

referred in the editorial section to the fiction that Elia was dead, and in another article T G Wainewright carried the hoax further. There was as usual plenty of good reading matter in the journal, for Hazlitt contributed one of his 'Sketches of the Picture Galleries of England', H F Cary wrote on 'The Early French Poets', and other contributors included B W Procter, C A Elton, Allan Cunningham, De Quincey, Richard Ayton and Thomas Hood, while Wainewright's 'Janus Weatherbound, or the Weathercock Steadfast for Lack of Oil' was one of his most sprightly contributions.

This month the magazine's publishers, Taylor & Hessey, whose office was at 93 Fleet Street, opened a second office at 13 Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, mainly for the sale of *The London Magazine*. The first issue of the *Elia* volume had only the Fleet Street address on the title page, but the second issue bore both addresses.

Crabb Robinson, one of Lamb's most frequent visitors during 1823, called on him on January 8 and found him serious and kind. They discussed John Payne Collier's *A Poet's Pilgrimage*, which Lamb said was like 'a collection of the duller parts of Spenser, and not quite so good'; he praised Byron's 'Vision of Judgment' in No.1 of *The Liberal* and deplored its persecution, but perhaps his best recorded remark on this occasion concerns Coleridge who, he said, 'ought not to have a wife or children; he should have a sort of diocesan care of the world, no parish duty'.

The day following Crabb Robinson's visit, Lamb wrote one of his most famous letters, that to Bernard Barton the Quaker poet, who proposed leaving his employment at Messrs Alexander's Bank in Woodbridge and trying to support himself by his literary efforts. Lamb was emphatic: 'Throw yourself rather, my dear Sir, from the steep Tarpeian rock, slap-dash headlong upon iron spikes...Keep to your Bank, and the Bank will keep you'. Fortunately Barton followed Lamb's advice: Byron had given him similar advice some years earlier.

Lamb was sometimes used by hopeful authors as an avenue through which to get their work published, and this month he was worried first by John Howard Payne, the American actor and dramatist, with several plays, one of which Mary took to Henry Robertson at Covent Garden but without success, and then by Miss Mitford's friend, the Rev. William Harness, who had persuaded Lamb to pass a manuscript to Taylor & Hessey only to have it rejected.

Of Lamb's theatrical friends, Charles Mathews was in America appearing at Boston in 'A Trip to Paris' at £50 a night, and Liston was appearing in Manchester. Following Christmas, Drury Lane and Covent Garden were mainly taken up with pantomimes.

Coleridge's elder son Hartley, after his Oxford failure and lack of success as a journalist in London, had returned to the Lake District and this month became assistant master at Mr Dawes's Academy at Ambleside. The 'she Coleridges' as Lamb called them had come to London just before Christmas and were on a prolonged visit, mainly to see STC. Dorothy Wordsworth was corresponding with Samuel Rogers the banker-poet about the possible publication of her Journal.

Other events not directly concerning Lamb, but no doubt matters of discussion among his friends, were the burial of Shelley's ashes in Rome on January 21, and the death a few days later in London of John Julius Angerstein at the age of 91. He had made a great name for himself as an underwriter at Lloyds, as a philanthropist, and as a collector of pictures. The collection at his house in Pall Mall was famous and Lamb had visited it in 1806 with

Thomas Manning, rhapsodising over pictures by Claude and Titian. After Angerstein's death 38 of the pictures were eventually and reluctantly bought by the Government for £57,000 to form the nucleus of the National Gallery. This was a major subject of discussion in art and literary circles in 1823 and the prime mover was Sir George Beaumont, the friend of Wordsworth and Coleridge, who also gave some pictures from his own collection. Among those bought were the six pictures comprising Hogarth's 'Marriage a la Mode' and his self-portrait, all well known to Lamb, who had written so well about the artist in Leigh Hunt's *Reflector* some years before.

During January Lamb was reading Evelyn's *Diary* and among periodicals, besides *The London Magazine*, he would most certainly have seen No. II of Leigh Hunt's *The Liberal* which was issued this month containing contributions by Byron, Shelley, Leigh Hunt and Hazlitt. Another publication likely to have interested him would be *The Retrospective Review* which contained an article on Izaak Walton. Apparently he did not then see *The Quarterly* in which Southey had mentioned the *Elia* volume, and came across it only during the summer.

February

February 1 saw *The London Magazine* again before the public, but with only two small items by Lamb: one on Milton and a suppressed passage in Comus, the other a mere paragraph. He is, however, mentioned in an amusing contribution 'The Literary Police Office, Bow Street' in which John Hamilton Reynolds good naturedly burlesques his friends as literary offenders before the law. 'Charles Lamb was brought up, charged with the barbarous murder of the late Mr Elia' and 'William Wordsworth, a pedlar by trade, that hawks shoe-laces and philosophy, was put to the bar, charged with stealing a poney, value 40s. from Mrs Foy, of Westmoreland', while 'Samuel Taylor Coleridge was brought up for idling about the suburbs of the town, without being able to give a satisfactory account of himself'. Other of Lamb's friends who contributed this month were Cunningham, Procter, Cary, Hartley Coleridge, Clare, and of course Hood. Barton had his sonnet 'To Elia', while Hazlitt continued his picture gallery essays.

This month, however, Hazlitt caused the publishers no little anxiety by his review of Scott's *Peveril of the Peak*. He had suffered at the hands of *Blackwood's Magazine* and Lockhart, one of its editors, was Sir Walter Scott's son-in-law. This was enough for Hazlitt to refer to Scott in unrestrained terms which somehow escaped the notice of the editor of *The London*. Procter and Wainwright after reading the review hurried round to Taylor to tell him they thought the passage libellous, and on re-reading it Taylor agreed. He took what action he could to suppress the remarks by tearing part of the page out of the unsold copies and replacing it with a new page without the offending passage, adding a new item to fill up the vacant space. About fifty copies of the magazine had already been distributed, but no legal action was taken on the review.

Lamb, now a well-known author, was frequently the recipient of presentation copies of works from their authors, and one such had reached him recently, Thomas Colley Grattan's *Highways and Byways; or Tales of the Road Side picked up in the French Provinces* 'By a Walking Gentleman'. He tells John Howard Payne that as far as he has read it, it is a very 'companionable' book. Thomas Westwood, some years later, has recorded Lamb's method of dealing with presentation copies: 'A Leigh Hunt...would come skimming to my feet through the branches of the apple trees'.

This month Lamb met Sara Coleridge at the Gillmans' during her visit to her father. Lamb wished he had such a daughter, and indeed she was the delight of all who saw her. It is recorded that on one occasion everyone stood up on her entrance into a public gathering, enraptured by her beauty. Yet this young girl had mastered Spanish, French, German, Italian and Latin, and had translated from the Latin Martin Dobrizhoffer's *An Account of the Abipones, an Equestrian People of Paraguay*, to help pay for the college education of her brother Derwent. Lamb recorded in a letter to Barton 'You might pass an age with her without suspecting that she knew anything but her mother's tongue.' He adds characteristically 'I don't mean any reflection on Mrs Coleridge here.' Towards the end of the month the mother and daughter left London to visit their relatives at Ottery St Mary.

Of Lamb's other friends Crabb Robinson called as usual, and Lucas prints a note from Lamb to William Ayrton inviting him to dinner at the same time as the Burneys and the Paynes. Alas the Admiral had died in 1821, so the party probably included 'Mrs Battle' and her daughter Sarah, who had married the younger John Payne of the bookselling firm of Payne and Foss, and probably Martin Burney was present as well. This month Hazlitt was arrested for debt and appealed to Talfourd for help, which no doubt was immediately forthcoming. William Godwin had been active on his daughter's behalf, or more accurately on his own, since he was to reap the financial reward of £400, and he wrote to Mary Shelley, still in Italy, to say that her novel *Valperga* was ready for publication.

At Covent Garden 'Nigel; or the Crown Jewels', based on Scott's *The Fortunes of Nigel*, was produced with Charles Kemble in it, and also Mozart's 'The Marriage of Figaro' with Miss Tree and Miss Paton, but there is little likelihood that Lamb attended the latter performance. At Drury Lane Kean was playing Lear, and Liston was appearing in some of his old characters from Scott's works, such as Dominie Sampson and Baillie Nicol Jarvie. John Philip Kemble died this month at the age of 66, and of him Lamb had many lively memories.

This month also Ann Radcliffe died aged 59. As the author of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and other gothic tales of terror, her work may not greatly have impressed Lamb, but Mary liked novels, and Mrs Radcliffe was a favourite of Leigh Hunt's in his youth. Even in 1849 he included an extract from the *Mysteries*, 'Ludovico in the Haunted Chamber', in his *A Book for a Corner*, and her writing received praise from Hazlitt. Michael Sadleir, in our own day, has called her 'the most influential woman novelist there has ever been'.

The editorial section of *The London Magazine* in March has a paragraph confirming that Elia is still alive; very much so, for although Lamb bemoaned the falling off in quality of the magazine, it contained 'Old China', one of the very best of his essays. Other contributors were mainly as in previous months, but there was something in what Lamb said; probably the main reason was the illness of the editor, John Taylor, from overwork.

In a letter to Barton this month Lamb confesses that the idea for his roast pig essay came from Thomas Manning. Some time early in 1823, possibly in March, Lamb paid a visit to H F Cary at his house in Chiswick, then a quiet, picturesque place. This little red brick georgian villa had at one time been the summer residence of Hogarth, and Lamb would have enjoyed inspecting the relics of one of his favourite artists, as well as meeting Cary and his 'Caryatides' as Lamb called his host's daughters. No doubt he inspected

the famous mulberry tree.

On March 21 B R Haydon had a private day for an exhibition at the Egyptian Hall of his painting 'The Raising of Lazarus'. He seems well pleased with the result and the receipts for the following days, but the future was not bright for him. This month Sara Coleridge and her mother were at Ottery St Mary and Sara was captivating the family, particularly Colonel James Coleridge. He cousin, the brilliant Henry Nelson Coleridge, records in his diary on March 21 'Sara and myself are solemnly engaged to each other', but the engagement was kept secret for a time. They were not to marry until 1829.

Mary Mitford came to London in March for the rehearsals of her tragedy 'Julian' which was produced at Covent Garden on March 16 and ran for eight days. Macready took the lead, but *The London* said 'Mr Macready never played worse', although the play itself was allowed to have some merit.

Perhaps Lamb heard that up in Edinburgh a huddle of book collectors got together this month to form the Bannatyne Club, named after George Bannatyne the 16th century collector of Scottish poems. Sir Walter Scott was the founder and first President of the Club, which issued reprints of scarce works of Scottish interest and also dined together. The first dinner was held on March 9 and Scott wrote some verses especially for the occasion entitled 'One Volume More', which begin

Assist me, ye friends of Old Books and Old Wine,
To sing in the praises of sage Bannatyne,
Who left such a treasure of old Scottish lore
As enables each age to print one volume more.

Crabb Robinson was away on Circuit for part of this month, but he was back in London by March 20 and was busy reading *Peveil of the Peak*, which he liked, and then *The Antiquary* which he found less pleasing. About this time the Wordsworths came from Sir George Beaumont's house at Coleorton to London for a prolonged visit culminating in a continental tour

April

Lamb's 'Ritson versus John Scott the Quaker' appeared in the April *London*, but there was not a great deal else of interest, although most of the usual contributors were represented. John Hamilton Reynolds wrote a long obituary notice of John Philip Kemble, and also reviewed Procter's *The Flood of Thessaly* which had just been published.

Although Crabb Robinson had not seen much, if anything, of the Lambs during the previous month their paths crossed frequently in April. On All Fools Day he called on Lamb in the evening to find Basil Montagu there, and he borrowed copies of *The London Magazine*. The next day he breakfasted at Thomas Monkhouse's in Gloucester Place, where he found Wordsworth and his son John; in the evening he returned there and found the Lambs.

Thursday April 4 was one of the high lights of the year. Crabb Robinson, Wordsworth, Rogers and Sir George Beaumont visited Aders to admire his pictures, but it is the dinner at Monkhouse's in the evening which is memorable. Lamb in a letter to Barton the next day wrote 'I dined in Parnassus, with Wordsworth, Coleridge, Rogers and Tom Moore - half the Poetry of England constellated and clustered in Gloster Palce! ...Coleridge was in his finest vein of talk, had all the talk', and the other poets

seem to have been contented just to listen. Also present were Mrs Wordsworth, Sarah Hutchinson, James Gillman and Crabb Robinson. Coleridge's discourse was mainly of metaphysical criticisms on words, and may well have been above the heads of some of his listeners. He is said to have addressed himself chiefly to Wordsworth, but according to Tom Moore, who sat next to Lamb, the latter delivered himself of some 'villanous and abortive puns' as well as some excellent things. It seems to have been on this occasion that Lamb discussed Defoe and told Moore that he was collecting the works of the Dunciad heroes; while Crabb Robinson told him the story of receiving his first brief and going to tell Lamb about it. 'I suppose' said Lamb 'you addressed that line of Pope's to it "Thou first best cause, least understood"'.

Earlier Robinson had arranged a musical party and supper for April 5 at Aders' house in Euston Square, which Lamb declined to attend. Those present included Wordsworth, Monkhouse, Coleridge, Flaxman, Rogers, and the Gillmans. Coleridge enjoyed the music greatly, Wordsworth was suspected of being asleep, Flaxman confessed that he could not endure fine music long, and no doubt Lamb had he been there would have agreed with this view. Nevertheless the party seems to have been a success.

The following day Crabb Robinson visited the Lambs and then went to Rogers' house where he found Wordsworth discussing his proposed tour to Holland. It was this month that 'Gentleman' Jackson the boxer called on Moore to ask him who wrote the line 'Men are but children of a larger growth'. Moore did not know, but promised to look for it. That it is from Dryden's *All For Love* was certainly known to Lamb for he quoted it in his essay 'The Illustrious Defunct', and it might have been in his mind when he wrote 'Lawyers were children once'.

At this time Procter presented Lamb with a portrait of Pope depicting him in a meditative mood, and the gift was greatly appreciated. In thanking him Lamb speculated on what Pope was thinking of and suggested it was his 'Epistle to Jervas'. This portrait was duly hung on the wall of Lamb's 'town room' in Russell Street (he also had lodgings at Dalston to avoid 'the knock eternal' on his door), and it was a subject of no little pride, vying with the Hogarth prints and Leonardo da Vinci.

Some of Lamb's friends were in trouble this month, for Hazlitt was threatening Cadell with an action for libel as Blackwood's London agent, and then Haydon's debts were such that on April 13 execution was levied on his picture 'The Raising of Lazarus' and by April 22 he was writing from the King's Bench prison. He was incarcerated there no less than four times during his life; on this occasion a broadside was printed entitled 'Petition for the Relief of Haydon from Insolvency'.

About this time there appeared a condensed reprint of one of Lamb's old authors: *The Spirit of Buncl; or, Surprising Adventures of John Buncl, Esq.* As early as 1797 Lamb had written to Coleridge describing Buncl as 'a famous fine man, formed in Nature's most eccentric hour', and he mentions him again in his essay 'Imperfect Sympathies' in 1821. Leigh Hunt described him as 'a kind of innocent Henry the Eighth...a prodigious hand at matrimony'. W C Hazlitt suggested that both Lamb and Hazlitt had something to do with the reprint.

Number III of *The Liberal* came out this month with contributions by Byron, Leigh Hunt, Charles Armitage Brown and Horace Smith. There was even a poem by Shelley, but no doubt the item most likely to attract Lamb's attention

would be Hazlitt's famous account of his first meeting with Coleridge 'My First acquaintance with Poets' which closed with one of Lamb's puns.

It was customary around Easter for the theatres to produce some spectacle rather like a pantomime. At Covent Garden 'The Vision of the Sun' was a thing of splendour with Miss Foote as the heroine and Grimaldi as Indian slave to an enchanter. Drury Lane's production was Dibdin's 'The Chinese Sorcerer' which, while notable for its scenery, was described by one critic as 'aChina-dish of weak tea'.

May

Lamb's 'Poor Relations' was printed in *The London*, but Crabb Robinson noted in his diary that he did not like some of the observations on poverty. De Quincey, Hartley Coleridge, Hood, Reynolds, Cary, Clare and Cunningham were the other principal contributors this month. Writing to Barton Lamb complains that the magazine 'drags heavily', and he notes the absence of Wainwright and Hazlitt, while he said that Procter was affronted by the editor's blue pencil.

It was probably about this time that John Bates Dibdin discovered who the author of the *Elia* volume was, and on May 6 Lamb asked him to tea at Russell Street, the beginning of their friendship. Another visitor, but to Dalston, was William Hone; while Crabb Robinson also called and read to Mary from Goethe's *Iphigenia in Tauris*. He says 'we looked over German together'.

This month Robinson met Coleridge at dinner at the house in Lincoln's Inn Fields of Joseph Green, a surgeon later to become eminent in his profession and also to be appointed Coleridge's literary executor. It was on this occasion that Coleridge offended a Methodist lady at the whist table by describing her as an archangel and calling for her *last trump*. Later in the month Robinson met Edward Irving, then making a name for himself at the Caledonian Chapel in Hatton Garden. He was pleased with him on first meeting, but had some criticisms when he heard him preach; the sermons often lasted for an hour and a quarter, but Robinson admits that he read beautifully. He describes him as 'a very ugly man. Looks more like an Italian assassin than a Gospel preacher'. Mrs Basil Montagu said it was a question with the ladies whether Irving's squint was a grace or a deformity, and Robinson's answer was that 'it enhances the effect either way.'

The Wordsworths, who had been staying at Lee Priory, left there on May 16 for Dover on the first stage of their tour through Belgium and Holland. Haydon was still in the Kings Bench Prison, and on May 28 there was a meeting of his creditors and some of his pictures were put up for sale a few days afterwards.

In an endeavour to recover from his infatuation for Sarah Walker, Hazlitt had this month published through John Hunt his *Liber Amoris*. It was anonymous, but the disguise was thin and the facts known to his friends. Besides dialogue between the girl and the essayist the book included correspondence with 'C.P.' and 'J.S.K.', enshrouding the names of his friends P G Patmore and J Sheridan Knowles. Crabb Robinson found the book disgusting, but as Charles Morgan has said it 'has stubbornly survived'.

Early in the month James Kenney had come from Paris to London and Lamb met him. On May 8 Kenney saw at Covent Garden John Howard Payne's opera 'Clari, or the Maid of Milan' the story of which, said one critic, 'runs like Pickford's Manchester van solidly through the night'. However, Miss Tree as Clari received praise and the highlight was her singing of 'Home Sweet

Home' the writing of which Payne was no doubt justly proud. The music was by Bishop.

This month William Cobbett was starting one of his rural rides, from London to Sussex. Even if his experiences as he subsequently recorded them did not interest Lamb greatly, he would have respected the prose style, and he used to read Cobbett's *Political Register*. He would have appreciated the story of the stormy meeting of Sussex farmers where it was moved that Cobbett should be put out of the room. 'I rose' he says 'that they might see the man they had to put out'.

June

Lamb's contribution to *The London Magazine* this month was 'The Child Angel'. The other contributors were much as before, but one item 'Angling and Izaak Walton' by Reynolds, a review of John Major's edition published the previous month, would certainly have attracted Lamb's attention; even the style was reminiscent of his own essays, and he would recognise the echo in Reynolds' 'It is next to impossible for a man to read Walton's Complete Angler and not sigh for a day by the Lea River'.

Early in the month Lamb and his sister had tea at Crabb Robinson's chambers and played whist; Monkhouse was also there. The following day Lamb wrote in haste to Barton and also sent Dibdin a copy of *John Woodvil*, both on the eve of his annual holiday. This year it was to Hastings, and on June 6 he and Mary took their places in the coach for Sevenoaks accompanied by Miss James. They continued, however, to Tunbridge Wells where they stayed nine days, visiting Knole and Penshurst. From here, travelling by post-chaise, they reached Hastings and had lodgings at Mrs Gibbs, No.4 York Cottages, near the Priory Bridge. The accommodation was not palatial, for there were only one sitting room and three bedrooms in the cottage. Mary said in a letter to Mrs Randal Norris 'We eat turbot, we drink smuggled Hollands and walk up hill and down hill all day long'. However, no doubt the change did them good, and Lamb said that he abused Hastings but learned its value. Among their excursions they visited Fairlight Glen and the little Hollington Church in the Wood. They did not return to London until July.

The Wordsworths too were still on holiday continuing their continental tour, but they arrived at Dover on June 11 and went again to Lee Priory. By June 17 they were in London hoping that Lamb would find them a bed, but in his absence Talfourd performed this service. More of Haydon's pictures were sold this month to pay his debts, but he was still in prison. Among others he appealed to Ugo Foscolo for help, and in his letter complained that £2000 worth of his property had been sold for £600. It was probably this month that Hazlitt published his *Characteristics*, which he seems first to have submitted to John Hunt for *The Liberal*, but they were not printed there. Nothing of great importance happened at the theatres, although one critic after seeing Liston at the Haymarket remarked 'Liston is greater than ever on a small stage'.

Of other events, in Rome Joseph Severn had erected a tomb for Keats, while at home Octavius Gilchrist had died. He had been one of the earliest contributors to *The London Magazine* and a good friend to John Clare. Scott's *Quentin Durward* was published this month. Several times Robinson tried to hear Edward Irving preach again, but the crowds were so great that he did not succeed until June 29, when he was duly impressed.

Later in the year Lamb was to dine at the Mansion House, but he would have appreciated an occasion this month when a man appeared before the Lord Mayor stating that he had travelled through many countries for the purpose of finding the most effectual way of hatching eggs without the assistance of the bird. He added that his labour in bringing his invention to maturity had been very great. 'Surely' said the Lord Mayor 'you do not mean that you *sit* yourself?' This the chicken hatcher denied and said his machine involved the use of steam, but the question brought forth the story of a Chinese ship of war that had captured an English vessel and determined to convert the prisoners to some use. Employment was easily found for the carpenter, the shoemaker and other tradesmen, but there happened to be a man of letters on board, and what to do with him the conquerors could not for a long time determine. At length, after deliberate consideration of the difficulty, they resolved to put a pair of feather breeches upon him and to set him to hatch a number of goose eggs, and wonderful to relate the young geese appeared in due time.

July

'The Old Margate Hoy' signed Elia appeared in *The London Magazine* this month. There was, too, Walter Savage Landor's 'Imaginary Conversation between Mr Southey and Professor Porson', his sole contribution to the journal. Cary had sent a further instalment of his 'Continuation of Dr Johnson's Lives of the Poets', this time the first part of a long article on Dr Johnson himself.

At the beginning of the month the Lambs were still at Hastings, but in a letter to Barton on July 10 Lamb says they have just returned. In the same letter he makes the first mention of Southey's reference to the *Elia* volume in the *Quarterly Review*, in which he had written that the book wanted a sounder religious feeling, and Lamb says he might have spared an old friend. He was hurt but would not reply (in fact he did later) and adds: 'The hint he has dropped will knock the sale of the book on the head, which was almost at a stop before'.

The latter part of July saw the Lambs preparing to leave Russell Street, where they had lived since 1817, and move to Colebrook Cottage, Islington. The exact date of the move is uncertain but Charles moved alone, Mary being ill. He was much pleased with the new house and wrote glowing accounts of the garden to his friends. Among others living in Islington or shortly to be there were Thomas Dibdin, George Cruickshank, Thomas Hood, Robert Bloomfield and Laman Blanchard. The Dalston summer lodgings were given up.

Godwin was now again in financial difficulties and his friends rallied round to help raise the sum of £600 required. A subscription list was started and a letter drawn up by Sir James Mackintosh to be sent to likely contributors: among the signatories were Lamb, Crabb Robinson, John Murray and William Lamb (later Lord Melbourne), who added his name at the request of Lady Caroline Lamb. Charles Lamb gave £50.

Another of Lamb's friends in trouble was Haydon, still in the Kings Bench Prison. His friends were helpful, including Thomas Barnes of *The Times*, Sir Walter Scott and Miss Mitford. Dr Darling and Sir George Beaumont bought items at the sale of his effects so that he should have something with which to start work as soon as he was released from confinement. This happy event occurred on July 25.

Hazlitt was at Winterslow Hut, but his niece Mary was in correspondence with

the Lambs to try to get a novel published. This month Part IV of *The Liberal* appeared with contributions by Leigh Hunt, Byron and Hazlitt, but it was the final number. At the same time Hunt started *The Literary Examiner*, but that survived only until the end of the year.

About the middle of the month Byron sailed from Italy for Greece in the brig 'Hercules' which he had chartered, taking with him Trelawny and two other friends. Mary Shelley describes the departure 'Lord Byron with £10,000 and Trelawny with £50'. She was herself about to leave Italy for England and, after unsuccessfully attempting to persuade Byron to pay her money he owed her, was obliged to borrow her fare from Trelawny.

In July Sir Henry Raeburn R.A. died. He was the most famous and successful portrait painter of his time, and there exists a painting attributed to him which is said to be of Charles Lamb. It used to be in America (and may be still there) and was thought to have been painted about 1810-15. Another who died this month was Richard Ayton. Although he lived mainly in Sussex he was a contributor to *The London Magazine* in 1822 and 1823, writing essays of an excellence which make it seem a pity that they are now forgotten.

This month the English Opera House produced an old farce 'Gretna Green' with Miss Kelly as Betty Finikin. The Haymarket staged Kenney's 'Sweethearts and Wives' with Liston, Terry and Madame Vestris. An important event was the production at the English Opera House on July 26 of Peake's 'Presumption; or the Fate of Frankenstein', founded on Mary Shelley's novel. It was a great success; audiences crowded to it, hissed it, shuddered at it, and came again to see it. Wallack played Frankenstein and Cooke the monster.

August

The London Magazine this month had no contribution from Lamb, the first time he had been absent since he started to write for it in August 1820.

However De Quincey, Darley, Clare, Cary and Cunningham were represented, and Taylor included a long extract from Elizabeth Kent's *Flora Domestica*, no doubt by way of a puff for one of his publications.

Lamb was probably taken up with his new house and garden at this time, for we know little of his movements or of those of many of his friends, who perhaps were taking their annual vacations. Crabb Robinson went to the Haymarket Theatre early in the month to see Liston, but this year he made a tour of Germany, Switzerland and the Tyrol. Thomas Hood went to stay in Norfolk with the Longmores (Eliza Reynolds had married Dr Longmore), the attraction being not so much, as he said, 'to pick up a month's health in a fortnight's holiday', as that Jane Reynolds was staying there too.

On August 25 Mary Shelley arrived in England from Italy and went to stay with her father in the Strand but, like so many people, she did not find the second Mrs Godwin any more congenial than before she fled with Shelley, and left after ten days. On August 30 she records in a letter to Leigh Hunt that she had met Lamb in her father's house, and described him as 'very entertaining and amiable, though a little deaf'. One of his first questions was 'Do they make puns in Italy?'. 'Yes' Mary replied 'now that Hunt is there.'

'Frankenstein' was still drawing audiences and on August 29 Mary Shelley, her father and brother, and Jane Williams, went in a party to see it. She was pleased with the principal actors, but thought Peake's management of the story was not well done. Kenney's *Sweethearts and Wives* was still running

at the Haymarket, while Charles Mathews was appearing in 'Monsieur Tonson' and other pieces, also at the English Opera House.

Robert Bloomfield the peasant poet died this month. He had dined with Lamb once, and the latter had read *The Farmer's Boy* but did not think much of it.

September

Perhaps because of his recent death, Richard Ayton's 'Sea-Roamers' occupied the first position in *The London* this month, and Lamb's 'Nugae Criticae: Defence of the Sonnets of Sir Philip Sydney' appeared as the second item. At Colebrook Cottage he was taken up with gardening "I have gather'd my Jargonels, but my Windsor pears are backward". He was visited at his new house by Cary, Allsop, Ayrton, Martin Burney and Barton and his daughter. He also asked Allsop to be one of his executors, proposing Talfourd and Procter as the others, but this Will does not seem to have been made and only Talfourd and Ryle were executors of the Will as finally proved.

In a letter to Miss Mitford attributed to this month Haydon tells her that Hazlitt has recently been writing on the contents of Fonthill Abbey for Phillips the auctioneer for the Beckford sale, for which he was to receive fifty guineas. There seems something odd about this statement, for Hazlitt's blistering comments on the treasures of Fonthill in *The London Magazine* in 1822 and 1823 make him appear an unlikely author for puffing the sale. Catalogues had been issued in July 1822, so that it could not be for this purpose that Phillips needed Hazlitt's help. Edward Irving had an alternative story that Hazlitt attended the sale as a bidder merely to raise prices.

It does seem that Hazlitt may have been misled as to Beckford's taste, for the best items had been taken to Bath and part of what Hazlitt saw was introduced by the auctioneer from other sources. Beckford told Cyrus Redding that not more than half of what was in the sale was his property. The auction took place between September 9 and October 29 and lasted for 37 days, of which 20 were occupied by the books. Large crowds were attracted to Wiltshire and 72,000 copies of the catalogue were sold at a guinea each. *The Times* said that a bed was not to be had within twenty miles of Fonthill, so great was the attraction.

Mary Shelley, in a letter to Leigh Hunt, says that Lamb is helping Hazlitt to prepare his *Elegant Extracts* (Select British Poets). The book when first issued covered the period from Chaucer to Hazlitt's own day and included poems by Byron, Keats, Shelley, Lamb and other contemporaries. It had to be withdrawn however owing to infringement of copyright and was reissued in 1825 without them.

Godwin was still in difficulties and wrote to Lady Caroline Lamb bemoaning that the subscription list was at a standstill. She replied giving a list of those to whom he might send letters 'without naming me'. Godwin, wishing also to benefit from the success of the dramatic version of *Frankenstein*, published a new edition of the book.

An event which may have interested Lamb was the discovery in Westminster Abbey of Ben Jonson's remains: they were in a coffin in a perpendicular position.

October

An important item in *The London Magazine* this month was the 'Letter of Elia to Robert Southey'. It was a long letter of great interest mentioning many

of Lamb's friends; when it appeared in *The Last Essays of Elia* under the title of 'The Tombs in the Abbey' much of it was omitted. The editorial section of the magazine contained Barton's 'Verses on the Death of Bloomfield' which had been transmitted to the editor through Lamb. A newcomer this month was Thomas Carlyle, with Part I of his 'Schiller's Life and Writings'. He had been introduced to Taylor by his friend Edward Irving.

Lamb's letters seem mostly concerned with dining this month, and there is little record of the excellent talk which no doubt took place. He invites Allsop and his wife, and writes to Cary to ask if he and Mary could visit him at Chiswick, expressing his preference for 'Roast *Shoulder* of Mutton with onion sauce'. He writes to John Bates Dibdin about a pig, and invites him to tea. It was about this time that he dined with the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House: there were forty-seven people present, including three directors of the East India Company, and Lamb says of himself that he was there 'all from being a writer in a magazine'.

During the summer or early autumn Lamb's friends the Novellos had moved from Percy Street out to Shackwell Green, Hackney. It was far from their circle of friends, but the attraction of the musical evenings was such that they still came. Mozart, Handel, Haydn and Beethoven were prominent in the programmes and a notable party took place on October 19, Leigh Hunt's 39th birthday, when they drank his health although he was far away in Italy. On this occasion the company included Mary Shelley, Jane Williams, Charles Cowden Clarke, Edward Holmes the biographer of Mozart, and John Nyren the famous cricketer. Lamb was not present, for as he said he was 'constitutionally susceptible of noises', and he wrote of 'the measured malice of music'. Nevertheless he was a sincere friend and visitor to the Novello family.

Crabb Robinson did not return from his continental tour until well on in the month, but he records in his diary his delight in Lamb's 'Letter to Southey'. At the end of the month he walked to Lamb's new house where he found the Burneys, Paynes and Ayerton and played whist.

On October 23 Thomas Manning wrote a nonsense letter to Lamb. P P Howe suggested that possibly it was to cheer him up after Mary's illness. Manning now lived at Redbourn in Hertfordshire, and the paucity of letters between the two may well have been because they saw one another frequently, for the London coaches for Shrewsbury and Manchester (the Holyhead Road) passed through Islington and Redbourn. For example, the 'Wonder Coach' for Shrewsbury left the 'Bull and Mouth' in Aldersgate Street at 6.30 a.m., arrived at the 'Peacock' Islington at 6.45, and at Redbourn at 9.13, stopping there 20 minutes for breakfast.

Both Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres produced 'Hamlet' this month, with Macready and Young respectively in the name part, while Drury Lane also had Clara Fisher the infant prodigy as Little Pickle in 'The Spoilt Child'. Fanny Kelly was appearing at the English Opera House.

A great public sensation was created by the murder of a Mr Weare at Radlett, Hertfordshire, on October 24. John Thurtell, who had attended prize fights with Hazlitt, was the murderer; with two others he was tried early in January 1824, and he was hanged a few days afterwards. John Hamilton Reynolds wrote a long account of the trial which appeared in *The London* in February 1824, under the name 'Edward Herbert'.

November

November 1 saw *The London Magazine's* appearance with no fewer than three items from Lamb's pen: 'Cockney Latin', 'Guy Faux' and 'Nugae Criticae No. II On a Passage in the Tempest'. Back in 1821 John Taylor mentioned in a letter that he was trying to show how improperly Latin was pronounced at that time, and it may well be that in later years his discussion of this point gave Lamb the idea for his humorous 'Cockney Latin'.

Lamb invited the Allsops to dinner early in the month, and later Mary Shelley came to tea. She records in a letter to Marianne Hunt 'I see the Lambs rather often, she is ever so amiable, and Lamb witty and delightful'. To Sarah Hazlitt Lamb wrote the first account of George Dyer's immersion in the New River which had occurred a few days before.

On November 19 Southey wrote his kindly letter to Lamb about the reference to the *Elia* volume in the *Quarterly Review*. Lamb was greatly appreciative of Southey's generosity, and he wrote a repentant letter to the Laureate. Later in the month Southey called on Lamb and they shook hands.

Crabb Robinson walked to Islington this month and played whist with the Lambs and Martin Burney. On November 20 he called on Godwin whose financial affairs had temporarily improved partly owing to Lamb's and Robinson's efforts. He found Mrs Godwin's 'lamentations - mixed with a little boasting' painful. A week later he called again and found the Lambs and Mary Shelley there. He records that the latter looked 'elegant and sickly and young. One would not suppose her the author of *Frankenstein*'.

Mary Shelley was now at work editing Shelley's *Posthumous Poems*: she was therefore somewhat dismayed when the firm of C & J Ollier went out of business. They had been Shelley's publishers and now handed the stock of unsold volumes to John Hunt. However the publication of her volume was subsequently guaranteed by Procter, Beddoes and Kelsall. It will be remembered that the Olliers had published Charles Lamb's *Works* in 1818.

At Drury Lane this month Elliston produced 'The Cataract of the Ganges' and later Sheridan Knowles's 'Caius Gracchus' with Macready in the lead. Covent Garden revived 'Venice Preserv'd' with Charles Kemble, and Planche produced his second opera 'Cortez, or the Conquest of Mexico' with Bishop's music - it was not a success.

December

December 1 saw Lamb's 'Amicus Redivivus' in *The London Magazine*. This account of George Dyer's descent into the New River from Lamb's cottage is one of the highlights of English literature. There was no doubt, however, that the magazine as a whole had fallen off sadly since its great days. Some of the old contributors lingered on, notably Lamb, De Quincey, Cary, Darley, Cunningham and Elton, while a few new ones appeared: for example the young Henry Taylor contributed 'Recent Poetical Plagiarisms and Imitations'. Writing many years later he says that he has reread his article and is amazed at the display of reading and erudition in it, which he is certain he never possessed. He adds that many of his quotations he could only have spelt out with a dictionary.

This month Lamb wrote to W Harrison Ainsworth. He had lent Lamb a rare book by William Warner, which the latter says he has read with pleasure although being in Black Letter it was difficult to make out. It seems to have been either *Syrinx* or *Albion's England*. Ainsworth's *December Tales* was published

this month, and later Lamb gave him a letter of introduction to Wordsworth. It is amusing to note that Ainsworth had once been introduced by James Browne, editor of Constable's *Edinburgh Magazine*, to some of his friends as Charles Lamb's nephew.

James Crossley, lawyer, book collector and antiquary and Ainsworth's particular friend was in London in the autumn of 1823, and may well have met Lamb at this time, for many years later he gave Ainger some reminiscences of Elia. They would have had much in common, since Crossley's library was rich in Elizabethan and Jacobean poets and dramatists. He had, too, edited for Blackwood in 1822 a tiny volume by Sir Thomas Browne entitled *Tracts*, but including as well as the 'Musaeum Clausum', both 'Urn Burial' and 'A Letter to a Friend'. He had intended to edit a complete edition of Browne's works but was forestalled in this by Simon Wilkin. Crossley wrote much for periodicals, and there had been contributions from him in *The Retrospective Review* on Browne, Sir Philip Sydney, Quarles and Thomas Fuller.

When Lamb wrote his essay 'The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple' he was drawing largely on memories of his childhood and early years when living in The Temple, and by 1823 most of those he mentions were dead. However two of his Old Benchers were still alive: Baron Maseres, who used to visit William Cobbett when he was in prison in Newgate, always coming 'in his wig and gown in order, as he said, to show his abhorrence of the sentence', and Joseph Jekyll. The latter was known personally to Lamb, to Randal Norris and to George Dyer. Although aged 70 in 1823 he was writing sprightly letters full of gossip of London life and the theatres.

At Covent Garden Mrs Hemans' 'The Vespers of Palermo' was produced without much success, while at Drury Lane 'The Cataract of the Ganges' was still drawing audiences. A notable event this month was the retirement at Christmas of the famous clown Joseph Grimaldi, although his final farewell performance did not take place until several years later.

This month Scott's *St Ronan's Well* was published; while Crabb Robinson, taking stock of the year, listed some of the books he had read and noted in his diary that his fees as a barrister had amounted to 445 guineas, which he did not regard as satisfactory. It was even less than the salary of a clerk at the East India House.

Although some of the interesting publications of the year have been mentioned under the month in which they were issued, many more were not included and a few may be listed here: for example, the 8th edition of *Mrs Leicester's School*, the 3rd edition of De Quincey's *Opium-Eater*, William Hone's *Ancient Mysteries*, Moore's *Loves of the Angels*, Cantos VI-XIV of Byron's *Don Juan* and Leigh Hunt's *Ultra-Crepidarius*.

Of the periodicals, Henry Southern's *The Retrospective Review* had articles on Defoe, Webster, Edward Herbert, Tourneur and Middleton. Mary Mitford's sketches which were to form her book *Our Village* were appearing in *The Ladies' Magazine*. Hazlitt was writing essays for *The New Monthly Magazine* and he was also starting on those for the *Spirit of the Age* volume.

Of other activities of Lamb's friends and acquaintances, Wainewright was exhibiting at the Royal Academy, Wordsworth's son John was about to enter New College Oxford at the instigation of Augustus Hare, who was a tutor there, Leigh Hunt's son Vincent was born at Albaro in Italy, and John Hunt was awaiting trial for the publication of Byron's 'Vision of Judgment'. John

Mathew Gutch, Lamb's old schoolfellow, had joined his father-in-law as a banker in Worcester this year.

Lamb in his 'Bachelor's Complaint' was rather hard on married people and complained that they were too loving. It was an early essay, but in 1823 he was evidently of the same mind for he reprinted it, and he would perhaps have noted that too many of his friends were contemplating the married state at this time. There was B W Procter and Anne Skepper, Basil Montagu's step-daughter, both supposed to be invalids whom someone described as supping water gruel together but who lived to be 87 and 88 respectively. Then there was Thomas Hood courting Jane Reynolds, Jefferson Hogg paying his addresses to Jane Williams and, though scarcely a friend of Lamb's, Carlyle writing ardently to Jane Welsh.

It will be remembered that Lamb at one time wrote puffs for a lottery contractor, and even before that drew a £20 prize himself. He would therefore look with disfavour on the decision taken in 1823 to make the sale of lottery tickets illegal, although the State Lottery seems to have been held for a few years more, and Lamb's essay 'The Illustrious Defunct' was not published until 1825.

Of the theatres it has been said that the first quarter of the century was a time of great actors and acting rather than of drama and dramatists, and names which come readily to mind are Kean, Kemble, Macready, Elliston, Liston, Munden, Mathews, Madame Vestris and Fanny Kelly (Mrs Siddons had retired by 1823); while the voices of Braham and Tom Moore are not forgotten. At this period perhaps James Kenney was the cleverest dramatist, while a notable production in the history of stage costume was Charles Kemble's 'King John' revived at Covent Garden with costumes by Planche which presented every character dressed as at the time of the action of the play.

Since, as far as we know, Lamb did not keep a diary we have to turn to his letters, his writings and what his friends have said about him for our knowledge of his activities, but we can form a fairly accurate picture from these sources. One year's record is, of course, not enough but I hope the attempt has done something to give the atmosphere of his life at the period when his most famous book was published.

LONDON ENTERTAINMENT IN THE DAYS OF CHARLES LAMB

Miss Molly Sands has kindly provided the following summary of her lecture, given to the Society on 3 March 1973

Lamb's years in London - 1790 to 1827 - covered a period of change in London and its entertainment, a transition from an 18th century to a 19th century way of thought. Increase of population and of building gradually cleared away those pleasant rural pleasure and tea gardens of his youth, where some of his theatrical favourites performed in the summer. Dicky Suett had made his first appearance at such a garden in 1777, and poor Mrs Bland her last at another in 1826.

The theatres themselves were divided into two categories: the Patent Theatres - the Theatres Royal of Covent Garden and Drury Lane - which were licenced to perform spoken drama, and the many so-called Minors which were only allowed to perform straight plays when disguised by incidental music so as to qualify as burlettas or melodramas, and which otherwise confined themselves to various kinds of spectacle. There was a difference of status, yet the Minors sometimes triumphed over their disabilities, and the Patents were not always the

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homes of High Drama. When Lamb visited Elliston during his period of management of the Olympic he thought it a kind of Elba in comparison with the empire of Drury Lane, and yet Crabb Robinson when he accompanied the Lambs to see Elliston at this same little Olympic found himself more 'amused' than he had often been at the Patent Theatres.

The size of the Patents, particularly after their rebuilding - they were both burnt down within the space of a year - was a drawback. Subtlety of vocal inflexion or of facial expression was lost. Effects had to be broad. This was good when you had a Kean or a Kemble, but lesser actors ranted and gave 'ham' performances. *Mr H* might have succeeded in a more intimate theatre. Then their overheads were crippling, so that in order to attract the public in sufficient numbers they had to resort to some of the stock-in-trade of the Minors: melodrama, dog drama, acqua drama, performing animals, and so on.

It was an age of unruly audiences. Lamb was not the only author to be hissed. Hazlitt thought the Gods were worse behaved at the Patents than at the Minors because they could not hear properly. Riots were frequent. The O.P. (Old Price) riots at Covent Garden lasted for two months, during which a great deal of material damage was done, and at the end of which John Kemble had to give way and restore the old prices.

Operas or plays with music (such as the English operas of Arnold and Storace in which Lamb's favourites John Braham, Mrs Bland and so on took part) could be performed at the Minors; and so could the 'Lecture' or one-man show, such as Fanny Kelly's Mrs Parthian.

It was not an age of great plays or playwrights, but rather of actors with enough stamina to override the many difficulties which the pursuit of their art entailed. Leigh Hunt thought most people enjoyed a performance more for its actors than for the play.

Lamb has much to tell us about these actors, and about the art of acting: Mrs Jordan, whom he preferred in her plaintive rather than in her hoydenish parts; the versatile Elliston; Munden, who was not so much a comedian as a company ('out of some invisible wardrobe he dips for faces'); Jack Bannister, whose Walter in *The Children of the Wood* stirred your whole conscience, and whose Ben in *Love for Love* Lamb analysed so brilliantly; Bensley, the tragedian who had 'most of the swell of soul'; 'Cherub Dicky' Suett, and so on...

He took a keen critical pleasure in the performance of certain actors at a time when the drama itself was at a rather low ebb. But above all he took exquisite pleasure in the business of *going to the play*, and he never really lost his sense of wonder at the theatrical illusion.

NOTES

Annual General Meeting At the AGM held on 7 April the Report and Accounts were accepted and the retiring members of the Council reappointed under a new rule, passed at the meeting, which abolishes the requirement of automatic retirement for one year. Miss Parsons, Miss Reeves and Mr Sandry were, by acclaim, appointed honorary Life Members.

Mr H G Smith writes When I retired as editor of the Charles Lamb Society Bulletin after an association extending from 1948 to 1972, the members subscribed to a donation of £35 which was handed to me in recognition of my

service on behalf of the society and which I could use in any suitable way. I thought the most appropriate solution would be to have the bulletins of the remaining ten years bound in the same style as those bound and presented to me on my eightieth birthday in 1963. This has now been done by the same bookbinder making in all a very handsome set of four volumes, together with a working chronological index, which, over the years, has proved exceedingly useful.

Therein lies my work as editor of The Bulletin which has given me a lot of pleasure over the past thirty five years. Thank you one and all.

Professor George L Barnett writes May I call your attention to what appears to be an error in the October 1972 number (No.216)? In the notice of 'Two Lamb Letters' on p.3, reference is made to the manuscript of 'Witches and Other Night-Fears'...'which is now in the Dyce-Forster collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum'. This statement was made originally by Lucas (*Works*, II,354) and perpetuated by Hutchinson, obviously copying without verification (*Works*, I,845). Arthur Wheen, Keeper of the Library, stated in a letter to me of 3 October 1955, in reply to my query, that it was not and had never been there. Later, from Mr Crowsley, he learned it was sold at Sotheby's on 24 July 1890 at the F W Cosen's Sale to Pearson for £6. Pearson & Co. were booksellers in Pall Mall and have since disappeared. Lucas must have discovered his error, although he did not acknowledge it, because in *Letters* III,369n he does not include this title in his list of MS essays at the V & A. During my recent stay in London I personally checked the holdings at the V & A and could find no record of 'Witches'. It would be interesting to know where the MS is now.

OBITUARY

In the death of Dr Phyllis Abrahams the Society has lost a keen and devoted member. We shall remember with pleasure the scholarly lectures she gave over the years, all showing much careful research. To the end of her life she took a deep interest in the Society's activities, and as a member of the Council she gave wise and helpful advice. Her patience and courage during her illness have been a source of inspiration to many who mourn the passing of a modest, brave and loving friend.

We regret to record the death in her 84th year of Mrs S M Jewell in Christchurch, New Zealand. The younger sister of S M Rich, editor of *The Elian Miscellany*, she had been a member of the Society for many years. She moved to New Zealand about 25 years ago after a full career in London's teaching service.

BOOK REVIEWS

Norman Fruman: Coleridge, the Damaged Archangel

This book is a psychological study of Coleridge's method of composition, in particular of his plagiarism. To obscure this plagiarism, to cover his tracks through others' works, says Mr Fruman, Coleridge went to great lengths. He acknowledged a sentence to avoid acknowledging pages; he stated that he regarded such acknowledgements as sacred duties in the same work in which he plagiarized extensively from major German thinkers. Under his own name, Coleridge published passages and even whole works by small and great. He stole sparks from a number of writers and fire from A W Schlegel, Schelling

and Kant. Many of Coleridge's most influential statements, it appears, were actually not his own.

There is no doubt that Coleridge was a plagiarist. To support his charge Mr Fruman has amassed a whole army of evidence. Passages from Coleridge and his sources are put back to back, side by side; evidence of plagiarism gathered by other scholars is summarised and discussed. The book is amply documented: nearly one-fourth of it consists of footnotes.

But ultimately this exhaustive evidence results in a kind of scholarly overkill. Coleridge is not merely damaged but destroyed. The praise Mr Fruman offers he severely qualifies in the discussion which follows it. If Coleridge's criticism is not plagiarised, it is incomprehensible; if it is not incomprehensible, then it suffers from lack of practical application. The poetry fares little better. The diction, sentiments, and even subject matter of some of his best poems Coleridge is said to owe to Wordsworth. What does not derive from Wordsworth or other poets comes from Coleridge's unresolved Oedipal conflicts. By his relentless presentation of sources, Mr Fruman obscures the difference in kind between mere plagiarism and a more creative use of sources. If Coleridge is successful, he 'transfigures' his sources; if he blunders, he 'plagiarizes' them. In short, if Mr Fruman is right, then there is virtually no evidence that Coleridge had any conscious control over his poetic craft. It is pure luck that some of his poetry is actually good. Nevertheless Mr Fruman says that it is a pity that Coleridge did not believe in his poetic powers. One wonders what else a sensible man could do!

In his introduction, Mr Fruman says that he ended his research as he began it - 'with a profound respect and a sense of personal affection for Coleridge'. If this is really Mr Fruman's conclusion, then his end is at war with his means. The Coleridge Mr Fruman presents is a man without a shred of integrity, whose very celibacy is held against him. Certainly damaged, but hardly an archangel. This is a pity, for such a picture, it appears, was not Mr Fruman's intention.

Sandra D Sandell

Professor Fruman's book, while it has had a good press both here and in the U.S. from what one might call the uninitiated general reviewer (the Cyril Connollys of this world), has aroused strong feeling amongst Coleridgeans everywhere. I have received a five page involuntary explosion of a letter from a member of the Society which I at first intended to print - until I resolved that it would be unfair to print an all-out attack on a book which should be read by all of us so that we can each assess its merits. Coleridge had faults enough, goodness knows, but properly understood his life shines out as an example of fortitude and courage in circumstances of extreme hardship and sorrow. Perhaps we shall be wiser when the much needed, truly definitive biography at length appears. In the meantime let us give Professor Fruman, excellent fellow that he is, the benefit of trial by reason; that is, by using our own reason (or intuitions) in a thorough reading of his book. It contains xxiv+608 pages and is published by Allen & Unwin (Braziller in the U.S.) at £5.50

Basil Savage

Invisible Friend; the correspondence of Elizabeth Barrett Barrett and Benjamin Robert Haydon, 1842-1845. Edited by Willard Bissell Pope (xx + 200pp Harvard University Press/Oxford University Press £5.00)

In 1939 Professor Martha Hale Shackford edited a volume which contained 18 letters and 3 fragments from Elizabeth Barrett to Haydon. They formed part of a collection of letters written by Miss Barrett which had been presented to Wellesley College Massachusetts in 1930. The present volume fills out the correspondence by printing also the Haydon letters which, as Professor Pope records, he and Maurice Buxton Forman bought at Sotheby's in 1937. The Wellesley treasure has been mined since 1939 by Betty Miller (E.B. to Miss Mitford, John Murray 1954) and by Barbara P McCarthy (E.B. to Mr Boyd, John Murray 1955).

I say that the correspondence is filled in with Haydon's letters: it bubbles, swells, overflows. In 1843 we have letters from Haydon dated May 4, 6, 9, 11, 16(twice), 17, 23, 26(twice), 27, 29. Poor Miss Barrett (*Dearest Invisible, My dearest Friend, My Dream!, My Sweet Unseen, You Ingenious little darling invisible*) fought back manfully (only one letter survives from the month cited) but it was manifestly not to be expected that she should keep up with a phenomenon like Haydon who poured himself out almost simultaneously into his work, his life, his family and friendships, his diary, his correspondence - all with a complete genuineness and lack of reserve which must command our sympathy, our affection, and in the end even our respect. Certainly he had Elizabeth Barrett's respect, and she herself emerges from this correspondence as one who was fearlessly prepared to meet Haydon on his own ground (if not with his own frequency) and who gave him true counsel at the time of the rejection of his House of Lords cartoons and when he was writing his *Autobiography* for publication. Entirely lacking in pretence herself, she recognised at once the genuineness of Haydon, and although she steadfastly refused to see him she clearly welcomed communication with one she accepted as a true artist: one, moreover, who sent her many paintings and drawings to see and have by her, and who entrusted her with his personal papers for safe keeping (in the end she discovered that she had been left the manuscript of his autobiography and journal to edit, a task for which she felt unprepared, although she might have edited the autobiography better than Tom Taylor eventually did).

As might be expected from the editor of the great edition of the *Diary* Professor Pope has put us greatly in his debt for this volume. His work is impeccable (although there *are* one or two misprints) and it forms a valuable addition to the Haydon canon, in which he has virtually a monopoly. Dare we hope that there is more to come?

Basil Savage

Birds Nest: poems by John Clare (70pp, Mid Northumberland Arts Group £2.10)

Beautifully edited by Mrs Anne Tibble and with a sensitive introductory essay by James Kirkup, this collection of twenty hitherto unpublished poems must be bought by all who are interested in Clare. It is a pity, however, that the design of the book was not put into the hands of a professional: even one of only modest talent would have done better than the typographical mess with which we are presented (produced, perhaps, by an art teacher who fancies himself at graphics?). It is difficult to spoil Bewick woodcuts entirely, but this character has done his best;

they and facsimiles of some of the manuscripts are printed in colour, which detracts from their clarity and contributes to the general tattiness of the book. Buy it, but don't expect to get as much pleasure from it as you might have done from the same texts cleanly printed in a well laid out and unpretentious pamphlet (I do not blame the printer here; all too clearly, poor man, he was following instructions).

Basil Savage

NEW MEMBERS

- Dr Peter Brier, Box 32332, Los Angeles, CA, 90032, U.S.A.
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