

## Books Briefly Noted

AMORY, HUGH, and DAVID D. HALL, eds. *A History of the Book in America. Volume One: The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. Pp. xxiv + 638. \$125.

While this volume rarely reaches into the nineteenth century, it is a harbinger of good things to come (volume two will examine "Print, Culture, and Society in the Early Republic"; three, "The Book in an Industrial Age, 1840–1880"). A project emerging from the American Antiquarian Society's Program in the History of the Book in American Culture, the projected five-volume series is a fulfillment of an idea of literary history that not so long ago was thought peripheral, but now is essential to our understanding of "literary" culture. Those of us old enough to remember the dreams and frustrations of the late William Charvat will appreciate in personal ways this fine achievement.

BIERCE, AMBROSE. *The Unabridged Devil's Dictionary*. Edited by David E. Schultz and S. T. Joshi. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000. Pp. xxii + 404. \$34.95.

If, as we believe, the nineteenth century invented adolescence, then Ambrose Bierce is indeed its patron saint. And this admirable edition is its bible, apocryphal and all.

BLACK, BARBARA J. *On Exhibit: Victorians and Their Museums*. Victorian Literature and Culture Series. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000. Pp. x + 242. \$37.50.

In this imaginative, wide-ranging, and well-informed study, Black's "primary focus" is on "the Victorian age as marking the great efflorescence of the phenomenon" that she calls "museum culture." Beginning with 1851 ("London's year of exhibitions"), Black proceeds to a highly original analysis of how Edward FitzGerald's *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* "draws our attention to a central cultural enterprise in the nineteenth century, the erecting of grand civic collections or museums." Black then turns her attention to the "house-museums" that we find in Victorian fictions like *Our Mutual Friend*. She also shows how and why the museum provides a crucial location in novels such as *Villette* and *Middlemarch*. Further chapters turn to the poetry of museums (Dante Gabriel Rossetti's "The Burden of Nineveh" and Hardy's "In the British Museum"), "Museums in Imperialist Boy Fiction," and "The Museum in Decline" (such as we find in Morris's *News from Nowhere*).

BOUMELHA, PENNY, ed. *Thomas Hardy: Jude the Obscure*. New Casebooks Series. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Pp. x + 240. \$49.95.

This useful collection brings together significant essays by ten distinguished critics, including Richard Dellamora, Maria DiBattista, John Goode, and Ramón Saldívar.

BRONTË, CHARLOTTE. *The Letters of Charlotte Brontë, with a Selection of Letters by Family and Friends: Volume Two, 1848–1851*. Edited by Margaret Smith. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000. Pp. lviii + 782. \$110.

To Ellen Nussey, 30 March 1850: "I also send you for perusal an opinion of 'Jane Eyre' written by a Working Man in this village; rather I should say a record of the feelings the book excited in the poor fellow's mind; it was not written for my inspection nor does the writer know that his little document has by intricate ways—come into my possession—and I have forced those who gave it, to promise that they will never inform him of the circumstance. He is a modest, thoughtful, feeling, reading being—his delicate health renders him incapable of hard or close labour, he and his family are often under the pressure of want."

BROWN, WILLIAM WELLS. *Clotel; or, The President's Daughter: A Narrative of Slave Life in the United States*. Edited by Robert S. Levine. Bedford Cultural Editions Series. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000. Pp. xvi + 527. \$39.95.

The historical documents in this edition of Brown's 1853 novel, which is based on the story of Jefferson's purported sexual relations with his slave Sally Hemings, include excerpts from Brown's sources for the novel (fiction, political essays, sermons, and presidential proclamations); selections that illuminate the range of contemporary attitudes concerning race, slavery, and prejudice; and pieces that advocate various methods of resistance and reform.

DICKENS, CHARLES. *The Letters of Charles Dickens, Volume Eleven: 1865–1867*. Edited by Graham Storey, et al. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999. Pp. xx + 578. \$120.

Dickens to W. H. Wills, 21 November 1867, Parker House, Boston: "A winter passage out here is, under the best circumstances (not to put too fine a point upon it) odious. But I had, in the Cuba, a fine run—was not sick for a moment—was hugely popular on board—made no end of speeches after the last dinner of the voyage—sang no end of duets with the captain (never known to come out before) and came over the side into the arms of Dolby (in a steam tug) illuminated with a blaze of triumph."

DRYDEN, LINDA. *Joseph Conrad and the Imperial Romance*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Pp. xii + 228. \$65.

After two introductory chapters ("Making the Imperial Hero" and "The Possibilities of Romance"), Dryden proceeds to detailed studies of *Almayer's Folly*, *An Outcast of the Islands*, "Karain," and *Lord Jim*.

FEDERICO, ANNETTE R. *Idol of Suburbia: Marie Corelli and Late-Victorian Literary Culture*. Victorian Literature and Culture Series. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000. Pp. xii + 201. \$30.

Although addressing “the question *why* Corelli’s novels were so popular” in late-Victorian culture, Federico’s discussion explores more specific inquiries—such as the reasons why heterosexuality seems “pathological in so many of [Corelli’s] novels.” Tracing Corelli’s immensely successful career, her links with aestheticism, and her “Weltanschauung,” Federico concludes her study by inquiring into the 1920s scandal about Corelli’s true identity, including the writer’s emotional attachment to Bertha Vyvey.

FRANKEL, NICHOLAS. *Oscar Wilde’s Decorated Books*. Editorial Theory and Literary Criticism Series. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000. Pp. xiv + 222. \$47.50.

“My discussion of Wilde’s writings,” Frankel declares in this highly original monograph, “is . . . premised on an initial refusal of his own mythic representations of his works: paradoxically, I read them as decorative artifacts, only to read them against the grain of their own claims for themselves as art.” Undertaking what he later terms an analysis of the “book as cultural performance,” Frankel opens by looking at how Wilde performed a particular kind of Englishness in the early-1880s editions of *Poems*. Subsequent chapters include studies of the depthless “dancing” of *Salome*, the kind of non-Arnoldian reading strategy demanded by *Intentions*, and Ricketts’s book decorations for *Poems* (1892). This groundbreaking book certainly encourages scholars to think carefully about the dangers of taking Wilde too much “in earnest.”

FRAZIER, ADRIAN. *George Moore, 1852–1933*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000. Pp. xx + 604. \$35.

“My main aim,” Frazier states in his introduction, “was to write a well-documented, chronological narrative that would be an interesting story and a basis for further engagement with Moore and his works.” In what stands as the most substantial study of Moore to date, Frazier adds modestly: “this is only one book on Moore, and not the last.” Particularly rewarding are the chapters that reveal Moore’s crucial position in late-Victorian and pre-Modernist literary contexts, especially his position in the cultural life of Dublin and his relations with other distinguished writers such as Conrad, Hardy, and James.

GARRETT, MARTIN. *A Browning Chronology: Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning*. Author Chronologies Series. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000. Pp. xiv + 235. \$55.

“6 March 1806: (Thurs) Elizabeth Barrett Moulton-Barrett is born, the eldest child of Edward Moulton-Barrett (1785–1857) and Mary Graham-Clarke (1781–1828), at Coxhoe Hall, County Durham. Both come from families with extensive plantations in Jamaica.” “31 December 1889: Robert Browning is buried, near Chaucer and Spenser, in Westminster Abbey. The pall-bearers include Jowett, Leighton, Hallam Tennyson, and George Smith.”

JAMES, HENRY. *Dear Munificent Friends: Henry James’s Letters to Four Women*. Edited by Susan E. Gunter. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999. Pp. xxiv + 288. \$39.50.

This edition of 150 previously unpublished letters to four of James's female contemporaries—Alice Howe Gibbens James (wife of his brother, William); Mary Cadwalader Jones (New York socialite married to Edith Wharton's brother); Mary Frances Prothero, wife of a Cambridge University academic; and Lady Louisa Wolseley, wife of a British military leader—provides rewarding insights into the social worlds that James inhabited between the late 1870s and the time of his death in 1916.

JENKINS, ALICE, and JULIET JOHN, eds. *Rereading Victorian Fiction*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Pp. xvi + 218. \$55.

In his foreword to this volume John Sutherland observes that the "Re-" prefix has been much used in contemporary critical discourse"; "If one wanted to be cross-grained," he adds, "the point might be made that more 'reading' of Victorian fiction is desirable. Forget rereading." The chapters—written mostly by scholars based in Britain—feature studies of quite familiar narratives: Daniel Karlin on *Middlemarch*, Gary Day on *Dracula*, Michael Irwin on the *Alice* stories, and Angus Easson on *The Pickwick Papers*. In addition, there are several inquiries into lesser-known works, such as Reynolds's *The Mysteries of London* (by Trefor Thomas) and Olive Schreiner's *Dreams* (by Scott McCracken).

JOHN, JULIET, and ALICE JENKINS, eds. *Rethinking Victorian Culture*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Pp. xvi + 244. \$55.

Based on the proceedings of a conference held at the University of Liverpool in 1996, this distinguished collection brings together new research by well-known Victorianists based in Britain, including Stefan Collini, Kate Flint, Regina Gagnier, John Lucas, and Stephen Prickett.

LEWIS, PERICLES. *Modernism, Nationalism, and the Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. Pp. x + 241. \$59.95.

While much of this study falls outside the field of nineteenth-century literature, Lewis provides a richly detailed chapter on "Conrad and the Discourse of National Character." He identifies how in *Heart of Darkness* Conrad attempted "to come to terms with the potential conflict of liberalism and nationalism," and he explains why the concept of "national character" faced a crisis in the 1890s, mainly because of the impact of eugenics.

LITVACK, LEON. *Charles Dickens's "Dombey and Son": An Annotated Bibliography*. The Dickens Bibliographies Series. New York: AMS Press, 1999. Pp. xxxvi + 399. \$94.50.

This helpful bibliography provides the excellent service of making research into Dickens's novel more efficient. Practically all of the 916 entries contain illuminating commentary. Particularly useful are Litvack's accounts of reviews by Dickens's contemporaries, several of which are cross-referenced.

LITVACK, LEON, and GLENN HOOPER, eds. *Ireland in the Nineteenth Century: Regional Identity*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000. Pp. 247. \$55.

In their concise introduction the editors remark that the “complexity of Irish regional identity reflects the complexity of Irish regions,” and the thirteen essays that follow cover a broad sweep of topics. Litvack, in the longest contribution to this collection, provides a nicely illustrated discussion of the “Irish Court” at the Great Exhibition of 1851, as well as the representation of Ireland in the exhibitions held at Cork and Dublin in 1852 and 1853, respectively. Much more briefly, Elizabeth Tilley explores Irish cultural politics in the *Dublin University Magazine*, and Brian Caraher analyzes Irish regionalism through the work of Edgeworth, Wilde, and Joyce. Given its range of reference, the volume opens up several new paths of inquiry in Irish literary and cultural studies.

MCCORMACK, KATHLEEN. *George Eliot and Intoxication: Dangerous Drugs for the Condition of England*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Pp. xii + 234. \$59.95.

“Despite George Eliot’s reputation for earnestness, responsibility, and even ponderousness,” writes McCormack, “a remarkable number of her characters stagger through the novels with their perceptions blurred and reason distorted by unwise consumption of brandy, wine, beer, ale, patent medicines, and opium.” Chapters scrutinize such topics as “The Beer Act in Nuneaton,” “George Eliot’s Conversions of Public Houses and Their Yards into Florentine Settings,” and a phenomenon imaginatively termed “Typhoid Gwendolen.”

MENSH, ELAINE, and HARRY MENSCH. *Black, White, and “Huckleberry Finn”: Re-imagining the American Dream*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2000. Pp. xiv + 167. \$29.95.

If one does not know what all the fuss is about, then this book—an intelligent and informed summary of the long debate—will serve a useful purpose. But it does not advance our understanding of the problems in any significant ways; in other words, it does not ask new questions or open new vistas.

MERRILL, STUART. *The White Tomb: Selected Writings*. Edited by Edward Foster. Jersey City, N.J.: Talisman House, 1999. Pp. x + 182. \$16.95 paper.

This careful selection (with translations of the French texts) reminds us of the importance of Merrill (1863–1915) to the transformation of American culture by the Modern Movement, as well as of that culture’s short memory.

MESERVE, WALTER J., and MOLLIE ANN MESERVE, eds. *Fateful Lightning: America’s Civil War Plays*. New York: Feedback Theatrebooks, and Brooklin, Me.: Prospero Press, 2000. Pp. xxii + 550. \$24.95 paper.

Reliable texts with cogent commentaries of eleven nineteenth-century plays that defined in significant ways contemporary understanding of the national conflict that led to the Civil War. The plays included are George L. Aiken's adaptation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852); J. T. Trowbridge's adaptation of his own novel, *Neighbor Jackson* (1857); William Wells Brown's *The Escape* (1858); Mrs. J. C. Swayze's melodrama *Ossawatimie Brown* (1859); Benjamin E. Woolf's farce *Off to the War!* (1861); *The Guerillas* (1863) by the Confederate, James D. McCabe, Jr.; Dion Boucicault's attempt at reconciliation, *Belle Lamar* (1874); Edward Harrigan's short skit *The Blue and the Grey* (1875); Bronson Howard's immensely popular *Shenandoah* (1888); William Gillette's *Secret Service* (1895); and David Belasco's *The Heart of Maryland* (1895).

MORGENTALER, GOLDIE. *Dickens and Heredity: When Like Begets Like*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Pp. xvi + 221. \$59.95.

Opening with a historical overview of "scientific" and "cultural" accounts of heredity that may have influenced Dickens, Morgentaler proceeds to analyses of such figures as Oliver Twist, the "first avatar of childish goodness" in the author's oeuvre. Later chapters turn to the "inheritance of goodness" in David Copperfield and Pip, the "negative aspects" of heredity (villainy and illegitimacy) in characters like Bradley Headstone, and "heredity, class, and race" in the complicated pattern of descent evident in *A Tale of Two Cities*. The concluding chapter explores Dickens's last three novels in light of Darwinian thought.

MYERSON, JOEL, ed. *A Historical Guide to Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Historical Guides to American Authors Series. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. Pp. x + 322. \$35.

Interdisciplinary in their approach, volumes in this series attempt to place their subjects "in the context of the vibrant relationships between literature and society." The aim is admirably achieved in this particular instance, with Ronald A. Bosco providing a fifty-page biographical sketch of Emerson (along with a detailed survey of the bio-bibliographical landscape, including pointers to the important "white-spaces" still on the map of our understanding); followed by Wesley T. Mott viewing Emerson in terms of the philosophical milieu ("Emerson and Individualism"); William Rossi, the scientific culture; David M. Robinson, religion; Gary Collison, antislavery; and Armida Gilbert, the women's rights movement.

NISSEN, AXEL. *Bret Harte: Prince and Pauper*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2000. Pp. xxiv + 326. \$28.

Long overdue, this new biography of Bret Harte fully justifies our wait: it is well conceived, well researched, and well written. In spite of the title, it is a life not defined merely by the blaze of Mark Twain, but rather by the social and literary arguments of the nineteenth century in the United States and Europe.

RANTA, JUDITH A. *Women and Children of the Mills: An Annotated Guide to Nineteenth-Century American Textile Factory Literature*. Bibliographies and Indexes in American Literature Series, no. 28. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999. Pp. xvi + 330. \$69.50.

The 457 texts annotated in this volume (a significant number of which were written by mill workers themselves) provide invaluable and consequential insights into the emerging industrial and social orders that still make the nineteenth century worthy of our serious attention.

RIEWALD, J. G. *Max Beerbohm's Mischievous Wit: A Literary Entertainment*. Assen, the Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 2000. NLG 50 paper.

"In this innovating book," Riewald observes, "I have set my own limits. . . . Instead of a central thesis, I have chosen to present Max Beerbohm as the impishly witty commentator on man, matters, himself, and English literature—of which he was an original, if idiosyncratic, critic." Featuring a generous number of illustrations, this study offers snapshots of Beerbohm's incisive comments on "Bardology," "Aesthetes and Decadents," "Ibsen and the New English Drama," and "Bloomsbury," among many other topics.

SHEA, VICTOR, and WILLIAM WHITLA, eds. *"Essays and Reviews": The 1860 Text and Its Reading*. Victorian Literature and Culture Series. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000. Pp. xxiv + 1057. \$90.

This phenomenal edition of the controversial *Essays and Reviews* opens with a comprehensive five-part introductory essay that examines such topics as the origin and publication of the first 1860 volume, the lively critical reaction it provoked, and the intellectual position of each of the essayists. The edition then provides carefully annotated reprints of the original essays. A further section—amounting to almost 250 pages—includes plentiful information about the "Charges, Manifestos, Declarations, and Testimonials" generated by *Essays and Reviews* during the 1860s, together with the trials and appeals that followed publication of the volume. In addition, the editors include Lewis Carroll's satires on the scandal associated with the volume, particularly the political tensions relating to Benjamin Jowett's position as Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford.

SHELLEY, MARY. *Frankenstein: Complete, Authoritative Text with Biographical, Historical, and Cultural Contexts; Critical History; and Essays from Contemporary Critical Perspectives*. Second Edition. Edited by Johanna M. Smith. Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism Series. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000. Pp. x + 470. \$39.95. Smith's edition, which opens with a somewhat brief historical and biographical introduction, takes the third edition of 1831 as copytext. Included among the contextual documents that appear after the text of *Frankenstein* are extracts from Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, Wollstonecraft's *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman*, and Rousseau's *Emile*. In addition to the detailed critical history of Shelley's novel, the edition concludes with modern critical essays that adopt different approaches: psychoanalytic (David Collings), feminist (Smith), gender (Frann Michel), Marxist (Warren Montag), and cultural (Boriana Zakharieva), as well as one by Fred Botting that combines some of these perspectives.

TENNYSON, ALFRED. *Alfred Tennyson*. Edited by Adam Roberts. The Oxford Authors Series. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. Pp. xxvi + 626. \$19.95 paper.

This volume, while not comparable to Christopher Ricks's selected edition of Tennyson's poetry, will be of use to students who need a reliable source for understanding such works as *The Princess*, *In Memoriam*, and *Maud*—each of which appears here in its entirety. Roberts devotes over one hundred pages to poems taken from *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* (1830), *Poems* (1832), and *Poems* (1842). Less well represented is *Idylls of the King*. The edition features over forty of Tennyson's letters and journal entries, together with extracts from Hallam Tennyson's *Memoir*. The notes are reasonably comprehensive.

WEBSTER, AUGUSTA. *Augusta Webster: Portraits and Other Poems*. Edited by Christine Sutphin. Broadview Literary Texts Series. Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2000. Pp. 423. \$12.95 paper.

Ever since Angela Leighton in 1992 drew developed critical attention to Webster's powerful poetry, scholars have been awaiting a detailed critical edition of this gifted poet's work. Christine Sutphin has made generous selections from Webster's major collections, notably *Dramatic Studies* (1866), *A Woman Sold and Other Poems* (1867), and *Portraits* (1870). The appendixes contain extracts from some of Webster's better-known essays on such topics as university degrees for women. In addition, Sutphin provides a sampling of the often highly favorable reviews that Webster received in the Victorian periodical press.

WILNER, JOSHUA. *Feeding on Infinity: Readings in the Romantic Rhetoric of Internalization*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. Pp. xvi + 154. \$34.95.

"The essays gathered here concern the problem of internalization as it finds expression in the European Romantic literary tradition." Chapters look at such topics as "Romanticism and the Internalization of Scripture," "Retrospection, Traumatic Internalization, and Perceptual Aberration in *Prelude 1*," and "Structure and Gender in Romantic Lyric."

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