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We are happy to be able to celebrate De Quincey's Bicentenary by publishing

PURSUING THE THRONE OF GOD: DE QUINCEY AND THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL

by Grevel Lindop

Of all the obstacles that can be placed in the way of accurate and balanced biography, none is more difficult to evade than autobiography. Our preconceptions about De Quincey's life and intellectual milieu are still largely founded on the views of himself which he presented in his autobiographical writings. Those elements which he preferred not to emphasise, we tend to overlook or regard as insignificant; but it may be that matters of some importance for an understanding of his works are thereby concealed.

At least in his published works, De Quincey is somewhat unwilling to examine his relationship with his mother; and by adopting towards her, when he does mention her, a tolerant, gently humorous and entirely detached tone, he artfully renders it almost inconceivable that she could have exercised any important influence over his intellectual development. Yet the possibility seems worth investigating, for his mother was, after all, the dominant force in De Quincey's childhood. His father was frequently abroad on business and died of tuberculosis in 1793, when De Quincey was seven years old. At least until 1802, when De Quincey ran away from Manchester Grammar School, his mother exercised the chief control over his social and intellectual life. She seems to have influenced his reading, moved him for obscure reasons from one school or tutor to another, and to some extent chosen his company for him. There is evidence that her direct influence persisted as late as De Quincey's twentieth year. All this is significant because Elizabeth Quincey was a committed Evangelical. Quite how her commitment developed we do not know, but from quite early in her son's life every aspect of her thought and conduct was permeated by an earnest and somewhat Calvinist piety.

It can be shown, I think, that a number of (to us, rather strange) features of De Quincey's childhood experience were fairly typical of an Evangelical upbringing at that period. I hope to do this, and also to sketch very briefly some of the ways in which traces of Evangelical thought may be detected in De Quincey's prose. It has always been a critical commonplace that De Quincey's work has what are loosely referred to as 'mystical' or 'visionary' aspects. It may be that we have failed to understand these properly because we have not related them to the intellectual traditions from which, in part, they sprang - the largely-forgotten traditions of earnest self-examination and apocalyptic fervour fostered by William Wilberforce, Hannah More, the so-called Clapham Sect and their followers, of whom Elizabeth Quincey was a fairly typical representative.

Here is De Quincey's description of her:

> 'Figure to yourself a woman of admirable manners ... distinguished by lady-like tranquillity and repose, and even by self-possession, but also freezing in excess. Austere she was in a degree which fitted her for the lady president of rebellious nunneries. Rigid in her exactions of duty from those around her, but also from herself; upright, sternly conscientious, munificent in her charities, pure-minded in so absolute a degree that you would have been tempted to call her 'holy' - she yet could not win hearts by the graciousness of her manner.'(1)

And although 'she was one whom her grown-up friends made the object of idolising reverence', her children did not find her altogether congenial company: as De Quincey nicely puts it, 'She delighted not in infancy, nor infancy in her'.(2)

It is not clear at what date Mrs Quincey adopted Evangelical views. De Quincey never claims that his father was inclined to religious earnestness, though he does mention that his library was well-stocked with 'popular divinity', that he was firmly opposed to the slave-trade and that his admiration for Cowper was based on a recognition of moral views 'cast in the very same mould of conscientious principle as (his) own'(3) - a configuration which may indicate that both his parents were moving towards Evangelical views at an early date. At any rate, soon after her husband's death Mrs Quincey moved to Bath (becoming Mrs *De* Quincey at about the same time) and was soon on intimate terms with Hannah More, the chief literary representative of the Evangelical wing of the Church of England. Thereafter Mrs De Quincey's commit ment never wavered (though her surname did before long revert to plain Quincey). De Quincey describes her in 1801 as scouring the country in quest of the ideal dwelling-place, her requirements being 'good medical advice somewhere in the neighbourhood; first-rate means of education; elegant (or what most people might think aristocratic) society; agreeable scenery' and 'a Church of England parish clergyman, who was to be strictly orthodox, faithful to the articles of our English Church, yet to these articles as interpreted by Evangelical Divinity'.(4) And in 1811 we find her taking care of the eleven-year old Thomas Babington Macaulay, son of Zachary Macaulay, editor of the *Christian Observer*, the main organ of Anglican Evangelicalism.(5)

But what did Evangelical views imply at this period? No hard-and-fast definition can be given, for Evangelicalism in the broad sense was an emotional movement as much as a theological one, part of the revival of religious intensity which followed the preaching of Whitefield and the Wesleys in the mid-eighteenth century. The 'Methodists' had left the Church of England by 1790, but there persisted in the Anglican Church a vocal and active minority who demanded, and tried to live, a more 'spiritual' form of Christianity, who took the scriptures literally and frowned on 'worldly' pursuits as a waste of the precious time given us by God for the sole purpose of doing His work. These Anglican Evangelicals were on the whole Conservative in politics and in their view of Church government, but their theology tended towards a moderate Calvinism. They rejected predestination, but their distinguishing doctrines were, first, a firm belief that the 'corruption ... of human nature' is 'eminently the basis and groundwork of Christianity'(6), an emphasis on what the standard phrase called 'human depravity', by which fallen man had forfeited all claim to God's mercy; and, secondly, the connected belief that only the grace of God, accepted through faith, availed for salvation. Good works were useless, because all human motivation was hopelessly corrupt. This led, naturally, to stress on the importance of conversion, a profound inner experience of the grace of God which could transform the personality. The aspirant to true, or as it was sometimes called, 'experimental' Christianity must undertake self-examination, so as to perceive clearly his own depraved and sinful state; must put his faith in Christ crucified, who would bear the weight of the individual's innumerable sins; and pray continually for the mercy of God.

Elizabeth Quincey participated in a phase of Evangelical expansion within the English Church. During the 1790's and early 1800's Anglican Evangelicals were organising themselves as a proselytising force. Henry Thornton, William Wilberforce and John Venn in 1792 formed the community at Clapham which was quickly to become 'the powerhouse of the Evangelical revival'(7); in 1793 Hannah More began her educational work at Cheddar and published the first of her numerous religious tracts for the poor; and the movement's leading periodicals were founded, the *Evangelical Magazine* in 1793 and the *Christian Observer* in 1802. De Quincey neatly situates his mother in this *milieu*, telling us, 'My mother's views were precisely those of her friend Mrs Hannah More, of Wilberforce, of Henry Thornton, of Zachary Macaulay (father of the historian), and generally of those who were then known amongst sneerers as "the Clapham saints".'(8)

De Quincey must have been exposed to Evangelical literature from an early age. Our first distinct evidence, however, dates from 1799, when he was kept off school owing to a minor illness and wrote to his sister Mary telling her with excitement of some new books that had arrived. They included the *Rambler*, Goldsmith's *Histories* and translations of Tasso and Ariosto, but also 'Milner's "Ecclesiastical History", Venn's "Duty of Man", Ogden's "Sermons", etc.'(9) These authors represent the staple reading-matter of the educated Anglican Evangelical of the period. Joseph and Isaac Milner, authors of the *History of the Christian Church*, were leading Evangelical divines; John Venn's *Complete Duty of Man* was the standard manual of Evangelical life and thought; and Samuel Ogden, though not an Evangelical, was the well-known author of forceful and serious sermons, including two particularly intimidating specimens on 'The Duty of Children to Parents', which may well have been considered suitable reading for a thirteen-year old boy.

Evangelicals laid great stress on the importance of family life and the training of children, and from what we can gather Mrs Quincey's practice here seems to have been typical of the stricter type of Evangelical parent.

> A peculiarity there was about my mother [writes De Quincey] which is not found, or anything like it, in one mother out of five hundred. Usually mothers defend their own cubs, right or wrong; and also they think favourably of any pretensions to praise which these cubs may put forward. Not so my mother. Were we taxed by interested parties with some impropriety of conduct? Trial by jury, English laws of evidence, all were forgotten; and we were found guilty on the bare affidavit of the angry accuser. Did a visitor say some flattering thing of a talent or accomplishment by one or other of us? My mother protested so solemnly against the possibility that we could possess either the one or the other, that we children held it a point of filial duty to believe ourselves the very scum and refuse of the universe.(10)

In fact, this was not such a 'peculiarity' as De Quincey suggests. On the contrary, it was standard Evangelical parental practice. 'Evangelical children', one authority tells us, were 'forbidden to show off accomplishments in traditional fashion to the admiring guests of their parents'(11). Macaulay 'used to say he could not recall an instance in which his father had ever praised him or shewn any sense of his abilities'.(12); Adam Clarke 'was careful rarely to praise his children directly'.(13) The reason for this was, naturally, a fear that praise might foster worldly pride. It was the duty of parents to oppose in children 'the desire of the admiration and applause of (their) fellow-creatures', for it was 'the passion of which the empire is by far the most general, and perhaps the authority the most commanding'.(14)

Letters written to his mother in the summer of 1800, when De Quincey spent a holiday with the young Lord Westport at Eton and the Irish estate of Westport's father, the Earl of Altamont, show De Quincey trying earnestly to propitiate his mother by a display of the obligatory Evangelical attitudes.

He gives a detailed account of his day, as follows:

> I and Westport rise at various times between half-past four and six. I read the Bible before breakfast and Lord Westport writes copies and cyphers. We breakfast with Lord Altamont, then read again, then ride and bathe till about two or three o'clock, when we dine (for neither I nor Westport are able to wait till six). In the afternoon I read and write and Westport plays with his cousins. At about seven o'clock we sup on bread and milk and fruit (which is also our breakfast) and at nine go to bed.(15)

This detailed timetable conforms to the historian Doreen Rosman's statement that 'in order to monitor a child's development ... (Evangelical) parents required detailed accounts from absentee sons of their companions, of how they spent each hour of the day, of their reading, of their use of Sunday'(16) and so on. We note here with some amusement that, having risen between half-past four and six, Thomas 'read(s) the Bible before breakfast' and then 'read(s) and write(s)' while his friend plays. He is clearly trying to convey the impression of a strenuous, high-minded way of life of which his mother will approve. And to make it clear that he is keeping only the best company, Thomas presents a suitably saintly picture of his host; Lord Altamont, he says, 'abhors the very idea of gaming, and does not like to see a pack of cards ... He never swears, because he thinks it both a blackguard and a foolish practice. He always goes to Church once on a Sunday, makes all the responses, seems very attentive, and loves to talk with me about the sermon as we are coming home from church.'(17) Short of asserting plainly that the worthy Earl is one of the Lord's Elect, Thomas could hardly have given him higher credentials.

Unfortunately he also had to confess to his mother that he had on one occasion accompanied Lord Westport to the theatre. This violated a cherished rule of Evangelical conduct: the avoidance of public amusements, and especially of plays, which were held to involve time-wasting, promiscuous mixing with worldly company and imbibing, through the drama, false and worldly values. 'Frequenting plays', states a contemporary, 'affords a proof of the depravity of human nature beyond most other things.'(18)

When De Quincey made his shamefaced confession he tried to place the main responsibility on his friend Lord Westport, who, he wrote, 'came to me and desired me to go with him to the play. I tried to escape by saying that I had letters to write ... however, as he seemed much disappointed ... I consented at length to accompany him ... But be assured, my dear mother, I would not have done this for all the world if I could have helped it, had I no other reason for avoiding public amusements than the earnest desire of obliging and obeying you.'(19)

We might imagine from all this that Mrs De Quincey's Evangelical views would have had a constricting effect on her son's imaginative development. But in one respect at least this would be the opposite of the truth, for it was probably by way of Evangelical circles at Bath and Bristol that De Quincey first encountered the poetry of Wordsworth, the greatest single agent in the awakening of his own imaginative and creative powers. The first poem of Wordsworth's that he came across was 'We are Seven', which he says was 'handed about in manuscript' at Bath, where he saw it during a school holiday.(20) Who showed it to him we do not know, but the publisher of the *Lyrical Ballads*, Joseph Cottle, had several friends in West Country Evangelical circles, and had given a copy to Hannah More, amongst others. It seems at least possible that the poem found its way to the De Quincey household by way of Hannah More: 'We are Seven' was perhaps a poem of particular appeal for an earnestly religious reader with an interest in children's literature. At any rate, the poem aroused De Quincey's interest and led him in due course to the *Lyrical Ballads* themselves, and so to Cottle, to Coleridge, and at last to Grasmere, where in 1807 he for the first time met Wordsworth face to face.

De Quincey's open repudiation of his mother's values came, of course, in 1802, when at the age of nearly seventeen he rebelled against her determination to keep him at school and ran away from the Manchester Grammar School to become, for several months, a homeless wanderer in North Wales and London. His feelings of depression and frustration at the school are elaborately described in the 1856 *Confessions*. What he does not describe there, however, is the long and bitter process of argument with his mother which preceded his flight. Thomas first insisted that he must leave the school in February 1802, and there followed four months of wrangling, mainly by letter, in which he argued that the school was damaging his health and stunting his intellectual development, whilst his mother marshalled a battery of religious artillery which she directed to trying to enforce his obedience.

It seems clear that Mrs De Quincey was less concerned with the actual merits of the case than with the fundamental importance of filial obedience. Parental views on the child's duty to obey were, of course, very strong in early nineteenth-century society generally, but Evangelical theology gave them a peculiarly terrifying intensity. Parents were encouraged to scrutinise their children's behaviour for indications of their spiritual state; often these turned out to be signs of depravity, though sometimes grace could be detected. The former meant, of course, that the child was in danger of perdition, and it was believed that the child's will must be 'broken' as a preparation for spiritual awakening and conversion. Parents who failed to accomplish this were failing in a great responsibility and could not therefore feel confident of their own salvation. The Eclectic Society, the central forum of Evangelical debate, had considered in 1798 the question 'What are the first and most prominent discoveries of Depravity in children, and the best methods of counteracting them?' The Reverend T. Scott, in answer, pointed to 'Self-Will', and opined that 'the present disorders of Europe may be assigned to the want of the old plan of discipline. We should teach children that they must obey a *master*.' (21) Samuel Ogden, whose sermons we have already found in the De Quincey household, reminded his audience that in Old Testament times a rebellious son could be stoned to death, and asked, 'What crimes will he not in time commit, who begins with this? and what punishment may he not grow up to suffer? "The eye, that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it!"'(22)

In her anxious letters to her recalcitrant son in 1802, Mrs De Quincey makes it very clear that she feels a pressing religious duty in demanding her son's total obedience.

> I have an awful account to give as a parent (she writes); my charge is one of the talents I must render up with improvement, or meet the just punishment of its neglect or abuse ... At some period of your life you must be convinced, either to your dismay or advantage, that every human being is brought upon the stage of existence for the great purpose of glorifying God above all, and of doing good, and of preparing for his own permanent happiness... Those unacquainted or but feebly impressed with this truth are puffed up, and are pursuing their own glory in all they do, which is the very essence of all that is contrary to God; it is the very spirit of heathenism; and if any one temper of mind may singly be put to denote the whole anti-Christian character, it is self-glory; and its monstrous adjuncts are independence and pride, which cast angels from heaven, where such tempers are no more admissable now than then ... As your parent, my very dear child, I solemnly request, I command you in the name of that God whom you must serve or lose, that you do conscientiously read every day at least a chapter in the Gospels or Epistles; there you will learn ... to know yourself, your end, your duty.(23)

De Quincey was contending with the doctrine of human depravity, and the depravity of children in particular. It says a good deal for his firmness of mind that he nonetheless took matters into his own hands and left the school; but, on the other hand, it is not surprising that in the *Confessions* he is inclined to view his flight from school as a kind of Fall, a rash act which was to precipitate upon him a 'hurricane, and perfect hailstorm of affliction' (24), however much it might at first savour of freedom when he walked out of Manchester on that fine July morning, as he says, 'with Providence my guide', a volume of Euripides in one pocket and a volume of Wordsworth in the other.

One might imagine that De Quincey's practical involvement with his mother's theology ended there. But after his adventures in London De Quincey re-established a guarded but amicable relationship with his mother and in 1811 she writes to him with advice from Hannah More and 'Mr Venn from Clapham' about the Sunday School which Mary and Dorothy Wordsworth are helping to establish at Grasmere.

We turn now to the question of De Quincey's major writings. Did Evangelical thought and literature make any contribution to De Quincey's prose masterpieces, or did he turn away unmarked from the world-picture which had been impressed upon him for a substantial portion of his childhood? Obviously my contention is that Evangelical habits of thought *are* traceable in his work; though at present only a brief sketch can be given of a range of connections which could be brought into clear focus and true proportion only by extensive further research.

No-one, so far as I know, has paused to reflect on the reasons why De Quincey's first significant original work should have been autobiographical or how it came about that he had already, as he tells us, a pre-existing body of 'notes' to draw on for 'the Pains of Opium'. Part of the answer, I believe, may lie in the fact that De Quincey had been brought up in a tradition which heavily stressed 'the important practice of self-examination'(25) and which regularly recommended the keeping of diaries and the practice of autobiography as an aid to self-knowledge.(26) De Quincey himself, as we know, kept a diary in 1803, in the depressed period following his London adventures, and though in every line it implies rejection of his mother's values, it shares with many surviving Evangelical diaries an anxious, unsparing moral and psychological self-scrutiny.

As a particular instance of De Quincey's contact with the tradition of self-examination, I want to look briefly at a work which he is known to have read in about 1805; this is John Foster's long essay, 'On a Man's Writing Memoirs of Himself'.(27) Foster was a baptist minister who wrote extensively for the *Eclectic Review* and whose writings were highly regarded by Evangelicals inside and outside the Anglican Church. De Quincey wrote a short and rather dismissive essay on Foster in December 1845, which shows that he had in fact considered Foster's work fairly carefully. He comments in detail on some of the essays, but it is noticeable that he skirts around Foster's most admired piece, his only comment being that 'Whether a man should write memoirs of himself cannot have any personal interest for one reader in a myriad'.(28) Perhaps not, one might respond, but if the question had a personal interest for even one reader, then that reader might well have been Thomas De Quincey. Foster recommends autobiography as a means to self-knowledge; one should endeavour 'not so much to assemble the mere facts and events of life, as to discriminate the successive states of the mind, and the progress of character'.(29) Recollection of small incidents which led to great developments is important, says Foster: man's life is the prelude to eternity, and accordingly 'A commencement, small in itself, may become important as the introduction to a sequel that is grand ... There is a mystic importance in the early part of a series of actions which is to have no end'.(30) Perhaps coincidentally, De Quincey uses Foster's phrase, 'a mystic importance', in the 1821 *Confessions*, where he recounts his first purchase of opium at the shop of the 'immortal druggist':'I feel a mystic importance attached to the minutest circumstances connected with the place and the time, and the man (if man he was) that first laid open to me the Paradise of Opium-eaters.'(31) Foster's view of autobiography seems strikingly close to that embodied in the *Confessions*. He recommends for example, that the autobiographer revisit 'Places and things, which have an association with ... the points of your past life', and suggests that 'A man of strong associations finds memoirs of himself already written on the places where he has conversed with happiness or misery'.(32) One recalls De Quincey's return on his birthday, August 15, 1821, when he was in the midst of writing the *Confessions*, to contemplate the exterior of the house in Greek Street which he had haunted, cold and hungry, in 1802.

De Quincey, in his late essay on Foster, is somewhat disparaging of his style, noting 'the contrast ... between the uncoloured style of his general diction and the brilliant felicity of occasional images embroidered upon the sober ground of the text' - which seem, he says, 'as extraneous to the substance as the flowers which are chalked for an evening upon the floors of ballrooms'.(33) De Quincey's own marvellous image of the chalked flowers (borrowed, incidentally, from Wordsworth: see 'I am not one who much or oft delights ...') should not distract us from the fact that some of Foster's best passages strikingly anticipate De Quincey's own characteristic imagery. To give one suggestive example, in a passage on the general human lack of introspection, Foster writes,

> A man might have lived an age, and traversed a continent, minutely exploring its curiosities, and interpreting the half-obliterated characters on its monuments, unconscious the while of a process operating on his own mind to impress or to erase characters of much

> more importance to him than all the figured brass or marble that Europe contains. After having explored many a cavern or dark ruinous avenue, he may have left undetected a darker recess in his character.(34)

Here, the half-obliterated characters, and the process operating 'to impress or to erase characters' on the mind, seem in particular to anticipate 'The Palimpsest of the Human Brain'; whilst the Piranesian images of caverns, 'dark ruinous avenue(s)' and 'darker recess(es)' recall the architectural imagery of the *Confessions* themselves. It is striking that in the same essay Foster discusses, with some indignation, 'the cant pretence and title of *Confessions*, sometimes adopted by ... narrators of their own disgrace'(35) - a reference to the popular memoirs of courtesans, adventurers and so on. Is it possible that Foster's attack on such titles as a 'nominal deference to morality ... amidst those very corruptions, on which these writers place their reliance for toleration, or applause' provoked De Quincey's justification of his own title, and his careful differentiation of himself from the 'demireps, adventurers, or swindlers' who 'obtrude on (our) notice (their) moral ulcers or scars'?(36) Foster certainly provides one interesting link between De Quincey and the Evangelical tradition of self-examination. Others perhaps await discovery.

An author of a very different kind whose importance for De Quincey's work has been largely overlooked, is the unofficial laureate of early nineteenth-century Evangelicalism, William Cowper. Cowper, of course, was widely-read by many sections of society, but he was, after Milton, probably the favourite poet of the Evangelicals, (37) who held him in quasi-religious veneration. He was frequently quoted in sermons and religious books. Wilberforce, in his *Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System* ... quotes extensively from *The Task*, recommending the study of Book V in particular to the faint-hearted and confessing his 'warm attachment to the beautifully natural compositions of this truly Christian poet' whose work 'appears to me scarcely surpassed by anything in our language'.(38) De Quincey refers to Cowper as typifying the literary taste of his father's class (as we have noted, quite what this means is uncertain, partly because we know too little about Thomas Quincey the elder). There can be no doubt that De Quincey knew his Cowper thoroughly: after Milton, Shakespeare and Wordsworth, Cowper is probably the poet to whom he most often alludes. There are, of course, important explicit references: for example, at the beginning of 'The Palimsest of the Human Brain' De Quincey humorously celebrates the 'divine stupidity' of mankind by reference to Cowper's playful account of 'the slow development of the *sofa* through successive generations of immortal dulness' in Book I of *The Task*.(39) But the less conspicuous debts are equally important. Take, for example, the quintessentially De Quinceyan adjective 'heart-shaking'. It occurs first in 'The English Mail-Coach', where we find 'the heart-shaking news of Trafalgar'; later, the guard's trumpet, 'that once announced from afar the laurelled mail', is characterised as 'heart-shaking when heard screaming on the wind'(40). Given the context, can we doubt that this is a reminiscence of Cowper's post-boy, who in Book IV of *The Task*, announced by his 'twanging horn', brings 'th'important budget! usher'd in/With such heart-shaking music' and carries news 'of grief/Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some' - precisely like De Quincey's mail-coach? 'Heart-shaking' occurs again soon afterwards to describe the effect of the decorations applied to the mail-coaches on the occasion of a famous victory (41); 'heart-shattering' appears towards the end of the piece - again in association with a trumpeter (42) and in the *Confessions* we find 'Heart-quaking' at the point of De Quincey's first purchase of opium (43). (Perhaps coincidentally, Cowper mentions opium only two lines after his 'heart-shaking music'.)(44)

But Cowper's *Task* may be present in the *Confessions* in a more pervasive fashion; at any rate, there are close affinities in the digressiveness of both works, their free movement between domestic detail and visionary expansiveness, and the idiosyncratic *personae* adopted by their authors. De Quincey asserts, 'my way of writing is rather to think aloud, and follow my own humours, than much to consider who is listening to me;'(45) Cowper professes, in *The Task*, to be merely 'pursuing the train of thought to which his situation and turn of mind led him'.(46) *The Task* surely helped (along, perhaps, with *A Tale of a Tub* and Sterne's *Sentimental Journey)* to suggest De Quincey's creation of an intimate, whimsical, self-deprecating *persona*, through whose 'humours' a sense of psychological coherence could be imposed on the most diverse materials.

Probably De Quincey's most interesting debt to Cowper is his description, in the 'Introduction to the Pains of Opium', of a winter evening at his cottage. This closely parallels memorable elements of *The Task's* Book IV, 'The Winter Evening'. Both writers offer defiant praise of Winter - in Cowper's words, 'king of intimate delights,/Fire-side enjoyments, home-born happiness,/And all comforts that the lowly roof/Of undisturbed retirement, and the hours/Of long uninterrupted ev'ning, know'.(47) De Quincey's enjoyment of 'the divine pleasures which attend a winter fireside: candles at four o'clock, warm hearth-rugs, tea, a fair tea-maker, shutters closed, curtains flowing in ample draperies on the floor'(48) match closely *The Task's* exhortation to 'stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,/Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,/And, while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn/Throws up a steamy column, and the cups/That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,/ So let us welcome peaceful evening in.'(49) Indeed, it may be that the passage was intended as an affectionate tribute to Cowper, and that what we are rather laboriously disinterring would have been obvious to most of De Quincey's original readers. (A kind of retrospective connecting link may be found in the *Autobiographic Sketches*, where De Quincey draws explicitly on Cowper's 'Winter Evening' to typify the ambience of his parental home and paraphrases the passage in terms which partly resemble his own account in the *Confessions*, as if the two passages have coalesced in his memory.)(50)

In case we seem to have wandered rather far from Evangelical thought in the strict sense, it may be worth noting that much of De Quincey's ambivalence about his opium-taking in the *Confessions* turns on the question of whether opium-use is a rational or a carnal pleasure. This was a test regularly applied by Evangelicals to enjoyments of the most diverse kinds.(51) De Quincey himself uses the distinction quite unselfconsciously of music: 'music', he says, 'is an intellectual or a sensual pleasure, according to the temperament of him who hears it'.(52) The general purport of the *Confessions* is that such pleasures as he has found in opium are intellectual pleasures and so not in themselves culpable. In attempting thus to extenuate himself he is defending himself, not against a widely-held disapproval of opium-taking (for in 1821 no such general view existed), but against a specifically Evangelical suspicion of secular enjoyments. This is not to suggest any conscious debate with Evangelical principles; it seems rather a case of habits of thought so deeply ingrained that De Quincey never really questions them.

Perhaps surprisingly, traces of Evangelical thought are more prominent in *Suspiria de Profundis*, written twenty-four years after the *Confessions*. As we have seen, the religious experience of children had an important place in Evangelical thought. Much of *Suspiria* is concerned specifically with childhood spiritual experience, the treatment of which ranges from uniquely powerful and poetic evocations of the narrator's own visionary experiences, to some fairly schematic material strongly reminiscent of popular Evangelical writing of the early 1800 s. To begin at the cruder end of the spectrum, let us consider a footnote which De Quincey appends to the first part of *Suspiria* - 'The Affliction of Childhood'. In his main text, De Quincey has just been expressing his distaste for children 'trained to *talk* of religion ... controversially of polemically'. In such cases, he says, 'the religion becomes nonsense, and the child a hypocrite'. This might be taken for a repudiation of Evangelical attitudes - at least, as these had become known (and caricatured) by the 1840 s. But De Quincey appends a surprising footnote: 'I expect, however, one case - the case of a child dying of an organic disorder, so therefore as to die slowly, and aware of its own condition. Because such a child is solemnized, and sometimes, in a partial sense, inspired... having put off the earthly mind in many things ... I ... acknowledge to have read with emotion of one child who, knowing herself for months to be amongst the elect of death, became anxious even to sickness of heart for what she called the *conversion* of her father.'(53) This child has dozens of analogues in early nineteenth-century Evangelical literature. She descends ultimately from the dying, preaching children of James Janeway's *A Token for Children*, reprinted in many editions from the 1790 s onwards, and its many imitators. 'Saved' children on their deathbeds were regularly portrayed as anxious about the spiritual state of their friends and relatives, and De Quincey undoubtedly found his story in an Evangelival periodical or tract. His note takes up, no doubt consciously several of what one is tempted to call the 'cant' phrases of such publications: 'having put off the earthly mind'; 'to be amongst the elect of death'; and, of course, '*conversion*'. It is odd that De Quincey repeats the story with such complete almost naive seriousness.

Similar seriousness is afforded to the account, in the final section of *Suspiria*, of the dying mother's letter of spiritual advice to her orphan twins - a letter which they are told to read 'either in the event of any calamity which ... should overspread their paths with total darkness,' or 'in the event of life flowing in too profound a stream of prosperity so as to threaten them with an alienation of interest from all spiritual objects'.(54) - of which she makes it clear that she would prefer the former and gloomier contingency. Such letters were frequently recommended and written by Evangelical parents,(55) and often expressed the same preference for spiritually bracing misfortune over enervating prosperity. As John Bacon wrote to his daughter, 'Perhaps I ought to rejoice at your *conflicts* ... Sure I am, you would have less evidence of a divine work, if you were entirely without them'.(56)

But the parts of *Suspiria* which deal most powerfully with spiritual experience are, of course, the justly celebrated accounts in 'The Affliction of Childhood' of the impact upon De Quincey of the death of his sister Elizabeth when he was nearly seven years old. The account of his vision in Elizabeth's death-chamber, where he had crept at midday, secretly, unnoticed by any member of the household, is unforgettable in the vividness and originality of its imagery. De Quincey has already expatiated upon the summer sunlight beyond the window, and the 'hollow, solemn, Memnonian, but saintly swell' of the wind outside. Then,

> instantly, when my ear caught this vast Aeolian intonation, when my eye filled with the golden fullness of life, the pomps and glory of the heavens outside, and turning when it settled upon the frost which overspread my sister's face, instantly a trance fell upon me. A vault seemed to open in the zenith of the far blue sky, a shaft which ran up for ever. I in spirit rose as if on billows that also ran up the shaft for ever; ahd the billows

> seemed to pursue the throne of God; but that also ran before us and fled away continually. The flight and the pursuit seemed to go on for ever and ever. Frost, gathering frost, some Sarsar wind of death, seemed to repel me; I slept - for how long I cannot say; slowly I recovered my self-possession, and found myself standing, as before, close to my sister's bed.(57)

The original experience which De Quincey here recreates remains inscrutable: De Quincey himself explained that in such passages, 'though a child's feelings are spoken of, it is not the child who speaks. I decipher what the child felt only in cipher.'(58) If the details of the account do have any direct relation to an Evangelical perspective, these may well be the result of hindsight, for we do not know whether in 1792, when Elizabeth died, De Quincey had yet encountered Evangelical thought in any form. What does represent an important similarity, however, between *Suspiria* and early nineteenth-century Evangelical literature, is the central importance attributed to the child's experience at the deathbed of another child. Presence at the deathbeds, and viewing the corpses, of siblings or childhood friends, were viewed as an important and even desirable ingredient in religious education. 'Deathbeds', an historian has written, 'had an almost sacramental function in Evangelical experience'.(59) Powerful spiritual transformations were often precipitated by such experiences, as Evangelical memoirs testify.

Other frequently-mentioned spiritual catalysts were church music and the words of the liturgy, which seem to have impressed other children of the period as strongly as they impressed De Quincey. With the account in *Suspiria* of De Quincey's childhood visions in church, stimulated by his mourning for Elizabeth, by the words of the Litany, and by 'the blare of the tumultuous organ'(60) we might compare a passage from C.I. La Trobe's *Letters to my Children* (written in 1815 and extensively circulated in manuscript, though not printed until 1851). Here is La Trobe's account of his first communion:

> The chapel was lighted with lamps, placed round the walls, shedding a quiet, solemn light on the congregation. The harmonious and devotional singing of between 300 and 400 communicants, all of whom, as I believed, were with their whole hearts waiting for a special blessing ... melted my soul within me ... And when, at the conclusion of that service, the congregation rose, and with united voices sang that hymn,
>
> "Praise be given to Christ, our souls' beloved," etc.
>
> the effect on me was such, that I thought myself transported among the saints in bliss, joining in the song of the redeemed.(61)

De Quincey, of course, makes his own highly individual and by no means orthodox use of such experiences; but it seems at least plausible that a reading of Evangelical literature helped to shape his view of his own past. Children were encouraged to expect intense spiritual experience upon the viewing of a corpse, or when hearing church music or the words of the liturgy; and for whatever reasons, his account of his childhood reproduces such patterns. It may also be that the fervent descriptions of religious experience in Evangelical memoirs, tracts and sermons helped sow in early life the stylistic seeds of the 'impassioned prose' of his maturity.

In 'The Affliction of Childhood' De Quincey in vision 'pursue(d) the throne of God' but was impeded and finally repelled by the consciousness of mortality -

a 'gathering frost, some Sarsar-wind of death'. It is, of course, in 'The English Mail-Coach' that the pursuit is, in a sense, brought to its conclusion. 'The English Mail-Coach' is De Quincey's most explicitly apocalyptic work, and the origins of its political vision probably lie in the pre-occupation of many English Christians during the Napoleonic Wars with the Book of Revelation. There was a widespread belief - not only amongst Evangelicals - that the French Revolution and other traumatic events of the period were fulfilling the prophecies of Revelation; commentators vied with each other in intricate argument to identify Bonaparte with Gog, or with Satan, or to explain the claims of the French Revolution to represent the 'great earthquake' which follows the opening of the sixth seal in Revelation VI.12. Such speculation was rife in Evangelical circles. No less a figure than John Venn, speaking to the Eclectic Society in 1804, announced that 'Bonaparte is Satan personified, and his legions ... If the French prevailed, I should consider it the death of the two witnesses'(62) - a reference to the two witnesses of Revelation XI, of whom it is prophesied that 'when they have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.'

However sceptical he may have been of such views, De Quincey was sufficiently aware of them to draw upon them for his apocalyptic vision of 'Waterloo and Recovered Christendom!' celebrated by 'the quick and the dead that sang together to God'. But his political vision is linked to a personal one. In the second instalment of the work, 'The Vision of Sudden Death', De Quincey points to what he calls 'a dreadful ulcer, lurking far down in the depths of human nature,' which he typifies by 'That dream so familiar to childhood, of meeting a lion, and, from languishing prostration in hope and vital energy, that constant sequel of lying down before him', which 'publishes the secret frailty of human nature - reveals its deep-seated Pariah falsehood to itself - records its abysmal treachery. Perhaps not one of us escapes that dream; perhaps, as by some sorrowful doom of man, that dream repeats for every one of us, through every generation, the original temptation of Eden'.(63)

This, clearly, is De Quincey's exposition of 'human depravity', of the individual and general corruption of the human heart, the perception of which, in the Evangelical scheme, marked the beginning of the process of conversion. But do we also find the end of that process, the intuitive sense of God's grace perceived through faith? I think we do. At the end of the essay, the moment of apocalyptic triumph is impeded by the narrator's own *lack* of faith. 'What ailed me, that I should fear when the triumphs of earth were advancing? Ah! Pariah heart within me, that couldst never hear the sound of joy without sullen whispers of treachery in ambush ... - Wherefore shouldst *thou* not fear, though all men should rejoice?' But - and De Quincey adopts for a moment the words of Revelation XIV.2 - 'I heard a voice from Heaven, which said "Let there be no reflux of panic - let there be no more fear, and no more sudden death! Cover them with joy as the tides cover the shore!"' The individual 'I' of the narrator is temporarily lost in the collective 'we', and 'As brothers we moved together; to the skies we rose - to the dawn that advanced - to the stars that fled - rendering thanks to God in the highest.'(64) The narrator's spiritual and social alienation is healed; he knows directly, and in the pattern of his own life, 'the endless resurrections of (God's) love'. And surely no adherent of the 'Clapham Sect' could have asked for a more triumphant affirmation of grace encountered as living experience.

For a long time it was customary to consider De Quincey's writings with reference to the imagery supposedly generated by opium-taking; more recently we have learned to read him in the context of the poetic theory and practice of Wordsworth and Coleridge, and in relation to contemporary politics. It may be that his debt to Evangelical literature and thought is also more important than we have realised. There is no evidence that he was ever, as child or adult, convinced by his mother's religious views; but paradoxically, it may nonetheless be true that the Evangelical Revival's most significant contribution to English literature was made in the stimulus it gave to the visionary imagination of Thomas De Quincey.

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CHARLES LAMB AND *THE ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY*

A paper given at the Charles Lamb Society's Day Conference at Cambridge on 22 September 1984 by Dr. W.G. Day

It is a truth universally acknowledged that the one seminal work of English Literature of which we will never see a definitive edition is *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. The *Anatomy* is an editor's nightmare: it contains an enormous number of references, quotations and allusions. Aldis Wright started working on the task of identification in 1871 and continued until his death in 1914 when his notes were passed to Edward Bensly. In 1926 the Oxford Bibliographical Society announced that a definitive edition was to appear from the Clarendon Press 'within a few years'(1), but Bensly worked on until his death in 1939, and the only fruits of these 69 years of labours were a handful of brief published notes.

If the explicatory annotations are the work of several lifetimes they are nonetheless as nothing when compared to the bibliographical problems presented. The *Anatomy* initially appeared as a quarto of 880 pages in 1621, and from that point to his death in 1640 Robert Burton appears to have devoted a substantial portion of his life to a continuous process of revision. 1624 saw a second edition now grown to a folio of 652 pages, which four years later had been expanded by over a hundred pages of additions and refinements. Another four years passed and 1632 saw the fourth edition, a folio of over eight hundred pages. The last lifetime edition appeared in 1638 and bibliographically is horrendously complicated: the printing of the work was started by Robert Young in Edinburgh, and he had managed to print the synopsis and the first 346 pages before Henry Cripps, the Oxford publisher who had been responsible for the preceding editions and who owned a half share in the work, decided to exert his rights in the matter. However, before the printing could be transferred to Oxford, it seems that Burton wanted changes made to the Edinburgh sheets and so Young's partner in London, Miles Flesher, reprinted and altered the pagination of nearly 70 of the pages already printed. The rest of the text was completed at Oxford, though by two separate printers: Turner and Lichfield. The binders, presented with sheets from Edinburgh, London, and two establishments in Oxford, were, not surprisingly, rather confused and there are times when one finds at various points in copies of this edition both slashed cancellandum and its cancellans. As if this were not enough for the notional editor, a further posthumous edition containing what Cripps announced were 'considerable additions' appeared. It appeared in 1651 with an Oxford imprint, and in 1652 with a London imprint.

Two further editions appeared in the seventeenth century: in 1660 and 1676.(2)

Though a nightmare for the would-be editor, this profusion of markedly different editions can be a godsend for the hunter of sources.

In the final paragraph of 'The Two Races of Men' Lamb advises the reader:

> If thy heart overfloweth to lend them, lend thy books; but let it be to such a one as S.T.C. - he will return them (generally anticipating the time appointed) with usury; enriched with annotations tripling their value.(3)

One of the works so annotated, he adds, is a copy of 'old Burton'. Lucas' note to this passage (II:327-28) states quite firmly: that Lamb owned the Burton quarto of 1621; that at the time of writing the note it was still in existence; and that it had no annotations whatsoever by Coleridge. Unfortunately, he says in a note nearly a hundred pages later, 'I do not know where it now is' (II:416)

Though there are many occasions when Lamb alludes to Burton, there are not many when he makes use of specific material. 'On the Melancholy of Tailors' for example is clearly heavily indebted in general terms to the *Anatomy*, but there is only one specific borrowing:

> *Diet.* - To which purpose I find a most remarkable passage in Burton, in his chapter entitled "Bad diet a cause of melancholy". "Amongst herbs to eaten (he says) I find gourds, cucumbers, melons, disallowed; but especially CABBAGE. It causeth troublesome dreams, and sends up black vapours to the brain. Galen, *loc. affect.* lib.3, cap.6, of all herbs condemns CABBAGE, and Isaack, lib.2, cap.1, *animae gravitatem facit*, it brings heaviness to the soul." (I:175)

A more extended borrowing is to be found in 'A Chapter on Ears' where, having again acknowledged Burton as source, Lamb writes;

> "Most pleasant it is to such as are melancholy given, to walk alone in some solitary grove, betwixt wood and water, by some brook side, and to meditate upon some delightsome and pleasant subject, which shall affect him most, *amabilis insania*, and *mentis gratissimus error*. A most incomparable delight to build castles in the air, to go smiling to themselves, acting an infinite variety of parts which they suppose, and strongly imagine, they act, or that they see done.- So delightsome these toys at first, they could spend whole days and nights without sleep, even whole years in such contemplations and fantasticall meditations, which are like so many dreams, and will hardly be drawn from them - winding and unwinding themselves like so many clocks, and still pleasing their humours, until at the last the SCENE TURNS UPON A SUDDEN, and they being now habitated to such meditation and solitary places, can endure no company, can think of nothing but harsh and distasteful subjects. Fear, sorrow, suspicion, *subrusticus pudor*, discontent, cares, and weariness of life, surprize them on a sudden, and they can think of nothing else; continually suspecting no sooner are their eyes open, but this infernal plague of melancholy seizeth on them, and terrifies their souls, representing some dismal object to their minds; which now by no means, no labour, no persuasions, they can avoid, they cannot be rid of, they cannot resist." (II:40-41)

The standard editorial remark upon this passage is that it shows Lamb quoting very freely, and particular attention is drawn to his capitalization of the 'SCENE TURNS UPON A SUDDEN' and the oddness of the use of 'habitated' in 'They being now habitated to such meditation and solitary places'. The editors usually point out that Burton had written 'the scene is turned' not 'the scene turns', and'habituated' not 'habitated.' What this reveals is the edition the editors are using, not the edition Lamb was using. The words Lamb uses throughout the passage, including 'habitated' and 'the scene turns' are precisely those of Burton in the quarto edition (1, 2, 2, 6, 115-16). Lamb is not quoting very freely: he is copying very carefully. And that the words he uses are precisely those of the quarto edition, they were revised in all subsequent editions to the form quoted by the editors, proves conclusively that Lucas' asseveration is correct: Lamb owned the 1621 edition of the *Anatomy*.

Would that life were so simple.

In his imitation of Burton, the 'Curious Fragments', one of the extracts, 'A Conceipt of Diabolical Possession', seems to be loosely based upon the English poem found in the prefatory matter of the *Anatomy* entitled 'The Author's Abstract of Melancholy'. And that Lamb knew this passage in detail can be demonstrated from 'Witches, and other Night Fears' where Lamb tells of his father's copy of Stackhouse's *History of the Bible*, and refers to a picture of 'the Witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that I had never seen' (II:66). The reason for this wish is explained:

> That detestable picture ... gave the fashion to my dreams -
> if dreams they were - for the scene of them was invariably the
> room in which I lay. Had I never met with the picture, the fears
> would have come self-pictured in some shape or other -
> Headless bear, black man, or ape -
> but as it was, my imaginations took that form. (II:67-68)

Burton's 'Abstract' included the lines:

> Methinks I hear, methinks I see,
> Ghosts, goblins, fiends; my phantasy
> presents a thousand ugly shapes,
> Headless bears, black men and apes.

A clear example of a borrowing, but a borrowing which complicates matters. 'The Author's Abstract of Melancholy' does not appear in the first edition of Burton's work, nor in the second; it was first printed in the edition of 1632. There seem to be two possible explanations of this: that Lamb borrowed a third or later edition of the *Anatomy* from a friend, or that he owned two separate editions himself. I would incline to the latter explanation. I have already cited Lamb's claim that Coleridge had heavily annotated his copy of Burton. There is no reason to doubt the veracity of the claim. I have also cited Lucas' claim that Lamb's copy of the *Anatomy* revealed no notes by Coleridge. There is no reason to doubt the veracity of this claim either. That Lamb's detailed use of the text of Burton reveals him to have had access to two separate editions allows us to accept both claims. The hunt for the copy of the *Anatomy* owned by Lamb and annotated by Coleridge should perhaps be directed to copies of the third and later editions.

After the 1676 edition the printing history of the *Anatomy* would seem to suggest that it had fallen out of favour: in 1734 Thomas Hearne recorded that it was possible to acquire a well bound copy for a shilling.(4) The next edition appeared in 1800 printed by J. Cundee for Vernor and Hood in two octavo volumes. It was of this edition that Lamb wrote in 'Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading':

> I do not know a more heartless sight than the reprint of the Anatomy of Melancholy. What need was there of unearthing the bones of that fantastic old great man, to expose them in a winding sheet of the newest fashion to modern censure? What hapless stationer could ever dream of Burton becoming popular? (II:174)

Charles Lamb knew the *Anatomy* in some detail and evidently appreciated its finer points, and it is therefore interesting that such a perceptive critic could be so spectacularly wrong.

What hapless stationer could ever dream of Burton becoming popular?

Vernor and Hood for a start. Their edition was reprinted in 1801, 1804 and 1806, and 1806 also saw the appearance of a rival edition by Edward du Bois. In the nineteenth century there were at least 18 different editions which were between them issued over 60 times. Far from being hapless, the stationers had found a very lucrative item, and indeed, since 1800 *The Anatomy of Melancholy* has never been out of print.

How could Lamb have been so wrong? Could we have expected him to have got it right? I think we could.

In *Athenae Oxoniensis* Antony Wood wrote of the *Anatomy:*

> 'Tis a book so full of variety of reading, that Gentlemen who have lost their time and are put to a push for invention, may furnish themselves with matter for common or scholastical discourse and writing. Sevral authors have unmercifully stolen matter from the said book without any acknowledgement ... (5)

This claim, that the *Anatomy* was a work much used by plagiarists, was a common one. Thomas Hearne noted:

> No book sold better formerly than Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, in which there is a great variety of learning, so that it hath become a common-place for filchers.(6)

And Archbishop Herring, in a letter to William Duncombe, observed:

> The wits of Queen Anne's reign, and the beginning of George I's, were not a little beholden to (Burton).(7)

Scholars of this century have shown that these reiterated claims are quite true: many writers of the eighteenth century, from Addison and Steele through to Smollett can be shown to have lifted passages from the *Anatomy*. Lamb, of course, was not to know of all of these examples, but the last decade of the eighteenth century saw the *Anatomy* being raised to a position of considerable prominence in literary circles.

Boswell's *Life of Johnson* appeared in 1791 and contained the oft quoted remark: 'Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy", he said, was the only book that ever took him out of his bed two hours sooner than he wished to rise.'(8) On another occasion Johnson is recorded as saying that it is 'a valuable work. It is, perhaps, overloaded with quotation. But there is great spirit and great power in what Burton says.' (*Life*, II:440). Johnson's praise seems to have influenced his circle; in a number of letters, one to Boswell and two to Mrs. Thrale, Johnson cited the famous advice: 'Be not solitary, be not idle', and on each occasion specifically referred to Burton as his source. Mrs. Thrale indeed, on Johnson's advice, read the book itself and may be found exclaiming:

> What a strange Book is Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy! & how it has been plunder'd! Milton took his Allegro and Penseroso from the Verses at the beginning, Savage his Speech of Suicide

> in the Wanderer from page 216. Swift his Tale of the Woman that held water in her Mouth to regain her Husband's Love by Silence - 'Tis printed in the Tatler; Johnson got his story of the Magnet that detects unchaste Wives from the same farrago, and even Shakespeare I believe the Trick put upon the Tinker Christopher Sly in the taming of the Shrew.(9)

Mrs Thrale had obviously read the book with some attention. Her remark about Milton also bears upon our expectations of Lamb's perceptions of the book. In the same year that Boswell's *Life of Johnson* appeared was published Thomas Warton's edition of *Poems upon several occasions ... by John Milton*. In it Warton pointed out in some detail the extent to which Milton was indebted to Burton in 'L'Allegro' and 'Il Penseroso'. He also offered the opinion:

> ... the writer's variety of learning, his quotations from scarce and curious books, his pedantry sparkling with rude wit and shapeless elegance, miscellaneous matter, intermixture of agreeable tales and illustrations, and perhaps above all, the singularities of his feelings cloathed in an uncommon quaintness of style, have contributed to render it, even to modern readers, a valuable repository of amusement and information.(10)

Precisely the sort of puff to make a hapless stationer believe his reprint might become popular.

But if the influence of Milton, Johnson and Warton was not enough there was a literary scandal which brought the name of the *Anatomy* to considerable prominance.

When *Tristram Shandy* first appeared the reviewers were generally favourable. William Kenrick in the *Monthly Review* was complimentary: 'On the whole we will venture to recommend Mr Tristram Shandy as a writer more ingenious and entertaining than any other of the present race of novelists.'(11) For the most part it was agreed that here was a writer who had brought novelty and originality to the novel. Those who made this claim for *Tristram Shandy* were mistaken; for *Tristram Shandy* is the apotheosis of plagiarism. In this novel Sterne raised borrowing to an art form. We now know that Sterne incorporated into his apparently original work well over two hundred passages, of up to a chapter at a time, from more than sixty different source books. Of these *The Anatomy of Melancholy* is far and away the most important, contributing over forty separate passages.(12)

Some indication of the size of Sterne's indebtedness and the particular importance of Burton to his mode of writing was first revealed in a paper read to the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society by the physician to the Lunatic Asylum, Dr John Ferriar. He read the paper on 21 January 1791 which, as the year of publication of Boswell and Warton's *Milton*, was clearly the *annus mirabilis* of Burtonian publicity.

Ferriar's essay was printed in the *Memoirs* of the Society for 1793 and gained wide circulation by being reprinted in the *Annual Register* for the same year.(13) The immediate result was a flurry of letters to the *European Magazine*, the *Gentleman's Magazine* and the *Critical Review*. The Correspondence was refuelled by the appearance of Ferriar's book length study, *Illustrations of Sterne*, in 1798, and its expanded two volume second edition in 1812. What is mainly interesting about the correspondence generated on the topic is the change in tone over the years. Initially the demonstrations of borrowing were offered in a matter of fact way with occasional aesthetic judgements upon the nature of the alteration to the original. As time went on there was less in the way of revelation and much more moralizing; expressions such as 'How are the mighty fallen ... debased to the lowest of all literary larcenies' and 'the sorry reputation of a servile imitator' became common.(14)

I think it reasonable to hold, that in view of the immense interest created by the works of Warton and Ferriar in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, together with Lamb's demonstrable interest in the works of Sterne, that he might have realized by 1800 that there would be a quite considerable market for a reprint of what was clearly a most influential work.

Interestingly I think it is also possible to trace in Lamb's comments upon and use of Burton a change which accords with the public feeling shown in the correspondence columns of the monthly magazines.

In a letter to Thomas Manning, written on 17 March 1800, Lamb noted:

> He (i.e. Coleridge) has lugged me to the brink of engaging to a newspaper, and has suggested to me for a first plan the forgery of a supposed manuscript of Burton the anatomist of melancholy. I have written the introductory letter; and, if I can pick up a few guineas this way, I feel they will be most *refreshing*, bread being so dear (VI: 159).

This appears to set Lamb in the great tradition of eighteenth century literary forgers along with such worthies as Psalmanazar, Lauder, Chatterton and Ireland. In retrospect it seems to have been rather foolhardy of Coleridge and Lamb to believe that, at a time when the *Anatomy* was being read rather closely by so many correspondents to the various monthlies, it would be possible to produce an unexposed forgery. Nevertheless the plan proceeded, for three weeks later he wrote to Manning again that he 'had struck off two imitations of Burton' (VI:161), and that he had sent them to the editor of the *Morning Post*. But the same letter shows that he had begun to realize that the imitations were not suitable for a newspaper.

Of the four 'Curious Fragments' the one most relevant to the present argument is extract III, the set of verses originally given the title, 'A Conceipt of Diabolical Possession'. Lucas records that:

> In one of Lamb's Commonplace Books preserved in the Rowfant Collection ... Lamb has copied these verses, attributing them without any qualification to the author of the *Anatomy* (V:296).

This seems to suggest that, at the time of copying, the notion of a literary forgery was still predominant. The verses were first printed in 1802 in the *John Woodvil* volume where the four extracts were prefixed by the note that they had been 'Extracted from a common-place book, which belonged to Robert Burton, the famous author of the Anatomy of Melancholy.' The 'Conceipt' was tied even more closely to Burton by the closing prayer:

> *Jesu Mariae! libera nos ab his tentationibus, orat, implorat, R.B. Peccator.* (I:395)

But in 1818 when the verses were reprinted in the *Works* a number of minor variations had been introduced together with two more important alterations. Firstly, the verses were no longer printed with the other extracts and thus were no longer introduced as being by Burton. Secondly, the closing prayer formula became:

> *Jesu! Maria! liberate nos ab his diris tentationibus Inimici.*
> (V:28)

Though the prose extracts remained as apparently by Burton, the overall effect was considerably diminished by these revisions. It is possible to argue that these revisions are indicative of a sensitive response on Lamb's part to a marked change in the public attitude to the notions of forgery and plagiarism.

In the *Essays* it is noteworthy that Lucas recorded only one occasion when Lamb failed to acknowledge a borrowing from the *Anatomy*. Most of the time not only is Lamb, as I have pointed out, very careful in his copying of material, he is also punctilious in the matter of declaring his source. He is, as far as I am aware, the first writer to be so punctilious in his treatment of Burton. Smollett's story in *Roderick Random* of the unfortunate medical condition of Narcissa's aunt (15) is passed off as original; Sterne, despite a multitude of borrowings, at no point in any of his extant writings mentions either Burton's name or the title of his work.

To describe Lamb as the first writer to be so punctilious is somewhat misleading - on the evidence of Antony Wood, Thomas Hearne, Archbishop Herring, Warton and Ferriar, it would appear that Lamb is the first author to acknowledge a debt to Burton in any form at all, punctilious or not. This all mixes rather oddly with his initial intention to set up as a forger, and with the fact that in the 1818 *Works* three of the 'Curious Fragments' are still prefaced as by Burton.

Lamb's most open indebtedness occurs in 'On the Melancholy of Tailors' (I;172-75) of which the entire theme is dependent upon Burton, and in which, after a most specific reference: 'I find a most remarkable passage in Burton, in his chapter entitled "Bad diet a cause of melancholy",' there follows the previously cited denunciation of cabbage together with the charming comment.

> I could not omit so flattering a testimony from an author, who, having no theory of his own to serve, has so unconsciously contributed to the confirmation of mine.

The essay is signed 'BURTON, *Junior'*, an accurate reflection of the relationship between the two writers.

That remark may be regarded as somewhat tendentious. Criticism of the 'Curious Fragments' divides into two camps. On the one hand we have the devotees of Lamb, such as Lucas who claimed:

> Of Lamb's imitations the first two are the most akin to the original in spirit, but the whole performance is curiously happy and a perfect illustration of his fellowship with the Elizabethans. Our language probably contains no more successful impersonations of any author: for the time being Lamb's mind approximated to that of Burton (I:394).

On the other hand there are the devotees of Burton, as exemplified by Paul Jordan Smith, who point out that Lamb's learning is essentially secondhand, and, more damningly, that it is limited to the extent that he is reduced to inventing authorities: he writes in Extract I: 'Concerning whom see *Plinius* and *Mandeuille* though *Fienus de monstris* doubteth at large of such a bird' (I:31). The only recorded work of Joannes Fienus (Jean Feyens [d.1585]) is *De Flatibus* and Thomas Fienus (Feyens [1567-1631]) though credited with several works does not appear to number *De Monstris* among them. Lamb also invents quotations. That in the first version there were also examples of anachronistic diction had been observed by Lamb himself; thus in the final extract he had originally written:

> Being in London I commonly dwell in the *suburbes*, as airiest, quietest, *loci musis propriores*, free from noise of caroches, waggons, mechanick, and base workes, workshoppes, also sights, pageants, spectacles of outlandish birds, fishes, crocodiles, *Indians*, mermaids, adde quarrels, fightings, wranglings of the mobbe, *plebs*, the rabble, duelloes with fists, *proper to this island*. (I:34)

In 1818 the 'mobbe', a word *OED* first records as being used in 1688, 48 years after Burton's death, is altered to the 'common sort'. An anachronism Lamb failed to change was in the first extract:

> After some weekes at sea he landeth, rides post to town, greets his family, kinsmen, *compotores, those jokers his friends that were wont to tipple with him at alehouses* (I:32),

where 'jokers' is a term not found until the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

However, the discovery of anachronisms is made easy by *OED*. Without access to that invaluable work Lamb is remarkably free from such errors in his imitations. I feel that his own epithet 'BURTON, *Junior*' is a very fair judgement.

All things considered the questions:

> What need was there of unearthing the bones of that fantastic old great man, to expose them in a winding sheet of the newest fashion to modern censure? What hapless stationer could ever dream of Burton becoming popular?

are inexplicable.

Lamb owned, I suggest, not one but two copies of the *Anatomy*; he wrote imitations of Burton of a standard unlikely to be surpassed; he knew the *Anatomy* in detail and was a perceptive critic; he was interested in Sterne: in 'My Relations' commenting, 'The pen of Yorick, and of none since his, could have drawn J.E. entire -- those fine Shandian lights and shades, which make up his story' (II:71); and it is inconceivable that Lamb was unaware of the frequency with which the *Anatomy* figured in the correspondence columns of the monthlies. Indeed, for a man who denied the possiblity of the *Anatomy* ever becoming popular, Lamb spent an extraordinary amount of energy promoting the work.

It would appear that Sterne, indirectly, and Lamb, directly, were the prime movers of Burton's reputation and reading public in the early nineteenth century.

There is another curious connection between these two writers. Sterne died in London on 18 March 1768, nineteen days after the publication of *A Sentimental Journey*. On 22 March he was buried very quietly in the new burial ground of St. George's, Hanover Square, which lay out in the fields of Paddington on the Bayswater Road. The interment was very quiet because of the considerable distance of the burial ground from the church.

One of the pall bearers on that occasion was Samuel Salt.

NOTES

1 *Oxford Bibliographical Society Proceedings and Papers*, I (1922-26), 193

2 Extracted from: Paul Jordan Smith, *Bibliographia Burtoniana* (California: Stanford University Press, 1931) and, Edward Gordon Duff and Falconer Madan, 'Notes on the bibliography of the Oxford editions of the *Anatomy*,' *Oxford Biblio.Soc.P & P.*, I (1922-26), 191-97. The 'considerable additions' increased the volume by two pages.

3 *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, ed. E.V. Lucas, 7 vols., (London: Methuen, 1903-1905), II:26. All subsequent references within the text.

4 *Reliquiae Hearnianae*, ed Bliss, (Oxford, 1857), II:796. To preempt accusations of plagiarism I should point out that this reference, together with those identified in notes 5, 6, 7 and 10 below are the standard commonplaces of Burtonian criticism, and may be found in, e.g. Jean Robert Simon, *Robert Burton et L'Anatomie de la Melancolie* (Paris: Didier, 1964), pp.93-94.

5 *Athenae Oxoniensis*, 2 vols., (London, 1721), I: col.628.

6 *Reliquiae Hearnianae*, II:796.

7 *Letters to William Duncombe*, (London, 1777), p.150.

8 Ed. George Birkbeck Hill, rev. L.F. Powell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934-50), II:121.

9 *Thraliana*, ed. Katherine Balderstone, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1942), I: 536-37

10 (London,1791), p.95

11 *Monthly Review*, Appendix to xxi (July-December, 1759) p.571

12 *Tristram Shandy: Annotations*, ed. R. Davies, W.G. Day and M. New, (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1984), vol. III of the Florida Sterne, *passim*.

13 *Memoirs of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society*, IV, Pt. 1 (1793), 45-86; reprinted in the *Annual Register* for 1793 (London, 1798) pp.379-98.

14 'Eboracensis', letter to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, lxiv (May, 1794), 406; R.F., letter to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, lxviii (June, 1798), 471. On the change in tone, see Alan B. Howes, *Yorick and the Critics*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958).

15 *Roderick Random*, chapter 39: *Anatomy*, 2, 2, 6, 2.

16 Information recorded by John Thomas Smith, *A book for a rainy day*, ed. Wilfred Whitton (London: Methuen, 1905). For this detail, which has not been noted by any of the biographers of Sterne, I am indebted to Mrs. Julia Monkman.

BOOK REVIEWS

James A.W. Heffernan *The Re-Creation of Landscape*. Hanover and London: University Press of New England. 1984. £25.00.

Lamb said of Hogarth that his paintings were like books: 'other pictures we look at - his prints we read'. But Hogarth was a narrative artist, and a relatively easy painter to discuss in literary terms; and what Lamb would have made of this study of four of his contemporaries is a much more teasing question. They are landscape artists, for one thing, and they appear to be posing much more difficult questions, probing into the imagination and its relationship to nature in a way which is very different from Hogarth. 'Look at' and 'read' become complicated by a third verb, the great romantic verb 'feel'.

The four contemporaries of Lamb in question are Wordsworth, Coleridge, Constable, and Turner. Their paintings and poems are discussed in a subtle series of chapters which leave the old simplicity of *ut pictura poesis* far behind, in a search for what romantic poems and paintings have in common. Professor Haffernan finds this principally in 'the internalization of prospect' (an ugly phrase for something very interesting) and 'the displacement of history': the meaning of this (and the book is not at all jargon-ridden) is that history painting is deposed by these artists in favour of their own private history in a landscape, and that landscape is internally perceived by the creative mind, rather than mechanically described. The mind, of course, can do marvellous things, as it does for instance in Coleridge's 'This Lime-Tree Bower my Prison', which is the only place where Lamb appears in this book. Professor Heffernan compares the poem to Dyer's 'Grongar Hill', contrasting Dyer's simplicity with Coleridge's complexity: in the darkness of the lime-tree bower the poet is imprisoned, but his memory seizes upon the landscape which Lamb is seeing, so that it becomes both a landscape remembered (internal) and seen (external) because Coleridge both thinks of it to himself and sees it through Lamb's eyes. The prospect and refuge contrast in this poem fits very well into the theory of Jay Appleton's *The Experience of Landscape*; it also corresponds with the shadows and enclosing forms of some of Constable's and Turner's paintings.

From this brief account of one discussion, it will be seen that Professor Heffernan's book is full of interesting theories and useful observations. He has illuminating things to say about three main features of romantic art: the transforming power of language or paint; the use of lines or borders; and the significance of reflections. Reflections can be both physical (the reflection of buildings in water, as in Shelley's or Turner's Venice) or mental (the processes of the mind in thinking about something). 'Reflection' thus serves as an interesting and useful bridge between the inner and outer, and becomes an emblem of that transformation of landscape which unites the four artists in their work. As Coleridge insisted, copying was not enough: 'if the artist copies the mere nature, the *natura naturata*, what idle rivalry!... Believe me, you must master the essence, the *natura naturans*, which presupposes a bond between nature in the higher sense and the soul of man.' It is this bond which is the subject of the present book; all students of the romantic period, and all lovers of landscape art, will find Professor Heffernan's discussion stimulating, enjoyable, and useful.

J.R. Watson

The University of Durham

University of California, Davis: *Minor British Poets, 1789-1918. Part I: The Romantic Period, 1789-1839.* Foreword by C.D. Elliott. The Library, Davis 1983.

This bibliography originated as a sale-catalogue from C.C. Kohler of Dorking, the collector and dealer, in 1983, together with a brief but informative introduction by Donald H. Reiman. The Davis Library has chosen to retain the original sale-catalogue plates, adding a short foreword and a new title-page of its own, thus making available a remarkable collection of 1401 items to a wider public, and drawing attention to the collections already at Davis, even though not listed here. As no comparably detailed bibliography exists for minor poets of this period, immediate publication of the catalogue was amply justified, even though it falls far short of a comprehensive bibliographical record. However, the standard of the original cataloguing was high, and the list also serves as a source of locations and description of actual, extant copies, as well as including attractive illustrations of title-pages and bindings. Now that the first stage of *The Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue* is complete, and work has begun (though on a rather different basis) on its nineteenth century continuation, the amount of material likely to come to light will be vast indeed, and the titles recorded here will be seen as but a small cross-section of the poetry publishing of the period. Of the 61 volumes of poetry dating from 1798 listed by John Jordan in his *Why the Lyrical Ballads?* (1976) only 3 appear here, though some of Jordan's authors are represented by later, collected editions. About 50 titles in the Davis collection have been reprinted in Reiman's *The Romantic Context: Poetry, 1789-1830* series. This catalogue inevitably reflects the omissions of actual collecting (no Lamb or Reynolds and little Lloyd) but also has its discoveries as well, as Reiman points out. Publication, it is to be hoped, will stimulate and facilitate further efforts in this field.

Peter Larkin
University of Warwick Library

Ann Blainey *Immortal Boy: A Portrait of Leigh Hunt.* Croom Helm, London, 1985, £16.95.

I was given *Born under Saturn*, Catherine MacDonald MacLean's biography of Hazlitt, at Christmas 1943. I find that I bought Lucas' *Life of Charles Lamb* in January 1944 and Leigh Hunt's *Stories from the Italian Poets* in March 1944. My mother always maintained that my interest in Lamb and his circle began earlier when she gave me *So Perish the Rose*, a rather tiresome 'life' of the Lambs by Neil Bell. I certainly do not still possess this latter horror, though I did buy a photographic reprint of the original 1940 edition in 1972. I mention all this because it illustrates, I believe, my own perception and belief that one cannot separate the strands of interest and influence that exist between the Romantic writers around 1800, and more especially, those that bind together the 'bunch' from Christ's Hospital; I have to admit, nevertheless, that I have read much more of Hazlitt than of Coleridge, and in spite of persuasive arguments to the contrary, still believe that Coleridge's effects were gained much more through his presence and his talk ('preaching' as Lamb put it!) than by his writings, whilst of course, with Hazlitt the truth must be the exact opposite.

Well - I still buy books in the Romantic field; perhaps I am addicted - I must be to buy 191 pages of text at almost 9p a page. Oh Heffer, Heffer, what extravagances have been committed on thy account! In spite of my miserly forebodings, I thoroughly enjoyed this Life, which Michael Foot discussed recently in his review in *The Times*. As he rightly says, Ann Blainey does not 'rehabilitate' Hunt as any kind of literary giant; this revival had been suggested as just and due by David Bromwich in his revival of Hazlitt as a 'giant' - also reviewed by Michael Foot in *The Times*. The point for us now, is that *Immortal Boy* recounts Hunt as a man, and his family surroundings, in his cloak or 'printed nightgown', with his effort and with his indolence, with his sensitivity and friendliness, but also showing his extraordinary indifference to some normal feelings and activities; he must have been maddening to know, but how marvellous to know his writings. He sustained, almost single-handed very often, papers and journals which were issued weekly, twice weekly, even daily. The sheer grind of it all is appalling, and it is hard indeed to recreate the conditions of life in such a household.

Consider - his parentage was from the West Indies and USA; his father found ducal patronage in Southgate and temporary residence in a debtor's prison and also the marvellous solution of a Blue-Coat education for the young James Henry Leigh. Hunt had published his *Juvenilia* before his seventeenth birthday. My copy has the usual list of subscribers (including Lamb, J, Esq, South-Sea House, Benjamin West and Thomas Lawrence,) and is inscribed on the front cover to Lord Hawkesbury 'October 10th 1801 - Best Friend to his Country and the Nations of Europe Peace-Maker.' This says something of the temper and the anxieties of the times.

I cannot resist noting here that Luther A. Brewer (*My Leigh Hunt Library* 1932) also mentions a copy of this (second) edition dated 1801 and with a cover inscription in the same terms, but addressed to 'Most Noble Marquis Cornwallis' and dated March 27th 1802. Throughout his life a whiff of sycophancy seems to surround our hero, running together with his rebellious political writings which later put him into prison; true to form however, that cell was embellished (a favourite word of the times) with venetian blinds, wall-papered with a trellis of roses and the ceiling coloured with 'clouds and sky'. Lamb himself said "There was no other such room except in a fairy tale". Indeed, Hunt's whole life is a fairy tale, though one fairly in the grim tradition.

His philosophy was of cheer, cheerfulness and piety; his actions see-sawed between sincere friendship and hard literary work, and what can only be called parasitism. This latter got its come-uppance when Dickens drew Harold Skimpole. Whatever the arguments about Dickens' real intentions -did he, or did he not deliberately describe Hunt - it is clear that everyone concerned in the affair saw in Skimpole Hunt 'to the life'.

I have (rather self-indulgently) set forth a few scattered items in the story of Leigh Hunt; Ann Blainey probably does not even attempt to put Hunt in any historical or literary context - she does not try to find significance, or draw parallels, or find deep causes. She can still give us a living tale, a very human picture with plenty of surprising and striking detail. Much of this detail is quoted from the letters of Hunt and Marianne (Mrs Hunt) published by Brewer in Iowa; sadly, I do not have this volume and have (with mixed feelings) saved a lot of money by never having seen it in any book-seller's catalogue! Two (smallish, or are they?) irritations crop up near the end of this book. To an Elian, the worst is to call Edward Moxon Moxom - twice, so I am not carping about misprints! The other is, I think, a pedanticism; Lytton Bulwer is mentioned as a friend of Hunt's in the later 1830s and early 1840s; it is true that the author of 'Eugene Aram' and of 'The Last Days of Pompeii' did not take the name of Bulwer-Lytton until 1843, but one gets a jolt to read Lytton Bulwer 'who can this be?' - and that takes away attention from the main subject.

All in all, a worthwhile book (no, I didn't mean in monetary terms); it brings Leigh Hunt before us in all his own complexity, and in the complexity of his links with society - I haven't dared to start on the topic of Lord Byron, which is worth a book in itself - the Charles Lamb Society would do well to look again, and in depth, at this strange 'immortal boy'; a reading of Ann Blainey's book, Edmund Blunden's excellent study and perhaps some of the essays (the 'Nows' for example) would make a firm foundation.

D.G. Wilson

A VISIT TO BUTTON SNAP

Mrs. Eleanor Mansfield, who is 93, and her brother Frank Andrews, who is a little younger, visited Button Snap on 17 April 1985.

Mrs. Mansfield records her impressions.

> I enjoyed visiting Button Snap after so many years and seeing my parents' home again. It was a fine spring morning and the garden was bright with daffodils, but I was sorry to see everything so neglected. I hope the purchaser will really care for the old cottage and get the garden in order again. I was amazed to think the place can be worth so much - the sale has just been reported in the local paper - and amused by the Agent's description: them "old English flowers" - good Hertfordshire weeds!
>
> My parents lived in the cottage for some years about 1910 as tenants of the Greg family. Mr. Greg used to give parties for the tenants. The farmer was Mr. Mildren down the lane and there were a lot of cottages which have now been pulled down. My father was a thatcher, using straw from the farm, and he worked for many miles all around. I was married from the cottage in 1911. The wedding was at West Mill. Before my marriage I was in service with a wealthy Quaker family at Falcon Grove in Saffron Walden. My brother Frank was only a tiny boy and he didn't like the place at all.
>
> The countryside hasn't hardly changed in all these years. The hedges are not so wide as they used to be,and of course the road had no tarred surface, just a dusty yellow flint road. The telephone poles are new; there was no telephone in those days. The big cherry in the garden must have been planted after we left and the rhubarb was in a different place. We grew all our own vegetables and had plenty of apples; we lived on apple puddings. The quite nice 'garage' building didn't exist. I see what the Agent calls "steps to large over for storage" is an old ladder and the roof leaks. Where the garage is there was a shed which contained the big copper (to heat the water) and it was our washhouse and bathroom. Of course there wasn't no bathroom in the cottage and no running water so a 'telephone-type mixer' mentioned by the Agent wouldn't have been no use to us. I was pleased to see the pond still there. It is fed by a spring and gave us all our water. We put it through a strainer and used it for drinking, cooking and washing. The electrics came later. We used oil lamps for lighting and wood and coal for the kitchen range. I see there is still an outside toilet, but ours was in a separate shed outside in the garden. I think the

modern stainless steel sink doesn't suit at all; old wooden draining boards were better. Of course we didn't have no sink, just bowls and basins. My brother and I were shocked to see the state of the thatch and wondered what it would cost to renew it.

My father had a horse; as there wasn't no stabling he had to rig up a stall for it hisself. In our time the baker from Buntingford delivered bread and flour. There used to be a shop in Great Munden but I didn't see none there now. The nearest one might be in Dane End or West Mill. They'll have a car now but I had to walk. My brothers had bicycles but I was only a girl and didn't get one.

I never knew nothing about Charles Lamb in those days and there weren't no plaques beside the front door. The big medallion on the road verge (put there I see twenty years ago) was a real surprise. The wonder is it hasn't been vandalised, but I expect nobody much goes there. It's still very out of the way and quiet. I hope the purchasers are happy there.

ELIAN NOTES AND QUERIES

My thanks to Dr. D.G. Wilson for his note in the *Bulletin*, January, 1985, p.34, concerning the following:

Lamb, Charles *Poetry for Children.*
Adorned with Cuts. New Haven.
Sidney's Press For J. Babcock & Son,
1820.

I regret that the Introduction to my facsimile reprint (1982) of that curiousity was apparently misleading. The problem, I suppose, was that I sketched the history of the first American edition of *Poetry for Children* (Boston, 1812) *before* more pertinently observing that "The little book that is presented here came belatedly to light in *A Checklist of American Imprints* for 1820 ... the compilers locating what must be another great rarity, if not a substantively notable production, only in the library of the American Antiquarian Society..." Dr Wilson asks, apropos of Prof. George L. Barnett's generous notice, the *Bulletin*, April, 1984, p.125, "To what does the 'nine poems' refer?" My final paragraph stipulates that the 1820 "edition" consists of "nine (out of a possible eighty-four) poems." That is, while the Lambs' original publication contained eighty-four pieces, with the Boston, 1812, edition reprinting all but three of them, the little 32-page American juvenile "based on the work of the same name by Charles & Mary Lamb" (I quote from my title page) was content to offer the drastically smaller number indicated.

Regarding Dr Wilson's valuable article on the publication history of *Tales from Shakespear* the *Bulletin*, January, 1985, pp.14-17, it may not be amiss to note a few early American editions that are presumably not represented in the collections he surveys: Philadelphia and New York, 1813 (the first American edition): Boston and New York, 1832, 1849, and 1858.

W. Nethery

INFORMATION PLEASE

Can any of our American friends and members give me some information about 'The Lamb Publishing Co. New York'. I have recently found a copy of the 'Last Essays of Elia' published by this firm; no date is given, and there are no indications whether by inscription or watermark (merely 'Harcourt Wove') to ascribe a date. It is called 'Edition de Luxe' and has 'Notes by Alfred Ainger'. More interestingly, the contents promise pages 273 'Mrs Leicester's School' with notes to this on page 395, and even more mysterious, the 'List of Illustrations' then says 'Volume III' and lists items for pages 275 and 352; however, the copy ends abruptly at page 271 just as the notes for 'Popular Fallacies' begin! The illustrations, moreover, are on paper quite different from that of the text, and of a different size. I cannot find in my collection the 'original' from which this (presumed) Volume III has been taken - pirated?

I should have added, of course, that the copy shows no evidence of having been re-bound; it is in an obvious publisher's green/blue cloth binding. The date must be around the turn of the century from style. I should appreciate information about publisher - were they respectable, or perhaps not, as I suspect? Was the name a coincidence? What else did they produce, and was that as peculiar as this little relic of transAtlantic Lamb?

D.G. Wilson

Mr John Lovell of 10 Dryburgh Road, Putney, London SW15 1BL writes:

> I write to ask whether the Society might be able to help me find out the connection between my mother's family and that of Charles Lamb.
>
> She bore the same surname and used to tell me of relations, Field-Talfourd (who drew my grandfather) and Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd.
>
> I would be most happy if you could assist or re-direct my inquiry.

CHARLES LAMB - A CELEBRATION

On May 11th 1985 about sixty people met at the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institute for a Day Conference to celebrate the Golden Jubiliee of the Charles Lamb Society and to pay tribute to the illustrious friends, Lamb and Coleridge. In the elegant surroundings of the Institute hall, with its portrait of the Sage of Highgate looking benevolently at us, we heard three superb lectures: from Professor Barbara Hardy on 'The Narrative Art of Charles Lamb', from Dr John Beer on 'Did Lamb really understand Coleridge?' and from Miss Rachel Trickett on 'The Style of Charles Lamb'. We hope to publish these lectures in a future *Bulletin*. Bill Ruddick chaired the Conference with charm and efficiency. Morning coffee, lunch and tea appeared as if by magic at the appropriate times through the kind offices of Miss Stutfield and her helpers, and our Society Chairman, Dr Wilson, dispensed the wine. We wish to thank all these people for their generous kindness, as well as the officers of the Highgate Institute, who made everything easy for us, and Mr and Mrs Wickham who took charge of the 'gate'. We must not forget the appreciative audience and everyone who helped to make the day go with a swing.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This took place this year at Highgate before the opening of the Day Conference. After the election of officers and Council, our Chairman, Dr Wilson, gave a report on behalf of the Trustees on the situation so far in relation to Button Snap. A further statement was to be made when there was firm news.

The Meeting reviewed with satisfaction a very full year of commemoration and celebration. The repair of books in the Library goes ahead with the aid of the allocation of £300 for each of the years 1984 and 1985 and of kind donations from members. In passing the Annual Report and Accounts, the Meeting was pleased that last year's deficit has not been repeated in 1984. Thanks were paid to the Officers of the Society for their devoted work.

SOCIETY NEWS

ANNUAL REPORT 1984 - CORRECTION

At the 1984 Annual General Meeting held on 12th May 1984, *Mrs* Wickham was elected to the Council (*not* Mr D. Wickham, who had been elected in May 1983).

BUTTON SNAP

The sale of Button Snap was completed in June so the Society has, for the first time in its history, a substantial capital sum and investment income to devote to Elian objects. The Council met on 14th September to consider the options open to us but suggestions from members will be welcome. If you have a pet Elian project which has languished for lack of funds please let the Hon. Secretary know.

CHARITABLE STATUS

We have asked our Solicitor to put in motion the formalities necessary for the registering of the C.L.S. as a charity (which brings with it substantial tax advantages). This will necessitate a Special General Meeting of the Society which could take place at 2.15 p.m. at the Mary Ward Centre on Saturday 2nd November, before the lecture. A formal notice convening the meeting will be issued.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

We have received details of the recently-formed JEROME K JEROME SOCIETY based on his birth-place at Belsize House, Bradford Street, Walsall. Part of the house has been converted into a Museum, open Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Admission Free). Elians who are or find themselves in the Walsall area may wish to visit this commemoration of an unusual and varied author. Membership details are obtainable from the above address (£5 p.a. or £2.50 concessionary rates - the young and the old!)

ANNIVERSARY ALBUM

We are grateful to Dr Alan Taylor for the gift of some excellent photographs of the wreath-laying at Lamb's grave at Edmonton on 29th December, and the subsequent commemoration in All Saints' Church.

APOLOGY

Miss Reeves writes:

> 'I feel that an apology from me is necessary to the devoted wife and family of Sidney Rich. In the short account I sent for the *C.L. Bulletin* of the Service of Thanksgiving I attended, I stated that Mr. Rich was a Rabbi. He was, in fact, President of the South London Liberal Synagogue.'

ANNUAL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION LUNCHEON

To be held on *Saturday, 8th February 1986*. Some dissatisfaction was expressed at the food/service at the 1985 Luncheon, so we have sought and found a new venue (thanks to Stella Pigrome)

THE VITELLO D'ORO RESTAURANT
Church House, Great Smith Street, Westminster, SW1

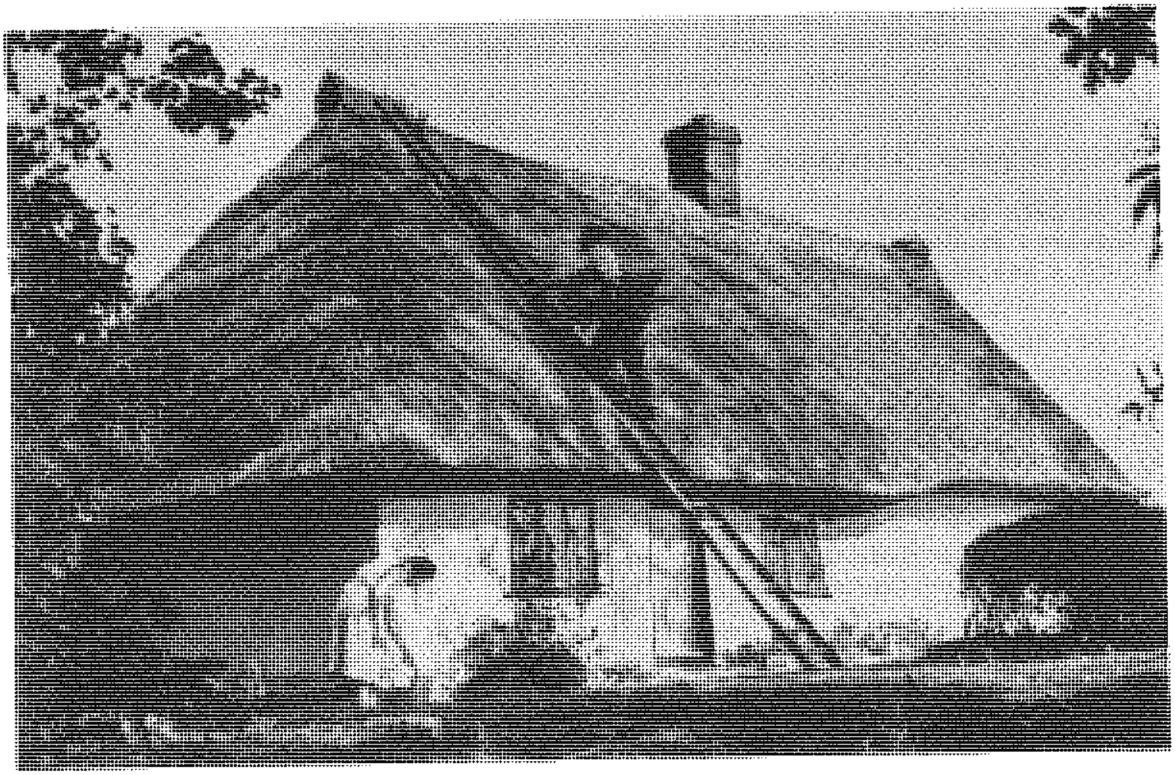
(equidistant from Westminster and St. James' Park Tube Stations; free on-street parking is normally available in the vicinity on Saturdays). We have been able to keep the price of tickets at £12 (including wine) and these will be available from 7th December 1985.

Admirers of *Akenfield* will be delighted to learn that Ronald Blythe has accepted our invitation to be Guest of Honour.

NEW MEMBERS

Elizabeth Benson, 42 Ainsworth Road, Cambridge, CB1 2PD.
Mr. J. Bodgers, 190 Heath Row, Bishops Stortford, Herts.
Loree Shaw Cline, 1336-A Cansler Avenue, Gadsden, Alabama 35901, U.S.A.
Enoch Pratt Free Library, 400 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201-4484, U.S.A.
Veronica Finch, 3 Toorack Road, Wealdstone, Middlesex, HA3 3HR.
Mr. P. Hinton, 31 Wordworth Road, Penge, London, SE20 7JF
Mrs.Jean Ings, 10 Geddes Way, Sheet, Petersfield, Hants. GU31 4DJ.
Central Library, Jeonburg National University, Jeonju 520, Korea.
Mr and Mrs N. Powell, 30 Camberwell Grove, London, SE5.
Mr E.G. Preston, 63 Bohemia Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex. TN37 6RG.
Prof. R. Ryan, 85 Bethlehem Pike, Philadelphia, PA 19118, U.S.A.
Mrs.R. Sanderson, 17 Ryder Lane, Marion, MA 02738, U.S.A.
Mr. Colin W. Sellars, 209 High Street, Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorks. LS23 6AA.
Mr. E.S. Worrall, 21 Merryhills Drive, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 7NS.
Mrs. E.D. Mower White, 401 Elm Tree Court, Elm Tree Road, London NW8 9JT.
University of California General Library, Serials Dept., P O Box 19557, Irvine, C.A. 92713, U.S.A.

AVE ATQUE VALE



BUTTON SNAP