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THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

An Essay in the light of some recently discovered documents of Charles Valentine Le Grice referring to Lamb, Coleridge and Wordsworth

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I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days,
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood.
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

Whne Lamb committed to paper in 1798 this ever-receding echo of a lost child-hood, 9 years had passed since he had last worn the Old Blue-Coat and Yellow Stockings. Much had befallen him since, not least his sister's madness and the ensuing death of his mother; his friends from 'Housie' had scattered and recent friction with Coleridge had led to a resurgence of memories of their days at Christ's Hospital. Indeed, in true Romantic vein, memories of the past had been transformed by the passing of the years and his view of Coleridge and Christ's Hospital had been projected into a dimension obtainable only to his spirit though physically he would wander still among the Ancient Cloisters of the Greyfriars - 'Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood'. No doubt the wrathful voice of James Boyer would have returned to Lamb's ears sparking off memories of that most memorable of schoolmasters for whom both Lamb and Coleridge had the greatest respect: Coleridge lauded him as an 'educer no less than educator of the intellect' and Lamb praised his 'great merits as an instructor'. Lamb can scarcely have forgotten, however, the fiery moods of the man of whom Coleridge was inspired to write *in memoriam* - 'Poor J.B.! may all his faults be forgiven and may he be wafted to bliss by little Cherub boys, all head and wings, with no bottoms to reproach his sublunary infirmities'. It could well have been on this line of thought that Lamb came to remember Charles Valentine Le Grice, at one time Coleridge's greatest friend. It would have been with a very special affection that Lamb remembered the story of how Coleridge and Val Le Grice were up before Boyer answering for some long-forgotten offence when they were disturbed by none other than Mrs Boyer herself. As she entered the room her husband was 'thundering away by way of prologue' to which tirade whe was inspired to add 'Flog them soundly sir, I beg'. So annoyed was Boyer at being disturbed that he promptly ordered her from the room and let both boys go unpunished.

Among the host of famous Old Blues of Boyer's day Le Grice has remained undeservedly hidden to all whose interest in the lives of those two

immortal sons of Christ's Hospital has been less than total. Coming from an East Anglian family he was presented on Guy's Gift, Thomas Guy being a relation of his father. From the first he struck up a close relationship with Coleridge and when fellow-Grecians they shared the same copy of Homer's *Iliad*, still preserved in the Christ's Hospital archives, and their original 'Grecian' signatures can still be seen alongside those of Lamb and Val's younger brother, Sam. With his piercing judgement of character Lamb saw them both 'like a Spanish great galleon, and an English man-of-war; Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid but slow in his performances. C.V.L. with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention'. Many were the memories that Le Grice and Coleridge would have shared of 'Housie', both showing much promise and both attaining to the high honour of transcribing some of their poems into Boyer's *Liber Aureus*.

Le Grice, however, was more of the character of Lamb than Coleridge and his special brand of humour would have been better suited to London than to the limited, rural and methodist community of Cornwall to which he retired soon after leaving Cambridge, where he had studied with Coleridge at Trinity College. Marrying Mrs Nicholls, the widowed mother of the child he had been tutoring, he took up residence at Trereife, which has remained the family seat to this day. Mount's Bay and the rugged smuggling atmosphere of West Penwith coupled with the opportunity to use his fine command of oratory and wit in debate against the methodists held him in a position where his undoubted talents were probably given less than their full scope. Progressing through the chaplaincy he became perpetual curate to St Mary's Penzance, holding this post until the end of his life.

As is the case of so many school-boy friendships, contact between Boyer's scholars waned and the little we have to show of any remembrances of their C.H. days, before they were immortalized in the Elia Essays, Table Talk and the like, comprises a somewhat strained fragment from Lamb informing Coleridge that 'Le Grice is gone to make puns in Cornwall. He has got a tutorship to a young boy, living with his mother, a widow lady. He will of course initiate him in "whatsoever things are lovely, honourable, and of good report"', and, of course, Lamb's poem 'The Old Familiar Faces'. In June, 1852, Le Grice was to write this poem 'In reminiscence of the Poet Coleridge.

> Coleridge, of Boyhood in the early dawn
> Oppress'd I felt not, nor of hope forlorn,
> Grasping your hand. You spoke, as though our school
> Were of a separate world the vestibule;
> And we its inhabitants. - In cloister'd walk,
> While such of opening scenes your cherish'd talk,
> I listen'd breathless; - and I saw you prove
> Your boded triumphs in the College grove. -
> Thence, by a sudden plunge, amid their strife
> You sprang into the waves of this world's life;
> Nor paused. - Far, far away 'twas mine to hear
> Fame of your struggles, and th' applauding cheer. -
> At last of wondrous Boy, of Bard, of Sage
> Sank beneath Friendship's roof the shelter'd Age.

Nineteen years had passed since Le Grice's last meeting with his old friend and so it is to 1833 that we must turn to witness the hitherto hidden

postscript of the relationship Coleridge and Lamb have immortalized.

Thirty-seven years after leaving Trinity College, Le Grice set out from Trereife 'for a journey', as he records in his notebook 'with humble hope that it may be as happy as former tours'. Indeed his notes seem to point to the success of his journey which took him via Bristol to Bath and from there to London and Canterbury, returning via 'Exeter and St Colomb'. In his summary Le Grice points to the various days which were of most interest to him and it appears that his acquaintances were not limited as his entry for May 28th portrays:

> 'Called on Lord Lyndhurst.
> Saw Brougham. - Denman
> and Talleyrand !! and Duchess
> of Dino - Duke of Orleans.
> St James' on Birthday
> Princess Victoria Duchess
> of Kent.
> Dined with C. Peers
> met Mr Watt -
> Saw microcosm
> Dies albissimae notae'

However the days that Le Grice remembered the most vividly were those on which he saw Coleridge and Lamb for the first time in so many years. On June 13th he records:

> 'To Edmonton at Johnny Gilpin's to
> meet Charles Lamb. O awful Melencholy!
> I had not seen him for 30 years.'

The emotions which must have passed through him are archetypal but ironical in fact of Lamb's lament in 'The Old Familiar Faces'. Time had undone so much. His mind still tormented by these same thoughts Le Grice records on the 18th his meeting with Coleridge; leaving just two lines for his dinner with the Duke of Wellington, he goes on to write:

> 'I visited Coleridge at Highgate. A most melancholy sight - his hair white: his frame debilitated - an aged broken down man! His faculties still - shall I say perfect - this I fear I cannot say - but still predominant - his talk eloquent. He spoke of Wordsworth - Scott - Ossian - Brougham. I listened - and was full of sad thoughts. O Coleridge ! and does the tale of they life end in this? - '

On June 26th Le Grice saw Coleridge for the last time during a reunion dinner at Trinity College. After a long list of his old friends, almost in fear of remembering the changes wrought in him, he adds the name of Coleridge with the postscript:

> 'O how changed! All things are changed ! I deeply see and feel that "All is vanity". I write this still with a heart grateful for many blessings.'

Of all Coleridge's friends none could have noted the decay of his faculties and appearance more clearly than Val Le Grice, seeing him over a distance of more than 30 years. Reminiscent, indeed, are his highly charged words of the 'Archangel - a little damaged' and the wages of time are a theme strongly felt on the few occasions when Le Grice expands from recording mere

commonplaces. It is no chance that he writes at the back of his notebook:

'Constantly occurring Reflection in Travelling

Unchanging Nature's charms make us compare
The brow deep furrow'd by the world's long toil
With her unwrinkled front - the times of care
With her bright glories -- all we are -- with all we were.'

Perhaps, in all his life, never had Le Grice felt this emtoion so deeply as when he bade Coleridge farewell for the last time on that late June night of 1833.

A few months after the death of Coleridge, Lamb too was dead, quickly following his life-long friend to the grave. Fate, in her own bitter irony had sent Le Grice at the last to see the friends he remembered so well in youth. It was Thomas Talfourd, however, in his plea for information concerning the young 'Elia' who saw Val Le Grice as the man to help him. Well-known, indeed, is the reply he received, for Le Grice had had 45 years in which to crystallize his memories and they were engraved on his mind with the precision and care of an artist. Many are the versions of the reply, though the original itself seems either to have been destroyed or to have found its way into the hands of an over-zealous protector of surviving 'Eliana' /knowledge of its whereabouts would be gratefully received/. Its companion, however, the draft copy, resides still among the Le Grice family papers. Reading it through for the first time provokes much the same release of frustration as when one first sees a figure of whom one has heard only hearsay. If, as one would suppose, the actual letter sent to Talfourd is mislaid or destroyed,this draft must surely become a blue-print for all future biographers of Lamb anxious to portray, at first hand, the character and appearance of the young Elia. Here, then, in full, is Le Grice's draft of the memories he retained:

Dear Sir,

I very gladly comply with your request relative to some reminiscences of Charles Lamb's boyhood. What I have to communicate is very little but I do not think that any person could make it more full. He quitted school when he was fifteen years of age and went immediately from school to the Accomptant Office in the East India House. At that early age there is not room for the development of character which takes place in the three or four succeeding years, but Charles Lamb if he had continued till he was nineteen, would in all probability have been known only as a quiet, gentle, studious boy a looker on rather than a participator in the frolics of others. He enjoyed their mirth extremely, but his delicate frame, and his difficult utterance, which was increased by agitation, unfitted him for joining in the usual sports of boys. The description which he gives in his Recollections of Christ's Hospital of the habits and feelings of the schoolboy is a deliniation of himself: --- the feelings were all in his own heart: while others were all fire and play, he "stole along with all the self-concentration of a young monk": this habit and these feelings were awakened and cherished in him from some peculiar circumstances. He had been born and bred in the Temple, so that he passed from cloister to cloister, and this was all the change that the young man knew. On every holiday, in ten minutes he was in the gardens, or in the cloisters, or on the terrace,

or at the fountain of the Temple: here was his home: and the influence which these scenes had on his infant mind is vividly shown in his chapter on the Old Benchers of the Inner Temple. He says, "I was born and passed the first seven years of my life in the Temple;" and then how beautifully does he describe the Recollections associated with the places. He might have said that he passed also a great portion (for holidays and half-holidays were very numerous) of the second seven years of his life in the Temple. Here he had a happy home, and a sister who watched him with the tenderest solicitude, and he had also access to the library of one of the Benchers, Mr Salt, to whose memory his pen has given ---- I do not think it extravagant to say ---- immortality. ----

As Lamb quitted school when the buds only and blossoms of education were shewing, I can say nothing more of his progress than that he shewed such symptoms of future attainments that he would undoubtedly have been continued on the University List, if he had not laboured under the defect of stammering. I never heard his name mentioned without the addition of Charles, altho as there was no other boy of a similar name the addition was unnecessary but there was an implied kindness in always so speaking of or addressing him: ---- After he quitted school he kept up a constant intimacy with his contemporaries whose companion he would have been if he had remained on the University List, spending his hours of recreation and his evenings with them. It was during this intimacy that he obtained the Sobriquet of Guy of which he was as familiarly known among them in after life, as by his real name: of this I met a notable proof within the last few days. A clergyman of the city observed to me I have no recollection of Lamb: there was a gent called Guy to whom you once introduced me, and with whom I was in the habit of interchanging Nods for twenty years, but how is it that I never met Lamb?; If ever I was introduced to Lamb, I wonder we never came in contact during my residence at Edmonton. Imagine the Gentleman's surprise when I told him that he had been nodding to Lamb for thirty years. He obtained this Nickname from the following circumstances: In the very first years of his clerkship he came one evening, the 5th of November, and spent the evening with some of his contemporaries. His hat happened to be of peculiar large brim, and his late schoolmates pinned up the sides of it to form a three cocked hat: instead of taking out the pins he walked home in it; and as he was going down Ludgate Hill in his usual slow pace some young men exclaimed Here is the veritable Guy Fawkes in propria persona -- no man of straw -- Guy himself: -- they took him up in their arms and carried him as far as St Paul's Yard -- sat him on a post -- gave him three cheers for /three words illegible/, and left him. This was the story Lamb told and so seriously that we believed it to be true, and he retained the name ever after. His facetious friend James White whose humour was the constant theme of his eulogy and for recollection to the last days of existence never addressed him by another. --- I dined with Lamb at Johnny Gilpin's at Edmonton tete-a-tete by appointment June 13th 1833, and he talked of nothing but Jemmy White. Oh! there was none like him! We shall never see his like on such days again --- In a note on his essay on the Old Actors he speaks of his Merry friend Jem White, and gives an anecdote of his (?? meekly Dodd ??). -- I have always suspected that Lamb lent a helping hand to White in his

> Falstaff's Letters made public by a descendant of Dame Quickly with a dedication to Master Samuel Ireland, published in the year 1796. -- A book which exhibits no ~~bad~~ (deleted) bald specimens of the spirit of Auld Lang Syne, of the hours and the companions of his youth -- I think if it were reprinted it would shew that Lamb had deep feelings when he gave a sign to the Memory of Jem White! -- In dwelling on the early history of Charles Lamb, -- and thinking only of the quiet, aimiable boy, I had forgotten and had almost omitted a melancholy occurrence but the lesson which we all ought to learn from the mingled tide of sorrows connected with genius demands the second. I am not certain as to dates, but I think that about the year 1795, poor Lamb suffered a temporary derangement of his intellects, and confinement under medical care was necessary. I remember it from this circumstance. I received a very long letter from Lamb -- very well written -- the main purpose of which was to advise me to (? read) Hartley on Man, one expression in it I perfectly remember. 'Hartley appears to me to have had as clear an insight into all the (secrets) of the human mind as I have into the items of a Ledger -- as an Accountant has -- a good counting; Housical Simile you'll say, and appropos from a clerk in the India House.' The very next day I received a letter from his mother to say that the supposed (letter) that I among other friends had received (had been written in a state of madness) --- that she was sorry to say that a temporary confinement was necessary, and that she desired that I would make no reply to it. -- I add no more: Lamb was an amiable quiet boy, very sensitive and keenly observing: his countenance was mild, his complexion clear brown with an expression that he might have been taken to be of Jewish parentage: his mother was a fine handsome woman, might have been taken for a sister of Mrs Siddons -- His eyes were each of a different colour: one hazel, and the other hazel mingled with grey: his step was plantigrade, which made him walk as a boy very slow and peculiar. --- Are you aware of the derivation of Elia. I had it from his own mouth. There was a young Italian of that name studying Accountancy in the South Sea House.

Several years after Lamb's death, William Wordsworth, writing to his brother in 1841, was to remind Christopher of his friendship with Val Le Grice and to impart to him the news that Le Grice had recently visited him. 'He told us several anecdotes of Coleridge, of whose life, since they appeared together at Christ's Hospital till Coleridge left college abruptly, he must have known more than anyone else possibly could. I have heard Coleridge speak of him hundreds and hundreds of times'. Despite the terse remarks which Wordsworth had used of Le Grice 34 years earlier, probably induced by a misunderstanding stemming from Southey, who appears to have taken a dislike to Val Le Grice, this meeting seems to have given him much pleasure as the mood of his letter conveys so vividly. For Le Grice too the meeting was a memorable one though,because not so emotive as his brief glimpse of Coleridge and Lamb nine years before, the experience must surely have been less haunting. The passage of time forgotten the two writers forged a friendship in the spirit of their late friend. Mindless of the shattering blow he had received from the change he perceived in Coleridge, Le Grice must have remembered again their days of almost 50 years before and where his tale ceased so there would Wordsworth have unfurled the tale of Coleridge's later years. The walks and the conversations, the thoughts and the poems, the passage of time. This, indeed, must have been the last

occasion on which those who had known Coleridge and Lamb intimately conversed together - it was the end of the Romantic reality, the beginning of the irretrievable myth.

Remembering their meeting Le Grice is no less vivid than Wordsworth as can be seen from this poem:

> On my first and only visit to the Poet Wordsworth,
> shortly previous to his death, when he regardfully
> presented me with a walking stick, which has been
> an old and much-used favourite.
>
> Wordsworth, Bard of the heart! my pulse beat high
> To meet the tearful welcome of thine eye
> We ne'er before, and ne'er again could meet;
> The meeting tender and the greeting sweet.
> Each had the other known, but as a dream;
> Our sympathy soon kindled with our theme -
> COLERIDGE: - the wonders of whose bygone days
> Each had in ample share the power to praise.
> Thine were his later years; mine, when as boys
> We tasted first of life, its cares, and joys.
> Ere the last moment of the pause to bless,
> Ere the deep farewell of our last caress
> A staff thy gift, as with a friend to roam. -
> Ah! No. It bides, for aye, the glory of my home.

Mindful of the same occasion, writing in his copy of *The Prelude* a first edition of 1850, Le Grice makes an evocative reference to time's decay in the postscript to the following note.

> I visited the poet at his house
> in the year 1841, and was most
> kindly welcomed. He presented
> me with the stick, which I now
> preserve, as a keepsake. It is
> burnt at the end, having been,
> apparently, used as a poker, in
> some moments of Poetic Energy.
> He handled it, and looked at it
> before he gave it to me, as if
> hesitating whether he should
> part with an old friend.
> The string attached is as he
> gave it to me. -
> (It is gone! I did not dream of my mice
> having such taste. Sept. 1854)

In praise of the poet he is profuse yet not extravagant and quoting from Southey he writes 'a greater poet than Wordsworth there never has been nor ever will be. I would point out some pieces which seem to me good for nothing and not a few faulty passages; but I know of no poet in any language, who has written so much that is good'. Le Grice, no doubt, was aware of Wordsworth's shortcomings, but he points quite clearly in a rhyme of typical Wordsworthian simplicity, to the dominance in the poet's work of a sense of nature coming from the heart; which, when his poetry is at its best, controls the stifling technicalities and conventions impressed on his mind by the needs of a none

too discerning public:

'Some poets by the Muses' Art
Aim by the head to guide the heart
Wordsworth by different taste is led
And by the heart he rules the head'

He was convinced that Wordsworth nurtured a poetic spirit in its virgin form untouched 'By uniform control of after years' for he writes quoting in part from *The Prelude*:

'Poetic Spirit, Wordsworth, in thee
Through every change of growth and of decay
Pre-eminent till death'

Sad though the undercurrent may be its pull is nonetheless strong and in both poet and reader thought must have wandered to Coleridge's time-scarred face.

Le Grice was certainly enthusiastic of *The Prelude* as the notes at the back of his copy show. He records the date and the time of his third and fourth perusal with the exactness of a stimulated mind. Acknowledging this 'Monument which pure hearts should reverence' Le Grice quotes from Montgomery's *The Retreat*:

'While transport with tenderness vied
It deemed as the harp of a seraph were swept
By a spirit, that surged at his side'

and from the fourth section of *The Prelude* itself he promotes the work to inspired heights asserting that it cannot be read 'Without attendant gleams of soul-illumination'. His thoughts, however, are forever with Coleridge and he writes 'For Coleridge See P.146: 'Most affecting I know the depths of the allusion, I might almost say "No one so well"'.

Indeed his memories were 'Unfading Recollections' of their youth and Le Grice marks with enthusiasm many of the passages in the copy which touch on the younger days of Coleridge. He describes as 'O indescribable' the passage in Book VII immortalized by biographers beginning:

'Who yet a liveried schoolboy in the depths
Of the huge city, on the leaded roof
On that wide edifice, thy school and home,
Wert used to lie and gaze upon the clouds
Musing in heaven'

He recognizes too the 'long exile' through which the eyes of Wordsworth saw him pass. Whether this was a recognition induced by the poetry itself or one borne from the harsh memory of the stone cloisters of C.H. none can say but there can be no doubt that Coleridge, Le Grice and Lamb felt in their most formative years, although interspersed by deep melancholia, the joy

'to live when every hour brings palpable access
Of knowledge, when all knowledge is delight.
While everywhere a vital pulse was felt
Acknowledging dependancy sublime'

and were more content to talk, in hushed whispers, of the ghosts that haunted Giff's Yard than of their harsh severance from nature, if, indeed, Lamb ever felt this emotion deeply.

Cornwall, undoubtedly, had captured Le Grice. Its landscape, rugged yet

inherent with a latent spirit of majesty, cruel yet full of subtly intertwining harmonies had quietly stripped from Le Grice any desire for fame which may have dogged him had he remained with his illustrious contemporaries. Suffice it to say he published his Works only when he occasionally felt the urge. A collection would take years of research to compile and in the final anlaysis would lack that depth of conveyed spirit inherent in the Great Romantics - Le Grice was content to feel and recognise that spirit not to define it. In terms of ecclesiastical debate he was fully aware of convention and this is well exemplified by his Sermon on St Matthew's Day before the Lord Mayor of London and the Almoners of Christ's Hospital. His letters to and from the Methodists, particularly Rose Price, would provide much material for research into this period of church history. It is certainly fortunate that Thomas Talfourd remembered Val Le Grice when he was writing his biography of Lamb for here, as with the notes he took in 1833 and the jottings he made in his copy of *The Prelude*, we see the true depths of his emotions coupled with that same reverence which is obvious in Trelawney, that other great commentator on the lives of the Romantics, who was also a son of The Granite Kingdom.

Perhaps that final return of the Old Familiar Faces in June 1833, and his nostalgic meeting with Wordsworth in 1841, in each case shortly before they died, subdued the spirit of those youthful memories he had retained from Christ's Hospital and Cambridge. An age-old plea for lost innocence and youth, Lamb had forgotten when he wrote 'The Old Familiar Faces' that though the faces might return, they could never be the same. Although Le Grice could never forget what Talfourd so fortunately inspired him to write, the Old Familiar Faces had betrayed him; how deep indeed was the emotion that made him write:

'O Coleridge! and does the tale of thy life end in this? ...'

PROFESSOR EDMUND BLUNDEN

We deeply regret to record the death earlier this year of Edmund Blunden, who was for many years a Vice-President of the Society. We reproduce below, by permission, the obituary notice which appeared in the London *Times*.

Mr Edmund Blunden, CBE, MC, the distinguished poet and writer, and Professor of Poetry at Oxford from 1966 to 1968, died yesterday.

Edmund Blunden chose to end his biography of Shelley with a quotation from the poet in which he affirmed that individual poems were properly to be recognized "as episodes to that great poem, which all poets, like the cooperating thoughts of one great mind have built up since the beginning of the world". This Platonic doctrine appealed to Blunden's remarkable feeling for poetic continuity, and may be fitly applied to his own work. His death at the age of 77 concludes one such long and rich episode.

Edmund Charles Blunden was born in London on November 1, 1896. Two years later the family moved from London to Yalding in Kent, where the father was a schoolmaster - and organist and choirmaster. Blunden attended first the local grammar school, but soon won a scholarship to Christ's Hospital, Horsham, becoming senior "Grecian" in due course. He was deeply devoted to the school, and his consciousness of those early "Old Blues" Coleridge and Leigh Hunt and Charles Lamb, influenced him all his life. They were his gateway into letters, and he was soon to emulate their literary achievements. In 1914, the year he gained the senior classics scholarship at Queen's

College, Oxford, he printed privately at Horsham two pamphlets of verse: *Poems* and *Poems Translated from the French*.

But the outbreak of the First World War changed everything and within a few months he was serving as a volunteer with The Royal Sussex Regiment. He gave an account of his service in Flanders in *Undertones of War*, but that classic alone hardly describes the full impact made on him by the war. He felt an intense loyalty not only to his immediate comrades in the Regiment but to all of his generation, without respect to nationality, who had shared the hell of the trenches, and was haunted throughout life by its memories. In 1916 he was commissioned and in 1917 was awarded the Military Cross.

He took up his scholarship after demobilization in 1919 but, finding himself unable to settle down to academic life, he left Oxford for London in 1920 to become assistant to Middleton Murray on *The Athenaeum*. When *The Athenaeum* merged with *The Nation* in 1921, under the editorship of H.W. Massingham, he contributed as a regular contributor until his appointment as Professor of English in the University of Tokyo in 1924. He married Mary Daines in June, 1918. There were a son and a daughter by this first marriage. In 1933 he married Sylva Norman, a writer who later came to share his enthusiasm for Shelley and other Romantics.

The war had been unable to interrupt entirely his studies or his writing. He had always a book with him in the trenches, and in 1916 he printed three pamphlets of verse. But he did not make a name for himself as a poet until the publication of *The Waggoner* in 1920 and *The Shepherd* in 1922, which won him the Hawthornden Prize. At one time it was usual to refer to Blunden as a "Georgian" on the strength of his appearance in the final volume of Sir Edward Marsh's *Georgian Poetry*, but the genius he showed in those two books of his own could not be so easily classified. He did not owe his poetic character to any temporary fashion. He sprang from the central tradition of English verse, continuing it in terms of his own peculiar vision. He knew the Elizabethans well but began to feel also at home with the seventeenth-century metaphysicals. Time and time again he caught,either deliberately or with unconscious sympathy, the genuine accent of such poets as Herbert and Traherene and Vaughan; and his English renderings of the Latin verse of the period, especially Milton's, are among his most felicitous translations. Dryden, Collins, the Wartons, and Christopher Smart, were among his favourites of the following period, but his deepest affection was reserved for the Romantics - Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and the lesser lights. He wrote at length or commented on or edited works by all the poets mentioned; and coming down in time, he gave his whole-hearted admiration to Thomas Hardy, publishing a study of him in 1941. His allegiance was to poetry itself, rather than to any of its schools, and though he was prompt to help and encourage the many young poets who appealed to him, he was scrupulous never to try to divert them from their individual tacks.

The Waggoner and *The Shepherd* are misleading titles if they are interpreted to mean that Blunden was essentially a pastoral poet. The pastoral vein in English verse was especially dear to him but in his own poetry, though he could brilliantly visualize the country scene and country folk, he interpreted nature in the light of the tensions and complexities of his age. Nature was an idyll of his childhood - a bright unattainable vision seen retrospectively through the screen of war and its congregated ghosts - and was for him an ironic or pathetic commentary on the bewildering present, never an escape from its demands. He was, in his own words "too old a realist" to be tricked by appearance or sentiment. He rediscovered John

Clare and edited his poems from manuscript, in collaboration with Alan Porter, in 1921, which marks one of his allegiances, but he was also the editor of Wilfred Owen, which points to another.

Undertones of War was written while he was in Japan and on publication in 1928 was immediately recognized as a masterpiece. Here he never obtrudes himself upon the reader and is the interpreter of, rather than a commentator on, events, catching exactly not only the horrors and devastation of the conflict but the humanity, humour, and courage of his comrades. The prose is as admirable in its way as his verse of the time, unaffected and yet ready to draw on all the resources of rhythm and image. In spite of the Second World War intervening to distract attention from the First, the book's lustre is undimmed.

He returned from Tokyo in 1928 and renewed his connexion with *The Nation*, but in 1930 he was elected a Fellow and Tutor of English at Merton College, Oxford. He made an excellent tutor, and many of his pupils became lifelong friends. His first collected volume of verse appeared in 1930, and in the same year his admirable biography of Leigh Hunt was published. His knowledge of the Romantic period was extraordinary, in sympathy and detail, and with the modesty and generosity that were his most characteristic traits, he was always ready to share it with other scholars. His gift of books to Keats House, Hampstead, should be mentioned in this connexion. But his range was not confined to the Romantics. There was hardly an aspect of English literature - or, for that matter, of English painting - in which he was not equally well versed.

He published several volumes of poetry during the 1930s. He wrote fluently and easily, with a remarkable talent for occasional verse, but he might have done better to have been more selective in his choice for publication, for some of the poems written at this time fall short of his best. He was, however, always being asked for contributions, and it went against his generous temperament to disoblige. His fatigue, rather than decline, was due not to any failure of power but to the extreme perturbation roused in him by the threat of approaching war. All the old spiritual wounds were set aching and his grasp on poetry seemed occasionally to grow relaxed. His answer to the charge that he published too much was, however, Walter de la Mare's - that time was the poet's best editor. A second collected volume of his poetry came out in 1940.

At the outbreak of war he served for a time with the University OTC, giving instruction in map reading, a subject in which he delighted, but in 1943 he resigned his Fellowship and returned to London, as a staff writer on *The Times Literary Supplement*. He was from early years a practised reviewer, and a collection of articles contributed to the *Literary Supplement* had appeared under the title of *Votive Tablets* in 1931.

His marriage to Miss Norman was dissolved in 1943. He married Claire Poynting in 1944; there are four daughters by the marriage.

Once the shock of war had been accepted he quickly recovered his poise and began to write poetry with his earlier intensity. *Shells by a Stream* (1944) and *After the Bombing* (1949) contain some of his most mature poems. They show the lyrical grace, the felicitous phrasing, the keen observation, and the deliberative intelligence of his earlier work, but their rhythm is tauter and their imagery sharper, in response to the moral and emotional stresses of the time. He was active, too in prose. *Cricket Country* (1944), his

delightful, digestive account of cricket - a game which had engaged his entire devotion from childhood, both as a keen player and spectator - was highly successful; and in scholarship his *Shelley, a Life Story* (1946) was equally popular.

He returned to Japan in 1947 as Cultural Liaison Officer to the British Mission. The appointment was a wise choice. He was regarded with the greatest esteem and affection in that country - sentiments which he fully reciprocated - and in 1950 was elected to the Japan Academy, the highest honour that could be paid. He was created CBE in 1951. He held the honorary degree of D.Litt. from the universities of Leeds and Leicester.

He resumed his work on *The Times Literary Supplement* in 1949, but returned to the Far East as Professor of English in the University of Hongkong in 1955. A year later he received the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry. Once again he gained the immediate respect and admiration of his students. Wherever he chanced to live or whomever he lived among, his sincerity, modesty and gentleness, his wisdom and knowledge, his humour and generosity, and his rare poetic temperament won him devoted friends.

In February, 1966, he was elected Oxford Professor of Poetry in succession to Mr Robert Graves. He polled 477 votes. Mr Robert Lavell, the American poet, received 241 votes.

Blunden wrote much and variously - only a few of his many writings have been referred to here - and the problem he set in classification may have helped to divert attention in recent years from his achievement. Nor did he call attention to himself by sharing in any of the literary controversies of his time: being an ally of no party, he was adopted by none. The diversity of his prose and the range of his scholarship alone would have been sufficient for an ordinary reputation, but in the long run Blunden's will rest on his poetry - one of the most admirable illustrations of the English tradition in our time, and an episode "to that great poem".

PAUL MOON JAMES, QUAKER BANKER AND POET

Ruth I Aldrich

Charles Lamb became acquainted with the Quaker poet Charles Lloyd (1775-1839) through Samuel Taylor Coleridge; the two young men met in London in January, 1797; they published together, they were caricatured together in the *Anti-Jacobin*, Lamb visited Lloyd in Birmingham in the spring of 1798 and saw him during his visit to the Lake country in 1802. Lamb also met other members of the wealthy Lloyd family, and one of these, Lloyd's sister Olivia, became the wife of the banker and minor poet Paul Moon James (1780-1854), member of the Society of Friends. James is of interest since his poems attracted some attention in their own day and were known to the Wordsworths and Robert Southey. Like Lamb's friend Bernard Barton, James represents the Quaker businessman who turned to poetry as an avocation. What is known of his life is described below.

James was born in Bristol at Castle Street in Castle Precincts on January 16, 1780, the son of William (a woollen draper) and Priscilla James of that city. (By 1808 his parents were living in London.) They had at least one other child, a daughter Elizabeth, born in 1783. Paul Moon James says in the preface to the third edition of his poems that in his boyhood he knew Thomas Chatterton's mother and sister, often reading to Mrs Chatterton

during her last illness. Since various sources give the date of her death as December 25, 1791, or January 1, 1792, he was not quite twelve at this time. Somewhat later he read and admired all of the early poems of Robert Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

James remained in Bristol until 1805, when he moved to Birmingham. There he was first manager, then partner, in the bank of Galton and James in Steelhouse Lane; in 1829, after the retirement of his partners, he became associated with the Birmingham Banking Company. During his residence at Birmingham James acted as High Bailiff and Chairman of the Commissioners, and was a magistrate of Worcestershire and president of the Birmingham Philosophical Institution. He was for some years an active Quaker, attending the annual meetings in London, and it was at his home in Wake Green Road, Moseley (Birmingham), that in November, 1822, the formation of the Birmingham Friends Book Society was first discussed. However, a few years later, after a difference over the payment of tithes, he resigned from the Society of Friends.

In 1810 James edited the poems of William Isaac Roberts of Bristol. Roberts, who had died in 1806 at the age of nineteen, had left his manuscripts to Edward Gogg and Paul Moon James to be published for the benefit of his sister. Robert's *Poems and Letters*, published in 1811, were printed by Knott and Lloyd, Birmingham, for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, London, Robert Southey (himself born in Bristol in 1774) obtaining many subscriptions to the volume.

Use of the printers Knott and Lloyd was undoubtedly due to the fact that in August, 1808, Paul Moon James married Olivia Lloyd (1783-1854), the sixth surviving child of the wealthy Quaker banker of Birmingham Charles Lloyd (who subscribed for two copies of the Roberts volume) and the sister of Robert Lloyd of Knott and Lloyd as well as of Charles Lloyd the poet. The seventeen-year-old Olivia is mentioned by Charles Lamb in a letter to Thomas Manning postmarked February 8, 1800: "An Ignorant Quaker girl, I mean ignorant in the best sense..." Manning in his reply, February 9, 1800, called her a good girl, "not a tattling pert minx." In March, 1800 Olivia and her mother visited London and saw Lamb, who commented, "a charming girl - full of feeling, and *thinner* than she was -" a statement which suggests that he had met her during his Birmingham visit.

Through her brother Charles, Olivia was also known to the Wordsworths. Charles and his wife Sophia had lived since 1800 at Old Brathay, Ambleside, in the Lake Country and Olivia, who occasionally visited them, is mentioned in Dorothy Wordsworth's journal. For instance, Olivia and Charles called at Dove Cottage on both November 19 and December 2, 1801, and on the second visit Mary and William Wordsworth accompanied them part of the way home. Another Wordsworth tie was the marriage of Olivia's older sister Priscilla to Wordsworth's younger brother Christopher in 1804.

It is doubtful whether Paul Moon James knew the Wordsworths or Robert Southey personally, although he corresponded with Southey. However, his best known poem, "The Otaheitan Mourner," appears in the small notebook kept by Sarah Hutchinson, and it seems most likely that she saw a manuscript copy through Charles Lloyd, his wife Sophia (of whom the Wordsworths were fond), or Priscilla Lloyd Wordsworth.

In August, 1836, James and his wife moved to Manchester, where he was managing director of the newly founded Manchester and Salford Bank and was also active in the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society. He died

at his residence, Summerville House, Pendleton (Manchester), of a heart attack on July 13, 1854. Olivia survived him by only a few months, dying at Windermere December 4, 1854. The marriage was childless. Four lines of James' own verse appear on his memorial tablet.

Paul Moon James apparently published only one volume of poetry, which went into three editions. According to his preface in the third edition he had begun writing poetry at least by 1798, and like Coleridge he composed poems on the spots that suggested them, while he continued to produce poetry for "upwards of half a century." A few pieces were printed in periodicals, including the *Monthly Magazine* and *Blackwood's*. The first edition, entitled simply *Poems*, was printed at Birmingham in 1821. Four copies were sent to his brother-in-law Charles Lloyd, who intended to present three of these volumes to Thomas Noon Talfourd, Charles Lamb, and Bernard Barton. In 1841 a second edition with new poems appeared, again entitled *Poems*, published by Simms and Dinham, Manchester. The third edition, described as a second edition with additions, was published by Simms and Dinham in 1853, the year before James' death. According to the obituaries, James also possessed artistic taste and sketched gracefully.

His poems are those of a minor poet, with little freshness or originality. Some are hymns or have a religious tone, a number are based on actual events or actual landscapes, and nearly all are thin and gentle, with a faint melancholy. Several echo the Quaker dislike for slavery. Two patriotic poems, written shortly after the battle of Waterloo, were set to music by the popular composer William Shield. The poem known to the Wordsworths and Southey, "The Otaheitan Mourner," shows contemporary themes in the familiar topics of the innocent savage destroyed by decadent civilization, the deserted young mother, and the public interest in Otaheite /Tahiti/ and the voyage of the Bounty under Captain Bligh, which provided the narrative base of the poem.

It is unlikely that James' poems were widely known outside local circles, and they must have been soon forgotten. A flicker of interest remained in the tenth edition of Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*, 1914, which quotes twice from James' "The Beacon," composed in 1801 but he is not included in the current edition.

THE CHARLES LAMB BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON

The luncheon again took place at Simpson's in the Strand (on February 9, the eve of the anniversary) with John Wain, newly-elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford as guest of honour and principal speaker. He confessed to having left his notes in the cloakroom, and so we are unable to report his speech in full. Let it suffice to say that it was Elian in spirit and friendliness and revealed a greater knowledge of Lamb than Professor Wain was willing to confess to. Our new Chairman, Dr Tim Wilson, returned thanks; Mr Branchini, with his usual verve, proposed the toast of the provincial and overseas members and the response was made by Miss Grace Lowe of Greenwich, Connecticut. We were glad to have the traditional presence of two senior scholars from both the girls' and the boys' schools of Christ's Hospital; and Andrew Wood, Senior Grecian read the Grace Before Meat and Martin Jones the Grace After Meat. As Mr Kingham pointed out in a note printed on the menu, these are graces which, with slight amendment, have been in use at Christ's Hospital since early in the 18th century. Our President, Dr Ian Jack, presented each of the School representatives with a copy of The

Essays of Elia suitably inscribed. Attendance at the lunch was higher than ever before, the demand for tickets being rather more than could be accommodated. Altogether a satisfactory result and, as ever, a genial and enjoyable occasion. Many Friends were remembered, and Distant Correspondents, some Popular Fallacies were indulged in, but there was no manifestation at all of Imperfect Sympathies. We all wished that more of our American Friends could be able to be with us on some future occasion.

1972-73 LECTURES

Our programme this season has attempted a survey of the arts in England in Lamb's time, with the assistance of lecturers nominated by The Mary Ward Centre. On November 3 Mr Lawrence Watts spoke on the vocal music of the early 19th century. On December 1 Mr P J Garrard covered "Art in Elian Times: Mrs Huxstep has provided the following summary:

> In his lecture, illustrated with slides, Mr Garrard defined the "modern art" of Lamb's day and linked this with Lamb's own preference expressed in such essays as "The barrenness of the imaginative faculty in the productions of modern art" (1833). This period embraced the work of Turner (1775-1851), John Constable (1776-1837) and John Martin (1789-1854) - the last-named being the subject of particular strictures from Lamb, although he acknowledges that "his towered structures are of the highest order of the material sublime". Lamb would not have had the opportunity of seeing much of Constable's most original work which, although much admired in France, had to wait long for recognition in England. Although Turner's *Liber Studiorum* was available in engravings it is not mentioned by Lamb, and he does not seem to have been interested in the important developments in water-colour painting by such artists as Cousins, Cotman and Crome.
>
> In art, Lamb was a traditionalist. Apart from Hogarth, among the moderns he liked George Morland, but his greatest praise is reserved for Titian, Leonardo, Raphael and Veronese. He wrote "Hogarth excepted, can we produce any one painter within the last fifty years...that has treated a story *imaginatively*". Lamb italicises the last word, but perhaps the word "story" is the significant one. He seems to have valued art as illustration - witness the magnificent description of Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne" - or for its psychological insights; Hogarth put "a thinking character into the faces of his people". The Rake's Progress and Marriage a la Mode were more to his taste than Reynolds' "Captain Heathfield" or "The Duchess of Devonshire and Child".

On January 5 Mr E E Brown spoke on Regency and Early Georgian Architecture.

CHARLES LAMB IN NEW YORK, 1974

W F Courtney

New York City is not all glass and chrome and chill. "The Lambs" in West 44th Street, on the edge of the theatre district, is an elderly building - for us, designed by Stanford White in 1905 - which a new CLS member has passed by all her life wanting to enter (but without excuse) because she knew it as an actors' club. Late last year she read in the *New York Times* a story about its financial difficulties. "The original club /said the

Times/ was founded in London in 1873 /1869, I believe/ and takes its name from Charles and Mary Lamb, the 19th century literary figures." Could it be? She dropped in shortly thereafter to find out, explaining her interest in Charles and Mary to the courteous elderly gentleman who guards the door, speaks beautifully, was in vaudeville once, and quotes Aldous Huxley; he prefers to be nameless.

She found The Lambs suitably agnian in aspect, with dark carpeting, cream-painted wood panelling, ceilings similarly panelled and edged in old gold, most walls alive with actors' portraits, playbills, photos - even a scene in oils of sheep and shepherds, of antique vintage. A bust or two. A *used* air about the place, and some mature actors (?) drifting through it. The kindly doorkeeper was bursting with information. He took her first to a small red-silk-lined anteroom whose prominent feature was an engraving of the F S Cary Charles and Mary. Under it, on a small brass plate: "Years ago, in London, some convivial spirits in the arts used to gather of an evening at the home of Charles and Mary Lamb, their slogan being, 'Let's go 'round to the Lambs.' Thus was born the Lambs Club. Floreant Agni - (May the Lambs flourish)."

Her conductor, now and then called away to the Door, explained that the Lambs lived near the Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres and *legend* had it that, since the taverns closed before the theatres, Mary had 100 keys made for the managers to distribute to their actors, who might then drop in for a warming potion after the play. (How Lamb would have liked this legend.)

Her guide next drew her to the larger lobby, stopping first to look into the Grill, dark but pleasant, where a large fire crackled and just now a wedding party, with white-veiled bride, made merry.

Outside in the lobby, the dark baize center wall opposite the reception desk was bare of decoration except for a modern portrait of - yes - Charles Lamb, two feet by three, in oils, attracting the eye by its illumination. On the wall above him was a large painted crest (*Floreant Agni*) with two lambs rampant. Her guide did not think the portrait a good one, but (after two viewings) the visitor decided that it had, after all, caught Lamb's spirit. The head fine and sensitive and not unlike; though the rest, clad in white breeches, seated in a chair and holding a scroll, suggested a Duke-of-Wellington dash that was not quite Lamb's in life. *Imaginative* dash (but black breeches) he surely had, and she began to grow fond of the picture. No member could escape him, or the description, "CHARLES LAMB, whose hospitality and brotherhood were responsible for this club. Donated by Rod and Bob Hendrickson." And opposite, over a stand-up writing desk to one side, were small portraits of his old acquaintances John Philip Kemble - the original, painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence for George III - and an 1813 oil of George Frederick Cooke.

The visitor was then urged to go up one flight to a large sitting room (there is a small theatre on a yet higher floor) lined with portraits of recent Shepherds (Presidents). With the Vice-President, or Boy, and a council, the Shepherd governs the Lambkins (members), who hold an annual Gambol (party with skits). The present Fold (building) is the Lambs' fourth New York home. Tom Dillon is the current Shepherd.

"Man is ever a social creature, seeking his kind," reads the souvenir card given to new guests. "On Christmas Day, 1874, five good fellows, headed by our first Shepherd, Harry J Montague, sat at supper in the Blue Room at Delmonico's and founded our club which they called The Lambs. Soon other

members were attracted; kindred souls seeking a place to bring something to rather than take something from ..."

So The Lambs are about to celebrate their centenary on February 8 (had CL something to do with the date?) at New York's Felt Forum, with a bang-up potpourri from "major Broadway shows of the past," featuring prominent club members of today including Fred Astaire, Hal Holbrook, Eddie Bracken, John Wayne, Alan Jay Lerner, and Frederick Loewe, according again to the *Times*. The proceeds are expected to alleviate the money troubles.

Membership - now people from all the arts - until recently 850, has now reached 1200 through a special drive. Women are being "contemplated" as members, the *Times* says - a move long overdue: shades of Mary and of Fanny Kelly!

Her guide called to the phone, her excuse fulfilled, the female visitor gamboled across 44th Street, almost tempted to seek membership herself. At any rate, she thought in some elation, the Lambs are alive in New York City. *Floreant Agni*!

OBITUARY: Mr R Meadows White

A long-standing and valued member of the Society, Mr Meadows White died in November aged 72. An actor of repute, he began his career with Sir Frank Benson's company. After repertory seasons which included Liverpool and Bristol, he made his West End debut in 1934 and from then on was busy and successful in the theatre, film and television. At the time of his death he was preparing to take part in Yorkshire TV's "South Riding" series. Mr Meadows White several times lectured to the Charles Lamb Society and was an occasional and welcome attender at its meetings.

B S

MR H G SMITH

We record with pleasure a tribute to Mr Smith and his interest in Charles Lamb which appeared in the Herts Advertiser of February 8. In a double-page spread "Following in the Footsteps of Charles Lamb in Hertfordshire" Ronald Riggs told the story of Mr Smith's life and linked it with his interest in Lamb and his work for the Charles Lamb Society and for the Bulletin. Mr Smith was photographed with his press cuttings and against the background of his Lamb library; and there were photographs too of the MS of Reginald Hine's *Charles Lamb and His Hertfordshire* and of Mackerye End (modern spelling). It is sad to record that at the time of publication Mr Smith was once again in hospital, but we hear that he is now home again, and all members will wish to send him their kindliest greetings. Even in retirement Herbert Smith is still in the battle for the recognition of Elia, and still a recruiting officer for the Charles Lamb Society.

B S

BOOK REVIEWS

De Quincey as Critic, ed. John E Jordan, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973, 492 pp, £7.50.

> "Neither moral philosophy nor poetry condescends to the monstrous or the abnormal; both one and the other deal with the catholic and the representative."

> "...my proper vocation, as I well know, was the exercise of the analytic understanding."

There can be few readers, without an intimate knowledge of the Romantic Period, who would immediately guess that the author of these quotations was Thomas De Quincey. The emphasis upon "the catholic and the representative", the endorsement of an "analytic understanding", and the rejection especially of "the monstrous or the abnormal", might at first sight come more aptly from one of the high priests of neo-classical artistic theory - Johnson or Reynolds or Pope. Yet it is one of the virtues of this new selection of De Quincey's criticism that the editor, Professor John E Jordan, constantly guards against such easy categorisations. As he rightly points out in his introduction, much of De Quincey's criticism is born of transient impulses and momentary insights; and it is almost impossible to discern a coherent scheme of ideas about literature which might place him unalienably in a 'Romantic' school of criticism. Instead, what De Quincey gives us, and what is well represented in this volume, is a series of assorted forays - into rhetoric, style and language, into the literatures of Greece, Rome and Germany, into history and contemporary English letters. His critical intelligence, as it appears in this book, is eclectic, not syncretistic - and although for some readers, such a mind may appear not so much a mystery as a muddle, there can be little doubt that it provides moments of outstanding literary illumination, such as in the famous "On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*", or in some parts of his essays on style and language.

In keeping with the intention of the Routledge Critics Series to provide a "considerable Introduction to the critic and his work", Professor Jordan, as well as providing brief notes on specific essays, writes an extensive general preface to the edition. Nearly three quarters of this introduction is devoted to the biographical and historical details of De Quincey's career as a critic - a rehearsal which might arguably have been condensed in favour of a more extensive *interpretation* of his critical method. However, when Professor Jordan turns to this field in the final pages of his introduction, many of his remarks are perceptive and valuable. He comments justly upon the 'methodology' (if such it may be called) of De Quincey's best criticisms - the way in which he often seems to begin an article as a purely 'affective' critic, engrossed by a certain emotional tone or atmosphere, but then the important way in which his approach changes to explore and analyse the *reasons* for such an effect. Professor Jordan also write excellently (if only too briefly) about the concepts of antagonism and contrast, which De Quincey saw as the "great cardinal law" upon which criticism must rely. Certainly, much of the philosophical basis for his thinking about literature rested upon an essential dialectic or bifurcation - witness, the famous distinction between the Literature of Knowledge and the Literature of Power, and other less well-known contrasts between pagan and Christian, dramatic and epic, subjective and objective modes of expression. And Professor Jordan's concluding assessment of De Quincey's status as a critic, if not altogether original, is eminently fair. His work, as this volume reveals, is too fragmentary and unsystematic (and occasionally too prejudiced) for him to be accounted one of the greatest of English critics. Yet for certain critical 'spots of time' for certain moments of illumination in which the whole nature of a poem or play is revealed, he is unsurpassed.

On a more minor level, I have only two criticisms of what is otherwise a book much to be welcomed. Although the typography and general lay-out of the volume are excellent, the dust-jacket design seems almost ludicrously inappropriate. De Quincey's features appear to have been sketched using a child's "Paint by Numbers" kit, and this outline is set against the most

anaemic of orange backgrounds. (*Orange* for the believer in the Literature of Power and "the majestic intellect of man"?) Secondly, it is difficult to know how large a readership this book will attain, since its price will surely make it prohibitive for many, save the more affluent public and university libraries and especial devotees of De Quincey. Nevertheless, its contents undoubtedly make for a valuable addition to this series.

Tim Chilcott

Discovering Walks in Hertfordshire by Ron Pigram (Shire Publications 56 pp 30p)

This modestly priced book is an excellent introduction to Lamb's "hearty, homely, loving Hertfordshire", for not only does it give directions for eight walks in the county, but it manages to impart, in its fifty-five pages, much information not usually to be found in such books.

It explains how some of the place names had their origins, and gives the correct pronunciation of others. Famous names appear frequently; William and Caroline Lamb, the Bulwer Lyttons, Sarah Jennings, Duchess of Marlborough, Bernard Shaw, Cherry-Garrard, Bunyan and of course Charles Lamb, for Walk 8 includes "Button Snap", the cottage given to him by his godfather. Lamb never lived here, and he sold it after three years. It is now the property of the Charles Lamb Society.

There are good maps to accompany the instructions, and the book is of a convenient size and can be slipped into a pocket or bag. Items of historical and architectural interest receive attention and to non-walkers the directions are so descriptive and detailed that the walks can be visualised and enjoyed sitting at home by the fire.

We are indebted to our member Mr R C Horsnell for bringing this splendid and useful little book to our notice.

F S Reeves

NOTES AND QUERIES

Mrs W F Courtney writes

"H C Robinson's Diary (ed. E J. Morley, London, 1938, Vol. 1), entry of Sept. 29, 1832, says that Lady Blessington "gave us an account of the suit to establish the marriage at Rome of Mr Swift with Miss Kelly, as represented to her by her attorney Mr Powell." The Mr Swift meant may be Godwin Swift of the index to *The Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington* (by R R Madden, London, 1855), whom Walter Savage Landor, living in Italy, recommended to Lady Blessington in Vol. 2, pp 103 and 119. Landor's lifelong love, "Ianthe," at her death Mme de Molande, was Sophia Jane Swift, who in 1803 married her cousin Godwin Swift (later spelled Swifte, of the family of Jonathan Swift) and had five children by him. He died in 1814 (according to Landor's *Letters and Other Unpublished Writings*, London, 1897, p. 85); young Godwin may have been one of these children, or a nephew. Does anyone know more of young Swift, or of "Miss Kelly's" supposed marriage? Has the origin of Miss Gerbini, Fanny Maria Kelly's stepdaughter - later called Miss Greville - ever been proved? The element of Italy - Landor's home, "marriage at Rome," and "Miss Gerbini" - is intriguing; though her biographers do not (I believe) mention that Lamb's Fanny Kelly ever went to Italy."

IN THE SALE ROOM

On December 4 1973 an interesting collection of De Quincey papers "the property of a gentleman" was sold at Sotheby's. Most of the MSS appear to have been used by A H Japp in *Thomas De Quincey: His Life and Writings* (1877) and in *The Posthumous Works of Thomas De Quincey* (1891) and not to have been transcribed in accordance with the usages of modern scholarship. Some appear not to have been published; there are also drafts of letters from De Quincey and letters sent to him. One heavily revised essay on the distresses of dining out which appeared in the 1877 work omitted three sentences in which De Quincey refers to have dined with Charles and Mary Lamb - "...Poor dear creatures, the attractions of splendour and luxury those dear friends had none to offer...". Presumably there were other attractions. Altogether there were sixty lots, which went to sixteen different buyers for a total of £4,237. Not, therefore and alas, all to the same collection.

On December 17 1973 a "hurriedly written" letter from Lamb to Bernard Barton was sold at Sotheby's (J D Swales, £140). Postmarked 29 November 1829, presumably from Enfield, it referred to an accompanying poem (now missing) "...poor stuff but worthy of a poor picture..." which Barton may well have asked for on behalf of a friend (Lamb asked him to copy the piece out in his own hand). Lamb declines an invitation from Barton, saying that he would prefer to see him at *his* home "when my *womankind* are here". Mary appears to have been visiting the Gillmans at Highgate at the time the letter was written: "a son of Nimshi drives her", as Lamb wrote to Gillman. The date of the letter is just after the Lambs had moved to the Westwoods'.

NEW MEMBERS

Mr and Mrs T Chamberlain, White Gables, Sutherland Avenue, Reading, Berks

Mrs B Hanss, 16 Buckland Crescent, London, N W 3

Essex County Libraries, King Street, Saffron Walden, Essex

Iowa State Univeristy Library, Serials Division, Ames Iowa 50010, U S A

University of Leicester Library, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH

University of Sheffield Library, Sheffield S10 2TN

Dr F A Uhlein, Philosophisches Seminar der Universitat Munster, 44 Munster, Johannisstrasse, West Germany