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THE NAPOLEONIST

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William Hazlitt's *Life of Napoleon* was originally published in 1830, in four volumes. The first two had appeared in 1828, but the difficulties of his publishers, the problem of amassing his materials, and a decline in his health delayed their full publication. The reception of the completed work was disappointingly muted, and sales were poor. Twenty-two years after the author's death, however, his son could describe the *Life* as 'my father's last, largest, and, upon the whole, greatest work': and although the latter judgement would probably be disputed by most of Hazlitt's admirers, the book is still a fascinating, if occasionally provocative, read.[1] My intention in this article is to examine the implications of the *Life* for an appreciation of Hazlitt's political ideas.

The methodological obstacles which such a task must encounter are quite formidable. In assessing the verdicts of Hazlitt upon the French Revolution and its Napoleonic aftermath, the enquirer is forced to take a stance on the period himself, and although many of the facts are beyond dispute, their interpretation never will be. Pieter Geyl, in the preface to his *Napoleon; For and Against* was honest enough to state that 'my sympathies are with the against rather than with the for category'.[2] However, Geyl had been incarcerated at Buchenwald, and many of his statements suggest that he was an unsuitable person to summarise the debate objectively. His book reveals how far the subsequent course of French history has inspired idolators and detractors in turn, just as Napoleon's statue in the Place Vendome has been torn down and re-erected with every fluctuation in fortune. French historians

are not alone in their guilt; unacceptable bias, for instance, mars a recent English biography, that of J. M. Thomson (1963). His sympathies are clearly unmasked when he refers to the allies as 'us' throughout.

It is especially fascinating that while historical developments have quite a predictable impact on interpretation, the effect of ideological commitment seems less clear. Napoleon has his admirers almost everywhere, except, perhaps, in Quaker Meeting Houses. His appeal to French Nationalists is obvious, but some case can be made for a Napoleon who inspired almost all of the nationalist movements in the nineteenth century. Needless to say, a case can be made against this, emphasising the examples of Spain and Poland which arraign him as the callous foe of nationalities. Conservatives can admire the order he brought after the Revolution, but equally it is open to them to detest the cynical exploiter of religion, the disturber and re-arranger of Europe. Marxists can exult in his apparent bourgeois prejudices, and recoil as he denounces the ideologists. Liberals, perhaps, are confronted with the sharpest dilemma of all. Here is the living symbol of the careers open to all talents, the scourge of annointed kings, the man who compromised between the arbitrary Ancien Regime and the anarchistic Jacobins, tolerating, within limits, both sides. Yet the same tomb in the Invalides shrouds the centraliser, the enemy of a free press, the man of violence and of vaulting ambition, the sexist who believed that the world's greatest woman was she who had borne the most children, the racist who suppressed the slaves in Saint-Domingue, the Judas of Revolutionary idealism. Because these conflicting reactions can all be supported by reasonable evidence, the debate will continue. At the bottom line are the facts that for his admirers, Napoleon may have threatened much, but he fell; for his detractors, he may have fallen, and yet he threatened much.

I

The reputation of Hazlitt's *Life* has not thrived, even at the hands of his admirers. David Bromwich is pro-Hazlitt and anti-Napoleon, a problem he tries to solve by claiming that Hazlitt somehow 'made' Napoleon into his ideal, presumably for want of a better, even though this was inconsistent with his normal political stand-point. Bromwich speaks of 'the starkest and most general apology conceivable' presented by Hazlitt for his hero in his chapter on the foundation of the Empire.[3] Herschel Baker is more forthright, believing that 'In Napoleon's career Hazlitt found a precedent and inspiration for almost all of his political ideals.'[4] Napoleon's fall, however, he 'implausibly construed as the destruction of reform.'[5] In other words, Hazlitt was not so much the victim of wishful, as of muddled thinking. Baker concludes that 'As history, the *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, with its sentimental view of Caesarism, is of course bizarre; but as Hazlitt's paean to the triumphant individualism that he regarded as the consummation of reform it is extremely moving.'[6] Robert Robinson found the *Life* largely derivative, and opined that 'the work deserves perhaps even less praise and attention than it has received' - a particularly harsh assessment of a book which has rarely received either.[7] According to Robinson, the *Life's* deficiencies are 'attributable, no doubt, to the author's too firmly established convictions; deficiencies in knowledge and experience, ill-health, personal disappointments, and premature old-age'.[8] Like the character which it portrays, Hazlitt's biography has therefore inspired criticism which appears, at least on first sight, to be contradictory. For Baker, Hazlitt's life-long radicalism remained unshaken even though he was taken in by Napoleon; for Bromwich, Hazlitt stretches his principles to embrace a tyrant. From Robinson's account it appears that Hazlitt distorted Napoleon's career because of his own inflexible preconceptions. The common theme of all

these interpretations is never questioned - that Hazlitt was a radical; in early nineteenth-century terms, a democratic liberal. It is this theme which will receive most attention here, in an attempt to remove any confusion over the political message of the *Life*. As I have explained, it would be hazardous to do this by comparing Hazlitt's account with what is generally accepted as true today. There must be another caveat, in that Hazlitt was much too close to the events he chronicled for objectivity, even if that elusive standard had been his goal. Hence it is important to compare his biography with contemporary appraisals. Yet, with all these qualifications in mind, the *Life* can yield some valuable insights into Hazlitt's politics.

II

After a brief history of Corsica, and a description of Napoleon's early life, Hazlitt tackles the French Revolution itself. Here, he is largely concerned with refuting Burke's *Reflections*, but by no means is his picture one of unrelieved triumph. It emerges that the Revolution was necessary, since the Ancien Regime had clearly failed at all levels of society. Like Burke, Hazlitt allows that the influence of intellectuals such as Rousseau and Voltaire was profound; but of course for him their posthumous role had not been pernicious. Rather, they had prepared the French nation to question. The Revolution was a direct result of the invention of printing. Once the old abuses had been held up for scrutiny and ridicule, they were doomed.

The outstanding characters in Hazlitt's tale, apart from Napoleon himself, are Louis XVI and Robespierre who dominate the early part of the work. His Louis XVI is a great advance on Burke's panegyric, in that the pervading tone, in this case hostility, is softened by sympathetic understanding. Louis could have done no other than he did. He was born an absolute king, which disqualified him from ever acquiescing in the constitutional role thrust upon him by the National Assembly. His behaviour in the face of the mob was sometimes brave, and almost always tactful. However, being an absolute king he could not resist intriguing for the restoration of his power. In the circumstances of 1793 his execution was inevitable. Not only was he a rallying point for the Royalists, but having agreed to the early constitutional changes in the hope of reversing them with the aid of foreign bayonets, he was a traitor to his country. Nevertheless, Hazlitt's portrait is a tragic one. He sees in Louis the impossibility of combining absolute power with virtue, however well-intentioned the ruler. By contrast, with his eye on Burke, he is compelled to cast Marie-Antoinette as a haughty schemer, driving her husband ever-faster along the road to disaster. But even she is permitted to show dignity and courage at the end.

Robespierre emerges from Hazlitt's pages as a bloodthirsty fanatic, and is not even granted the consolation of an edifying exit. Even his oratory left much to be desired; 'his declamation was typically a disjointed tissue of rhapsodical common-places, forced into an abortive union by dogmatical assertions, and where, in the midst of an utter barrenness of thought or illustration, there is an appearance of coming to the point with great directness and simplicity.'[9] 'The truth is, in one word, he was a natural bigot, that is, a person extremely tenacious of certain feelings and opinions, from an utter inability to conceive of anything beyond them, or to suppose that others do.'[10] Hazlitt proceeds to compare Robespierre's fanaticism to that of 'monks and inquisitors', drawing a parallel much beloved by enemies of totalitarian democracy in the present century. 'The religinus and the

political fanatic are one and the same character, and run into the same errors on the same grounds', he writes.[11] However, he shows rather more insight into the problem than those more recent commentators, who by equating political 'messianism' with religious fervour have done little more than demonstrate their hositility towards religion.[12] Religious persecutions were undoubtedly terrible, but 'to argue from hence that those who sanctioned or who periodically assisted at such scenes were mere monsters of cruelty and hypocrisy, would be betraying a total ignorance of the contradictions of the human mind.'[13] This concession to Robespierre, one suspects, is wrung from Hazlitt because he does not want the reader to imagine that the Terror was solely the product of gratuitous evil from above. By contrast, Robespierre's enemies the Gironde, and later, Danton, are presented with mildly critical sympathy. The men who instigated the 'Incorruptible's' fall have been dubbed 'ultraterrorists', but in Hazlitt's pages they speak and act like heroes.

Hazlitt has two major explanations for the Terror. One, as Robert Robinson suggests, 'is a restatement of the liberal or radical view of French affairs' - that a peaceful revolution was wrenched from its course by the aggressive interference of other powers.[14] It is certainly true that the worst excesses of the Revolution took place when Paris was most threatened, and that enough of a 'fifth column' existed in France to justify an atmosphere of mistrust. But, leaving this argument aside, Hazlitt provides a different solution to the problem in his discussion of French character. This theme crops up throughout the work; it appears that Hazlitt considered Napoleon's talents thrown away on the French. The stereotypic Frenchman he presents is easily bored, frivolous and vulgar. Consequently, 'If a nation of a species lower than men had undertaken a Revolution, they could not have conducted it worse than this of France, with more chattering, more malice, more unmeaning gesticulation, and less dignity and unity of purpose.'[15] Of course, he believes that the brutalization of the Ancien Regime had contributed much to this depraved national character, and explained the triumphant displaying of heads, the judicial murders and the indifference to suffering. But even this could be regarded as a product of Hazlitt's francophobia; the Ancien Regime had lasted so long, to his mind, because unlike the English the French were capable only of abusing liberty.

Hazlitt's account of the Revolution, therefore, sets the scene for a favourable interpretation of Napoleon's career. The Directory which emerged after the Thermidorian reaction is described as a total failure, with inept governmental intervention in many fields and bankruptcy staved off due to Napoleon's victories in Italy. Thus, although Hazlitt does not play down the extent of Napoleon's ambition, he makes it easier to comprehend that the nation might have cried out for the General as a welcome alternative to chaos.

It is worth pausing briefly here to assess and explain Hazlitt's progress thus far. There seems little ground for dismissing the work as 'bizarre', nor to claim that it deserves less attention than it has received. Hazlitt's prejudices do show through, but it is his hatred for the Ancien Regime which causes most damage. He reprints some of the 'cahiers' presented to the Estates General, and outlines the Feudal Rights of the nobility, believing that this alone will establish the case against Louis XVI. There is no suggestion that the Revolution may have arisen from a clash between the monarchy and the nobility; to him all hereditary positions were tainted with the same lurid stains of corruption. However, this mistake was not unusual in his day, and it was quite understandable, when both Crown and aristocracy had met identical fates, to assume that the third estate had been the instigators from the outset. Hazlitt, therefore, is not so much biased in favour of the Revolution,

as against its enemies. For instance, he does not regard the assailants of the Bastille as heroes, even though he demonstrates his abhorence of the place. It is not difficult to guess the reasons for the even-handedness; firstly, he is happy to suggest that if Napoleon did betray the Revolution, he was not committing a glaring moral fault; and perhaps equally important, he was not obliged to condemn the movement out of hand, as someone who had once declared that it was bliss to be alive at its dawn. His original reaction to the events may well have been exultant, but it was not recorded in black and white, as in the cases of Southey, Coleridge and Wordsworth. The reader is nowhere led to assume that Hazlitt's hopes were dependant on the fate of the Revolution, and the general tone of the book indicates that after the fall of the Gironde at the latest, he ceased to identify himself with its fortunes. If historians today would be unhappy with the application of his belief that 'one is concerned not only with what takes place, but with what ought to take place and which seldom actually does so,' to the writing of such a biography, this fault is not missing from his great 'competitor' Scott, nor indeed from many of his successors.[16] Hazlitt's work, therefore, is scarcely unique in telling us as much about the author as the events he relates.

III

The *Life* opens with a Preface which does much to explain Hazlitt's attitude to the Emperor. Napoleon's actions may often have been foolish, but at least they 'recoiled upon the head of the doer' - 'they were not precedents; they were not exempt from public censure or opinion; they were not softened by prescription, nor screened by prejudice, nor sanctioned by superstition, nor rendered formidable by a principle that imposed them as sacred obligations on all future generations.'[17] He declares 'I felt pride ... to think that there was one reputation in modern times equal to the ancients, and at seeing one man greater than the throne he sat upon.'[18] As Augustine Birrell noted, 'This is not Whig doctrine, and indeed is quite contrary to the principles of 1688.'[19] The first quotation, at least is also contrary in many ways to facts which Hazlitt must have known.

First of all, the assertion that Napoleon's actions recoiled upon the head of their doer is not much of an apology - the same could be said of Louis XVI. As suggested earlier, Hazlitt is taking refuge here in the fact that Napoleon failed in the end. Similarly, many of Napoleon's deeds were not precedents, softened by prescription, precisely because he did not secure the hereditary institution he had inaugurated. Of course, the Code Napoleon, the Concordat and the Legion of Honour were seized upon as precedents by his 'legitimate' successors, but Hazlitt prefers to imply that the whole Napoleonic edifice was swept away with its creator. It could be argued that the regime was sanctioned by superstition; and the Papal coronation, the Imperial Catechism Napoleon introduced, together with the celebration of St. Napoleon's Day, reinforce this impression. The most obvious distortion is Hazlitt's claim that Napoleon was not free from public censure or opinion. While men could think what they liked about the Emperor, it was a different matter if they wished to publicise these opinions. The liberty of the press, which Hazlitt extolls so highly in other contexts, is hardly mourned in the biography of its deadly foe. By 1811, there were only four newspapers left in Paris, all of which were under close scrutiny.[20] Napoleon prosecuted an English newspaper, and found it hard to believe that its contents had not been dictated by the government. Hazlitt does discuss these matters briefly, and demonstrates his conviction that both

the religious and the press policies were mistaken, but it is hard to imagine that his protests would have been so muted had Bonaparte been a 'legitimate' sovereign. Similarly, he dismisses Napoleon's treatment of his liberal critics like Madame de Stael, by saying that 'Buonaparte is accused of having intermeddled too much and too harshly with literature; but not till it had first meddled with him.'[21]

It might be anticipated that Hazlitt would disapprove of Napoleon's assumption of the Imperial title. This, however, is not the case. 'Buonaparte's object almost from the first,' he writes, 'appears to have been to consolidate the Revolution by softening its features and mixing up its principles with others which had been longer and more widely established, thus to reconcile old to new France, the philosophers and the priests, and the Republic with the rest of Europe.'[22] This, it might be argued, is a rather charitable view.
D. M. G. Sutherland has recently written that 'The Revolutionary era began with men hoping they could place limits on the actions of an arbitrary government. It ended with some of the very same men creating a government far more arbitrary and despotic than the monarchy of the Old regime.'[23] This verdict was common among Hazlitt's contemporaries. For Wordsworth, Napoleon was the 'barbarian Ravager of Europe', the 'enemy of mankind.' Sir James Mackintosh saw him as the head of a 'new nobility of dishonour'. Southey considered that 'his acts of perfidy, midnight murder, usurpation and remorseless tyranny' had consigned him 'to universal execration, now and for ever.' Shelley thought of him as 'a hateful and despicable being'; Keats said he had done more harm to 'the life of liberty' than all the kings of Christendom.[24] These opinions were echoed by Coleridge, Sydney Smith, Francis Jeffrey and Thomas de Quincey.
Indeed, after Waterloo, Henry Crabb Robinson recorded that of his extensive acquaintance only Hazlitt, Godwin and two others regretted the final fall.

Why did Hazlitt fly in the face of contemporary opinion by remaining an admirer of the Corsican? The critics listed above cover a wide ideological spectrum; some can be questioned, as their dislike for Napoleon was heightened by the guilt they felt for originally supporting the Revolution, but this does not apply to Shelley, Keats or Leigh Hunt. Hazlitt can hardly have been simply duped by Napoleon, since his material was gleaned from hostile, as well as sycophantic, sources, and he must have argued the point exhaustively with his friends. There are, in fact, several plausible reasons for his continuing 'hero-worship'.

Firstly, there is the suggestion thrown out by Georges Lefebre in his own biography of Napoleon. He writes, 'The romantics were not altogether wrong [in making him their hero], for what was classical in him was only his culture and the form of his intellect. The spring of his actions, however, was the imagination, the irresistable impulse of the temperament. This is the secret of the charm which he will always exercise on men. If only in the passing fervour and confusion of youth they will always be pursued by the romantic dream of power.'[25] This statement might lead to a discussion taking us beyond the limits of this paper, but it is relevant to notice an immediate difficulty here. First of all, Lefebre seems to believe that there is a clear distinction between Classicism and Romanticism. But these are merely generalised tendencies, bearing scant relation to the beliefs and actions of real historical characters. If these constructs are regarded too seriously, they become obstacles, not aids, to understanding. Napoleon was deeply read in the classics, and he seems to have derived great inspiration from the deeds of Alexander and Caesar. But this would make him a Classicist no more than an octagenarian reading Wisden would thereby become an international cricketer.

The Classicists are presumed to have been most interested in form, the Romantics to have placed great emphasis on spontanaeity and the imagination. But we should not follow the literary student into the trap of inferring from this that Pope had no imagination, and Byron no respect for form.

Secondly, it is important to notice Lefebre's point about a romantic 'love of power', since many of Hazlitt's critics have paid great attention to this trait in him. This, they believe, explains his admiration for Burke's style, and for Napoleon's rule. This line of criticism seems to receive support from a suggestion of Leigh Hunt's, but in his case, as in that of the recent writers, it appears to be an evasion of the real issue.[26] Human power is an abstraction, and can hardly be assessed in isolation from its effects. Hazlitt most certainly did not admire the power of the allies which overcame Napoleon at Waterloo; he did not appreciate the powers of the Inquisition, nor of the Tsar of Russia over his people. It would be fair to say that he was interested in powerful men and institutions, but that is a fairly characteristic feature of a political writer. It leaves us with the problem of deciding why Hazlitt admired power when it was exercised in a particular way. Hence, Hazlitt's espousal of the Napoleonic cause cannot be wholly explained by an appeal to 'Romantic' aspects of the Emperor's character, nor by referring to Hazlitt's love of power.

A more promising suggestion is provided by David Bromwich in his book *Hazlitt: The Mind of a Critic*. According to Bromwich, the *Life* includes 'Burkean assumptions about human nature which few readers could have deduced from his Preface'.[27] This is not the place to discuss such an issue fully, although it could be persuasively argued that 'Burkean assumptions' were never very far away from Hazlitt's mind.[28] Napoleon's assumptions were not exactly 'Burkean', although he paid due attention to customs and prescription during his Egyptian expedition, to take only one example. His introduction of the Legion of Honour, his respect for the power of religious conviction, and his hatred of the mob could all be described as 'Burkean' without stretching the term too far - indeed Napoleon's politics should be classed as 'aristocratic' if anything. Echoes of Burke can be found throughout the *Life*, even though Hazlitt was evidently concerned to rebutt many of his arguments. For instance, we find the phrase, 'Those who instantly lose sight of the past can have no security for the future', and again, 'Every state contains within itself the means of salvation, if it will look its danger in the face, and not shrink from the course actually necessary to save it', and also, 'Nothing old can ever be revived; for if it had not been unsuited to the circumstances of the people, it would have been still in existence.'[29]

But these are not Burkean assumptions about human nature, however much they might logically follow from such assumptions. Bromwich (who evidently rejects these assumptions himself), is right in so far as the Burkean side of the debate over human nature was the pessimistic one; but Burke was hardly ever so gloomy as the Hazlitt of the *Life*. Most remarkable from a so-called Radical is his insistence that 'No man is ever wiser from experience or suffering, or can cast his thoughts or actions in any other mould than that which nature has assigned them.'[30] This cuts the ground from beneath many of Hazlitt's Radical contemporaries, who believed that environmental factors largely determine character formation, and that by improving political and social institutions a similar amendment could be brought about in human nature. This is not all; his notion of the French as light-headed and changeable is paralleled by a picture of the English as the perpetual dupes of malicious leaders. One of Napoleon's faults, we learn, was not allowing for the ignorance of his subjects; Hazlitt extends the moral to all nations. 'There is nothing that people resent more',

he states, 'than having benefits thrust upon them.'[31] After recounting the behaviour of the defenders of Moscow in 1812, he declares 'Ignorance is power.'[32] By 1826, Hazlitt had become bitterly disillusioned; but he had always admired the Napoleon who could say on St. Helena, 'Men must be very bad to be as bad as I think they are', and of whom John Gibson Lockhart could truthfully say, 'we doubt if any man ever passed through life, sympathising so slightly with mankind.'[33] In short, there is a temperamental affinity between Hazlitt and the Emperor, illustrated further by their shared love of glory and immortality. Bourrienne records a conversation with Napoleon, during which the latter congratulated his secretary on the future fame awaiting him; Bourrienne retorted by asking if he could name Alexander's secretary. Napoleon's proclamations to his armies, even his defiant Will, show his sense of history and the part he was playing in it. Hazlitt was always receptive to the desire for immortality in others, since he craved it for himself. This disposition can only be termed aristocratic, but most emphatically an aristocratic tendency that pays homage to merit rather than birth. It is an important reason for Hazlitt's unpopular enthusiasm for Napoleon, but it requires a further point to render it more plausible.

As we have seen, Hazlitt responded to the glory of Napoleon's deeds, although he was not a blind worshipper of power, however, it was exercised. It has been suggested that he could overlook Napoleon's absolutism because it was used both more efficiently and more beneficially than that of the legitimate monarchs of Europe. Also it is probable that Hazlitt did not think the French were fit for the liberties enjoyed by Englishmen. However, his contemporaries were unable to see things in that light; they could never view Napoleon objectively until he was dead and his line extinguished. It is revealing that once the final fall had occurred, Plymouth harbour was filled with enthusiasts hoping for a glimpse of the deposed Emperor on his way to St. Helena. In hindsight, even the conservative John Gibson Lockhart could say, 'Napoleon was ... essentially and irreclaimably a despot ... but his successor, whether a Bourbon or a Buonaparte, was likely to be constitutional sovereign. The tyranny of a meaner hand would not have been endured after that precedent.'[34]

This last judgement was echoed by Hazlitt when he wrote to his publisher in 1827, 'I thought all the world agreed with me at present that Buonaparte was better than the Bourbons, and that a tyrant was better than tyranny.'[35] But Hazlitt had admired Napoleon when the Army of England was gathered at Boulogne, when invasion fears in England were so exaggerated that Coleridge and Wordsworth fell under suspicion for studying a stream. The reason for Hazlitt's attitude at that time can be found in the biography written twenty years later. Here he write; 'If Buonaparte had made good his landing ... he might have levelled London with the dust, but he must have covered the face of the country with heaps and tumuli of the slain, before this mixed breed of Norman and Saxon blood would have submitted to a second Norman Conquest.'[36] He underlines his patriotism by contrasting his countrymen to the supine French; 'in England (dull as we are), a thousand enemies would only call up a thousand champions to answer them'.[37] Hazlitt had no fears at all that England would be successfully invaded, however grim matters became on the continent. His reference to the Norman Conquest is revealing, aside from the obvious fact that both threats came from France. There had been a successful 'invasion' of England in 1688, which was not resisted due to the unpopularity of James II. Perhaps unconsciously, Hazlitt the defiant 'revolutionist' is here conceding that the Hanoverians, for all their faults, were tolerable enough for their regime to be defended from external danger, at least. Hazlitt's admiration for Napoleon, one may guess, would not have survived long at close quarters;

however justified the cause of reform in England, the right of the people to change their governors did not need to be exercised.

The conclusions to be drawn from Hazlitt's *Life* are manifold, and it is impossible to do much more than scratch the surface here. But I believe it is reasonable to suggest that the work has never been well received because it alienates both camps; it is too favourable to Napoleon to satisfy his enemies, and not radical enough to please those of Hazlitt's modern admirers who wish to reflect their left-wing beliefs back onto their hero. Hazlitt was not only never a strict Republican; he was not against arbitrary power so long as it was wisely exercised. In other words, he differed from the Radicals of his day in his lack of faith in political machinery; as we have seen, this is not the only point on which he disagreed with them. It is very likely that commentators have been unable to appreciate the *Life* because, understanding that it would be difficult for a radical to praise Napoleon and remain consistent to their beliefs, they have preferred to sacrifice Hazlitt's consistency than his Radicalism. But in a field where political bias will probably never permit an authoritative assessment, Hazlitt's *Life of Napoleon* has a great deal of merit - after all, it could only be derivative to some extent, since he was not an eye-witness of events, nor privy to those inner thoughts which prompted the Emperor's endlessly controversial actions.

NOTES

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1. William Hazlitt, *The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, 1852 ed. Preface (by his son William). v.
2. P. Geyl, *Napoleon: For and Against* (Trans. Olive Renier), Jonathan Cape reprint, 1949; Preface, passim.
3. D. Bromwich, *Hazlitt: The Mind of a Critic* (Oxford University Press, 1983); p.303.
4. H. Baker, *William Hazlitt* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1962); p.328.
5. *Ibid*, p. 329.
6. *Ibid*, p. 330.
7. R. E. Robinson, *William Hazlitt's "Life of Napoleon Buonaparte": Its sources and Characteristics* (Geneva, 1959), p. 11.
8. *Ibid*, p. 36.
9. Hazlitt, *Works*, Ed. P. P. Howe; Vol. 13, p. 127.
10. *Ibid*, Vol. 13, p. 153.
11. *Ibid*, p. 168.
12. See esp. J. L. Talmon; *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (Sphere, 1970 reprint), passim.

13. Hazlitt, *Works*, Vol. 13, p. 168.

14. Robinson, *op.cit.*, p. 12 note.

15. Hazlitt, *Works*, Vol. 13, p. 184.

16. *Ibid*, p. 300. For Scott, of course, what happened in the end was rather more desirable than for Hazlitt; see Works (Edinburgh, 1835) Vols. 7-16.

17. *Ibid*, IX.

18. *Ibid*, X.

19. A. Birrell, *William Hazlitt*, Macmillan, 1902; p. 203.

20. D. M. G. Sutherland, *France 1789-1815; Revolution and Counter-Revolution* (Fontana, 1985); p. 390.

21. Hazlitt, *Works*, Vol. 14, p. 249.

22. *Works*, Vol. 14, p. 126. See also *Works*, Vol. 14., p. 236: 'I have nowhere in anything I may have written declared myself to be a Republican ...'

23. Sutherland, *op.cit.*, p. 365.

24. Baker, *op.cit.*, pp. 329-30.

25. G. Lefebre, quoted Geyl *op.cit.*, p. 447.

26. See *Leigh Hunt's Literary Criticism*, ed. L. H. and C. W. Houtchens, New York 1956; p. 253.

27. Bromwich, *op.cit.*, p. 303.

28. See the present writer's 'Hazlitt Against Burke: Radical Versus Conservative' *Durham University Journal*, June 1989.

29. *Works*, Vol. 13, p. 127; Vol. 13, p. 168; Vol. 14, p. 23.

30. *Works*, Vol. 13, p. 116.

31. *Works*, Vol. 14, p. 316.

32. *Works*, Vol. 15, p. 71.

33. J. G. Lockhart, *The History of Napoleon Bonaparte*, Everyman Reprint 1947; p. 504.

34. *Ibid*, pp. 505-6.

35. Hazlitt to Charles Cowden Clarke, Dec. 7, 1827. See *Letters*, ed. H. Sikes New York, 1978; p. 348.

36. *Works*, Vol. 14, p. 210. See also E. Targye Lean, *The Napoleonists: A Study in Political Disaffection 1760-1960* (London, 1970); p. 272 ('The Napoleonists neither believed Napoleon could succeed in invasion nor wanted him to'.)

37. *Works*, Vol. 13, pp. 119-20.

THE ANATOMY OF IDOLATRY: HAZLITT'S *Liber Amoris*

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It has been said that we know too much about the Romantics. Certainly, we know too much about the author of *Liber Amoris; or, The New Pygmalion* (1823), for, preoccupied with the autobiographical origins of this, William Hazlitt's only work of fiction, readers have largely misread the book itself. In this strange, obsessive little work Hazlitt recounts, in compulsive detail, his unrequited and disastrous infatuation with a lodging-house maid named Sally Walker. It is 'something between a work of art and a case history', according to Cyril Connolly, while Lord David Cecil has memorably said that 'No one ever edited his personality for publication less.'[1] Only recently have critics begun to regard *Liber Amoris* as something more than a literary monstrosity, interesting only as a document of unseemly self-exposure.[2] Rather than merely the thinly-disguised record of a middle-aged infatuation, *Liber Amoris* is an exhaustive and erudite analysis of the idea of infatuation which happens to find its starting-point in a middle-aged infatuation. The confessional aspect must be viewed in the context of this overarching analytical purpose; and equally as the literary form consciously chosen as best able to carry within itself the more transparent mode of 'anatomy' or investigation and analysis of private feelings and mental states in this work.

According to Frye, the 'anatomy' (or Menippean satire) 'presents us with a vision of the world in terms of a single intellectual pattern.' Its satiric focus is not moral or social but intellectual, for the anatomist sees evil and folly 'as diseases of the intellect, as a kind of maddened pedantry which the *philosophus gloriosus* at once symbolizes and defines' - the latter being Frye's term for the pedant-hero of the anatomy. Bakhtin terms this figure the 'hero-ideologist', and states that the aim of what he calls the *menippea* is 'to test the idea and the man of the idea'.[3] The defining trait of *Liber Amoris*, similarly, is its obsessive intellection. In the final section of this work, the narrator H-- concludes that a 'more complete experiment on character was never made' (160).[4] While a reference to 'character' may suggest the social and psychological emphases of the novel, the term 'experiment' describes Hazlitt's anatomistic approach to his subject, for in *Liber Amoris* 'character' is an idea, a hypothesis to be rigorously tested and debated. Much as Bakhtin's *menippea* concerns itself with 'moral-psychological experimentation' and creates '*extraordinary situations* in which to provoke and test a philosophical idea', so *Liber Amoris* is a sort of 'moral-psychological' crucible - Godwin's *Political Justice* is described in *The Spirit of the Age* as 'an *experimentum crucis* to show the weak sides and imperfections of human reason as the sole law of human action' (11. 23) - in which Hazlitt decompounds H--'s infatuation with S-- and analyzes its elements, observing their actions and reactions in various situations. Hence the 'propositions' put forward by H-- at one point as he ponders his love for S-- (124), and his appeals to his correspondent C. P-- as 'a philosopher' (118). (A reviewer in the *Examiner* in fact noted a philosophical bent in this work.[5]) Moreover, 'character' here is ancillary to a more dominant preoccupation of Hazlitt's, which is the idea of idolatry, a concept introduced in the very subtitle, *The New Pygmalion*.

Every other idea and motif is subsumed by this central preoccupation to form the 'single intellectual pattern' that is H--'s vision of the world in *Liber Amoris*. Each episode, each circumstance of H--'s courtship of S--, is, as Bakhtin observes of even the most fantastic Menippean interludes, 'subordinated to the purely ideological function of provoking and testing the truth.'[6] Like the Shakespeare of *Twelfth Night* he describes elsewhere, Hazlitt 'runs riot in a conceit and idolises a quibble' (4. 314), for the obsessive nature of anatomy perfectly suits this work's theme of idolatry and the disputatious bent of its author. Hazlitt, or rather his narrator, is *philosophus gloriosus* in love.

Within its largely dialogic-epistolary framework, *Liber Amoris* exhibits the medley style typical of the anatomy, containing verse, manuscript notations, *pensees*, and miniature familiar essays, and underlying this multiform structure is the anatomist's preoccupation with examining an idea from as many points of view and by means of as many methods as possible. H--'s analysis of his idolatrous bent must of necessity include all its possible vehicles, for idolatry is pre-eminently a formal impulse - a compulsion to objectify, and obsessive need to impose form upon desire. Hence the various manners in which H-- attempts to approach the object of his desires: the dialogues of Part I in which he tries to coerce the indifferent S-- into reflecting, or rather echoing, his ideas concerning her; the letters to S-- in which, his attempts at dialogue having failed, H-- modulates into supplicating monologue; the letters to C.P-- and J.S.K-- in which H-- attempts to validate his obsession with S-- by appealing to the sympathy and understanding of another; H--'s retreats into subjectivity, on the one hand, in pensees and miniature familiar essays, and, on the other hand, H--'s sober, objective references to his situation and prospects in journal-like fragments of italicized narrative ('*To this letter I have received no answer, not a line* ' [114]). Thus it is possible for Hazlitt to exhibit H--'s monomaniacal obsession from the different perspectives of the genres through which H-- variously attempts to objectify his desires in S--.

The anatomy's playful, multiform nature may also indicate a parodic impulse. Marilyn Butler has recently argued that *Liber Amoris* is in fact a satire and that works like it and Shelley's *Alastor* present a 'critique of Romantic autobiography'. Butler does not relate this thematic preoccupation to the actual form of *Liber Amoris*, but certainly the genres variously employed by Hazlitt in this work are, with the exception of the critical/dialectical form of the dialogue, conventional forms of self-revelation: letters, pensees, familiar essays, journal entries. Perhaps, though, Hazlitt's concern is less with confession than with obsession, the confessional mode serving chiefly as a vehicle for this satiric preoccupation. Significantly, many of the allusions and quotations in *Liber Amoris* point to such works of sentimental obsession as Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida* and the sonnets, Byron's *Sardanapalus*, Keats' *Endymion*, and Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling*. One of these allusions, for instance, takes the intriguing form of a jotted note 'WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF ENDYMION' (114). Reminiscent in its bibliographic playfulness of Sterne, this reference dovetails nicely into the intellectual pattern of *Liber Amoris*, for Keats' elusive feminine ideal issues from the same epipsychic impulse as S--, the protean Venus-Lamia figure of H--'s obsessive worship. While carrying no subversive overtones separately, in the prevailingly analytical context of *Liber Amoris* such intertextual elements suggest the satiric/parodic pattern of anatomy. The numerous quotations, often an irritating mannerism elsewhere in Hazlitt, are here perfectly suited to both subject and form. Collectively they constitute something like the chaotic, fragmentary record left by Carlyle's Teufelsdrockh of his infatuation with the obscure Blumine -- 'confused masses of Eulogy and Elegy, with their mad

Petrarchan and Werterean ware lying madly scattered among all sorts of quite extraneous matter'[7] - and as in the case of *Sartor Resartus* the disorder and the extraneousness are only apparent. The formal conventions of romantic confession, courtly love, portraiture, tragedy, metaphysical drama, the novel of sensibility, and so on, in this seeming miscellany of recondite erotica, have been manipulated into the satiric self-portrait that is Hazlitt's anatomy of idolatry.

It is in keeping with its paradoxical nature that the anatomy should be so variegated in its form and references and yet so obsessively focused on some ruling idea. Thus, for instance, Herr Teufelsdrockh's clothes philosophy informs every one of the bewildering array of subjects raised in *Sartor Resartus* as Carlyle's Professor 'undertakes to make manifest, in its thousandfold bearings, this grand Proposition, that Man's earthly interests 'are all hooked and buttoned together, and held up, by Clothes.'[8] In *Liber Amoris*, as I have suggested, every other idea is subsumed by Hazlitt's ruling preoccupation with the concept of idolatry; its 'grand Proposition', in the words of the love-lorn H--, is that 'nothing touches me but what has a reference to her' (123) - namely, S--, his heart's idol' (119). 'I will make a Goddess of her', cries the infatuated H--, 'and build a temple to her in my heart, and worship her on indestructible altars, and raise statues to her' (133). But idolatry is not restricted only to affairs of the heart in *Liber Amoris*. '[w]e are more in love with a theory than a mistress', Hazlitt writes elsewhere (18. 306), and this statement holds true even with reference to H--'s mistress, for in the end it is not S-- but the nature of H--'s obsession with her that is the central preoccupation of this work. Moreover, while 'love's projective psychology', as Robert Ready terms it,[9] is the immediate subject of *Liber Amoris*, the underlying principle of which this psychological phenomenon is an aspect - namely idolatry - this underlying principle in its many other manifestations, political and aesthetic as well as erotic, is finally the subject of Hazlitt's anatomizing intelligence. What is central to this Book of Love, then, is the theory behind H--'s love for his mistress.

The terms 'idol' and 'idolatry' recur throughout Hazlitt's writings in numerous contexts, aesthetic and political. Hazlitt, indeed, believed that he lived in an age of idolatry. In an essay 'On the Spirit of Monarchy', published the same year as *Liber Amoris*, he suggests that man's progress from the 'brute idols' of primitive superstition to the graven images restored in the name of Legitimacy after Waterloo has not been so great after all:

> It was thought a bold stride to divert the course of our imaginations, the overflowings of our enthusiasm, our love of the mighty and the marvellous, from the dead to the living *subject*, and there we stick. We have got living idols, instead of dead ones; and we fancy that they are real, and put faith in them accordingly. Oh, Reason! when will thy long minority expire? (19. 259)

Hazlitt himself, as John Kinnaird notes, is often 'an infatuated idolater of "greatness"' in his writings,[10] and chief among the idols, living and dead, to whom he pays homage are Shakespeare and Napoleon, as well as lesser gods like Edmund Kean the actor. Though arising in part from what in an essay on 'Mind and Motive' Hazlitt terms '*the power of fascination*' (20.45), and thus something passive and susceptible, idolatry is also for Hazlitt a species of self-aggrandizement by which a subject willfully establishes its own preconceived ideal in an object. 'The idol we fall down and worship', states Hazlitt, 'is an image familiar to our minds' (8. 311), is in effect created in our own image, but not necessarily in our best image. In Hazlitt's estimate,

the great folly of the age is the newly-revived cult of Legitimacy - wholly a product of idolatrous projection:

> The contrivers or re-modellers of this idol, beat all other idol-mongers, whether Jews, Gentiles or Christians, hollow. The principle of an idolatry is the same: it is the want of something to admire, without knowing what or why: it is the want of an effect without a cause; it is a voluntary tribute of admiration which does not compromise our vanity: it is setting something up over the rest of the world, to which we feel ourselves to be superior, for it is our own handywork; so that the more perverse the homage we pay to it, the more it pampers our self-will: the meaner the object, the more magnificent and pompous the attributes we bestow upon it; the greater the lie, the more enthusiastically it is believed and greedily swallowed. (7. 150)

Idolatry is at once a desire to worship otherness and a projection of self. Its deception, then, lies within both idol and idolater, for the one is not what it seems, while the other seems to adore what it cannot, and will not, know beyond itself. The 'stupid idol', according to Hazlitt in *The Spirit of the Age*, is 'set up on its pedestal of pride for men to fall down and worship with idiot fear and wonder at the thing themselves have made, and which, without that fear and wonder, would itself be nothing!' (11. 7).

Throughout the dialogues of *Liber Amoris* the debate between idol and idolater - 'this running fight of question and answer', as H-- calls it (152) - turns on just such an epistemological impasse. When, in the opening dialogue of Part I, 'The Picture', H-- warns S-- that 'if you are never to be mine, I shall not long be myself' (99), he indicates the investment of ego involved in his hoped-for possession of S--. His insistence that she resembles the female subject of a certain picture he owns is thus nothing more than a pampering of his own self-will. The ensuing exchange amounts to an indirect, though remarkably dense, pathology of imaginative projection that is not without its ironic edge, as, like the worshippers of Legitimacy in Hazlitt's description above, H-- attempts to re-model his reluctant idol:

> S. Do not, I beg, talk in that manner, but tell me what this is a picture of.
>
> H. I hardly know; but it is a very small and delicate copy (painted in oil on a gold ground) of some fine old Italian picture, Guido's or Raphael's, but I think Raphael's. Some say it is a Madonna; others call it a Magdalen, and say you may distinguish the tear upon the cheek, though no tear is there. But it seems to me more like Raphael's St. Cecilia, 'with looks commercing with the skies', than anything else. --See, Sarah, how beautiful it is! Ah! dear girl, these are the ideas I have cherished in my heart, and in my brain; and I never found any thing to realize them in earth till I met with thee, my love! While thou didst seem sensible of my kindness, I was but too happy: but now thou hast cruelly cast me off.
>
> S. You have no reason to say so: you are the same to me as ever.
>
> H. That is, nothing. You are to me everything, and I am nothing to you. Is it not too true?

S. No.

H. Then kiss me, my sweetest. Oh! could you see your face now - your mouth full of suppressed sensibility, your down-cast eyes, the soft blush upon that cheek, you would not say the picture is not like because it is too handsome, or because you want complexion. Thou art heavenly-fair, my love - like her from whom the picture was taken - the idol of the painter's heart, as thou art of mine! Shall I make a drawing of it, altering the dress a little, to shew you how like it is?

S. As you please. -- (99-100)

And here the debate ends, only to be picked up in the ensuing dialogue, and in the dialogue after that, and so forth.

Ostensibly, there are only two perspectives here: that of the taciturn and somewhat sullen S--, and that of H--, effusive and desperate. But whereas S-- speaks in only the monotone of everyday speech, H--'s longer, more animated speeches exhibit a greater dynamic range; they are, in Bakhtin's phrase, 'internally dialogized'. H-- is by turns courtly lover, connoisseur of art, man of letters, painter, and hopeless wretch, and underlying his many voices is the ground bass of idolatry, for in each mode he attempts to objectify his 'idea' of S--, cherished in both his 'heart' and 'brain'. She is variously a Madonna and a Magdalen - by Guido or Raphael - or perhaps she is Raphael's St. Cecilia, though the quotation accompanying this identification suggests that she is also Milton's melancholy goddess in 'Il Penseroso'. Thus she is virgin and whore, patron saint of music and muse of melancholy: she is, in short, anything H-- can make of her in his various modes. He ends by offering to remake her once again by drawing a revised copy of the copy to which he originally compared her. *Liber Amoris* does indeed, as Butler nicely puts it, draw out 'the human comedy implicit in the making and breaking of icons'.[11]

For her part, S-- maintains a stubborn insistence on the integrity of her literal identity and on her feelings toward H--. '[Y]ou are the same to me as ever', she tells him, and when he hysterically demands to know whether he is nothing to her, her answer is a simple 'No'. S--'s final 'As you please' to H--'s offer to draw her suggests the irresolution characteristic of the anatomy, a genre, according to Philip Stevick, 'strong on tensions but rather disinclined to resolve them'.[12] Hence the numerous dinner debates in Peacock that achieve gustatory but never intellectual resolution. Moreover, S--'s concluding words only give expression to the intellectual uncertainty that has underlain H--'s extravagant propositions throughout the dialogue. When S-- asks him about the female subject of his picture, he answers, 'I hardly know', and the identifications that follow are speculative and even contradictory.

Variations on this theme run through *Liber Amoris* as Hazlitt examines idolatry in its many possible permutations. In the example above, H--'s habit of abstracting an image of his intellectual ideal in S-- is implicitly paralleled with the process by which a painter's model is transformed into 'the idol of the painter's heart' (100). Not surprisingly, H-- often refers to the sculptor's art in his idealizing of S--. 'Since I wrote to you about making a formal proposal', H-- tells his correspondent C.P--, 'I have had her face constantly before me, looking so like some faultless marble statue, as cold, as fixed and graceful as statue ever did'. Here H-- betrays his desire to appropriate and 'fix' S--'s very self much as the sculptor imprisons beauty and grace in his frozen, immobile medium, 'for I think', H-- adds, 'she was made on purpose for me' (137-38). The statue motif also recalls the Pygmalion myth of

the subtitle, for indeed the impulse to idolize is not restricted to the pictorial arts. The poet's ideal embodiments, too - whether Milton's Eve (126), the mistress of Shakespeare's sonnets (133), the elusive Cynthia of Keats' *Endymion* (114) - these ideal feminine embodiments are the graven images that at once possess and are possessed by the poet. Even the book as physical artifact bears a totemic significance as witnessed by H--'s reverence for those books - authored by him, significantly - that he has made gifts of to S-- (148-9). Most revered, of course, is the Book itself, this Book of Love that H-- has consecrated in the name of his devotion to S--.
Catherine MacDonald MacLean observes that while Hazlitt might have hoped to loosen the grip of his obsession by writing about it, he merely gave it more tangible form in a book which 'served him also at times as a graven image'.[13]

It is in the dialogues concerning 'the little image', however, that the full scope of Hazlitt's intellectual preoccupation with idolatry becomes evident. In an episode entitled 'The Reconciliation', H-- queries S-- about a former lover and wonders if she was first drawn to him by his likeness to this lover. S-- denies this but does claim a likeness between her old lover and a small bronze figure of Buonaparte on H--'s mantle. In a passage of italicized narrative H-- describes how he was moved by this admission to give her the figure: '*And then I added "How odd it was that the God of my idolatry should turn out to be like her Idol, and said it was no wonder that the same face which awed the world should conquer the sweetest creature in it!"*' (112). The 'little image' clearly has a totemic significance, serving as an objectification of H--'s love for S--. Moreover, this tiny statue is such a potent symbol for H--'s worship of a woman because it carries the associations of an equally idolatrous political devotion. In *Political Essays* (1819) Hazlitt describes the spiritual malaise from which Napoleon saved disaffected liberals during the reactionary retrenchment of Legitimacy that set in following the French Revolution, claiming that 'He who saves me from this conclusion, who makes a mock of this doctrine, and sets at nought its power, is to me not less than the God of my idolatry ... He who did this for me, and for the rest of the world, and who alone could do it, was Buonaparte' (7. 10). Hazlitt's justification of his idolatry - for it *is* justification, directed at those disillusioned by the barbarities of a warlike god - implicitly distinguishes, without wholly divorcing, the man from the ideal projection that issues as graven image. 'It is true, I admired the man', states Hazlitt in the preface to his *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, 'but what chiefly attached me to him, was his being, as he had been long ago designated, "the child and champion of the Revolution." Of this character he could not divest himself, even though he wished it. He was nothing, he could be nothing but what he owed to himself and to his triumphs over those who claimed mankind as their inheritance by a divine right' (13. ix). Thus Napoleon is the object in which the projective imagination of the idolater sets up its sacred idea, the living icon of revolutionary liberation opposed to the false god of Legitimacy. Divested of this 'character', he would be 'nothing' in the eyes of his jacobin idolater.

Napoleon had since fallen of course, so that the devotee of S-- had already experienced what it was to have the god of his idolatry overthrown. From all contemporary accounts, Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo shattered Hazlitt and become the sole, obsessive topic of his conversation for some time afterwards, as his traumatic infatuation for Sally Walker would six years later. Indeed, though Hazlitt once described the abstract theorizing of the French Revolution as being much more seductive than a mistress (18. 306), it is clear that to the author of *Liber Amoris* attachments so apparently different in mind may be similar in degree, for informing both is the projective imaginative intensity of the idolater. Hazlitt, in the years following Napoleon's defeat, felt increasingly the solitary righteousness of one devoted to a fallen god. 'To

have an object always in view dearer to one than one's self', he writes in 1821, 'to cling to a principle in contempt of danger, of interest, of the opinion of the world, -- this is the true *ideal*, the high and heroic state of man' (20.99); and he speaks with the knowledge of one who has experienced the lonely rigours of being a Buonapartist in post-Waterloo England. In *Liber Amoris* H-- assumes a similar role with respect to his quixotic devotion to S--, contemplating in Part II a life dedicated to the faithful worship of his 'Goddess' despite her hostility. 'And thus', he concludes, 'my love will have shown itself superior to her hate; and I shall triumph and then die. This is my idea of the only true and heroic love!' (134). The spurned lover and the alienated jacobin become martyrs to their own peculiar idols. *Liber Amoris* must be one of the very few instances where sexual failure serves to sublimate political zeal.

But a thin line divides consecration from desecration. In one of his letters to J.S.K.-- in Part III, H-- describes an emotional episode in which he is alternately idolater, appealing to S--'s attachment to '*the little image*', and iconoclast, cursing her name and destroying the symbols of his love for her:

> I tore the locket which contained her hair (and which I used to wear continually in my bosom, as the precious token of her dear regard) from my neck, and trampled it in pieces. I then dashed the little Buonaparte on the ground, and stamped upon it, as one of her instruments of mockery. (145)

The idolater, in all his intellectual folly, is here decisively upset - 'discrowned', to use Bakhtin's term for the anatomy's overthrowing of the hero-ideologist[14] - humiliated and exposed as surely as the Peacockian crotcheteer inevitably finds himself the object of his creator's retributive slapstick. This episode plumbs the secret capacity of the idolater for blasphemy, the emotional relief of destroying what has been so carefully enshrined in the heart and cherished in spite of the most painful persecution - indeed, cherished all the more for the persecution and resented for this reason too. Hence the exquisite remorse that follows this act of release, the recriminations and the renewed devotions. S-- has 'the little image' mended, though new pieces have had to be used in its repair, to which H-- says '"I didn't care how it was done, so that I had it restored to me safe, and by her"' (156). But it will never be quite the same, just as H-- can never quite trust S-- completely, and the final rupture occurs soon after.

From a new historicist perspective, this episode could be viewed as yet another of the historical suppressions that characterize the Romantic ideology. An impulse toward idolatry and desecration alike is viewed elsewhere by Hazlitt as distinguishing the age. With respect to the violent fluctuations of Godwin's reputation, Hazlitt asks in *The Spirit of the Age*: 'Is the very God of our idolatry all of a sudden to become an abomination and an anathema?' (11.17).

It is to this tendency that Hazlitt credits the success of such contemporary luminaries as Reverend Edward Irving, who 'keeps the public in awe by insulting all their favourite idols' (11. 41), and Lord Byron, who 'hallows in order to desecrate; takes a pleasure in defacing the images of beauty his hands have wrought; and raises our hopes and our belief in goodness to Heaven only to dash them to the earth again, and break them in pieces the more effectually from the very height they have fallen' (11. 75). Surely the smashing of the 'little image' just two years before lies somewhere behind these passages. In *Liber Amoris* H--'s infatuation with S-- develops along lines similar to the course of political sensibility during the post-Waterloo period, at least as seen from

Hazlitt's morbidly disillusioned perspective. While it would be wrong to see in H--'s smashing of the 'little image' a rejection of the Napoleonic ideal - based, that is, on anything we know of the history of Hazlitt's beliefs - perhaps this act indicates a revulsion from the idolatrous intensity of his Buonapartism. According to Kinnaird, Hazlitt's fascination with Napoleon was 'compounded variously of combative idealism and vengeful contempt for idealism, of fear, envy, baffled pride, and the identification of the impotent with compensatory or oppressive strength'.[15] Thus Hazlitt might certainly have recognized in himself the very idolatrous impulse he saw imaged in the noxious hegemony of Legitimacy, that 'lie' so 'greedily swallowed' by its worshippers. Through H--'s destruction of Buonaparte's image, therefore, Hazlitt rejects not the man, or the libertarian idea he associates with the man, but the obsession that fuses man and idea into an object of idolatrous regard. S-- has been fashioned by H-- into just such an object, only to be symbolically destroyed in the cruel dissection of her character that concludes *Liber Amoris* - and from the same willful compulsion to desecrate that has led to the destruction of the 'little image'. Moreover, the terms which the disaffected H-- uses to describe this fallen idol of his heart - she is to him now only a 'phantom', a 'mockery', and a 'frightful illusion' (153, 159) - are similar to those in which Hazlitt elsewhere describes the 'phantom of the imagination' Legitimacy (7. 151). Hazlitt could never bring himself to describe his Buonapartism in such terms, but the deception in which these idols and their idolaters are implicated is finally no different in nature than that involving the 'little image' and the middle-aged radical.

H--'s last words, then, that 'no flower will ever bloom on earth to glad my heart again' (162), carry both a personal and a public meaning. In an essay 'On the Pleasure of Hating', written the same year, Hazlitt bitterly reflects that 'mistaken as I have been in my public and private hopes, calculating others from myself, and calculating wrong; always disappointed where I placed most reliance; the dupe of friendship, and the fool of love; have I not reason to hate and to despise myself? Indeed I do; and chiefly for not having hated and despised the world enough' (12. 136). Hazlitt can only be referring here to his disappointments in love and politics, as in a later essay 'On the Fear of Death' (1825) in which he dismisses his life, saying, 'My public and private hopes have been left a ruin, or remain only to mock me' (8. 325). It was a common enough strain among liberals and radicals at the time; this public/personal *topos* finds its critique in figures such as Wordsworth's Solitary in *The Excursion* and Peacock's Shelley-like Scythrop Glowry in *Nightmare Abbey* in reaction to much less critical presentations in works like Byron's *Childe Harold*. In the ironic self-portrait presented in *Liber Amoris*, Hazlitt, in the obsessive manner of the anatomist, examines this spirit of the age under the rubric of idolatry, tracing his peculiar intellectual bent through its various permutations in love, art, and politics. 'A more complete experiment on character was never made', claims H--, for indeed it is the testing 'of the idea and the man of the idea' with which Hazlitt is ultimately concerned in his anatomy of idolatry.

NOTES

1. Cyril Connolly, 'Hazlitt's "Liber Amoris"', *London Magazine* 1 (November, 1954), 58; *The Fine Art of Reading* (London; Constable, 1957), p. 247.

2. For example, in his recent *English Fiction of the Romantic Period* (London; Macmillan), Gary Kelly characterizes this work as a 'Romantic lyrical quasi-novel'. Similarly, Marilyn Butler speaks of this work's 'inception as letters to its appearance as a novel'; 'Satire and the

Images of Self in the Romantic Period: The Long Tradition of Hazlitt's *Liber Amoris*, 'in *English Satire and the Satiric Tradition*, ed. Claude Rawson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984), p. 216. See also Robert Ready, 'The Logic of Passion: Hazlitt's *Liber Amoris*', *Studies in Romanticism*, 14 (Winter, 1975), 41-57. On the other hand, Gerald Lahey, in the introduction to his recent edition of *Liber Amoris* (New York: Gotham Library, 1980) still emphasizes the traditional autobiographical view of this work.

3. Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 310, 309; Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, trans. R. W. Rotsel (Munster: Ardis, 1973), pp. 91, 122.

4. *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. P. P. Howe (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1932), v. 9. Hereafter, all further references to *Liber Amoris* will be taken from this volume and edition. References to Hazlitt's other works will be identified by volume as well as page.

5. Cited by Butler, 223.

6. Bakhtin, pp. 95, 94.

7. Butler, p. 210; Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus: The Life and Opinions of Herr Teufeldsrockh* (London: Curwen Press, 1931), pp. 175-6.

8. Carlyle, p. 63.

9. 'The Logic of Passion', 46.

10. *Hazlitt: Critic of Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), p. 36.

11. Bakhtin, p. 114; Butler, p. 222.

12. Stevick, 164.

13. Catherine MacDonald MacLean, *Born Under Saturn* (New York: Macmillan, 1944) p. 440.

14. Bakhtin, p. 102.

15. Kinnaird, p. 327.

A SLIGHT ENIGMA: TIMON OF ATHENS in Lambs' TALES FROM SHAKESPEARE

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Timon of Athens, a lesser known Shakespearean tragedy, seems an unlikely choice for Charles and Mary Lamb to make for inclusion in their classic

Tales from Shakespeare, which they wrote for children. For one thing, Timon, the central character, is not a person who elicits great sympathy. He spends his early life as a youth and a young man living in a surfeit of luxury, seeking no moral or intellectual growth, but only the pursuit of pleasure; sharing his wealth with a great number of seeming friends, but making no effort to replenish his assets. When at last he exhausts both his resources and his financial credit, he is truly shocked to learn that his erstwhile friends have also vanished, unwilling to help him in any way. Indeed, they are eager to disassociate themselves from him. Because until this time Timon has assumed that his companions, whom he has entertained lavishly, will gladly treat him in similar guise and because he has developed no inner resources which might give him strength in adversity, he reacts to the rejection of his former companions with bitterness and vindictiveness. He sees no culpability in himself but only in his associates.

A close perusal of the Lambs' letters for the years 1805-07, during which either or both Mary and Charles might have discussed their choice of plays, reveals no such information. Indeed, a study of their letters for this relevant period as edited by E. V. Lucas in 1903,[1] by Percy Fitzgerald in 1924,[2] and most recently by Edwin W. Marrs, Jr. in 1976,[3] reveals no reference to the criteria the Lambs used in choosing the twenty tales to be included. It is, of course, possible that William Godwin, as publisher, had some influence; but none is indicated in any known writing. The eminent Lamb scholar and biographer Winifred F. Courtney suggests in a recent personal letter [to me] that her examination of prefaces to several editions of *Tales from Shakespeare* as well as her reading of a recent computer databank bibliography from the University of Georgia yielded nothing on this topic. In conclusion Mrs. Courtney writes:

> It *may* be that Godwin indicated which plays he wanted - tho' I find no confirmation of that in a hasty look, or that L. simply chose representative plays - omitting the historical (so no *Julius Caesar*?? - he's not there). *Timon might* be considered historical tho' it is surely more *psychological*? like *Hamlet*? At any rate, if the Lambs did choose all they were not above a *bit* of moralizing (as in *Mrs. Leicester's School*) and *Timon* may have been considered to point a moral or a lesson? Your guess is surely as good as mine.[4]

In his doctoral dissertation entitled *Charles Lamb's Children's Literature*, Joseph Riehl refers only twice to *Timon of Athens*. His first reference is in connection with his discussion of the ways in which the Lambs sought to simplify Shakespeare's plots. Riehl mentions that the Lambs chose only plays with comparatively simple plots, the only exception being *King Lear*. Another tactic of simplification which Riehl identifies is that of eliminating scenes which deal with the motivation of minor characters. The example Riehl uses concerns *Timon*:

> In *Timon of Athens*, for instance, he eliminates the scene in which Alcibiades pleads for the life of one of his soldiers before the Athenian senate. Though the scene provides motivation for Alcibiades, it contributes little to Timon's story and so is eliminated.[5]

Though Riehl does not speak of the specific choice of *Timon of Athens* for inclusion in *Tales from Shakespeare*, he does speak in general terms of the simplicity of its plot as being a determining factor in its selection.[6]

What Mrs. Courtney suggests in her letter as a possible reason for the Lambs' choice of *Timon of Athens* (that is, the chance to point a moral) Professor Riehl elaborates upon at some length in his dissertation. He explains:

> As earlier noted Charles's own contribution to the Preface concerned the morality of the work. Whereas Mary's concerns with style and with plot had been relatively simple and practical, Charles's concern had been more abstract and controversial, and it is worthwhile to examine his tales in some detail to clarify precisely what Lamb had in mind when he commended Shakespeare as a teacher of virtue.[7]

Professor Riehl then explains that in writing the tales of the tragedies, Lamb had several purposes. By introducing young readers to Shakespeare, he wished to help them experience the pure literary pleasure which Shakespeare had afforded him. He hoped that his readers would realize a freedom of literary experience unequalled by those who put greater emphasis on morality or on logic than on the joy of reading. Simultaneously, however, he did feel an obligation to help his readers comprehend the moral world of adulthood. Whether consciously or unconsciously, Charles Lamb set himself the dual task of awakening in his readers delight in literature even as he sought to create a morally responsible tone and to influence his readers in their judgements. Being, as he was, a truly creative writer with a rare and wondrous view of life (despite his assertion that his genuine works are on the shelves in Leadenhall Street and that his "writings" are nothing more than his recreations), Lamb met his own challenge in a unique and effective way. Professor Riehl points out that Lamb ends each of his tales of the tragedies, not with a moralistic comment, but with the expression of a deep sense of loss and waste. After discussing Charles Lamb's endings of *King Lear, Romeo and Juliet,* and *Hamlet,* Riehl observes:

> In *Othello, Timon of Athens*, and *Macbeth*, there is only a profound sense of sadness and loss, and very little qualified joy at the restoration of order in the endings. There are no lessons on the foolishness of jealousy, flattery, or ambition which might be expected from a less sensitive and more aggressive moralist.[8]

Another aspect which Professor Riehl considers is that Lamb, despite strong public opinion in favour of sanitizing the tales, refuses to eliminate the more embarrassing or shocking features of the plays he has chosen. This, I feel, is the reason that Lamb chose *Timon* over *Titus Andronicus*. He will not compromise his integrity by eroding Shakespeare's power, but he tacitly acknowledges that including such a gory play as *Titus Andronicus* would jeopardize the success of the book.

When I looked carefully at the list of tragedies, I realized that after eliminating all of the plays that have the word "tragedy" in the title but that are actually historical plays, the Lambs' choices of tragedies beyond the obvious ones of *Macbeth, Othello, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet,* and *King Lear* were limited to *Titus Andronicus* and *Timon of Athens*. Since by some arrangement with Godwin, the inception of which remains unknown, the Lambs had agreed to include fourteen comedies and six tragedies, the Lambs' selection of *Timon of Athens* was virtually assured. That the tragedy also contains a simple plot and lends itself to a conclusion which underscores the sense of sadness and waste without overt moralizing are, I believe, yet two other reasons for their including a play which, on first consideration, seems an unlikely choice

for a children's book. The Lambs' choice of *Timon of Athens* and Charles' treatment of it exhibit once more their ability to take a seemingly unlikely topic and give it fresh appeal for its intended audience.

NOTES

1. E. V. Lucas, editor. *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb: Books for Children* and *Letters* (London: Methuen and Company, 1903), Vols. III and VI.

2. Percy Fitzgerald, editor. *The Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb* (Edinburgh: T. and A. Constable, Ltd., 1924), Vol. II.

3. Edwin W. Marrs, Jr., editor. *The Letters of Charles and Mary Anne Lamb, 1801-1809* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1976), Vol. II.

4. Winifred F. Courtney, Letter to Carolyn Misenheimer (Greenwood, South Carolina, October 19, 1989), p. 3.

5. Joseph Earl Riehl. *Charles Lamb's Children's Literature*: A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, University of Denver, March, 1979, p. 71.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

KATE WARD'S CENTURY

Berta Lawrence

Kate Ward, christened Catherine in 1825, was the youngest of the five daughters of Thomas Ward, 'that man of many daughters' as Mrs. Coleridge called him in a letter. Thomas Ward came to Nether Stowey, about the time Coleridge settled there with Sarah, as the 16-year old apprentice to the prosperous and philanthropic Nether Stowey tanner Thomas Poole, whose business he took over some years later. At twenty-five the talkative, sparkling Coleridge fascinated the tanner's apprentice who, living under Poole's roof in Castle Street like a member of the household, sometimes joined the social gatherings in Poole's 'great windy perlour', as Coleridge called it, or in the arbour constructed of oak bark under the lime trees (Coleridge's "lime tree bower"), listening enraptured to Coleridge's outpourings. Later he eagerly shared Coleridge's letters written from Germany to Poole and copied them into Poole's 'copying-books', notebooks with marbled covers that would contain biographical material invaluable to Mrs. Sandford, Poole's niece, when she wrote her book *Tom Poole and his Friends* in 1888. In time young Tommy Ward became a settled-down and prosperous inhabitant of Nether Stowey, marrying a Sarah Anne Poole, living in the fine Castle Street house after Poole's removal and supporting, with Poole, numerous Stowey enterprises, customs and social gatherings, so that the sarcastic Rector of the Quantock village Over Stowey, always referred to him as 'Tom Poole's shadow'. Finally Ward and his family went to live at Marshmill House in 1829 when Kate Ward was four. A large family of Pooles had occupied it for many years. Here Ward maintained a Silk

Mill, employing a number of women workers disliked by the Rector for their 'Methodistical' tendencies and their rather 'free' way of living - a rather strange combination. Kate Ward lived at Marshmill House in the hamlet called Marshmills for almost the whole of her very long life. In July 1925 the local newspaper published a short notice of her death.

> 'The death occurred at Over Stowey of Miss Kate Ward aged 99, a retired governess whose father was a personal friend of Coleridge, Wordsworth and Josiah Wedgewood, and who owned Over Stowey silk-throwing mill.'

The accomplished novelist Phyllis Bottome author of the novel *The Mortal Storm* set in pre-war Nazi Germany, also wrote her autobiography *Search for a Soul* which described her very early childhood at Over Stowey Rectory in the 1880's. She remembered 'the Miss Wards', five spinster sisters living at Marshmill House, 'an espaliered and gardened mansion' who were curtsied to as gentlefolk by village women. Kate Ward remained there until 1917. In her hundredth year she was urged by the new owner to write her *Recollections* which, with kindly help she managed to do. They are brief, rather stilted and colourless, and contain no special information relevant to Coleridge and Wordsworth yet they provide a small picture of life in Over Stowey and the little market town of Nether Stowey (as it then was) as Coleridge must have known it. She touched his hand at one remove, so to speak, and was proud of Ward's connections with him. She retained, she writes, 'a set of jocular letters written by Coleridge to my father'. She remembered that Thomas Ward was 'an ardent follower of Wilberforce' and had long forbidden the use of sugar, a product of slave labour, in his house, 'honey being invariably substituted'. She continues 'After leaving Stowey Coleridge referred in a letter to the excellent honey-pie of which he had partaken in our house'. We know that Coleridge wrote such a letter to Poole while sitting in the George Inn in Bridgwater to wait for the Bristol coach. Kate also recalled with pride that Coleridge and Southey came to Marshmill House during their first visit when university students on vacation, to the Pooles in Nether Stowey.

'It was in our drawing-room at Marshmill that Southey and Coleridge returning from a walking tour in Wales, heard of the death of Robespierre and dissolved into tears at the news. This was before we lived at Marshmill when Marshmill was inhabited by a cousin of Mr. Tom Poole who brought the poets to call on this cousin'. The cousin was the Rev. John Poole, stiff-necked Tory divine and scholar, who abominated Tom Poole's 'politicks' and his 'Democratic' friends with their extravagant expressions of grief for Robespierre - 'a ministering angel' - that prejudiced him against Coleridge for life.

Marshmill House was built by the Pooles early in the 18th century, 'plain but pleasant' Mrs. Sandford described it. In recent years it has been restored and its exterior cream-washed so that it now presents a very pleasing face at a crossroads less than a mile off the A39 (Bridgwater - Minehead) road. Its garden faces the curving blue line of the Quantock Hills. As you approach the house from the A39, the righthand road leads to the higher part of Nether Stowey, passing the well called Blindwell that Coleridge knew. He was equally familiar with St. Peter's Well near Over Stowey church. One of these was 'the beautiful well at Upper Stowey' mentioned in his Notebooks because an abundance of ferns round its rim cast flickering images on the water shining below.

The lane straight ahead as you approach Marshmills wanders round to the tiny hamlet of Adscombe where Coleridge tried to rent a cottage before settling in

Nether Stowey. Its lonely ruined chapel that belonged to Athelney monastery was demolished not many years ago.

Living in a pleasant house in comfortable middle-class circumstances, young Kate Ward was not unaware of the grim poverty that pervaded the lives of the lowlier inhabitants of Over Stowey and Nether Stowey. Marshmill House, like many others, had its garden raided for vegetables and fruit by the hungry poor. Some householders used man-traps to catch offenders although kind enough to display a notice 'Beware of Man Traps and Spring Guns'. Thomas Ward never used his man-trap. Completely destitute people lived in the poorhouse close to Over Stowey church. Poorhouse children were given a little 'feast' on special occasions, and young Kate Ward helped with these. At ninety-nine she well remembered taking flowers (pansies) from the Wards' garden to decorate the poorhouse table when Princess Victoria's coming-of-age was celebrated.

Very few poor people could read or write but a surprising opportunity for education was provided in Nether Stowey when in 1813 Tom Poole built a school that became quite famous. It was run on Bell's monitorial system; the building functioned as a school until a few years ago. Kate Ward wrote 'Gentle and simple, everyone sent their children to Tom Poole's school; I myself was taught my letters there'. (Some years later the Rev. John Poole built a nationally-famed elementary school in the Quantock village of Enmore where Coleridge's friend Lord Egmont, who invited Coleridge to Enmore Castle, was the chief landowner.)

When Kate was seventeen she helped with the establishment of an organ fund intended to provide an organ that would banish the Singers and their instruments from the west gallery of Over Stowey church. In her Memoirs she recollects that they included a flute, clarinet and bass-viol that accompanied the singing of metrical psalms and, at an esteemed person's funeral, an anthem. (The recently published Diary of Mr. Holland, Vicar of Over Stowey, mentions the rivalry, vanity and quarrels existing between his Singers and those of Nether Stowey). Kate says that Nether Stowey had similar instruments to theirs and a trombone as well. She does not, however, mention the bassoon alluded to by Tom Poole, in a letter, that was played at Nether Stowey and *may* have suggested the 'loud bassoon' the Ancient Mariner heard. A musical workman at Ward's tannery founded the Nether Stowey Band, much in demand at local festivities, particularly those of Tom Poole's two famous Friendly Clubs, a Men's and a Women's. The Women's Club still flourishes and, at midsummer, its ceremonial procession moves along the main street of Nether Stowey, beside the brook, to church for a special service followed by a splendid tea with clotted cream such as Coleridge loved (see his Letters) at the Rose and Crown; 'a few gentlemen were invited' writes Kate who faithfully describes the procession of women in summer dresses, all carrying posies and headed by a young girl carrying the Club banner. 'This', writes Kate, was a great event in my young days and in my old days also, for I never failed to attend this function. One of the proudest days of my life was the one on which I was promoted as a child carrying the blue Club banner inscribed with the lines Coleridge had written expressly for it'. Had he? We wonder. The same banner is still carried. It is embroidered with these lines:

Foresight and Union
linked
by Christian Love
Helped by the Good below
And Heaven above.

Did Coleridge watch the Club's first anniversary procession in June 1807? He was staying with Tom Poole at that date. As Poole's guest he could have joined the 'few gentlemen' at the cream tea.

In these *Recollections* Kate Ward notes various social features of her uneventful life and its tranquil environment. Morning callers were offered Madeira wine or hot chocolate. Girls curtsied when entering a room full of adults, called parents 'Sir' or 'Ma'am'; wives like Mrs. Ward addressed husbands in public as 'Mr. Ward' or 'Ward'. No gentleman smoked in ladies' company; Kate was amazed that she lived to see the day when *ladies* smoked.

As a young woman she travelled to London in a single day on the famous Swiftsure stage-coach. She saw the arrival of Rowland Hill's Penny Post and envelopes that replaced folded writing paper sealed with wax, which the recipient paid for. She declares that her father told her how Coleridge once paid for a penniless woman to receive her son's letter (containing no written message) although this story was always related of Rowland Hill, not Coleridge.

Young men greatly feared the activities of the press gang. And a Bristol aunt travelled by post-chaise to Marshmills, terrified by Reform riots in Bristol.

One poetic recollection is that of a Stowey Christmas custom. Villagers walked on Christmas Eve to a park to see a scion of the Holy Thorn in blossom. They waited for the cattle to kneel in front of it at midnight.

In Coleridge's time Nether Stowey enjoyed the status of a little market-town. A timber-framed octagonal market-cross stood at the meeting-point of its three main streets; its tiled roof was crowned by a wooden turret with a clock and a bell. This building survived, very dilapidated, until late in the 19th century. An old photograph of it exists. Kate Ward writes that her earliest childhood memory was associated with this market-cross. In 1830 she saw "an inscription painted on the eaves of the red stone market house in Nether Stowey - God Save the King and Queen, in honour of the coronation of King William IV". Coloured streamers decorated its roof.

In 1809 Coleridge had sent Tom Poole four lines of rather dreary verse headed *For a Market Clock*.

BOOK REVIEWS

Stanley Jones, *HAZLITT: A LIFE, from Winterslow to Frith Street.*
Clarendon Press, 1989, pp. 397, £35.

This is a long-awaited book, not simply because of the years of research it has involved, but also because of the difficult task which the author set himself. There were, as he acknowledges, several meritorious biographies of Hazlitt already in existence to offer competition and if this handicap was to be overcome by Dr. Jones, it could only be through undertaking prodigious labours.

Under the circumstances there were only two ways in which a new biography of Hazlitt could justify itself. First, it could provide a persuasive portrait of a human being, since previous efforts had done little more than recount Hazlitt's deeds, and a mere caricature had resulted (perhaps this does not apply to Catherine MacDonald MacLean's remarkable *Born under Saturn* of 1943, but here we find the hero's features too much obscured by a halo). The problem has been that in the absence of satisfactory witnesses biographers such as

Augustine Birrell (1902) and P. P. Howe (1922) relied excessively on the testimony of their subject. In every case this is a thoroughly dubious activity, but Hazlitt's confessional tone is particularly capable of luring sympathisers to take his side in his numerous disputes. So we curse the Lake Poets for their apostasy; we loathe Sarah Walker for making sport with his emotions; we abhor the leering jackals of *Blackwood's* (how COULD they so abuse his unblemished complexion - 'pimpled' Hazlitt indeed!); we stand aghast when he expires with the words 'Well, I've had a happy life.'

There is one essential element which can never be satisfactorily conveyed by autobiography. Not even 'negative capability' can show us exactly what our acquaintance thinks of us: indeed, as Hazlitt often pointed out, following the injunction 'Know Thyself!' is a sure method for misunderstanding others.
Dr. Jones has performed a valuable service by demonstrating that much testimony which had previously been rejected, notably that of 'Crabbius' (P. P. Howe's expressive soubriquet) Robinson, is in fact very pertinent. Robinson emerges as a loyal ally of Hazlitt's, at least until his admiration for Wordsworth put him into an impossible dilemma. Also, Dr. Jones places just emphasis on Coleridge's statement that Hazlitt was 'the only one who [knew] me' (quoted, P. 248) - a remarkable accolade when one considers that Hazlitt had first met the poet as a disciple rather than as an equal. In addition, Dr. Jones carefully examines the views of Haydon, Patmore and others (disappointingly, he had unearthed nothing new from Lamb): and by demonstrating how, for example, Hazlitt was a regular visitor to the Basil Montagues, he corrects the impression of the 'brow-hanging, shoe-contemplative' Hazlitt beloved of earlier students. The picture is filled out by means of obscure references, new letters and hitherto-unidentified articles, ferreted out largely by the author himself. In short, this Hazlitt lives and breathes, and loves as well as he hates (provided that we do not identify quality with success).

So far so good. But Dr. Jones does not fulfil the second requirement so well. There is not really sufficient new material here to have alone justified his book. This impression may perhaps partly be the result of our having already benefitted from Dr. Jones' numerous articles, but the impression must be recorded. And there are still gaps. For example, while he traces the origins of 'the second Mrs. Hazlitt', and her personality is far better defined than previously, we still do not know exactly why they separated, and I presume that this is the main point for Hazlitt's admirers. More important, however, is the fact that lack of source material expels Hazlitt from the realms of 'being' to simply 'doing' for his last two or three years: and since Dr. Jones is concerned not to re-trace chartered ground wherever possible, Hazlitt does not even 'do' as much as he had in the hands of Howe or R. M. Wardle (1971). The unfortunate result of this scrupulous behaviour is that while Dr. Jones doubtless only intended his book to supplement earlier accounts of Hazlitt's life, he has arguably erred on the side of excessive scrupulosity and reticence. It might be too much to say that the omission of material regarding Hazlitt's work on Napoleon, for example, restricts interest to dedicated students of the essayist: but it can be anticipated that a full appreciation will only be achieved at all if the reader has already perused Howe or Wardle. Dr. Jones' commitment, and indeed his excellent prose, deserves a better reward than this. The period covered is so close to Hazlitt's whole writing career that he might also have gone back to the publication of the *Essay on Human Action* in the interests of greater completeness.

Dr. Jones has a great love for Hazlitt, partly inspired, as he engagingly reveals, by a shared enthusiasm for the game of fives (see Preface). It would

be tedious, futile and wrong to suggest that biographers should not love their subjects: the result of such advice would probably be either useless biography or, more likely, no biography at all. But often a counter-productive side effect arises from this devotion, especially when dealing with politicians or political writers. When we embrace the person of our historical choice we tend to take their politics along with them: in Hazlitt's words, we adopt them 'for better, for worse'. Thus it is quite normal to read contemporary events through their eyes, and to excuse their opinions whenever that irresistable formula 'ahead of his time' is inappropriate. Dr. Jones has unquestionably produced the clearest and most persuasive account of Hazlitt's politics yet. The maintenance of balance in his account is the more impressive since he is clearly convinced that Hazlitt's side of the question was the only one open to a man of humanitarian sympathies - a view which most certainly could be countered. For Dr. Jones, both Whig and Tory 'stood for privilege ... No improvement was possible while privilege remained' (p. 233). This is going somewhat beyond Hazlitt's own opinion, if I read him correctly. It is also untrue, unless improvement is here defined as the reduction of privilege. Also, he sees Peterloo as a 'wild climactic spasm of fear and hatred in the ruling class' (p. 239). The intrusion of personal opinion is impossible to avoid altogether, but when the opinions are not generally shared it can unnecessarily devalue the otherwise impressive impact of a book. In the present historiographic climate, it might be open to others to attack the whole enterprise in Hazlitt's spirit, if not with his imperishable principles: 'He [Burke] had his revenge: but so must others have theirs on [him]'. This is a pity, since it is the best-researched of the lives, ensuring that unless some major, unexpected sources come to light, no more efforts on this scale will need to be devoted to Hazlitt's later years.

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POSTSCRIPT From another appreciative reader, our sharp-eyed Chairman, Dr. D. G. Wilson:

Faced with the paucity of direct documentary evidence concerning certain aspects of Hazlitt's life, it is impossible to avoid speculation, and I admit that I have never played fives in 'North Britain'; but both the Eton and Rugby versions in England employ either the bare or the gloved hand. Admittedly, Chambers' Dictionary (published, of course, in Edinburgh) adds 'or with a bat' to its definition, but I still regard Dr. Jones' description (p. 251) of Hazlitt 'throwing his racket up to the roof' on winning a game of fives as somewhat hyperbolic speculation: which is a pity as it throws a momentary shadow of doubt on other, much more plausible, suggestions.

[The game of fives apart, Tim Wilson speaks warmly of Stanley Jones' 'voyages in the interior of his subject' and fascinating discoveries about Hazlitt's private and literary life. He provokes thought by wondering 'if events in Britain had taken the shape shown in Eastern Europe today, could there have been a President Hazlitt to point the way for Havel?' It's a fascinating speculation. Michael Foot could probably supply an authoritative answer: Charles Lamb's views would also be well worth hearing!]

J. Robert Barth, *Coleridge and the Power of Love*. Pp. xiv+128.

Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1988.

Robert Barth's brief new study of Coleridge and Love is not an attempt to rewrite Anthony Harding's treatment of this theme, in *Coleridge and the idea of Love* (1974). Rather it is a re-reading of Coleridge's major poems to explore the thesis that their paradigmatic concern is the passage from a limited state of love to a wider communion with 'the other', through which is ideally mediated an encounter with what Wordsworth calls the principle of Love. The book is in fact surprisingly reticent in relating Coleridge's ideas to philosophical and religious tradition. Even Tillich's *Of Love and Power*, most surprisingly in view of the conjunction of 'love' and 'power' in Barth's title, is not alluded to.

Naturally, however, Barth begins by describing Coleridge's ideal of love, offering a useful collocation of the poet's many utterances on this theme - in the letters, the notebooks, the lectures, the Opus Maximum, and elsewhere. 'Love', Coleridge wrote in a notebook,

> 'is a Sense of Union: and all its acts are tendencies to union, and ways of making ourselves conscious of the Same. Finally, Love is Love - essentially the same whether the object be a helpless infant, our Wife or Husband, or God himself'.

Expanding upon this hint, the opening chapter is organised around a presentation of Coleridge's views on familial and parental love, friendship, romantic or conjugal love and love of God.

As Barth (via T. S. Eliot) concedes, 'Between the idea / And the reality ... Falls the Shadow'. Chapter 2 recognises the various shadowings of Coleridge's multi-faceted ideal, highlighting the coldness between himself and his mother, and the pattern of ruptured friendships and broken marriage, while down-playing somewhat Coleridge's willingness to criticise his friends' shortcomings, allied to a well-developed sense of what is owed to a man of genius by those whom he considers worthy of esteem.

Some readers may feel that Barth occasionally sometimes errs on the side of generous construction of his subject. For instance, when Coleridge writes to the *seven-year-old* Derwent on the subject of parental anxieties, nurture and solicitude, and cautions him that 'it must needs be a horribly wicked thing ever to forget, or wilfully vex a Father or a Mother', the moral pressure here receives no comment. And although Barth recognises that there is a disconcerting element in Coleridge's view of marital compatibility (a man should ask himself of a prospective wife - Coleridge writes to an unknown correspondent in 1819 - 'Does she sincerely adopt my opinions on all important subjects? Has she at least that known docility of nature which, by uniting with true wifely love, will dispose her to do so?' CL: 4, 903-9) he appears not to consider whether such a profession casts doubt on an earlier quotation from the same 1819 letter, that 'Perfect friendship is only possible between Man and Wife' (the irony of which, in Coleridge's case, both Coleridge and Barth do acknowledge). Does perfect friendship in Coleridge's real opinion involve thorough self-abnegation of the other?

The main preoccupation of the book, however, is to trace (with extensive prefatory consideration of extant critical interpretations, so that each reading is a mini-casebook) the extent to which love (in the broad and unitary sense defined here) is the mainspring of action, the prime mover in the

experience of joy and the exercise of imagination, in Coleridge's best poems. The major conversation poems are convincingly read as repeatedly expressing a reaching out in 'an expansion of being' towards 'communion with the other', and realisation of the Wordsworthian 'principle of love'.

Even in *Dejection: an Ode*, Barth argues, Coleridge dramatically repudiates the solipsistic counter-Wordsworthian moment in which he declares 'O Lady, we receive but what we give'. The conclusion of the poem demonstrates this to be a distortion of the gentler (and also Wordsworthian) view that love must precede understanding. These readings, and the chapter on the Dejection poems, provide a persuasive corrective to critical overemphasis upon imagination, arguing for the interdependency of love, joy and imagination.

Accepting part of Harding's case for the unity of *Christabel*, Bath reads this poem as an expression of the failure of love, in which the series of broken relationships demonstrates the difficulty of realising the principle of Love 'in a world of sin', and within 'our broken and unfinished human life'. On *'The Ancient Mariner'* Barth is especially interesting on the counterpoint between the ballad-narrative, with its concluding emphasis upon human community, and the editorial gloss, with its revealing preoccupation with love of the infinite.

Unwisely, I think, Barth chooses not to end the book with his revaluation of *Dejection: an Ode* but to include a rather desultory chapter on some late poems, built around a consideration of recent interpretations of Coleridge's *Constancy to an Ideal Object*. It would have been more fitting, I suggest, to have developed at this point the brief concluding suggestions about the rich friendships of Coleridge's Highgate life, and his increasing sense of the blessedness of those who 'begin *early*' - as he wrote to his godchild - 'to seek, fear, & love their God, trusting wholly in the righteousness & mediation of their Lord, Redeemer, Saviour, & everlasting High Priest, Jesus Christ'.

Richard Gravil

The College of St. Mark and St. John

Claude A. Prance *Essays of a Book Collector: Reminiscences on Some Old Books and Their Authors*. Locust Hill Press, PO Box 260, West Cornwall, CT 06796, Australia, 1989, pp.xii+209. $A30.00.

Reasons for book collecting must surely defy enumeration: probably there are as many of them as there are book collectors alive and active at any given time. Whether collectors active or, sadly, emeritus (forced to desist at some point by poverty, family resistance or the threatened collapse of shelves and floor joists) we always feel that we could give a rational account of our obsession if pressed; but perhaps it would amount to little more, when analysed, than those twin universals 'I like books' and 'I never could resist a bargain'. But one thing is certain. Whether the books are bound and tended with care, like Walter Scott's, or constitute a ragged regiment, like Charles Lamb's, they are for use; for reading, for browsing in, for keeping us out of our beds at midnight on a winter's eve. Wretched is he who assembles fine bindings, rare editions, the best sets, and never looks inside. And there must be favourites: those shabby paperbacks hidden in the lowest corner, those comfortable bindings kept within easy reach. We all understand Charles Lamb's feelings on the

subject, only regretting (though perhaps with a lurking sense of relief) that we have no Coleridge to borrow our treasures and sometimes return them, richly freighted with holograph annotations of his own.

Everything in *Essays of a Book Collector* proclaims its author to be a true Lambian and a true leader of our happy band of book-amassers. The range of Claude Prance's essays on bookmen and book collecting is prodigious. His own collection must be one of those things which come into the category of sights 'to dream of, not to tell'. Only, fortunately, Mr. Prance likes telling, and such is the extent of his often very out-of-the-way knowledge (particularly of the period between 1800 and 1950) and so unfailingly interesting and full of surprises are his narratives that the reader learns something (sometimes several things) from every page, and the book proves almost impossible to put down.

Who *would* have thought that Sir Richard Burton owned a book called *Witchcraft and Devil Lore in the Channel Islands*? Or that any such work ever existed? And why had we never heard of *Books that Have Been Fatal to Their Authors* till now? It dates from 1895, so perhaps the time is now approaching when a centenary edition (preferably updated) might be tried. But I must not go on. Claude Prance's book is an Aladdin's Cave of unexpected facts!

The pieces assembled in *Essays of a Book Collector* started life in *The Private Library*, *Biblionews*, *Australian Notes and Queries* and *The Charles Lamb Bulletin*. It seems a pity not to have the dates of appearance stated at any point, but that is my own solitary regret. The range of these pieces is remarkable: from Izaak Walton and Dorothy Osborne to four essays concerned with Charles Lamb, a rich cluster on turn-of-the-century publishers and editors (including a particularly informative essay on 'Austin Dobson and Some of His Books'), and then delightful pieces on 'Edmund Blunden and Cricket' and 'John Drinkwater and Some of His Books'. All are written *con amore*.

Modest collectors need not feel discouraged by Claude Prance's clearly-wonderful collection. References to 'the Farringdon book-barrows' occur in essay after essay: reminders of remarkable finds before the War; but a reminder, too, that even today we may hope for strokes of luck if we keep our eyes open ... and if we are willing to learn something about the histories of books and their publishers. And Mr. Prance is no snob. Like Charles Lamb he has his own ragged regiment, tucked into the shelves here and there. His essay on 'Odd Volumes' testifies to his abiding love of books for what they contain, irrespective of their value, or what they look like. Again and again one is reminded of Charles Lamb's historic purchase of the folio *Beaumont and Fletcher*... and of his and Mary's loving concern in mending the pages. For the true book lover collects from a love of books and what they have to say to us. But it is needless to go on. Our long-time (though, alas, now distant) member and benefactor, the author of the invaluable *Companion to Charles Lamb*, has done it again. Another of his books proves to be un-put-downable!

Bill Ruddick

50 years ago (continued)

CLS Bulletin No. 43 (Fifth Year) With Supplement September 1939

REPORT OF JUNE MEETING

Hampstead is rich in inns, and the party visited - *outsides only* - "The Holly Bush, "The Bull and ditto", the Spaniards and "Jack Straw's Castle"...And then to Ken Wood, where tea awaited us.

CLS Bulletin No. 44 (Fifth Year) October 1939

THE CLS BULLETIN IN WAR-TIME

Message from the Chairman [Mr Walter Farrow]

The advent of war has called many of our members to some branch of National Service, whilst others have been scattered far from their homes. These circumstances allow your Officers no option but to suspend for the time being most of our Society's activities.

But we have no intention of striking our flag; and in proof of this, we shall continue to issue our Bulletin as a quarterly. This will enable us all to maintain our Elian fellowship until, with the return of happier times, we can resume the work we have so far successfully advanced.

For all of us the future is uncertain, but at least we can (and will) maintain our comradeship, courage, resolution and cheerfulness as did Charles Lamb in even darker days than ours.

CLS Bulletin No. 45 (Fifth Year) With Two Supplements January 1940

C. L.

His own he hid 'neath others' merit;
Doom, duty, 'neath a player's part;
And left men, wondering, to inherit
The largesse of one holy heart.

Q.

[This was apparently a new quatrain, specially-composed for the Society by the President, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch.]

CASH AND CARRY ON

As a special War-time measure, the annual subscription rate has been reduced for the time being from 5/- to 2/6.

CLS Bulletin No. 46 (Fifth Year) With Two Supplements April 1940

New Member Mrs A. F. Bishop of Maida Vale.

[Over sixty members and friends attended the Society's gathering on the 165th anniversary of the birth of Charles Lamb]

[Bibliographical] Short Note: "Rubber - and Charles Lamb" (The Rubber Age: February 1940). On the Elian activities of E.G. Crowsley.

CLS Bulletin No. 47 (Fifth Year) With Two Supplements July 1940

Message from Mr Edmund Blunden, Vice-President.

"I am pleased you are keeping the Society alive, and am assured that all those who at this time can take a few moments off with some favourite passage in Charles Lamb's prose or verse, will go forth better prepared for all chances. Elia alone, like a strain of music in the air, has been my comfort every day nearly."

So far as we ascertain, this is the only London Literary Society carrying on in these difficult times.

CLS Bulletin No. 48 (Fifth Year) With One Supplement October 1940

Postponement of September Meeting. Owing to circumstances obvious to the most absent-minded, the meeting arranged for September 21st had to be postponed. *But*, we look forward to hearing Mrs. Thornton Cook's address on "Biographical Novels" - when Hitlers cease from troubling and Goerings are at rest.

CLS Bulletin No. 49 (Fifth Year) With Two Supplements January 1941

The donor of the first supplement to this issue is Mr H.G. Sxxxh. We are forbidden, by what he describes as "Yorkshire obstinacy" to particularise him more closely; but...a receipt for two-and-sixpence will be presented to every member paying a subscription [of 2/6d] for 1941 who guesses the missing letters correctly.

CLS Bulletin No. 50 Jubilee Number With Two Supplements April 1941

TAILPIECE

As this issue is the last to be produced by stencil duplication, the Editor takes the opportunity of expressing his gratitude to Ball and Johnson, 5 Copthall Buildings, Copthall Avenue, E.C.2. who have been responsible for all fifty numbers of the Bulletin. He unhesitatingly commends the firm to members requiring similar work.

SOCIETY NEWS AND NOTES FROM MEMBERS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 12th May 1990

The Annual General Meeting of the Charles Lamb Society will be held at 2.45 p.m. on Saturday 12th May 1990 at the Mary Ward Centre, 42/3 Queen Square, W.C.1. Nominations for Officers and Council for 1990/91 should be sent in writing to the General Secretary, Madeline Huxstep, 1a Royston Road, Richmond, TW10 6LT (the consent of the nominee having been obtained) by Saturday 5th May 1990.

LIST OF SPEAKERS Madeline Huxstep was grateful to have a prompt response to her appeal for speakers on Charles Lamb and his circle included in the October 1989 *Bulletin* from Dr Burness. She would be glad to hear from members who are in touch with other organisations who would appreciate the opportunity to include a talk on Charles Lamb in their programmes.

MR RICH'S BOOKCASE

D.E. Wickham

Samuel Rich's bookcase, pictured in Kent's *London for the Literary Pilgrim* full of his Elian collection, was sold by Phillips the auctioneers on 12 December 1989 as Lot 134 in a mixed sale, No. 27,993.

The catalogue entry was 'A Victorian mahogany Library Secretaire Bookcase, the upper part with a moulded cornice and enclosed by three pairs of glazed panel astragal doors, divided by and faced with foliate scroll pilaster and column stiles, the lower part with a fall enclosing a fitted interior flanked by interlaced Gothic foliage and pairs of drawers to either side, and having enclosed cupboards below between similar column stiles, on a plinth base, 2.96m (9ft 6in) wide, 2.57m (8ft 5in) high, 43cm (1ft 5in) deep. Provenance: by descent to the present owner from the late S M Rich, former editor of the Charles Lamb Society.' The estimate was £3000-7000.

The Council considered various possibilities of buying the bookcase but none seemed feasible.

Phillips later advised that it went to a company, presumably a dealer, for £4400 hammer-price, i.e. plus buyer's premium, VAT, etc.

THE BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON, 1990

It is always a particular pleasure when we can hold the Birthday Luncheon on Charles Lamb's actual birthday, as happened this year. The occasion was graced by Presidents past and present and their wives, a goodly number of Members, and a gratifyingly large number of guests; plus, of course, the especially welcome young representatives from Christ's Hospital.

Our new President, Professor John Beer, presided with his customary grace and light touch; his very first speech including a new fact, derived from one of Coleridge's marginal notes to a Lamb volume which we hope to be able to publish in the *Bulletin* at a later date. Professor John Stevens, our recently retired President and the day's Guest of Honour, spoke wittily and engagingly on Lamb's boyhood reading at Christ's Hospital, and concluded with a spirited rendition of one of the Anthem's sung by the boys in those days: the engaging way in which he filled the pauses in the vocal line with the 'pom, pom, pom' of an unmistakeably late-eighteenth century organ will long be remembered, as will the clarity with which he suggested the light boyish tones. We hope that text and music from Professor Stevens' address can be included in the July *Bulletin*.

The presentation of copies of Jonathan Bates's *Essays of Elia* to our Christ's Hospital representatives was made all the more appropriate by the fact that

Jonathan Bates had returned from America in time to attend the luncheon and to autograph the copies of his edition. The President also presented handsome early nineteenth-century London prints to Professor Stevens and the recently-retired editor of the *Bulletin*, Mrs Mary Wedd.

BOOKS FOR SALE

D.E. Wickham

Mrs Bridget Silver is the daughter of Mrs Connie Hale and hence the grand-daughter of Samuel Morris Rich (1877-1949), the Elian scholar and collector, a founder member of the Charles Lamb Society and first Editor of the *Bulletin*.

After the recent death of her mother, Mrs Silver was kind enough to present to the Society several books and pictures which had belonged to her mother and grandfather. Some were at once placed in the Society's collections but it seemed best to make others available to members - for a donation (size unspecified) to the Society's funds.

At Mrs Silver's particular request I have inscribed each item with a note of its source. The books available are:

Hine: *The History of Hitchin*, Vol. II only, 1929, unopened, inscribed in 1949 in an unknown hand to S M Rich in memory of Hine

Hine: *Hitchin Worthies*, 1932, the signed limited edition, No. 453 of 1021 copies, inscribed as above

Hine: *Charles Lamb & his Hertfordshire*, 1949, in dw

Hine: *Charles Lamb & his Hertfordshire*, 1949, poor

Hine: *Confessions of an Un-Common Attorney*, 1945, second edition, with a letter from H G Smith to Mrs Hale

Witches and Other Night-Fears, published as a pamphlet by Dent with Waudby's illustrations, 1929

If you are interested, please let me know at 116 Parsonage Manorway, Belvedere, Kent DA17 6LY if I am to bring something to a meeting or post it (postage extra).

FOR THE RECORD

D E Wickham

Wiliam Kent's *London for the Literary Pilgrim*, 1949, pages 130-1, refers to several books in the Elian collection of S M Rich, Editor of *The Charles Lamb Bulletin*. Inter alia, 'There is Southey's *The Doctor Etc.* in seven volumes. Rich's copy has Augustine Birrell's book-plate in each volume, and he paid a penny a volume for the set!'

By arrangement with Mr Rich's grand-daughter, Mrs Bridget Silver, and after the expenditure of rather more than seven pence, these volumes are now in my personal library.

Alliance of Literary Societies — October 1989 meeting

On Saturday 14 October 1989 the Alliance of Literary Societies held one of its periodic committee meetings at the Birmingham & Midland Institute. Attending was the present writer, together with representatives from the George Eliot, John Clare, and Thomas Hardy societies, and the Dickens Fellowship. Also present were Kenn. Oultram, editor of *Chapter One*, and Acting Secretary H W Woodward. The meeting was chaired by Joseph Hunt.

Among the several topics discussed, the fate of the Society's newsletter, *Chapter One*, seemed to claim most attention. Its editor, the able and resourceful Kenn. Oultram, was pleased to report that responses to the first issue had been very positive, but regretted to announce that only about £100s worth of advertising had been received for the forthcoming issue. The best estimate for producing this issue was £300 and therefore its publication had been necessarily delayed. It was generally felt that a cheaper version of the newsletter on inferior paper would harm the Society's image at this crucial stage of its career, and Mr O. appealed to those members present to return to their societies and be responsible for at least one advert each. (The Charles Lamb Society, incidentally, need not feel guilty. It was one of the first to buy advertising space to the tune of £40!!) Mr Woodward agreed to write to those societies whose representatives were not at the meeting. The present writer suggested that an officer responsible for dealing with adverts might relieve the Editor of an onerous duty, though there were no volunteers from those present! At all events the newsletter was likely to appear just before the ALS seminar/AGM on 28 April 1990.

The Secretary's card index listing details of literatary societies would be the basis of a publication issued free to ALS affiliated societies, and available to others, price £2. Money would also be raised by setting overseas affiliation subscriptions at twice the rate of British ones, and by organising a raffle at the Seminar/AGM. An appeal for prizes will be made (how about it, CLS ?) The ALS's balance currently stands at £124.78.

R M Healey

CHARITABLE STATUS

The Society's application for charitable status looks like reaching a favourable conclusion in the near future. Full details will be given in a future edition of the Bulletin, but in the meantime here is an interim report.

Acting under the authority of resolutions of a special general meeting of the Society and successive meetings of the Council, the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer have arranged for the formation of a company limited by guarantee. This new company now exists, has two members (your Chairman and Secretary), a name - "The Charles Lamb Society" and a constitution in the normal form adopted by companies limited by guarantee. The Charity Commission have confirmed that it satisfies their requirements for registration as an English Charity. The one remaining hurdle is the approval of the Inland Revenue, and we anticipate

this shortly. Thereupon, the officers intend to act on the resolution already passed by the existing Society to transfer to the new charitable company all the existing Society's assets and to wind up the existing Society.

All present individual members of the Society will be invited to become members of the new charitable company - although in practice it is likely for administrative reasons that these invitations will be issued only at the start of the 1991 subscription year. All present corporate members of the Society will at the same time be invited either to nominate a representative individual to become a member of the charitable company, or (the option more likely to be chosen by most corporate members) to become subscribers to the Charles Lamb Bulletin without actual membership of the company.

Membership of the company will be available on the same terms as membership of the present Society, save that a member of the company will be asked, in addition to paying the normal subscription, to guarantee to contribute the sum of £1.00 should the Society ever become insolvent! This is the normal method by which a charitable company constitutes itself, and the guarantee is in reality most unlikely ever to be called on - or so your undersigned Treasurer hopes!

These changes will undoubtedly lead to a significant saving in tax for the Society, and will thus put off the evil day when it next becomes necessary to raise the level of subscriptions. In the meantime, however, all members are reminded that subscriptions for the calendar year 1990 were due for payment on 1st January. A separate notice on this topic appears below.

Nick Powell, Hon. Treasurer

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1990 were due on 1st January 1990 and the space where the reminder should have appeared at the end of the January *Bulletin* if the editorial eye had not blinked can be found at the end of that number. Subscription rates remain unchanged and payments will be received with pleasure by the Hon. Treasurer at any time, but *soon* would be extra agreeable. The rates are:

Personal:	U.K.	(single)	£ 8.00
		(double)	£12.00
	Overseas		US $14.00
Corporate:	U.K.		£12.00
	Overseas		US $21.00

(Cheques should be made payable to the Charles Lamb Society)