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"More than most men am I dependent on sympathy to bring out the best that is in me."
Commonplace Book

Gissing Laughs, Wells Sighs: *The Wells Way* on BBC Radio 4

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Fresh on the heels of Christopher Douglas' adaptation of *New Grub Street*, *The Wells Way* was first broadcast on BBC Radio 4 on 27 February 2017.[1] The 45-minute drama is directed and produced by Tracey Neale and written by Martyn Wade, and it marks the seventieth anniversary of Wells' death. It stars Julian Rhind-Tutt as H. G. Wells, Joseph Millson as Gissing, Jade Matthew as Jane Wells, and Louiza Patikas as Gabrielle Fleury. Where Douglas playfully interweaves Gissing's biography with his abridged version of the novel, *The Wells Way* traces Gissing's and Wells' friendship from their first meeting on 20 November 1896 at a dinner organized by the Omar Khayyám Club to some time after Gissing's death, and explores, to some extent, the antagonism between Wells and Fleury. *The Wells Way* thus juxtaposes the private and professional lives of Gissing and Wells, concentrating on the former's progression from realist fiction to Rome in the 6th century as he works on his unfinished novel *Veranilda* and on the latter's progression from scientific romances to the semi-autobiographical *Love and Mr Lewisham* (1900). After their meeting, Wells confides to Jane his aspiration to follow Gissing (though not too closely) by writing in the realist tradition about the contemporary scene: "I've been pondering . . . About my career thus far . . . And my conclusion is: I've been too hasty. I've rushed the fences. Produced stuff that sold – but the quality wasn't there; or if it was, somewhere, it wasn't recognized. I'm not saying that I'll never write scientific fantasy again – but I feel the need to take a new direction." Gissing had had a number of successes by this stage in his career, including the major novels *The Nether World* (1889), *New Grub Street* (1891), *Born in Exile* (1892), and *The Odd Women* (1893).

In Wade's rendering, Wells is attracted as much as he is opposed to Gissing's writing, which functions as an analog to their relationship at large: "Let Gissing be an inspiration, and a warning, too." Indeed, the Wellses agree that, were he to write in the realist tradition, Wells would write "Realism . . . that sells," and

should this project fail, Wells decides that he would "give up on realism": "I'll write futurology, and nothing but futurology – for ever." For all their differences "in temperament, tastes and culture,"[2] the two writers' similarities are equally striking: "Both men had been stunted and perhaps coarsened by events in their early lives. Both had a self-indulgent side to their natures, a tendency to puerile simplifications and vapid idealism."[3] Pierre Coustillas reasons:

> All the elements of potential dissension – there were many – shrank behind a mutual determination to find in his *confrère* an interesting personality, even a case worth studying [. . .] Other factors could conceivably draw them together: both, although in different circumstances, had starved, and starvation was in Gissing's artistic philosophy of life a passport to professional respectability; they were both unencumbered by antiquated religious beliefs and considered that it was for man alone to forge his own destiny.[4]

Gissing and Wells were both immensely productive during the period in question. Wells gained instant acclaim for *The Time Machine* (1895) and followed it with *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896), *The Invisible Man* (1897), *The War of the Worlds* (1898), *The First Men in the Moon* (1901) and some volumes of short stories. Gissing, in addition to a succession of novels (i.e., *The Whirlpool* (1897), *The Crown of Life* (1899), *Our Friend the Charlatan* (1901), *Veranilda* (posthumously published in 1904), and *Will Warburton* (1905)), wrote extensively about Dickens, the travel book *By the Ionian Sea* (1901), the short novel *The Town Traveller* (1898), over a dozen short stories, and one of his masterpieces, *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* (1903).

The Gissing-Wells connection is well documented and has considerable narrative potential.[5] Notwithstanding its factual infelicities (e.g. Edith was the mother of *both* Gissing's children and not just Alfred), *The Wells Way* is striking in its use of Gissing's and Fleury's romance as a foil to the Wellses' marriage. Fleury had corresponded with Gissing, in June 1898, in the hope of translating *New Grub Street* into French and they met, on 6 July, at the Wellses' home. In Wade's rendering, Wells turns to (and manipulates) Gissing's life story for his own ends. Reflecting on Gissing's decision to marry Fleury, Wells would reason to himself: "The truth is: my recent talk with Gissing had given me a provocative prod or two, and I'd begun to ask myself: were the bonds of marriage bonds indeed so binding? Was the institution so sacred? I tried hard, however, to fight against such speculation. I would, I vowed, be like Mr Lewisham [his character], and contentedly, thoroughly, settle down." Wells does not, in the end, settle down, and *The Wells Way* finds him leaving Jane after the birth of George Philip Wells (on 17 July 1901). In the play's final scene, set in the Wellses' drawing room in Spade House, Wells tells Jane about the gossip he had heard about Gissing: some of this included the possibility of Gissing having syphilis and his beating of both Nell Harrison and Edith with a

stair-rod. Gissing did not, of course, have syphilis: the symptoms that John George Black describes – and that Gissing shared – in his letter on 26 March 1876 are not those of the disease.[6] The stair-rod anecdote seems to have originated from a misinterpretation of what Gissing had said in a letter to his brother Algernon on 7 June 1882: "You will be amused to hear that certain carpet-rods are still *in situ* on my staircase – just as you saw them last."[7] Algernon had visited Gissing shortly before and Gissing, who cared for tidiness in a home, had complained that his landlady began to clean the stairs and/or the rods days ago though she had left the job unfinished.[8]

As its title intimates, *The Wells Way* is neither *The Gissing Way* nor *The Gissing-Wells Ways*: it is relayed entirely from Wells' perspective. Wade's script reveals, furthermore, that the narrating Wells is some fifteen years older than the character when the play opens.[9] An important source is Wells' *Experiment in Autobiography* (1934), and we do well to attend to his descriptions of Gissing. Wells characterizes Gissing as "a strange tragic figure, a figure of internal tragedy, and it is only slowly that I have realized the complex of his misfortunes," concluding:

> He was a pessimistic writer. He spent his big fine brain depreciating life, because he would not and perhaps could not look life squarely in the eyes,—neither his circumstances nor the conventions about him nor the adverse things about him nor the limitations of his personal character. But whether it was nature or education that made this tragedy I cannot tell.[10]

Wells remembers teaching Gissing to cycle (he refuses to learn in *The Wells Way*):

> It was curious to see this well-built Viking, blowing and funking as he hopped behind his machine. "Get on to your ironmongery," said I. He mounted, wabbled a few yards, and fell off shrieking with laughter. "Ironmongery!" he gasped. "Oh! riding on ironmongery!" and lay in the grass at the roadside, helpless with mirth. He loved laughter and that was a great link between us – I liked to explode him with some slight twist of phrase. He could be very easily surprised and shocked to mirth, because he had a scholar's disposition to avoid novel constructions and unusual applications of words.[11]

Later, Wells identifies how Gissing's laughter is at odds with his education:

> The Gissing I knew, therefore, was essentially a specially posed mentality, a personal response, and his effect upon me was an extraordinary blend of a damaged joy-loving human being hampered by inherited gentility and a classical education. He craved to laugh, jest, enjoy, stride along against the wind, shout, 'quaff mighty flagons.'[12]

Wells constantly searches for the reasons behind what he sees as Gissing's impatience

> [f]or that thin yet penetrating juice of shrewd humour, of kindly stoicisms, of ready trustfulness, of fitful indignations and fantastic and often grotesque generosities, which this London life of ours exudes […] I have never been able to decide how much that defect of taste was innate or how far it was a consequence partly of the timid

> pretentiousness of his home circumstances, and partly of that pompous grammatical training to which his brain was subjected just in his formative years. I favour the latter alternative. I favour it because of his ready abundant fits of laughter. You do not get laughter without release, and you must have something suppressed to release.[13]

Whether or not we agree with Wells, his observation of Gissing as one who constantly turns to laughter is revealing, particularly in the light of the often ironic humour we find in his fiction. Shortly after the airing of *The Wells Way*, I discussed, with Wade, his creative process behind the play and how he researched and subsequently reimagined these historical figures. Wade is the author of a number of dramas about different figures, including Benjamin Britten and Gustav Holst. He has adapted many works of nineteenth-century literature including Herman Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener" (1853), Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* (1859), Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* (1860), and Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879). Wade's play *Over the Hills and Far Away* (1982), on the life of Percy Grainger, earned the Sony Radio Drama Award for best production.

What led you to focus on Wells and Gissing?

I've written a number of biographical plays for radio (e.g. literary subjects such as Coleridge, Emily Brontë, Hazlitt, George Eliot) and am always on the lookout for lives, or aspects of lives, which might make strong drama. Wells I'd been interested in for a while, and I read Anthony West's *Aspects of a Life* and was drawn to the relationship between Wells and Gissing (not, perhaps, the likeliest of friends?), what each hoped/expected to get out of it, and how it was affected by Gabrielle Fleury's arrival on the scene. So, I came to Gissing via Wells (though, as it happens, I'd used parts of *By the Ionian Sea* – superb! – for a CD compilation of travel writing, *A Journey through Italy*.)

Tell us about your research into the two writers.

For Gissing: Pierre Coustillas's *Heroic Life;* Paul Delany; *Collected Letters*. For Wells, aside from his son's book: Michael Sherborne; David Lodge's *A Man of Parts* (entertaining, but I read it chiefly to make sure that he wasn't covering the same ground). The *Experiment in Autobiography* was particularly useful.

I like to do a fair bit of "research": it helps to put off the evil day when one has to start writing. When I do start, I persuade myself that I'm broadly following what, it's thought, actually happened. But the important thing is dramatic effect: I'm prepared to shape, bend, twist, ignore material if it helps to make the piece entertaining. It's drama, not documentary.

***The Wells Way* brings up a number of rumours about Gissing, some of which have been disproven. When did your research end and your creative process begin?**

In the particular case you cite, it doesn't matter at all if rumours regarding Gissing have been questioned or disproven. They were around at the time. And the Wells that I present *might possibly* have been happy to circulate the rumours even if he didn't believe them all – as a way, perhaps, of venting his spleen on a friend who – in the play – spoils the friendship by falling in love with Fleury; and also, *perhaps,* as a way of allowing himself to feel less guilty about Gissing's death.

You had intended the production to be twice as long as it currently is. What were some of the omissions?

I can't specifically say what was omitted, not least because the 90-minute version was never written. But I think I intended to give more attention to the tug-of-war between Wells and Fleury, and to the nature of the relationship between Fleury and Gissing. Gissing's role would have been built up, so that the two men would have been of equal standing, and the audience would have been encouraged to identify with each in turn as the play developed. The longer play, of course, would have had a different title. R3 is to blame.

Acknowledgements

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[1] For a discussion of Douglas' production and recent developments in Gissing studies, see my article in the *TLS*. Douglas and I discuss, in "The Roads to Gissing's Grub Street: An Interview with Christopher Douglas," his research into Gissing, how fact and fiction are brought together in his adaptation, and the storylines that he retains and omits.

[2] Pierre Coustillas, *The Heroic Life of George Gissing, Part II: 1888-1897* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012), p. 293.

[3] Patrick Parrinder, "The Roman Spring of George Gissing and H. G. Wells," *Gissing Newsletter*, 21:3 (July 1985), p. 7.

[4] Coustillas, *George Gissing, Part II*, p. 293.

[5] For some excellent studies of this connection, see John R. Harrison's "Gissing's Friendship with H. G. Wells" and "The Rejected *Veranilda* Preface: Wells's View of Gissing as a Novelist"; Patrick Parrinder's "The Roman Spring of George Gissing and H. G. Wells"; and Simon J. James' "'The Truth About Gissing': Reassessing the Literary Friendship of George Gissing and H. G. Wells."

[6] Paul F. Mattheisen, Arthur C. Young, and Pierre Coustillas, eds., *The Collected Letters of George Gissing, Volume One, 1863-1880* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1990), p. 43, n. 2.

[7] Paul F. Mattheisen, Arthur C. Young, and Pierre Coustillas, eds., *The Collected Letters of George Gissing, Volume Two, 1881-1885* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1991), p. 89.

[8] I thank Hélène Coustillas for her information.

[9] Martyn Wade, *The Wells Way* (London: n. pag., 2017), p. 1.

[10] H. G. Wells, *Experiment in Autobiography: Discoveries and Conclusions of A Very Ordinary Brain (Since 1866)*, 2 vols (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd and The Cresset Press Ltd, 1966), pp. 567, 581.

[11] Wells, *Autobiography*, p. 568.

[12] Wells, *Autobiography*, pp. 569-70.

[13] Wells, *Autobiography*, pp. 570-71.

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Born in Exile, Bakhtin, and the Double-Voiced Discourse of the Epistolary Form

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"You know that I constantly use irony & this is never under[stood]; it is all taken in the most stupid literal sense."[1]

In Bakhtinian terms, irony, along with sarcasm and cynicism, is understood as what emerges when carnivalesque humour collides with oppression and suffering. It can also be seen as a leitmotif of Gissing's writing. It has produced, in the critical reception, a persistent search for some sympathetic shelter from the inevitable bathos of *ressentiment*. A clear indication of this is the manner in which Gissing's correspondence has been seized upon as capitulating the myth of the author as noble victim. It is just this motif that Gissing sought to keep out of his fiction itself, and the novels make us uncomfortable to the precise degree that they disallow any such melioristic modes of escape.

Similarly, the impulse to discover the author in the books has been particularly forceful in Gissing criticism. Yet, because of the heteroglossic and dialogic nature of Gissing's writing, this has had the effect of creating a mythic figure of an author invested in such a vast array of seemingly autobiographical characters and, consequently, one wrought with paradox, contradiction, and inconsistency. Perhaps, then, the clue to the man, so obfuscated by the novels, lies in his supposedly monologic correspondence and as a result the publication of the nine volumes of Gissing's *Collected Letters* has proselytised the highly influential strand of biographical criticism in which, most worryingly, his correspondence is valued almost as much as his novels.

The critical engrossment in the letters as the key to the novels is misleading due to their fundamental difference in form. Gissing's novels display what Constance Harsh has defined as the "looseness of Gissing's artistic control" in relation to his use of free indirect speech.[2] The letters, by contrast, maintain a much tighter discourse or, in Bakhtin's terms, are "monologic form" uttered "outside the artistic context" of work and thus

> are merely prototypes for several of the idea-images in [...] novels. For this reason it is absolutely impermissible to substitute a critique of these monologic idea-prototypes for genuine analysis of [...] polyphonic artistic thought. It is important to investigate the *function* of ideas in [the novels'] polyphonic world, and not only their *monologic substance*.[3]

Where Bakhtin warns against using letters and articles as an explicative tool for understanding novels by proxy, Gissing identifies the problems of this confusion of forms but in reverse. In 1894, for instance, he writes to the *National Observer* complaining that "the novelist is often represented as holding an opinion which he has simply attributed to one of his characters," amounting to a form of negligence with "all the effect of deliberate misrepresentation."[4] Although approaching the issue from different angles, both Gissing and Bakhtin point out the disingenuous and misleading effect of confusing the ideas of characters with those of the novel's author.

Yet despite Gissing's exhortation against "deliberate misrepresentation," such forms of criticism have prevailed and, as the title of Gillian Tindall's eloquently written biographical reading *The Born Exile* implies, *Born in Exile* (1892) has been a prime victim for the minimalising character-author interpretations of Gissing's works.[5] However, if we turn to the letters – the biographer's favoured elucidatory tool – these understandings are far from straightforwardly substantiated: "Peak is," Gissing writes to Bertz,

> in a great degree, sympathetic to the author. But you will not find that Peak's tone is to be henceforth mine ... it seems to me that the tone of the whole book is by no means identical with that of Peak's personality, certainly I did not mean it to be so. Peak is myself – one phase of myself. I described him with gusto, but surely I did not, in depicting the other characters, take *his* point of view?[6]

There is a pronounced reservation in the equation of the already strangely detached "author" with character, and there is, moreover, a marked distinction – an implicit opposition even – between protagonist and, through "tone," the stance or attitude of the piece. Arguably, nowhere is Gissing's irony so sharp, language so slippery, the *ressentiment* so forceful than in *Born in Exile*.[7] The author's and protagonist's voices may seem deeply interlocked but unpacking them reveals an irony which separates the two. Furthermore, as Gissing draws attention to the "other characters" and their contrasting attitudes, nowhere is the "dialogic communication *between* consciousnesses," the confrontation of the "ideas of *others*," so qualified.[8]

The affinity between Gissing and Dostoevsky has already been convincingly established by Jacob Korg, John Sloan and Simon J. James.[9] While, as James points out, "Gissing's narrative voice is certainly more heavily ideologically inflected than Mikhail Bakhtin seems to find Dostoevsky's"; his "work shares many of the qualities of the Dostoevsky novel lauded by Bakhtin in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*."[10] Gissing, for example, like Dostoevsky, "thought not in thoughts but in points of view, consciousnesses, voices" and thus views of ideologies of his novels contradict the performatively monologic ones stated in

his correspondence.[11] So, with this in mind, this article will turn the matter on its head and ask: what happens when letters appear in Gissing's novels?

Like many of Gissing's works, *Born in Exile* contains numerous examples of what Bakhtin defines as "inserted genres" such as letters, articles, reported dialogues, parodically reinterpreted citations.[12] To Bakhtin, letters in novels are "images of ideas" – the refracting word – in which the author's conceptions and aspirations are refracted through characters. They are a form or variety of *Ich-Erzählung* [first person narration]. Discourse here, as in the epistolary style, allows for double-oriented speech, and in most cases is unidirectional. In other words, the discourse of letters does not express ideas in a straightforward and direct fashion, but is adjusted to take their recipient's views and concerns into account. In *Born in Exile*, a novel so concerned with the irony of double standards, with self-presentation and preservation, and – perversely – the innate and often almost irresistible impulse to expose such hypocrisy (in others, society, and oneself), letters take on a particularly performative quality, expressing a guardedness, seeking the avoidance of confrontation and detection yet fraught with an undertone of scepticism. The sense of the double-voice in *Born in Exile* is thus not just a literary technique but a sign of the double-consciousness that permeates the narrative.

The clearest instance of double-consciousness is seen in Godwin Peak – the lower middle-class exile with a misplaced "aristocratic temperament" who, in order to penetrate the class to which he believes he naturally belongs, suppresses his deep-seated atheistic cynicism under a guise of liberal Anglicanism. But even prior to this, the narrative is wrought with the irony of Godwin's double-consciousness or, in the Bakhtinian understanding of consciousness as always a language, the dialogism or doubleness innate in the associated processes of perception of and interaction with the world. Like Bakhtin, the narrative of *Born in Exile* recognises the commonality of multiplicity in language by presenting Godwin as an example of an "intelligent young man" in a "society strange" to him:

> Only the cultivation of a double consciousness puts them finally at ease. Impossible to converse with suavity, and to heed the forms of ordinary good-breeding, when the brain is absorbed in all manner of new problems: one must learn to act a part, to control the facial mechanism, to observe and anticipate. [...] The perfectly graceful man will always be he who has no strong apprehension either of his own personality or of that of others, who lives on the surface of things, who can be interested without emotion, and surprised without contemplative impulse. [... Peak] was beginning to understand the various reasons of his seeming clownishness.[13]

The references to "suavity," "play a part," "control," "observe and anticipate" exhibit the innate dialogism of speech by emphasising the tension between the

language of the protagonist and other characters. Godwin's speech is orientated towards the discourse of another, rendered double-voiced, then, through the forms of internal polemic and stylisation. The idea of having "no strong apprehension of [...] personality" and living "on the surface of things" contains an implicit reference to Negative Capability and the suppression of personality, perhaps standing as an ideological and retrospective poetic justification for Godwin's debilitating class insecurity. There is a wonderful duality implicit in "seeming clownishness" – alongside a resistance to the carnivalesque which Bakhtin views as an essential truth. And for Godwin, of course, the motivation for the internalisation of the one in favour of the cultivation of another is social status, the showcasing of the "aristocratic temperament" at the expense of the needy beneficiary. At Whitelaw College Godwin is preoccupied with achieving the façade of "self-possession" whilst simultaneously tormented by the silenced but known thoughts of others.

The letters of Godwin

The form in which both Godwin's socially paranoid dialogism, and the interpenetration of narratorial and protagonistic language, is most revealed in the various letters in the novel. After deciding to leave Whitelaw following the arrival of his working-class uncle and the approaching establishment of "Peak's Dinin' and Refreshment Rooms," Godwin writes to Lady Whitehall requesting permission to complete his funded studies in London. The passage begins in the third person, which intimates the double-voice in the epistle: "all possible respect yet firm," a narrative "without confession" in which "he could not even hint" at the real reason, and moves on to quote monologically from the letter.[14] So far, so direct. Yet, immediately after this, the narrative continues "the lady must interpret that as best she might" in a tone suggestive of Godwin's perfunctory stance.[15] Then we get an echo of the letter Godwin wished he were writing: "dignified without effort," displaying "disinterestedness."[16] Thus the letter is multi-tonal, a surface idea hiding both the real motivation and natural discourse. The performativity of the epistolary form is highlighted at the close: "several portions of the letter struck him as well composed, and he felt that they must heighten the reader's interest in him. With an author's pleasure (though at the same time with much uneasiness) he perused the appeal again and again."[17] The letter is "double-voiced" since Godwin has written with his audience in mind and in a consciously stylised fashion. The "uneasiness," in strange conjunction with the "author's pleasure" in creative pride, anticipates the fine line between performance and pretence along which the novel pursues and reiterates the sense of doubleness from the beginning.

Following his subsequent meeting with Lady Whitelaw Godwin is described hurtling home in "feverish excitement."[18] In the report of his reflection on the exchange there is a strange part-focalisation: "That would have been to act with dignity; that would have been the very best form of gratitude [...] But no, his accursed lack of self-possession had ruined all"; followed by rhetorical questions and exclamations.[19] The prose, through its anaphoric repetition and contrast, reflects Peak's thought process from regret, through resentment to the perverseness which at once motivates and undermines his affected "self-possession." Thus, by the opening of the next paragraph, with "composed already," we are already in Godwin's interior monologue and yet approaching it via narrational irony.[20] Furthermore, the jolty prose – enacting the state of mind which we are privy to – further contradicts the attitude Godwin aims to portray, accentuating its performativity. The letter is reported not monologically but dialogically:

> He begged Lady Whitelaw would forgive this thoughtless impropriety; she had made him understand the full extent of his error. Of course he could not accept anything more from her. [...] – "instead of going into the world to make a place for myself among the scientific investigators of our time."[21]

The hyperbolically phrased "thoughtless impropriety" is melodramatic and appears spurious. The concluding quote from the letter is "double-voiced" due to its echoes of the discourse of Whitelaw College's philanthropic aims and the benevolence of Sir Job, without which its lower-middle-class student would have "set forth into the world with no better equipment of knowledge than was supplied by some 'academy' of the old type."[22] However, the ironic tone causes it to appear cynical and parodic through repetition, taking on the quality of a hidden, antagonistic polemic.[23] Consequently, the letter is a "microdialogue" and provides an example of dialogic interchange.

Following this, the free indirect discourse continues, indicated by a narrative interjected with various colloquialisms which impede the aspired decisiveness:

> One's claims to respectful treatment must be put forward unmistakably, especially in dealing with such people as Lady Whitelaw. Now, perhaps, she would understand what his reserve concealed. [...] He read his letter several times aloud. This was the great style; he could imagine this incident forming a landmark in the biography of a notable man. Now for a fair copy, and in a hand, mind you, that gave no hint of his care for caligraphic seemliness: bold, forthright.[24]

"Such people" is Godwin's opinion as he reads Lady Whitelaw as a straightforward prototype of someone with the "superiority of mere brute wealth," and yet his bombast is undermined by his nescience of both the complexities of character the narrative reveals and the adverse way in which he comes across.[25] Godwin does not really want Lady Whitelaw to understand

what his reserve conceals, but rather to present her with a character of his own invention. This sense of playing a part is amplified as he, reading the letter aloud as though in performance, perceives it as the "great style." The pronouncement evokes both the "grand style" of rhetoric and the "grand manner" in painting, two modes characterised by their use of idealisation and figuration. Thus the narrative, focalised through Godwin, recognises the "doubly-oriented" speech in the stylisation, or the borrowing of another's discourse.[26] The reference to emblematic forms emphasises the letter's status as "an image of an idea," not presented in a single voice, but via a combination of battling heterogeneous voices. In constructing an alternative narrative of the self, Godwin, grandiose and self-dramatising, envisages his story as "a landmark in the biography of a notable man" in a way which underlines the textualisation of life. It is almost as though, like Dostoevsky's heroes, Godwin is consciously self-aware, but unlike in Bakhtin's definition, he is also cripplingly cognisant of his fictionality.[27] So self-conscious, in fact, that he imagines even his handwriting could expose him and its subsequent falsification suggests the fundamental dissimulation of the written word.

However, when it comes to narrating his composed self through real, external dialogue with his mother "Godwin found his tongue falter" as he wonders how to "convey to another the intangible sense of wounded dignity which had impelled his pen"; his consciousness is implicitly questioned and tested by the ideas of other "life-positions" in the book. [28] The written self, the inserted genre, remains hidden, unposted, until a letter arrives from Lady Whitelaw, granting his request:

> [F]orthwith he sat down to write quite a different letter from that which still lay in his private drawer,– a letter which he strove to make the justification (to his own mind) of this descent to humility. At considerable length he dwelt upon the change of tastes of which he had been conscious lately, and did not fail to make obvious the superiority of his ambition to all thought of material advancement. [...] a letter in which the discerning would have read much sincerity, and some pathos; after all, not a letter to be ashamed of. Lady Whitelaw would not understand it; but then, how many people are capable of even faintly apprehending the phenomena of mental growth?[29]

The location of the letter, in Godwin's "private drawer," microcosmically perpetuates and enacts the "intimacy of one's own room" which Bakhtin defines as the "zone of the letter."[30] Elsewhere, Bakhtin asserts that Ivan in *The Brothers Karamazov* is "not disputing with Alyosha but above all with himself," and here the fact that Godwin is in dialogue with "his own mind" is noted via narratorial comment.[31] At the close it appears that we have slipped into free indirect discourse as Godwin considers his tonal achievements and yet, through the reference to "the discerning" and "sincerity," it is overtly self-ironising, and the sentiment is further undercut by

the presence of rhetorically charged "pathos." The "pathos," perhaps, represents an immediately undermined desire for a monologic discourse. The litotes, "not a letter to be ashamed of" has an obscuring quality which accentuates the dialogism between narrator and character. By this point, Godwin appears almost convinced by his own misplaced superciliousness – an ironically rendered egotism which undercuts his ability to gain self-knowledge. Godwin, then, estranged from rather than conjoined with the narrator is constructed of surface qualities which are nonetheless hidden from explicit view – obtained indirectly via negation. Reading the novel from a Bakhtinian point of view completely counters persistent biographical readings, such as Halperin's suggestion that "All [Peak's] 'aristocratic instincts', as Gissing calls them, are his own."[32] In fact, Godwin has no fixed position, no monologic consciousness, for it *is* his only defining feature, the persistent "idea function" of the "savagely aristocratic temperament," which is tested throughout.

The letters of others

Unlike the dialogically reported letter, in which the subtle switches between third-person narration and free indirect discourse are sometimes hard to determine, through the I-narrators of the monologically quoted epistolary forms the reader is made doubly aware that the author is not addressing them directly but through the represented discourse of some persona or character. *Born in Exile* is a novel of ideas in which debates, discussions, and arguments about radicalism, theology, and science are foregrounded. Characters in the novel are, superficially at least, figurations of various ideological standpoints – a feature attested by their quasi allegorical names.[33] Thus characters' discourse, be it spoken or written, generates and sustains the continuous struggle and interchange of competing interests and ideas. This is evident in a written exchange between Sylvia Moorhouse and Sidwell Warricombe which begins with a strangely-phrased apology for not writing sooner: "I have written to you mentally at least once a day, and I hope you have mentally received the results," as though to think is to communicate or, in Bakhtinian terms, "to *be* is to *communicate*."[34] At this point, the letter is interrupted by the narrative discourse as Sidwell notices that "Sylvia had carefully obliterated two lines, blackening the page into unsightliness. In vain Sidwell pored over the effaced passage, led to do so by a fancy that she could discern a capital P, which looked like the first letter of a name."[35] The description is fraught with tensions: between Sylvia's acting "carefully" and the resulting "unsightliness." Also, where Sidwell's "fancy" suggests something whimsical and capricious, "pored" implies something much more assiduous. And Godwin – disguised, implied, half-

present, imagined – is introduced only to be effaced from the discourse. Obliterate, with its Latin roots implying to literally unwrite, anticipates the way in which, later, Godwin will be written out of the novel. In a text in which names carry a part of, or stand as an emblem for, identity, it is particularly telling that Godwin's presence, reduced to a "P," is blackened and effaced: designations which connote something hidden or shifted, like Godwin himself. And yet, his trace remains and perhaps influences the direction of the discourse:

> Don't trouble yourself so much about insoluble questions. Try to be more positive – I don't say become a Positivist. Keep a receptive mind, and wait for time to shape your views of things. I see that London has agitated and confused you; you have lost your bearings amid the maze of contradictory finger-posts.[36]

This, presumably, is in response to an earlier, unquoted letter from Sidwell. Yet the way that Sylvia's reference to Positivism is placed directly succeeding the present absence of Godwin, reminding the reader of the "peculiar recklessness of mood" during his recent visit to the Moorhouses in which "ironic temptation was terribly strong," requiring, in a way reminiscent of Poe's "Imp of the Perverse" (1845), "an incessant effort to refrain from self-betrayal," suggests that the abrupt change of subject is an oblique response to a hidden polemic of deep-rooted cynicism.[37] Bakhtin suggests that in Dostoevsky's novels the authorial discourse is loosened, allowing other discourses in the text to dialogically interact in more complicated ways. In these terms, Sylvia's advice to Sidwell, to be "more positive" can be understood as a direct antithesis to Godwin, earlier depicted as devoid of "[a]bsolute faith [...] essentially a negativist, guided by the mere relations of phenomena," and his Schopenhauerian impulses.[38] The struggle of competing ideas – "the maze of contradictory finger-posts" – embodied in Sidwell stands in contrast to Godwin's innate recognition of the connectedness between abstracts. Sidwell's reply realises the anticipated answer of Sylvia's letter:

> By way of being more "positive", I have read much in the newspapers, supplementing from them my own experience of London society. [...] The decay of religious belief is undermining morality, and the progress of Radicalism in politics is working to the same end by overthrowing social distinctions. Evidence stares one in the face from every column of the papers. Of course you have read more or less about the recent "scandal" – I mean the *most* recent.– It isn't the kind of thing one cares to discuss, but we can't help knowing about it, and does it not strongly support what I say? Here is materialism sinking into brutal immorality, and high social rank degrading itself by intimacy with the corrupt vulgar. There are newspapers that make political capital out of these "revelations." I have read some of them, and they make me so *fiercely* aristocratic [...] You will tell me, I know, that this is quite the wrong way of looking at it. [...]
>
> Reading this, Sylvia had the sense of listening to an echo. Some of the phrases recalled to her quite a different voice from Sidwell's. She smiled and mused.[39]

In both "Problem of Speech Genres" and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Bakhtin notes that an author can use quotation marks to signal a voice shift or to "lend expressivity" to another, as though "the *change of speech subjects* has been internalised."[40] Sidwell uses speech marks throughout her letter. Firstly, the reiteration of Sylvia's "positive" in a way which accentuates the dialogic method, the speech marks give it a vaguely ironic edge and this anticipates the following description. Secondly, in quoting newspapers, the letter becomes metatextual, with Sidwell foregrounding the issues and debates of declining religious belief, growing Radicalism and the immorality of the press via a dialogue with a second inserted discourse through dialogue. The single word citations – "scandal," "revelations" – contain a subversive mockery of the certain type of newspaper from which they are sourced. Furthermore, the personified "evidence stares one in the face" vivifying the image-idea and lending it a life of its own. This personification is pursued as the letter progresses, with "high social rank degrading itself." The use of italics – *most*; *fiercely* – give the words a visually iconic status. The sense of the hidden polemic, the antagonism between the proprietous evasion of polite society and the candid bavardage of metropolitan journalism, emphasised through the shifting register as Sidwell moves, in one sentence, from the indefinite "one" to first person plural "we" and finally to the first-person singular "I", reveals a double-oriented discourse which incorporates various speech-acts. Through the direct address to Sylvia: "you will tell me," the letter appears to confirm the theory that "[i]f the word is territory *shared* by both addresser and addressee, by the speaker and the interlocutor, then language is not one's own."[41] This sense of a shared language is furthered, at the close, through the interpretation, focalised through Sylvia, of reading giving "the sense of listening to an echo" of "quite a different voice" – most pertinent in Sidwell's phrase "*fiercely* aristocratic." Thus the communication between consciousnesses is further multiplied – the idea-image being polyphonic or multi-voiced through Sylvia's recognition of Godwin's register disguised and refracted in Sidwell's. Sidwell's language, much like Godwin's, is not her own.

The end of the novel provides a final example of how Godwin is disguised and discussed through the written word:

> [I]n a hand there was no recognising:
> "Ill again, and alone. If I die, act for me. Write to Mrs Peak, Twybridge."
> [...]
> He turned hurriedly to the foreign writing [...] beyond *Geehrter Herr*, scarcely a word yielded sense to his anxious eyes. Ha! One he had made out – *gestorben*.

[...]
"Dead, too, in exile!" was his thought. "Poor old fellow!"[42]

This stands in painful contrast to the letter Earwaker received ten days earlier, where Godwin confidently writes that in Vienna he "shall get [his] health back again," and which is ironically placed directly preceding the news of his death.[43] Like Bakhtin's understanding of Dostoevsky's heroes, Godwin cannot achieve "absolute death (non-being)" or "the state of being unheard, unrecognised, unremembered."[44] Godwin's final message, reduced to a "hand there was no recognising," is symbolic of his ultimate inability to author the self in death just as he failed to in life.

In Dostoevsky, Bakhtin suggests, "final agony and death are observed by others. Death cannot be a fact of consciousnesses itself," because death belongs to the person but not consciousness.[45] Death, in fact, "doesn't exist at all."[46] It is an "objective fact for other consciousnesses" and "finalises nothing." And in *Born in Exile*, Godwin's death is not reported directly, but via a letter written in "execrabl[e…] German manuscript."[47] The one word Earwaker can discern – "*gestorben*" – is visually and linguistically emblematic of how Godwin has, through his sentient cultivation of double-consciousness weighted too much on the surrounding otherness and too little on his core self. The news is given dialogically once Earwaker and his acquaintance have "extracted the essence" of the letter.[48] The pseudo-scientific register, along with the respective definitions of Godwin as "the English gentleman," "the stranger," and finally "the body" and the particularly bathetic ending query: "To whom should *bills* be sent?" have a distancing and ignobling effect.[49] This highlights how Godwin's death, like those in Dostoevsky's novels, is an objective fact for other consciousnesses. A character is given the last word, and it encapsulates the idea-image which rings out throughout the novel, incorporating Godwin's initially repressed though increasingly recognised self, and – through its echo of the title – the narrative view. It is a word which disallows the conclusion and completion since, although "unheard" and "unrecognised," Godwin is, through "exile," defined and remembered.

In the end, Godwin is deprived entirely of his ideological content and is written out of the novel, remaining only as an image of an idea once removed. This is uncomfortable for the reader through contrast – the narrative departs unsensationally and indirectly from identification to comment and reportage – underlining the irony innate in the image of the self as "aristocratic temperament" finally exposed as "poor" "exile."

[1] Paul F. Mattheisen, Arthur C. Young, Pierre Coustillas, eds., *The Collected Letters of George Gissing*, 9 vols, (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1990-97), Vol. VII (1995), p. 318.

[2] Constance Harsh, "Gissing's *In the Year of Jubilee* and the Epistemology of Resistance,' *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 34:4 (1994), p. 855.

[3] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. and translated by Caryl Emerson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 92.

[4] *George Gissing on Fiction*, eds. Jacob and Cynthia Korg (London: Enitharmon Press, 1978), p. 76.

[5] John Halperin, *Gissing: A Life in Books* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982) suggests: "At times he seems to forget he is writing a novel, so directly does he speak to us of himself and his own disappointments," p. 163, see also pp. 160-63; John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice Among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880-1939* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), writes "much of what Godwin believes in, Gissing himself never outgrew," p. 113.

[6] Paul F. Mattheisen, Arthur C. Young, and Pierre Coustillas, eds., *The Collected Letters of George Gissing, Volume Five*, *1892-1895* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1994), p. 36.

[7] The innate ambiguity of the novel's narrative is astutely expressed by Ralph Pite, who explains: "Godwin's success is disturbing and sometimes funny because it shows how much escapes detection in social interaction and how little there is of mutual understanding or genuine exchange," in "Place, Identity and *Born in Exile*," *Rereading Victorian Fiction*, eds. Alice Jenkins and Juliet John (London: Macmillan, 2000), p. 138.

[8] Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 88.

[9] Jacob Korg, *George Gissing: A Critical Biography* (London: Methuen, 1965), p. 173; John Sloan, "The Literary Affinity of Gissing and Dostoevsky: Revising Dickens," *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 32:4 (1989), pp. 441-453; Simon J. James, *Unsettled Accounts: Money and Narrative in the Works of George Gissing* (London: Anthem Press, 2003), p. 44.

[10] *Ibid*.

[11] Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 93.

[12] Godwin's initial fabrication is based around a report of a sermon interpreted ironically, but understood unambiguously by his audience; the growing friendship between Godwin and Mr Warricombe is reliant, in part at least, on a translation of a German disquisition, and Godwin's eventual carnivalesque "unmask[ing]" or uncrowning centres around the discovery of his authorship of the article "The New Sophistry" by Buckland, to name but one example. See George Gissing, *Born in Exile* (1892; London: Everyman, 1993), p. 309.

[13] Gissing, *Born in Exile*, pp. 55-56.

[14] *Ibid*., p. 72.

[15] *Ibid*.

[16] *Ibid*.

[17] *Ibid*.

[18] *Ibid*., p. 77.

[19] *Ibid*.

[20] *Ibid*.

[21] *Ibid*.

[22] *Ibid.,* p. 4.

[23] Bakhtin explains: "analogous to parodistic discourse is ironic, or any other double-voiced, use of someone else's words; in those instances too another's discourse is used for conveying aspirations that are hostile to it," *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 194. Jameson also notes that "the

normal form of the dialogical is essentially an antagonistic one," *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 84.

[24] Gissing, *Born in Exile*, p. 77.

[25] *Ibid*.

[26] Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 189.

[27] *Ibid*., pp. 48-49.

[28] Gissing, *Born in Exile*, p. 78; Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 88.

[29] Gissing, *Born in Exile*, p. 79.

[30] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, translated by Caryl Emerson & Michael Holquist (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 397.

[31] Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 279.

[32] Halperin, *A Life in Books*, p. 163.

[33] As Christine Huguet, "Written too, in exile!": A Metatextual Approach to *Born in Exile*," *A Garland for Gissing*, ed. Bouwe Postmus (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), explains that "naming is performative" in the novel, p. 167.

[34] Gissing, *Born in Exile*, p. 266; Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 287.

[35] Gissing, *Born in Exile*, p. 266.

[36] *Ibid*.

[37] *Ibid*., p. 252.

[38] *Ibid*., p. 139.

[39] *Ibid*., p. 268

[40] Bakhtin, "Problem of Speech Genres," *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, eds., C. Emerson and M. Holquist and translated by V. W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), p. 92.

[41] V. N. Volonšinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, translated by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 86.

[42] Gissing, *Born in Exile*, pp. 415-416.

[43] *Ibid*., p. 416.

[44] Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 288.

[45] *Ibid*., p. 290.

[46] *Ibid*.

[47] *Ibid*.

[48] Gissing, *Born in Exile*, p. 416.

[49] *Ibid*.

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A Compendium of Mysteries in Gissing Studies

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George Gissing has long been a fascinating subject for biographers. Thanks to fine research in the past using old-fashioned methods and in the computer age using the Internet we have learned far more about him than seemed possible fifty years ago. Yet there are trails biographers follow which lead to dead ends, gaps in the biography which remain unexplained, or archives of

manuscripts and letters which disappear into the night. However Gissing scholars can count themselves fortunate that so much material *has* been recovered. And this is undoubtedly due in part to the fact that Gissing is an uncommon surname.

What if his name had been George Smith instead? How much would we know about him today? Most scholars would have given up long ago, and even Pierre Coustillas might have thrown up his hands in a gesture of Gallic frustration. Let us then sympathise with biographers of W. H. Hudson, who are confronted with two writers sharing exactly the same name. In a 1904 letter to the Royal Literary Fund supporting Algernon Gissing's application for financial aid, Hudson himself warned his correspondent, "To prevent mistakes it is as well to say that of the three W. H. Hudsons who write books I am the author of *The Naturalist in La Plata*, *Hampshire Days*, *Nature in Downland*, etc."

As for any misguided soul who ever considered researching Morley Roberts's life, just think what a nuisance, a curse, an affliction it must be that there was once a famous British actor named Robert Morley (1908-1992) – reversing the name is no help either. And to top everything this larger-than-life personality had the most provoking tendency during his long acting career to put pen to paper and publish all kinds of nonsense including plays, bedside readers, comic sketches, autobiography, and a seemingly unending avalanche of compilations with such titles as *A Book of Worries*, *The Best of Robert Morley*, *Morley Marvels*, *Morley Matters*, *More Morley* (as if we had not had enough already), *Morley's Book of Bricks*, and *Morley's Second Book of Bricks* etc., etc. As one can imagine the poor scholar who decides to look into Morley Roberts's life (God help him) will find that there is not a single online search that isn't partly inconvenienced, partly blighted, or even completely sabotaged by the appearance of an interminable list of Robert Morley's works. *Morley's Book of Bricks*! By George, it is enough to make one throw bricks at the screen. And we haven't yet mentioned the former editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Charles Robert Morley, for Morley Roberts's middle name was … that's right, Charles. So let us be thankful that George Gissing is so called and that no such vexations plague our every attempt to learn more about our favourite author.

It is said that everyone enjoys a mystery, but scholars like to solve them. Here then is an overview of some mysteries in Gissing scholarship that we can still hope will finally be solved, explained, or settled for good.

1. One of the most surprising things about the nine volumes of *The Collected Letters of George Gissing* is that there are so few letters from Gissing to Morley Roberts. Volumes three to nine contain sixty-four in all, of which, even more unexpectedly only two date from before 1894. It is indeed from

1873, when they first met, to 1894 that concerns us here and one might suppose that there are so few extant letters because they saw each other regularly during these years except, of course, when they lost touch with each other between May 1876 and 1880 and when Roberts roamed across North America between 1884 and 1886. In his 1912 fictional biography of Gissing, *The Private Life of Henry Maitland*, Roberts himself refers to the loss of his letters as follows: "It is, from any point of view, a very great disaster that in some way, which I cannot account for, I have lost all his letters written to me previous to 1894. Our prolonged, and practically uninterrupted correspondence began in 1884, so I have actually lost the letters of ten whole years." In the same volume he also asserts, after Gissing told him in early 1876 he was planning to marry Marianne Helen Harrison, that "[w]hen I was away from him I wrote him letters. I suppose I wrote him a dozen letters begging that he would do no such foolish thing." He then goes on to write "These letters of mine were afterwards discovered in his rooms when the tragedy had happened … Professor Little [Greenwood], who was then the head of the college, sent for me and asked me what I knew of the matter. This was because the police had found in Gissing's room letters from me which referred to Marian Hilton [Nell Harrison]." If true, and as many scholars have remarked Roberts is not always reliable, then one must assume that, like the four letters of John George Black which were confiscated by the university, kept in their archive, and are still extant, some or all of Roberts's twelve letters were also held by Owens' College or the police. Possibly they were returned to Roberts, and, if not, then where are they? Twenty years later, in an early draft of an article he wrote in 1931 for the *Virginia Quarterly*, "The Letters of George Gissing," he refers again to the later lost letters:

> I have said elsewhere that my collection of Gissing's letters is far from complete. Those written to me from 1881 to 1894 disappeared in some inscrutable manner. While I was in Canada and the United States and for a long time afterwards, when my camping grounds in London varied from Chelsea to Dane's Inn, they were entrusted to my mother, who had a remarkable capacity for putting things away in such security that she could never find them again. To me this was a great loss and I believe it is a great loss to the English literary world … The vanished letters … may perhaps be recovered. I can only hope that they may yet be returned to me by those who during my absence from England also acquired many of his books.

Since these letters appear to have been mislaid by his mother in 1885 in his parents' home at Clapham Common, it is extremely unlikely that they will ever be discovered, but if they were, then they would almost certainly tell us much about Gissing's relationship with his first wife that has so far been extinguished by the concerted efforts of his family and closest friends.

2. Most scholars accept that Gissing's second novel *The Unclassed* (1884) reveals how he first came into contact with his German friend, Eduard Bertz. Just as Julian Casti replies in the novel to an advertisement in a morning newspaper by Osmond Waymark, Gissing also responded to one in a morning newspaper. According to his eldest son, Alfred, this was in December 1878. Yet, despite much research by Pierre Coustillas and several other researchers at the former British newspaper archive at Colindale, Bertz's advertisement has not been located. The first mention of Bertz occurs in a letter Gissing sent to his brother, Algernon, on 19 January 1879 where he writes, "Last Friday night, according to agreement, I went with Bertz to the Lyceum, & we enjoyed ourselves immensely. He had tea with us here before we went, & supper on returning. Altogether, we got through very nicely." Happily, the exact wording "I went with Bertz to the Lyceum" indicates that Gissing had mentioned Bertz in more detail in a previous letter to his brother which has been lost or is in private hands. If this letter ever comes to light at an auction or in a private archive, there is the possibility that scholars will find mention of the newspaper in which Bertz's message appeared. Or else a determined researcher may yet find the advertisement either at the British Library in Euston Road or on one of the digital newspaper archives online.

3. In October 2007 Bouwe Postmus published a fascinating essay about Gissing's former landlord and landlady George and Annie Coward at 17 Oakley Crescent, Chelsea, where he stayed from 9 September 1882 to 10 May 1884. Some scholars believe that Mrs Coward was far more to him than just a landlady especially when her husband, a commercial traveller, was away. Because of their biographical significance in Gissing's life Postmus traced the couple through census and shipping records. He records their many moves around London and then to Pennsylvania where George settled in 1898. Annie and one son joined him there in 1903 and three of her other four sons also moved to America. Yet when one of these, Clive, sailed from Boulogne to New York in 1904, the ship's manifest shows that he gave his destination as "Friend. George Coward, 1524 Vine Street, Philadelphia." Looking closer at the manifest Postmus noticed "that instead of 'friend' the custom officer had first written 'Father.'" Postmus continues: "Why Clive Coward should have changed his mind baffles me. Another question that arises is why, unlike his brother Frank, Clive refers only to his father, as domiciled in Philadelphia. Does this mean that Annie Coward before a year was out had been disappointed in her hopes of making a new start in America and returned to the mother country?" Postmus adds that after 1904 there is no further trace of the couple in the official records.

Ten years after his article, much new information has reached the Internet to help researchers and genealogists, and more will be added in time. So the Internet may yet yield up some clues as to the family's fate after 1904.

4. Now we come to the Holy Grail of Gissing mysteries: the matter of the whereabouts of "Mrs Grundy's Enemies"? Gissing's letters tell us that he finished the three-volume novel on 25 August 1882 and sent it on 4 September 1882 to Smith and Elder, who rejected it. As did Remington and Chatto & Windus in October, before George Bentley offered Gissing £50 for the copyright on Boxing Day. Proofs were soon dispatched and returned in the early months of 1883 until Bentley started to worry literally about what Mrs Grundy, the figurative personification of morality at Mudie's Circulating Library, might have to say about the novel. Over the next year Bentley asked for changes, there were more proofs, letters, and discussions. As late as 1895 Gissing marked it down in his account book as still unpublished and in the hands of Bentley. As Pierre Coustillas notes in his *Definitive Bibliography* (2005), Bentley had offered the book to Chatto & Windus in 1887, but they rejected it once more, and when Richard Bentley & Son was taken over by Macmillan & Co in 1898, the manuscript was apparently lost. The Bentley and Macmillan archives found their way to the British Library, but the manuscript is not among either publishers' papers. So what happened to it? Did George Bentley destroy it? Did he take it home with him, put it in a drawer, and forget all about it? Was it lost in transit on its way to Macmillan? Or is it lying in a private archive somewhere in the United Kingdom or America? 135 years after Gissing sent it to Bentley, it seems unlikely that it will be discovered.

In May 1887 Gissing finished another novel, "Clement Dorricott: a Life's Prelude," which he also sent to Bentley. The story was deemed unfit for serialisation, but Bentley did offer to publish it in volume form. Gissing by now felt the novel was weak and asked for it to be returned to him, even rejecting the chance to send it on to Smith, Elder & Co. In *The Letters of George Gissing to Eduard Bertz* (1961) Arthur C. Young reports that Alfred C. Gissing had told him his father had personally "destroyed the unpublished manuscript." Coustillas remarks in his *Bibliography* that Gissing never mentioned the manuscript again after July 1887. One must therefore accept that Alfred is correct. Yet, this seems surprising, because one might have expected that Gissing would preserve the manuscript for use in some future work.

Thirteen years later, in February 1900, Gissing completed a novel about people seeking a new religion entitled "Among the Prophets," which he felt was only suitable for serialisation. He put the manuscript into the hands of his agent, J. B. Pinker, who thought it best to hold back the novel. Gissing

agreed and then on 13 March 1901 actually asked Pinker to burn both typewritten copies. Again we must assume that he did. If only Pinker had acted like the Prague writer Max Brod some twenty years later when Franz Kafka asked him to burn the *Nachlass* of manuscripts he had left him.

5. In a letter to Algernon on 10 October 1883 Gissing states "Since I wrote to you [on 1 October] I have been to Aberdeen,—there by sea, & back by train.—'Strange things, upon my honour!" as Mazzini used to say. But don't think that troubles have driven me off my head. This is the foundation for better things." About this adventure, Pierre Coustillas writes, "The trip to Aberdeen remains one of the most mysterious and fascinating problems in Gissing scholarship." The next day Gissing wrote to his eldest sister, Margaret, "I am very sorry indeed to have had to delay my answer so much. I have been very busy indeed, &, among other things, had to go to Aberdeen for half a week. I went by sea, & came back by train. We were two days getting there, twelve hours over time, owing to a somewhat serious gale. It was worst off Flamborough Head. The sea was glorious. Coming back I got a glimpse of the Highlands, passing through Perth and St[i]rling; also just saw Arthur's Seat (Edinbro') in the far distance … My days in Scotland were the sunniest & warmest I have known this year." In his Gissing biography, Coustillas writes, "some mysterious purpose took him by boat to Aberdeen, the return journey being made by train. It was, he wrote to his brother on 10 October, the foundation for better things, which doubtless proved to be one more *ignis fatuus*." The only other scholar to mention the Aberdeen trip is Paul Delany who writes, "In October he had gone up to Aberdeen on a mysterious trip that, he said, would be 'the foundation for better things[.]' Perhaps he was interviewed for a job; if so, nothing came of his first and last trip to Scotland."

Gissing referred just once more to the journey on 14 October in a letter to his sister, Ellen, in reference to a boat trip William Ewart Gladstone and Alfred Tennyson had made together around the north coast of Scotland a few weeks earlier. It would seem then that Coustillas and Delany are correct in assuming the trip was in vain. But why did he travel by boat to Aberdeen at such short notice and to what end? His use of language in describing the journey is interesting in itself. He writes that "he had to go" and that they were "twelve hours over time" – why did he have to go and "over time" for what? For the usual time the trip should take or for some arranged meeting? And why travel by sea when it would have been twenty-four hours quicker to go by train. Gissing would have started his journey along the Thames at Gravesend on one of the steamboats or sailing packets that voyaged as far as Leith where another steam company operated the route to Aberdeen. He must have been highly

motivated in the first place to undertake such a long journey by sea. But what was the incentive for going? Most likely, as Delany states, he went to apply for a job, but in what connection? There is no clue in his correspondence leading up to October. Indeed prior to leaving for Aberdeen, he was much taken up with trying to obtain a divorce from his first wife, – they had separated in 1882 – and actually considering employing a detective to gather evidence against her. He had sought the advice of Frederic Harrison, his former mentor in the Positivist society, having told him the facts about his association with Nell. Sympathising, Harrison had offered to loan him money to pay any legal fees which might arise in divorce proceedings, but Gissing had refused the offer. Possibly he had then suggested some other means of aiding Gissing, perhaps a job connected with the Socialist Party or with a Socialist newspaper that had just become vacant, involving an interview at short notice in Aberdeen. Today our best chance of finding out the true facts about the trip lies in the hope that some further correspondence from this period will eventually come to light.

6. The next mystery concerns Gissing's first wife: why are there so few official records about her? She only appears in the marriage register for 1879, the 1881 census, and in the death register for 1888. In the 1879 marriage register she gives her name as Marianne Helen Harrison and her age as 20 (according to Gissing – see below – she was in fact 21 at the time), whilst her father is referred to as John Harrison, deceased. The two witnesses were unrelated, likely complete strangers drawn from the street. The 1881 census shows the couple at 55 Wornington Road, Nell appearing as Mary A. H. Gilling [*sic*], aged 22, and born in Shrewsbury. Seven years later her death certificate confirms her first names as Marianne Helen.

From all this data we can assume that Marianne Helen Harrison was her actual name as she signed herself thus on the marriage certificate and that her father was dead and was called John Harrison. If her age given as "twenty" in October 1879 and "thirty" on her death certificate in 1888 are close to the true facts then she must have been born in 1858 or 1859. But this is where the problems begin. Despite extensive searches she cannot be found under any of the numerous variations of her first names and initials as a child of any age between one and seven in the 1861 or between eleven and seventeen in the 1871 census for Shropshire or in fact for the whole of the United Kingdom. As the manifold errors in the census show (look at the details for Gissing and Nell in 1881), her name may be in the records but spelt wrongly, or simply as Helen or Ann Helen, whilst Harrison also has a few variations. As for her father, alas, John Harrison is such a common name that it is a hopeless undertaking to try to discover him in the census. There were over 2000 John

Harrisons who died in Britain between 1858 and 1879. And we have no information about her mother, so we cannot trace the marriage, and possible siblings. Also other genealogical searches in Shropshire: in church registers, workhouse and poor law records, baptism records, etc., have uncovered no new information. We cannot even be sure if her birth was registered at all, and even if there is a birth certificate, for all we know her name may appear on it as "Mary Anne" or "Marian," as registrars were not always exact in the writing of names.

During the years Gissing and Nell lived together, from 1877 to 1882, two facts establish her birthdate, a letter of 19 February 1879 to Algernon telling him "the 25th inst. is Nell's 21st birthday and then on the 25 February 1881 Gissing writes to Algernon, "It was very kind of you to send such a fine present to Nell. It arrived last night, & she was very delighted with it. She herself will write as soon as ever she is able, but asks me to thank you heartily in the meanwhile." After much research over the past decade, the only real candidate I could find is a Mary Ann Harrison who was born to Mary Harrison at Dolphin Row in the Saint Mary district of Shrewsbury on 27 February 1858. The mother is given as the informant and being illiterate she marked the document, whilst the father's name is not recorded. This could mean either that she was illegitimate or else that her father had died whilst her mother was carrying her. One local genealogist I contacted, Sue Cleaves, informed me that Harrison was "not a common name in Shrewsbury at the time." She was able to discover that the mother, Mary, was a domestic servant living in Dolphin Row and that she had the child baptised on 4 March 1859 in the district of St Michael, Shrewsbury. On the same page of the baptism register seven other babies' names appear all with both parents listed – only Mary Ann's baptism is witnessed by just the one parent. A year later the same woman gave birth on 5 July 1860 to a son, John (named after the father?), who was baptised on 30 July that same year. Again the father's name is not on the birth certificate or the baptism register. Even Mary Ann Harrison's details simply do not match those of Gissing's Nell. And what is the likelihood that she did not know her own birthdate? Then again she may not have been born in Shrewsbury at all. So we must accept that we have come to a dead end. But when more official and genealogical records appear on the Internet her name may yet be discovered in some obscure document, perhaps in hospital records or temperance society records, and we may then learn something new about her.

7. In 1961, 30 years after Bertz's death, Arthur C. Young published *The Letters of George Gissing to Eduard Bertz*. Like Gissing's *Diary*, the letters in this volume begin in 1887. So what happened to all the letters Gissing wrote

to him going back to December 1878 when they first came into contact? Young writes, "This edition contains 189 letters and post cards written by Gissing to Eduard Bertz between April 1887 and October 1903. I believe that the correspondence offered here is all that remains of the many letters that passed between the two men during their twenty-four year friendship." Young did not know then that Bertz quotes from a letter Gissing wrote him in 1882 in his correspondence with Joseph Widmann. In this letter dated 5 December 1906 he refers to a volume of Gissing's letters he was preparing for publication which he hoped to have ready by Easter. He had even acquired the interest of Constable & Co Ltd who had produced numerous editions of Gissing's works since 1903.

Over the next three years Bertz was in two minds about publishing them because Gabrielle Fleury, Gissing's common-law wife, would not give her consent. But when Wanda von Sacher-Masoch, the Austrian writer who had known Gissing, wrote to him enquiring about the letters, urging him to publish them for the sake of posterity (and to get at Gabrielle for some obscure reason), it seems, wishing to protect Gissing's reputation, Bertz was finally prompted to destroy the ones prior to 1887 and put the others away in a trunk. After his death in 1931 the archive passed to the Dreising family with whom he had lived out his last years and they kept the letters in the trunk until the end of the Second World War regarding them as worthless. Then they sent the letters to Professor Hobart Coffey at the University of Michigan, a Gissing admirer, as Young explains, "who met the Dreising family in Berlin during the occupation and performed an important service for them." He sold the letters for the Dreising family to Edwin J. Beinecke who gave them to Yale University Library in 1949, where Young was able to consult them. This time there is little hope that the pre-1887 letters are still extant.

8. When the Dreising family came into possession of Bertz's letters, they also acquired all his valuable presentation copies of first editions from Gissing. These they apparently sold as waste paper to a West Berlin bookseller who in turn was selling them very cheaply until another German bookseller, Wolf Mueller (see Pierre Coustillas's article "Gissing's Presentation Copies of his Works to Eduard Bertz: New Considerations and Fresh Confusions" in these pages in October 2007) discovered them in his shop and over time acquired all the copies. He then sold them to an English bookseller, H. M. Fletcher, in 1934 for £75 and eventually the presentation copies found their way to a Chicago dealer who acquired them for £800. The main mystery here is what happened to the following signed and unsigned first editions Gissing is known to have presented to Bertz, for they were not among those Mueller sold to

Fletcher: *Denzil Quarrier*, the revised 1895 edition of *The Unclassed*, *The Town Traveller*, *Our Friend the Charlatan*, *Forster's Life of Dickens*. Bertz is also thought to have received a first edition of *Isabel Clarendon*.

The obvious explanation for their disappearance is that the West Berlin Bookseller had already sold them to other customers in the days, weeks, or months before Mueller came upon them. So where are they now? Probably they are lost to us forever through the same ignorance that saw the Dreising family offload them to a bookseller for next to nothing. Still there is always the chance that the odd volume will find its way to auction on the dissolving of some private German library. One question remains: how is it possible that no single member of the Dreising family was ever aware of the importance this archive had for Eduard Bertz during the years he lived with them?

9. The surviving correspondence of George Gissing was published in the nine volumes of *The Collected Letters* between 1990 and 1997. At the time it was known that there were batches of letters which had not found their way into university archives. After that magnificent work was finished thirteen letters to Algernon came to light from a private collection as Jim Moske at the New York Public Library informed our readers in April 2002. But where are the letters Gissing wrote to George Whale? Whale, a solicitor who socialised with literary men, first met Gissing in 1894 at the National Liberal Club, after which they became good friends. They often met on social occasions such as the Omar Khayyám dinner in July 1895, and they corresponded frequently after Gissing moved to France in 1898. Whale, of course, also drew up Gissing's will. In 1926, a year after his death, Edward Clodd, Clement Shorter, and his wife, Winifred Stephen Whale, edited a book of tributes to him entitled *George Whale 1849-1925* by, among others, H. G. Wells, Augustine Birrell, and E. S. P. Haynes. The volume included some of his own essays and lectures on a range of subjects which revealed an expert on Samuel Johnson and a man who enjoyed a life steeped in the world of books, yet preferred reading to writing.

In his unpublished biography of his father Alfred C. Gissing quoted from some Gissing letters to Whale, lent to him by the family. These fragments were printed in *The Collected Letters*. But where are the letters now? In his will Whale bequeathed his papers to his wife. When she died in 1944 she left "to each of the children and grandchildren of her late husband any books, manuscripts or documents or articles of personal or domestic use." Some papers from his time as Mayor of Woolwich (1908-1909) went to the Greenwich Heritage Centre. The Gissing letters, if they are not lost, must be in private hands. Such letters as there are may yet reach an auction or be donated to a library archive. Yet it is worth noting that Whale often mishandled his

most valuable possessions, even ripping out pages of first editions for the sake of quoting from them . Clement Shorter tells us that his library contained "all that was best in the literature of the three last centuries." He also tells us that Whale liked to say, "I buy my books for myself and not for my executors." If he treated Gissing's letters in the same way then perhaps all that remains of them *are* the fragments that Alfred transcribed in the early 1930s.

10. The last mystery concerns a batch of thirty letters which surfaced at a Sotheby's auction on 13 December 1950. Pierre Coustillas made brief mention of the fund in these pages in October 1996. The collection, lot no. 140, was described as "A series of 30 ALS, etc, concerning George Gissing, the novelist, from his friends and contemporaries, including W. D. Howells, W. J. Locke, Richard Le Gallienne, Arnold Bennett, H. G. Wells, Sir Edmund Gosse etc." The letters were acquired by Stonehill of New Haven, Connecticut for £12. When Coustillas consulted the firm they were unable to tell him what became of the batch. He contacted the Beinecke Library, but drew a blank once again. He then studied the wording of the description and came to the "fragile assumption" that they were letters Wells wrote to Gissing and the other writers – this is plausible as they were auctioned four years after Wells died. But we will only know for sure once the letters are traced. Even if they are letters from Wells, Coustillas is right to say "They are sure to contain new information." Where are they? One must assume that they are stored away in a private collection.

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George Gissing and Advertising

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George Gissing was aware that Literature as Art still must work within the commercial world if the artist expects payment and the publisher expects a profit. If books are to sell they must become known to be sold and authors who associate their own names with their works brand their work for public recognition and greater sales. The literary work of value must go through the same market process as genre fiction, even if it only appeals to an elite audience. As the editors of *The Collected Letters of George Gissing* note, "Books not properly advertized scarcely have a chance of selling."[1]

Advertising horrified Gissing, offending him to the core. He attacked it specifically and vigorously in *In the Year of Jubilee*.[2] His characters are surrounded by advertising, see life in its terms, use it for their own ends and

one, Luckworth Crewe, evangelises for it. Intending to portray the events surrounding Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee on 20 June 1887 and expose the shallowness and vulgarity of the newly-risen middle classes in London's new suburbs, Gissing lays much of the blame for the perceived ugliness and superficiality of late 19th century London on a poorly educated population who receive much of their cultural information and stimulus from advertising. Much as it may have been a popular celebration of the Queen's fiftieth anniversary, the Jubilee was also a massive advertising campaign by the nation's most prominent advertiser, the Crown. William Stead, Jr., in *The Art of Advertising: Its Theory and Practice Fully Described*, introduced his volume with a facsimile of the Court Circular and an engraving of Queen Victoria over the title "A Royal Advertiser," commenting:

> What advertiser among the leviathans of trade and industry would not joyfully exchange his best position for that occupied by the brief, bold diary of Royal movements in *The Court Circular*? The Sovereign does not placard the street with great posters on every hoarding. These things perish with the day. The Monarchy has advertisements of the mural order which are not so ephemeral. The Royal Arms confront us everywhere, and the Royal initials are to be seen stamped on every letter-box of the land. Carved in stone or cast in bronze they are a perpetual advertisement of the existence of the Monarchy.[3]

Gissing, anti-imperialist and anti-monarchist that he was, must have been almost maddened by the Jubilee, with its bunting, decorations, and memorials to the Monarch blanketing the nation. Nothing was immune. In a letter to Algernon on 3 April 1887 Gissing is shocked by Tennyson publishing a "Jubilee Ode" and notes that "By the bye, the fish man who goes through [Allsop] Place every evening, now shouts always 'Jubilee Winkles!'"[4] Gissing, a keen observer of his world, had an interest in advertising as a social phenomenon that the Jubilee heightened. He went to the British Museum on 24 August 1893 to do research on advertising for *In the Year of Jubilee*. It is quite possible that Gissing would have come across Henry Sampson's *A History of Advertising from the Earliest Times*. Published in 1874, it was a sprightly defence of the profession. Perhaps that was what he used to furnish the inspiration behind Luckworth Crewe, an advertising agent who figures prominently in *In the Year of Jubilee* as its most good-natured and intelligent character. Luckworth defends his profession by asking, "How could we have become what we are without the modern science and art of advertising? Till advertising sprang up, the world was barbarous. Do you suppose people kept themselves clean before they were reminded at every corner of the benefits of soap?"[5]

The frontispiece of Sampson's *History* has a fold-out illustration of 'Modern Advertising,' depicting a London train station as an example of efficiency of

space, courtesy of the station walls leased by W. H. Smith's full-service advertising agency and covered from top to bottom with advertising posters of every size. Smokeless, bustling, and brilliantly lit, it is an advertiser's ideal. In *In the Year of Jubilee* the reality of it becomes a vision of hell:

> They descended and stood together upon the platform, among hurrying crowds, in black fumes that poisoned the palate with sulphur. This way and that sped the demon engines…Shrill whistles, the hiss and roar of steam…all echoed … from a huge cloudy vault above them. High and low, on every available yard of wall, advertisements clamoured to the eye: theatres, journals, soaps, medicines, concerts, furniture, wines, prayer-meetings – all the produce and refuse of civilisation announced in staring letters, in daubed effigies, base, paltry, grotesque. A battle-ground of advertisements, fitly chosen amid subterranean din and reek; a symbol to the gaze of that relentless warfare which ceases not, night and day, in the world above.[6]

The advertising was pervasive, not only in the station, but in the carriages and inside the omnibus. To Nancy Lord in *In the Year of Jubilee* the world is defined by advertisements. In an omnibus,

> [s]itting opposite to Samuel, she avoided his persistent glances by reading the rows of advertisements above his head. Somebody's 'Blue;' somebody's 'Soap;' somebody's 'High-class Jams;' and behold, inserted between the Soap and the Jam – 'God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son….' Nancy perused the passage without perception of incongruity, without emotion of any kind.[7]

But Nancy would have known it was Rekitts's Blue, Pear's Soap, and Pink's High Class Jams that Gissing was referring to. Introduced to the love-interest of the novel, a Mr Tarrant, she associates the name from advertisements, "'I wish I knew if he had any connection with Tarrant's black-lead,' said Miss Lord mischievously."[8] Black lead was not associated with the Tarrant name but with Rekitts, Crane, Oakely, and W. G. Nixey, among others.

In a letter to his brother Algernon dated 22 September 1885, Gissing declared that he wanted "detachment from the vulgarities of the day."[9] Although advertising would have been among those vulgarities, Gissing found it necessary to use advertising for his own personal needs. He advertised for students, for nursemaids for his children, for the never-ending supply of maids to replace those driven off by his wife Edith, for tenants for 7K Cornwall Residences, for summer flats. Although there are only two or three references to advertisements in Gissing's *Commonplace Book* and in his *Scrapbook*, his letters show his awareness of advertisements and his use of some of their products. In another Gissing novel, *The Unclassed*, two educated, lonely men, Julian Casti and Osmond Waymark, find intellectual companionship through meeting via a newspaper advertisement. In Gissing's life this was how he met the exiled German socialist writer, Eduard Bertz, who became a life-long

intellectual companion. In Gissing's work within the commerce of literature, he clearly understood the importance of advertising and marketing.

From his first book, *Workers in the Dawn*, he looked for and looked forward to the appearance of advertising and reviews and was aware of the importance of timing. In a letter to Algernon on 25 May 1880, he noted that

> [t]he book was advertised last Saturday in the first number of a new weekly called *The Pen*, price 2d, which promises to be good. I have no doubt it will review 'Workers' in a week or two. This is the only advertisement yet. Remington says he is waiting to be able to insert extracts from reviews in the advts. I don't think the delay altogether wise.[10]

A month later on 23 June he informs Algernon, "[M]ost extraordinary that no other reviews of my book have yet appeared. It is never advertised either. I believe Remington is a thoroughly irresponsible & heedless fellow, & I don't consider that he has yet 'published' the book at all."[11] And again to Algernon on 30 June 1880 he remarks "That scoundrel Remington appears to be utterly neglectful of my book. It has not been advertised now for three weeks, & I presume it is an unmitigated failure. This is rascally on his part. I certainly think I shall offer my next to a better publisher."[12]

For books in the 19th century there were several ways to advertise books. Directly by the publisher through newspapers and journals, by sending out handbills or subscription forms to booksellers for distribution, by using catalogues, either issued separately or bound into books; by listing the author's other books on the title page or jacket. There was some use of posters, but mostly for journals, newspapers or serial libraries rather than individual titles. And there was 'puffing' or the placement of favourable paragraphs in the press. Indirect advertising consisted of reviews and publicity, encouraged by the publisher through the distribution of review copies and advertising but not directly controlled by the publisher. Handbills and subscription offers for penny numbers of self-improvement books would be distributed in working class neighbourhoods, subscription lists for expensive books would be mailed or delivered to wealthy targets. Timing of publication was important. *Demos: A Story of English Socialism* was published when there was an interest in Socialism occasioned by the unrest of the 1880s. Gissing felt that anti-war sentiment could help the sale of his anti-war novel, *The Crown of Life*. Although Gissing told Gabrielle on 18 December 1898 that *Demos* was published anonymously because *The Unclassed* was so shocking that Smith, Elder were afraid to have his name appear, it was really because Chapman & Hall were about to publish *Isabel Clarendon* and it was considered wrong to have two new novels compete against each other at the same time.

Gissing was aware of the importance of advertising in selling his books. He closely followed his own and other publishers' advertisements. He understood that having his name mentioned could increase his sales. Although he despised reviews, he understood their importance in keeping his name before the public. Gissing was sensitive to the market and to timing. He was bitter that Methuen delayed *The Crown of Life*, failing to understand and take advantage of the anti-Boer War sentiment that could have helped his sales. The book could have "become the subject of a good deal of discussion – for there is an anti-war party in England, & this book should appeal to such people very strongly."[13]

Badly as Smith, Elder may have abused him, particularly with the delayed appearance of the cheap edition of *Thyrza*, he felt they had served him best of all his publishers. But in the letter of 3 April 1887 in which he mentioned "Jubilee Winkles" he showed his critical awareness of Smith, Elder's advertising "…no sign of publication of 'Thyrza.' Surely no book ever had such pre-advertisement; seven or eight weeks. They put 'Isabel Clarendon' after it now, yet have refused to let that stand on title-page – inexplicable."[14] Advertising for *Thyrza* had begun to appear in the *Athenaeum* from 19 March and it was published on 28 April with only 'AUTHOR OF DEMOS, ETC.' appearing below his name on the title page. More than a decade later Gissing said:

> Very gladly I would have remained with Smith, Elder, had it been possible to live on what they paid me. And…I notice that those of my books published [by] Smith are very much better known than those published by others – simply because all five novels appear constantly in Smith's page of advertisements. The sale is probably much above that of the books with L. & B. [Lawrence and Bullen] – a mere result of commercial tactics.'[15]

Smith, Elder never skimped on advertising his books. Between 1886 and 1904 they spent a total of £629. 0s. 5d. on advertising, including a proportion charged against each title for listing in their catalogues. They spent between £60 and £70 on the initial appearance of a new novel, from £17 to £36 on advertising the crown-octavo, and between £16 and £30 on the announcement of the cheap issues. Generally, they seem to have allocated a specific percentage to advertising. As a percentage of their total initial costs, advertising would run from 16 per cent to 25 per cent. Advertising for *Demos* was 21 per cent on all three editions and issues; *Thyrza*'s budget was 25 per cent on the three-volume edition, 18 per cent on the six-shilling crown-octavo and 24 per cent on the 3s 6d and two-shilling foolscap. Twenty-two per cent was spent on the three-volume edition of *A Life's Morning* but only 9 per cent on the cheap edition, probably because it was already well known from its earlier serialisation in *The Cornhill*. The budget for *The Nether World* was 18 per cent for the three-volume and foolscap issues and 16 per cent for the

crown-octavo. *New Grub Street* had an allocation of 16 per cent on the three-volume and foolscap editions and 21 per cent on the six-shilling edition that appeared soon after the three-volume edition.

Much as Lawrence and Bullen honoured him, he felt betrayed by their lack of advertising of his eight novels, telling Pinker in a letter on 6 October 1900 that "it is obvious that in the hands of almost any other house my books would have received greatly more advertisement."[16] Gissing's books "lie dead" with L & B and no one offers enough to purchase the right to republish them "…the books are worth little, seeing that for years they have had no advertisement."[17]

Gissing attributed the poor sale of his novels as "partly due to the indifference with which I have always regarded the means of self-advertisement."[18] Gissing was not a self-promoter to the extent of authors such as Marie Corelli, but he did know the value of such promotion and that publicity about the author sold books as well as advertising the title did. At the request of his publishers, he sat for numerous photographic portraits that would appear in collective author biographies or journal reviews. The portraits were done by some of the best photographers in England: Alfred Ellis specialised in theatrical photography; Elliot & Fry have over a thousand portraits in the National Portrait Gallery; Russell & Sons did portraits of Aubrey Beardsley and H. Rider Haggard, as well as the Royal Family. Cassells paid for the 1895 portraits by H. S. Mendelssohn and used them for their catalogue to promote *The Paying Guest.* Gissing sent copies as gifts to Collet and Gabrielle. On 21 May 1895, he wrote to Collet that he had been requested to sit for Elliot & Fry. "So that three photographers are now selling my portraits [Alfred Ellis, Russell & Sons, and Elliot & Fry]. The question is, who on earth buys? I am absolutely at a loss to reconcile this kind of thing with the fact that none of my books sell to more than a few hundred copies."[19] The Russell portraits, commissioned by Shorter, appeared in the supplement to the 25 February issue of *The Album: A Journal of Photographs of Men, Women, and Events of the Day* along with those of George Meredith, James Payn, Thomas Hardy, S. R. Crockett, H. Rider Haggard, Grant Allen, William Black, Conan Doyle, Sabine Baring-Gould, Stanley Weyman, Walter Besant, George MacDonald, J. M. Barrie, Rudyard Kipling, and Israel Zangwill.

> Frequent references in periodicals prove to me that I am becoming pretty well known. My title 'New Grub Street' has even been accepted for popular use, witness the fact that a column of reviews in the *Graphic* the other day was headed 'in New Grub Street.' A monthly paper called *The Bookman* stated, not long ago, that it was known that 'Mr. Thomas Hardy has a special admiration for the writings of George Gissing.' In view of Hardy's great popularity just now, this was a valuable advertisement.[20]

And he was also upset when in the *Athenaeum* announcement of the Rochester edition of Dickens they mentioned the names of the illustrators and F. G.

Kitton as editor but not Gissing for his introductions, which he saw as a "deliberate suppression of my name in what are practically advertisements is quite another affair."[21] That James Payn, Smith, Elder's editor wanted "Emily" [*A Life's Morning*] for *The Cornhill* was good as, "To be sure, the 'Cornhill' business will advertize my name, which is advantageous."[22] Gissing wrote to *The Times* (9 September 1893, p. 13) to complain that a review of a book called *The Social Problem* plagiarised from *The Nether World.* The author and publisher then apologised in print for the error (11 September 1893, p. 3; 13 September 1893, p. 10), an incident that Gissing saw as "good advertisement."[23]

Literature is a commercial field and Gissing, artist that he was, toiled hard in that field. He was quite aware of the importance of marketing his novels, of seeing them advertised, and of the value of a 'George Gissing' brand in keeping his name before the public. The cover of the 1910 edition of *New Grub Street* published by Newnes features an anguished-looking Reardon sitting at his desk. It could well have been a picture of Gissing, who would have been particularly horrified by this edition. Not only did it have an advertisement for Fry's Cocoa on the cover, there were numerous pages of commercial advertisements bound in at the front and rear and more advertisements on the back cover. When this paper was originally presented at the Fourth International George Gissing Conference at York in 2011 a specialist bookseller at the conference was offering a copy of Gissing's *Unclassed* (A.H. Bullen, 1901) that, inexplicably, contained a newspaper advertisement for Harrods Pork Sausages 'neatly pasted' on the front free endpaper. Near the hotel I stayed in just outside the walls there was an advertisement for a laxative called Bile Beans painted on the side of a building. The product appeared in 1899 and so may have been known to Gissing. The advertisement had been restored by the York Arts Council as a local icon in the 1980s, just as Bile Beans ceased production. Gissing's ghost would not have been amused by these coincidences, but they do show the continuing power of advertisement in our lives. Literary success depends on the quality of writing. Commercial success relies on popular appeal. Word of mouth and good reviews help both but advertising, as Gissing knew, carried the furthest. Gissing's poor sales were not from lack of advertising. His publishers advertised him well, mostly featuring his new titles at or near the head of their lists and spent approximately a quarter of the publishing costs for each of his new novels on advertising. Royal A. Gettmann, in his study of the Bentley papers notes that "Smith, Elder had sold only 412 copies of Gissing's *Thyrza* (1887), and it may be that Bentley's generous advertising of *The Emancipated*, to the sum of £129. 19s. 10d., had some bearing on the sale of 829 copies of that novel. But advertising, however lavish, could not make Gissing and Le Fanu popular authors and establish a fixed demand for their succeeding novels."[24]

[1] Paul F. Mattheisen, Arthur C. Young, and Pierre Coustillas, eds., *The Collected Letters of George Gissing, Volume Eight, 1900-1902* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1996), p. xlvii.

[2] George Gissing, *In the Year of Jubilee*, London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1895. Quotations in this essay are taken from the Hogarth Press, 1987 reprint.

[3] *The Art of Advertising: Its Theory and Practice Fully Described* (London: T. B. Browne, 1899), p. 13.

[4] Paul F. Mattheisen, Arthur C. Young, and Pierre Coustillas, eds., *The Collected Letters of George Gissing, Volume Three*, *1886-1888* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1992), p. 99.

[5] *In the Year of Jubilee*, p. 74.

[6] *In the Year of Jubilee*, p. 309.

[7] *In the Year of Jubilee*, pp. 60-61.

[8] *In the Year of Jubilee*, p. 21.

[9] Paul F. Mattheisen, Arthur C. Young, and Pierre Coustillas, eds., *The Collected Letters of George Gissing, Volume Two*, *1881-1885* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1991), p. 349.

[10] Paul F. Mattheisen, Arthur C. Young, and Pierre Coustillas, eds., *The Collected Letters of George Gissing, Volume One*, *1863-1880* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1990), p. 276.

[11] *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 285.

[12] *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 288.

[13] Letter to J. B. Pinker, 10 November 1899, Paul F. Mattheisen, Arthur C. Young, and Pierre Coustillas, eds., *The Collected Letters of George Gissing, Volume Seven, 1897-1899* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1995), p. 401.

[14] *Letters*, Vol. III, p. 99.

[15] Letter to J. B. Pinker, 10 November 1899, *Letters*, Vol. VII, p. 402.

[16] *Letters*, Vol. VIII, p. 94.

[17] Letter to Clara Collet, 24 October 1900, *Letters*, Vol. VIII, pp. 99-100.

[18] Letter to Clara Collet, 22 October 1899, *Letters*, Vol. VII, p. 387.

[19] *Letters*, Vol. V, p. 336.

[20] Letter to Eduard Bertz, 3 November 1892, *Letters*, Vol. V, p. 64.

[21] Letter to A. M. S. Methuen, 29 July 1900, *Letters*, Vol. VIII, p. 71.

[22] Letter to Ellen Gissing, 4 November 1887, *Letters*, Vol. III, p. 159.

[23] Letter to Eduard Bertz, 29 September 1893, *Letters*, Vol. V, p. 149.

[24] *A Victorian Publisher: A Study of the Bentley Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 123-124.

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Book Reviews

Pierre Coustillas, ed., *Collected Essays - George Gissing*, Grayswood, Surrey: Grayswood Press, 2015. 243pp. ISBN 9780957223134. £40 HB/£20 PB.

Gissing was not primarily a discursive writer: his crowning talent was for fiction. Nevertheless, from his student days at Owens College to his final years in France, he wrote occasional essays on a wide range of topics. This volume, edited by the doyen of Gissing scholars, Professor Pierre Coustillas, brings together twenty-one essays dating from approximately 1875 to 1902.

Following a general introduction, each article is supplied with an Introductory Note. There are also four appendices reprinting articles (three of them by the editor) relating to particular essays. All the essays have been published before, almost half in three older collections: Alfred Gissing's *Selections Autobiographical and Imaginative* (1929), Coustillas's *George Gissing: Essays and Fiction* (1970) and Jacob and Cynthia Korg's *George Gissing on Fiction* (1978). However, having all of them in a single volume allows us to review the range of Gissing's interests, and offers insights into his tastes and values.

As Coustillas says in his introduction, these essays, like Gissing's imaginative works, mirror "the multiplicity of his interests, which ranged from politics to history, from the theatre to literary criticism, from painting to philosophy, from art to the development of ideas in Europe at the turn of the century." This variety is all the more remarkable, given that at least two thirds of the essays are not on topics chosen by Gissing. The first three he wrote to order as a student. Almost all of the last thirteen (from 1889 onwards) were produced at the request of editors or admirers (the only possible exceptions are a piece in which he expanded, at the recipient's request, on a letter he wrote to Edmund Gosse and an essay entitled "The Coming of the Preacher," the genesis of which is unknown). Broadly speaking, Gissing did not choose to write essays. He did so when asked – which happened frequently as his reputation grew.

The essays can be divided into five categories (with a couple not falling into any category). The first consists of those he wrote as a student: on Robert Burns (a lifelong favourite – he praises him in *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*), on Shakespeare, and on "The English Novel of the Eighteenth Century." The last in particular is hugely impressive for a young man of seventeen or eighteen. Although, as Jacob Korg once remarked, its value as criticism is slight, it reveals a phenomenal breadth of reading. It also contains passages of extraordinary poignancy in the light of Gissing's dismissal from college not long after he wrote it. Here is a young man whom Owens College condemned for "leading a life of immorality and dissipation" writing primly of Aphra Behn's immorality, Smollett's "grossness," Sterne's "indecency," and expressing relief at finding a novel (Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*) "free from the taints of vice."

The second category comprises four descriptive essays, two set in London and two in Italy. "On Battersea Bridge" (published in his lifetime) and "Along Shore" (which was not) are verbal portraits of the Thames. Each includes a conversation with another man. In "Along Shore" this is a waterman who laments the threat to his trade from the coming of the railway. In "On Battersea Bridge" it's a fellow observer whom Gissing hopes will share his aesthetic

response to the impending sunset. After hymning the scene in elevated terms ("see the murky air breathing yonder from the south, compelling those darker visaged shapes into nearer companionship, constraining them to put off their fluttering cloaks and don the livery of the night", etc.), Gissing records feeling:

> a certain curiosity to discover whether my neighbour really was a kindred soul to whom these things spoke intimately. When already the darkness was drawing in around us I turned my face in his direction. He noticed my appeal, looked at me in a friendly way, then nodding downwards, said gravely – "Throws up a deal o' mud don't it?"

The two descriptive Italian essays are "At the Grave of Alaric" (1898), a kind of appendix to *By the Ionian Sea*, and "Christmas on the Capitol," a vividly atmospheric piece in which, despite the intrusion once again of elements that jar on Gissing (priestly propaganda, "ignoble" tourists, the horrible proximity of military drill), he is touched by the spectacle of children reciting long pieces of poetry, watched by affectionate adults.

The third category contains four philosophical essays of which the best known (though unpublished in his lifetime) is certainly "The Hope of Pessimism," written in 1882. In this Gissing repudiated Comte's Positivism (though Comte is never mentioned by name) in favour of Schopenhauer's pessimism. The implications of the essay have been much discussed and Coustillas helpfully includes as an appendix the account of it he published in *George Gissing: Essays and Fiction*. Almost as well known are "Notes on Social Democracy," produced in 1880 as three articles for the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Analysing socialist movements in Germany, these pieces drew extensively on Gissing's friendship with Eduard Bertz. Here too we have a helpful appendix to provide analysis and context: the introduction to Korg's Enitharmon Press edition.

The other two reflective pieces in this volume will be less well-known to most readers. "Questions at Issue" (1893), arising from correspondence with Gosse, is a disquisition on the English lack of interest in poetry. Starting with the memorable sentence "The popular mind is my study," it insists that despite the recent elegies for Tennyson, claiming he was dear to the heart of the people, "*no* poet holds this place in the esteem of the English lower orders." This is well-trodden Gissing territory: a refusal, based on personal observation, to idealise the working class. Interestingly, though, the essay ends with a mordantly matching indictment: "What of the multitude in higher spheres? Their leisure is ample; literature lies thick about them. It would be amusing to know how many give one hour a month to the greater poets …" Clear-eyed perception of the populace did not, for Gissing, mean smoothing over the philistinism of the wealthy.

The fourth reflective essay, "The Coming of the Preacher," published in 1900, is difficult to pin down. In his Introductory Note Coustillas writes:

> Gissing knew that preachers of whatever persuasion, religious or political, were one of the plagues of mankind. His essay testifies that he placed no greater hope in the prophets of the future than in those of past ages for the simple reason that they do not lend an ear to objective knowledge, but only to their own fears and desires. Fallibility, he thought, is writ large on their constructions of the future. His disenchantment is the disenchantment of reason.

This seems a surprising characterisation of the essay, which really falls into two parts. Opening with polished ironies directed at the moralising and didacticism currently intruding into fiction (Gissing had the later Tolstoy in mind), it turns into an attack on the materialism, encouraged by the false promises of science, which has prompted this desire for preaching. The essay does not base its hopes on "reason" or "objective knowledge": on the contrary it criticises science as "bankrupt before the human soul." Its concern is with preachers rather than prophets – in fact the only prophecy it contains is Gissing's own at the end of the essay: "But we may not have long to wait for a clear voice amid our tumult which shall rebuke the madding world, and recall its thought to things essential. The new preacher, like him of old, will begin by crying 'Vanity'!" Gissing's standpoint in this essay replicates that in "The Hope of Pessimism": not rationalist, but pessimistic.

The fourth category, on the nature of literary art, contains two pieces well known to Gissing scholars: the 1892 essay "Why I Don't Write Plays" and the brilliant short article of 1895 "The Place of Realism in Fiction." The first is linked to an excellent appendix, an article by Coustillas on Gissing and the theatre originally published in *The Gissing Journal* in 2001. The second includes the memorable formulation: "The novelist works, and must work, subjectively. A demand for objectivity in fiction is worse than meaningless, for apart from the personality of the workman no literary art can exist […] Realism, then, signifies nothing more than artistic sincerity in the portrayal of contemporary life." This category also includes a short essay on the art of authorship and a critique of bellicose martial verse, "Tyrtaeus," deploring Swinburne's brutal poem "Transvaal" and remonstrating with Kipling, "the laureate of the Empire," with lethal suavity ("One cannot easily conceive that, in his quieter moments, Mr. Kipling would refuse sympathy with those who hope that men will some day no longer cut each other's throats and explode each other's heads off").

The fifth category is really a subdivision of the previous one – four articles that followed the publication in 1898 of Gissing's *Charles Dickens: a Critical Study*. "The Homes and Haunts of Dickens" is an informed topographical survey. "Dickens in Memory" recalls Gissing's first acquaintance with the

author, as well as tracing his impact ("In time I came to see London with my own eyes, but how much better when I saw it with those of Dickens!"). Two book reviews for the then newly founded *Times Literary Supplement*, "Mr. Swinburne on Dickens" and Mr. Kitton's Life of Dickens," are fascinating for the skill with which Gissing, while acknowledging the books' merits, implies their limitations – Swinburne's clamorous assertiveness, Kitton's naive literalism.

Two articles in this volume elude categorisation – a short piece of art criticism written in Boston in 1876 and an article entitled "The Old School," composed in 1897 at the request of the former principal of Lindow Grove School. The latter, although (as Coustillas points out) offering a rosy picture of the school, does contain revealing moments – for example this comment on one of the teachers: "he came to us from Italy, from Milan, and I cannot recall the day when the name of Italy did not stir my blood."

As one would expect from Coustillas, this collection is splendidly edited and any criticisms must be minor. In the table of contents it would have been useful to have the original dates of publication specified after the title of each essay. There are one or two misprints: "that voices" for "than voices" (p. 57), "dumb all servitor" for "dumb old servitor" (p. 59), "his historical mystery" for "this historical mystery" (p. 153). Overall, though, this collection lays out lucidly Gissing's qualities as an essayist: range of cultural reference, subtlety of allusion, clarity of thought and expression. In his essay "The Art of Authorship" Gissing declared: "My own attempts at authorship […] have had the result of making me constantly search, compare, and strive in the matter of style." And indeed one can discern a development from the expansive fluency of his student essays to the terse ironies of his later ones. What remains constant is sincerity of tone and evidence of keen and voracious reading. *Collected Essays - George Gissing*, perhaps the culminating achievement of Coustillas's distinguished career as an editor, should fascinate anyone interested in late Victorian culture, as well as prove invaluable to all students of Gissing.—David Grylls, University of Oxford

Anne-Marie Millim, *The Victorian Diary: Authorship and Emotional Labour* (The Nineteenth Century Series), Oxford: Routledge, 2013. 226pp. ISBN 9781409435761. £100.

George Gissing's diary, published in 1978 by Pierre Coustillas as *London and the Life of Literature in Late Victorian England: The Diary of George Gissing, Novelist*, offers a compelling insight into his daily preoccupation with the business of writing and surviving in the late-Victorian literary world. It is in many respects a far more revealing, far more private companion piece to his

correspondence. Aside from its importance as a social document, the diary is thus, as Coustillas declares, "a window into his own mental universe" during fifteen crucial years of his novelistic career from 27 December 1887 to 8 November 1902. Indeed the outward appearance of each entry is revealing: those written in England being for the most part bare-bone accounts of the weather, his productivity, his reading, and his bodily or mental sufferings; those written on vacation abroad being extensive and exuberant descriptions of the weather, museum visits and other cultural pursuits, city and country walks, his reading, and his occasional bodily pains.

One supposes that as most entries were written in England, this explains why Robin Barrow, in a 1980 review, found the diary "tedious." In 1981, John Halperin, the Gissing biographer, not only felt "the decision to publish every word of it has turned out to be a fatal one," but also added that since "nothing has been left out … much of it is very dull." He concludes, "If the specialist finds it tedious, the lay reader, at whom the bizarre title obviously is aimed, should find it impenetrable." Yet, other reviewers and Gissing experts found the diary fascinating, which might make one wonder if Barrow and Halperin had in fact read the same book as them, so different are their responses. Which Gissing, then, is the more real, the more relevant, the one writing in England or the one writing in Europe during his few working holidays? Are either of these the real Gissing? Have the biographers got him completely wrong? Is there in fact a different Gissing lurking between the lines, in the ellipsis? After all, the diary presents us with only 4,113 days out of the 16,837 days or 46 years and 36 days that Gissing lived. And if we just count the adult years from 22 November 1873 when he became sixteen, which amount to 10,993 days in all, then approximately only four out of every eleven days are accounted for in the diary. Similarly, the nine volumes of the *Collected Letters* contain 2,500 letters from Gissing. But how many did he actually write? 5,000? 10,000? We have then to face the fact that we know scarcely anything about three out of every four days in his life and may have only one out of every four letters he wrote. So what is missing is far more than what we have. Because of this very lack of extant manuscript material, one would expect any serious scholar to welcome the diary (such is generally the case) in the most complete state available, both as a major resource and crucial aid in filling in some of the gaps in our knowledge of Gissing's life and works.

The book under review here is a study of Victorian diaries spanning the entire nineteenth century. Anne-Marie Millim originally wrote *The Victorian Diary* in 2009 at the University of Glasgow as her PhD thesis. This is a revised version published by Routledge four years later in their renowned "Nineteenth Century Series." Millim is a senior lecturer in English studies at

the University of Luxembourg specialising in self-writing and Victorian and Luxembourg literature. The book contains an introduction giving a useful overview of diary criticism and an explanation of Millim's own theoretical approach to the diaries of seven Victorian writers. This is followed by four chapters: the first about Elisabeth Eastlake and Henry Crabb Robinson, the second about George Eliot and George Gissing, the third about John Ruskin, and the last about Gerard Manley Hopkins and Edith Simcox. The text is accompanied by footnotes (and lots of "*ibid*"s), which add little beyond the actual bibliographical reference and ought to have been placed either at the end of each chapter or at the back of the book as endnotes. The book closes with Millim's conclusions, a bibliography of works consulted, and an index.

In an expansive introduction she refers to the enlightened nineteenth-century psychologist, Alexander Bain (1818-1903), who advised keeping a diary to record immediate experiences so as to draw up a balance sheet at a later date. This enables the diarist, without allowing the emotions to interfere in future decisions, to observe himself disinterestedly or objectively over a long period of time in order to arrive at a logical and superior synthesis at some later date. As Millim writes, "By correctly managing the emotions, the diarist could avoid wasting emotional resources on fruitless impulses and steer them into artistically propitious avenues." She uses the term "emotional labour" to account for this process of managing feelings to fulfill the emotional requirements of a work of literature such as Eliot or Gissing produced. Equally her focus is on what she calls the "interplay between the public and the private dimensions in the various diaries." This leads her to look at the way each diarist used "life-writing practices to favour and further literary production." She shows how the writer cultivated a self-disciplined economy of emotion in his/her recording of private experiences with the goal of achieving public expression in the finished published work. An important part of this process, highlighted in the diaries, involves the diarist comparing his former self with his present self over many years as a way to monitor progress and evaluate his standing in the cultural context within which he functions as a creative individual.

Millim's analysis is most successful in the chapters about the diaries of the more famous writers: Ruskin, Eliot, Gissing, and Hopkins perhaps because they were more interesting and creative personalities than, for example, Crabb Robinson, whose diary is outwardly focused, and who was plainly a socialite desiring to record the doings and sayings of his famous acquaintances whilst keeping his own personality in the background. In the chapter devoted to them, Millim's pairing of Eliot and Gissing is a happy one because they and their method of keeping diaries are in many respects similar. Both were highly

reserved in their private recording of daily experience and incredibly disciplined and structured in their management of time devoted to writing literary works. They also kept regular accounts of their reading, of the number of pages they wrote, and of the amounts they earned from their productions.

Towards the beginning of the chapter Millim notes that although both diarists were markedly minimalistic in their daily jottings and rarely revealed their most private thoughts, they were still able to reflect their philosophic outlook in a relatively "confessional openness." She sets up her argument in opposition to the standard critical view outlined by Robert A. Fothergill in his *Private Chronicles* (1974), who asserts that diarists ought to write "flawlessly crafted prose" and express "a high degree of self-disclosure …" Millim remarks that while Eliot clearly had a possible reader in view, as diaries were then often published posthumously, she avoided writing in any great detail or to entertain. However she offers no opinion on why Gissing's diary "presents an abundance of short, staccato entries," yet one can easily imagine that after a long day of writing fiction, he was too weary to describe "in flawlessly crafted prose" what was most often a monotonous daily routine without much human contact. Unsurprisingly, then, whilst such diaries as Eliot's and Gissing's are described as "meaningless" according to Fothergill's criteria, that of Crabb Robinson scores high marks for its entertainment value, having been written with the intention to please. Yet Millim feels that, in spite of Eliot's and Gissing's inherent reticence as diarists and their resistance to "analysis," these diaries are still valuable especially because they testify "to the reality of authorship, helping us understand the authors' temporal organisation and giving us insight into Victorian publishing practices …"

Millim continues her discussion by looking primarily at the George Eliot of 1854 to 1855, some years before she became the most important mid-century English novelist, in fact before she had even written a single page of fiction. Her diary entries (see *The Journals of George Eliot*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) from this period in which she spent three months in Weimar followed by four in Berlin, reveal an extraordinary range of intellectual reading much like the entries found in Gissing's diary – both writers were deeply acquainted with German literature in the original. Yet while their intellectual pursuits were very similar, sadly their social spheres were worlds apart. Whereas Gissing, during many years of his literary life, hardly socialised at all because of his unfortunate domestic situation, Eliot, by contrast, associated with many of the great personalities of the nineteenth century including Herbert Spencer, T. H. Huxley, Liszt, Berlioz, Clara Schumann, Thomas Carlyle, and William Makepeace Thackeray. Furthermore, from 1854, at the age of thirty-five, until 1878, she had the constant companionship of the brilliant

English philosopher and critic George Henry Lewes. Gissing, on the other hand, did not find an intelligent soulmate until five years before his death.

The last part of the chapter deals solely with Gissing. In the section entitled "George Gissing's Diary: Balance and Belonging" Millim observes that his time was taken up mostly with trying to attain economic survival at the expense of emotional contentment. Even so, she points out, he expended a great amount of emotional labour in "his efforts to counteract his loneliness." Hence his diary constantly "monitor[s] the gap between his desired self and his current self. When this gap is narrow, Gissing feels emotionally content; when it is wide, he calls upon himself to increase his efforts at being productive." As a result Gissing's dissatisfaction with himself and his life was always at odds with his need to have something to show for his emotional sacrifice to disciplined working habits. Further to this Millim notes that Gissing's "diaristic writing is characterised by his efforts to determine his personal value by the quality of his literary output." Consequently his ambition to produce quality literature often stood in the way of his quest for economic security – as evidenced by the manifold false starts and discarded novels. She might have added that unconsciously or not this determination to write serious fiction was also spurred on by the need to acquire a sense of dignity and attain respectability to make up for earlier disastrous chapters in his life story.

Since Gissing "portrayed work as simply a painful necessity," Millim feels that he must have repudiated Samuel Smiles' mid-century ideal of self-improvement through self-cultivation. She also assumes he would have strongly rejected Thomas Carlyle's notion of work as a selfless pursuit to be followed without any expectation of reward, monetary or otherwise, except in the afterlife. It is easy to imagine Gissing feeling "infuriated," as Millim puts it, by Carlyle's Calvinistic view of work as "detached … from the worldly reality of financial necessity." For all that he would have wholly agreed with Smiles and Carlyle that hard work and self-cultivation have their rewards in the end. After all he was one of the most disciplined and industrious workers in the eve of the nineteenth century. Yet Millim is correct to say that "[f]or Gissing, the maxim 'time is money' was reversed into 'money is time.'" Indeed, she explains, "'Work for work's sake' was a meaningless concept to him as the necessity to work subtracted time from his life, instead of validating it." This meant that every year of his life, as his diary amply reveals, was dictated by concerns about economic survival which put him under a constant state of emotional and economic stress. She then draws an important comparison between Ryecroft's troubled literary experience and Gissing's, writing, "Ryecroft, like Gissing, finds himself in a circular economy: he must sacrifice

all his time to work, in order to make the money necessary to afford leisure time, from which then to draw the inspiration essential to his profession."

In the next section entitled "Becoming a Poet: Travelling with the Diary" Millim follows Gissing on his travels. Through the analysis of selected diary entries she comes to the fascinating conclusion that it was whilst he was abroad that he came closest to becoming the person he most wanted to be. In further sections headed "Loneliness and Productivity: the Need for Complementation," and "Being at Home in England: Gissing's Emotional Management" Millim scrutinises in turn Gissing's expressions of emotional depletion and the way he coped with loneliness by means of surrounding himself with cultural artifacts and following intellectual pursuits. In her brief summing up Millim writes, "Wishing to signify themselves through their work, Eliot and Gissing record recent success and remember that of former selves in their diaries, which, on the one hand, can serve as a means of emotional management, kindling motivation and inspiration." The negative effect of such "emotional management," on the other hand, Millim observes, can be seen in how, as Eliot and Gissing became more assured novelists, the pressure they imposed on themselves to produce better works of literature also increased. "Through thus gauging personal value through internal comparison," she concludes, "the self becomes a depletable resource — a conceptualisation that entails an immense fear of the future."

Whereas Gissing's *Diary* has been greatly mined for the biographies, Coustillas's *Definitive Bibliography*, the *Collected Letters*, and various editions and studies of his private papers, it has had otherwise only limited employment as a resource for scholarly articles about Gissing, and never been the subject of an extended study. Now we have Anne-Millim's stimulating work on the diaries of seven Victorian writers, and a long chapter devoted to the diaries of Gissing and Eliot. Her analysis of the two diarists in tandem and separately results in some interesting comparisons as well as some illuminating discussions about how they used their diaries to manage, nurture, and further themselves as individuals and novelists. This chapter will serve as a useful tool for future enquiries into Gissing's development as a writer and into the significance of his diary as an "autobiographical" document. This is therefore an important book on an area of life writing which is still to be fully explored.—Markus Neacey

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Notes and News

Tom Ue has sent news of a panel on *Born in Exile* he is organising for the Literary London Society's Annual Conference which takes place at Senate

House in the University of London on 13th-14th July 2017. The panel is part of a conference devoted to the theme "Fantastic London: Dream, Speculation and Nightmare." Under the intriguing title "*Born in Exile* and the Fin de Siècle" the panel intends to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the publication of the finest novel Gissing wrote. It is a novel, Ue writes in the panel description, that

> brings together a rich set of associations for theorizing about London. If, on the one hand, Godwin perceives his uncle as a "London-branded vulgarian," one who, it is expected, "would certainly never quit his dirty haunts in London," on the other, Godwin's ambition gravitates towards the city in the novel's early chapters: "Where else could he hope for opportunity of notable advancement?" "[L]ife in London lodgings made rich promise," mused Godwin, "that indeed would be freedom, and full of all manner of high possibilities!" This panel explores *Born in Exile* from a number of vantage points. The novel, according to Jeremy Tambling, evinces an intellectual clash between, for instance, geology as a concept which introduces history into nature, and which questions, therefore, the privileged place given to the human as specially God-created; and as a historical formation which assumes the relative fixity of the human in a class-position and which induces guilt especially over "hypocrisy." Tambling's paper "Gissing and Natural History" discusses how "natural history" may be thought of as a concept which both questions Gissing and suggests some alternative ways implicit within his work of thinking about nature, history, and natural history, challenging the ideology which makes "natural history" a second nature, with power of control and inducing defeat. In "The London Frame of Mind in *Born in Exile*: Attractions and Repulsions of the Metropolis," Constance Harsh reveals how Gissing explores the city, not only through Peak's search for a satisfactory social and personal location, but also through Sidwell's and Marcella's ideological embeddedness in particular social spaces. Tom Ue's paper "Class, Capital, and Consumerism in Gissing's *Born in Exile* and Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*" explores the conversation between the two novelists, and returns to Raymond Williams' foundational work on the country and the city to consider what Hardy's staging of Gissing's story away from London says about both works. As a whole, this panel investigates how this fin-de-siècle novel posits the city, variously, as a site of fantasy and nightmare.

One hopes the panel will create new interest in a novel which has been neglected in recent decades and remains out of print since the 1993 Everyman edition. If only Penguin or Oxford University Press would add a scholarly edition of *Born in Exile* to their list of Gissing titles.

Rebecca Hutcheon has sent news from the H. G. Wells Society that will be of interest to readers of *The Odd Women*: BBC Radio 4 has made a two-part dramatisation of Wells's 1909 feminist novel, *Ann Veronica*. The first part was recently made available on BBC iPlayer Radio, and the second part was broadcast on 26 February 2017 at 15:00 GMT.

At the Centre Universitaire de Norvège à Paris on 26-27 May 2016 a conference organised by the Norwegian Bergen Literature and Science Research

Group was held on "Ageing Brains and Minds, Ageing Senses and Sentiments: Literature, Neurology, Psychiatry." Among the scholars invited to speak was Emanuela Ettorre of the University of Gabriele d'Annunzio in Chieti Pescara, Italy, who read a paper called "'Now my life is rounded': The Art of Equanimity in George Gissing's *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*."

In the 27 January 2017 edition of the *TLS* it was a pleasant surprise to find J. C. mentioning Gissing and the first issue of the journal to appear in two years. He revealed his delight in once again being able to read a journal he has referred to on many occasions over the past decade. On learning that a Gissing enthusiast has become the editor, he writes that it is "pleasing news to Poor School types like us." He also enjoyed reading the long article about Algernon Gissing and his story "The Marriage of Rhoda" "in which," J. C. writes, "we were happy to see, the habit of perambulation plays a role." He ended by recommending a subscription to *The Gissing Journal* to his readers, for which the editor thanks him. Let us hope he will come across more Gissing titles on future perambulatory walks in search of worthy bookshops.

Beth-Ann Betz, one of three daughters of the late Alfred M. Slotnick (1915-1980), who was a great admirer of Gissing, collector of his works, and contributor to *The Gissing Newsletter*, informs me that his Gissing library is now for sale. Her mother, Shirley R. Slotnick, arranged to sell the collection a year before her own death in 2015. The sale is in the hands of James Cummins Bookseller at 699 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10065, USA, Tel: 212/688-6441FAX: 212/688-6192; www.jamescumminsbookseller.com. One item from Slotnick's Gissing collection, a three-volume first edition of *The Emancipated*, is currently on offer at abebooks.co.uk for £550.

Among other interesting items at the same website are some Japanese editions including a 1973 translation of *The Paying Guest* published by Kinseido Ltd, and a near fine 1969 edition of *New Grub Street* translated by Osamu Doi and published by Kitazawa Publishing Company. This last is for sale by the Idle Booksellers of Bradford at a very reasonable £10. At the steeper end, the most expensive book on the website is a first edition of *New Grub Street* in dark green cloth for £5480. There is also a major curiosity: for one suspects that George Gorniak of Grayswood Press will be interested to learn that the Irish Booksellers of Rumford, Maine, are offering a 2011 first hardcover edition of the first volume of *The Collected Short Stories of George Gissing* for £3443!

Recent Publications

Volumes

Gissing, George, *Le donne di troppo* [*The Odd Women*], translated by Vincenzo Latronico. Milano: La Tartaruga, 2017. Pp. 472. ISBN 9788894814002. £20.

Neacey, Markus, ed. *The Gissing Journal: A History and Index of the First 50 Years*. Grayswood, Surrey: Grayswood Press, 2016. Pp. 296. ISBN 9780957223158. HB £20/PB £40.

Articles, reviews, etc.

Adam, Abraham, "Before *New Grub Street*: Thomas Miller and the Contingencies of Authorship," *Victorian Fiction Beyond the Canon*, Daragh Downes and Trish Ferguson, eds., Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016, pp. 31-44.

J. C., "The Other Gissing," *Times Literary Supplement*, 27 January 2017, p. 40.

Delyfer, Catherine, review of Christine Huguet and Simon J. James, eds., *George Gissing and the Woman Question: Convention and Dissent*, *Cahiers victoriens et édouardiens* [online], 84 (Autumn 2016), n.p.

He, Chang., "The literary taste and 19th century middle-class cultural construction: With George Gissing's *In the Year of Jubilee* as an example," *Foreign Literature Studies*, 37:4 (2015), pp. 120-127.

Hutchison, Sharla, review of Markus Neacey, ed., *Selected Stories of Morley Roberts*. *English Literature in Transition*, 60:1 (2017), pp. 123-127.

Liedke, Heidi, "*Otium* et écriture dans *Un flâneur en Patagonie* de William Henry Hudson (1893)," *Recherches & Travaux*, 88 (2016), pp. 107-127.

Nash, Susan Smith, "An Apocalyptic yet Abject 'Jubilee' Narrative in George Gissing's *In the Year of Jubilee*: Mobility, Restoration, and Materiality," *Journal of English Language and Literature*, 4:2 (2015), pp. 371-380.

Ying Ying, "Life Shall Be Concerned with the Mind First: A Cultural Crusade in *Thyrza*," *Foreign Literature Studies*, 38:1 (2016), pp. 110-118.

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Information for Contributors

The Gissing Journal publishes essays, book reviews and notes on Gissing and his circle. Contributions may deal with bibliographical, biographical, critical, and topographical subjects. They should be sent to the editor, Markus Neacey, by e-mail to forfarmarkus@fastmail.co.uk as a Word document.