings which he was later to analyse so scathingly in Alfred Yule, but he was struggling in vain. A few days before the examination he said to Bowes that he was preparing with Macbeth to “screw up [his] courage to the sticking place,” and burnishing his arms for the “glorious conflict.”⁵ On 23 October he acknowledged his defeat. He had come out third, but it was a defeat with honour. He was not last, he observed self-consolingly; besides, the three other candidates had passed the first B.A., which meant that he was the youngest of the four; and when Ward showed them their

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marks they could see they “were all very near together.”⁶ But he was not disheartened. The “honourable mention” he received on the official notice read like an encouragement to try again in a year or two. Further, the winner of the competition was so poor that the £80 he would receive would do more good than if it had gone to the son of some Yorkshire or Lancashire capitalist, and the candidate who had come out second was so disappointed by his own failure that he was very ill in bed. Not so Gissing, who as early as November was half tempted to compete again for the Poem Prize which he had won the previous session with “Ravenna” and for the Essay Prize. The subjects – “The Last Sigh of the Moor” and “The Influence of Chaucer on English poets” respectively – were the kind which, at the time, fascinated his exalted brain.⁷

In his letters to Bowes Gissing does not mention the name of the winner, but the Owens

College records supply the missing information. Thomas Wilson Dougan was the son of an Irish clergyman, the Rev. John Dougan, of Loughmourne, Co. Monaghan. He had been admitted as a regular student at the College in the same academic year as Gissing, that is 1872-73, winning the Gilchrist Entrance Scholarship, a scholarship of the value of £50 per annum, awarded to the best candidate aged between sixteen and twenty at the Midsummer Matriculation examination of the University of London, and he had passed his First B.A. with honours in both Latin and English a few months before, in June 1873. The *Who Was Who* entry on him shows that on leaving Owens College he went to St. John's College, Cambridge where he further distinguished himself, being Browne's Medallist for Latin Epigram in 1878 and third in the first class Classical Tripos in the next year. He was M.A.(Classics), with Gold Medal, of London University in 1881 and became Professor of Latin, Queen's College, Belfast as early as 1882. However, nothing exceptional attaches to his name subsequently. He prosaically married a

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clergyman's daughter, Mary Elizabeth Field, in 1890, and published only two books, an edition of Thucydides, Book VI, in 1884 and an edition of Cicero's Tusculan Disputations, Books I and II, in 1905. He was to die in his early fifties on 3 June 1907. If Dougan and Gissing followed each other's careers, no evidence of it is on record; at all events Dougan is more likely to have been aware of his former college fellow's activities than *vice versa*. He allowed himself to be absorbed by the routine of academic life. With a professorship in his native country his ambitions were fulfilled.

The candidate who was classed second, doubtless equally brilliant, was to make his way in life in a much more conspicuous manner, but he must be viewed at this stage as the unfortunate competitor who, according to Gissing, had been working for some years with a view to winning the Shakspeare Scholarship, was confident he would succeed, but was inexplicably beaten at the post. His name was to be associated with that of Gissing in an engaging manner that neither of the two youths could have in the least imagined.

Born in Manchester on 18 February 1853 – and consequently more than four years Gissing's senior – Charles Harold Herford was the eldest son of Charles James Herford, a local wine-merchant, and Mary Jane Robberds, whose father, John Gooch Robberds (1789-1854) was a well-known unitarian minister and classics teacher, and a friend and colleague of William Gaskell. He had first attended Castle Howell School, Lancaster, a school founded by his uncle William Henry Herford (1820-1908), to whom he was to devote a memoir in 1911. According to the *Dictionary of National Biography* he was a regular student at Owens College from 1867 to 1869, then worked for six years at architecture, but the Owens College Calendars show that this is misleading. Herford passed his First B.A. at Owens in 1871 and was prizeman in the English classes in 1872. Also, distressed though he was by his failure to win the Shakspeare

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Scholarship, he promptly took a sight on the 1874 Essay Prize and won it. He went up to Trinity College, Cambridge, in the next year, and consequently was not a witness of Gissing's arrest and expulsion, but he was a contemporary of his for three years (1872-75) and, as an occasional student, was aware of his triumph when a new competition for the Shakspeare Scholarship took place in October 1875.

There are no letters of or to Gissing extant for that month; so that his victory is much like a peak emerging from a misty plateau. Nor are the names of the unlucky candidates known to us through the official records, none being given as *proxime accessit* or with an honourable mention, but the Calendar for 1875-76 gives some useful factual details. The examination, which was scheduled for 13 and 14 October, was as usual open to all candidates, whether

previously students of the College or not, whose age did not exceed twenty-one years on 1 January 1875 and the curriculum had been partly revised. It comprised: a) the history and grammatical structure of the English language, including its earlier stages b) the versification of Shakespeare's plays as a test of their chronology c) the absence or otherwise of Shakespeare from England at any time of his life d) A.W. Schlegel and Coleridge as Shakespearian critics e) Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Milton, *Comus*. In addition, as in 1873, an essay would be required on some subject suggested by one of the five heads of examination. The sole relic of Gissing's work in preparation for the examination is an annotated copy of *Love's Labour's Lost* now in the Beinecke Library. The following is a facsimile reprint of the subject as it was printed in the Calendar for 1876-77:

SHAKSPERE SCHOLARSHIP.
OCTOBER, 1875.

I.

1. "The language of the purposes and the affections, of the will and of the heart is

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genuine English-born; the dialect of the market and the fireside is Anglo-Saxon." Give some examples to illustrate this statement, and quote any passage from Shakspeare (marking in it the words of English origin) to show the important part which the English element of the language can play in the region of the highest poetry.

2. On what grounds do you class modern English as a Teutonic, rather than as a Romance tongue? Compare English, in its latest and in its earliest form, and modern German, with regard to their respective powers of extending the vocabulary by the aid of native material.

3. Contrast the result on language of the conquest of Britain by the English with that which followed the Teutonic conquests of other parts of the Roman Empire, and endeavour to account for the difference.

4. Give a brief sketch of the system of inflection of nouns and adjectives in the earliest English. Of what earlier system was this (in the case of nouns) the representative? and to what state was it reduced by the close of the 14th century? Do you consider this decay to have been a consequence of the Norman conquest? What had been the history of inflections in the case of the language spoken by the Normans?

5. Write out the present indicative of any verb in the oldest English. Were there any exceptions to the general form of this tense? How are these exceptional cases explained? What forms of this tense are found in writers after the conquest? What in Shakspeare? Give the history of the future tense in English.

6. Mention any circumstances which, in the 14th century, were favourable to the rise of a native literature in England; and give a brief account of some of the works most characteristic of the time. Do you consider Spenser's description of Chaucer's language appropriate?

7. Give an outline of the history of the state of learning in England in the 16th century. With what danger does the language seem to have been threatened during this period? Give the substance of the remarks made on this head by contemporary writers. Mention any characteristics of the language of Spenser, of Lilly. By whom was the style of the latter ridiculed? What circumstances led to the study of Early English in the reign of Elizabeth?

8. What translations of the Scriptures in England preceded the authorised version? What was the effect of this last on the language?

9. Mention, with examples, any points in which Elizabethan English differs from that of the present day. Explain the use of the italicised words in the following: –

I'll come *by* Naples.
How say you *by* the French Lord.
We'll deliver you *of* your great danger.
There is no woe *to* his correction.
Nor *to* his service no such joy on earth.
I have a king here *to* my flatterer.
Thou *still* hast been the author of good tidings.
There was an old fat woman *even* now with me.

10. Give the authors, dates, and dialects (where these are marked) of the following works:-

The Governour.
The Bruce.
Le Morte Darthur.
Handlyng Synne.
Translation of Boethius.
Confessio Amantis.
The Ayenbite of Inwit.
The Kynge's Quhair.
The Repressor of over much blaming of the Clergy.
Gorboduc.
Mirror for Magistrates.
Roister Doister.

11. Turn into modern English the following passages:

ða ic þa ðis eall gemunde ða gemunde ic eac hu ic geseah, ær þamþe hit eall forherogod, wære & forbærned, hu þa cirican geond eall Angelkynn stodon maðna & boca gefylða & eac micel menigu Godes ðeowa & þa swiðe lytle feorme ðara boca wiston, for þam þe hie heora nan wuht ongietan ne meahton, for þæm þe hie næron on hiora ægen geðeode awntene. Swelce hie cwæden. Uri ieldran, ða þe ðas stowa ær hioldon hie lufedon wisdom & ðurh ðone his begeaton welan & us læfdon. Her mon mæg giet gesion hiora swæð, ac we him ne cunnon æfterspyrgan, forþæm, we habbað nu ægðer forlæten ge þone welan ge ðone wisdom, forþam þe we noldon to þæm spore mid ure mode onlutan.

ða ic þa þis call gemunde, þa wundrode ic swiðe swiðe þara godena witena þe giu wæron geond Angelcynn, & þa bec befullen ealla geleornod hæfdon þæt hi hiora þa nanne dæl noldon on hiora ægen geðeode wendan.

Bot for Crist spekes of takeninge,
That tithand of this dom sal bringe,
Forþi es god that I you telle

Sum thing of thir takeninges snelle;
 Sain Jerom telles that fiften
 Ferli takeninges sal be sen
 Bifor the day of dom and sal,
 Ilkan of thaim on ser dai fal.
 The first dai, sal al the se,
 Boln and rise and heyer be
 Than any fel of al the land
 And als a felle up sal it stand;
 The heyt therof sal passe the felles
 Bi sexti fot, als Jerom telles
 And als mikel, the tother day,
 Sal it sattel and wit away,
 And be laur than it now esse,
 For water sal it haf wel lesse.

In what dialect is this written? Point out some of its dialectic peculiarities.

T. N. TOLLER

II.

VERSIFICATION; BIOGRAPHY; CRITICISM

1. In treating of the versification of Shakspeare's plays as a test of their chronology, in which of his dramatic contemporaries do we find characteristics of versification sufficiently marked to make a reference to their writings desirable for purposes of comparison?

2. Explain and illustrate the meaning of the following expressions: – the *rhyme-test*; the *feminine-ending test*; the *pause test*. With regard to these supposed tests, what general conclusions have been arrived at as to Shakspeare's practice in the successive periods of his dramatic productivity?

3. Are there any special characteristics of versification in *Love's Labour's Lost* tending to establish any conclusions as to the chronological position of that comedy

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among Shakspeare's plays? How do the characteristics of the versification of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* agree with ascertained facts as to the date of that play?

4. What gap or gaps are left by the ascertained dates of Shakspeare's biography, admitting – so far as time goes – of the supposition that he spent more years than one in succession out of England? With reference to the period or periods in question, what probabilities suggest themselves from the lives of his contemporaries as to the particular direction or directions his travels might have taken?

5. Where is "Will, my Lord of Lester's jesting plaier" mentioned, and what arguments have been advanced in support of, or in opposition to, the suggestion that Shakspeare was the person in question? Do you think that there are any passages in Shakspeare's works indicating a close acquaintance with, or experience of, the incidents or accompaniments of a military campaign? Illustrate your remarks on this head by references to the works of any contemporary poets whose military experience is beyond doubt.

6. Examine the view according to which certain of Shakspeare's plays furnish evidence of an acquaintance with Italian localities and their associations not explicable except on the assumption of a personal visit to Italy. What Italian cities form the scene of any of his plays, or of parts of them? On the supposition that Shakspeare was never in Italy, what literary sources can you mention as likely to have supplied him with the details of local colouring observable in one or more of his dramas?

7. With reference to the supposition that Shakspeare had paid a visit to Scotland before he wrote his *Macbeth*, answer the three following questions: –

(1.) When do we know English actors to have professionally visited Scotland during Shakspeare's life time?

(2.) What considerations determine the probability or improbability of Shakspeare's ever having been in Scotland as an actor?

(3.) Does the character of the local allusions in *Macbeth a priori* favour the supposition of a personal visit to Scotland by Shakspeare?

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8. Can you state enough as to the dates of the publications of A. W. Schlegel and Coleridge respectively concerning Shakspeare and the Elisabethan drama to account for the charges of plagiarism which have been brought against the latter critic? How did Coleridge himself meet such charges? Admitting the truth of his reply, how would you account for the phenomenon which gave rise to the accusation?

9. With what movement in the German world of letters is the spirit of A. W. Schlegel's Shakspeare-criticism associated? Can you connect with the general history of that movement the change or changes observable in the spirit of Schlegel's criticism of the modern drama? What were his notions as to the most acceptable classification of Shakspeare's plays, and which of the so-called 'doubtful plays' was he inclined to ascribe to Shakspeare?

10. What is the substance of Schlegel's theory of Shakspeare's 'irony,' with reference to the comic episodes, personages or passages regarded by others as 'disturbing elements.' State your own view on this point of criticism, and illustrate it if possible by references or quotations.

11. Whose opinion does Coleridge impugn in controverting the assertion that 'Shakspeare wrote for man, but the gentle Fletcher for woman,' and what is the substance of his observations on the subject?

12. What is Coleridge's view as to Shakspeare's picturesque power, and how would you connect the spirit of his remarks with any distinctive characteristics of the age of English poetry to which Coleridge belonged, or of English writers with whom he was more especially in personal contact or in literary accordance?

III.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST; A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM; COMUS.

1. Illustrate from *Love's Labour's Lost* the character of the so-called Euphuistic fashion of speech, and point out any passages in this comedy the origin of which has actually been traced to Lyly. How does this play affect the question as to the general relations between Shakspeare's style and Euphuism?

2. Paraphrase in clear prose the following passages.
 - (a) This wimpled, whining, purblind, wayward boy
This senior-junior, giant-dwarf, Dan Cupid...
Sole imperator, and great general
Of trotting paritors...
 - (b) A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,
when the suspicious head of theft is stopp'd.
 - (c) He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument.
 - (d) Nay, he can sing
A mean most meanly, and in ushering
Mend him who can.
3. Explain:
 - (a) Is there not a ballad, boy, of the King and his Beggar?
 - (b) Why, he comes in like a perjure, wearing papers.
 - (c) I will play
On the tabor to the Worthies, and let them dance the Hay.
 - (d) Nay then, two treys, (an if you grow so nice) –
Metheglin, wort, and malmsey.

4. What internal evidence (versification and style apart) has been thought to help to fix the date of the production of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and what conjectures have been put forward as to the occasion of its composition or performance?

5. Explain the words or phrases *italicised* in the following passages:

- (a) Brief as the lightning in the *collied* night,
That, in a *spleen*, unfolds both heaven and earth.
- (b) Contagious fogs, which, falling in the land,
Have every *pelting* river made so proud
That they have overborne their *continents*.
- (c) Nay, I can *gleek* upon occasion.
- (d) I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me; I was never *curst*.
- (e) There is a *brief* how many sports are ripe.

6. Quote as much as you remember of Oberon's speech to Puck, *M. N. Dream*, II, 2; and state what allegorical interpretations have been given to it, and what credit they seem to you to deserve.

7. Give the derivation of the names *Oberon*, *Titania*, *Puck*, *Hecate*. Are any of these names apparently invented by Shakspeare? State the sources from which Shakspeare directly or indirectly derived the fairy machinery of his *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

8. Illustrate from the history of the English or foreign drama the custom of tradesmen's plays. Has Shakspeare elsewhere ridiculed performances of this description or

of a similar character? What do you presume to have been Shakspeare's source for the subject of the play performed by the clowns in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*?

9. What are the essential characteristics of the species of composition to which *Comus* belongs, and how does it distinguish itself from the several species of the regular drama? To what previous works has Milton been held to be indebted for elements in the plan and characters of *Comus*? Explain the origin and significance of the term *κόμος*, and quote the substance of Milton's account of the origin and parentage of the deity invented by him. Do you recognise any secondary allegorical significance in the design of Milton's poem, or of parts of it – and in which other of his works can you point out an analogous intention?

10. Paraphrase in clear prose:

- (a) The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies and imbrutes.
- (b) ... unmoulding reason's mintage
Charactered in the face.
- (c) Yea, even that which Mischief meant most harm
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory.

11. Derive the words *italicised* in the following:

- (a) The *pert* fairies and the *dapper* elves.
- (b) Thyrsis, whose artful strains have oft delayed
The huddling brook to hear his *madrigal*.
- (c) Those *budge* doctors of the Stoic fur.
- (d) Cheeks of sorry *grain*.
- (e) *Urchin* blasts.
- (f) Her *purpled* scarf.

12. (a) Explain the following:

- (a) 'that Moly
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave.'
- B

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- (B) 'that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena.'

(b) Illustrate the forms: 'the *low-roosted* lark,' her wings were *all to ruffled*' by Shakspearean analogies or otherwise.

13. (a) In Milton's description of Comus' rout, is there any touch likely to have been suggested by an incident in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*?

(b) Can you quote any passages in *Comus* which appear to be reminiscences from *Love's Labour's Lost* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*?

IV.

Write an essay on *one* of the following subjects:

- a. On the possibility of reconciling moral responsibility with supernatural agency in a dramatic poem.
- b. A critical examination of the following assertion: "Shakspeare gives to all nations the manners of England."

The awarding to Gissing of the Shakspeare Scholarship on 5 November was to be his last great academic satisfaction. The three Wakefield newspapers, that is the *Express*, the *Herald* and the *Free Press*, which had recently begun to report his academic performances, duly mentioned his latest feat.⁸ He was very busy during his fourth session at Owens as is testified by a succession of paragraphs in the *Owens College (Union) Magazine*, which had published his ode "To Truth" in May 1875. Echoes of his activities on half a dozen occasions, from 12 November 1875 to 3 March 1876 were printed in three successive numbers, in January, March and May. Then Gissing vanished from college for ever.

C. H. Herford made his way, first as a student at Cambridge, where he was bracketed eighth classic in 1879 and obtained a second class in the moral sciences tripos as well as a number of essay prizes, then at Aberystwyth, where he held a chair of professor of English language and literature at University College from 1887 to 1901. His first book, *Studies in the*

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Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century, published in 1886, broke new ground in that it foreshadowed a remarkable series of works of a somewhat revolutionary nature which show him to have been one of the pioneers of comparative literature. Herford was a good linguist as well as an explorer of European literatures – German, Italian and Norwegian. He translated Ibsen's *Brand* and *Love's Comedy* in the original metres. *The Influence of Goethe's Italian Journey on his Style* (1900) was the Taylorian lecture delivered at Oxford in 1897. In 1885-86 he was instrumental in the foundation of the English Goethe Society. His many books on English literature range from the Elizabethan period to the nineteenth century. The British Library Catalogue entry on his works as scholar, editor and translator covers more than four columns. If his interests included a minor figure like Herbert of Cherbury, he concentrated on the so-called giants of literature, moving gracefully from Shakespeare to Dante, from Milton to Pushkin, from Shelley to d'Annunzio, from Browning to Lessing. Almost inevitably Gissing met his name in English journals where his many volumes were listed, noticed or reviewed. And Herford, who, like another man of letters whom Gissing knew personally, Allan Noble Monkhouse (a cousin of Ménie Muriel Dowie, alias Mrs. Henry Norman), was a critic on the *Manchester Guardian*, must have seen review copies of Gissing's novels on the editorial desk in Cross Street. Most of Gissing's works were reviewed in that newspaper – twenty in twenty-eight, sometimes the second edition when the first had been missed – and it is just possible that Herford wrote some of the unsigned and unidentified pieces, although his appointment to the independent chair of English literature at Manchester University not earlier than 1901 somewhat detracts from the plausibility of this assumption.

At all events his familiarity with Gissing's works is not in doubt. When in early 1912 the idea was put forward by Percy Withers that the University of Manchester, despite the deplorable

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circumstances under which Gissing had left it, might be well inspired in paying him a posthumous tribute, Herford was one of the staunchest supporters of the project. Not only was he, together with Arnold Bennett, James Brockbank, Edward Clodd, John Galsworthy, A. N. Monkhouse, Thomas Seccombe, A. W. Ward, and H. G. Wells among others, one of the members of the committee whose appeal appeared in the London and Manchester press,⁹ but he sought the support and opinion of a woman, Clara Collet, who had known Gissing intimately in

his later years and could offer assistance if the character of her friend was attacked even by those supporters of the project who held his work in high esteem. The following letter is largely self-explanatory; it presupposes some correspondence between the writer and the recipient and contains a reference to an unpublished article by Clara Collet which, despite Herford's encouragement, does not seem to have ever found its way to an editor's hands. The other piece is "George Gissing's Novels. A First Impression," which she had published in the *Charity Organization Review* in October 1891.¹⁰

5, Parkfield Road,
Didsbury,
Manchester.

7 May '13
Dear Miss Collet,

You will forgive my having kept your two very interesting Gissing papers so long, I hope. It is a very busy season with us, preparing examinations; & I am concerned in this way with two universities besides our own. But I have read them, especially the one in MS., with admiration for the keenness & also the weight, of judgment which they seem to me to show, it you will allow me to say so. I think your indication of the qualifications to be made in G.'s pessimism is very judicious, & full of striking remarks

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in detail. He has been discussed hitherto almost entirely by the 'literary' reviewer, & as a writer; so that your estimation of the value of his work as portrayal of the 'nether world,' and your analysis of his own attitude towards it, seem to me important; & I wish that the salient parts of the MS. paper could appear in print. In these days of rushing to press, how rare it is that one has *time* to utter such a wish! One is occupied so much with wishing that things in print had remained in MS.!

About the *Whirlpool*, I am not quite sure that you touch my difficulty. I did not judge the society painted there less real than that of (eg.) the *Netherworld* merely because it corresponded less to what I knew. I accept Caliban as a being quite as real as most of my acquaintance; but the *Whirlpool* world does seem to me less real than the *Netherworld* in the sense that it has less, for me, of the persuasiveness of reality; – as the critical jargon has it, it is less 'convincing.'

I fear there is no prospect of the Gissing fund amounting to much more than £250, so that our searchings of heart on the rival claims of kindred & commemoration might have been spared. I expect we shall have a good memorial tablet, perhaps a medallion, & then an annual prize or small exhibition of perhaps £10. Possibly when that comes off you will come to see the memorial 'unveiled'; & then I trust you will do us the pleasure of accepting our hospitality. My wife will be delighted to make your acquaintance. She has read your papers with great interest.

Yours very truly
C. H. Herford.¹¹

Herford's prediction was by and large correct. The sum that was collected did not amount to much more than £250. A tablet which can still be seen was put up in the University of Manchester – it commemorates Gissing in terms which could hardly be less passionate. And

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a George Gissing Memorial Prize in English Literature was founded in 1914 by the Gissing

Memorial Subscribers, “a prize of £10 to be awarded to the best candidate in the Preliminary Examination in the Honours School of English and Literature.”¹²

Thus some forty years after Gissing had won the Shakspeare Scholarship a Gissing Prize was created, largely thanks to the efforts of one of Gissing’s rivals on his first attempting to secure the prestigious scholarship, and Charles Harold Herford remains doubly associated with Gissing, as a fellow student who like him experienced failure and success, but also as a scholar and critic who was anxious to do justice to his former companion. In the last analysis Herford’s active, respected and happy life¹³ as well as the less brilliant career of Thomas Wilson Dougan are compulsive reminders of what professional status Gissing himself might have reached at the turn of the century and possibly later had not his youthful quixotic generosity defeated his own ambitions in that (for him) fateful year 1876.

1. In the Owens College Magazine, “Ravenna. Prize Poem. 1873,” February 1874, pp 45-51; *A Selection of Verses from the Manchester University Magazine 1868-1912* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1913), pp. 22-28; and in *Selections Autobiographical and Imaginative from the Works of George Gissing* (London: Cape, 1929), pp. 176-84.
2. Published in *George Gissing on Fiction*, by Jacob and Cynthia Korg (London: Enitharmon Press, 1978), pp. 99-119.
3. Joseph Thompson, *The Owens College: Its Foundation and Growth, and Its Connection with the Victoria University, Manchester* (Manchester: J. E. Cornish, 1886), pp. 245-55.
4. Charles Sheldon, whose name appears in none of the standard reference works,

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distinguished himself at Owens College on several occasions. He obtained his B.A. and B.Sc. degrees with honours in 1868 and was Essay Prizeman in 1870. He won the Shuttleworth Scholarship in 1872, having by then passed his M.A. Hartog, in his book on the Owens College (1900), gives him as D.Litt. Alfred Hopkinson (1851-1939) went up to Oxford in 1873, became a Professor of Law at Owens College, a post he resigned in 1889. The *D. N. B* entry describes him as “lawyer, educationist and politician.” He returned to Owens as Principal in 1898 and was the first vice-chancellor of Victoria University in 1900. He was knighted in 1910. Henry Spenser Wilkinson (1853-1937) was a military historian and journalist, serving on the staff of the *Manchester Guardian* as leader writer and special correspondent. He translated German military works, and later became leader writer on military subjects for the *Morning Post*. He was also Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. – William Summers (1853-1893), the son of a Stalybridge ironmaster, went up to Oxford, and was returned in 1880 as Liberal member for Huddersfield, then reelected in 1886 and 1892. He died of malignant smallpox at Allahabad. Gissing was asked to write a memoir of his former friend, but for unknown reasons the project failed to materialize.

5. Letter of 12 October 1873 (Yale).
6. Letter to Arthur Bowes of 23 October 1873 (Yale).
7. Gissing did write a poem entitled “The Last Sigh of the Moor,” the manuscript of which, dated March 1874, is at Yale, but he is not known to have entered into competition for the Poem Prize in 1875.

8. See for instance the *Wakefield and West Riding Herald* for 30 October 1875.
9. See in particular *The Times*, 5 March 1913, p. 11, and the *Manchester Guardian*, 5 March 1913, p. 6.
10. P. 375-80.

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11. Letter in the present writer's collection.
12. Extract from the Manchester University Calendar for the academic year 1915-16, p. 588.
13. C. H. Herford retired from Manchester University in 1921 and died ten years later, aged seventy-eight.

"Famous Too Late"

Walt Mason

(This curious, ironical poem by a forgotten American wit of the interwar period was first published by Christopher Morley, a great admirer of Gissing's works, in particular of *By the Ionian Sea*, *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, and *The House of Cobwebs*, in his weekly contribution to the *Saturday Review of Literature*, on 28 March 1936, p. 13.)

Now when the gentle reader looks in any catalogue of books, he sees George Gissing mentioned there, at prices that will make him stare. George Gissing's works are in demand by all collectors in the land. To buy his "Workers in the Dawn" you'd have to put your shirt in pawn, and anything that bears his name is haloed by a glow of fame. But Gissing didn't live to nail his vast celebrity and kale. Throughout his long years as a scribe he labored with the Grub Street tribe; whatever ills the fates disgorge were heaped upon the luckless George. He lived on

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lentils for a time while grinding out his work sublime, and now and then he'd sadly bleat, "If I but had enough to eat!" His room was often cold and damp because he had no stove or lamp, and in the darkness he would freeze, and chew his lentils and his peas. As tutor he went forth each day to teach some kids at meagre pay, and tottered homeward in the eve, a chapter of his book to weave, still thinking as he plied his pen, "Had I the bosom of a hen!" His life was bleak and full of grief, which seldom knew an hour's relief, but when they placed him in his grave the populace began to rave about the merit of his work, and every weary bookstore clerk was selling Gissing all the day, and loading him upon a dray.

A Japanese View of *The House of Cobwebs*

A Note by Kazuo Mizokawa.

In 1983 a charming little book was published for the special benefit of book-lovers by Seikyūsha in Japan, *The Notes of an Unearther of Out-of-Print Pocket Books: In Search of Lost Masterpieces* (*Zeppan Bunko Hakkutsu Nôto: Ushinawareta Meisaku o Motomete*). It was the work of Jun'ichirō Iwao, a very young author, not more than thirty at the time of publication. Among the 80-odd titles selected for recommendation is to be found *The House of Cobwebs*, the author referring to Gissing in two other places.

After running through the list of the long-vanished pocket-book classics in his introduction Mr. Iwao makes an apt quotation from *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*

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(Autumn II), “Ah! the books that one will never read again ... Books gentle and quieting; books noble and inspiring; books that well merit to be pored over, not once but many a time. Yet never again shall I hold them in my hand; the years fly too quickly, and are too few...”

Then, in one of the mini-essays scattered in the book Gissing is again mentioned, “in a cultural climate in which only those titles that do more harm than good are turned into ‘bunko’-size pocket books, I find myself dreaming of some visionary ‘bunkos.’ It is a sweet dream that I have, like a dream dreamt in a summer siesta. In fact, isn’t it most desirable, I wonder for instance, that there should exist a reading situation in which at least Gissing’s novels are at any time within our easy reach?”

After echoing such a challenging question, it may be as well to quote in full what the young author has to say about *The House of Cobwebs*. It shows how the reading public in Japan have responded to the work since its first Japanese translation appeared in 1930.

THE HOUSE OF COBWEBS
by George Gissing

(Shinchō Bunko, 2 vols., first published in 1951, set price 200 yen, translated by Kinetarō Yoshida).

Imagine a young man of letters writing novels at the risk of his life, living in dire poverty, always threatened by starvation. The image is certainly out of fashion nowadays. Yet here is a man who, literally, made such a start in literature, a writer of rare sincerity who watched with a gaze of infinite warmth the characters he depicted – strugglers despairing of society and of the age, trying hard to work out their own salvation. I mean

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George Gissing (1857-1903), author of *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, a work suggestive of evening calm.

The House of Cobwebs is a collection of short stories presenting a group of individuals who likewise breathe hard under the pressure of the age, wandering about and making frantic efforts to find a way out. In this work are delineated and put up for show well-defined characters – an unlucky apothecary, a tailor whose son is good for nothing, a ruined book collector, a good-natured old maid with no relatives, a would-be author trying to make his way in the world, a shy, good-hearted clerk capable of nothing except helping others and so on and so forth, each with his or her dearly-bought life illumined by precious moments, as though the author said: “Take them in your hand and have a good look at them, please.” When you take each one of them in your hand and have a look at them, you find that they are poor, decent creatures estranged from success, wealth or fame chiefly because of their sincerity, and you see in them the value of human conscience, you sympathize with them and you even love them simply because they have nothing to do

with affluence, position or career. "Quite so," you will say, "My hopes, too, were defeated that way ... Such is life, generally." Muttering these words, you fully, calmly understand the plain truth that the essential thing in life is, after all, not material comfort but (trite though this may sound) a pure and simple heart. This is a "life guide" of the highest quality offered by a writer who suffered various forms of hardship, lived with astonishing sincerity through the latter end of the nineteenth century when the British Empire was at its height, felt for his fellow creatures struggling for a better life and perpetuated their memory in words. Like an album of water-colours lovable and heartwarming, painted in light hues.

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To this I should like to add that the same work by the same translator was published in two volumes by Iwanami Shoten, and that another translation, by Rikichi Sato, appeared in the Kadokawa Bunko in 1953. Works of subdued radiance like this are sure to run out of print and fall into oblivion. Such is the present age. The usual price of a secondhand copy is 400 yen or thereabouts. It is not infrequently met with.

The Iwanami edition mentioned above was first published in 1946, and I am glad to say that it was reprinted at the request of general readers in February of this year.

Additional Notes to *Demos*.

P. F. Kropholler
Paris

[The edition referred to is the Harvester edition of 1972, reprinted in 1982.]

- page 43, line 12
"most sweet voices." From Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, II.III.180.
- page 57, line 8
"her eyes 'dreamed against a distant goal.'" From D. G. Rossetti, *The House of Life*, Sonnet XLV, "Secret Parting," line 4.
- page 62, line 23
The reference to "King Cambyses' vein" also occurs on p. 149, l. 26. Cambyses, Persian king from 529 to 522 B.C., was the son of Cyrus the Great.
- page 69, line 35
"a character so compact of subtleties and refinements." Gissing uses "compact" here in

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the Shakespearean sense of "composed of," as in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V.I.8: "of imagination all compact."

- page 136, line 18
"nature had scanted him." "Scanted" is used here in the Shakespearean sense of "refrain

from giving,” or “to neglect” as in “I will your serious and great business scant” (*Othello*, I.III.269).

- page 145, line 4
“my latter end.” A biblical expression from *Job*, XII.42.
 - page 149, line 37
“that name was scarlet to him.” “Scarlet” here has the biblical sense of “heinous”, cf. *Isaiah*, I.18: “though your sins be as scarlet.”
 - page 152, line 29
The reference to a lamb “led to butchery” echoes *Isaiah*, LIII. 7 (“brought as a lamb to the slaughter”).
 - page 166, line 1
“In the church of the Insurgents there are many orders.” A biblical echo: “In my Father’s house are many mansions,” St. John, XIV.2.
 - page 188, line 13
“a land, flowing with milk and honey.” From *Exodus*, III.8.
 - page 190, last line
“the light of your countenance.” A biblical echo: Psalms, LXVII.1 (“shew us the light of his countenance,” *Book of Common Prayer* version).
 - page 221, line 11
“between the former and the latter night.” Perhaps a biblical allusion: *Hosea*, VI.3.
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- page 226, line 23
“the sinews of war.” From Bacon’s *Essays* (no. 29, Of the True Greatness of Kingdoms).
 - page 235, line 37
“his anticipation of the good time coming.” The expression occurs in a poem by Charles Mackay (1814-1889).
 - page 240, line 35
“hardened her heart.” A biblical expression from Psalms, XCV. 8 (“Harden not your heart”). Gissing uses it once again on p. 265, l. 32.
 - page 264, line 34
“the quality of mercy.” From Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, IV.I.182.
 - page 266, line 20
“To love, to honour, to obey.” “To love, cherish, and obey” in the *Book of Common Prayer* (Solemnization of Matrimony). Other references occur on p. 299, l. 33 and p. 312, l. 9. Gissing may also have been influenced by Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V.III.25 (honour, love, obedience), a passage which is referred to in *Ryecroft*, Autumn V.

- page 272, line 16
“unworthy to touch her garment.” A fairly frequent expression in the Bible, e.g. St. Matthew, IX.21 (“If I may but touch his garment, I shall be healed”).
- page 282, line 27
“an earthly paradise.” As the character of Westlake is said to be based on William Morris, can this be a hidden reference to the author of *The Earthly Paradise*? On p. 286, l. 32 Stella Westlake’s embrace is compared to “paradise.”

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- page 282, line 38
“consider it too deeply.” Cf. Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, II, II, 31: “Consider it not so deeply.”
- page 291, line 6
“days of storm and stress.” The usual English rendering of the German “Sturm und Drang.”
- page 292, line 29
“mopping and mowing.” An echo from Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, IV.I.47: “with mop and mow,” that is “grimace.” Also in *King Lear*, IV.I.62.
- page 306, line 24
“buffets.” Gissing here betrays his northern origin. According to the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* “buffet” is Scottish or northern dialect for “footstool.”
- page 341, line 38
“Behold the man.” See St. John, XIX.5.
- page 349, line 30
“in vain search of a resting place.” This phrase, like so many in *Demos*, has a biblical ring about it. Cf. Numbers, X.33 (“to search out a resting place”).
- page 353
The article in *The Tocsin* is full of biblical allusions mixed with contemporary Marxist jargon:
line 2: “to cry peace where there is no peace.” Jeremiah, VI.14 (“saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace”)
line 3: “We know this kind of thing of old.” Psalms, CXIX.152 (“I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever”).
line 6: “let us rejoice.” Psalms, XCV. 1 (in the *Book of Common Prayer* version: “let us heartily rejoice”).

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line 7: “their eyes will be opened.” Genesis, III.5 (“then your eyes shall be opened”).

- page 379, line 40
“They did not know what they were doing.” Cf. St. Luke, XXIII.34: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”

- page 385, last line and ff.
“A pillar of dark cloud leads it by day, and of terrible fire by night.” Cf. “the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night” (Exodus: XIII.22). The religious style is continued in “the promised land” and “woe is me for the desert first to be traversed.”
- page 393, line 28
“the path that leads to destruction.” Cf. St. Matthew, VII.13: “the way that leadeth to destruction.”
- page 416, line 42
“The year had come full circle.” Cf. Shakespeare, *King Lear*, V.III.176: “The wheel is come full circle.”
- page 435, line 37
“the efast way.” A Shakespearean expression. Cf. “that’s the efast way” in *Much Ado About Nothing*, IV.II.39.
- page 470, line 35
“those elect.” Another religious term, used e.g. in Isaiah, LXV.9.

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The Romance of Japanese Editions:
The “Selected Works of George Gissing”
in their bibliographical context

Pierre Coustillas

Has anyone in Japan ever tried to collect all editions and impressions of Gissing’s books published in that country since eight Spring sections of *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, translated by Shukotsu Togawa, appeared in the July 1909 number of *The Shumi*? This is doubtful, and I would advise any collector who might be tempted by such an idea to make sure that he can spare a whole room in his house or flat, for he would need shelf space for hundreds and hundreds of volumes, many of them slim, that is true, but so frequently reprinted that they definitely gain in numbers what they lose in bulk. Japanese publishers, unlike most of their Western colleagues, have a keen sense of bibliography and their modest contribution to the books they produce, tucked away in the region of the back cover, is a boon to bibliographers. When you look at the last page of a Japanese book, you find a wealth of neatly compiled factual information; there it is, in that place where you are usually told the publisher’s name, address and telephone number, that you see the figures which help you to determine whether you are in possession of the third or the twenty-third impression of a textbook offering the first or the fourth Season of the *Ryecroft Papers*. However, if you do not know when the present Emperor ascended the throne, you are likely to go astray among the figures which give you the year (of the Emperor’s reign), the day and the month of publication. If you have in hand, say, a copy of the fifty-fifth impression of Volume I of *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* in the Kaibunsha edition – a yellow paperback in a yellow dust-jacket with red lettering – and the twenty-eighth

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impression of Volume II, published almost simultaneously, in 1980 and 1979 respectively, you know what you are in for should you be determined to seek and purchase all the previous impressions of this title under this particular imprint. Shelf-space and time are essential assets, and Gissing, who was an authority on the subject, reminded his fellow-mortals in *The Unclassed* and in *Henry Ryecroft* (where he reconsiders many statements he made in his early works) that if time is money, the reverse is also true, even truer.

Only in Japan have any Gissing titles been so frequently reprinted, but then these titles have been few, mostly *Henry Ryecroft* and the short stories, with *The House of Cobwebs* in the forefront of these. The Kenkyusha edition of the former title, in which new impressions are, for once, indicated in the Western manner on the verso of the title page, is a good example of his posthumous fame in the Far East. The first edition appeared on 10 December 1921, with an introduction and notes by Dr. Sanki Ichikawa; it was one of the Kenkyusha English Classics, an attractively got up volume in red cloth with gilt titling, with a portrait of Gissing as a frontispiece which would seem to have come from Edward Clodd's *Memories*, published five years before. Gissing's text covers 195 pages and one third of the volume consists of an introduction, textual notes, partly linguistic, partly literary, in which a number of allusions to the Bible and to aspects of European culture are elucidated for the first time, and an index to the notes which helps you to find your way to Port-Royal or Wensleydale promptly. This edition was reprinted many times until 1954, when the publishers thought it advisable to revise the thirty-three-year-old edition and to reprint it in a new format, but even in its latest garb the Kenkyusha edition has retained many characteristics of its ancestor. The binding is still in red cloth gilt, the Elliott and Fry portrait of Gissing still faces the title page and the text which,

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rather curiously, never included Gissing's preface to Ryecroft's meditations, still covers 195 pages, but the notes and the index have been copiously enriched. This revised edition has proved as popular as the old one, at least it did until the mid-seventies. For over two decades scarcely a year passed without its being reprinted, and when a gap of one year is noticeable in the bibliographical record, you find that the book was reprinted twice within twelve months shortly before. Kenkyusha were so pleased with the sales that they issued part of the book in another format. I have a copy in blue cloth of "Summer" in Kenkyusha's Pocket English Series published on 5 January 1929; the introduction and notes are also by Sanki Ichikawa, and Gissing still looks in front of him, sitting on the same uncomfortable photographer's chair, with his fingers intertwined.

In those interwar days bilingual editions of *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* began to appear and they show that the first two Seasons were more popular than "Autumn" and "Winter." Interesting examples are the Spring and Summer editions brought out by Shunyodo in 1932 in the same format – red cloth with black titling. The translation and notes by K. Nemoto have been harmoniously displayed, the notes being distributed equally on even and odd pages, and a selection has been made – the word "selection" was obsessional when publishers were confronted with long Victorian books, and one of the reasons why Gissing's longer novels did not appeal to Japanese publishers of the period was precisely their length – and "Spring" is reduced to seventeen sections. But "Summer," with the *Literature* portrait of Gissing in 1901 sitting at Wells's desk, is given in full.

By that time – the early thirties – *Henry Ryecroft* was no longer the book with which Gissing's literary production tended to be equated by those editors and critics who found in it

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something Japanese that was largely missing from the rest of his work. Of all the short stories those in *The House of Cobwebs* quickly became the most widely read, and the volume was made available by Kobundo in July 1926 if not earlier in a fat volume of 601 pages, attractively bound in blue cloth and sold in a slip-case. This was a very substantial bilingual edition which supplied Japanese learners of English with a wealth of material. Kobundo also published the English text alone in 1927, with notes by I. Maki and K. Terai, whereas a 1928 edition of 295 pages offering only the first seven short stories with a translation and notes, by Kunio Terai only, made the title available in yet another form from the same publisher. The other short stories were not overlooked, but *Human Odds and Ends* does not seem ever to have been reprinted in its entirety, the reason being that the twenty sketches originally commissioned by C. K. Shorter are very short even by Japanese standards. The selections of Gissing stories published by competing publishers from the 1950's to the present day have been considerable in number, but even though one finds in them pieces borrowed from *Human Odds and Ends* and *A Victim of Circumstances*, the most popular stories in these selections are those which first appeared in England in 1906 with the introductory survey by Thomas Seccombe, who for years was, with Frank Swinnerton, the best known Gissing critic. There have been a variety of selections such as *Gissing's Best Short Stories*, first issued by Kaibunsha on 10 April 1954, which includes "Fate and the Apothecary," "The Pig and Whistle," "Humplebee" and "The House of Cobwebs" (it was in its seventeenth impression by the late 1970's); *A Daughter of the Lodge*, which contains "Christopherson" besides the title story, under the Eihosha imprint as early as 1955; and *Topham's Chance and The Scrupulous Father*, first published by the Hokuseido Press on 5 May 1959. In these selections the favourite Gissing short stories are not difficult to determine. Yet you do not come across any two similar selections. Publishers with an eye on the academic

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market must have been watching one another's doings most attentively. Hokuseido does not copy Nan'un-do, Nan'un-do does not imitate Aoyama, and Aoyama does not repeat Kobunsha. Nonetheless, "A Daughter of the Lodge," "Christopherson," "A Poor Gentleman" and "The Scrupulous Father" were obviously among the favourites. Dozens of such selections have been published and the number of impressions many of them have gone through is such that, even if each printing is admittedly small, English publishers might well rub their eyes, if they came to know. I see I have the twenty-first impression of *A Victim of Circumstances and Other Stories* in the Kenkyusha Pocket English Series edition (1982); also the twenty-first impression of *The House of Cobwebs and Other Stories* in the Kaibunsha edition (1965). I gather from several sources that *Gissing's Best Short Stories* in the Kaibunsha edition went through eleven impressions between 10 April 1954 and 1 March 1965. During that period the book was reprinted every year.

Confirmation that Japanese publishers steered clear of long texts by Gissing for years is given by the scarce Hokuseido edition of *Sleeping Fires*. Masanobu Oda, who was to publish a good little critical study of Gissing in 1933, was the editor. One suspects that his choice was dictated as much by the shortness of that novel of English and Greek life as by its subject. The first Hokuseido edition appeared in 1930, and Oda followed English publications so closely that he was able to quote from *Selections Autobiographical and Imaginative*, which Cape had brought out scarcely twelve months before. Even *Sleeping Fires* enjoyed some success; I have found, besides a copy of the first edition in dust-jacket, one of the fourth impression, printed on poorer paper, more cheaply bound, and dated 1943. Gissing's other very short novel, *The Paying Guest*, did not escape the notice of Japanese publishers either. Shigeru Koike, in his

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remarkable article on “Gissing in Japan,” published a quarter of a century ago (*Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, November 1963) tells us that this satire of suburban middle-class life first appeared, again with an introduction by Masanobu Oda, complemented by notes from the pen of Tsutomu Ueda, under the imprint of Shokyu-shobo in 1936. The book is still in print, available from Kinseido without the introduction, but with the notes. It was in its seventh impression by 1 April 1961, and has become a good seller under the new imprint. A copy of a reprint dated 1 April 1977 indicates that the publishers no longer trouble to give the number of the impression. Still, *The Paying Guest* is not likely to beat the record set by *Henry Ryecroft* – but in what edition? The Nichiesha edition of “Spring,” which had reached the forty-fourth impression in 1982? *By the Ionian Sea*, another short book, but a travel narrative, has been less popular with publishers and students. Nor has any edition in paperback form ever included the whole text. The Sekkei-syobo edition of 1958 in white stiff wrappers gives you only ten chapters of the original, and the Shohakusha edition, apparently first published in 1970, is even less ambitious, with its 71 pages as against 132 for the abridged version under the Sekkei-syobo imprint. Still by April 1977 it was already in its sixth impression.

All these books reprint Gissing’s texts in English with notes, sometimes with a translation, invariably to be found on the right-hand page. They must have been read by hundreds of thousands of students, if not more, doubtless also by former students who were tempted to read further extracts from the work of an English author who had strongly appealed to them. One characteristic they have which strikes the Western booklover at once – they are in many respects not unlike books published in Europe or America. The bindings of the cloth editions are not

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infrequently imitations of some Western style in favour in the recent past. The paperback textbooks themselves have a familiar look. Not so most of the translations for the general reader who cannot read English or for a while wishes to forget he can do so. In the article previously referred to Shigeru Koike lists translations of very few Gissing titles – only three, *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, *The House of Cobwebs* and *By the Ionian Sea*. Had his article appeared a few years later he would of course have added *New Grub Street*, translated by Osamu Doi (Kitazawa Publishing Company, 1969). But this short list looks a little too modest. True, there was at the time only one translation of *By the Ionian Sea* by Tadashi Sasaki (Tokyo, Shingetsu-sha, 1947), a remarkable edition with copious scholarly notes which any Western commentator might profitably consult. But there have been at least two translations of *The House of Cobwebs* – Mr. Kazuo Mizokawa’s article in the present number confirms this –, one by Kinetaro Yoshida, the other by Rikichi Sato. As for *Henry Ryecroft* there have been at least four Japanese versions of it since the incomplete one by Shukotsu Togawa in 1909: one by Shian Shibata published serially in *Nihon-oyobi-Nihonjin* (Japan and Japanese) in 1912, another by Shigeru Fujino in 1924, yet another by Masao Hirai in the “Iwanami Library” (Iwanami Shoten, 1960) and definitely one more by Shintaro Nakanishi, published in the Shincho Library, in beige wrappers, which by 1968 was in its twentieth impression.

The fact nevertheless remains that up to the present year remarkably few of Gissing’s twenty-eight titles from *Workers in the Dawn* to *The House of Cobwebs* had been translated into Japanese, although the number of editions of his works published in a variety of forms by Tokyo publishers was, by English or American standards, truly considerable. As regards the longer novels, Mr. Doi was and remains a pioneer. Even in their English version, with the

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unconvincing exceptions of *Sleeping Fires* and *The Paying Guest*, they had been neglected. The 1961 Apollon-sha edition of selected chapters of *A Life’s Morning*, a yellow paperback of 106

pages, with notes by N. Jimbo, does not seem to have been a commercial success. But the tide has now turned. With the Shûbun International edition of the "Selected Works of George Gissing," translated under the supervision of Professor Koike, a giant's stride forward has been made. *Born in Exile*, *The Odd Women* and *Sleeping Fires* had never been available in Japanese, nor had the critical study of Charles Dickens, of which no other translation in any language is on record. Professor Doi's 1988 translation of *New Grub Street* is a thoroughly revised version of the 1969 text, and that of *By the Ionian Sea*, a better rendering than the out-of-print 1947 translation. This *édition de luxe*, with the five volumes in their slipcases, is an unprecedented achievement in the history of Gissing's works in Japan; the paperbound edition, should the library edition reach only its titular destination, will doubtless convert a number of new individual readers to what might be called the Gissing cult, if such a word adequately conveys the sense of personal attachment to his personality and writings which these so often produce.

New developments may already be noted. Only a few days after the publication of the Shûbun set, came the news that on 10 June another Tokyo publisher, New Current International, had just published a translation of *The Odd Women* by Professors Saburo and Harumi Kuramochi, who have now turned to *The Nether World*, a new venture in all senses of the term, since Gissing's working-class novels have never received any attention in Japan. This translation, which, I am told, is still far from completed, is a further event to look forward to, as is the forthcoming publication of Mrs. Ota's translation of *The Whirlpool*.

Much remains to be done, but so much has already been achieved that the curiosity and

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interest of the Japanese reading public are likely to prompt publishers to commission further translations. *Demos* and *Thyrza* among the working-class novels, *In the Year of Jubilee* and *Will Warburton* among the middle-class ones, are perhaps worthy of consideration. A scholarly edition of *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* which would take into account all the discoveries and critical interpretations of recent decades – from Gissing's many sources of inspiration to the deepest ambiguities of a many-sided text – might also appeal to a publisher with an eye to both the future and the past.

Notes and News

Adeline Tintner, a Jamesian scholar who contributed to this journal on various occasions and published several other articles on Gissing in other scholarly journals, has a new book on James in the press, *The Pop World of Henry James* (UMI Research Press) which carries a section on James and Gissing. This volume comes after *The Museum World of Henry James* previously commented upon, and *The Library of Henry James*, which has not yet been seen. It is to be hoped that Adeline Tintner has been able to determine which of Gissing's novels James actually read and had on his shelves. Reconstructing a writer's library after its volumes have been offered for sale at auction or in booksellers' catalogues is a daunting task which can only be partially successful. One can be sure that James read *In the Year of Jubilee* and *The Whirlpool*. It is generally assumed that he was also familiar with *Demos*, the influence of which

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upon *The Princess Casamassima* has been discussed. James's copy of *New Grub Street* is at Lamb House, Rye, and that of *In the Year of Jubilee* is at Senate House, London. If he read *Isabel Clarendon*, it must have been in a library copy, unless he was lucky enough to find a

secondhand copy of this notably scarce title. A copy of *The Library of Henry James* is now awaited with curiosity.

The Planning Department of the Wakefield District has issued a poster entitled "Wakefield 100," with views of Wakefield as it was in 1888 when *A Life's Morning* was running serially in the *Cornhill Magazine*. "Many of the landmarks of 1888," the compilers of this attractively produced poster observe, "are present to-day, some have changed and some have been lost. These drawings and photographs give an idea of what Wakefield was like in the latter part of the 19th century." Among other features of interest are two views of Westgate, the familiar one with T. W. Gissing's shop on the left-hand side (and a portrait of Gissing over it), and another, far lesser-known, showing the side of Westgate which the Gissings could see when they looked out of their upper-floor windows. This second view gives some idea of the concentration of Victorian commercial architecture in Westgate; the Old Corn Exchange built in 1820, the Wakefield and Barnley Bank of 1877-78 and the Great Bull Family and Commercial Hotel stand side by side. The New Town Hall on another photograph was opened in 1880, but the corporation had bought the site in T. W. Gissing's time. The brick and stone dressed building of the banking firm of Leatham Tew and Co. reminds us of Gissing's tendency to choose Wakefield (or Manchester) names for his characters. The other views show the Cathedral – it will be remembered that its first bishop Walsham How was the man who claimed to have burnt his copy of *Jude the Obscure* –, the Bull Ring, the Theatre Royal, the Old Post-Office, the Town Hall between the Museum and Court House, Cross Square and Tammy Hall.

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Two new Japanese editions of Gissing's works have appeared in February and June in Tokyo, the old translation of *The House of Cobwebs* by Kinetaro Yoshida under the imprint of Iwanami Shoten and a new translation of *The Odd Women* by Prof. Saburo Kuramochi and Prof. Harumi Kuramochi (New Current International, Co. Ltd: 2-22-12 Kôraku, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 112; Telephone (03) 816-5266). Further details about the two books will be given in our next number.

Recent Publications

Volumes

Pierre Coustillas and Patrick Bridgwater, *George Gissing at Work: A Study of his Notebook* "Extracts from my Reading," Greensboro, North Carolina: ELT Press, 1988, pp. viii + 188. Brown cloth with gilt titling, green and white dust jacket. \$25.00. This is no. 2 in the 1880-1920 British Authors Series, no. 1 being *The Poems of John Gray*, ed. Ian Fletcher. The books are distributed in England and Europe by Colin Smythe Ltd., Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire SL9 8XA.

George Gissing, *New Grub Street*, translated by Osamu Doi; *Born in Exile*, translated by Kazuo Mizokawa; *The Odd Women*, translated by Ryokô Ota; *Sleeping Fires* and *By the Ionian Sea*, translated by Osamu Doi and Shigeru Koike respectively; and *Charles Dickens: A Critical Study*, translated by Shigeru Koike and Ryôta Kanayama. All the volumes of these "Selected Works of George Gissing" contain the introduction of the general editor, Professor Shigeru Koike, textual notes and a translator's postscript. The publisher is

Shûbun International Ltd, 4-12-7, Komagone, Toshima-ku, Tokyo 170. The volumes in the Library edition are bound in blue cloth with gilt titling and each volume is in a beige slip case; they are all available in paperback individually. For further details and prices, see our last number.

Articles, reviews, etc.

Wolfgang Guthardt, *Die Konzeption des Massenverhaltens im englischen Roman des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Bern and Frankfurt am Main, Verlag Peter Lang, 1981. Besides passing mentions of *Workers in the Dawn* and *The Nether World*, this book contains a thorough discussion of *Demos* which extends over several chapters of Parts II and III.

Raymond Chapman, *The Sense of the Past in Victorian Literature*, London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1986. The subject of this book is the way in which writers of the Victorian period explored one or other historical period and used it as a standard by which to judge the nineteenth century, or as a lost ideal to be restored. The last chapter, entitled "The Great Dust Heap of History" contains various passages on Gissing, notably on *Born in Exile*, which Raymond Chapman seems to have read carelessly. He is unclear about the opinions of Gissing and of his characters Godwin Peak and Bruno Chilvers.

Alex Zwerdling, *Virginia Woolf and the Real World*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1986, Gissing appears on pp. 172 and 176-77, where *The*

Odd Women is briefly discussed in connection with a type of character to be found in Virginia Woolf's works.

Francesco Badolato, "George Gissing and Calabria," *Anglo-Italian News* (Reggio Calabria), June 1987, pp. 5-7.

Lori Hope Lefkowitz, *The Character of Beauty in the Victorian Novel*, Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1987. Contains a short chapter on *The Odd Women*, "The Certain Beauty of Health," pp. 186-93.

Richard Benvenuto, "Book Reviews," *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 2, Winter 1988, pp. 260-61. Review of *Social Mobility in the English Bildungsroman* and *The Paradox of George Gissing*.

Francesco Badolato, "George Gissing: An English Italophile," *Anglo-Italian News* (Reggio Calabria), April 1988, pp. 17-18.

Francesco Badolato, "La moralità in Manzoni, Pater e Gissing," *Il Corriere di Roma*, Anno XXXIX, n. 539, 15 May 1988, pp. 3 and 10. An article which explores some unnoticed literary affinities.

Laurel Brake *et al* (ed.), *The Year's Work in English Studies*, Vol. 66: 1985, London: John Murray, 1988. Some publications of Gissing interest in 1985 are briefly discussed on

pp. 12, 396, 412-13 and 595.

Helga Quadflieg, *Der Short Story der Nineties*, Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York and Paris: Verlag Peter Lang, 1988. Contains brief discussions of "A Foolish Virgin," "Transplanted," "The Poet's Portmanteau" and "Raw Material."