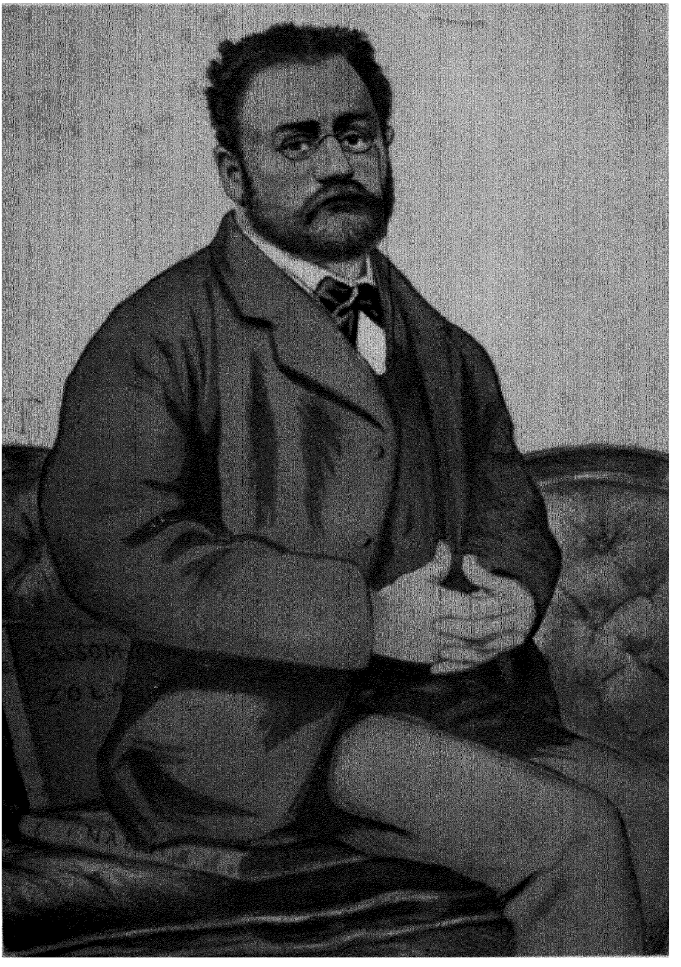
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THE VICTORIAN CONSCIENCE



French Realism. M. Emile Zola
(SPY)

CLARENCE R. DECKER

The Victorian Conscience

NEW YORK : TWAYNE PUBLISHERS

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TO

MARY BELL

whose conscience

neither Victorian nor Modern

is Perennial

TO HIS BOOK

To read my book, the virgin shy
May blush, while Brutus standeth by:
But when he's gone, read through what's
writ,
And never stain a cheek for it.

—Marcus Valerius Martialis,
translated by Robert Herrick

Contents

	French Realism. M. Emile Zola	FRONTISPIECE
I	"The Mantling Blush"—EARLY VICTORIANISM	*9*
II	"To Teach and Delight"—THE ENGLISH TRADITION	*31*
III	"Frail, French and Thirty"—BALZAC IN ENGLAND	*49*
IV	"The Fleshly School"—BAUDELAIRE IN ENGLAND	*63*
V	"The Maiden Tribute"—THE NATURALISTS IN ENGLAND	*79*
VI	"Enemy of the People"—IBSEN IN ENGLAND	*115*
VII	"Tenderness and Loving Kindness"—THE RUSSIANS IN ENGLAND	*131*
VIII	"Reality's Infinite Sweetness"—THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVOLT	*147*
IX	"The New Spirit"—LATE VICTORIANISM	*175*
	Notes	*185*
	Index	*199*
	Illustrations	FOLLOWING PAGE *128*

CHAPTER I

"The Mantling Blush"

EARLY VICTORIANISM

"VICTORIANISM" in the twentieth century is a term of reproach. It has come to mean all those habits of thought and sentiment personified in Mrs. Grundy and identified with the conventions of Queen Victoria—those unimaginative, bourgeois proprieties against which our rebellious age levels satiric shafts. We scorn its eminent respectability; its complacent, humorless, pompous customs; its hypocrisy, particularly in matters of sex; its prudish fear of a literature that "calls the mantling blush to the maiden cheek." We recall that it criticized Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities* as mere rubbish, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* as a free novel, heathen and horrid in taste, George Eliot's *Adam Bede* as vulgar, Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh* as hysterically indecent, Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* as morally disgusting, Kingsley's *Griffith Gaunt* as immoral ("the modesty and purity of women cannot survive its perusal"), and Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* as indelicate, quite improper for the genteel clientele of Mudie's Circulating Library. We remember Tennyson's alarm at "maiden fancies wallowing in the troughs of Zolaism." We cannot forget that Hardy's career as a novelist was prematurely concluded by the vicious attacks on *Jude the Obscure*. We smile

at the concessions made by even the greatest writers of the period to a Puritanical public taste: Carlyle's euphemistic description of a man's "similitude of love-court" to a chambermaid; Dickens' study of the criminal classes in *Oliver Twist,* whose benighted characters speak no improper word; Thackeray's reluctant bow to a "society that will not tolerate the Natural in our Art"; Trollope's priggish warning "that it behooves the English novelist to be pure." We see the Queen, whose Whiggish tastes set the popular tone of the period, ruling a court which—in Hazlitt's phrase—was "dignified without ease . . . pompous without meaning." We remember, too, the Queen's refusal to visit the Petit Trianon because Du Barry had once lived there. "The last vestige of the eighteenth century had disappeared," writes Strachey in his biography of Victoria; "cynicism and subtlety were shrivelled into powder; and duty, industry, morality, and domesticity triumphed over them. Even the very chairs and tables had assumed, with a singular responsiveness, the forms of prim solidity. The Victorian Age was in full swing." [1] The household gods of Respectability, Prudery, and Humbug, as our generation calls them,[2] presided over the age as it flourished through the years in pomp and circumstance.

Then came the Diamond Jubilee, the glorious climax—to us the anticlimax—of a culture "clothed in the bonnet, fichu, bustle and petticoats of formality," of a period rich, proud, and "drunk with sight of power":

> There were miles of warships gathered at Spithead; feudatory princes from India and representatives of free peoples ruling over territories such as has never before owned allegiance to a single flag were assembled to do homage to the aged sovereign. The newspapers whose "frantic boast and foolish word" gave utterance

to the feeling of the nation from which those newspapers took their spirit, were not without excuse. But suddenly, upon ears still ringing with the blare of trumpets and hearts still elate with the proofs of material power, there fell the arresting voice which proclaimed the insufficiency and evanescence of all such power:

> "Far called, our navies melt away
> On dune and headland sinks the fire:
> Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
> Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!" [3]

The good Queen lived on for four years, but, long before her passing, the age she ruled and to which for all time she gave her name was passing too. Like the century it succeeded, it was in turn succeeded. "Lest we forget—lest we forget!"

Our age remembers these things none too kindly—remembers mainly "Manifest Destiny," "the White Man's Burden," and, in Amy Lowell's words, "that long set of sentimental hypocrisies known as *Victorian.*"

II

Viewed with critical detachment, however, Victorianism is far more than the Grundys, Pecksniffs, and Bowdlers of the nineteenth century. It is the curious paradox of Victorianism that the great Victorians were strenuously anti-Victorian, and that the period they created, particularly in literature, was one of fertile achievement and vigorous protest—protest against materialism and complacency, against aesthetic and moral blindness.

It is not our purpose here to whitewash the Victorians, but, since it will often be necessary in these studies of literary prejudice to exhibit Victorianism at its worst, it is only fair to remind ourselves now that it would be difficult to point to another period that produced a more brilliant galaxy of figures in every

field of thoughtful endeavor. Carlyle, Tennyson, Browning, Dickens, George Eliot, Cardinal Newman, Charles Kingsley, John Stuart Mill, Thackeray, Matthew Arnold, Ruskin, Chambers, Lyell, Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, Morris, Meredith, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Swinburne, Stevenson, Thomas Hardy—such stars recall the fullest and brightest luminaries of the Elizabethans.

If Mrs. Grundy looms large as the protector of the proprieties, she is more than matched by lusty and intransigeant rebels against her prudery. If there is smug convention, there is also courageous revolt. If there is pretension, there is also solid achievement. If there is much generally to regret, there is more to praise. When the ephemeral injustice of twentieth-century reaction has given away to the larger perspective of history, it is certain the Victorian Age will be finally remembered as one of the great creative eras of history, and its contributions to knowledge, to the arts and sciences, to democratic life generally, as among the most productive in Western culture.

In a very real sense, there never was a clearly defined Victorian era—an era, that is, with a common character, uniquely uniform in literature and art and social institutions. The sixty years between the Coronation and the Jubilee form a period of intense vitality, continually changing, growing, creating new ideas and new tastes, and evolving new forms of intellectual and social values.

Already there are signs of a sounder evaluation, signs which lead Harold Nicolson in his study of Tennyson to remark: "We smile to-day at our Victorians, not confidently, as of old, but with a shade of hesitation; a note of perplexity, a note of anger sometimes, a note often of wistfulness has come to mingle with

our laughter. For the tide is turning and the reaction is drawing to a close." We have grown older and perhaps wiser. With a broader perspective, we begin to see Victorianism as a dynamic period of surging and bewildering and restless forces struggling toward a synthesis which our mid-twentieth century has yet to achieve—a period, in the overquoted lines of Matthew Arnold,

> Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
> The other powerless to be born.

III

If the literature of an age "shows its people its natural face in a glass, and leaves to posterity the record of the manner of man it found," [4] contemporary criticism of this literature reveals what the age thinks of itself thus reflected. Victorian literary controversies expose the Victorian character and its troubled concern with the ethical, aesthetic, and intellectual problems of its day.

These controversies center largely about the movement we call Realism. More than any other of the conflicting currents that swept through this turbulent period, it channeled the main stream of intellectual, moral, and aesthetic controversy. What was this Realism? What was its relation to Victorianism?

Philosophers define Realism as the belief that there exists an objective world independent of consciousness. For different philosophers the precise nature of this objective world varies. The long history of controversy among Platonic Idealists, Logical Realists, Nominalists, Scholastic Realists, Rationalists, Positivists, Empiricists, and other ontologists has in modern times more or less settled down to a common-sense, or modified common-sense, view which holds that there is *a real objective world to be known, a mind capable of knowing, and a sense perception that connects*

the "objective world" with the "knowing mind." To clarify, illuminate, and interpret the objective world is the major task of Realism. Emphasizing perceptual phenomena as the essence or ultimate stuff of experience, Realism is concerned—except as it goes beyond verifiable to imaginative hypotheses—with observable fact susceptible of scientific description and explanation.

Men of letters, of course, are not too often interested in these metaphysical subtleties. They are not professional philosophers; indeed, most of them are impatient with formal systems of thought. Nevertheless, literary modes closely parallel philosophical fashions. Realism in literature moves hand in hand with Realism in philosophy. In different periods and with different writers literary Realism is clothed in various garbs, yet in all its varieties it seeks to convey *a vivid sense of the actuality of the objective world,* of the life immediately perceptible to the senses. In its informal garb—in the Realism of Chaucer, Defoe, Fielding, Jane Austen, Dickens, Thackeray, and others—it attempts simply to represent life without idealization. In its formal garb—in the Naturalism of the Goncourts, Zola, Maupassant, Ibsen, Tolstoi—it seeks to achieve the objectivity of science.

To secure *a vivid sense of the actuality of the objective world,* Realists in literature employ various technical devices. In fiction, which of all literary forms is most susceptible of Realistic treatment, emphasis is placed upon concrete and factual detail—the crude and the ugly (often the pathological) as well as the conventionally beautiful; the organization of material from an observable or scientific rather than from a fanciful point of view; and the presentation of the story as impersonally as possible. Realism, in technique and in subject matter, thus opposes Romanticism, which emphasizes imaginative, psychological, or

spiritual experience—the hidden reality obscured by the apparent reality of material phenomena.

Academic definition, however, is simpler than practical illustration. Literature, like life, too easily escapes a formula. Defoe, Fielding, Dickens, Balzac, even Flaubert—Realists though they were—are disconcertingly romantic in certain aspects of their work; and Romantics, such as Hugo and Scott, amass Realistic detail with a completeness the most thoroughgoing Naturalist might envy. The scientific Realism (Naturalism) of the late nineteenth century, as expressed by Zola or Maupassant, often deepens into a psychological Realism approximating Mysticism. Who can dissociate the Mystical from the Realistic in Dostoevski, Huysmans, and Maeterlinck? Zola has been described, by equally competent critics, as a Romanticist and as a Naturalist. George Moore has been thought of as realistic, impressionistic, romantic, and often sentimental. The preoccupation of twentieth-century Realists with Freud and psychoanalysis has been described as "the later realism," [5] but it is only with difficulty that "the later realism" can be squared with Naturalism. Certainly there is more than objective Realism in Henry James, Dorothy Richardson, James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, and others. In his famous essay on Flaubert, George Saintsbury wrote that Realism, if it means anything, "means the faithful patience and the sense of artistic capacity which lead a man to grapple with his subject, whatever that subject may be, and to refuse 'tanquam scopulum' easy generalities and accepted phrase." [6] But may not the same be said of Romanticism or of any other point of view that is honestly expressed?

Happily for these studies of various Victorian literary controversies, we do not need to bog ourselves down in semantic subtleties. The record itself is one of constant effort by Victorian novelists and critics, many of whom thought of themselves as Realists, to define Realism. It is sufficient for our purposes if we keep in mind that Realism, in general, believes in the validity of material phenomena and in the objective behavior of human beings and seeks to convey a vivid sense of the actuality of the world as it appears to our senses.

In fiction Realism is as old as the oldest legend and as new as the latest novel. Its characteristics can be found in ancient Hindu writings, in the Old Testament, in Greek and Roman literature, in the *fabliaux* and other popular stories of the Middle Ages, in the novels in our own day of Dreiser, Hemingway, Lewis, Faulkner, Farrell, and Steinbeck. Romanticism has an equally ancient and honorable history. And the conflict between the two never ends—it is always beginning anew; indeed, the history of human thought has been a persistent struggle between their opposing philosophies. "Throughout the history of literature," wrote Hubert Crackanthorpe in the *Yellow Book,* "the jealous worship of beauty—which we term idealism—and the jealous worship of truth—which we term realism—have alternately prevailed. Indeed, it is within the compass of these alterations that lies the whole fundamental diversity of literary temper." Crackanthorpe admits that "no hard and fast line can be drawn between the one spirit and the other. The so-called idealist must take as his point of departure the facts of nature; the so-called realist must be sensitive to some one or other of the forms of beauty, if each would achieve the fineness of great art. And the pendulum of production is continually swinging from

degenerate idealism to degenerate realism, from effete vapidity to slavish sordidity." [7]

As the pendulum swings from one extreme to the other an explosion is likely to occur. In the nineteenth century the explosion was unusually violent in literature, creating controversies critical enough to the Victorians, even though to future generations they may appear as lifeless as the Nominalist-Realist debates of the medieval schoolmen seem to us today.

Although the philosophy underlying Realism is essentially the same in any time or place, the unique manner of its expression at any given time is conditioned by the social, economic, intellectual, and religious temperament of its age. Nineteenth-century Realism was dominated by science. The discovery of fresh facts about the universe, of man's new relation to a vastly expanded and complicated world, gave rise to a mechanical explanation of the origin, development, and movements of peoples and civilizations. In industry, the new science stimulated mechanical invention and mass production; in history and social economy, it led to a systematic study of the problems of society—religion, ethics, politics, industry, business, labor conditions, education, crime, family life; in philosophy, it produced a new intellectualism; and in art, it inspired a fresh interpretation of the function and technique of imaginative work. In science the new thought was formulated as Evolution; in social economy as Humanitarianism; in politics as Democracy; in economics as Utilitarianism; in metaphysics as Positivism; in art, particularly literature, as Realism and Naturalism, with its half brother Aestheticism, or "Art for Art's Sake."

What was the original source of this modern Realistic movement? No one can say with certainty. It has been traced to

scientific, economic, psychological, and philosophic causes, depending on the predilections of the critic. It has been found in the history of technics and class struggle, in the ideology of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in the law of alternate sequences, the inevitable oscillations of culture cycles. Research has illuminated, but not solved, the problems of cultural origins. In ultimate terms we can say little more than the poet O'Shaughnessy:

> For each age is a dream that is dying,
> Or one that is coming to birth.

But whatever the original cause, in the nineteenth century science, economics, politics, religion, philosophy, and art, interpenetrating each other, produced the Scientific-Realistic world of contemporary life and letters. The old order was changing, giving place to the new.

IV

The Realistic revolt in England was less violent than that on the Continent. The Victorians were only mildly or indirectly involved in proselytizing literary reform. Realism, and later Naturalism, affected Victorian life and letters much as the radical social changes modified her economic and political patterns. There was no sudden eruption. There were reforms—not peaceful to be sure—but they came with little of the furor aroused in France or Germany. Nonetheless, by a kind of osmosis, the Victorians absorbed the new spirit.

Darwin, the Victorian apostle of the scientific movement that traced its ancestry back to Aristotle, Newton, and Locke, affected the entire social and intellectual life of the last half of the cen-

tury. The *Origin of Species* (1859) was acknowledged by the Victorians themselves as perhaps the most influential book, English or foreign, of the period, and, despite the brutal and insolent attack of the Bishop of Oxford as the champion of orthodoxy, it also proved the most popular. When the volume first appeared, the pulpits of England and Scotland resounded with denunciations of its impiety and absurdity and the journals of the period were filled with vitriolic denunciations. But if its foes were bitter, its friends were staunch. Within a few years Darwin's evolution, if not to be accepted without reservations, was acknowledged worthy of consideration and temperate discussion. Huxley—"Darwin's bulldog," as he called himself—headed the defense. Within a few months after the publication of the *Origin of Species,* Huxley, in his lecture, "A Lobster; or The Story of Zoology," at the South Kensington Museum (May 14, 1860), exclaimed:

> The whole of modern thought is steeped in science; it has made its way into the works of our best poets, and even the mere man of letters, who affects to ignore and despise science, is unconsciously impregnated with her spirit and indebted for his best products to her methods. I believe that the greatest intellectual revolution mankind has yet seen is now slowly taking place by her agency. She is teaching the world that the ultimate court of appeal is observation and experiment, and not authority; she is teaching it to estimate the value of evidence; she is creating a firm and living faith in the existence of immutable moral and physical laws, perfect obedience to which is the highest possible aim of an intelligent being.

Despite the prolonged battle between evolution and orthodox theology, Darwinism proved to be more than able to hold its own. By 1883 the popular Scottish clergyman Henry Drum-

mond could publish his *Natural Law in the Spiritual World,* a sincere and eloquent effort to establish religious truth on scientific grounds and, implicitly, to testify to the importance and influence of Darwinism. "None," he wrote, "but those who have passed through it can appreciate the radical nature of the change wrought by Science in the whole mental attitude of its disciples. What they cry out for in Religion is a new standpoint —a standpoint like their own. The one hope, therefore, for Science is more Science."

This hope was more than realized. Darwin created a flood that had been long in the forming and that drew from many tributaries. Spencer, Huxley, and others, popularizing evolution, constructed new systems of ethics, politics, aesthetics, and philosophy. Volume after volume, article after article speculated on such problems as the nature of the State, the relation of man to man, the connection between art, religion, and life. Evolution became the historical point of view and experimentation the method of research. Factual information in the physical sciences mounted rapidly, social changes found their greatest justification in a new rationalism with "progress" as its watchword, and politics, literature, and the arts daily discovered new worlds to conquer.

Literary criticism was primarily concerned with the questions created by the impact of science on the novel, the most popular form of literature in the period. In seeking an answer to these questions, criticism raised other problems touching on the mores of the times. It was concerned not only with the technique of fiction, poetry, and drama but also with the philosophy of art and literature, which in turn involved the larger problems of the relation of literature to morality and of morality to life.

The morality of literature—always of concern to the English mind—took on fresh significance as a result of the popular materialistic interpretations of the Darwinian hypotheses. The clash lay between Victorianism with its conventional moral biases and the new Realism with its unorthodox scientific prejudices. At its worst the controversy was little more than bludgeon and blunderbuss, "police-constable" criticism; at its best it reached a high plane of philosophic reflection. The revolt was championed in one way or another by such writers as George Eliot, Swinburne, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Ruskin, Saintsbury, Gosse, Symonds, Moore, Hardy, Wilde, Shaw, Symons, Archer, and Havelock Ellis; and by such journals as John Stuart Mill's *Westminster Review* ("organ of the free-thinkers"), the liberal *Fortnightly,* Thackeray's *Cornhill Magazine,* and such mushroom magazines at the end of the century as the *Yellow Book, Savoy, Parade, Pageant, Dome, Quarto, Chameleon, Evergreen,* and *Rose Leaf.* The "art for art's sake" movement, although rejecting the aesthetic and scientific conclusions of the Naturalists, maintained a factitious alliance with the latter in the revolt against the common enemy, Convention.

The attack came from many sources: from the pulpit, platform, and press; from the orthodox journals, such as the *Gentleman's Magazine, Monthly Review, Edinburgh Review, Quarterly Review, Blackwood's Magazine,* Trollope's *St. Paul's Magazine, Temple Bar, Contemporary Review, Spectator, Athenaeum,* and *Dublin Review.* It came also from those critics who protested on intellectual grounds. The Realists, intent upon finding scientifically justifiable answers to every question of life, art, and morality, no matter how ancient and sacred the orthodox prejudice might be, struck back at their attackers vigorously.

It was the great age of periodical literature, and through the pages of innumerable journals the quarrel between convention and revolt burned passionately and endlessly.

The controversy led inevitably to censorship and other political action. Again there was nothing new in this. Censorship, ecclesiastical or secular, from the prosecution of Socrates to the public edicts against Ibsen, has been one of the bitterest issues in the eternal struggle between individual freedom and social responsibility. In England, the home of Milton's *Areopagitica,* the nineteenth century witnessed the proscription of many distinguished literary works. In France the authorities found it necessary to fine Baudelaire for his "outrage à la morale publique" when *Fleurs du mal* appeared. And in Germany, by resolution of the Bundestag, a general interdict was placed upon the printing not only of all that Heine had written but of all he might write thereafter.

Even in the twentieth century—when our revolt against Victorianism seems somewhat overdone—the Pecksniffs and the Bowdlers have not been silenced. If our vaunted superiority seems obvious, we have only to remember that our own country and our own generation witnessed a wave of literary prohibition in the twenties that parelleled our other historic prohibition. New York suppressed, among other novels, Radcliffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness.* A Baltimore court finally dismissed the charges of abetting immorality brought against the managers of the dramatic production of Dreiser's *An American Tragedy,* but the Watch and Ward Society of Boston successfully prosecuted booksellers for distributing this novel as well as works by Sinclair Lewis, Upton Sinclair, H. G. Wells, D. H. Lawrence, and many others. The prosecution rested its case on the Massachusetts Act

on Obscenity, which read in part: "Whoever imports, prints, publishes, sell or distributes a pamphlet, ballad, printed paper or other thing containing obscene, indecent or impure language, or manifestly tending to corrupt the morals of youth . . . shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than two years or by a fine of not less than $100 or more than $1,000." On the basis of this act, *What Price Glory, Desire Under the Elms, Gods of the Lightning,* and numerous other plays were banned from the Philadelphia stage. In Chicago *The Front Page* was accused by the Illinois Vigilance Committee of being "obscene, indecent, immoral," a charge the court rejected, remarking that the play was guilty of nothing more than "robust vulgarities." The most inclusive and sweeping censorship of the decade was reached in 1928 when the Customs Bureau and Post Office blacklisted 739 books and forbade their importation. Included among them were many masterpieces of ancient and modern literature.

The result of this censorship, as is generally the case, was simply to increase the sales of the prohibited publications. "Banned in Boston" became a remunerative sales slogan. Some publishers, it has been alleged, sought to have their books Boston-banned in order to insure a rapid and extensive sale elsewhere. Efforts to protect the freedom of the artist have been only partially successful. Some years ago the novelist Elliot Paul framed a bill which was introduced into—and rejected by—the Massachusetts legislature. It read in part: "Any person acting as censor of either books, plays, pictures, music or dancing, for the Commonwealth or any county, city, or town thereof, shall first pass a civil-service examination including the standard Binet intelligence test for mentality of eighteen years, general information and language tests similar to those required for employees

of the Boston Public Library, and shall submit to the State Department of Public Health satisfactory evidence of normal sex experience." [8]

Censorship is not peculiarly Victorian; indeed, there has probably not been a year since man became a social animal that it has not played an active role in government. It occupies an important place in church history; it runs through English common law; it goes back to the Colonial period of American history. Censorship—that is, criticism enforced by political action—is an index of official taste throughout the ages. In the nineteenth century, however, it was particularly active and thus provides us with valuable clues to the conflict in the Victorian conscience.

V

The Victorian controversy reached its climax in quarrels evoked by Continental Realism and Naturalism. Had there been no foreign influence, Victorianism undoubtedly would have been affected by the natural stream of events and thought in its own history. This stream, owing partly to the inevitable psychological reaction against the excesses of the French Revolution and the Romantic era, partly to economic and social changes, and partly to the new discoveries in science and technics, was moving in the direction of modern Realism. Yet the larger streams that swelled the floods of controversy came from France and, later, from the Scandinavian countries and Russia. Even Darwin's science, like the Arthurian legend of the Middle Ages, influenced English literature not so much directly as through its effect first on Continental literature. In this controversy certain figures loom large, among them Balzac, Flaubert, Baudelaire, the Goncourt broth-

ers, Daudet, Maupassant, Zola, Huysmans, Tolstoi, Turgenev, Dostoevski, and Ibsen.

All of these figures, in one way or another, were profoundly influenced by the scientific spirit of the age—a spirit summarized by Zola in 1880: "The return to nature, the naturalistic evolution which sweeps over the century, gradually forces all the manifestations of human intelligence into the same scientific channel." [9] The Realistic and Naturalistic movement was an expression of faith in a new form of an old instrument—the instrument of science—as a means for discovering truth. In literature, as in other fields, this faith implied the acceptance of facts apparent only to the senses; it relied on a scientific-empirical method of research; and it sought to eliminate sentiment, imagination, poetic idealism, and all didactic moral purpose as irrelevant to the essential purpose of the artist. "A novelist has no right to invent," [10] Flaubert declares in a letter to Zola in which he congratulates him on the scientific objectivity of his work. The Goncourts, seeking "to do away with invention in the novel," Maupassant, dedicating himself to "toute la vérité," [11] and Zola, defending *Le roman expérimental,* were simply embracing the new scientific faith sweeping the Western world.

For more than a century philosophers had been groping their way toward the method that was to crystallize as Naturalism in mid-nineteenth century. Diderot, for example, had set forth scientific hypotheses so daring in his *Le rêve d'Alembert* that the volume could not be published until 1830, over sixty years after its inception. For his *Lettre sur les aveugles* (1749), demonstrating the dependence of thought on the five senses, he was clapped into jail as a heretic. His work on the *Encyclopédie* angered the ecclesiastical party, who placed a censorship upon

his writing. Even his novels startled the "authorities" as a consequence of their advanced scientific spirit. Critics analyzing the late nineteenth century have acknowledged the debt this period owes to Diderot. Zola calls him the grand figure of the century, the genius who anticipated the truths of a later generation, the warrior against the worm-eaten edifice of convention and rule.[12] English journals of the Victorian era point to him as the pioneer of Naturalism. In 1890 Havelock Ellis eulogized him as the inaugurator of the spiritual activities of the modern world:

> Diderot's robust faith in nature, that finest fruit of the scientific spirit, comes out again and again. . . . He never seems to waver in his faith in men, nor in the determination, with which, indeed, that faith must ever be bound up, to look every fact of nature squarely in the face. The words with which his letters to Sophie Voland close seem to be the constant refrain throughout all his work: "There is nothing good in this world but that which is true." . . . When science is thus renewing itself, and men are on every hand seeking how, by means of science, they may enlarge and ennoble life, the spirit that moved Diderot is again making itself felt.[13]

The new scientific spirit on the Continent found its most popular and dramatic expression in the literature of the period, particularly in fiction. Between 1820, when Lamartine published *Les premières méditations,* and 1843, when Hugo's last tragedy, *Les burgraves,* failed, the Romantic period had successfully overthrown most of the Neoclassic conventions. Even before 1843, however, there were already signs of the decline of Romanticism, and from the Revolution of 1848 to the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 Realism tended more and more to monopolize literature. Balzac's efforts to mirror society truthfully; his

emphasis on materialistic rather than idealistic motives, on force rather than virtue; his preoccupation with concrete detail and heavy documentation; his concern with the effect of milieu on character; and his insistence on the "comparaison entre l'Humanité et l'Animalité"—these and similar characteristics mark him as one of the first of the modern Realists. His philosophy and fictional technique pointed the way to the materialism, determinism, pessimism, cynicism, and scientific objectivity later to become the leitmotiv of Naturalism.

Morality for the Naturalists is no more relevant to art than it is to science. Truth, the object of both, admits no ethical consideration, except in the sense that false scientific conclusions might be considered immoral. Balzac stated the issue thus:

> The reproach of immorality, which has always been aimed at the courageous writer, is resorted to, moreover, when one can find no other criticism of a poet. If you are true in your depiction; if, by working night and day, you succeed in writing the most difficult language in the world, they throw the word immoral in your face. Socrates was immoral, Jesus Christ was immoral; they both were prosecuted in the name of the societies which they overthrew or reformed.[14]

Later Zola, replying to the critics and censors who accused him of immoral writing, said that his only concern was truth. Romantic novels describing "pure" women and "loyal and noble" young men are far more guilty of immorality: they do not belong to this earth; they are not mortal; they are sentimental, therefore untrue, therefore immoral:

> In short, the question of morality in the novel boils down to these two opinions: the idealists claim that it is necessary to lie in order to be moral, the naturalists affirm that it is impossible to be moral

outside the realm of the true. Now nothing is so dangerous as the romanesque; a work which paints the world in false colors leads imaginations astray, throws them into unreal situations; and I am not speaking of the hypocrisies of propriety, of the abominations made attractive by a blanket of flowers. With us, these risks disappear. We teach the bitter science of life, the uncompromising lesson of the real. Here is reality, try to adjust yourself to it.[15]

This indifference to moral issues on scientific grounds becomes increasingly characteristic of two later groups, and for two different reasons: *L'art pour l'art* protagonists—the *culte du moi*—believed Beauty to be the sole aim of art and the only immoral art to be ugly art; the Naturalists argued that Truth is the sole aim of art and that the only immoral art is false art. In the restricted and practical interpretation of the term, however, morality to both of these groups is irrelevant: art is amoral. On this common ground Baudelaire, the Parnassians, and the Aesthetes join forces with the Naturalists in the revolt against Convention.

VI

When it crossed the channel, Naturalism met Victorianism at the height of its power, affluence, and self-assurance. It also met the vigilant Mrs. Grundy, and "toute la vérité" and "the mantling blush" found life difficult together. The reception accorded the foreign Realists by the Victorians was hardly cordial, and the hostility was aggravated by historical and temperamental differences. England's proverbial opposition to sudden innovation; the reaction against the scandals of Byron, the radicalism of Shelley, and the laxness of the courts of the Georges; the advent of the Middle Class to political and economic power; the

moral earnestness of the new Puritanism with "duty" as its watchword—all conspired to engender a tense and colorful conflict, dramatizing not only the problems of literature and asethetics but also those questions of morality and religion that perplexed the age. In the center of the conflict stands the elusive and paradoxical character we call Victorian—a character compounded of conservatism and liberalism and caught between the equally powerful forces of convention and revolt.

CHAPTER II

"To Teach and Delight"

THE ENGLISH TRADITION

FRANCE WAS considerably in advance of England in the application of science to social and aesthetic theory, and England looked upon her with mixed feelings of antagonism and admiration. Nonetheless, French Naturalism was a persistent influence on English thought throughout the last half of the century, particularly in the field of literature.

Any attempt to trace the influence of one stream of thought upon another is hazardous. The elements of such a study are vague and complicated, and research has not yet provided us with tools adequate for their measurement. One culture permeates another through many mediums—through a kind of osmosis. It is impossible, for example, to prove the exact extent of French Naturalist influence on Victorian life and letters, or, indeed, the precise ways in which that influence was exerted. English travelers were constantly in France—the French, to a less extent, in England. French literature was read in the original as well as in translation, and English writers reflected in various ways the influence of French thought. That Continental Realism and Naturalism reached a wide audience in England is obvious from the large number of English translations of the works of

Balzac, Flaubert, the Goncourts, Daudet, Maupassant, Zola, Huysmans, Ibsen, Tolstoi, and Dostoevski. It is likewise obvious from the number and importance of the magazine and newspaper articles devoted to the questions Naturalism evoked. Balzac was first translated as early as 1834; additional works were issued throughout the century, especially between 1886 and 1890; and from 1895 to 1898 Saintsbury edited the complete edition of the *Comédie humaine* in forty volumes. By the end of the century practically all of Balzac's writings had been translated and were well known to the Victorian literary public. Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and *Salammbô* were translated by 1886, and several new editions or new translations appeared before 1900. Altogether there were nine English publications of Flaubert's works, five translations of the novels of the Goncourts, thirty-five translations of Daudet, twelve of Maupassant, forty-five of Zola, two of Huysmans, nine of Dostoevski; and virtually all of Tolstoi was translated. Ibsen, due to the efforts of Edmund Gosse and William Archer, was also completely translated before 1900. A survey of ten of the leading English journals from 1830 to 1900 reveals over three hundred articles dealing with Realism, Naturalism, or the French writers themselves. The years 1888 to 1889, for Zola and French Naturalism, and the years 1889, 1891, and 1896, for Ibsen, are the most important in the history of the Naturalist controversy.

The direct influence of French Naturalism on English creative writers has been traced in two studies. Margery Oliver's *The Influence of French Naturalism on English Fiction*[1] tracks down the Naturalist influence on George Moore, Thomas Hardy, and Arnold Bennett. The technique of Moore's novels—the detailed background, the emphasis on environment, the references to min-

ute and unsavory details, the portrayal of character from an unidealized, physiological point of view, the Naturalistic plot construction, and, finally, the shift from Naturalism to Impressionism—all show the extent to which Moore was influenced by contemporary French literature. The writings of Hardy and Bennett show similar influences.

The second study—W. C. Frierson's *L'Influence du naturalisme français sur les romanciers anglais de 1885 à 1900*[2]—traces the French influence on the writings of George Moore, Hubert Crackanthorpe, H. D. Lowey, "George Egerton," Henry Harland, Ella D'Arcy, G. S. Street, Ernest Dowson, H. M. Gilbert, Kipling, Arthur Morrison, Somerset Maugham, Henry James, George Gissing, Richard Whiteing, and Arnold Bennett.

In neither of these studies is attention given to the English critical reaction to their own Realistic and Naturalistic writers, but such attention would not materially alter their conclusions, although it would undoubtedly prove a valuable verification and enlargement of some of the considerations raised. It is clear that practically all of the important English writers of the late nineteenth century were, in one way or another, influenced by foreign Naturalism. Most of them, in varying degree, echo the words of Arnold Bennett in 1913: "I have done all my work under the influence of French and Russian novelists. I have been familiar with 'The Experimental Novel' for about twenty-eight years." [3]

Before French Naturalism invaded England, however, England had accumulated a long tradition of critical thought in her own literature. It was this tradition, reinforced by the conservative in the Victorian temper, that was at loggerheads with Naturalism. To understand the full force of the conflict, some of the main characteristics of this tradition should be recalled.

II

An intensive survey of the works of leading English fiction writers substantiates Richard Burton's assertion that the "tendency was toward what has come to be called 'realism' in modern fiction literature . . . It may be roundly asserted that from the first the English novel has stood for truth; that it has grown on the whole more truthful with each generation, as our conception of truth in literature has been widened and become a noble one. The obligation of literature to report life has been felt with increasing sensitiveness."[4]

It may also be asserted that English novelists generally have told their stories with avowed moral intentions. The manner of reconciling Truth with Morality was often misunderstood by the public. Nevertheless, the obligation "to teach and delight" runs like a leitmotiv through the prefaces, forewords, prologues, and critical writings of English storytellers from the earliest times. Chaucer, writing under the pressure of this responsibility, felt obliged, if not to apologize for, at least to explain, his intentions:

> And therefore every gentil wight I preye,
> For Goddes love, demeth nat that I seye
> Of yvel entente, but for I moot reherce
> Hir tales alle, be they bettre or werse,
> Or elles falsen som of my mateere.
> And therefore, whoso list it nat yheere,
> Turne over the leef and chese another tale;
> For he shal fynde yowe, grete and smale,
> Of storial thyng that toucheth gentillesse,
> And eek moralitee and hoolynesse. . . .
> Avyseth yow, and put me out of blame;
> And eek men shal nat maken ernest of game.[5]

Two hundred years later Sir Philip Sidney, in his *Defense of Poesy*, echoed Chaucer's avowal: "Poesie therefore is an arte of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in his word *Mimesis*, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth: to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture: with this end, to teach and delight." As a novelist as well as a poet, Sidney made little distinction between the aesthetic and didactic functions of his work. Nor did other writers of the times. An examination of Gregory Smith's *Elizabethan Critical Essays* amply justifies the general opinion that Sidney's *Defense of Poesy* constitutes an epitome of the literary opinion of the Elizabethan period.

Our chief concern, however, is with fiction, yet the critical writings of the novelists from Defoe to George Eliot only emphasize the earlier English belief in the storyteller's obligation "to teach and delight." Defoe, perhaps with his tongue in his cheek, perhaps reflecting little more than a literary convention, protests almost too much that his purpose is to edify his readers. He seeks, to be sure, to give his writings an air of verisimilitude. He so clothes fictitious incident with detailed documentation that today the *Journal of the Plague Year* is in many ways a historical source book for that year. In *Robinson Crusoe* he attempts to convince the reader of the truth of his story, not only by means of a detailed account of the trivial, routine life of Crusoe on the Island but also by assuring the reader that the author "believes the thing to be a just history of fact; neither is there any appearance of fiction in it."[6] The avowed purpose of Defoe's writing is to improve his readers' morals. *Robinson Crusoe* is written for "the instruction of others by his example." In *Colonel Jack*, "every wicked reader will be encouraged to a

change, and it will appear that the best and only good end of a wicked misspent life is repentence. . . . if this appear to be the whole scope and design of the publishing this story, no objection can lie against it."[7] In *Moll Flanders*,

All possible care . . . has been taken to give no lewd ideas, no immodest turns in the new dressing up of this story; no, not to the worst parts of her expressions. To this purpose some of the vicious part of her life, which could not be modestly told, is quite left out, and several other parts are much shortened. What is left 'tis hoped will not offend the chastest reader or the modestest hearer; and as the best use is made even of the worst story, the moral 'tis hoped will keep the reader serious, even where the story might incline him to be otherwise. To give the history of a wicked life repented of, necessarily requires that the wicked part should be made as wicked as the real history of it will bear, to illustrate and give a beauty to the penitent part, which is certainly the best and brightest, if related with equal spirit and life.

Richardson's detailed analysis of the subtle phases of a woman's heart gives to emotions the illusion of reality that Defoe had given to events, and it anticipates by a hundred years a method to be adopted by the Naturalists, and more particularly by the "later realists" who were concerned with the subconscious and psychoanalytical aspects of character. His psychology may seem superficial to an age educated in Freud and Jung, but the wonder is that it is so often persuasive. Throughout his prefaces, Richardson constantly reiterates his intention, not only to tell the truth but more especially to improve, by example, the morals of his readers. The subtitle to *Pamela* is "Virtue Rewarded." The purpose of *Clarissa* is

to warn the inconsiderate and thoughtless of one sex, against the base arts and designs of specious contrivers of the other—to caution

parents against an undue exercise of their natural authority over their children in the great article of marriage—to warn children against preferring a man of pleasure to a man of probity upon that dangerous but too commonly received notion, *that a reformed rake makes the best husband*—but above all, to investigate the highest and most important doctrines not only of morality, but of Christianity, by showing them thrown into action in the conduct of the worthy characters, while the unworthy, who set these doctrines at defiance, are condignly, and, as may be said, consequentially punished.[8]

Smollett's Realism is satiric, the kind "which brings every incident home to life; and by representing familiar scenes in an uncommon and amusing point of view, invests them with all the graces of novelty, while nature is appealed to in every particular."[9] Sentimental romance, Smollett points out, originated in the Dark Ages when ignorance, vanity, and superstition were rife, when authors, exaggerating human qualities, magnified evil, virtue, and valor. This type of unnatural romance existed until Cervantes and Lesage ridiculed it to its death. Smollett wishes to continue the satire of these writers but promises to part company with them whenever they seem unnatural and improbable. "Every intelligent reader will, at first sight, perceive that I have not deviated from nature, . . . although the circumstances are altered and disguised, to avoid personal satire."[10] His conscientious effort to improve public morality is emphasized at length in the prefaces to his novels. He concludes the dedication of *Ferdinand Count Fathom* with the following self-justification:

If I have not succeeded in my endeavours to unfold the mysteries of fraud, to instruct the ignorant, and entertain the vacant; if I have failed in my attempts to subject folly to ridicule, and vice to indig-

nation; to rouse the spirit of mirth, wake the soul of compassion, and touch the secret springs that move the heart; I have at least advanced virtue with honour and applause; branded iniquity with reproach and shame, and carefully avoided every hint or expression which could give umbrage to the most delicate reader.[11]

Fielding, taking human nature with its hypocrisy and irresolution for his province, holds truth to be the aim of fiction. "The picture must be after nature itself," he writes in one of the many enlightening and not uninteresting interludes that interrupt the story of *Tom Jones*. "Let your rogues act like rogues and your honest men like honest men," he advises the purveyors of popular unnatural romances flooding the country. Anticipating the Naturalists, he sees the novel as a chronicle of events and refuses for the sake of the story "to do violence to the truth and dignity of history." Fielding, like Meredith, knew the true Comic Spirit, which was, not to falsify life, but to point up its incongruities. Yet Fielding's Comic Muse is a proselytizer:

> The stage was not for low farce designed
> But to divert, instruct and mend mankind.

He writes "to laugh men out of their vices and folly," and "to promote the cause of virtue, and expose some of the most glaring evils, public as well as private, which infect at present the country."[12]

Even Scott in his romances contributed to the long English tradition that literature must "teach and delight." The importance he attached to continuity, to the logical and probable development of thematic material, and to the use of detail drawn from actual life distinguishes his novels from the host of sensa-

tional, unreal Gothic romances popular in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries:

> The imitators of Mrs. Radcliffe and Mr. Lewis were before us; personages who, to all the faults and extravagances of their originals, added that of dullness. . . . We strolled through a variety of castles, each of which was regularly called Il Castello; met with as many captains of condottieri; heard various ejaculations of Santa Maria and Diablo; read by a decaying lamp, and in a tapestried chamber, dozens of legends as stupid as the main history; . . . We disapprove of the mode introduced by Mrs. Radcliffe, and followed by Mr. Murphy and her other imitators, by winding up their story with a solution by which all the incidents, appearing to partake of the mystic and marvellous, are resolved by very simple and natural causes . . . there is a total and absolute disproportion between the cause and effect, which must disgust every reader much more than if he were left under the delusion of ascribing the whole to supernatural agency.[13]

In contrast with the unnatural, improbable romances of his period, Scott finds in Jane Austen's novels a style that does not alarm the imagination or attempt to amuse the fancy by a wild variety of incident. She avoids those sentimental scenes that rarely occur among those who actually live and die: "The substitute for these excitements, which had lost much of their poignancy by the repeated and injudicious use of them, was the art of copying from nature as she really exists in the common walks of life, and presenting to the reader . . . a correct and striking presentation of that which is daily taking place around him."[14]

But for Scott the novel must not only be truthful: it must also be moral. The morality, however, must come naturally and inevitably from the story, as it does in Jane Austin's novels:

" . . . hers is that unpretending kind of instruction which is furnished by real life."[15]

Other "lady novelists" of the period, like Jane Austen, made war on sentimentality. Maria Edgeworth, following Frances (Fanny) Burney, sought to expose the false standards of contemporary morality. Her own writing, nevertheless, is as obviously didactic as that of the writers of the eighteenth century: ". . . the love of virtue and the handling of vice [can] be effectively taught by precept and example, without violating the law of probability or outraging the bounds of common sense. [In] these Moral Tales . . . are embodied the purest principles of moral rectitude, conveyed in the pleasing garb of virtue and truth."[16]

As the nineteenth century advanced, fiction, like the social order, became more democratic. Turning away from medieval and supernatural themes, it concerned itself more and more with psychological and social problems. Attempting more than an exposure of falsehood and hypocrisy, after the manner of Fielding, it sought consciously and conscientiously to achieve reform of glaring social evils. The interest of a Kingsley or of a Dickens in the slums, in educational reform, in prison and poorhouse conditions, in the problems of the masses was so intense that novels often became social tracts. Although Dickens had little specific affinity with the French Naturalists, his concern with social problems and his detailed, sympathetic portrayal of the life of the poor link him with them. The didactic nature of Dickens' novels would be obvious even if the prefaces did not constantly reiterate his intention to improve the moral and social conditions of the times. In *Oliver Twist*, he "saw no reason . . . why

the very dregs of life, so long as their speech did not offend the ear, should not serve the purpose of a moral, at least as its froth and cream."[17]

The three most influential novelists just preceding the greatest period of the Naturalistic influence in England were Thackeray, George Eliot, and Trollope. Thackeray's sharp criticism of contemporary society, his uncompromising rejection of traditional ideas merely because of their orthodoxy, his quarrels with the sentimentalists, of whom he felt Dickens to be one, and his large, sharp portraits of character caused him to be compared constantly with Balzac by contemporary critics. Of this similarity, the conservative *Dublin University Magazine* for December, 1864, writes:

No two men could have appeared more fitted to stereotype the manners of such an age as this than Balzac and Thackeray. Without being dazzled by the glare or stunned by the noise of the world, they watched the scene narrowly, penetrated beneath the surface of social life, and discovered the simple machinery by which it was all worked. They glided noiselessly through the gay masquerade with us, telling us strange stories, and occasionally lifting the mask of some passer-by, when we saw what miserably padded wretches the blustering hectors of life often are; and as to the Venuses and Dianas, when we come close to them—and they had their masks off—we saw that so far from being goddesses, they were very ordinary people indeed. Consequently, instead of describing imaginary heroes and heroines, these keen observers of life have depicted men and women. . . . They forced their way through external appearances, through the elegant outworks of life, and dragged human nature to view in all its terrible and truthful reality.[18]

In the Preface to *Pendennis*, Thackeray sets forth his purpose to tell the truth. He declines to draw exciting pictures of "active

horrors," escapes, battles, murders, executions, the manners of ruffians and jailbirds à la M. Eugène Sue:

> . . . of a writer, who delivers himself up to you unreservedly, you say, is he honest? Does he tell the truth in the main? Does he seem actuated by a desire to find out all and speak it? Is he a quack, who shams sentiment, and mouths for effect? Does he seek popularity by claptraps or other arts? . . . I ask you to believe that this person writing strives to tell the truth. If there is not that, there is nothing. . . . Since the author of *Tom Jones* was buried, no writer of fiction among us has been permitted to depict to his utmost power a Man. We must drape him, and give him a certain conventional simper. Society will not tolerate the Natural in our art.[19]

Thackeray, after the manner of Fielding, constantly thrusts himself into the pages of his novels: "Be cautious then, young ladies; be wary how you engage. Be shy of loving frankly; never tell all you feel—(a better way still), feel very little . . . That is the way to get on, and be respected, and have a virtuous character in Vanity Fair."[20] These pleasant, if didactic, interludes in which Thackeray delivers himself of a sermon led Taine to write of him as the characteristic Englishman and to find the chief distinction between the English and French temperament to be the difference between Balzac and Thackeray. Thackeray and the English, Taine argues, saw man as an aggregate of vices and virtues, never as a psychological being, and the same may be said of English criticism, philosophy, and religion.[21] However exaggerated this conclusion, Taine was recognizing the obvious fact that English life and letters were strongly colored by moral earnestness, while French life and letters remained relatively aloof to proselytizing.

George Eliot continued the English tradition with some modification, although her writings indicate the definite influence of the new scientific and Naturalistic thought of the period. It is of more than coincidental significance that the *Origin of Species* and *Adam Bede* appeared the same year. Both emphasize science as the revealer of truth. Darwin traced the biological significance of environment on man. George Eliot traced the spiritual significance of environment on character. Intimately acquainted with the scientific and philosophic ideas of the day, she was also considerably influenced by the work of her husband, George Lewes, a journalist of repute, a student of the arts, a philosopher of some standing, and a scientist whose discoveries attracted wide attention in his own day. She was also influenced by the French philosopher Comte, whose Positivism considerably colored Naturalism. "My gratitude increases continually for the illumination Comte has contributed to my life," she wrote in one of her letters, an acknowledgment often repeated in her correspondence.[22] So great was her interest in the scientific thought of the age that she contributed an article, "The Influence of Rationalism," a review of Lecky's history of the subject, to the *Fortnightly* in 1865.

Nine years earlier she had published in the *Westminster Review* an article entitled "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists," in which she set forth her antipathy to the unreal, sentimental novel of the day.[23] In one of the interludes of *Adam Bede* she anticipates the criticism of her readers that she has not, but could have, put into the mouth of the rector some truly spiritual advice, some beautiful things, quite as good as a sermon, and replies:

Certainly I could, if I held it the highest vocation of the novelist to represent things as they never have been and never will be.

Then, of course, I might refashion life and character, entirely after my own liking. . . . But it happens, on the contrary, that my strongest effort is . . . to give a faithful account of men and things as they have mirrored themselves in my mind. The mirror is doubtless defective; the outlines will sometimes be disturbed, the reflection faint or confused; but I feel as much bound to tell you as precisely as I can what that reflection is, as if I were in the witness-box narrating my experience on oath.[24]

One is reminded of Charlotte Brontë's observation in *Jane Eyre*: ". . . I am not writing to flatter parental egotism, to echo cant, or prop up humbug; I am merely telling the truth."

George Eliot, in spite of her emphasis on truth, would have had little sympathy with the Naturalists when they argue that art is indifferent to morality. The exhortative spirit of her writings, the emphasis on character and duty, the warm sympathy with the commonplace characters who fill her works, the unhesitating criticism of error and weakness distinguish her from most of her French contemporaries. In the opinion of Brunetière, she is the highest exponent of the essential aims for which Realism, in the finest sense of the term, really stands—the type of Realism that elevates English fiction above that of French, both in conception and in execution.[25]

The leading English fiction writers from Defoe to George Eliot constantly sought to portray life truthfully and realistically in their writings. From an objective interpretation of character, their Realism developed into a deeper interpretation of emotions and ideas and became involved, in later days, with science, psychology, and psychoanalysis. In its emphasis on Realism the English fiction of the nineteenth century had much in common with that of France, but, generally speaking, a wide

chasm separated them. Brunetière felt that the English possessed a warmer sympathy for their scenes and characters, that they had a larger and greater humanity, that their ultimate philosophy included more of life, and that they emphasized the moral as well as the intellectual and aesthetic faculties. Taine felt, on the other hand, that the English were overly didactic, that they reduced man to an aggregate of vices and virtues, portrayed him only in his exterior and social relations, and neglected the inner, psychological elements of his being. To Taine English criticism was always moral, never scientific, English religion was a discipline, not a spontaneous act, and English philosophy was destitute of metaphysics. The cause of this emphasis, he concluded, is to be found in their native energy, their practical education, and the severe, religious instinct which has, in times past, made them Protestant and Puritan.

The English themselves accepted this difference and did not hesitate to attack the French for what they felt to be their grievous moral shortcomings; indeed, to many Victorians "French" and "immoral" were synonymous. The English journals of the nineteenth century are full of comparisons, not a few of them invidious and odious. Many were drawn during the controversy over Naturalism, but the conclusion that such comparisons were peculiar only to the late nineteenth century is not justified by an examination of the journals of the early part of the period. Bulwer's observation in the *Monthly Review* for July, 1834, is typical: "Well might a late association of virtuous Frenchmen denounce the frightful character of their present fashionable literature, and declare that, unless stemmed speedily, it would overwhelm the nation with such a tide of impurity as would make it nauseous in the estimation of the world."[26] Bulwer ar-

gues that English literature historically, unlike French literature, has a profound reverence, as have the English people, for chastity in their women. Other critics vituperatively attack the decadence and immorality of the French drama, the lack of moral emphasis in French fiction, and the general laxity in French life.[27] The typical attitude of the English public toward literary morality is summed up in the conservative *Monthly Review* for May, 1835, in an article entitled "The Pilgrims of Walsingham": "It is not too much to say, that to our novels, the established rules which refined society acknowledge and study has been greatly indebted; and the delicacy of our public morals have been brought about more by these multiform codes of social morality, than by the schoolroom or the pulpit." That the hostility of the English toward the French was a bias of long standing is made clear in the *Quarterly Review* in 1843: "The mutual opinions entertained by French and English of each other, were in the last century universally admitted and agreed upon. The Englishman was a sturdy, carnivorous, independent clown; the Frenchman a lantern-jawed skeleton (the epithet was applied to him as far back as Piers Plowman), soup-fed, lace-dizened, and pressed under the triple yoke of 'popery, slavery, and wooden shoes.' " [28]

None of the outstanding English writers of the nineteenth century has summarized as cogently as Trollope the strong moral bias of English letters. In the *Nineteenth Century* for 1879 he traces briefly the part the sermon has had in the development of the English race from its earliest beginnings. But today, he maintains, the sermon is no longer effective in instructing people in prudence and moderation. Its place has been taken by the novel, which must supply the moral instruction for the rising genera-

tion: ". . . the writer of stories must please, or he will be nothing. And he must teach, whether he wish to teach nor not . . . if he can make virtue alluring and vice ugly, while he charms his reader instead of wearying him, then we think that he should not be spoken of generally as being among those workers of iniquity who do evil in their generation."

Trollope evidently felt the necessity of apologizing even for English fiction, which had fallen into some disrepute during the Victorian era because of what appeared to be its dubious moral implications. The pressure brought upon novelists by the public to keep their works free from wickedness, Trollope points out, is traditional: "There have been English novelists by the score,—by the hundreds we may say. Some of them have been very weak; some utterly inefficacious for good or evil; some undoubtedly mischievous in their tendencies. But there has accompanied their growth a general conviction that it behooves the English novelist to be pure."[29]

It was this conviction "that it behooves the English novelist to be pure"—"to teach and delight"—that French Naturalism encountered as it invaded Victorian England. The inevitable conflict revealed the Victorian conscience at its worst—and at its best.

CHAPTER III

"Frail, French, and Thirty"

BALZAC IN ENGLAND

THE CONTROVERSY over Naturalism in England centers about the translations of the writings of Zola and the trial in 1888 of the publisher Henry Vizetelly. The first translations of Zola's novels appeared in 1884. They aroused an immediate storm of protest. Zola, however, was not the first to attract the attention of the English public to the dangers of French Naturalism. Just as in France, Balzac, Baudelaire, Flaubert, and others had opened the way for *Le roman expérimental,* so also in England translations of Balzac's novels, Swinburne's response to Baudelaire, and the articles of Henry James and Saintsbury on French writers had helped to prepare for foreign Realism and Naturalism. English critics of the later Victorian era remembered Balzac as the father of French Realism, the chief precursor of Naturalism.

Balzac's literary career in England spanned the entire Victorian period. A translation of *Scenes from Parisian Life* was published by Fraser as early as 1834. The next translation, that of *Mother and Daughter,* did not appear until 1842. From then until the end of the century Balzac's fiction appeared reg-

ularly either in the monthly or annual magazines or in book form. English critics, at first hostile to these translations, as the century advanced became more and more persuaded of Balzac's genius. The record of Balzac's literary reputation in England is a revealing commentary on changing literary fashions and an important chapter in the history of the Victorian conscience. A comparison of the early criticism with the later indicates the growth of Balzac's literary reputation. The reasons for the "growth" become clear when we turn later to a consideration of other literary reputations.

II

In 1836 the *Quarterly Review*—destined throughout the century to voice reactionary criticism—vituperatively attacked the entire group of contemporary French writers. Pointing to Rousseau and Diderot as the demoniac sources of the new fiction, it protested that

> . . . a baser, meaner, filthier scoundrel never polluted society than M. de Balzac's standard of "public morals," nor one who better exemplified the divine warning—"Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so a good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit."[1]

For this critic, *Études philosophiques* is "nothing but demoralizing maxims exemplified by licentious examples."

Although most of the commentators were cautious, not all of them were completely hostile. The liberal *Westminster Review* in 1838, for example, recommended to the young and curious ". . . the good, homely honesty of Balzac's citizens . . . [as] an excellent antidote to the showy morality, and fostering

of pride, vanity, emulation, and exclusiveness our own novels furnish them."[2]

By 1840 Balzac was more widely known. His name appeared frequently in magazines, and translations of his shorter pieces were published in several periodicals. The substance of two articles in the *Monthly Review* for this year is that Balzac is "an observer of the world, and a faithful delineator of all its phases."[3] In 1844, however, this same magazine flays Balzac in a denunciation of foreign novels in general and French novels in particular:

> It is well known that the French writers borrowed from Hoffman all the psychological aberrations, all the demoniac frights in the most exalted states of crime, passion, or fear. It is only the inclination toward obscene scenes, the amalgamation of voluptuousness and cruelty that belongs to their own invention. Balzac, Sue, Janin, Kock, Raynard, Sand . . . and the whole host of their own imitators, all vied in the representation of human vices and torments in their worst aspect.[4]

This same year the *Foreign Quarterly* again warns its young readers to beware of Balzac, whose works are insidious and wanting in delicacy, whose ideas flout natural manners and natural thinking as ridiculous, whose morality intimates that only Parisian refinement can make a human being estimable.[5] The writer feels able to recommend only *Le Curé de Tours* and *Le Médecin de Campagne* as fit for young women.

Although minor notices and reviews of Balzac's works were constantly appearing, the next important article was not published until 1853 in the *Westminster Review*. This liberal periodical, again as fifteen years earlier, leaped to the defense, deploring the fact that Balzac is so little known in England and

eulogizing him as the head of the Realistic school of French writers. His novels differ from previous French fiction, the writer points out, by their emphasis on reality, the truthfulness of their characters, the simple but natural motivation of their intrigues, and the refusal of the author to sacrifice truth in order to effect a happy ending where the good are respectably married and the bad are cast into a single-lived perdition. Like Richardson and Defoe, Balzac uses realistic detail to achieve credibility in the circumstances of everyday life. In answer to an attack on *The Physiology of Marriage* the writer argues that "Balzac had a far more elevated notion of virtue than those who have attacked him. He knew how to distinguish between virtue, and the homage which vice pays to virtue, and admiring it profoundly, found it, like all things worthy of profound admiration, exceedingly rare."[6]

Five years later the *Westminster Review,* in a discussion of "Realism in Art: Recent German Fiction," points to Balzac as one whose Realism might well be emulated. The German Realists—Heyse, Ludwig, Mügge, Freitag, Keller, etc.—are simply photographic. Balzac analyzes character and motive; he gives us the only Realism that is the basis of sound art:

> . . . its antithesis is not Idealism, but Falsism. When our painters represent peasants with regular features and irreproachable linen: when their milkmaids have the air of Keepsake beauties, whose costume is picturesque, and never old or dirty; . . . when the conversation of the parlour and drawing-room is a succession of philosophical remarks, expressed with great clearness and logic, an attempt is made to idealize, but the result is simply falsification and bad art. To misrepresent the forms of ordinary life is no less an offence than to misrepresent the forms of ideal life; a pug-nosed Apollo, or Jupiter in a great-coat, would not be more truly shock-

ing to an artistic mind than are those senseless falsifications of nature into which incompetence is led under the pretence of idealizing, of "beautifying nature."[7]

The question of true and false Realism troubled Victorian critics throughout the century. It was the basis of the philosophical and aesthetic attack on Naturalism in the eighties and nineties, but early in the controversies Balzac's Realism is recognized as the Realism of spirit, emotion, and character.

Few of the periodicals of this period are as enthusiastic as the *Westminster Review.* In fact, some, like the *Irish Quarterly Review,* oppose fiction altogether. Of Balzac's works it writes that "human passions are the prime movers in his *Comédie Humaine;* there is no high presiding influence directing their operations for any purpose of good."[8] The writer denounces the whole school of French writers of the period, applying to them all—Balzac, Dumas, Viron, Planche, and Sue—the remark of Mirecourt on Théophile Gautier: " . . . if you state anything in his presence whose truth or accuracy rests on Christian ethics, he stares at you as if you were uttering words in an unknown tongue."

Bentley's Miscellany, the year following, can recall no French author more skilful than Balzac in the presentation of characters or more thoroughly French in ideas and manners. Yet it deplores doctrines subversive of that morality which, fortunately, exists among the English:

> We regret much, for the sake of France, that we are forced to the conviction that every work of art written by de Balzac gave one more blow to French morality, and that the deplorable condition of society in that country is in a great measure owing to the success of the school of which he was the arch-teacher. The author

of *Le Père Goriot* has passed away from us, but the terrible influences of his pernicious doctrines exercised upon society will last as long as the reputation of the author.[9]

Between 1864 and 1867 the *Dublin University Magazine* published a series of four articles on Balzac. Its attitude toward French literature is summed up thus: "More than once, when contemplating in a library, the cheery bright-coloured backs of some of these volumes, we have been forcibly reminded of the wasp displaying his bright and strongly contrasted hues, but cunningly keeping his sting out of sight."[10] The reviewer, however, is more generous to Balzac than to many of his contemporaries. Although he does not find him entirely free from the vices and taints peculiar to French novelists, he feels that his works, on the whole, have little of what a fastidious reader would term "objectionable." In fact, he concedes that "many of his works are wholly free from any trace of the dreaded taint."

The traditional English emphasis on morality in literature is heavily stressed by the critics. In 1868 Trollope's magazine, *St. Paul's,* calls Balzac a whimsical, absurd man, a humorist whom it is interesting to read in those works which are not concerned with disease, depravity, and distortion, but who, when dealing with the latter, brings his readers "into a close contact and familiarity with vice, from which few minds can reasonably hope to escape with total impunity."[11] The *Fortnightly Review* in 1871 notes that English readers do not care for a novel in which illicit relations between the sexes seem to be the only important relations in life, and in which the inexperienced become demoralized by a vivid representation of evil. "Novels in

England are written to be read by girls and boys; novels in France are not."[12]

Leslie Stephen, in the *Fortnightly* for this same year, recognizes Balzac's ability to create intense actors and impressive scenery but argues that his work as a whole is not true to life. His visions, fantastic and grotesque, are those of an opium eater. He tricks the reader into believing these visions to be true by the use of detail, familiar incident, intimate description, after the manner of Defoe, but his philosophy is fundamentally a diseased and exaggerated cynicism:

> Now Balzac, though he shows powers which are unsurpassed or unequalled, possessed a mind which, to put it gently, was not exactly well-regulated. He took a pleasure in dwelling upon horrors from which a healthy imagination shrinks. . . . I do not say that this makes his work immoral in the ordinary sense. . . . But, from a purely artistic point of view, he is injured by his morbid tendencies. . . . Therefore, the *Comédie humaine*, instead of being an accurate picture of human life, and appealing to the sympathies of all human beings, is a collection of monstrosities, whose vices are unnatural, and whose virtues are rather like their vices.[13]

Even Henry James, who, through his articles on Musset, Gautier, Baudelaire, George Sand, Flaubert, and others, helped to introduce French literature to the English public, feels that Balzac has little sense of morality; "and this," he adds, "we cannot help thinking a serious fault in a novelist."

> Be the morality false or true, the writer's deference to it greets us as a kind of essential perfume. We find such a perfume in Shakespeare; we find it, in spite of his so-called cynicism, in Thackeray; we find it, potently, in George Eliot; in George Sand, in Turgénieff. They care for moral questions; they are haunted by a moral ideal.[14]

James was among the first, however, to recognize the huge, all-compassing, all-devouring love of reality characteristic of Balzac's genius. Swinburne too was fulsome in his praise and considered Balzac's analysis of character worthy for Browning to follow.[15] Six years earlier he had written: "The word realism has a higher and a baser sense; there is the grand spiritual realism of Balzac or Browning, as well as the crude and facile realism, or vulgarism, rather, of writers wanting alike in spirit and in form."[16]

From 1877 to 1878 a series of eulogistic Balzac articles appeared in various periodicals. The conservative *Blackwood's* praises the intensity of his scenes, objects to his occasionally morbid imagination, and excuses his lack of morality on the ground that he is executing a faithful picture of life, and consequently must draw pictures which at times might bring a blush to the cheeks of enlightened innocence.[17] The *Temple Bar* refers to Balzac as "the king of thought,"[18] and the *Gentleman's Magazine,* observing that the nudity of the human nature he portrays so startles English prudery that he has but a small audience, concludes that Balzac writes for men, not for boys and girls.[19]

The *Edinburgh Review* as late as 1878 finds Balzac's *Human Comedy* awful, dark, despairing—a comedy, not divine, but full of darker horrors than Dante ever dreamed:

> The philosophy of Fielding is only a laughing humour in comparison, and the supposed cynicism of Thackeray is but piquant "malice," in the French sense of the word, devoid of bitterness. George Eliot, indeed, is the only writer who resembles Balzac in this particular. There is something in her angry scorn of superficial virtue, in her somewhat gloomy insight into the growth and

culmination of evil, in her profound distrust of happiness and disbelief in its possibility, and her perpetual consciousness of the vulgar undercurrent of self-regard which sweeps every obstacle out of its path, which recalls the master of moral anatomy who preceded her.[20]

Perhaps the most typical reaction of the Victorians toward Balzac in 1880 is that of W. S. Lilly, who, in the pages of the *Contemporary Review,* draws a resemblance between Tacitus and Balzac "in their cold scientific exposition of the terrible truth of things," between Michelangelo and Balzac in that both "were anatomists of supreme excellence," and between Shakespeare and Balzac in the high emotional coloring each applied to his work.[21] Lilly qualifies his praise with the observation that Balzac's picture is the product of a materialistic age, somber and terrible, without religion or virtue. His Realism, nevertheless, is not that of the Naturalists who portray ". . . the shambles and latrines of human nature. There is as much difference between his work and . . . M. Zola's, as there is between a portrait of Holbein or Titian, and a cheap effort of the photographic art."

Few important articles on Balzac appeared between 1880 and 1885. By 1886 his reputation in England was so firmly established that such cautious journals as the *Cornhill* could give him unqualified approval, could compare him, in extravagant terms, to Rabelais, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Scarron, Molière, Lesage, Richardson, Scott, and Beaumarchais. Like theirs ". . . his name is graven forever in the Pantheon of letters beside the greatest of the great." [22] But even as late as 1886 some hostile critics remained. The journals were less severe, but many of them feel, as did the conservative *Spectator,* that Balzac has no uni-

versal appeal, that his morality is sordid, unhealthy, and morbid, that his philosophy is decadent, that he will not stand the test of time (no less then eight of his novels were then being translated), and, finally, that he is responsible for originating Naturalism:

> The confusing of the unbridled with the powerful is a common form of mistake. The value of unrestrained writing depends on the mind behind it. . . . It may flow from a Shakespeare or a Zola. We are not comparing such a writer as Balzac to the last of these, any more than to the first; but we suspect Balzac to be very answerable for him, as also for the worship of the great god Improper, from the one eternal side of wives' aberrations, which, in the hands of the later French novelists, has become so intensely tiresome and so socially popular. . . . The inventor or discoverer of that dangerous element in life . . . the woman of thirty years, has caused the peopling of the market ever since with unhushed seraglios of divers woes, whose houris, to do Balzac justice, resembles his only in this—that they are frail, French, and thirty.[23]

Although Balzac was held responsible by many Victorians for fathering Naturalism, he was exonerated from most of the charges brought against the Zolaists. Indeed, as Naturalism became more widely known in England, Balzac's reputation, by comparison, improved. The comparison drawn between Balzac and Zola in the *Temple Bar* is typical of the reactions of many of the English journals of this later period:

> In his most outspoken passages, the former maintains a certain decent reserve, which the latter and his followers—those shameless purveyors of hideous garbage—have set aside. . . . This new school has imagined the impossible. Hyenas, delighting in carrion, they have lost touch with humanity; and the contrast between their corrupt imaginations and the searching analysis of Balzac is as

great as that between the obscene ravings of delirium tremens and the quiet dignity of a clinical demonstration.[24]

Yet, complains the reviewer, the writings of Balzac, in spite of their excellent construction, their terrible logic, their lack of didacticism, and their avoidance of the "happy ending" so common to the contemporary English three-volume novel, can not be wholly transferred to England where the veil is drawn tightly over human nature. "Our maidens may study physiology and pathology in company with young men of their own age; but our men and matrons must not read stories touching matters which every woman over thirty—and most over twenty—know by heart." [25]

III

In 1899 George Moore, in the *Fortnightly,* hails Balzac as the greatest of all creative geniuses because of his profound insight into human passion and his understanding of the "racking inquietude of existence":

As a traveller in the unknown East, standing on the last ridge of the last hill, sees a city, and in awe contemplates the walls fabulous with terraces and gates, the domes and the towers clothed in all the light of the heavens, so does the imaginative reader view the vast sections into which the Human Comedy is so eloquently divided. . . . [Balzac's] criticism of life seems to me as profound as Thackeray's is trivial and insignificant, and as beautifully sincere and virile as George Eliot's is canting and pedantic; and today it is more living than when he wrote, for he was enormously, incomprehensibly, in advance of his time and able by intuitive knowledge of the inherent qualities of things to divine all latent possibilities.[26]

In the nineties the critics, following Moore, are almost unanimously appreciative of Balzac. He has become the "Holbein in literature," [27] and his work, transcending any single school of fiction, has had tremendous influence on all the more advanced German, Russian, American, French, and English novelists of the late nineteenth century.[28] The *Gentleman's Magazine* epitomizes current opinion when it praises Balzac for holding the mirror up to nature, for depicting vice and virtue side by side without confounding them, for not always punishing the wicked and arranging for the good to "live happy ever after," and for the sincerity of his criticism of life. "His diagnosis of the evils of his time is as searching as it is fearless, and yet exhibiting neither the pessimism of Ibsen nor the moral squalor of Zola, with his gospel of sordid facts unrelieved by any spiritual aspiration." [29]

By 1898, the year Saintsbury issued a definitive edition of the *Comédie humaine,* Balzac's reputation in England was secure. Arthur Symons' tribute in the *Fortnightly* was a fitting recognition of the ultimate triumph of a stormy literary reputation. Symons argued that Balzac's greatness is to be found, not in his miscalled Realism, not in his patient observations, not in his photographic reproductions of life, not in his scientific theories, but rather in that insight into humanity which comes to the great dreamers and the great poets. Balzac possesses the power ". . . to give us so much life that we are almost overpowered by it, as by an air almost too vigorous to breathe; the exuberance of creation which makes the Sibyl of Michelangelo something more than human, which makes Lear something more than human, is one kind or another of divinity." [30] Balzac, Symons points out, transcends any formula such as realism, pessimism, or materialism. He shares, in his concerns with the world, the

philosophy of all great artists. With Michelangelo and Shakespeare, a genius such as Balzac " . . . will find spirit everywhere; nothing for him will be inert matter, everything will have its particle of the universal life. One of those divine spies, for whom the world has no secrets, he will be neither pessimist nor optimist; he will accept the world as a man accepts the woman he loves, as much for her defects as for her virtues." [31]

Thus do literary fashions change. In the thirties ". . . a baser, meaner, filthier scoundrel never polluted society" than Balzac. In the nineties the man who had gathered "figs of thistles"—whose people are "frail, French, and thirty"—has become one of those "divine spies, for whom the world has no secrets," who finds "spirit everywhere," and who gives "us so much life that we are overpowered by it."

CHAPTER IV

"The Fleshly School"

BAUDELAIRE IN ENGLAND

THE HUE and cry over Balzac proved a minor skirmish compared with the ugly battle over Swinburne, Rossetti, and the Pre-Raphaelites generally. This conflict in the sixties and seventies foreshadowed the controversies to center in the eighties on Zola and in the nineties on Ibsen. The Victorians, while roundly denouncing "the want of reticence" in their own writers, traced the ultimate source of pollution to French influence—more specifically, to Baudelaire.

Baudelaire's revolt against the extravagances of Romanticism and the artificialities of the contemporary poetic style; his frank employment of themes previously considered immoral and unpoetic; his glorification of the senses; his passion for the faithful presentation of experience; his belief that literature is unconcerned with conventional morality; and his insistence on the inviolable sovereignty of art—all link him and the Pre-Raphaelites with the Realists, Naturalists, and later Aesthetes. His alleged paganism, sensuality, and materialism aroused censorship in France and, by way of Swinburne, who introduced him to the English, provoked the wrath of the Victorians.

II

With the exception of a few occasional poems, no translations of Baudelaire's poetry appeared until 1894. In 1862, however, Swinburne wrote an anonymous review of *Les fleurs du mal* for the *Spectator,*[1] which caused no little surprise to the subscribers of this eminently respectable journal. Swinburne's article was based on the second French edition of the poems. The first edition had appeared in 1857, was prosecuted by the French courts the same year, and six of the poems ordered expurgated. When the second edition appeared in 1861, the first edition was exceedingly rare. Swinburne, remembering the bitter attack in France on Baudelaire, castigated the great mass of readers who believe that "a poem is the better for containing a moral lesson or assisting in a tangible and material good work." Indeed, the greatness of Baudelaire's poetry lies in the fact that it is free from all didacticism, from "all whining and windy lamentation, . . . [from] the blubbering and shrieking style long since exploded." Baudelaire's perception of truth, his grace, and his faultless workmanship and the charm of his whole manner place him far above most contemporary poets.

Swinburne, anticipating Victorian antagonism on the score of morality, sought to forestall the attack:

> Certain critics, who will insist on going into this matter, each man as deep as his small leaden plummet will reach, have discovered what they call a paganism on the spiritual side of the author's tone of thought. Stripped of its coating of jargon, this may mean that the poet spoken of endeavours to look at most things with the eye of an old-world poet; that he aims at regaining the clear and simple view of writers content to believe in the beauty of material subjects. To us, if this were the meaning of

these people, we must say it seems a foolish one; for there is not one of these poems that could have been written in a time when it was not the fashion to dig for moral motives. . . . [The] moral side of the book is not thrust forward in the foolish and repulsive manner of a half-taught artist. . . . But those who will look for them may find moralities in plenty behind every poem of M. Baudelaire's; . . . Like a medieval preacher, when he has drawn the heathen love, he puts sin on its right hand, and death on its left. It is not his or any artist's business to warn against evil; but certainly he does not exhort to it, knowing well enough that one fault is as great as the other.

Swinburne later qualified this first enthusiasm, but he never lost his original admiration for the French poet. Owing to the unfortunate circumstance that a letter from Baudelaire to Swinburne failed of delivery, the two poets did not meet. When Baudelaire died in 1867, Swinburne again praised the French poet, in his book on Blake, and composed the noble elegy "Ave Atque Vale," the imagery of which is largely drawn from *Les fleurs du mal.*

Swinburne continued throughout his life to fight the critics who denounced art on moral grounds. The *Spectator* in 1862, three months before Swinburne's anonymous defense of Baudelaire, had published an attack on Meredith's *Modern Love.* Swinburne wrote an angry letter to the magazine, in which he asserted that there are already enough pulpits for preachers, that the business of writers is not sermonizing, and that poetry dealing in dogmatic morality is so much the worse for doing so:

. . . it is too much to expect that all schools of poetry are to be forever subordinate to the one just now so much in request with us, whose scope of sight is bounded by the nursery walls, that all Muses are to bow down before her who babbles, with lips yet warm

from her pristine pap, after the dangling delights of a child's coral; and jingles with flaccid fingers one knows not whether a jester's or a baby's bells. We have too many writers capable of handling a subject with the serious interest of men.[2]

III

Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads* appeared in 1866. Shortly thereafter the *Spectator* published a malicious satire entitled "The Session of the Poets" and signed "Caliban." [3] Swinburne and William Michael Rossetti eventually identified the author as the writer Robert Buchanan, who apparently was seeking revenge on Swinburne in particular and the Pre-Raphaelites in general for a slighting reference Swinburne had made to David Gray, a young poet to whom Buchanan had been deeply attached and whose death from consumption at the age of twenty-four had profoundly shocked him. William Michael Rossetti returned the insult in kind, and ugly remarks were published back and forth to the end of the decade. *Tinsley's Magazine,* the *Contemporary Review,* the *Spectator,* and the *Quarterly Review*[4]—to mention only the most bitter—joined in the assault on Swinburne, accusing the *Poems and Ballads* of paganism, vulgarity, brutality, bestiality, and general unhealthiness. Throughout the controversy Baudelaire's name frequently appeared as the chief source of the decadence of Pre-Raphaelite poetry.

In 1870, in the midst of the controversy, Dante Gabriel Rossetti's volume entitled *Poems* was published. Swinburne, still smarting from the reception his own volume had received and anticipating similar attacks on Rossetti, published in the *Fortnightly Review* an extravagant and belligerent eulogy of Rossetti. He took the occasion to belabor the "decriers of the age"—those blind to excellence in anything modern:

In every age there is some question raised as to its wants and powers, its strength and weakness, its great or small worth and work; and in every age that question is waste of time and speech; . . . there has never been an age that was not degenerate in the eyes of its own fools. . . . Each century has seemed to some of its children an epoch of decadence and decline in national life and spiritual, in moral or material glory; Dante's generation and Shakespeare's, Milton's and Shelley's, have all been ages of poetic decay in their turn, as the age of Hugo now is; there, as here, there was no great man to be seen, no great work was to be done, no great cry was to be heard, no great impulse was to be felt, by those who could feel nothing, hear nothing, do nothing and see nothing. . . . I am content to assume . . . that the qualities which make men great and the work of men famous are now what they were, and will be what they are; that there is no progress or degeneracy traceable from Aeschylus to Shakespeare, from Athenian sculptors to Venetian painters.[5]

Rossetti's poems were widely acclaimed, the volume went through printing after printing, and his fame as a poet was securely established. A year passed. The quarrel with "Caliban" Buchanan seemed also to have passed. Rossetti, ever hypersensitive to criticism, was reassured.

Then came the *Contemporary Review* for October, 1871. In it appeared an article entitled "The Fleshly School of Poetry" under the signature of "Thomas Maitland." [6] It was a brutal attack on Rossetti, whose *Poems* was then in its fifth edition. Swinburne, Baudelaire, even Tennyson, did not escape the lash:

The fleshliness of "Vivien" may indeed be described as the distinct quality held in common by all the members of the last sub-Tennyson school, and it is a quality which becomes unwholesome when there is no moral or intellectual quality to temper and control it. Fully conscious of this themselves, the fleshly gentlemen have bound themselves by solemn league and covenant to extol

fleshliness as the distinct and supreme end of poetic and pictorial art; to aver that poetic expression is greater than poetic thought, and by inference that the body is greater than the soul, and sound superior to sense . . .

Baudelaire is described as a slave to his own devil, a dandy of the brothel, a Brummel of the stews, and fifth-rate "littérateur," chosen by Rossetti and Swinburne as godfather of their own unsavory writings:

All that is worst in Mr. Swinburne belongs to Baudelaire. The offensive choice of subject, the obtrusion of unnatural passion, the blasphemy, the wretched animalism, are all taken intact out of the *Fleurs du Mal.* . . . The fleshly school of verse-writers . . . are spreading the seeds of disease broadcast. . . . Their complaint too is catching, and carries off many young persons. . . . Mr. Swinburne . . . was only a little mad boy letting off squibs. . . . "I will be naughty!" screamed the little boy. . . . In petticoats or pantaloons, in modern times or in the middle ages, he is just Mr. Rossetti, a fleshly person, with nothing particular to tell us or teach us. . . . At times, in reading such books as this, one cannot help wishing, that things had remained forever in the asexual state described in Mr. Darwin's great chapter on Palingenesis. . . . Productions of this sort are "silly sooth" in good earnest, though they delight some newspaper critics of the day, and are copied by young gentlemen with animal faculties morbidly developed by too much tobacco and too little exercise.

Rossetti soon discovered the author of the attack. It was Robert Buchanan, the "Caliban" of "The Session of the Poets." But the damage had been done. Rossetti was crushed, and his death in 1882 was probably hastened by abornomal brooding over the revolting affair. He did defend himself with dignity and courage in an open letter, entitled "The Stealthy School of Criticism," to the *Athenaeum* (December 16, 1871), but his

mind never fully regained its balance. Swinburne rushed to the defense in an article, "Under the Microscope." Sidney Colvin, H. Buxton Forman, and a number of other leading critics, in protests to the *Contemporary Review,* denied the charge of sensuality, either in execution or intent, and asserted that Rossetti's sole aim was to render spiritual life in poetic form. Buchanan replied in a more scurrilous and offensive piece, "The Monkey and the Microscope." Swinburne wrote a letter to the *Examiner,* entitled "The Devil's Due," signing it "Thomas Maitland." Buchanan sued Swinburne and the publisher for libel—and won the suit. The judge, Mr. Justice Archibald, speaking of Rossetti, Swinburne, even William Morris, declared that "it would have been better if they had never written, and that if all the poetry of the Fleshly School were committed to the flames tomorrow, the world would be very much the better for it." [7]

Buchanan was ostracized by colleagues and friends alike for his shameful activities, but the fact remains that he did not stand alone: popular judgment, at least for the time, was undoubtedly on his side. The *Quarterly Review, Blackwood's Magazine,* the *Scotland Review, Galaxy, Temple Bar,* and "The Society for the Suppression of Vice" renewed their efforts to purify the land. William Stigand, in *Belgravia* in 1871,[8] joined Buchanan in assailing Baudelaire. He accused him of sensuality, of erecting evil as a god and as a principle of art, of taking more loathsome forms of corruption and vice as matter meet for song than ever were so employed before, and of raising in their behalf diabolical chants of adoration:

To us it seems as absurd to deny the use of moral power to the poet and the artist, as it would be to deny it to the orator, or to

any form of human expression. To us it appears that the aim of all art whatever is to excite sensations, which sensations in art may be of the order of the beautiful, or the pathetic, or the sublime; and in each case, the moral sense, if artistically appealed to, will join with and enhance the sensations.

A magazine, *Days Doings,* was prosecuted in 1875 at the instigation of the Society for the Suppression of Vice for printing a picture of a nude woman. The defense proved the picture to be a copy of a work of a well-known artist, but the judge put the case to trial on the grounds of indecency. Ministers took up the campaign on Buchanan's behalf. In the *Christian World* for July of the year following, the Reverend W. H. Wylie wrote a long defense of Buchanan and regretted, among other things, that Swinburne had failed to take his advice to abandon blasphemy and the sensual vein of Baudelaire.

George Saintsbury then entered the battle on behalf of Baudelaire and, indirectly, of the Pre-Raphaelites. Little was popularly known in 1875 about the French poet. His reputation in England had been determined largely by the "Fleshly School" controversy. Saintsbury, through the *Fortnightly Review,* reminded the Victorians that Baudelaire's influence was second to none on contemporary French poetry, and that it would be difficult to find another who equaled him in intensity of expression and originality of conception. He sought to persuade the English critics, then busy denouncing Swinburne's Baudelairian tendencies, of the fallacy of the popular notion that an artist must necessarily take pleasure in the subject represented in his art before he can find pleasure in the representation itself. He admitted it was difficult to persuade a public already suspicious

of anything smacking of French, whether poetry or prose, styles in clothes or morality.[9]

Saintsbury deprecated any attempt to introduce questions of morality into literature as "a blunder and a confusion of the stupidest kind," yet since the matter had been raised, he felt obliged to state that he could see no justification for the Régime in France that had condemned six of Baudelaire's poems—a Régime which itself had become almost a byword for the lax morality in conduct and language which it permitted, if it did not actually encourage:

> The pervading tone, from a moral point of view, is simply a profound and incurable discontent with things in general, a discontent which may possibly be unchristian, but which is not yet an indictable offense in any country that I know of. Among two hundred poems there are barely half-a-dozen the subjects of which come in any way within the scope of that elastic but apparently delicate commandment, infringements of which (or rather excitements to infringements of which) put legislators and moralists so terribly on the "qui-vive." [10]

When authors write of crimes, we do not look upon them as criminals, nor do we consider them thieves because they portray brigandage; then why, if a writer draws a picture of the deadly sin of luxury, should be himself be judged degenerate, immoral, a debauchee? The essential consideration in Baudelaire is not morality, but art. In this he is original, intense, highly aesthetic —a poet the English would do well to study.

Many years later Saintsbury, recalling the "unintelligent pother and bother about 'Art for Art's sake' " during this period, elaborated his position:

The present humble writer was credibly informed that he lost as least one Fellowship partly, if not mainly, by adopting the notion in an Essay of the 'sixties. And he "got it over the face and eyes" from proper moral men for more mature delinquencies in the same key when writing on Baudelaire in 1875 and Gautier three years later. Then, as usual, it made its way, as far as it deserved to make it, and was little heard of in theory, though a good deal seen, especially (as usual, likewise) in degeneracies and exaggerations of practice. . . .

We did not . . . at all disregard the "matter" of Baudelaire and Flaubert, or make small or no account of the "life" in their work. To this day, while chuckling a little, as I did of old, at Baudelaire's "Satanic" poses, I feel just as keenly as ever I felt at first, ten years before I wrote on him, that the "Hymne" and "Les Enfants de la Lune," . . . and the magnificent conclusion-poem which he added after the first edition of *Fleurs du Mal*, express, as all the greatest things in poetry do express, thoughts and feelings which one has thought and felt oneself in dumb and inorganic fashion. I know, and always have known, that *Madame Bovary* and the *Tentation* . . . reproduce with perfect *mimesis* actual life and dream-life. But when we praised these men and others, when we rejoiced in them because they had followed art for art's sake, it was also . . . because they had followed life's sake *as well.* In fact you cannot do the first without doing the second, though you certainly may do the second without doing the first.

Form *without* matter, art *without* life, are inconceivable . . . But unless you train yourself to value the art and the form and the literature apart from, though by no means to the neglect of, the matter and the life, you are likely to fall, as a delightful phrase of the Articles has it, into "wretchlessness of the most unclean [critical] living." [11]

By the end of the seventies the controversy between "The Fleshly School of Poetry" and "The Stealthy School of Criticism" had run its course, but Baudelaire, unlike Balzac, con-

tinued to provoke the Victorians to the end of the century. After 1880 his reputation in England was reflected largely through the "art for art's sake" movement that included such figures as Oscar Wilde, George Moore, Aubrey Beardsley, and Arthur Symons. Max Beerbohm, writing in the *Yellow Book* for January, 1895, describes the transition from the early to the late aesthetes:

Be it remembered that long before this time [1880] there had been in the heart of Chelsea a kind of cult of Beauty. Certain artists had settled there, deliberately refusing to work in the ordinary official way, and "wrought," as they were wont to put it, "for the pleasure and sake of all that is fair." Swinburne, Morris, Rossetti, Whistler, Burne-Jones, were of this little community—all of them men of great industry and caring for little but their craft. Quietly and unbeknown they produced their poems or their pictures or their essays, read them or showed them to one another and worked on. In fact, Beauty had existed long before 1880. It was Mr. Oscar Wilde who first trotted her round. This remarkable youth, a student at the University of Oxford, began to show himself everywhere, and even published a volume of poems in several editions as a kind of decoy to the shy artificers of Chelsea. The lampoons that at this period were written against him are still extant, and from them, and from the references to him in the contemporary journals, it would appear that it was to him that Art owed the great social vogue she enjoyed at this time. . . . Into whatever ballroom you went, you would surely find, among the women in tiaras and the fops and the distinguished foreigners, half a score of comely ragamuffins in velveteen, murmuring sonnets, posturing, waving their hands. "Nincompoopiana" the craze was called at first, and later "Aestheticism." [12]

Wilde's alleged materialism, paganism, and indifference to the moral responsibility of letters link him with the Naturalists and

provoked much the same type of criticism. His "aestheticism," with its concern for form at the expense of thought, was traced by the critics to the influence of the French Parnassians and especially to Baudelaire. The Wilde cult not only aroused considerable Victorian indignation; it was also the subject of much caricature. In 1881 Gilbert in the opera *Patience* immortalized him in satiric verse:

> If you're anxious for to shine in the high aesthetic line
> as a man of culture rare,
> You must get up all the germs of the transcendental terms,
> and plant them everywhere.
> You must lie upon the daisies, and discourse in novel phrases
> of your complicated state of mind,
> The meaning doesn't matter if it's only idle chatter
> of a transcendental kind.

In the eighties the Society for the Suppression of Vice, and other self-appointed guardians of public virtue, found new worlds to suppress: Zola and his fellow-Naturalists were about to create the next tempest in the Victorian teacup. Swinburne, Rossetti, and Morris were widely read and approved. Buchanan publicly retracted his earlier attacks, inscribed his book *God and Man* to Rossetti, and wrote an appreciation of him in *Look Around Literature* (1887). The change in public opinion is evident in the reaction to the collected works of Rossetti, edited by William Michael Rossetti and issued in 1887. The comment of the *Saturday Review* is typical:

> The collected issue of the late Dante Rossetti's works in verse and prose appears in the well-known old binding which at once suggests thoughts of far-off, if not altogether unhappy, things and battles long ago. . . . The extreme moderation of tone may be

judged from the fact that Mr. Rossetti says, in reference to the notorious "Fleshly School" article, "having been retracted, let it be condoned," though he hints pretty plainly his opinion of the original act. A less severely guarded commentator might have been tempted to refer to the vindication of Rossetti (more complete than any retraction) which has since been made by his critic's loudly uttered admiration of M. Zola. The "House of Life" could not be justified by anything better than by the fact that it displeased an admirer of *La joie de vivre*.

The controversy ended on this conciliatory note. While it flourished it brought tragedy to one of the great literary figures of the century, provided notoriety for a few obscure individuals, supplied ministers with subjects for sermons, and gave the Society for the Suppression of Vice something to suppress. What good it accomplished is hardly discernible. It may have clarified some issues; it may, by forcing whispered innuendoes into the open, have enlarged and broadened Victorian literary taste, obliging it to face issues which should not be too long suppressed; it may have served, in the long run, as a wholesome discipline for creative art—the kind of discipline public criticism has provided from time immemorial for all men, whether they be geniuses pursuing the high ways of life or simply ordinary people living among other people. These are the imponderables. We would like to believe that discipline might come with less pain, with greater understanding.

IV

The immediate controversy died, but criticism continued into the nineties, though on a loftier plane. As late as 1894, Arthur Waugh, complaining in the pages of the *Yellow Book* over the

want of reticence in modern literature, pointed to the year 1866 as the turning point in literary frankness—the year Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads* were published, the year Baudelaire was flayed in "The Session of the Poets":

It was then that the dovecotes of English taste were tremulously fluttered by the coming of a new poet, whose naked outspokenness startled his readers into indignation. Literature, which had retrograded into melancholy sameness, found itself convulsed by a sudden access of passion, which was probably without parallel since the age of the silver poets of Rome. This new singer scrupled not to revel in sensations which for years had remained unmentioned upon the printed page; he even chose for his subjects refinements of lust, which the commonly healthy Englishman believed to have become extinct with the time of Juvenal. Here was an innovation which was absolutely alien to the standard of contemporary taste—an innovation, I believe, that was equally opposed to that final moderation without which literature is lifeless.[13]

Waugh admits that "there is no such music in all the range of English poetry" as Swinburne's, but that is all, and "when some newer singer discovers melodies as yet unknown, melodies which surpass in their modulations and varieties those poems and ballads of twenty-eight years ago," . . . what will be left of the earlier singer? "A message? No. Philosophy? No. A new vision of life? No. A criticism of contemporary existence? Assuredly not. There remains the melody alone; and this, when once it is surpassed, will charm us little enough. We shall forget it then. Art brings in her revenges, and this will be one of them."

It is not that the frankness of Baudelaire and Swinburne and their followers is objectionable so much as that their frankness is unsustained by any moral vision of life:

And our poets, who know no rhyme for "rest" but that "breast" whose snowinesses and softnesses they are forever describing with every accent of indulgence, whose eyes are all for frills, if not for garters, what have they sung that was not sung with far greater beauty and sincerity in the days when frills and garters were alluded to with the open frankness that cried shame on him who evil thought. The one extremity, it seems to me, offends against the standards of contemporary taste: ("People," as Hedda Gabler said, "do not say such things now"); the other extremity rebels against that universal standard of good taste that has from the days of Milo distinguished between the naked and the nude.

However much later criticism re-estimated Baudelaire and the Pre-Raphaelites, time has not yet sustained Waugh's prophecies. His was the last important dissent. By the turn of the century even Baudelaire was accepted by the Victorians. His poems had appeared in unexpurgated translations. Arnold Bennett could write without fear of offending a sensitive public: "In the whole range of literature familiar to me, the one thing that recurs most frequently to my mind, and on which I dwell with the most constant and equable pleasure, is Baudelaire's sonnet *La Geante*." [14] And Arthur Symons could call him "one of the great literary forces of the age. . . . What would French poetry be today if Baudelaire had never existed? As different a thing from what it is as English poetry would be without Rossetti." [15]

And so "The Fleshly School of Poetry" becomes a memorable current in the moving stream of English literature, while "The Stealthy School of Criticism" is only vaguely recalled as a muddy episode in literary-moral history.

CHAPTER V

"The Maiden Tribute"

THE NATURALISTS IN ENGLAND

BALZAC'S AND Baudelaire's reputations among the Victorians reflect the evolving literary taste of the period. The moral of the story is already clear: Victorianism is not the same in the forties, sixties, eighties, and nineties. It was traveling a long and tortuous but ever-broadening road from the Coronation to the Diamond Jubilee. The fervor of the literary moralists and other pundits may not have been less in the nineties than in the forties, but the objects of their concern, and consequently their standards of judgment, had encompassed a world that must have seemed strange to the early Victorians still living at the time of the Jubilee.

The constant appearance of new and more challenging writings, especially French, drew attention to themselves and away from those which with time had become lesser evils. Balzac's reputation grew purer as Baudelaire threatened Victorian virtue. Baudelaire and the Pre-Raphaelites became tolerable as Zola and, later, Ibsen shook the pillars of Victorian propriety. And so it went, to the end of the century, by which time Arthur Waugh could complain that "the cry for realism, naked and

unashamed, is borne in upon us from every side," and Hubert Crackanthorpe could exclaim:

A new public has been created—appreciative, eager and determined; a public which, as Mr. Gosse puts it . . . "has eaten of the apple of knowledge, and will not be satisfied with mere marionettes. Whatever comes next . . . we cannot return, in serious novels, to the inanities and impossibilities of the old well-made plot, to the children changed at nurse, to the madonna-heroine and the god-like hero, to the impossible virtues and melodramatic vices. In the future, even those who sneer at realism and misrepresent it most wilfully, will be obliged to put their productions more in accordance with veritable experience. There will still be novel-writers who address the gallery, and who will keep up the gaudy old convention, and the clumsy *Family Herald* evolution, but they will no longer be distinguished men of genius. They will no longer sign themselves George Sand or Charles Dickens." [1]

Yet there had been a day not long past when George Sand and even Charles Dickens had suffered the contumelies of an offended public. The literary reputation of the Naturalists in England reveals the tone and temper of mid-Victorian aesthetics and morals; it indicates, by comparison with Balzac's reputation, the change that had taken place between 1830 and 1880; and it prepares the way for the relative tolerance of the late and post-Victorian periods toward the younger generation of artists.

II

The English hostility to Naturalism came from two widely disparate groups. One, including such names as George Meredith, John Addington Symonds, Andrew Lang, Henry James, Robert Louis Stevenson, George Moore, Oscar Wilde, Arthur Symons, Havelock Ellis, and Arnold Bennett (however much

they were indebted to the Naturalists and however much they defended their morality), disagreed completely or partially on aesthetic or philosophic grounds. Since this group in general expresses the larger judgments of the Victorians on matters of literary taste, a separate chapter is devoted to their general criticism. The other group—the periodicals, the newspapers, the clergy, the censor, and the public generally—protested against Naturalism on conventional moral grounds. Their opposition reached its climax in the attack on Zola and in the trial of the publisher Henry Vizetelly.

At the time of the trial Vizetelly was over sixty years of age. His had been a distinguished career as typographer, journalist, publisher, and patron of the arts. His ancestors, emigrating from Italy in the Elizabethan period, had at first become distinguished manufacturers of glass. Early in the eighteenth century they turned to printing and publishing, and they remained in this profession for the following two hundred years. Frequent intermarriage with the English had completely anglicized the family by the nineteenth century.

Henry Vizetelly, with whom Zola's literary career in England was intimately bound, founded the *Illustrated London News* in 1842. The following year he established the *Pictorial Times,* to which Jerrold and Thackeray contributed. Later he achieved fame as a book publisher. He was the first to introduce Poe's tales to the English, the first to publish *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* and one of the first to popularize Longfellow. A long residence in France led him to a deep interest in contemporary French literature and the decision to publish a series of cheap translations of novels then in high repute in France—works of Daudet, Theuriet, About, Malot, Cherbuliez, George Sand, Mérimée, and others.

The Victorians were indifferent to these translations, but a series of Gaboriau's sensational detective stories found ready sale.

After the failure of his first French translations, Vizetelly turned to the publication of English fiction. At this time novels were still issued in three-volume formats. Their size and expense were prohibitive of wide sale and placed publishers at the mercy of the circulating libraries, through which the public largely obtained its reading matter. George Moore, like many another Victorian writer, was soon to discover that his novels were unacceptable for moral reasons to Smith's and Mudie's and the other circulating libraries. He protested in vain. When he became one of Vizetelly's authors, he and his publisher abandoned the three-volume system, lowered the price of novels, and made fiction directly accessible to a large and popular audience. They successfully broke the monopoly of the circulating library and greatly hastened the day of publishing and reading on a democratic basis.

III

In 1884 Vizetelly prepared to issue translations of Zola's novels. Before this date only one translation had appeared, although a number of unsympathetic criticisms of French originals had been published in various periodicals. Swinburne's attack on *L'Assommoir* is the earliest criticism of a distinctly controversial nature and indicates the fury Zola could arouse in even a perceptive and liberal critic. Between 1876 and 1877 *La République des Lettres* had been publishing *L'Assommoir* in instalments. Swinburne's name appeared on the cover of one of the issues, but no contribution from him was included in the issue. Hugo had published a poem in the preceding number.

Shortly thereafter the publication of Zola's novel was suddenly suspended. Swinburne, in a letter to the *Athenaeum,* asserted that either Hugo had ordered this suspension, or the editors themselves had realized the impropriety of placing Zola cheek by jowl with Hugo. For Swinburne, Zola's work fell into two equally horrible and loathsome classes:

> . . . [Such] passages as deal with physical matters which might have almost turned the stomach of Dean Swift . . . [and] details of brutality and atrocity practiced on a little girl, as would necessitate the interpolation of such a line as follows in the police report of any and every newspaper in London: "The further details given in support of the charge of cruelty were too revolting for publication in our columns." [2]

Swinburne reported that one magazine had aptly told Zola "to drive his pigs to some other market." He himself could see no excuse for such a work except as a medical treatise and therefore washed his hands forever of the entire subject, hoping to cleanse his memory of the book and happy that no line of his had ever appeared in a magazine that published *L'Assommoir.* Thus spake the disciple and defender of Baudelaire!

Zola's novel had reached its forty-eight edition in France, but it had not yet been translated into English when H. Schütz Wilson in the *Gentleman's Magazine* pompously excuses Zola's sordid pictures as perhaps useful for social reform, but hardly the sort of thing an English writer would do:

> M. Zola frequently revolts us by his unvarnished allusions to things which lie outside the pale of modest decency. There is, however, it must be remembered, in justice to him, a vast difference in their treatment of man as an animal between French and English writers. English authors will not leave a celestial bed to

prey on garbage. French writers sometimes do not shun even ordure. French literature knows but little reticence in the mention of such things. English writers avoid, with the reticence of fine shame, all allusion to the ignobler needs and functions of the body.[3]

In 1878 Saintsbury, in an article on Flaubert in the *Fortnightly,* referred to Zola's Realism as "grossière étiquette." [4] In 1879 *L'Assommoir,* dramatized by Charles Reade under the title "Drink" and produced at the Princess's Theatre, London was duly watered for a fastidious public.[5] In 1880 Lilly attacked Zola's novels in the *Contemporary Review* as a "cheap effort of the photographic art." [6]

Andrew Lang's lengthy and considered review of Zola appeared in the *Fortnightly* two years later and was the only serious study before 1884, the first year of the Vizetelly translations. Lang noted the tremendous popularity of Zola in Russia, Italy, Denmark, Norway, and Germany, and his comparative neglect in England: "The cause of our isolation is only too obvious. Our unfortunate Puritanism, alas! prevents us from understanding M. Zola and the joys of 'naturalisme'." It is evident, wrote Lang with prophetic insight into the next ten years, that the English public will never take with pleasure to this author. Admitting that Zola has courage, is a conscientious workman, and a creator of some scenes of great beauty, Lang nevertheless finds his philosophy impersonal, unsympathetic, as cold as that of a vivisectionist; his literary judgments faulty; his knowledge of literature scant; and his lack of humor absolute. Concerning Zola's first work, *Thérèse Raquin,* Lang felt that he "has deliberately chosen the meanest characters, the most repulsive environment which his memory or his imagination could suggest

. . . [and] has almost exhausted the dictionary in the effort to find words unpleasant enough for the unpleasant place he has to describe." Lang objected to Swinburne's condemnation of *L'Assommoir,* which he considered dreadful, but not immoral. *Nana,* on the other hand, he thinks "appeals to the basest curiosities. It cannot be called an alluring description of vice, but it does gloat on, and sows broadcast, the knowledge of secret and nameless iniquities. Literature and science alike refuse to acknowledge this last unclean fruit of the tree of Rougon-Macquart." [7]

Lang's observations are a model of understatement when one turns to the pages of the *Scottish Review* for the following year:

> It may be questioned whether the author lays the greater stress upon the representation of foul animalism or upon that of an almost utter absence of any sentiment of honour, honesty, or self-respect. By the inculpated class itself the work was greeted with screams of horror at its impropriety. It is certainly coarse almost beyond expression, and contains one description in particular which should never have been written by man born of woman . . .[8]

Zola's Naturalist brethren fared somewhat better. In a letter (1875) to the American novelist William Dean Howells, Henry James recounts his early impressions of Flaubert, the Goncourts, Maupassant, Daudet, and Zola, all of whom he had met through his friend Turgenev. James, a great admirer of Turgenev, expresses mild wonder at the complete extent to which the Russian novelist appears to have been taken in by his French friends. The following year, in the *Galaxy,* James points to Flaubert as the successor to Balzac, and to his *Madame Bovary* as the high point of French Realism. Its accumulation of detail and its vividness of character and setting, of time and place, are so

poignant, we seem to have lived in it all. Speaking on his own behalf as a Realist, James adds: "We care only for what is—we know nothing about what ought to be. . . . The real is the most satisfactory thing in the world." He isn't so sure on the point of morality. Balzac's indifference in this regard he felt "a serious fault," but on the charge of immorality brought against Flaubert for the publication of *Madame Bovary,* while admitting the novel to be inappropriate for family reading, he nonetheless concludes that its moral intent is so obvious that it would make the most useful of Sunday-school tracts.[9]

In 1878 George Saintsbury, doughty champion of contemporary writers (except Zola), published a series of essays in the *Fortnightly* on Flaubert, Sandeau, Gautier, Cherbuliez, and Charles de Bernard. Flaubert is hailed as the bard of life as it actually is: "*Madame Bovary* is, I frankly admit, a repulsive book in more ways than one; but I should as soon think of calling a 'Dance of Death' or a 'Last Judgment' immoral, as of applying that epithet to it." [10]

Of all the Naturalists, Daudet[11] was the most sympathetically received by the Victorians, but precisely for the reason that he seemed to the English the least Naturalistic of the Naturalists, less offensive to conventional Victorian morality, and more in accord with the spirit of their own literature. Daudet's resemblance to Dickens was immediately and continuously noted by the reviewers—a literary kinship that undoubtedly enhanced the hospitality he received.

The noted French critic Edmond About published two articles in the *Athenaeum* (1874 and 1875), both pointing to Daudet as "the pupil of Charles Dickens"—a pupil indeed whom Dickens himself has hailed as one of the "rising glories of French litera-

ture." [12] The *Athenaeum,* the *Saturday Review,* and *Colburn's New Monthly* noted the resemblance with approval, although the *Athenaeum's* own critic found *Fromont Jeune* "a little confused" and *Jack* a dull and coarse story "of a bastard crushed by his bastardy." [13] Nevertheless the Dickensian charm of Daudet's early novels generally pleased the English, especially his picturesque scenes of Parisian life. Though not a book "for maidens and boys, *Jack* is valuable for its representation of this little known life, and for the author's imagination as well as his satirical power." [14] *Macmillan's* saw in *Fromont* "the skill of a true artist," [15] and the *Saturday Review* found in its plot a resemblance to *Vanity Fair.*[16] Daudet himself was hailed as "one of the foremost novelists of France."

The appearance of *Le Nabab* in 1878 proved too much for the Victorians. The *Spectator* voiced the general opinion when it pointed to passages "which are disfigured, as in nearly all French art, by what can only be considered brutal realism" and admonished Daudet to return to the manner and mood of Dickens.[17] To the extent that Daudet avoided the evils of contemporary Naturalism the Victorians found him delightful and wholesome. They approved the warmth and charm and sympathy of his nature, they praised his bright humor and delicate descriptions of nature, and they looked to him to save the fallen reputation of French fiction:

> Though French novels have, and with justice, a bad name in England, yet the works of Alphonse Daudet are a most hopeful and consolatory proof that France is thankful to escape from the shower of mud . . . being rained on her, and retains the better taste of healthful imagination after all. Though not to be recom-

mended as specially adapted for a "pensionnat de demoiselles" neither are [his novels] to be apprehended as unfit reading for any pure-minded woman.[18]

Blackwood's was not to be disappointed in this pious hope. Three years later (1881), following the publication of *Numa Roumestan,* its reviewer could still say that there was "no French writer of the day in the sphere of fiction to whom they could look with the same confidence as to M. Alphonse Daudet," [19] and *London Society* (1882) could pronounce him the most moral of the coterie known as the French Realistic School. The *Saturday Review* (1882) is mildly unsympathetic, objecting mainly to Daudet's use of friends and acquaintances as models for his fictional characters—". . . hardly an English author would rise to the vast indiscretion of revealing the facts as M. Daudet had done." [20]

Henry James, writing from England for the *Atlantic Monthly* (1882), is charmed with Daudet's work, "so nervous, fresh, and young." He has poetry and sentiment, his feeling for the real is always tempered by a sense of the beautiful, and he has none of the hardness of the other Naturalists. In comparison, Zola seems ugly and unclean; the Goncourts morbid, peevish, artificial; Flaubert lacking in softness, refinement, and grace. "I should say," writes James, "that the main object of the novel is to represent life. . . . The success of a work of art, to my mind, may be measured by the degree to which it produces a certain illusion; that illusion makes it appear to us for the time that we have lived another life—that we have had a miraculous enlargement of experience." Daudet, of all the Naturalists, best produces this illusion.[21] Yet James, whatever his reservations, is

generally impressed with the sincerity of all the Naturalists. In letters to his friend Howells he often speaks of them:

> I have been seeing something of Daudet, Goncourt, and Zola; and there is nothing more interesting to me now than the effort and experiment of this little group, with its truly infernal intelligence of art, form, manner—its intense artistic life. They do the only kind of work today that I respect, and in spite of their ferocious pessimism and their handling of unclean things, they are at least serious and honest. The floods of tepid soap and water which under the name of novels are being vomited forth in England, seem to me, by contrast, to do little honour to our race.

So deep was James's admiration for Daudet that he translated *Port Tarascon* a few years later, a translation widely admired by the Victorians.

In 1883 came Daudet's *L'Évangéliste,* a psychological "case history" of a religious fanatic. Dedicated to the celebrated psychiatrist Charcot, the novel followed the scientific technique of contemporary Naturalism. The Victorians were dismayed. The Catholic *Dublin Review* (1883) charged Daudet with paganism and materialism.[22] The *Saturday Review* feared he was degrading his genius.[23] With the appearance of *Sapho,* Victorian dismay turned into alarm. The *Scottish Review* (1883) commends the earlier novels but objects strenuously to this latest work.[24] The *Spectator* (1884) enjoys Daudet's bright Realism, his delicate sentiment, his Dickensian charm, but it wonders why, with *Sapho,* he felt impelled to abandon his original, more genuine, comedy and tragedy—"the one pervaded, the other tempered by the sunshine of his own Provençal nature. Why could he not leave the moral crétins of Paris to themselves—and to M. Zola?" [25]

IV

Such was the reputation of the Naturalists among the Victorians up to 1884 when Vizetelly published Zola's *Nana* and *L'Assommoir,* the year he also brought out translations of Flaubert, the Goncourts, Daudet, Maupassant, Tolstoi, and Dostoevski, and was preparing to issue translations of Gogol and Lermontov and to publish the first fifteen volumes of the "Mermaid Series of Old English Dramatists." The middle eighties provided a rich literary fare, but it was a fare not easy for the Victorians to stomach. Although Zola's novels were in wide demand and were followed by other translations, an outburst of hostile criticism greeted each as it fell from the press.

W. S. Lilly opened the assault in the *Fortnightly* (1885) with a castigation more devastating than the one he had written in 1880. He felt about *Nana* what Dr. Johnson had felt about Sheridan: "Why, sir, Sherry is dull, naturally dull. But it must have taken him a great deal of pains to become what we now see him. Such an excess of stupidity, sir, is not in nature." Naturalism is not new: all the great artists—Homer, Phidias, Goethe—interpreted nature. The old Naturalism, however, is poetic and moral; the new Naturalism is scientific, materialistic, atheistic:

> . . . from the very dawn of the intellectual development of our race until the middle of the last century, men had looked upon external nature as a veil, a parable, a sacrament. The conviction that behind the world of form, of colour, of extension there is a reality of which phenomena are the shadows, was the life of the Old Naturalism. And the function of art was conceived of as being the union of spiritual and material symbol.
>
> [The "New Naturalism"] eliminates from man all but the ape and tiger. It leaves him nothing but the "bête humaine" . . . The

issue of the Naturalistic Evolution is the banishing from life of all that gives it glory and honour: the victory of fact over principle, of mechanism over imagination, of appetites, dignified as rights, over duties, of sensation over intellect, of the belly over the heart, of fatalism over moral freedom, of brute force over justice, in a word, of matter over mind.

The true mission of art is not to confound nature with science, but rather, in the midst of the sordid and ugly, to present the image of a fairer world. George Eliot recognized the principle when she wrote: "We are bound to reticence, most of all by that reverence for the highest efforts of our common nature, which commands us to bury its lowest fatalities, its invincible remnants of the brute, its most agonizing struggles with temptation, in unbroken silence." But Zola "has supplied the most pregnant illustration to me in literature that 'the visible when it rests not upon the invisible becomes the bestial.' " In *Nana* "there is not a vestige of the 'beau ideal.' Blank and crude materialism, the trivial, the foul, the base of animal life, is the staple of the book from beginning to end." [26]

Even Daudet did not escape the lash. While critics admitted that *Sapho* "was powerful, artistic, the effort of the greatest living master of fiction in Europe," [27] they were also most unanimously in agreement with the *Saturday Review* that the novel was not fit for the English drawing room, for Daudet, "the distinguished literary artist, has wandered into a noisome byway where a reader of wholesome tastes can only follow him with a handkerchief at his nose." [28]

The *Nineteenth Century* (1886) leaped into the fray with an onslaught on novels imbued with the materialism and immorality of contemporary science;[29] "disease in fiction" became a

popular topic of discussion;[30] and Tennyson, despairing of the younger generation, published "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After":

Authors—essayist, atheist, novelist, realist, rhymster, play your part,
Paint the mortal shame of nature with the living hues of art.

Rip your brother's vices open, strip your own foul passions bare;
Down with Reticence, down with Reverence—forward—naked—
let them stare.

Feed the budding rose of boyhood with the drainage of your sewer;
Send the drain into the fountain, lest the stream should issue pure.

Set the maiden fancies wallowing in the troughs of Zolaism,—
Forward, forward, ay and backward, downward, too, into the abysm.

Do your best to charm the worst, to lower the rising race of men;
Have we risen from out the beast, then back into the beast again?

In 1888 the controversy reached a climax. The previous year Zola had completed the manuscript of *La Terre*. George Moore, then in Paris, made arrangements with the author to sell the British rights to Vizetelly. When the proofs arrived, Ernest Vizetelly, the son, was struck by the boldness of the story, and, as with the earlier novels, realized the book could not be published unexpurgated. Excisions were duly made. In the meantime, the novel, published in Paris, was greeted with a storm of protest. A rumor went the rounds that all foreign translations had been stopped. The Vizetellys proceeded cautiously. The manuscript was reread and further bowdlerized for the English public, but the storm about to break had for months been gathering a momentum that could not be checked.

W. T. Stead led the attack. A reformer by temperament, he had been greatly concerned over the disreputable moral life of

Victorian society. He had opposed the Contagious Diseases Acts, which he felt were harmful to woman's noble place in the social order. Invited in 1880 by John Morley to become co-editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette,* he had hesitated because of what he felt to be the wicked influence of London newspaper life. Finally, "he accepted the invitation, but resolved never to enter the misleading club-atmosphere which makes London papers so tranquilly heartless and hopeless; he would pass his life with his associates at his office, and with his wife and children at his home." [31] In 1885 Stead published *The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon.* Against the advice of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and other dignitaries, he had visited the brothels of the city. The resulting pamphlet was a colorful account of the iniquities he had witnessed. Before the booklet had left the printer, the shop was stormed by a mob attempting to secure copies. The newspapers protested the indecencies Stead described, and a committee was formed to investigate. "For more than a week," George Moore wrote, "until *The Daily Telegraph* took the matter in hand, the sale of *The Maiden Tribute* converted London into a pandemonium. None who lived in the vicinity of the Strand at that time will forget the shouting of the vendors of obscenity—often children only twelve years of age." [32]

For outraging the public with lurid pictures of indecency, Stead was sent to prison for a short time, but the movement was carried on by the National Vigilance Association, headed by a Protestant fanatic named Kensit. Pouncing upon *La Terre,* the Vigilance vice squad secured an indictment against the Vizetellys for trafficking in pornographic literature. Other Naturalistic novels were included in the charges: Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*

and *Salammbô,* the Goncourt's *Germinie Lacerteux* and *Renée Mauperin,* Gautier's *Mademoiselle de Maupin,* Murger's *Vie de bohême,* Maupassant's *Bel-ami* and *Une vie,* Daudet's *Sapho,* and Bourget's *Crime d'amour* and *Cruelle énigme.* Some anonymous individuals even charged that the "Mermaid Series of Old English Dramatists," brought out by Vizetelly, was unfit for publication.

The question was raised in the House of Commons by a Samuel Smith who was described in *Notts Daily Express* (May 10, 1888) as "an enthusiast without enthusiasm, with a tall, expansive frame, a huge beard, a placid-like expression, and a mild feminine voice" which the *Pall Mall Gazette* the previous day had said was "peculiarly suited to the expression of Lamentation." Smith accused Vizetelly as the "chief culprit in the spread of pernicious literature." Of Zola's novels he said, "nothing more diabolical had ever been written by the pen of man; they were only fit for swine, and those who read them must turn their minds into cesspools." Smith did not spare even the newspapers, magazines, and English novels of the day.

The House refused to institute proceedings, but recommended that the law against obscene publications be rigorously enforced. Many newspapers, however, endorsed the prosecution. Vizetelly's son, in his biography, *Émile Zola,* summarizes their comments:

The Vigilant *Guardian* of the Church of England availed itself of the occasion to thunder against Sir Richard Burton and his *Arabian Nights*; *The Tablet* of the Roman Catholics jesuitically signified its approval of the agitation, because Zola's whole tendency was "suspected" (!) to be immoral; the conscientious Nonconformist journals . . . said ditto to everything Smith said. Some righteous contributor to the *Globe* wrote of Zola's books that they

were characterized by "dangerous lubricity," that they "sapped the foundations of manhood and womanhood, not only destroyed innocence, but corroded the moral nature." The *Birmingham Daily Mail* declared that Zola "simply wallowed in immorality." The *Whitehall Review* openly clamoured for the prosecution of his publisher. The *Weekly Dispatch* impudently inquired, "If Mr. Vizetelly gives us Zola, why does he pick *La Terre* and if Daudet, why pick *Sapho?*" . . . A few newspapers wrapped themselves in their dignity and said nothing; and a few remained fairly cool and sensible; in the *Standard,* the *Scottish Leader,* the *Scotsman,* the *Radical Leader,* the *Bradford Observer,* the *Country Gentleman, Piccadilly,* the *Newcastle Chronicle,* and the *Western Daily Express* . . . the writer . . . after examining some hundreds of extracts . . . finds little that is not mendacious or steeped in religious bigotry, puritanical prudery, or gross ignorance.[33]

Few of the periodicals were more generous. Saintsbury, defender of Balzac, Baudelaire, and Flaubert, called Zola "the dirt compeller," his works obscene, and his documentation "wearisome nonsense." Even Daudet and Maupassant, gifted as they are, fail to break loose from forbidden subjects:

Whether this world is the best of all possible worlds is a complicated religious and philosophical question. No doubt it has in it toothache, gout, bad wine, bad weather, bad poets, political charlatans, American cheese, popular preachers, "advanced thinkers," spelling reformers, and many other evil beasts and evil things. But it is certainly not such a bad world as the Zolaists, with a monotonous and unimaginative uniformity, make out. I have hinted before that the objection to the new French morality or immorality is not so much that it is immoral as that it is so utterly unamusing and unpleasant.[34]

The year before, Saintsbury, writing in the *Fortnightly,* had observed: "The habits and public opinion of the nation have kept

us from that curious scholasticism of dull cleanness on which too many French novelists spend their time." [35]

The editor of *Time* accuses Zola of confounding vivisection with art—a butcher's carcass, however faithfully reproduced, can inspire no elevating feeling.[36] The *Spectator* thinks Daudet has greater literary power than Dickens, but that he is less profoundly human; his novels, especially the later ones, unfortunately, are "more or less odorous with the ill odour that clings like a curse to French fiction." [37] The *Universal Review* berates Zola for going "far beyond the elementary decencies of life," of dealing with licentiousness, depraved youth, and impure maidens who are so many Bacchantes in the vineyards:

> His literary cynicism equals the practical indecency of those ancient "Dogs" who degraded their human nature to the level of the beasts. . . . Familiarity with infamous subjects has overpowered his own finer perceptions; intimacy with vice has rendered him skeptical of virtue. . . . Human nature, according to this perverted gospel, is simply bestial when it is not infernal. And the men and women whom we call saintly and heroic, faithful and unselfish, modest and self-respecting, virtuous and self-restrained, where do they stand? Are they mere figments of the brain? the grand furies of the adult imagination? We think not. Rather, we know that they exist, and are in the majority.[38]

Barnett Smith, in the *Gentleman's Magazine,* denounces Realism in general as degraded, wearisome, ugly, deterministic, and immoral:

> Indeed, the French might take a lesson, both in literature and in art, from the results of realism in the Italian and Flemish schools of painting. In Italy, the artists were versatile men of aristocratic tendencies; their realism was always closely attached to the study of the antique—that is, to the study of ideal beauty. The conse-

quence was, that crude realism is only to be seen in the pioneers like Massaccio, Andres del Cas-Tagno, Pisanello. But under the influence of tradition, each school gradually built up its canon of the beautiful, till those works were produced which are the wonder of the world. Notice the contrast in Flanders. . . . Art there is narrow and democratic; the masters are specialists . . . In fact, the Flemish realists depicted man as so uninteresting, so degraded, so fear-ridden, that from very repulsion the painters found their way into the open air; realism, as far as man was concerned, was flung aside, and the painting of nature, of landscape, sprang into existence.[39]

Blackwood's Magazine, a month before the Vizetelly trial, published an article, "The Old Saloon," taking both Maupassant and Daudet to task for writing novels recording vile passions and the lusts of the flesh. It is a mistaken notion that "brings the hideous nightmares of a corruption which no community could wallow in and live." [40]

Henry James, in two articles in the *Fortnightly,* is more generous, but even he feels that Maupassant is too one-sided, his reflective powers underdeveloped and his interests in the carnal exaggerated.[41] The Goncourts, he adds, could draw the factual, sensuous world, but they are incapable of exploring the soul.[42]

Such was the temper of criticism when Vizetelly was haled into court and prosecuted by Mr. Asquith, later Lord Asquith. The chief charge was the publication of *La Terre,* for which Zola three weeks earlier in France had been awarded the decoration of the Legion of Honor. The government took up the prosecution at this point, and Vizetelly, by way of defense, wrote an open letter to its various members:

Sir:—As the Treasury, after a lapse of four years since the first appearance of the translations of M. Zola's novels, has taken upon

itself the prosecution instituted for the suppression of these books, I beg leave to submit to your notice some hundreds of Extracts, chiefly from English classics, and to ask you if, in the event of M. Zola's novels being pronounced "obscene libels," publishers will be allowed to continue issuing in their present form the plays of Shakespeare, Beaumont, and Fletcher, Massinger, and other old dramatists, and the works of Defoe, Dryden, Swift, Prior, Sterne, Fielding, Smollet, and a score of other writers—all containing pasages far more objectionable than any that can be picked out from the Zola translations published by me . . .[43]

Vizetelly was finally convicted, fined a hundred pounds, and placed on a year's probation. The next year the Vigilance Association, elated by easy victory, again haled Vizetelly into court, this time for publishing Flaubert, Bourget, and Maupassant. The prosecutor in this second trial was Sir Edward Clarke, who was later to prosecute Oscar Wilde. Several booksellers were also indicted for selling such works as the *Heptameron*. George Moore, in a newspaper article, "New Censorship of Literature," attacked the "Vigilants" for their nefarious methods in securing evidence and for prosecuting innocent parties.[44] The case for the "Vigilants" was summarized in the *Annual Report* of the Association:

No one argues for absolute free trade in obscene publications. Society must in some way protect itself. No one, again, argues for a Censorship, under which every publication would be submitted to a public authority before being issued. Such a system would tend to tyranny, suppress much useful matter, and besides, in modern civilized life, would be impossible. There remains the English system, under which everyone publishes what he pleases; but if he publishes anything obscene, a magistrate may order it to be destroyed, a judge and a jury may punish him. Therefore, the ultimate authority as to what is obscene is a jury.

Now the question—What is obscenity?—is not a technical question, but a question of common sense, and a jury is not only the best authority on it, but is the authority which makes most for freedom.

There remains the question: Who should have the power to complain? Clearly, anybody; because by indecent publications the public—that is, everybody—is attacked. The police sometimes act on behalf of the public. The Association acts as a combination of citizens for the purpose of assisting to preserve the purity of our publications.

The action of the Association has been censured by some critics on the ground that these translations of M. Zola were literature. That means that obscene literature is now to be published—or it means that a jury does not know what literature is obscene. But what is literature? The humblest penny-a-liner claims—and is legally entitled to call himself—a literary artist; and in his degree he is one. The great artists rarely, if ever, write that which their own countrymen and contemporaries—as represented by a jury—would call obscene. But if a great artist thinks fit to transgress the laws of decency, so much the worse for him. And the jury knows what is obscene, even if they do not know what is literature.[45]

Vizetelly was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. He was then sixty-nine years of age and suffering from a painful physical ailment. The sentence undoubtedly hastened his death (he died in 1894, a few years later). A petition, which finally secured his release, was signed by such notables as John Millais, John Gilbert, Harry Furniss, George du Maurier, Henry Morley, Geddes, Edmund Gosse, Richard Garnett, Frederick James Furnivall, John Addington Symonds, Leslie Stephen, Lytton Strachey, Havelock Ellis, Robert Buchanan, Thomas Hardy, George Moore, Hall Caine, Arthur Pinero, William Archer, Olive Schreiner, William Sharp, H. D. Traill, Arthur Symons, and many others.

The court trial was over, but the public trial continued into the next year. It seemed then as if Saintsbury's observation, that no competent critic of any European country admires Zola without such large restrictions and deductions as to make his admiration almost worthless, might be true.[46] The *Spectator* observed that Zola has gazed so long on what he thought was a world festering with vice, on human beings who were monsters of depravity, on laws that were instruments of inconceivable iniquity, that all this had become truth to him.[47] The *Contemporary Review* recalls Gladstone's statement: "What gives me apprehension is the school of foul novelists that have arisen, and are, by all accounts, making their way. The French novel was never so bad a dissolvent as it is now of all that binds a people into a progressive nation." For itself, the journal feels that "the best protector of youth from those vices which cause immediate degeneracy is modest feeling and the instinctive shrinking from what is lewd. How can we expect the young to escape from spring blights if that beautiful and natural guard against them, the sense which calls the mantling blush to the maiden cheek, is broken down by literature that is wantonly prurient?" [48]

V

Popular interest in the Naturalist controversy waned during the nineties. Translations were published freely and were received, if not always enthusiastically, at least with less vituperation than in the eighties.

Flaubert's reputation grew by leaps and bounds. William Sharp, in the *Academy,* considers him a master of irony and in this respect compares him with Aeschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Lucian, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Swift, Heine, and

Matthew Arnold.[49] D. F. Hannigan, in the *Westminster Review,* thinks him a greater artist than Scott,[50] and Ernest Newman, writing in the *Fortnightly,* analyzes his pessimism and concludes with a eulogy of his style:

> It is on the side of his style that Flaubert's master-patience comes to its artistic consummation. His theory that for each mood, each aspect, each situation, there was one true expression, and one alone, could not fail to give to his style the closest precision and the greatest psychological veracity. But even more remarkable than the artistic appropriateness of his speech is the world of hidden things that it suggests. He can utter volumes in a word, and give you far-reaching vistas of thought or emotion in a single phrase; he can play upon the inner life with the magic of a musician, and evoke the most wonderful dream-shapes at the bidding of a word . . . a simple sentence will take its echoing course through the inner chambers of the mind, and the barest transcript of immediate experience swells into the solemnity of oceanic distances.[51]

In 1897 Oxford University invited Paul Bourget to deliver a lecture on Flaubert—an academic accolade symbolizing his own and Flaubert's acceptance by the Victorians.

The literary reputation of the Goncourts was not in the nineties controversial, although occasionally a recrudescence of the earlier literary fireworks broke into the calm atmosphere. Frederick Wedmore in the *Academy* (1894) notes that, despite the tremendous influx of foreign thought, the English still hesitate to accept art whose morality does not accord with the traditional English spirit. Speaking of a bowdlerized version of the *Journal* just published, Wedmore assures the reader that "the two young ladies, upon whom has fallen the task of compiling, abridging, and translating, have removed all of this for us, so there remains that only which even a man can read." [52] The *Spectator* holds

the Goncourts responsible, as the legitimate heirs of Balzac and the godfathers of modern Realism, for Zola "and the grave indiscretions of Médan." [53] The *Fortnightly* points to their historical importance in the scientific, social, and industrial movements of the century.[54] Most of the journals disagree with *Macmillan's Magazine* that the Goncourts are uncritical and unselective.[55] Arthur Symons' two articles in 1896—one in the *Savoy* and the other in the *Athenaeum*—summarize the prevailing opinion of the nineties. Like Pater, the Goncourts are sensitive to the "delicacies of fine literature," though they are less scrupulous, more feverish, and are interested in a different kind of truth. Their great contribution, for Symons, is their invention of a new style through which personality can express this truth: "In order to arrive at their effects, they shrink from no sacrifice, from no excess; slang, neologism, forced construction, archaism, barbarous epithet, nothing comes amiss to them, so long as it tends to render a sensation. Their unique care is that the phrase should live, should palpitate, should be alert, exactly expressive, super-subtle in expression. . . ." [56]

Daudet, too, won general approval before the turn of the century. The *Saturday Review* felt that he overemphasizes man's lack of free will and his moral irresponsibility,[57] but the liberal *Westminster Review* praises him for not excusing immorality and licentiousness on the grounds of a lack of free will—grounds palpably unsound, for man has a strong moral sense as the product of his evolution: if Darwin's theory did not include this sense, his theory would be untrue.[58] Arthur Symons believes Daudet's greatest lack is a sustained philosophy, his greatest gifts those of style, feeling, delicacy, and the rare detachment that renders his intimate touches impersonal.[59] Other articles com-

mend his good taste and delicate sentiment, his avoidance of pornography (which distinguishes him from Zola), and his kinship with Dickens and Stevenson in warmth of feeling. If he falls short of absolute greatness, the fault lies in his lack of profound convictions and of a broad philosophy.[60] Shortly after Daudet's death in 1897 Joseph Conrad paid tribute to his disinterestedness, generosity, and kindliness:

> With more talent than many bigger men, he did not preach about himself, he did not attempt to persuade mankind into a belief of his own greatness. He never posed as a scientist or as a seer, not even as a prophet . . . He was not the wearisome expounder of this or that theory, here to-day and spurned to-morrow. He was not a great artist, he was not an artist at all, if you like—but he was Alphonse Daudet, a man as naïvely clear, honest, and vibrating as the sunshine of his native land . . . And Daudet was honest . . . If he saw only the surface of things it is for the reason that most things have nothing but a surface. He did not pretend—perhaps because he did not know how—he did not pretend to see any depths in a life that is only a film of unsteady appearances stretched over regions deep indeed, but which have nothing to do with the half-truths, half-thoughts, and whole illusions of existence. The road to these distant regions does not lie through the domain of Art or the domain of Science where well-known voices quarrel noisily in a misty emptiness; it is a path of toilsome silence upon which travel men simple and unknown, with closed lips, or, maybe, whispering their pain softly—only to themselves.[61]

Maupassant was less fortunate than Daudet. The critics, for the most part, found his work cold, pessimistic, materialistic, uncongenial to English taste, although all recognized his great skill as a craftsman. The criticism ranged from the vituperative to the scholarly, with periodicals like the *Spectator,* the *Fortnightly,* and the *Academy,* and critics like Saintsbury, presenting

on the whole sober reviews. The comment in *Temple Bar* for 1894 is a fair sample of the more cautious criticism of the nineties:

Like the Lady of Shalott, who was doomed to see life only in her magic glass, Maupassant lived in a world of his own creation, apart from humanity; and the contemplation of the baseness and stupidity of the beings that he chose to people it with finally drove him mad . . . Worse than beasts—that is perhaps the moral to which most of Maupassant's war-stories tend. Of all animals, the human is the most detestable when he takes to the blood-fury. . . . The fact remains that his view of human nature was an utterly distorted one. On all hands he saw only the cruelty, the bestiality, above all, the ineffable stupidity of mankind. We hardly find one man or woman in his books who illustrates the nobler side of life. . . . of all animals the human animal is the most detestable. Something of Swift's "saevo indignatio" seems to have possessed Maupassant, and, in consequence, some of his creations are as repulsive as the Yahoos. "What to me is this quintessence of dust?" we find him continually asking. The question is, perhaps, a wholesome corrective to what someone calls "sloppy optimism"; but it is not thus that the greatest writers have regarded life. Not Balzac nor Thackeray, not even Daudet nor Zola. Thus it is that Maupassant is fatally excluded from the company of the greatest. It is not his to come "where Orpheus and where Homer are"; but he will . . . always be read by the lovers of consummate style, and of keen insight into very dusty chambers of the heart.[62]

Zola—in spite of censors and hostile, at time vicious, criticism—continued to be translated throughout the nineties. The opinion expressed in 1890 in *Belgravia* persisted in many journals and periodicals to the end of the decade:

Zola, especially in his later works, is merely an expositor of whatever is unclean and horrible. He appears to look upon an atrocious villain as a doctor looks on some horrible development of

disease—with acute interest. He seems to take no interest in manly love or womanly devotion. All is dark with him; no light, no relief. The horrible odours of a moral cesspool seem to suit him; in fact, the more abominable it is, the more at home he appears to be. "Evil, be thou my good" seems to be his motto.[63]

In 1893, the year before the Dreyfus trial, Zola visited England. The *Spectator* notes the ironic fact that a country which punishes Zola's publisher in 1889 and a press that generally rejects his works now unite to give him a reception worthy of some master who has been taken to the heart of the English nation.[64] The *Westminster Review* caustically observes that even as Zola enjoys a generous reception from the critics and writers, the Bishop of Worcester is busily denouncing his work.[65] Both journals attack *La Débâcle* and *L'Assommoir* for sensualism and Schopenhauerish pessimism.[66] Late in the decade the *Academy,* rejecting Zola's "death-in-life" art and repulsive philosophy, quotes various press reports of Zola's new novel *Paris*: *Daily Chronicle*: "It is impossible . . . for any book written by M. Zola to be received at this moment solely upon its literary merits and demerits"; *Athenaeum*: *Paris* can "hardly be praised from the standpoint of a work of art; it is far more a disguised pamphlet or sermon"; *Westminster Gazette*: *Paris* "is a laborious effort to cover the ground in a manner which cannot be artistic as a whole, and which in detail is, for the most part, highly disagreeable." *The Daily Telegraph* was more emphatic:

Descriptive details, personal details, business details—details ad nauseum, exuberant, bewildering, and wearisome—furnish M. Zola with materials for the padding-out of his story to unconscionable dimensions . . . Nobody wants to read the elaborate biography and psychological analysis of a journalist or stockbroker, legislator

or speculator, who just flits across the stage as an illustration of bad manners and worse morals and then vanishes permanently from the scene without having awakened the least desire in any of the audience to learn what ultimately becomes of him. Such people crowd M. Zola's turgid pages, and are altogether unworthy of serious attention.[67]

George Moore, Vernon Lee, R. E. S. Hart, Arthur Symons, and Havelock Ellis express the more tolerant and scholarly criticisms of the nineties, and their opinions point the way to the broader judgments of the twentieth century. George Moore had been profoundly influenced by the Naturalists generally and Zola particularly in his youth, but as the years passed he was drawn more and more toward the "art for art's sake" group and Impressionism. Throughout his life he continued to defend the Naturalists against the charges of indecency, and he fought the censorship and the moral strangle hold of Mudie's Circulating Library. But by 1892 Moore had broken with the Naturalists on aesthetic and philosophical grounds. Acknowledging Zola's lasting contribution to the technique of the novel, Moore nevertheless considers him too much of a journalist and not enough of an artist, and his art, if it can be called an art, that of a Cecrops rather than a Phidias—an art of mass rather than of selection.[68]

Vernon Lee admits the horrors and indecencies portrayed by Zola, but finds his morality orthodox and humdrum:

Such books as *Nana*, *Germinal*, and *Pot Bouille*, putting aside *La Terre*, must contain for an immense number of readers a large amount of bad example, and bad emotion. . . . But is not life full of the same? Not to those perhaps who know life only on the surface; and not to those who, seeing more than the surface, would never be vividly impressed by its ugly sides: to such as

these Zola may do harm without doing good. But to those who could not fail to learn elsewhere than in Zola's novels many of the things with which they deal, to the only men and women who can be really just and helpful to their fellow-creatures, these books can do very little harm and may do very much good. . . . It is salutary to be horrified and sickened when the horror and sickening make one look around, pause and reflect.[69]

R. E. S. Hart, in the *Fortnightly,* argues that Zola holds out the promise of a better world. He calls upon us to re-examine accepted traditions; for him no question is too sacrosanct to be accepted blindly. A re-evaluation of life on the basis of what we learn through science, experiment, and reason will destroy bad thinking, correct social evils, and fortify human aspirations. Zola is not a materialist; rather, he is a great religious spirit seeking for the highest expression of human life.[70]

In 1893 Arthur Symons' "A Note on Zola's Method" summarized the objections of the "art for art's sake" group to Zola. Admitting Zola's prodigious energy and power, Symons nonetheless finds him totally lacking in artistic sensibility. He sickens the reader with his "plebeian flesh." In all his books "there is something greasy, a smear of eating and drinking." He has no charm, no craftsmanship. "His fingers are too thick; they leave a blurred line. If you want merely weight, a certain kind of force, you get it; but no more." Symons complains, not as a matter of morals, but as a matter of art, of an obsession that "is grossly, uninterestingly filthy." Zola's vision is that "of a man who sees the world through a formula. [He] sees in humanity *la bête humaine.* He see the beast in all its transformations, but he sees only the beast. He has never looked at life impartially, he has never seen it as it is." [71]

Havelock Ellis' essay "Zola: The Man and His Work" appeared in the first number of *The Savoy* (January, 1896), a short-lived, illustrated quarterly edited by Symons. The purpose of the journal, in the words of the "Editorial Note," was to provide "a periodical of an exclusively literary and artistic kind. . . . We have no formulas, and we desire no false unity of form or matter. We have not invented a new point of view. We are not Realists, or Romanticists, or Decadents. For us, all art is good which is good art. We hope to appeal to the tastes of the intelligent by not being original for originality's sake, or audacious for the sake of advertisement, or timid for the convenience of the elderly-minded."

The new spirit in criticism had arrived, and Havelock Ellis was among its chief spokesmen. It drew upon contemporary science, aesthetics, and ethics, and it sought to arrive at a balanced and inclusive judgment. Discussion of the "philosophical critics" must be reserved for a later chapter, but Havelock Ellis' essay appropriately concludes the record of Zola's literary reputation among the Victorians:

> Zola's name—a barbarous, explosive name, like an anarchist's bomb—has been tossed about amid hoots and yells for a quarter of a century. In every civilized country we have heard of the man who has dragged literature into the gutter, who has gone down to pick up the filth of the streets, and has put it into books for the filthy to read. And in every civilized country his books have been read by the hundred thousand, whatever judgment must be passed on the millions who have drunk of this moral sewage. But popularity failed to silence the hooting; in England, the classic land of self-righteousness, the decree went forth that this thing must be put an end to, and amid general acclamation the English publisher of such garbage was clapped into gaol. There was only a slight pause in the outcry, more a pause of stupefaction than of

reconciliation, when it was known that many respected novelists in Europe and America looked up humbly to this scavenger as to a master; or again, when a metaphysician stood up in the Concord School of Philosophy and boldly classed him with Jesus and the great masters of moral irony. Today, Zola's great life-work is completed. At the same time, the uproar that it aroused has, to a large extent, fallen silent. . . . the storms . . . have worn themselves out . . . Such a time is favourable to the calm discussion of Zola's precise position:[72]

The argument over Zola, Ellis observes, has usually presented itself as a question of Idealism versus Realism. But "there is no absolute realism, merely various kinds of idealism; the only absolute realism would be a phonographic record, illustrated photographically, after the manner of Edison's kinetoscope. Zola is just as much an idealist as George Sand. . . . The questions are: Has the artist selected his materials rightly? Has he selected them with due restraint?" To the latter question, Zola himself admits that he has been carried away by his enthusiasm —"It is the same kind of error as Whitman made." Nevertheless Zola is a great master of his art. *L'Assommoir* and *Germinal*

are related to the ordinary novel much as Wagner's music-dramas are related to the ordinary Italian opera. Wagner reaches a loftier height of art than Zola; he had a more complete grasp of all the elements he took in hand to unite. Zola has not seen with sufficient clearness the point of view of science, and its capacity for harmonising with fiction; nor has he, with perfect sureness of vision, always realized the ends of art. He has left far too much of the scaffolding standing amid his huge literary structures; there is too much mere brute fact which has not been wrought into art. But, if Zola is not among the world's greatest artists, I do not think we can finally deny that he is a great artist.[73]

His greatness lies less in the method than in the material itself, and in the impulses and ideas that prompted the selection of that material. "Zola has enlarged the field of the novel. He has brought the modern material world into fiction in a more definite and thorough manner than it has ever been brought before, just as Richardson brought the emotional world into fiction; such an achievement necessarily marks an epoch."

It is Zola's treatment of the sexual and digestive functions that has chiefly aroused his critics, yet—

> If you think of it, these two functions are precisely the central functions of life, the two poles of hunger and love around which the world revolves. . . . Our own literature during the last two centuries has been terribly hampered by the social tendency of life to slur expression, and to paraphrase or suppress all forceful and poignant words. If we go back to Chaucer, or even to Shakespeare, we realize what power of expression we have lost. It is enough, indeed, to turn to our English Bible. . . . If some of the stories of the Old Testament were presented to us under some trifling disguise on week-days we should declare that they were filthier than the filthiest things in Zola; and, certainly, if the discovery of the Bible had been left for us to make, any English translation would have to be issued at a high price by some esoteric society for fear lest it should fall into the hands of the British matron. It is our British love of compromise, we say, that makes it possible for a spade to be called a spade on one day of the week, but on no other; our neighbors, whose minds are more logically constituted, call it *le cant Britannique.* . . . It is a question how far any real vital literature can be produced under such conditions.[74]

It is true that most of the things Zola has tried to do have been done better by more accomplished artists. The Goncourts, like Zola, have extended the language and pictured the world,

but with far more delicate art. Balzac has created as large and vivid a world of people. Huysmans has greater skill in stamping the vision of strange or sordid things on the brain. Tolstoi gives a deeper realization of life. Flaubert is as audaciously Naturalistic, but he had the perfect self-restraint which should always accompany audacity. It is Zola's moral energy which lifts him to a position of influence above the greater artists with whom we may compare him:

> It is by no means probable that the world will continue to read Zola much longer. His work is already done; but when the nineteenth century is well past it may be that he will still have his interest. . . . For a vivid, impartial picture—on the whole a faithful picture—of certain of the most characteristic aspects of this period, seen indeed from the outside, but drawn by a contemporary in all its intimate and even repulsive details, the reader of the future can best go to Zola.[75]

The late Victorians were quick to see in Huysmans the development of the novel away from the Naturalism of Zola into a deeper, more penetrating, more religious Realism. Only two of his novels—*En Route* and *The Cathedral*—were translated before 1900, but French versions of his other works were widely known. The reaction to his early, Naturalistic novels was one of intense hostility, but to his later, mystical writings, one of widespread approval. The *Saturday Review's* comment is typical:

> He began his literary career, nearly twenty years ago, as a realist, more unflinchingly absorbed in the ugliness of reality than even Zola himself. *Marthe: Histoire d'une Fille* . . . is one of the most brutal books ever written. *Les Soeurs Vatard* and *En Ménage*, which followed, are both sordid studies in the most sordid side of life . . . The end of *En Ménage* leaves us with . . .

despairing resignation. . . . In *A Rebours* the realist has outgrown the creeds and the methods of realism, and we have an astonishing picture of the artificial paradise in which a perverse imagination can isolate itself in the midst of all the healthy and intolerable commonplaces of contemporary existence. The book is the one real, the one quintessential, book which has been produced by the literature vaguely called decadent. . . . *Là-Bas*, with its monstrous pictures of the Black Mass, and the spiritual abominations of Satanism, is one step further in the direction of the supernatural; and it, too, ends desperately. . . . *En Route* is the story of a conversion. . . . The whole book is a sort of thinking aloud; it fixes, in precise words, all the uncertainties, the contradictions, the absurd unreasonableness and not less absurd logic, which distracts man's brain in the passing over him of sensation and circumstance, and all this thinking aloud is concentrated on one end, is concerned with the working out, in his own singular way, of man's salvation.[76]

Arthur Symons traces this spiritual evolution to its completion:

Nothing is changed in him and yet all is changed. The disgust of the world deepens through *L'Oblat*, which is the last stage but one on the pilgrimage which begins with *En Route*. It seeks an escape in poring, with a dreadful diligence, over a saint's recorded miracles, in the life of *Sainte Lydwine de Schiedam*, which is medieval in its precise acceptance of every horrible detail of the story. *Les Foules de Lourdes* has the same minute attentiveness to horror, but with a new pity in it, and a way of giving thanks to the Virgin, which is in Huysmans yet another escape from his disgust of the world. But it is in the great chapter on Satan as the creator of ugliness that his work seems to end where it had begun, in the service of art, now come from a great way off to join itself with the service of God. And the whole soul of Huysmans characterizes itself in the turn of a single phrase there: that "art is the only clean thing on earth, except holiness." [77]

VI

Huysmans' novels bring the Naturalist controversy among the Victorians to a close. With the opening of the nineties the main storm had passed over. Naturalist novels were published freely; the influence of liberal and sympathetic critics softened the hostility of a once indignant public; Ibsen, and the problems posed in his plays, now attracted the moral and aesthetic controversialists; mushroom magazines—*Parade, Quarto, Chameleon, Evergreen, Rose Leaf, Yellow Book, Savoy*—championed a diversity of aesthetic creeds; the older journals were caught up in part with the new spirit; and Naturalism itself, absorbing new intellectual and aesthetic principles, turned in the twentieth century from the science of Darwin to the science of Freud and the religion of Humanitarianism.

Hostilities, to be sure, did not entirely cease. The *Quarterly Review,* which for almost a century had fought all encroachments on the conventions, continued in the nineties to charge Balzac with materialism, animalism, and atheism—with founding the movement that culminated in Zola's "chamber of horrors." Baudelaire's poetry was likened to "toad stools." Flaubert was described as a dilettante and nihilist. The Naturalists generally were accused of producing a "literature of an exhausted race" in a period of putrescence.[78]

But even as the Empire celebrated the Diamond Jubilee, Balzac, Baudelaire, Flaubert, the Goncourts, Daudet, Maupassant, Huysmans—even Zola—had won a large audience of sympathetic readers, and the public generally was ready to tolerate much more freedom in literary expression than it had tolerated in the forties, sixties, and eighties. Certainly by 1900 it was

obvious that the warnings of the National Vigilance Association and the thunderings from the pulpit and press had accomplished nothing, ultimately, in preventing the pernicious influence of a wanton and prurient literature that "calls the mantling blush to the maiden cheek."

CHAPTER VI

"Enemy of the People"

IBSEN IN ENGLAND

OF THE many late nineteenth century controversies over questions of art, morals, and religion, none was more bitter than the one provoked during the last three decades of the century by the dramas of Ibsen. Wagner's heresies called down upon him the wrath of aestheticians; Nietszche and Schopenhauer disturbed the quiet waters of philosophy; Manet excited concern chiefly within the confines of Paris; and the Realist-Naturalists —Balzac, Flaubert, Maupassant, Zola—challenged the attention mainly of professional critics and moralists. But the entrance of Ibsen into Victorian society was like the flaunting of a red flag before the vigilant eyes of John Bull, and there burst forth a storm of protest unequaled in its vehemence and vituperation. This storm is of interest to social and literary historian alike, for it throws into bold relief the Victorian conscience with its troubled concern over art and morality.

Although the collected English edition of Ibsen's works did not appear until 1906-1908, translations were made as early as 1872,[1] and increased in frequency through the eighties and nineties. During this period all of his important work was published

and at least thirty-six productions of the plays presented. Ibsen's literary reputation in Victorian society centers about three men: Gosse, who introduced his writings to the public; Archer, who translated and produced them; and Shaw, who, with characteristic vigor, defended them against the onslaughts of the Philistines.

II

During the seventies Ibsen's work was brought to the attention of the English almost exclusively through the writings of Gosse, who in 1871, at the age of twenty-two, was commissioned by the *Spectator* and *Fraser's* to go to Norway to study Scandinavian literature. When Gosse arrived, the Ibsen controversy had already begun. The young man immediately threw himself into a fervent defense of the "enemy of the people" and, during the following year, published four articles in English journals, hailing Ibsen as "second to none of his contemporaries" [2]—"a poet who is fast gaining for himself that European fame which nothing but the remoteness of his mother-tongue has hitherto denied him." [3]

That Gosse's article in the *Fortnightly* the year following should be continually referred to as Ibsen's introduction to the English public is probably due to the anonymity and brevity of his preceding notices, as well as to its effectiveness in arousing interest in the Norwegian dramatist's work. The temper of Gosse's writing may be gauged from the following:

There is now living at Dresden a middle-aged Norwegian gentleman who walks in and out among the inhabitants of that gay city, observing all things, observed by few, retired, contemplative, unaggressive . . . a soul full of doubt and sorrow and unfulfilled

desire, piercing downward into the dark, profound, Promethean . . . Ibsen has many golden arrows in his quiver, and he stands, cold and serene, between the dawn and the darkness, shooting them one by one into the valley below, each truly aimed at some folly, some affectation, in the every-day life we lead.[4]

Gosse, however, was no uncritical pilgrim at the shrine of Ibsen, as his correspondence with the dramatist concerning *Kejser eg Galilaeer* proves. The English critic objected to Ibsen's use of prose—"as if Orpheus should travel hellwards without his ivory lyre." [5] Some years later Gosse published Ibsen's rejoinder:

You think my new drama ought to be written in verse. . . . Here I must simply contradict you; for the piece is, as you will find, developed in the most realistic way possible. The illusion I wish to produce is that of truth itself. . . . The variety of everyday and unimportant characters, which I have intentionally introduced into the piece, would be effaced and blended into one another, if I allowed them all to converse in a rhythmic movement. We are no longer living in the time of Shakespeare. . . . My new drama is not, indeed, a tragedy in the old-world signification of the word, but what I have tried to depict in it is human beings, and for that very reason I have not allowed them to talk "the language of the gods." [6]

Gosse continued to propagandize Ibsen through the decade.[7] With the publication in 1879 of his *Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe*—a collection of previously published essays (reprinted in 1883 and 1890), which circulated among the members of the rather restricted number interested in contemporary literature—Gosse's activities for the time being came to a close. In 1880 William Archer entered upon the scene. Referring to this year, Archer some time later wrote that there were probably not more than half-a-dozen people in England to whom

the name of Ibsen conveyed any meaning. Indeed, he knew of only one—Mr. Edmund Gosse. " 'Henry Gibson!' said an editor to whom I proposed an article on the Norwegian dramatist, 'Who in the World is he?' " [8]

III

Thus in 1880 there was little justification for supposing that Ibsen in a few years would set the entire theatrical world by the ears and arouse a storm of abuse intimidating to those less enthusiastic than his admirers.[9] As his popularity increased, however, criticism gathered momentum, and as Archer, to a large extent, was responsible for his popularization, it became Archer's task to deliver him from his enemies. The actual "outbreak of Ibsen-mania and Ibsen-phobia," to use Archer's phrase, did not occur until 1889-1890; during the eighties, while Zola absorbed the attention of the National Vigilance Association, hostility, at least on the surface, remained quiescent.

The decade was one largely of translation and experiment. As early as 1876 Catherine Ray had rendered *Emperor and Galilean* into English, and in 1880 a bowdlerized English version of *Norah*—later entitled *A Doll's House*—was made by a Danish writer and printed in Copenhagen.[10] The actress Henriette Frances Lord made her own translation of this play in 1882 and three years later adapted *Ghosts*. Other important translations were: *Pillars of Society* and *Ghosts* (1888), by Archer; *An Enemy of Society* (1888), by Mrs. Eleanor Marx-Aveling;[11] *A Doll's House* (1889), by Archer, for the Novelty Theatre production; and *Rosmersholm* (1889), by Louis Parker.

The performances previous to 1890 were few: *Pillars of Society* (1880) at the Gaiety and (1889) at the Opera Comique;

Breaking a Butterfly (1884) at the Princess's Theatre (one month's run), (1885) by amateurs, and (1889) at the Novelty Theatre (three weeks' run). *Breaking a Butterfly*—a version of *A Doll's House*—enjoyed the longest run of any of these productions, but was so altered and diluted that it could hardly be called an Ibsen play. It is evident that from 1880 to 1889 there was little popular interest in Ibsen.

That Ibsen profoundly influenced English drama has not been denied, yet it must be recognized that Realism on the English stage, like Realism in English fiction, possessed a tradition long before the influence of foreign literature was felt. *Theatre* traced this tradition in detail back to Madame Vestris, the actress, who in 1831 proclaimed the new mode later carried on by the Bancrofts, Macready, and Charles Kean. But English Realism, the writer hastens to assure us, is not that of the Naturalists:

> . . . when we come to the realism of Zola, and his imitators, and the only less objectionable work of some of the lady novelists of the day, and regard the craving after the most minute and oftentimes sickening details of the murders, massacres, mysteries, and other sensational subjects, with which the columns of some publications teem, the wholesome tone is absent, and the question arises, with what putrid pabulum will this morbid appetite find satiety?[12]

The tendency toward greater realism was given impetus by Ibsen, and Archer felt it necessary to defend him. Speaking of the 1884 production of *Breaking a Butterfly,* he wrote:

> The adaptors . . . have felt it necessary to eliminate all that was satirical or unpleasant, and in making their work sympathetic, they have made it trivial. I am the last to blame them for doing so. Ibsen on the English stage is impossible. He must be trivialized.[13]

Three years earlier Archer had defended Ibsen's unhappy endings by pointing out that the Norwegian dramatist "is one of the great negative voices of a negative age which tries in vain, by shrieking in falsetto and thundering in the deepest bass, to convince itself that it is positive." [14]

The reviews of translations and productions from 1883 to 1889 are relatively unimportant. They probably helped to keep Ibsen's name before the public, but did little more. In the spring of 1888 Archer gave a series of lectures—one on Ibsen—at the Royal Institution, and in 1889, following a ten years' silence, Gosse took up his pen in defense of Realism.

> Ibsen, be it admitted, for the sake of the gentle reader, is not a poet to the taste of everyone. The school of critics now flourishing amongst us, to whom what is serious in literature is eminently distasteful, and who claim of modern writing that it should be light, amusing, romantic, unreal, will find Ibsen too imposing. The critic who is bored with Tolstoi, who cannot understand what Howells is aiming at, and who sees nothing but what is "improper" in Guy de Maupassant, will not be able to put up with Ibsen. . . . But others, who believe that literature is alive, and must progress over untrodden ground with unfamiliar steps, will recognize a singular greatness in this series of social dramas, and will not grudge a place for Henrik Ibsen among the foremost European writers of the nineteenth century.[15]

R. Farquharson Sharp was not convinced, declaring that Ibsen's power had decreased proportionately with the increase of his interest in social problems.[16] Arthur Symons, on the other hand, hailed Ibsen as "the chief figure of European significance that has appeared in the Teutonic world of art since Goethe," and pointed out that his Realism stifles nothing—that, while it is daring enough to discuss matters over which society draws a veil,

"it is never gross, never unhealthy; it 'sees life steadily, and sees it whole.' " [17]

The 1889 production of *A Doll's House* by Mr. and Mrs. Charington marked the first important outburst of Ibsen-mania. Although the *Athenaeum* declared that Ibsen *au naturel* is not unpleasing to the English palate, the *Spectator* found the play mischievous, "especially as it teaches, if it teaches anything, that the way to improve life is to root up the good wheat that has begun to grow, because there are tares intertwined with it." [18]

The *Academy* published a series of critical skirmishes between Wedmore and Herford,[19] the latter a staunch defender of the dramatist. Wedmore was abetted by Clement Scott, formerly owner of the *Theatre* and critic for the *Sunday Times*, the *Observer*, the *London Illustrated News*, *Truth*, and the *Daily Telegraph*—the latter, the largest circulated newspaper in the world at that time. The temper of the controversy can best be suggested in Scott's own words:

> Having shown us a child wife compounded of infantile tricks and capriciousness, a frivolous and irresponsible young person who does not hesitate to fib, and can, at a pinch, condescend to forge; a wife of eight years' standing who changes from a grown-up baby to an illogical preacher; a woman who, in a fit of disappointment, in spite of appeal to her honour, her maternity, her religion, her sense of justice, leaves the husband she has sworn to love, the home she has engaged to govern, and the children she is made to cherish; having introduced us to the sensual Dr. Rank who discusses hereditary disease and the fit of silk stockings with the innocent friend; . . . having flung upon the stage a congregation of men and women without affection, an unloveable, unlovely, and detestable crew—the admirers of Ibsen, failing to convince us of the excellence of such creatures, turn around and abuse the wholesome minds that cannot swallow such unpalateable doctrine. . . .[20]

A number of important journals leaped to the defense, coming to the general conclusion that Ibsen is not "one to be laughed down or damned with faint praise, still less to be cowed into silence. . . . He is already a power in the world of today, and it is hard to see that his influence has much more than dawned." [21]

Archer, the chief apostle during this first outburst, was well qualified for his task. His own dramatic efforts, his knowledge of French, German, and Norwegian, and his broad appreciation of foreign literature brought to his writing a logic, clarity, and forcefulness seldom found in that of the other controversialists. In a vigorous article he denied the charges that Ibsen has nothing to say, that what he does say is untrue, and that his dramas are immoral, by asserting that Ibsen's "originality lies in giving intense dramatic life to modern ideas" and his morality in presenting "broken lights" of truth, refracted through character and circumstance. Immorality, Archer added, is as remote from the dramatist's mind as it seems close to those of the reviewers.[22]

With the publication of this article the first period of the Ibsen controversy comes to a close.

IV

A lull followed in 1890. Mrs. Winslow gave some Ibsen readings at the Haymarket and other theaters; numerous translations appeared; Herford wrote a series of articles for the *Academy*;[23] and Shaw aroused a controversy among Ibsenites by his address before the Fabian Society in which he classified Ibsen as a socialist.[24] The *Saturday Review*—later to print Shaw's enthusiastic reviews—wrote of the fourth act of *Rosmersholm,* "It is not observation, except of persons in delirium; it is simply

bosh!" and attacked *Ghosts* for being as unhealthy as a Naturalistic novel.[25]

The most tempered appraisal during this and, indeed, later periods was that of Havelock Ellis in *The New Spirit.* Ellis called attention to the peculiar environment and racial heritage of the Scandinavians as explaining their paradoxical qualities: "wild and fantastic imagination stands beside an exact realism and a loving grasp of nature; a tendency to mysticism and symbol beside a healthy naturalism." [26] Ibsen epitomizes these qualities and, like Aristophanes, Molière, Dumas, and Walt Whitman, has given all of his mature knowledge and art to the liberation of the individual as a means, not only to personal happiness, but also to the happiness of society. His work is that of a great soul crushed by the weight of an antagonistic society, which, forcing him into utterance, proclaims him the most revolutionary of modern writers:

> Ibsen, standing alone in the darkness in front, absorbed in the problems of human life, indifferent to the aspects of external nature, has closer affinities to the stern winter-night of Norway. But there is a mighty energy in this man's work. The ideas and instincts, developed in silence, which inspire his art, are of the kind that penetrate men's minds slowly. Yet they penetrate surely, and are proclaimed at length in the market-place.[27]

In 1891 with six productions of five Ibsen plays, three of which—*Rosmersholm, Ghosts,* and *Hedda Gabler*—proved to be Ibsen's most controversial dramas, the battle was again resumed. Although none of the productions enjoyed an extended run, they all aroused extended hostility. Twenty important essays, not to mention innumerable minor articles and

newspaper comments, appeared; scarcely an aspect of the dramatist's personal life and works escaped notice.

An essay in the *Quarterly Review* is typical of much of the comment. Earlier in the century this journal had so viciously attacked Balzac and the whole of French life and letters that indignant protests had forced the editors to an apology. Now it attacked the fervent but blind admirers of Ibsen's pretensions and of Walt Whitman's lucubrations, and those who rated the novels of Tolstoi and Dostoevski above those of Thackeray and Balzac. Ibsen is associated with the group of moderns to which Tolstoi with his *Kreutzer Sonata* and Zola with his *La Terre* belong—a group whose sole aim is to avoid imaginativeness, the constructive power of genius, the dream of fancy, and the intuitive side of intellect.[28]

Even the *Westminster Review* saw in *Hedda Gabler* a decay of Ibsen's moral strength,[29] while the *Saturday Review* suggested that the following lines from Shakespeare might not inappropriately preface an edition of the dramatist's plays:

> O, fie! 'tis an unweeded garden
> That grows to seed: things rank,
> and gross in nature,
> Possess it merely.[30]

The *Theatre* described *Rosmersholm* as "unfathomable," *Ghosts* as "horrible," and *Hedda Gabler* as "motiveless"—the story of a "spiteful, blasé woman, none too virtuous, of ill-regulated mind, and deceitful." [31] And the *Fortnightly*, which this year published two articles by Gosse in defense of Ibsen,[32] printed a review which, while praising Ibsen as a master of dramatic situation, observed: "If his types are to be accepted as normal, the world

is certainly a viler as well as a gloomier place than most of us have supposed." [33]

Shaw summarized the Ibsen-phobia as it raged up to June, 1891, in his *Quintessence of Ibsenism* (an elaboration of the Fabian address) and was facetiously abused by the *Saturday Review*. On behalf of Ibsen stood a formidable group of critics, among them Archer, Shaw, Gosse, Henry James, Arthur Symons, and George Moore. The opposition was led by clergymen, newspapers, and numerous managers and producers. Rational criticism was displaced by personal animosity. Shaw sums up a few of the newspaper maledictions on *Ghosts*:

"Revoltingly suggestive and blasphemous. . . . Characters either contradictory in themselves, uninteresting, or abhorrent."—*Daily Chronicle*. "A repulsive and degrading work."—*Queen*. "Morbid, unhealthy, unwholesome and disgusting story. . . ."—Lloyd's. "Merely dull dirt long drawn out."—*Hawk*. "Morbid horrors of the hideous tale. . . . Ponderous dullness of the didactic talk. . . . If any repetition of this outrage be attempted, the authorities will doubtless awake from their lethargy."—*Sporting and Dramatic News*. "Just a wicked nightmare."—*The Gentlewoman*. "Lugubrious diagnosis of sordid impropriety. . . . Characters are prigs, pedants, and profligates. . . . Morbid caricatures . . . Maunderings of nookshotten Norwegians. . . . It is no more of a play than an average Gaiety burlesque."—W. St. Leger in *Black and White*. . . . "Garbage and offal."—*Truth*. . . . "As foul and filthy a concoction as has ever been allowed to disgrace the boards of an English theatre. . . ."—*Era*. "Noisome corruption."—*Stage*.[34]

The epithets were hurled not only at the plays but at the dramatist and his defenders as well. Ibsen was described as an egotist and a bungler, a crazy fanatic, a gloomy ghoul, and the Ibsenites as dabblers, nasty-minded, muck-ferreting dogs, *ad nauseum*.[35] Shaw's defense continued through the decade, his re-

views appearing after 1895 in the *Saturday Review*, a journal until this year consistently opposed to the Norwegian dramatist.

A few of the magazines, such as the *Athenaeum,* remained calm:

> To those who do not remember the fierce antagonism to which Wagner was exposed, the not undeserved outcry against the nudities of Walt Whitman or the diseased imagination of Baudelaire, the scream against "Songs and Ballads," and other similar manifestations, it might seem as if decency had been beaten to a mummy and purity had received its death blow. But unless the Lord Chamberlain is coaxed or coerced into interference by those who will afterwards laugh at him, the storm will blow over.[36]

Nevertheless, the defenders of Ibsen were subjected to further scurrilous abuse, one critic writing that Archer reminded him of the American schoolmaster who wrote over his door:

> I'm the head of this here collidge
> And what I don't know isn't nollidge.[37]

V

The controversy again abated in 1892. A number of appreciative reviews appeared in various journals;[38] the *London Quarterly,* however, was still unable to find in Ibsen's theories anything but beatific anarchy and ghastly caricature—work that could "scarcely live beyond our day." [39] Beerbohm Tree denounced Ibsen before the Playgoers Club, speaking, so the *Gentleman's Magazine* reported, "as a man living in some fog-bound city of Dreadful Night might speak of the sun if he were suddenly transported to a Nilotic town." [40]

With the production of the *Master Builder* in 1893 the lines of controversy were again drawn. The *Spectator* thought it "quite the worst play that Ibsen has yet produced . . . nothing

but one desperate, raging cry of revolt against human destiny. . . . 'Vanitas vanitatum,'—one knows the text well enough, many have preached from it; but none have brought their sermons to a more hateful ending. . . ." [41] The *Athenaeum,* expressing the sentiments of many journals, charged the dramatist with a perverse and malign obscurity, observing that his characters "are, or should be, one and all, inmates of a lunatic asylum." [42]

Five Ibsen productions in 1894 intensified the conflict. The *Athenaeum* called the *Wild Duck* a joke; the actor Herbert Waring prophesied that no drama constructed on the Ibsen model could ever find popularity either in England or abroad;[43] the *Saturday Review* described *Little Eyolf* as "a hopeless burden of horror";[44] and *Belgravia* opined that Ibsen could do no good to the great mass of people by opening up a world of psychological lore hitherto unheard of:

> Brought up in the Puritan household, we fought for gaiety; brought up in the latter-day nursery, we seek for gloom. For gloom of some kind or other is a need for our natures. Take away our hell-fires and our lost spirits, and lo—we have an Ibsen.[45]

The most important aspect of the Ibsen-mania in 1895 was the English translation of Dr. Max Nordau's *Degeneration,* which, running through five editions, brought no little satisfaction to the anti-Ibsenites. The premise of the book is that the tension of modern life has created a race of nervous degenerates and that the clearest expression of this degeneracy is found in the lives and works of such figures as Wagner, Tolstoi, and Ibsen and in such groups as the Pre-Raphaelites and Impressionists. Ibsen is included because his Realism is unsound,

his science inaccurate, his religion reactionary, and his entire philosophy inconsistent. A volume entitled *Regeneration* attempted to answer Nordau's thesis, but the best refutation came from Shaw in an article published in the American paper *Liberty*.[46] Shaw summarily dismissed Nordau's charges that declared Ibsen sunk below the level of the human and his characters to be drunkards, silly louts, idiots, and crazed hysterical geese.

With the 1896 production of *Little Eyolf* the Ibsen controversy reached its climax. After this year the dramatist's reputation was secure and his work taken as a matter of course. There were, to be sure, many who continued obstinate in their first opinions. The *Dublin Review*, for example, remained to the last bitter in its opposition to Ibsen as well as to the Naturalist novelists:

> [Ibsen] is like a surgeon, scalpel in hand, in the dissecting room. . . . Nothing is sacred to him. . . . We have got accustomed to the leading motive of almost every modern play being either a seduction or a divorce, but the frank and free discussion on the stage of the most intimate relations of two married people, the tearing away of every veil from the holiest relation in life, is something sufficiently new to deserve special comment. . . .[47]

Such voices as this, however, diminished in number and influence as the century drew to a close and militant controversy passed into the history of literary criticism. Shaw's articles in the *Saturday Review* indicate the final capitulation of the stalwarts. They were devoted largely to expostulations against Mr. Smyth-Pigott, examiner of stage plays to the Lord Chamberlain's department, who reported, "I have studied Ibsen's plays carefully; and all the characters . . . appear to me morally

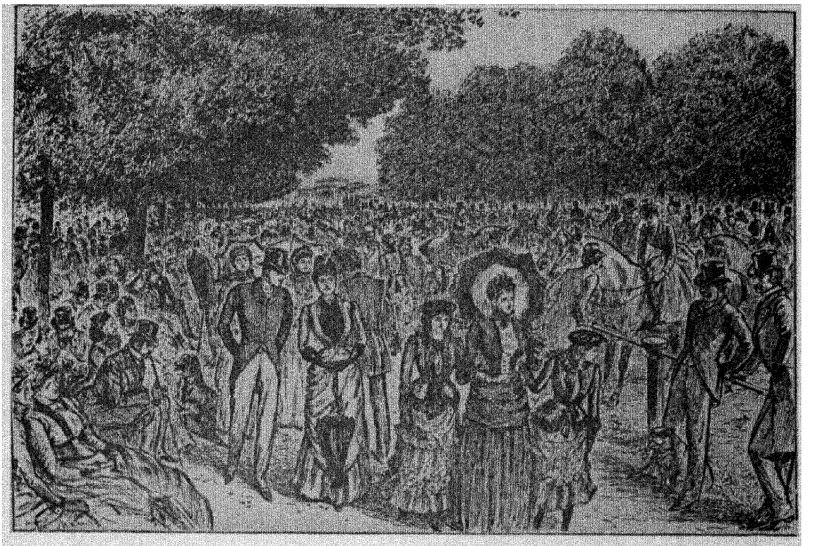


Books. Caricature of Sir Anthony Panizzi, founder of the London Library

(SPY)



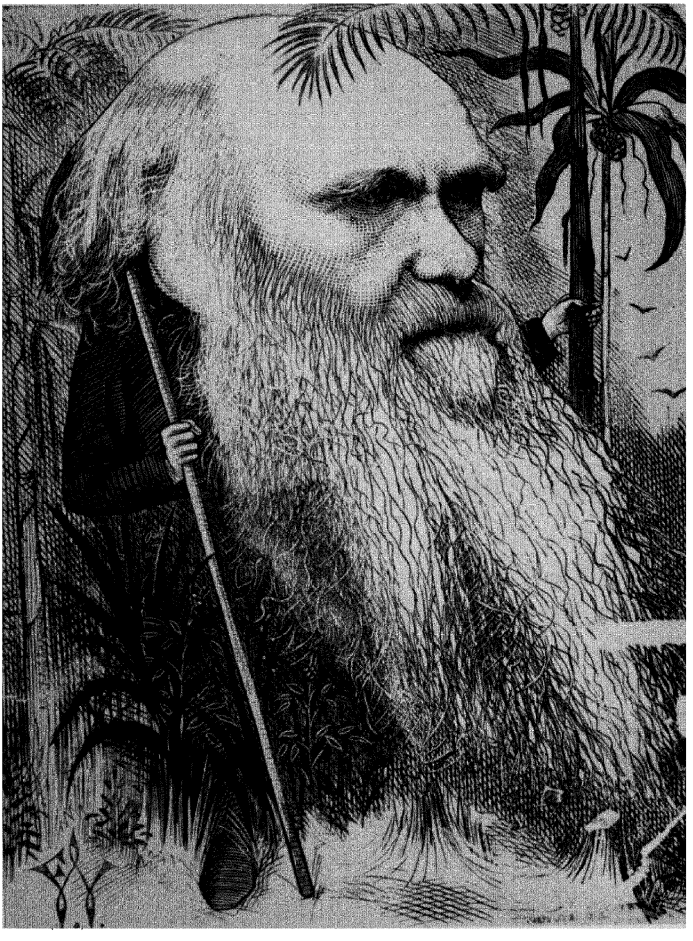
The Birth of Nana-Venus: A Theme for Future Bouguereaus
(ANDRE GILL)



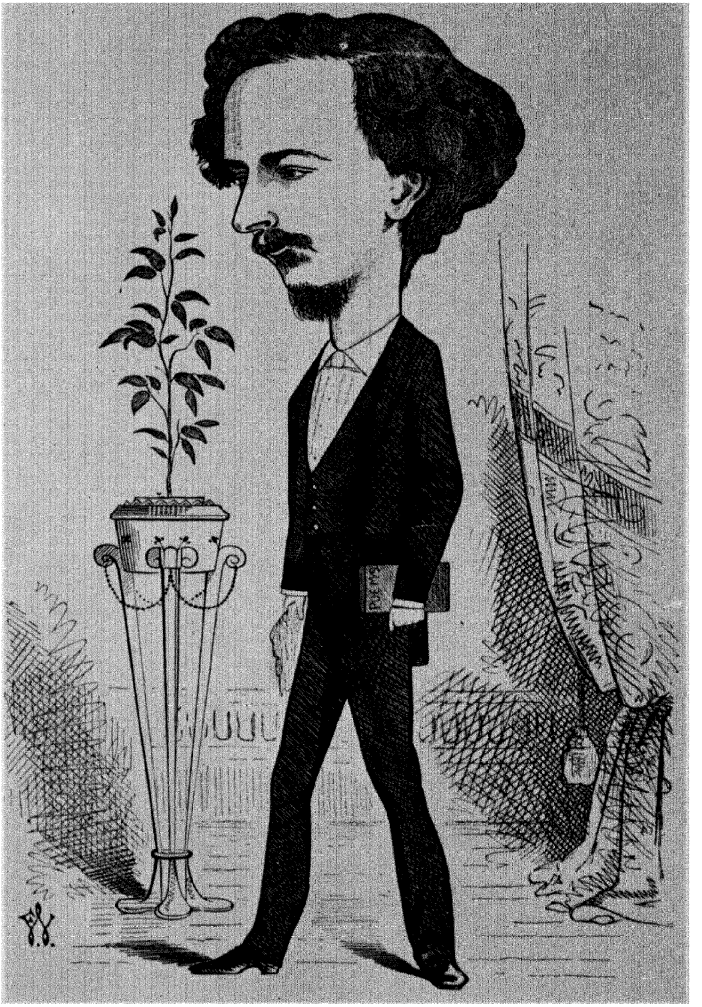
The English Take Their Pleasures Sadly
(GEORGE DU MAURIER)



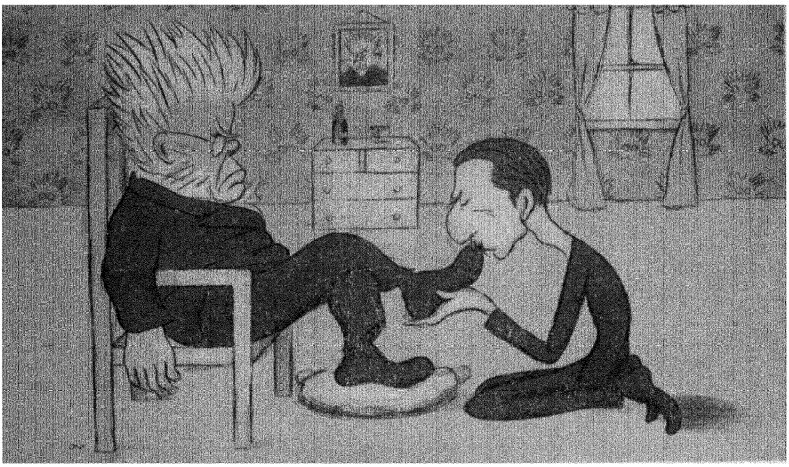
The Scholastic Hen and Her Chickens. Miss Thimblebee: "Turn your heads the other way, my dears, for here are two horribly handsome officers coming."
(GEORGE CRUIKSHANK)



Natural Selection. Charles Robert Darwin
(FREDERICK WADDY)



A True Poet. Algernon Charles Swinburne
(FREDERICK WADDY)



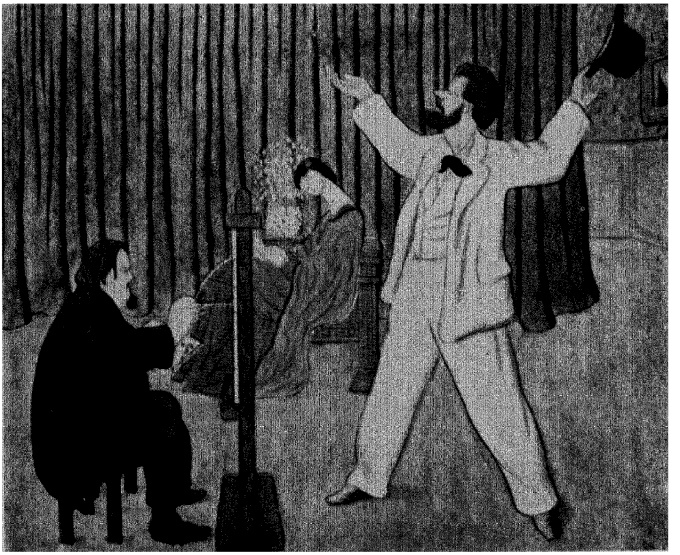
Henrik Ibsen Receiving Mr. William Archer in Audience
(MAX BEERBOHM)



Dante Gabriel Rossetti in His Back Garden. Background from left to right: Swinburne, Theodore Watts, George Meredith, Hall Caine. In front of wall on left: Whistler. With kangaroo: Burne-Jones. On the right: Holman Hunt, and in front of him, in profile: Ruskin. In the foreground: Rossetti. The lady is no one in particular, just a vague synthesis.
(MAX BEERBOHM)



His Spiritual Father. Balzac Salutes Zola and Zola Returns the Salute of His Literary Ancestor
(ANDRE GILL)



Rossetti Insistently Exhorted by George Meredith to Come Forth Into the Glorious Sun and Wind for a Walk to Hendon and Beyond
(MAX BEERBOHM)

deranged"; to invectives against public apathy concerning Ibsen; to criticism for England's failure to celebrate the dramatist's seventieth birthday; and to speculations as to what Queen Victoria thought about *Ghosts* when she witnessed a performance during the Jubilee.[48]

VI

Thus, like Balzac, Baudelaire, Swinburne, and Zola, Ibsen at last established himself, but only after a controversy that shook Victorian society. The battle was characterized on the one hand by bitterness, bigotry, and personal animosity, and on the other by extravagant eulogy and unrestrained enthusiasm. If his enemies unjustifiably discredited him, it must be confessed that his admirers too often sang his praises with absurd lustiness. That he could arouse the storm of controversy he did in 1889, 1891, 1893, and 1896 seems incredible to one who knows the plays but is unfamiliar with the social and moral prejudices of the age in which they first appeared.

The essential point of the record, however, is that, in spite of the bitterness of the struggle, Ibsen succeeded in making himself a force in Victorian society and that in doing so he illuminates the Victorian temper in moral and aesthetic matters. Queen Victoria's presence at *Ghosts* in 1897 is symbolical: Victorianism was giving way before the onrush of the twentieth century. The history of Ibsen's literary reputation is the story of the transition, and it was admirably summarized at the turn of the century by James Joyce:

> Twenty years have passed since Henrik Ibsen wrote *A Doll's House*, thereby almost marking an epoch in the history of the drama. During those years his name has gone abroad through the

breadth and length of two continents, and has provoked more discussion and criticism than that of any other living man. He has been upheld as a religious reformer, a social reformer, a Semitic lover of righteousness, and as a great dramatic artist. He has been rigorously denounced as a meddlesome intruder, a defective artist, an incomprehensible mystic. . . . Through the perplexities of such diverse criticism, the great genius of the man is day by day coming out as a hero comes out amid the earthly trials. The dissonant cries are fainter and more distant, the random praises are rising in steadier and more choral chant. . . . It may be questioned whether any man has held so firm an empire over the thinking in modern times. Not Rousseau; not Emerson; not Carlyle; not any of those giants of whom almost all have passed out of human ken.[49]

CHAPTER VII

"Tenderness and Loving Kindness"

THE RUSSIANS IN ENGLAND

THE *Spectator* of July 10, 1886, voiced the general opinion of the then limited group acquainted with Russian literature when it hailed Tolstoi, Turgenev, and Dostoevski as not only the greatest of Russian writers but also the most important among contemporary Realists.[1] Such enthusiasm seems at first oddly inconsistent with the prevailing popular literary taste, particularly when we remember that the Russian novelists were closely identified with the French Naturalists. Moreover, their writings, representing virtually the only Russian literature to appear in English translation before 1900, came at a time when the controversy over Balzac had barely subsided and when the controversies over Baudelaire, Zola, and Ibsen had excited a tempest, not only in the literary world, but also in the pulpit, the press, and on the platform—even within the halls of Parliament. The history of Russian Realism in England prior to 1900 thus throws into bold relief the essential differences between it and French Realism as these two movements appeared to the English, and affords a deeper insight into the causes of the Victorian concern over art and morality.

The reception accorded the Russian masters by the Victorians marked the culmination of a slowly but steadily increasing interest in Russian life and letters that began in 1821 with Sir John Bowring's articles in the *Foreign Quarterly Review* and his *Specimens of the Russian Poets*, which, according to the *Westminster Review* fifty-six years later, "made people in England conscious that there was such a thing as Russian literature." [2] Other translations—of Pushkin, Gogol, Lermontov, and Krylov—had appeared sporadically between the twenties and the eighties. By 1877 the *Westminster Review*, in a lengthy discussion of Russian literature, including a brief account of Victorian interest in it, could observe that "the appearance within a short time of each other of two histories of Russian literature must be considered as a sign that an interest has been aroused among the nations of Western Europe in the progress and development of their Slavonic neighbors. A great change has come over the country since Mme. de Staël sarcastically said of Russia that some gentlemen have amused themselves with literature there." [3] The change had been undoubtedly due in part to the Napoleonic, Crimean, and Russo-Turkish wars, which, with their economic and political consequences, had made Russia a power to be reckoned with. Recognition came with rivalry, and, as always, literature provided the most effective medium for translating recognition into understanding. Turgenev was the first to arouse the interest of the Victorians, then Tolstoi, and finally Dostoevski.

Turgenev can be omitted from this study. He spent so much of his life in France, he was so intimately associated with the Naturalists in spite of his disagreement with many aspects of their theories, and his ideas and writings came into England so

directly through the French that a study of his literary reputation in Victorian society would add little to the conclusions reached in our previous studies. It is sufficient to note that he was as widely known in England as any other member of the Naturalist group with the exception of Zola. Henry James and George Moore published extensive appreciative reviews of his works, and between 1880 and 1900 numerous other articles concerning him appeared in the leading journals. The comment, by and large, was sympathetic. Arnold Bennett in 1896, for example, wrote: "There is no doubt in my mind that he is the greatest master of the modern novel." [4] Many English writers and readers, it might be added, were introduced to Russian literature through the pages of Turgenev.

II

Tolstoi's literary reputation in England began formally in 1879 with an article in the *Nineteenth Century*. Although largely a synopsis of *War and Peace*, which had not yet appeared in translation, the review commends Tolstoi for his striking and lifelike pictures of the Crimean War, his "slight but true analysis of peasant and soldier character," and "his fuller delineations of the changes wrought by time and fortune in the minds of the principal actors on his stage." [5]

Eight years pass without further significant comment—an interim during which Zola and Ibsen become the focal points of the attacks of the anti-Naturalists. With the appearance of the French and English translations of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* the first definitely widespread, even popular, interest in the Russian novelist develops and is given impetus by the extended discussions in the *Saturday Review*, the *Spectator*,

the *Contemporary Review*, and the *Fortnightly*. Each of these journals distinguish cautiously between Tolstoi's Realism and the Naturalism of contemporary French novelists. The former, argues the *Saturday Review*, is not the Realism of external and trivial details—although there is enough of this for the purposes of art, if not to satisfy M. Zola—but it is the higher Realism of mental and spiritual truth, the Realism of *Othello* and *Hamlet*. "If he chose, he could beat MM. Daudet and Zola and de Goncourt at their own game; but their barren pessimism is not for him, and the last word of his study, inexorable till then, is a word of hope and faith." [6]

The *Spectator* is even more enthusiastic. It finds *War and Peace* so pervaded with kindly tolerance that the reader cannot help sympathizing with "the great powers for good that lie below a rough exterior," and pitying rather than blaming "the ignorance that sometimes plunges the rude peasantry into such brutal excesses." Like Turgenev and Dostoevski, Tolstoi is a Realist, but his is not "the repulsive realism of the modern French school, which seems to consist largely in dragging forward and exposing to the light that shameful side of human nature which it should rather be our interest to hide and duty to conceal." [7]

The *Contemporary Review*, more critically cautious, objects to Tolstoi's scientific technique and fatalistic philosophy, which, as Bacon anticipated, fails "to give the soul some shadow of satisfaction in the things wherein it is more noble than the world."

Tolstoy's irrelevant detail, his painful reproduction of what is fragmentary and disproportionate, belongs to that search after truth which is the deepest thing in him, and adds its influence to make

his page reflect as it does the mood of our own time: its hurry, its candour, its want of reticence, and then again its bewilderment, its questioning of all that its forerunners assumed, and its new assertion of whatever is saved from the wreck with the emphasis of individual conviction and fresh experience.[8]

Such naturalism and fatalism, the writer continues, has little of the noble emotion of Shakespeare. It sees life only as bewildering confusion, futile design, wasted effort . . . It is a picture of the alleged disintegration of the modern epoch which will not bear analysis. A similar tune is sung by George Saintsbury a month later in the *Fortnightly*: "There is still too much healthiness and beefiness . . . in the English temperament to permit it to indulge in the sterile pessimism which seems to dominate Russian fiction." [9]

Matthew Arnold, through the pages of the *Fortnightly*, entered the controversy. Observing contemporary novels in general, Arnold, quoting Sainte-Beuve with approval, concludes that "the ideal has ceased, the lyric vein is dried up. *L'idéal a cessé, le lyrique a tari.*" The old English masters are gone, leaving no worthy successors, and the French novel has lost all its old attraction. Only Russian literature, particularly the work of Tolstoi, upholds the great tradition. *Anna Karenina* is a picture of a world that misconducts itself almost as much as that of a French novel "all palpitating with 'modernity,' " yet its ultimate philosophy raises it far above contemporary French fiction, even above such a work as *Madame Bovary*, which, although possessing less taint than recent French novels, is nevertheless a product of "petrified feeling"—bitter, ironical, impotent:

Our Russian novelist deals abundantly with criminal passion and adultery, but he does not seem to feel himself owing any service

to the goddess Lubricity, or bound to put in touches at this goddess's dictation. . . . [Tolstoy's work] is more than sufficient to signalize him as one of the most marking, interesting, and sympathy-inspiring men of our time—an honour, I must add, to Russia, although he forbids us to heed nationality.[10]

The number of critical reviews of Russian Realism increased greatly between 1888 and 1890—the period between the arrest and trial of Henry Vizetelly for his Zola publications and the first serious outburst of Ibsen-phobia. The *London Quarterly* points to the rising interest in Russia and Russian life, attributing this interest largely to the translations of Gogol, Turgenev, Pushkin, Dostoevski, and Tolstoi—writers, the reviewer observes, as much a part of the age as Byron, Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot, and, fortunately, unaffected as are the French

> with the strange colourblindness of the soul which makes virtue invisible; they do not put vice under the microscope in order to present us with its hideously magnified image. . . They have felt the fascination and sombre power of Death; they can express it with unsurpassed power, but the mystery of suffering life and its strife with evil has a yet greater attraction for them. The "wind from the graveyard" may blow through their writings, but a fresher wind that comes from the lands of hope pushes it aside often.[11]

The *Westminster Review* expresses the increasing enthusiasm of most of the journals of this period when it eulogizes Tolstoi as the greatest of all contemporary novelists. French and English fiction is decadent, containing no noteworthy trace of the spiritual ascendency which distinguishes great art. Tolstoi's strength, like that of Goethe, is to be found in his determination to see

life truthfully, to shirk none of its enigmas, to explain where he can, and where he cannot, to reflect its glittering facets in their cold and hard reality. "His realism, unlike that of the declining French school, is not the realism of the gutter. From the gutter, indeed, he does not recoil, but in it he sees the image of the sky." [12]

In 1890 Charles Turner published his volume *The Modern Novelists of Russia*—a survey of the writings of Karamzim, Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoevski, and Tolstoi. The book received considerable appreciative press comment and did much to popularize Russian literature with the English. This same year two significant articles on Tolstoi appeared: the first, by Havelock Ellis, formed a chapter in his book *The New Spirit*; the other, by Edmund Gosse, was later included in his collected essays, *Critical Kit-Kats*. During the nineties Russian Realism effectively entered and influenced the stream of English literature.

Havelock Ellis found the modern Russian spirit most completely expressed in the writings of Turgenev, Dostoevski, and Tolstoi. Turgenev, "so delicate and sensitive in his realism . . . is a Corot among novelists"; Dostoevski, so searching and profound in his understanding of the primitive and instinctive elements of the human heart, possesses the sympathy and depth of feeling rooted in the national character of the Russians; but Tolstoi is the greatest of the three:

> His art is so full and broad and true that he seems to be able to do for his own time and country what Shakespeare with excess of poetic affluence did for his time, what Balzac for his. He is equal to every effort, he omits nothing that imports, he describes everything with the same calm ease and simplicity. . . . His art is less perfect than Flaubert's, but Flaubert's intense personal note,

the ferocious nihilism of the Norman, is absent. He holds life up to the light, simply, and says: "This is what it is!" [13]

Ellis is careful to point out that Tolstoi has little of the Realism of the French. He is not, like Zola, the prophet of a fallacious formula—a mathematical Realism that collects documents, accumulates notes, analyzes characters from actual persons, and draws us a procès-verbal of human life. "Nature seems to resent this austere method of approaching her, and when we have closed our hands the reality has slipped through our fingers." Tolstoi's Realism brings us face to face with religion, the summation of all human efforts, beliefs, desires:

> If religion is not science or morals, it is the sum of the unfettered expansive impulses of our being. Life has been defined as . . . a tension. All our lives long we are struggling against that tension, but we can truly escape from it only by escaping from life itself. Religion is the stretching forth of our hands toward the illimitable. It is an intuition of the final deliverance, a half-way house on the road to that City which we name mysteriously Death.[14]

Edmund Gosse's essay is essentially an appreciative account of Tolstoi's life and genius—a genius that rises above the limitations of Naturalism, whether French or Russian:

> The Realists in Russia, as well as elsewhere, have given us many good gifts—they have awakened our observation, have opposed our hallucinations, have shattered our absurd illusions. . . But one great gift has commonly eluded their grasp. In their struggle for reality and vividness, they have too often been brutal, or trivial, or sordid. Tolstoi is none of these. As vital as any one of them all, he is what they are not—distinguished. His radical optimism, his belief in the nobility and beauty of the human race, preserve him from the Scylla and Charybdis of naturalism, from squalor and insipidity.[15]

Five years elapse without any significant discussion of Tolstoi's writings. In 1895 the *Westminster Review*, in a survey of Russian literature in general, assures its readers that the works of Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoevski, Korolenko, and Tolstoi contain scarcely a line to offend the most sensitive reader. Their writings are full of life and energy, they portray vividly great historical events, and they are unsurpassed in their descriptions of nature. One turns to them with a welcome relief from the sordid Realism of the French school.[16]

But more than his dramatic portrayal of historical events, more than the strength of his descriptions of nature, and, indeed, more than the breadth and power of his aesthetic achievements, it is Tolstoi's intense moral and religious point of view that impresses the Victorians. The review in the *Academy* is typical:

> . . . here with all his faculties alive, is the Great Iconoclast, the censor of idle living, of bloodshed, of excess, of hypocrisy, of everything contrary to the teaching of Christ. It is as though Tolstoi said: "The novel pure and simple I have lost heart to write; the sermon pure and simple you have no interest in reading; you shall have the two inextricably mixed." And since life is a didactic business, the story comes to be as much like a piece of life itself as if it were without deliberate moral purpose at all.[17]

Thus, by the end of the century Tolstoi's literary reputation is firmly established, his Realism, impelled by powerful religious passion, enthusiastically endorsed. The general attitude of the critics and the public is summarized in the *Contemporary Review*:

> It is to the attempt to realize this "Christianity of feeling and action" that Count Tolstoy's life and his intellectual and artistic work are devoted—an effort which has brought him, like his Master,

into conflict with every established authority in the modern world. When will his conception of the advent of the enlightened man—whom he continually calls the Son of God—be realized in the history of humanity? We cannot tell. Certain it is that such a witness to it cannot be denied. It is there—at once accusing and comforting. For with Tolstoy, and men like Tolstoy, Light comes into the world, and we feel that in its sacred radiance the common life of man is transfigured and absorbed.[18]

III

Dostoevski's literary reputation in England before 1900 came largely through French translations of his works. H. Schütz Wilson, traveling in Germany in 1885, had his attention directed to the German translations beginning to appear at this time, and sent a brief notice of the *Brothers Karamazov* to the *Academy*:

"My friends, pray to God for cheerfulness," cries Dostojewsky. He does not love superstition, monkery, Jesuitism, or even dogma; but he has a strong religious fibre, and he hates unbelief. He holds that virtue and morality depend upon faith in God. He expects the regeneration of Russia, not from priest or Nihilist, but from the people itself. "Dieses Volk trägt Gott im Herzen," he says. . .[19]

This theme—Dostoevski's religious faith—becomes the leitmotiv of subsequent reviews. The *Spectator*, for example, is deeply impressed with a French translation of *Crime and Punishment*, although it doubts seriously that the novel will ever be popular in England:

. . . for it must be admitted that Dostoyevsky did not write with much regard for the prejudices of British Philistines. Though never Zolaesque, he is intensely realistic, calls a spade a spade

with the most uncompromising frankness, and takes his characters from the "great army of miserables." . . . Dostoyevsky describes sin in its most hideous shapes; yet he is full of tenderness and loving kindness for its victims, and shows us that even the most abandoned are not entirely bad, and that for all there is hope—hope of redemption and regeneration. *The Crime and the Chastisement* may not be suitable for young people—we question if young people would care to read it—but we cannot believe that anybody who knows the difference between good and evil would be the worse for reading it; most people would probably be much better.[20]

In 1886 Robert Louis Stevenson, after reading the French version of *Crime and Punishment*, wrote enthusiastically to John Addington Symonds:

Raskolnikov is easily the greatest book I have read in ten years; I am glad you took to it. Many find it dull; Henry James could not finish it: all I can say is, it nearly finished me. It was like having an illness. James did not care for it because the character of Raskolnikov was not objective; and at that I divined a great gulf between us, and, on further reflection, the existence of a certain impotence in many minds of to-day, which prevents them from living *in* a book or a character, and keeps them standing afar off, spectators of a puppet show. To such I suppose the book may seem empty in the centre; to others it is a room, a house of life, into which they themselves may enter, and are tortured and purified. The *Juge d'Instruction* I thought a wonderful, weird, touching, ingenious creation: the drunken father, and Sonia, and the student friend, and the uncircumscribed, protoplasmic humanity of Raskolnikov, all upon a level that filled me with wonder: the execution also, superb in places. Another has been translated—*Humiliés et Offensés*. It is even more incoherent than *Le Crime et le Châtiment*, but breathes much of the same lovely good-

ness, and has passages of power. Dostoevsky is a devil of a swell, to be sure. Have you heard that he became a stout, imperialist conservative? It is interesting to know. To something of that side the balance leans with me also in view of the incoherency and incapacity of all.[21]

Stevenson, the enemy of Realism, nevertheless finds in the Russian the humanity that fills him with wonder.

The year following—1887—John Lomas, writing in *Macmillan's*, argues that Dostoevski, like other Russian Realists, violates all the known canons of art: coherency of plot, balance of character, restrained sentiment, reticence in certain moral matters; yet, in spite of these defects and in spite of material nearly always somber, miserable, and filled with abject poverty, betrayal, and the oppression of the weak by the strong, Dostoevski's simplicity, hopefulness, and faith in God elevate him to the rank of great writers.[22] The *London Quarterly* is mainly impressed with Dostoevski's pictures of the stark tragedy of life and the hope of regeneration he holds out to struggling man. His novels are often morbid and unhealthy, the scenes are often too dark, the figures are sometimes extreme in beauty or in grotesqueness, and the combination of good with evil frequently appears fantastically impossible, yet these great books remain the convincing expression of one who has lived through squalid misery, false imprisonment, and bitter self-denial:

> Every page being written with his heart's blood, we may not too fastidiously blame the strange hue of the letters and the waywardness of the words; we only wonder that so much in them is true, beautiful, and tender, and that this sworn champion of the oppressed is so keenly alive to the "sweet uses" of adversity and oppression.[23]

There were few extended reviews of Dostoevski in the nineties.[24] The numerous notices and briefer references repeat themselves without much variation. The neglect was due in part to the shift in critical interest from the problems of Realism to those of Aestheticism, but more important was the "strangeness" to the Victorian mind of Dostoevski's abnormal psychology. His name was often mentioned and his work discussed in connection with contemporary fiction, but widespread recognition of his genius had to wait until after World War I. Then, with the new interest in psychoanalysis and literary experimentation, Dostoevski became an idol and a cult which endured for more than a decade. In a very real sense, he was at least a half century in advance of his time. A few of the rebel Victorians perceived this. In 1898 George Gissing, in his study of Dickens, hails Dostoevski's works as "indescribably powerful and finely tragic—far "beyond Dickens, as we know him." [25] Eight years earlier Havelock Ellis, in *The New Spirit*, had expressed the opinion of the small, but critically intelligent group interested in Dostoevski and Russian Realism:

> Dostoieffski's profound science of the human heart could never get near enough to its primitive and instinctive elements. There are two or three scenes in *Recollections of the Dead House* of Dantesque awfulness, which seem to bring nearer to us than anything else the very flesh and spirit of humanity. . . . In all Dostoieffski's books we are constantly irritated by this same strange penetrating odour of humanity.[26]

IV

It is apparent that English interest in Russian Realism, though rather restricted before the twentieth century, is sympathetic and at times enthusiastic. The critics are gratified to note that

the Russians, unlike the French, do not dwell upon or glorify the "seamy side of life," that their Realism is selective and spiritual, and their morals are Christian. French Naturalism is materialistic, impersonal, futilitarian, mechanistic, and sordid; Russian Realism is spiritual, humanitarian, moral, and permeated with faith, hope, and charity.

Again it is clear that the Victorians are less concerned with aesthetic than with moral and religious considerations in their reaction to the Realist and Naturalist movements of the age. Changing aesthetic modes, one may safely generalize, seldom arouse extensive popular resentment. The reason is not far too seek. Aesthetic problems, have, at least superficially, to do mainly with the intellect. Moral questions, on the other hand, are psychologically determined by emotion. Any shift of moral values requires that customs be torn away from deeply grounded roots. Russian Realism, like French Naturalism, broke with the aesthetic conventions of Romanticism, but, unlike French Naturalism, did not tear at the roots of Victorian moral and religious beliefs.

At least, so it appeared to the critics. The *Spectator*, for example, assures its readers that frank and outspoken as Count Tolstoi is, "no wholesome mind could take the slightest harm from the perusal of his pages." Obviously referring to French Naturalism, the writer continues: "Such a theme as that which he has chosen might prove insupportable in the hands of one of that school who think their readers can never be reminded too often that man is an animal." [27] Darwinism, Positivism, and Materialism—all the implications of the contemporary scientific spirit—had struck at the foundations of traditional religious and moral belief. It was reassuring to discover a literature which,

though employing much of the Naturalist technique, reasserted a faith that could be comfortably interpreted in terms familiar and dear to the Victorians. As the *Westminster Review* in 1895 put it:

It is refreshing, in these degenerate days of the modern novel, to turn from the inane indelicacies of fashionable fiction, from the hysterical emanations of the unhealthy imagination of the New Woman and the vapid vapourings of the "fin-de-siecle" young man, to the luminous pages of a literature that has in it all the life of true realism, whilst it does not flaunt in our faces those lower phases of human nature which are best left to the imagination of the prurient.[28]

CHAPTER VIII

"Reality's Infinite Sweetness"

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVOLT

MANY OF the Victorian moralists were at long last persuaded of the honorable intentions of the Naturalists. Even some of the most bitter partially or wholly confessed their errors as the years passed. Robert Buchanan was one of these. He not only repudiated the hasty hostilities of his youth but became a staunch defender of Zola. In 1866 he had aligned himself with the forces of conventional virtue and uplift as embodied in the National Vigilance Association, whose aim was to save the land from the blasphemers Rabelais, Boccaccio, Baudelaire, Swinburne, Rossetti, Zola, Wagner, Ibsen, Meredith, George Moore, and others equally dangerous. Some twenty years later he published an appreciation of Zola, in which he wrote:

As one grows older, one wonders less at the proverbial philosophy of contemporary criticism. While the *Saturday Review* still exists, though toothless and moribund, a journalistic Dogberry proclaiming the watches of the literary night to a generation still unaware of sunrise and of Mr. Spencer, there will always be a class of readers which takes its opinions on faith and eagerly echoes the anathemas pronounced by senile watchmen against "one deformed" and other disturbers of the peace. We smile at Dog-

berry, though it is sad to reflect that never once, from the beginning of his official career, has he done a sane or a generous thing, has he recognized a new thought or a rising reputation, has he ceased to regard all men of genius as malefactors, and all mediocrities as men of genius.

Zola, he continues, is among the great men of the age who are "run-in" by the old-fashioned literary watch. One is amused when lesser men repeat the old cry of immorality, as when they told Thackeray he was "no gentleman" and Dickens that his *Tale of Two Cities* was "mere rubbish," but there is cause for amazement when a Stevenson accuses Zola of an "erotic madness":

> Zola is to literature what Schopenhauer is to philosophy—the preacher of a creed of utter despair. No living writer has a stronger and purer sense of the beauty of moral goodness; no living man finds so little goodness in the world to awaken his faith or enlarge his hope. But if Zola is "erotic," then a demonstrator of morbid anatomy is a sensualist, and a human physiologist is a person of unclean proclivities.[1]

Just as two decades earlier Buchanan had found himself arrayed against the Pre-Raphaelites and other purveyors of "pernicious" literature, so now, ironically, he found himself opposed by critics, many of them writers themselves, who condemned Naturalism, not for its alleged perversion of public morals, but for its limited philosophic and aesthetic assumptions.

Thus far we have been concerned largely, but not exclusively, with the periodicals, the newspapers, the censor, the clergy, and the public generally, whose protests against the literature that calls "the mantling blush to the cheek" rested mainly on conventional moral grounds. As time passed and the Victorians

discovered that the "dangerous lubricity" of Naturalism failed to corrode "the moral nature" or to sap "the foundations of woman-hood," emotion gave way to reason, passionate controversy to fairly dispassionate discussion.

To complete the record, it remains to trace the part played by the philosophic critics in shaping Victorian literary opinion. With them, as with the moralists, the challenge of Naturalism provided a battleground of conflicting points of view, but the intellectuals were less concerned with specific authors than with the implications of their theories. Many of these critics had been profoundly influenced at one time by Naturalism—some, in their youth, had been more Naturalistic than the Naturalists themselves—and most of them were to transmit, with modifications, those virtues of Naturalism that were so deeply to affect the literature of our century.

II

Andrew Lang—not the greatest, but perhaps the most influential critic of his day—provides a convenient link between the moral and the philosophic critics. In the sixties and seventies he had attached himself to the Pre-Raphaelite movement and to its prophet Swinburne, but in little more than a decade he had turned away from their dangerous influences to become the spokesman for the conservative critics. In 1882 he denounced Zola and the "unclean fruit of the tree of Rougon-Macquart." [2] Five years later he is perturbed by the whole philosophy of Naturalism. Weighing it solely by the significance of its aim and the beauty of its expression, he finds it wanting on both grounds. Its interpretation of life is distorted, its method is crude. It sacrifices the good and the beautiful on the altar of

the vulgar and ugly. Comprehensive and truthful observation of society reveals men and women in all walks of life who are kind, courteous, good-humored, and well bred. In their exclusive emphasis upon the sordid, contemporary Realists lack the breadth and understanding of great artists such as Fielding, Scott, and Thackeray:

> Perhaps mean people are more easily drawn than generous people; at all events from the school of Realists we get too many mean people—even from a Realist who is as little a Realist as the king was a royalist—from M. Zola. These writers appear not to offer up Henry Fielding's prayer to the Muse, "Fill my pages with humour, till mankind learn the good nature to laugh only at the follies of others, and the humility to grieve at their own."

Eschewing partisanship in the current controversy between Realism and Romance, Lang nonetheless concludes that ". . . if the battle between the crocodile of Realism and the catawampus of Romance is to be fought out to the bitter end—why, in the Ragnarôk, I am on the side of the catawampus." [3]

John Addington Symonds is less troubled than Lang by the problem of good and evil, but he is interested in the problem of truth. Endorsing Darwin's evolutionary theory, he sees in it the freeing of the mind from dogma, the reconciliation of Hellenism, Christianity, and science, and the justification of the new democratic spirit in art:

> Delivered from scholastic traditions regarding style and the right subjects to be handled—delivered from pedantry and blind reactionary fervour—delivered from dependence upon aristocratic and ecclesiastical authority—sharing the emancipation of the intellect by modern science and the enfranchisement of the individual by new political conceptions—the artist is brought immediately face to face with the wonderful world of men and things he has to

interpret and to re-create. The whole of nature, seen for the first time with sane eyes, the whole of humanity, liberated for the first time from caste and class distinctions, invite his sympathy.[4]

Modern art, conditioned by the new scientific concepts, has inevitably become Realistic:

Science has made one fact manifest, that the more we come to know instead of dreaming about things, the less can we tolerate having those things misrepresented in accordance with some whimsical or obsolescent fancy. Science has rendered our sense of veracity acute. Under its influence we tend to become positively shy of anything which seems untrue to fact, intolerant of a merely allegorical use of known things, to express visions however beautiful, or aspirations however honourable. . . . Art, obliged to obey the mental stress of the epoch, deprived of a widely-accepted body of sensuous religious thoughts, leans of necessity more to Realism than it did in the Athens of Pericles or in the Florence of Lorenzo de Medici.[5]

But even Realism is too often unscientifically exclusive. If Truth is the chief object of art, then no aspect of life is unworthy of examination. Therefore, chivalry, adventure, beauty, modesty, the chastity of saints, the strength of athletes, manhood, temperance, hope, and love are quite as much the proper subject of art as ugliness and impudicity, the licentiousness of harlots, and the flaccid feebleness of debauchees. The beautiful no less than the ugly—the good no less than the bad—is inherent in experience.

The first duty of the artist—whether he be painter, sculptor, or writer—is veracity. The painter, for example, "must depict each object with painstaking attention to its details. He must aim at delineating the caper and columbine as faithfully as

Titian did, armour as accurately as Giorgione, pearls and brocade with the fidelity of John Van Eyck, hands with the subtlety of Leonardo da Vinci, faces with the earnest feeling after character displayed in Raphael's Leo or Velasquez' Philip." [6]

But this is only the first step. The artist soon discovers the impossibility of absolute reproduction—his eye is not that of the camera. Actually the artist reproduces himself—the object imitated becomes the object imagined. Twenty cameras under identical conditions reproduce an object identically; twenty draftsmen produce twenty different chiaroscuro drawings. Thus absolute Realism, no less than absolute "art for art's sake," is impossible. An artist cannot represent life without injecting himself into his work; neither can he depict an ideal object completely dissociated from reality. His representation inevitably conveys the thoughts of good and evil, the feelings of nobility and baseness, that he himself sees in his experience.

Thus the basis of all art is selection. Whether Realistic or Idealistic, it will discover truth only by avoiding the transitory, the exceptional, and the particular. The Greek sculptors, having recognized the principle, are our surest teachers. Realism and Idealism at their best are one, but few artists achieve this perfect union. Successive ages have emphasized a crude Realism or an unsubstantial Idealism, each striving to correct the other. It is this shifting emphasis that seems to oppose them in their ultimate aims. "Realism is the presentation of natural objects as the artist sees them, as he thinks they are. It is the attempt to imitate things as they strike the senses. Idealism is the presentation of natural objects as the artist fain would see them, as he thinks they strive to be. It is the attempt to imitate things as the mind interprets them." The nineteenth century in its effort

to escape from an exaggerated Idealism has turned to an equally exaggerated Realism: "The one regarded man's incapacity to rival a machine with pride, and deemed his power of independent imagination sufficient for itself. The other, indignant at the miserable consequences of such arrogance, strives to reduce man's mind, so far as possible, to the condition of an imitative machine." [7] The great artist, whatever his aesthetic creed, will endeavor to reconcile these conflicting extremes.

Zola, for example, in *La Bête humaine* selects and rearranges his material, violates his own experimental, scientific method, and creates an illusion of reality rather than a reproduction of reality itself. Imagination and emotion profoundly color his best work. Indeed, his very enthusiasm for the ugly and the vulgar has all the ardor of the Romanticist glorifying the beautiful and the refined:

> The ponderousness of his method, the tedium of his descriptions, and the indecencies in which he revels, do not justify his claim to stand outside the ranks of those who treat reality from an ideal point of view. Walt Whitman, one of the staunchest idealists who ever uttered prophecy, might be made to pass for a realist on the same grounds of heaviness, minuteness, and indecency. The fact is that Zola, like Whitman, approaches his art-work in the spirit of a poet.[8]

Symonds' acceptance of contemporary science, his sympathy with the rising democratic spirit, his compromise between Romanticism and Naturalism, and his insistence on the importance of the whole life of man mark him as one of the sanest critics of the late Victorian period. His modernity is neither puerile nor unrooted, his traditionalism is neither sentimental nor dogmatic.

III

If Symonds' formulas seem too simple—too easy of realization in a world forever quarreling over them—we have but to turn to George Meredith for a more biting, if less clear, effort to resolve the Romantic-Realistic dilemma. No Victorian novelist was more deeply influenced by contemporary science, none dipped his pen in blacker gall to flay its pretensions and impudences. Fully accepting natural evolution as a sound scientific hypothesis, Meredith insists that it not only reveals man as an animal but that it also reveals him as a moral, mental, and spiritual creature. The principles of science must be expanded into a philosophy that includes these higher faculties. In literature such a philosophy will oppose both blind sentimentality and "gross realism"—it will be neither "rose-pink" nor "dirty drab." "Sentimental people," one of Meredith's characters exclaims, "fiddle harmonics on the strings of sensualism, to the delight of a world gaping for marvels of musical execution rather than for music." On the other hand, Realism, we are told in the Prelude to *The Egoist* (1879), has likewise prostituted science, and

> is mainly accountable for our present brainfulness, and for that prolongation of the vasty and the noisy, out of which, as from an undrained fen, streams the malady of sameness, our modern malady . . . We drove in a body to Science the other day for an antidote; which was as if tired pedestrians should mount the engine-box of headlong trains; and Science introduced us to our o'er-hoary ancestry—then in the Oriental posture: whereupon we set up a primeval chattering to rival the Amazon forest nigh nightfall, cured, we fancied. And before daybreak our disease was hanging on us again, with the extension of a tail. We had it fore

and aft. We were the same, and animals into the bargain. That is all we got from Science.

Meredith's antipathy for Naturalism, repeatedly expressed in his letters, was at times set forth with a vehemence and lack of restraint worthy of the National Vigilants. In a letter to a friend (1887) he wrote:

I have gone through the horrible book of Mendès, with the sensation of passing down the ventre de Paris and out at anus into the rat-rioting sewers, twisted, whirled, tumbled amid the frothing filth, the deadly stench, the reek and roar of the damned. Cloacina sits on such productions; Dementia, born of the Nameless, dissects them. Nigh the end of it, Zola seems to me a very haven, Maupassant a garden. Who reads must smell putrid for a month. . . . It is the monsterization of Zolaism. O what a nocturient, cacaturient crew has issued from the lens of the Sun of the mind on the lower facts of life!—on sheer Realism, breeder at best of the dungfly! Yet has that Realism been a corrective of the more corruptingly vaporous with its tickling hints at sensuality. It may serve ultimately in the form of coprolite to fatten poor soil for better produce.[9]

In *One of Our Conquerors* (1891) the character Simeon Fennellon remarks of a lawyer acquaintance that he

thinks he knows the world, from having sifted and sorted a lot of dust-bins; as the modern Realists imagine it's an exposition of positive human nature when they've pulled down our noses to the worst parts—if there's a worse where all are useful; but the realism of the dogs is to have us by the nose:—excite and befoul it, and you're fearfully credible![10]

The "Comic Spirit" is the only remedy for this false and degraded approach to life. A common-sense philosophy colored

by a vivid sense of humor and by a feeling for the incongruities of life and combined with the method of art—the method of selection and clarification and beauty—the "Comic Spirit" will correct the pretentiousness, the inflation, the dullness, the vestiges of rawness and grossness to be found about us. "She is the ultimate civilizer, the polisher, a sweet cook. . . . She watches over sentimentalism with a birchrod." She alone awakens the minds of men to the great issues of life. She is the latest step in that process of natural evolution which has given meaning and direction to human existence. With the "Comic Spirit" the novelist's vision will be neither sentimental nor Realistic, neither ascetic nor sensual: it will at once comprehend man's affinity to Mother Earth and point the way to the further realization of his infinite potentialities:

> Then, ah! then, moreover, will the novelist's Art, now neither blushless infant nor executive man, have attained its majority. We can then be veraciously historical, honestly transcriptive. Rose-pink and dirty drab will alike have passed away. Philosophy is the foe of both, and their silly cancelling contest, perpetually renewed in a shuffle of extremes, as it always is where a phantasm falseness reigns, will no longer baffle the contemplation of natural flesh, smother no longer the soul issuing out of our incessant strife. Philosophy bids us see that we are not so pretty as rose-pink, not so repulsive as dirty drab; and that, instead of everlastingly shifting those barren aspects, the sight of ourselves is wholesome, bearable, fructifying, finally a delight . . . And imagine the celestial refreshment of having a pure decency in the place of sham; real flesh; a soul born active, wind-beaten, but ascending. Honourable will fiction then appear; honourable, a fount of life, an aid to life, quick with our blood. Why, when you behold it you love it—and you will not encourage it?—or only when presented by dead hands? Worse than that alternative dirty drab, your recurring

rose-pink is rebuked by hideous revelations of the filthy foul; for nature will force her way, and if you try to stifle her by drowning she comes up, not the fairest part of her uppermost! Peruse your Realists—really your castigators for not having yet embraced Philosophy. As she grows in the flesh when discreetly tended, nature is unimpeachable, flower-like, yet not decoratively a flower; you must have her with the stem, the thorns, the roots, and the fat bedding of roses. In this fashion she grew, says historical fiction; thus does she flourish now, would say the modern transcript reading the inner as well as exhibiting the outer.[11]

Philosophy, spiritual comprehension, alone leads us to "Reality's infinite sweetness."

IV

Stevenson, like his older contemporary, Meredith, protested the Realistic domination of late nineteenth-century literature. With the exception of a few youthful efforts in the Realistic vein, his own writings are wholly Romantic. "A Gossip on Romance" (1882) sets forth his aesthetic credo. The world is too much with us. Storytelling therefore is a means of escape. It is to the grown man what play is to the child. The more we identify ourselves with the characters and the progress of the plot, the greater has been the author's triumph. The writer, to be sure, draws his material from real life, but this is merely his method, not his objective. He selects and arranges his subject matter so that the impression on the reader becomes a satisfying illusion. In the ideal novel "situation is animated with passion, passion clothed with situation. Neither exists for itself, but each inheres indissolubly with the other." The true character of Romance is the subordination of character, passion, and

thought to incident in such a way that the situation will be brought strikingly and dramatically to the mind's eye. Thus the reader forgets the characters and loses himself in the excitement of fresh experience; thus he "changes the atmosphere and tenor of his whole life. And when the game so chimes with his fancy that he can join in it with all his heart, when it pleases him with every turn, when he loves to recall and dwells upon its recollection with entire delight, fiction is called romance." [12]

A year later, in "A Note on Realism," Stevenson argues that the great change that has affected the novel since Scott is the admission of detail—a change due wholly to the influence of the semi-romantic Balzac and his wholly unromantic followers. For a time this detail expressed a more ample contemplation of the conditions of man's life; "but it has recently (at least in France) fallen into a merely technical and decorative stage." It has become mere *"feux-de-joie"* of literary trickery. Thus it is that a "man of the unquestionable force of M. Zola spends himself on technical successes. To afford a popular flavor and attract the mob, he adds a steady current of what I may be allowed to call the rancid." For Stevenson, "ugliness is only the prose of horror": the essential problem is not the alleged conflict between Realism and Romanticism. All living representative art is both Realistic and Romantic. The Realism to which he objects is simply the external Realism of the French Naturalists:

> The immediate danger of the realist is to sacrifice the beauty and significance of the whole to local dexterity, or, in the insane pursuit of completion, to immolate his reader under facts; but he comes, in the last resort, and as his energy declines, to discard all design, abjure all choice, and, with scientific thoroughness, steadily to communicate matter which is not worth learning. The danger

of the idealist is, of course, to become merely dull and lose all grip of fact, particularity or passion.

The nineteenth century, however, errs on the side of Realism, and Stevenson cautions the contemporary novelist "to begin no work that is not philosophical, passionate, dignified, happily mirthful, or, at the last and least, romantic in design." [13]

The following year, in "A Humble Remonstrance," Stevenson replied to Henry James's theory that the novel is a transcript of life. Experience, he believes, is too complex, too diverse, to be reproduced between the covers of a book:

> [It is] attended by the most various and surprising meteors; appealing at once to the eye, to the ear, to the mind—the seat of wonder, to the touch—so thrillingly delicate, and to the belly—so imperious when starved. It combines and employs in its manifestation the method and material, not of one art only, but of all the arts. Music is but an arbitrary trifling with a few of life's majestic chords; painting is but a shadow of its pageantry of light and colour; literature does but drily indicate that wealth of incident, of moral obligation, of virtue, vice, action, rapture, and agony with which it teems.

No art can possibly hope to present an exact transcript of life. But it can give a representation that is typically true. From life, which is monstrous, infinite, illogical, abrupt, and poignant, comes art, which is neat, finite, self-contained, rational flowing, and emasculate.[14]

Thus art reshapes life. The result is true if the artist has not falsified the relationships of man to man, and of man to nature. If he has falsified his interpretation he has created not only an untrue but an immoral work. This is the true meaning of the morality of the profession of letters, "for any book is

wrong that gives a misleading picture of the world and life. The trouble is that the weakling must be partial; the work of one proving dank and depressing; of another, cheap and vulgar; of a third, epileptically sensual; of a fourth, sourly ascetic." It is impossible, of course, in literature, no less than in conduct, always to be right, but we can strive earnestly, patiently, and honestly. Then it is likely that we shall not fall far short of the true, the good, and the beautiful—whether we be Classicist, Romanticist, or Realist.[15]

V

Although "A Humble Remonstrance" was Stevenson's reply to Henry James's "The Art of Fiction," it is clear that while James deeply respected the courageous and honest efforts of the Naturalists to see life clearly, he was at the same time perturbed by the aesthetic limitations of the scientific novel and its apparent lack of moral sense. As he grew older James found himself less and less in sympathy with his French friends.

In "The Art of Fiction" he defines a novel as a "personal, a direct impression of life." [16] It is not an exact science. Its laws cannot be defined with precision. "Humanity is immense and reality has a myriad forms; the most one can affirm is that some of the flowers of fiction have the odour of it, and others have not." The difference in the reality of Don Quixote and Mr. Micawber is the difference in their respective author's personality: ". . . the air of reality (solidity of specification) seems to me to be the supreme virtue of a novel—the merit on which all its other merits (including that of a double conscious moral purpose . . .) helplessly and submissively depend. If it be not there, they are all as nothing, and if these be there, they owe

their effect to the success with which the author has produced the illusion of life." But this illusion of life has many garbs: there is the Realism of a Dickens and the Realism of a Zola; there is also the psychological Realism that James himself sought to create.

Morality in fiction rises out of the honesty and sincerity of the novelist. It is never didactic. It is not a sermon. It is a quality of the mind: "There is one point at which the moral sense and the artistic sense lie very near together; that is in the light of the very obvious truth that the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer. In proportion as that intelligence is fine will the novel, the picture, the statue partake of the substance of beauty and truth." Naturalism falls short of both beauty and truth by the narrowness of its intelligence: "In France today we see a prodigious effort (that of Emile Zola, to whose solid and serious work no explorer of the capacity of the novel can allude without respect), we see an extraordinary effort vitiated by a spirit of pessimism on a narrow basis. M. Zola is magnificent, but he strikes an English reader as ignorant; he has an air of working in the dark; if he had as much light as energy, this result would be of the highest value."

In a letter to Stevenson in 1890 James writes that he hasn't read Zola's *The Human Beast*, but that he has heard that Zola's account of him is dull, imperfect, and "old, old, old." [17] In 1903, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, James has drifted even farther from the Naturalist enthusiasms of his youth. He continues to respect Zola's energy, his high courage, his power of conviction, but "what does Naturalism do for our life, our mind, our manners, our morals—what does it do that history, poetry, philosophy

may not do, as well or better, to warn, to comfort and command the countless thousands for whom and by whom it comes into our being?" [18] It is a pity "to see so great an intellectual adventure as *Les Rougon-Macquart* come to its end in deep desert-sand." Its defects are its lack of subjective understanding, of fine perception, of taste. It is true that "there are judges, in these matters, so perversely occupied that for them to see anywhere the 'improper' is for them straightway to cease to see anything else," yet

> there is simply no limit . . . to the misfortune of being tasteless; it doesn't simply disfigure the surface and the fringe of your performance—it eats back into the very heart and enfeebles the sources of life. When you have no taste, you have no discretion, which is the conscience of taste, and when you have no discretion you perpetuate books like *Rome*, which are without intellectual modesty, books like *Fécondité*, which are without a sense of the ridiculous, books like *Vérité*, which are without the finer vision of human experience.

VI

George Moore, like Henry James, was profoundly influenced in his youth by the Naturalists, but as he grew older he turned more and more away from their absolute formulas. The efforts of the philosophical and aesthetic critics of the late Victorian period to find a middle ground between Romanticism and Realism—the kind of synthesis Symonds and Meredith sought—are reflected in Moore's later criticisms. In the *Fortnightly Review* (1889) he hails Balzac as one of the greatest of all geniuses because he lived in the midst of the Romantic period, yet never succumbed to it, and because he was a Realist, yet never allowed himself to drift "among the mud-banks and shallow shores of Naturalism." [19]

The true distinction, Moore argues, is not Realist versus Romanticist or Idealist versus Naturalist; rather, it is "thought-mind" versus "fact-mind." Zola's strength comes from his "fact-mind," Turgenev's from his "thought-mind." The former may create great art, but only the latter can create the greatest:

> For it is thought, and thought only, that divides right from wrong; it is thought and thought only that elevates or degrades human deeds and desires; therefore turgid accounts of massacred negroes, and turgid accounts of fornicating peasants, are in like measure distasteful to the true artist. . . . What I wish to establish here is that it is a vain and fruitless task to narrate any fact unless it has been tempered and purified in thought and stamped by thought with a specific value.[20]

Impersonality in art is one of the vainest of delusions—vain for Naturalist as for Romanticist. Art means personality. *Madame Bovary,* objective as it may superficially appear, is a most personal book. Even Zola is no impersonal Realist. His novels are a synthesis of life. Based on personal observation and subjective interpretation, they rise from science to poetry and philosophy. Zola's critics have closed their eyes to the form of his works and have been deceived by their subject matter. They should be reminded that the mire is not more real than the clouds. Zola's emphasis on factual detail impresses us with his Realism, but of more importance are the feeling and understanding that give life to this detail. In this Zola is essentially Romantic. It is true that he carries the use of minute detail to its limit. It can go no farther. The method, with him, has become sterile.

Whatever Moore's affection for the Naturalists in his youth, it was a passing fancy. His later life and writings indicate his

strong kinship with the "art for art's sake" movement. His emphasis on form, his aversion to mere detail, his love of the fine phrase and the precise word, his appreciation of the Impressionist painters, his admiration for Pater and Stevenson—all indicate how foreign Naturalism really was to his nature. With the other aesthetes, he did align himself with the Naturalists as they fought to stave off the attacks of the Grundyites. He was vehement in his denunciation of the censorship and, indeed, of all charges of immorality brought against his contemporaries. But in his defense of Naturalism on the score of morality he was insisting only on the sovereignty of art, on the novelist's right to choose his own material whether or not that material was acceptable to the popular conventions of the period. "Art for art's sake" or "art for truth's sake" joined hands only on this one issue.

George Moore's criticism points in many directions. His emphasis on actuality looks back to his early interest in Naturalism; his insistence on style, form, beauty of expression, and subjective impression and his belief that art is amoral and its own justification link him with the aesthetes both in France and England; and his effort to discover a synthesis of Realism and Romanticism anticipates the "later Realism" of the twentieth century.

VII

Moore's attempt to reconcile science and art, objectivity and subjectivity, Naturalism and Aestheticism finds a counterpart in Arnold Bennett's "synthetic impressionism." But neither Bennett nor Moore was ever wholly able to escape the powerful hold of Naturalism. Bennett had read Zola's *Experimental*

Novel in 1885, when he was eighteen years old. The impact it made upon him was never fully lost.

Like Moore, Bennett felt that literature should not be straitjacketed by the standards of conventional morality. In 1898 C. Lewis Hind, editor of the *Academy*, gave him carte blanche for a proposed review of Moore's *Evelyn Innes*—this, although he knew of Bennett's personal friendship and admiration for Moore. Of the episode that followed, Bennett has written in his *Journal*:

For once, therefore, I *expressed myself* as regards fiction in general and George Moore in particular. I sent in the article 11 days ago. Today Hind writes me that "while fully acknowledging the excellence" of the article he will not use it, though he will pay for it! The timidity of the people in the matter of George Moore's work is almost incredible. . . . For the sake of English fiction such articles are sadly needed.[21]

As the years passed, Bennett turned from the stark photography of Zola to a new Realism that reflected his own "natural instincts toward a *synthetic impressionism*"—an impressionism he found partly in the Goncourts. In 1896 he wrote: "I ought during the past month to have read nothing but Goncourt. . . . I read the 'Death of Jules' in the *Journal des Goncourts*, and the spirit of the brothers took hold of me." [22] Two years later, contemplating "a history of the English novel in the nineteenth century," he reflected on the importance of form in fiction:

As regards fiction, it seems to me that only within the last few years have we absorbed from France that passion for the artistic shapely presentation of truth, and that feeling for words as words, which animated Flaubert, the Goncourts, and Maupassant, and which is so exactly described and defined in Maupassant's intro-

duction to the collected words of Flaubert. None of the (so-called) great masters of English nineteenth century fiction had (if I am right) a deep artistic interest in form and treatment; they were absorbed in "subject"—just as the "anecdote" painters of the Royal Academy are absorbed in subject, and in my view they are open to the same reproach as these. . . . The novelists cared little for form, the *science* of construction—*Composition*. They had not artistic taste. . . . An artist must be interested primarily in presentment, not in the thing presented. He must have a passion for technique, a deep love for form.[23]

Bennett's synthetic impressionism was strengthened in 1899 when he visited the Burne-Jones Exhibition in London. That night he recorded the evolution of his own literary beliefs in his *Journal*:

The sight of Burne-Jones' aloofness, of his continual preoccupation with the spiritual, to the ignoring of everyday facts, served to complete in me a modification of view which has been proceeding now for a year or two. The day of my enthusiasm for "realism," for "naturalism," has passed. I can perceive that a modern work of fiction dealing with modern life may ignore realism, and yet be great. To find beauty, which is always hidden—that is the aim. If beauty is found, then superficial facts are of small importance. But they are of *some* importance. And although I concede that in the past I have attached too high a value to realism, nevertheless I see no reason why it should be dispensed with. My desire is to depict the deeper beauty while abiding by the envelope of facts. At the worst, the facts should be ignored. They might for the sake of more clearly disclosing the beauty, suffer a certain *distortion*—I can't think of a better word. Indeed they cannot be ignored in the future. The achievements of the finest French writers, with Turgenev and Tolstoy, have set a standard for all coming masters of fiction. What the artist has to grasp is that there is no such thing as ugliness in the world. This I believe to

be true, but perhaps the saying would sound less difficult in another form: All ugliness has an aspect of beauty. The business of the artist is to find that aspect.[24]

VIII

Oscar Wilde, the self-appointed high priest of late Victorian aestheticism, represents the culmination in England of the theories set forth by the Pre-Raphaelites and, with minor divergences, promulgated by Ruskin, Swinburne, Morris, Pater, and Stevenson. With Wilde the "art for art's sake" movement becomes its own *reductio ad absurdum.*

The philosophical critics objected to Naturalism on the ground that it was not scientifically or intellectually true, or, at best, that it represented only a partial truth. The aesthetic critics objected on the ground that it was not beautiful, therefore not true, therefore not art.

In actual practice Naturalism and Aestheticism shared many common objectives and traced their origins back to common sources. Both, early in the century, had revolted against the sentimentalism of the Romantic movement. Both championed the sovereignty of art and the artist. Both argued that art was independent of conventional morality, and both included within their fold writers who might have belonged to either group. Baudelaire, though not a Naturalist, contributed no small share to the rise of Naturalism. Flaubert, though not strictly an "art for art's sake" votary, profoundly influenced the stylists of the late nineteenth century. Paralleling each other throughout the period, both movements not only affected and interpenetrated each other but were destined jointly to affect the literature of the twentieth century. Their influence on writers like George Moore and Arnold Bennett is clear.

But there were profound philosophical and aesthetic differences between the two movements, and these differences are emphasized, even distorted, in the criticism of Oscar Wilde. His antagonism to Naturalism is set forth in the *Nineteenth Century* (1889), in his well-known essay "The Decay of Lying":

> Art never expresses anything but itself. It has an independent life, just as Thought has, and develops purely on its own lines. It is not necessarily realistic in an age of realism, nor spiritual in an age of faith . . .
>
> All bad art comes from returning to Life and Nature, and elevating them into ideals. Life and Nature may sometimes be used as part of Art's rough material, but before they are of any real service to Art they must be translated into artistic conventions. The moment Art surrenders its imaginative medium it surrenders everything. As a method Realism is a complete failure, and the two things that every artist should avoid are the modernity of form and modernity of subject matter.
>
> Lying, the telling of beautiful untrue things, is the proper aim of art.[25]

Opposing what he felt was Zola's preoccupation with the ugly and the vulgar, his neglect of form and style, and his insistence that art must be a scientific transcription of life, Wilde argued that art is concerned solely with the creation of the beautiful and may or may not have any apparent connection with the life about us. In the Preface to *Dorian Gray*, published originally in the *Fortnightly Review* (March, 1891), he sets forth this creed:

> The artist is the creator of beautiful things. . . .
>
> Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. This is a fault. . . .
>
> There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all.

The nineteenth century dislike of Realism is the rage of Caliban seeing his own face in a glass.

The nineteenth century dislike of Romanticism is the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass.

The moral life of man forms part of the subject-matter of the artist, but the morality of art consists in the perfect use of an imperfect medium. . . .

It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors.

Diversity of opinion about a work of art shows that the work is new, complex and vital. . . .

All art is quite useless.

Wilde's theories were, at least for him, broad enough to include many of the great nineteenth-century Realists, as his essay in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (1886) indicates:

Many years ago, in a number of *All the Year Round*, Charles Dickens complained that Balzac was very little read in England, and although since then the public has become more familiar with the great masterpieces of French fiction, still it may be doubted whether the *Comédie Humaine* is at all appreciated or understood by the general run of novel readers. It is really the greatest monument that literature has produced in our century, and M. Taine hardly exaggerates when he says that, after Shakespeare, Balzac is our most important magazine of documents on human nature. . . .

Writing as the controversy over Zola was reaching its climax, he offers the observation that "the distinction between such a book as M. Zola's *L'Assommoir* and such a book as Balzac's *Illusions Perdues* is the distinction between unimaginative realism and imaginative reality." [26] This "imaginative reality" is likewise found in the Russians:

Of the three great Russian novelists of our time Tourgenieff is by far the finest artist. . . . Count Tolstoi's method is much larger,

and his field of vision more extended. . . . Dostoieffski differs widely from both his rivals. He is not so fine an artist as Tourgenieff, for he deals more with the facts than with the effects of life; nor has he Tolstoi's largeness of vision and epic dignity; but he has qualities that are distinctly and absolutely his own, such as a fierce intensity of passion and concentration of impulse, a power of dealing with the deepest mysteries of psychology and the most hidden springs of life, and a realism that is pitiless in its fidelity, and terrible because it is true.[27]

Only at one point does Wilde agree with the Zola Naturalists. For him, as for them, art and morality are not to be confused. Balzac, he writes, "was, of course, accused of being immoral. Few writers who deal directly with life escape the charge. . . . The morals of the personages of the *Comédie Humaine* are simply the morals of the world around us. They are part of the artist's subject-matter; they are not part of his method." [28] A few years later, in a letter to the editor of the *St. James Gazette*, Wilde was more explicit:

Besides, I must admit that, either from temperament or taste, or from both, I am quite incapable of understanding how any work of art can be criticized from a moral standpoint. The sphere of art and the sphere of ethics are absolutely distinct and separate; and it is to the confusion between the two that we owe the appearance of Mrs. Grundy, that amusing old lady who represents the only original form of humour that the middle classes of this country have been able to produce.[29]

For Wilde—as for the other intellectual and aesthetic critics—essential reality is not to be found in the surface appearance of life. It rises out of the interpretation of experience. And all interpretation is, finally, subjective. What is truth? Wilde asks, then replies: "In matters of religion, it is simply the opinion

which has survived. In matters of science, it is the ultimate sensation. In matters of art, it is one's last mood." [30]

Such is the glorification of individuality. It is the antithesis of Flaubert's "impersonalism," of the Goncourts' "experimentalism," of Maupassant's "objectivism," and of Zola's "scientism." It is the reply of the dogmatic Aesthete to the dogmatic Naturalist. In their refusal to come to terms with Naturalism the Aesthetes parted company with the philosophical critics who sought mainly to enlarge what they felt to be the narrow scope of Naturalism.

Despite Arthur Symons' early connection with the Realistic and Naturalistic movements, and despite his sympathy for their efforts to produce a vital art, the whole tone of his later criticism is impressionist. Although profoundly affected by the Naturalists, by temperament he was more the aesthete than the scientist. Unlike Wilde, he never fully escaped the influence of the Naturalists and consequently he was not led into the blind alley of pure aestheticism, but, like Pater and James and Moore and Stevenson, he sought constantly to convey the spirit of a work of art through a prose style that would express every nuance of meaning. In Symons, Aestheticism and Naturalism are united in Symbolism. To him art as symbol is far more true than nature:

> The art of Rodin competes with nature rather than with the art of other sculptors. Other sculptors turn life into sculpture, he turns sculpture into life. . . . But for the living representation of nature in movement, something more is needed than an exact copy. This is a certain deliberate exaggeration; not a correction, not a deviation, but a means of interpretation, the only means by which the softness and energy of nature can be rendered into clay.[31]

Like Huysmans, whom he admired, Symons in his youth turned to literature to find a representation of life. In his maturity he turned to literature, if not as a denial of life, at least as an escape from its "annihilating reality":

Allowing ourselves, for the most part, to be but vaguely conscious of that great suspense in which we live, we find our escape from its sterile, annihilating reality in many dreams, in religion, passion, art; each a forgetfulness, each a symbol of creation; religion being the creation of a new heaven, passion the creation of a new earth, and art, in its mingling of heaven and earth, the creation of heaven out of earth. Each is a kind of sublime selfishness, the saint, the lover, and the artist having each an incommunicable ecstasy which he esteems as his ultimate attainment, however, in his lower moments, he may serve God in action, or do the will of his mistress, or minister to men by showing them a little beauty. But it is, before all things, an escape; and the prophets who have redeemed the world, and the artists who have made the world beautiful, and the movers who have quickened the pulses of the world, have really, whether they knew it or not, been fleeing from the certainty of one thought: that we have, all of us, only our one day; and from the dread of that other thought: that the day, however used, must after all be wasted. . . . Well, the doctrine of Mysticism, with which all this symbolical literature has to do, of which it is all so much the expression, presents us, not with a guide for conduct, not with a plan for our happiness, not with an explanation of any mystery, but with a theory of life which makes us familiar with mystery, and which seems to harmonise those instincts which make for religion, passion, and art, freeing us at once of a great bondage. . . . On this theory alone does all life become worth living, all art worth making, all worship worth offering. And because it might slay as well as save, because the freedom of its dead captivity might so easily become deadly to the fool, because that is the hardest path to walk in where you are

told only, walk well; it is perhaps the only counsel of perfection which can ever really mean much to the artist.[32]

X

The philosophical critics, unlike the moralists, object to Naturalism not so much on the ground that it deals with "the seamy side of life" as that it deals with "the seamy side of life" in a way that is neither truthful nor beautiful. The intellectual and aesthetic revolt attacks the narrow scientific formulas of the Naturalists. It rejects their blindness to the subjective and personal nature of art. It questions the basic premises of Naturalistic dogma.

The philosophical critics do not deny the importance of the material world, nor do they remain indifferent to the new world of modern science. They believe that the whole of human experience is fit matter for fiction, but they maintain that Naturalism is concerned only with a partial world—the world of objective experience. Further, the philosophical critics insist that experience must be clarified, interpreted, and illumined, that the work of an artist can never in fact, regardless of theory, be wholly objective and scientific. They further insist that joy no less than sorrow, beauty no less than ugliness, hope no less than despair are inherent in the reality of experience.

Far more than the moralists, whose criticism is largely lost in literary history, the philosophical critics are responsible for the deflection of Naturalism into the numerous subjective Realisms of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century fiction.

CHAPTER IX

"The New Spirit"

LATE VICTORIANISM

QUEEN VICTORIA was born in one world. She died in another. History has seldom recorded a greater transformation in so short a period of time. The continuity of the two worlds seems fairly clear as we piece the pattern together, although the speed and the extent of the revolution, even in the retrospect of half a century, still give pause for wonder. Between the Coronation and the Diamond Jubilee, Victorian life had passed from an agricultural to an industrial economy, from an aristocratic to a middle-class-proletariat society, from a fixed and static to an evolutionary science, from an authoritarian to a relative theology, and, generally, from a dogmatic to an experimental spirit. Many, indeed most, of these changes were still in progress at the turn of the century, but their force and significance had already become distinguishing elements of the late Victorian temper.

We have been looking at this revolution as it was reflected in some of the literary controversies of the era. In the battle of the books—the arguments over Balzac, Baudelaire, Zola, Ibsen, and the Russians—traditional science, theology, morality, social

economy, philosophy—all the conventions of conduct and belief—were weighed in the balance of the new spirit. One by one the old gods were displaced or, at least, badly shaken. There was, of course, conflict and controversy, charge and countercharge, but convention gave way before revolt with cumulative effectiveness as the century advanced. Our wonder today is not only at the extent and speed of this revolution, but also at the relative order with which it was brought about.

The publication in 1890 of Havelock Ellis' *The New Spirit* bore witness to the partial triumph of the new world that had emerged out of the Victorian era:

> To-day, when we stand, as it were, at the beginning of a new era, . . . an individual who, for his own guidance, has done his part in this searching and probing, may perhaps be allowed to present some of the results, not claiming to be an expert, not desiring to impose on others any private scheme of the universe. The pulse of life runs strong and fast; I have tried to bring a sensitive lever to that pulse here and there, to determine and record, as delicately as I could, its rhythms; the papers I now present might be called a bundle of sphygmographic tracings.

Ellis' "sphygmographic tracings" of "the new spirit" outline the patterns set by five literary figures—Diderot, Heine, Whitman, Ibsen, and Tolstoi—who for him epitomize a modern renascence of the human spirit comparable to that of the twelfth century spearheaded by Abelard, to that of the thirteenth century with St. Francis as its standard-bearer, and to that of the Reformation with Luther as its leader.

No renascence of the human spirit, Ellis points out, is possible unless some mighty leverage has been at work. Its forces work underground, slowly and coarsely and patiently during

barren periods, and they meet with much contempt as destructive of man's finer and higher nature; but, in the end, it is by these that the finer and higher are lifted to new levels. At the end of the sixteenth century, it was above all the sudden expansion of the physical world that inspired human effort and aspiration. In the nineteenth century, it was the brave new world of science that revitalized the human spirit:

> The conception of evolution has penetrated every department of organic science, especially where it touches man. Darwin personally, to whom belongs the chief place of honour in the triumph of a movement which began with Aristotle, has been a transforming power by virtue of his method and spirit, his immense patience, his keen observation, his modesty and allegiance to truth; no one has done so much to make science—that is to say, all inquiry into the traceable causes or relations of things—so attractive. The great and growing sciences of today are the sciences of man—anthropology, sociology, whatever we like to call them, including also that special and older development, now become a new thing, though still retaining its antiquated name of Political Economy. . . . this devotion to truth, this instinctive search after the causes of things, has become what may be called a new faith. The fruits of this scientific spirit are sincerity, patience, humility, the love of nature and the love of man.

This is not to say that "the new spirit" had won an easy victory. Ellis notes that there was long abroad in the world a curious dread of all attempts to face simply and sincerely the facts of life: "This audacious frankness and scarcely less audacious humility aroused horror and suspicion; and those who marched at the front heard with considerable pain many members of the rear black-guard hurling 'Materialist!' and other such terms of scorn at their backs. The sting has now died out

of these terms." [1] But has it? Thirty-six years later Ellis was to recall the reception accorded his own new volume blithely proclaiming the triumph of "the new spirit." Although the book went through three editions within three years, none of his subsequent works was reviewed more bitterly—with such hearty indignation, such withering contempt, such slashing brilliancy:

"A more foolish, unwholesome, perverted piece of sentimental cant we have never wasted our time over," said the *World*. "The jejune, hasty, and over-confident judgments of inexperienced youth," declared a sententious critic of what another termed "this unpleasant compilation of cool impudence and effrontery." "Unintelligible and not worth trying to understand," said a fourth, while yet another found it "as crude in thought as it is fantastic and ridiculous in expression." The *Spectator* could not "imagine anything of which it could be more necessary for human nature to purge itself, than the new spirit of Havelock Ellis." "We have seldom met one who knows so many things that other people do not know," remarked the *Athenaeum* sarcastically, and a critic in Scotland wrote: "We should be sorry to describe the new spirit; we only know it is not intoxicating." [2]

The battle was far from won in 1890, but the seeds of victory had been deeply sown. The new spirit had emerged and was making itself felt; indeed, by this date it was re-examining its own assumptions and correcting its early excesses. The liberal critics at the end of the century accepted Darwinian science, but already they were insisting that its implications included much that was old and conventional and traditional. Even in the nineties there began among the champions of "the new spirit" a re-evaluation of all things Victorian; a new respect, that was to broaden in the twentieth century, grew up for much

that had been discarded during the first fine careless rapture over the emancipation. Havelock Ellis himself, in later years, looked back more cautiously and a bit nostalgically on the days that were no more:

> I see, as I turn the pages, that my attitude of rebellion against those we now call the Victorians was, at that time, a wholesome and laudable exercise. I could toss them aside disdainfully or playfully because I first absorbed all the fine essential juices they had to yield; it was the husks, on which the swine fed, that I threw gaily away. But since then I have seen a younger generation performing the same gesture towards the same figures, and sometimes without the knowledge or the insight to see that there was, or had been, any good grain there. The gesture that was once a vital reaction to real things thus becomes a stale and empty trick.[3]

All of this finds expression in the literary criticism at the end of the century. "The new spirit," while accepting much of Naturalism, began not only to question its early dogmatic pretensions to the whole truth but to doubt whether it had uttered the last word on the problem of literary morality. In a new form, the traditional English belief that the function of literature is "to teach and delight" continues to crop out in the discussion of the liberal intellectuals. The debate on "Reticence in Literature" between Arthur Waugh and Hubert Crackanthorpe in the *Yellow Book* in 1894 illustrates the continued liveliness of the literary-moral questions that had concerned English writers and critics from the time of Chaucer to the twentieth century.

Admitting that it is the privilege and the duty of the man of letters to speak out, "to give no ear to the puritans of his hour, to have no care for the objections of prudery," Waugh nonethe-

less argues that while the writer must be frank, he must be something *more*. This *more* is determined by two guides: "the one, the shifting standard of contemporary taste: the other, the permanent standard of artistic justification, the presence of the moral idea."

From Herodotus to Sheridan, Waugh believes, reticence has become more and more pronounced; and literature, reflecting the age, has assumed in its normal and wholesome form the degree of silence which it finds about it. The standard of taste is regulated by the normal taste of the hale and cultured man of his age: "It should steer a middle course between the prudery of the manse . . . and the effrontery of the pot-house." It must be permeated by the moral idea. Hogarth, in the field of painting, illustrates the difference between conventional morality and this deeper moral force:

> We are all familiar with his coarseness; all these we have known from our youth up. But it is only the schoolboy who searches the Bible for its indecent passages; when we are become men, we put away such childish satisfactions. Then we begin to appreciate the idea which underlies the subject; we feel that Hogarth—
>
> "Whose pictured morals charm the mind
> And through the eye correct the heart"—
>
> was, even in his grossest moments, profoundly moral, entirely sane, because he never dallied lasciviously with his subject, because he did not put forth vice with the pleasing semblance of virtue, because, like all hale and wholesome critics of life, he condemned excess, and pictured it merely to portray the worthlessness, the weariness, the dissatisfaction of lust and license.

When literature is "sane, equable, and well spoken," it conforms to this moral idea:

By its sanity it eludes the risk of effeminate demonstration; by its choice of language it avoids brutality; and between these two poles, it may be affirmed without fear of question, true taste will and must be found to lie . . . Without dignity, without self-restraint, without the morality of art, literature has never survived; they are the few who rose superior to the baser levels of their time, who stand unimpugned among the immortals now. And that mortal who would put on immortality must first assume that habit of reticence, that garb of humility, by which true greatness is best known. To endure restraint—*that* is to be strong.[4]

In his reply to Waugh, Hubert Crackanthorpe defends the outspokenness of contemporary Realistic fiction—a type of fiction "supreme in time of democracy and of science." He defends it not because it is Realism, but because it is "the frank, fearless acceptance by every man of his entire artistic temperament, with its qualities and its flaws." It is a literature born, in due season, of the spirit of the latter half of the nineteenth century. The problem is not whether it is Realistic or Idealistic, it is not whether it is moral or immoral in the eyes of its contemporaries; the whole question is simply whether it satisfies "a sound, fine, and genuine standard of workmanship."

Crackanthorpe is not surprised that the new fiction provoked "opposition of just that kind which every new evolution in art inevitably encounters." The wonder is, he thinks, that the opposition has been so quickly stilled:

. . . its opponents are not the men they were. It is not so long since a publisher [Vizetelly] was sent to prison for issuing English translations of celebrated specimens of French realism; yet, only the other day, we vied with each other in doing honour to the chief figure-head [Zola] of that tendency across the channel, and there was heard but the belated protest of a few worthy individuals,

inadequately equipped with the jaunty courage of ignorance. . . . A sound, organized opinion of men of letters is being acquired; and in the bouts with the *bourgeois*—if I may be pardoned the use of that wearisome word—no one has to fight single-handed. Heroism is at a discount; Mrs. Grundy is becoming mythological; a crowd of unsuspected supporters collects from all sides, and the deadly conflict of which we had been warned becomes but an interesting skirmish. Books are published, stories are printed in old-established reviews, which would never have been tolerated a few years ago. On all sides, deference to the tendency of the time is spreading. The truth must be admitted: the roar of unthinking prejudice is dying away . . . Let us whine, then, no more concerning the prejudice and the persecution of the Philistine, when even that misanthrope, Mr. Robert Buchanan, admits that there is no power in England to prevent a man writing exactly as he pleases. Before long the battle for literary freedom will be won.[5]

The history of literary criticism and literary battles after 1900 does not entirely justify this optimism. The struggle for literary freedom continues even in our own day and the problem of truth and morality in creative art remains with us. But the long and bitter controversies of the Victorians prepared the way for the broad and deep interpretation of human experience that modern writers may, if they will, give us. Darwin, in time, was superseded by Freud and Jung, and the objective world of the Naturalists gave way to the inner world of the "later realists." These too shall pass—are indeed passing—as we seek more satisfying answers to the eternally imponderable questions of *truth* and *reality*, but, braced by a broad and inclusive and imaginative science and inspired with an ever-deepening concern in human beings and their destiny in an increasingly complex world, the literature of the future—be it Realistic or Ro-

mantic—will seek honestly to probe more deeply into the eternal mysteries and to reveal a more fruitful life.

Popular morality in art is still what it has always been—the prevailing standards of goodness and taste. That these standards in our own day are more flexible and more inclusive, therefore more serviceable, is due in part to the Victorians, who gave us not only the pious Philistines we like to remember, but also the courageous non-conformists we too easily forget. The wonder is not that Mrs. Grundy was overly cautious; rather it is that she could, in due course, be persuaded to accommodate herself to the shocking notions of a Balzac, Baudelaire, Zola, and Ibsen—that she could, before the turn of the century, include them in a great literary tradition and, thus absorbed, pass them on to another generation and to posterity. The translation of the Victorian attitude toward foreign Realism and Naturalism from outright hostility to one of almost universal admiration within a generation measures the vitality of its spirit.

"The mantling blush" may come rarely to the maiden cheek these days, but moral responsibility no less than artistic integrity is still very much alive and very much concerned with remolding life a little closer to heart's desire. There is no persuasive evidence that the distinguished literary figures of our day are decadent or that they have forgotten the responsibility of the great tradition "to teach and delight." If the teaching is more palatable, more artistic, more delightful than a sermon, candor compels us to admit that it is also more instructive.

This story of the Victorian conscience is for the record, but the record obviously carries its own admonition. The concluding words of *The New Spirit* speak to us from 1890 with singular appropriateness:

Certainly old things are passing away; not the old ideals only, but even the regret they leave behind is dead, and we are shaping instinctively our new ideals. Yet we are at peace with the past. The streams of hot lava flow forth and cover the world; the lava is but the minute fragments of former life. We marvel at the prodigality of nature, but how marvellous, too, the economy! The old cycles are forever renewed, and it is no paradox that he who would advance can never cling too close to the past. The thing that has been is the thing that will be again; if we realize that, we may avoid many of the disillusions, miseries, insanities, that forever accompany the throes of new birth. Set your shoulder joyously to the world's wheel: you may spare yourself some unhappiness if, beforehand, you slip the book of *Ecclesiastes* beneath your arm.

Notes

CHAPTER I

[1] Lytton Strachey, *Queen Victoria* (New York, Harcourt, 1921). P. 195.
[2] Malcolm Elwin, *Old Gods Falling* (New York, Macmillan, 1939). Ch. 1.
[3] Hugh Walker, *The Literature of the Victorian Era* (Cambridge, University Press, 1921). P. 1.
[4] Arthur Waugh, "Reticence in Literature," *Yellow Book,* I (April, 1894), 203.
[5] W. L. Myers, *The Later Realism* (Chicago, University Press, 1927). Ch. I.
[6] *Fortnightly Review,* XXLX (April 1, 1878), 592.
[7] "Reticence in Literature," *Yellow Book,* II (July, 1894), 260.
[8] See Horace M. Kallen, *Art and Freedom* (New York, Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1942). II, 898.
[9] Translated from *Le roman expérimental* (Paris, Fasquelle, 1905). P. 1.
[10] Translated from Guy de Maupassant, *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris, Conard, 1910), II, "Étude sur Gustave Flaubert," 99.
[11] Translated from *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris, Conard, 1909). XIX, ix.
[12] *Le roman expérimental.* P. 114.
[13] *The New Spirit* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1926). Pp. 63-67.
[14] Translated from *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris, Lévy, 1869), I, "Avant-propos," ix.
[15] Translated from *Les romanciers naturalistes* (Paris, Charpentier, 1910). Pp. 127-128.

CHAPTER II

[1] (University of Chicago Library, 1913).
[2] (Paris, Giard, 1925).
[3] Oliver, *op. cit.*, p. 86.
[4] *Masters of the English Novel* (New York, Henry Holt, 1909). P. 12.
[5] *The Canterbury Tales,* "Miller's Prologue," lines 3171-3186.

[6] Preface. See also the Prefaces to the *Apparition of Mrs. Veal, Moll Flanders,* and other Defoe novels.

[7] Preface.

[8] Preface. See also the Prefaces to *Pamela* and *Sir Charles Grandison.*

[9] *Roderick Random,* Preface.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] See also the Preface to *Peregrine Pickle.*

[12] *Amelia,* Dedication. See also the Dedication and Preface to *Tom Jones.* For a detailed study of Fielding's critical opinions, see M. E. Waits, "Fielding as Literary Critic," typewritten Master's thesis (University of Chicago Library, 1927).

[13] *Miscellaneous Prose Works* (Edinburgh, Robert Cadell, 1835). XVIII, 162-167.

[14] *Ibid.,* p. 210.

[15] *Ibid.,* p. 224.

[16] *Moral Tales,* Preface.

[17] See also the Prefaces to his other novels, and James Hughes, *Dickens as an Educator* (New York, Appleton, 1901).

[18] "The Style of Balzac and Thackeray," p. 621. See also "Thackeray as a Novelist and Photographer," *Westminster Review,* XVIII n.s. (1860), 500-523.

[19] See also *Miscellaneous Sketches,* pp. 426-463; *Burlesques,* pp. 88-92; *The Virginians,* ch. I., pp. 1-2, and the author's running comments throughout *Vanity Fair.*

[20] *Vanity Fair.* Ch. XVIII.

[21] *History of English Literature* (New York, Henry Holt, 1875). III, 255.

[22] J. W. Cross, *George Eliot's Life as Related in Her Letters and Journals.* III, 2-3. See also I, 209, 227; II, 85, 101, etc.

[23] *Westminster Review,* LXVII, 442-462.

[24] For a discussion of George Eliot's moral emphasis, see S. Law Wilson, *The Theology of Modern Literature* (Edinburgh, Clark, 1899). IV, 229-266.

[25] *Le roman naturaliste* (Paris, Levy, 1896). P. 217.

[26] Henry Bulwer, "France, Social, Literary, Political," *Monthly Review,* CXXXV (July, 1834), 302.

[27] See the *Quarterly Review,* LI, 177-213, and the *Westminster Review,* XXXI, 73-98.

[28] "French Criticism of English Writers," *Quarterly Review,* XXXIII (Oct., 1843), 1. For other references during this decade to the English aversion for French literature and drama, to the differences between French and English character, and to the traditional moral attitude of the English toward the novel, see the following: *Monthly Review,* CXXXI (Aug., 1833), 532-542; CXLI (Oct., 1836), 211-12; CXLIII (April, 1839), 483-495;

CXLIX (Aug., 1839), 457-475; CLXVI (Dec., 1844), 537-559; CLIII (Sept., 1840), 11-20; *Quarterly Review,* LI (Mar., 1834), 177-213; LVI (April, 1836), 65-131; *Athenaeum* (Dec. 6, 1834), p. 889.

[29] "The New Fiction," *Nineteenth Century,* V (Jan., 1879), 32.

CHAPTER III

[1] "French Novels," *Quarterly Review,* LVI (April, 1836), 69.

[2] "The Philosophy of Fiction," *Westminster Review,* XXXI (April, 1838), 92.

[3] "Balzac's *Sketches of Country Life,*" *Monthly Review,* CLIII (Sept., 1840). See also p. 292.

[4] "Novels," *Monthly Review,* CLXVI (Dec., 1844), 549.

[5] "Balzac and George Sand," *Foreign Quarterly,* XXXIII (July, 1844), 265-299. See also XXX (April, 1843), 182-188, and *Monthly Review,* CLXV (May, 1844), 23.

[6] "Balzac and his Writings," *Westminster Review,* LX (July, 1853), 207. See also pp. 199-215.

[7] LXX (Oct., 1858), 493.

[8] "The Last of the Regenerators," *Irish Quarterly Review,* VIII (July, 1858), 433.

[9] "Honoré de Balzac," *Bentley's Miscellany,* XLVI, 157.

[10] "A Triad of French Writers," *Dublin University Magazine,* LXIV (Sept., 1864), 330. See also "The Style of Balzac and Thackeray," LXIV, 620, and "Balzac—His Literary Labours." LXX (Dec., 1867), 529.

[11] "Balzac at Home," *St. Paul's Magazine,* II (July, 1868), 430.

[12] "Some Recent English Novels," *Fortnightly Review,* XV (June, 1871), 736. See also "Beauty and Realism," pp. 723-731.

[13] "Balzac's Novels," *Fortnightly Review,* XV (Jan., 1871), 38.

[14] "Honoré de Balzac," *Galaxy,* XX (Dec., 1875), 820.

[15] "Letter to Joseph Knight," Nov. 28, 1875. Reprinted in *Letters of Algernon C. Swinburne* (London, Heinemann, 1919). I, 222.

[16] "Notes on the Text of Shelley," *Complete Works of Swinburne* (London, Heinemann, 1925-1927). XV, 381, note.

[17] "Balzac," *Blackwood's Magazine,* CXXI (March, 1877), 300-324.

[18] "Honoré de Balzac," *Temple Bar,* LIV (Dec., 1878), 535.

[19] "Balzac," *Gentleman's Magazine,* XXI (Dec., 1878), 617-632.

[20] "The Correspondence of M. de Balzac," *Edinburgh Review,* CXLIX (Oct., 1878), 532.

[21] "The Age of Balzac," *Contemporary Review,* XXXVII (June, 1880), 1004-1045.

[22] "Balzac," *Cornhill Magazine,* LIII (April, 1886), 471.
[23] "Honoré de Balzac," *Spectator,* LIX (Sept., 1886), 1180.
[24] "The Novels of Balzac," *Temple Bar,* LXXVIII (Oct., 1886), 199-392.
[25] *Ibid.*
[26] "Some of Balzac's Minor Pieces," *Fortnightly Review,* LII (Oct., 1889), 491-492.
[27] "A Realist at Work," *Belgravia,* LXXI (March, 1890), 32.
[28] "Balzac," *Academy,* XXXVII (March, 1890), 144.
[29] "The Realism of Balzac," *Gentleman's Magazine,* LII (June, 1894), 596-607.
[30] "Balzac," *Fortnightly Review,* LXXI (May 1, 1899), 745.
[31] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER IV

[1] "Charles Baudelaire: Les Fleurs du Mal," *Spectator,* XXXV (Sept. 6, 1862), 998, *et seq.*
[2] *Spectator,* XXXV (June 7, 1862), 632-633.
[3] XXXIX (Sept. 15, 1866), 1028.
[4] "Mr. Algernon C. Swinburne," *Tinsley's Magazine,* III (Aug., 1868), 26-37; "Mr. Arnold and Mr. Swinburne," *Contemporary Review,* VI (Nov., 1867), 337-357.
[5] "The Poems of Dante Gabriel Rossetti," *Fortnightly Review,* XIII (May 1, 1870), 574-575.
[6] Reprinted in expanded form as *The Fleshly School of Poetry* (London, Strahan, 1872). The quotations are from this reprint.
[7] Harriet Jay, *Robert Buchanan* (London, Unwin, 1903). Pp. 165-166.
[8] "Baudelaire," *Belgravia Magazine,* XV (Oct., 1871), 449.
[9] Cf. Henry Bulwer, "France, Social, Literary, Political," *Monthly Review,* CXXXV (July, 1834), 302; *Monthly Review,* CXXXVII, 93; CXXXI, 532-542; CXLI, 211-212; CXLXIII, 485-495; *Quarterly Review,* LI (March, 1834), 177-213; LVI, 65-131; and *Athenaeum* (Dec. 6, 1834), p. 889. The national hostility current in the early Victorian period was continued, to a lesser degree, to the end of the century.
[10] Reprinted in *Collected Essays and Papers of George Saintsbury* (London, Dent, 1924). IV, 25.
[11] *A Scrap Book* (London, Macmillan, 1922). Pp. 114-117.
[12] "1880," *Yellow Book,* IV (Jan., 1895), 278-279.
[13] "Reticence in Literature," *Yellow Book,* I (April, 1894), 213.

[14] *Journal of Arnold Bennett* (New York, Literary Guild, 1933). P. 103 (entry for Dec. 14, 1899).

[15] *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York, Dutton, 1919). Pp. 113-114.

CHAPTER V

[1] "Reticence in Literature," *Yellow Book,* II (July, 1894), 268.

[2] "Note on a Question of the Hour," *Athenaeum* (June 16, 1877), pp. 767-768.

[3] "L'Assommoir," *Gentleman's Magazine,* XX (Dec., 1878), 745.

[4] Reprinted in *Collected Papers and Essays* (London, Dent, 1924), IV, 25.

[5] "The Comédie Française et M. Zola," *Gentleman's Magazine,* XXIII (July, 1879), 60-73. See also "Literary Bohemians," *Blackwoods,* CXXXIII (Jan., 1833), 116-126.

[6] "The Age of Balzac," *Contemporary Review,* XXXVII (June, 1880), 1004-1045.

[7] Émile Zola," *Fortnightly Review,* XXXVII (April, 1882), 439 *et seq.*

[8] "Zola's Parisian Middle Classes," *Scottish Review,* XXXV (Sept., 1883), 301.

[9] Reprinted in *French Poets and Novelists* (London, Macmillan, 1893). P. 202.

[10] Reprinted in *Essays and Papers* (London, Dent, 1924). P. 32.

[11] Since this chapter originally appeared in *PMLA* (1934), Alphonse R. Favreau has published a more detailed study of Daudet's reputation in England. Although our conclusions are substantially the same, the interested reader should see this study: "British Criticism of Daudet, 1872-1897," *PMLA,* LII (June, 1937), 528-539. I am indebted to this study for some expansion of my original material.

[12] Edmond About, "Notes from Paris," *Athenaeum* (Nov. 14, 1874), 644; and (January 2, 1875), 19.

[13] "Fromont Jeune et Risler Aîné," *Athenaeum* (Nov. 21, 1874), 672; "Jack," *Athenaeum* (Feb. 12, 1876), 226; "Jack," *Saturday Review,* XLI (June 3, 1876), 721; *Coburn's New Monthly* (1877); and "My Brother Jack," *Academy,* XIII (April 6, 1878), 298.

[14] "Daudet's Nabab," *Saturday Review,* XLV (March 2, 1878), 281.

[15] H. de Lagardie, "French Novels and French Life," *Macmillan's Magazine,* XXXV (March, 1877), 386.

[16] "Alphonse Daudet," *Saturday Review,* XLIV (Sept. 1, 1877), 266.

[17] "A Satire on the Second Empire," *Spectator,* LII, Part I (Feb. 15, 1879), 215. See also; W. E. Henley, "Le Nabab," *Academy,* XIV (Aug. 24, 1878), 187; "Le Nabab," *Saturday Review,* XLV (Feb. 2, 1878), 160; and "Le Nabab," *Athenaeum* (Dec. 9, 1877), 732.

[18] "The Novels of Alphonse Daudet," *Blackwood's Magazine,* CXXV (Jan., 1879), 94. See also; "Le Petit Chose," *Saturday Review,* XLIX (April 3, 1879), 457; "Théâtre," *Saturday Review,* XLIX (June 5, 1879), 738; "Les Rois en Exil," *Athenaeum* (Nov. 8, 1879), 595; and Andrew Lang, "Les Rois en Exil," *Academy,* XVI (Dec. 6, 1879), 401.

[19] "A Few French Novels," *Blackwood's Magazine,* CXXX (Dec., 1881), 703. See also: "Numa Roumestan," *Saturday Review,* LII (Oct. 22, 1881), 520; R. B. Brett, "Daudet's Numa Roumestan," *Academy,* XX (Dec. 10, 1881), 436; "Provençal Idylls," *Spectator,* LIV, Pt. I (Feb. 19, 1881), 252; and "Numa Roumestan," *Athenaeum* (Oct. 22, 1881), 526.

[20] "M. Daudet on Himself," *Saturday Review,* LIII (Jan. 28, 1882), 109-110.

[21] Reprinted in *Partial Portraits* (London, Macmillan, 1899). P. 225.

[22] "L'Evangeliste," *Dublin Review,* XVII (1883), 496.

[23] "L'Evangeliste," *Saturday Review,* LV (Feb. 3, 1883), 163.

[24] "L'Evangeliste by A. Daudet," *Scottish Review,* XXV (May, 1883), 186.

[25] "Numa Roumestan," *Spectator,* LVII (Sept. 13, 1884), 1209. See also "French Puritans," *Spectator,* LVI (July 21, 1883), 367.

[26] "The New Naturalism," *Fortnightly Review,* XLIV (Aug., 1885), 241, 243, and 246.

[27] "Sapho," *Westminster Review,* CXXV (April, 1886), 600.

[28] "Tartarin Again," *Saturday Review,* LX (Dec. 19, 1885), 812.

[29] "Gustave Flaubert and George Sand," *Nineteenth Century,* XX (Nov., 1886), 694-704.

[30] "Disease in Fiction," *op. cit.,* p. 590.

[31] Waugh, *William T. Stead* (Chicago, Women's Temperance Publication Association, 1886). P. 14.

[32] "New Censorship of Literature," *New York Herald* (London edition, July 28, 1889). See also Shaw, *Quintessence of Ibsenism* (London, Scott, 1891). Pp. 242-300.

[33] E. Vizetelly, *Émile Zola* (1904). Pp. 242-300.

[34] "The Present State of the Novel," *Fortnightly Review,* XLIX (Jan., 1888), 120-121. See also "Alphonse Daudet," *Critic,* XIII (Nov., 1888, 236-237.

[35] XLVIII (Sept., 1887), 412.

[36] "The Literary Creed of Emile Zola," *Time,* XVIII (May, 1888), 563.

[37] "Daudet," *Spectator,* LXI (March 24, 1888), 417.

[38] "M. Zola's Idée Mère," *Universal Review,* I (May, 1888), 39.

[39] "Gustave Flaubert," *Gentleman's Magazine,* XLI (July, 1888), 128.

[40] CXLIV (Sept., 1888), 427. See also: "L'Immortel," *Athenaeum* (July 21, 1888), 92.

[41] "Guy de Maupassant," *Fortnightly Review,* XLIX (March, 1888), 364-386.

[42] "Journal of the Brothers de Goncourt," *Fortnightly Review,* L (Oct., 1888), 501-521.

[43] *Ibid.,* p. 271.

[44] "New Censorship of Literature," *New York Herald* (London edition, July 28, 1889). See also Shaw, *Quintessence of Ibsenism* (London, Scott, 1891). Pp. 242-300.

[45] Reprinted in *A Romance of Philanthropy* (London, National Vigilance Association, 1916). Pp. 46-47.

[46] *Fortnightly Review,* XLVIII (Sept., 1887), 412.

[47] "Zola's Earliest Work," *Spectator,* XLIII (Dec. 7, 1889), 811.

[48] "Émile Zola," *Contemporary Review,* LV (Jan., 1889), 94-113. For criticism of Flaubert and Daudet for this same year, see: "Naturalism," *Westminster Review,* CXXXII (Aug., 1889), 185-190; "Correspondance de Gustave Flaubert," *Athenaeum* (Aug. 3, 1889), pp. 155-156; "M. Daudet's Recollections," *Spectator,* LXIII (Sept., 1889), 304-309; and "Gustave Flaubert and His Work," *Saturday Review* (Oct. 5, 1889), pp. 378-379.

[49] "Life and Letters of Gustave Flaubert," *Academy,* XLVIII (Aug. 3, 1895), 85.

[50] "Gustave Flaubert," *Westminster Review,* CXLIV (Sept., 1895), 383-391.

[51] "Gustave Flaubert," *Fortnightly Review,* LXIV (Dec. 1, 1895), 826.

[52] "Edmond and Jules de Goncourt," *Academy,* XLVI (Dec., 1894), 504.

[53] "Goncourts vs. Realism," *Spectator,* LXXVII (July 25, 1896), 110.

[54] "Edmond de Goncourt," *Fortnightly Review,* LXVI (Sept., 1896), 333-350.

[55] "The Goncourts," *Macmillan's Magazine,* LXXVI (Oct, 1897), 413-423. See also "The Académie des Goncourts," *Academy,* LII (June 19, 1897), 635.

[56] These two articles later appeared as a chapter in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York, Dutton, 1919). P. 133.

[57] "The Struggle for Life," *Saturday Review,* LXX (Sept. 27, 1890), 372-373.

[58] "Parisian Darwinism," *Westminster Review,* CXXXIII (Feb., 1890), 163-173. See also "M. Daudet on Evolution," *Spectator,* LXIV (June 7, 1890), 791.

[59] "Alphonse Daudet," *Saturday Review,* LXXXIII (Dec. 25, 1897), 739. See also *Athenaeum* (Dec. 25, 1897), p. 888.

[60] "Trente Ans de Paris," *Nineteenth Century,* XXVIII (Aug., 1890), 248-250; "Daudet," *Saturday Review,* LXXXIII (Jan. 9, 1897), 43-44; "Alphonse Daudet," *Academy,* LII (Dec. 25, 1897), 575-576; "Alphonse Daudet," *Contemporary Review,* LXXIII (Feb., 1898), 182-193; "Daudet," *Fortnightly Review,* LXIX (June, 1898), 943; "Alphonse Daudet," *Macmillan's Magazine,* LXXVIII (July, 1898), 175-183; "Alphonse Daudet in Private Life," *Pall Mall Magazine,* XVI (Nov., 1898), 293-301; "Daudet," *Living Age,* CCXVI (Jan., 1898), 278; "Doctor Daudet," *Academy,* LVI (June 3, 1899), 604; "The Early Years of Alphonse Daudet," *Temple Bar,* LXVI (Jan., 1899), 82-96.

[61] Reprinted from the *Outlook* in *Notes on Life and Letters* (New York, Doubleday, 1921). Pp. 20-22.

[62] "Guy de Maupassant," *Temple Bar,* CLII (Dec., 1894), 498-505. See also: "Guy de Maupassant," *Fortnightly Review,* LVIII (July, 1892); "Guy de Maupassant," *National Magazine,* XXI (Aug., 1893), 817-827; "Maupassant," *Spectator,* LXXI (July 15, 1893), 77; "The Love Letters of Guy de Maupassant," *Fortnightly Review,* LXVIII (Sept. 1, 1897), 571-582; "The Finest Short Story," *Academy,* LVII (July 29, 1899), 107.

[63] "Eugène Sue and Émile Zola," *Belgravia,* LXXI (Feb., 1890), 130.

[64] "A Delicious Celebrity," *Spectator,* LXXI (Sept. 30, 1893), 427.

[65] "Zola and His Work," *Westminster Review,* CXL (Dec., 1893), 614.

[66] See also "M. Zola on Sedan," *Spectator,* LXIX (Aug. 13, 1892), 228.

[67] "Zola," *Academy,* LIII (March 12, 1898), 297-298. See also: "Downfall of Zolaism," *Catholic World,* LXI (June, 1895), 357; "Émile Zola," *Westminster Review,* CXLIII (Jan., 1895), 57; "Rome," *Westminster Review,* CXLVI (Dec., 1896), 532; and "M. Zola's Paris," *Spectator,* LXXX (March 12, 1898), 378.

[68] "La Débâcle," *Fortnightly Review,* LVIII (Aug. 1, 1892), 204.

[69] "The Moral Teaching of Zola," *Contemporary Review,* LXIII (Feb., 1893), 213.

[70] "Zola's Philosophy of Life," *Fortnightly Review,* LXVI (Aug., 1896), 257-272.

[71] Reprinted in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York, Dutton, 1919). Pp. 162-179.

[72] "Zola: The Man and His Work," *Savoy,* I (Jan., 1896), 67.

[73] *Loc. cit.,* pp. 70-71.

[74] *Loc. cit.,* pp. 77-78.

[75] *Loc. cit.,* p. 80.

[76] "M. Huysmans as a Mystic," *Saturday Review,* LXXXIX (March 9, 1895), 312-313.

[77] Reprinted from the *Fortnightly Review* (1892) in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York, Dutton, 1919). Pp. 278-279.

[78] "Realism and Decadence in French Literature," *Quarterly Review,* CLXXI (July, 1890), 57-67. See also: "The Modern French Novel," *op. cit.,* pp. 69-76; "English Realism and Romance," *Ibid.,* CLXXIII (Oct., 1891), 468-495; "The French Decadence," *Ibid.,* CLXXIV (April, 1892), 479-505.

CHAPTER VI

[1] The poem "Terje Vigen" appeared in *Norwegian and Swedish Poems,* a volume published in Bergen and circulated in England. No reference being made to it in any of the important critical journals, it may be presumed that it exerted little or no influence.

[2] "Ibsen's New Poems," *Spectator,* XLV (March 16, 1872), 344.

[3] "A Norwegian Drama," *Spectator,* XLV (July 20, 1872), 922. See also "Norwegian Poetry Since 1814," *Fraser's,* LXXXVI (Oct., 1872), 446-448

[4] "Ibsen, the Norwegian Satirist," *Fortnightly Review,* XIX (Jan., 1873), 74.

[5] "Ibsen's Social Dramas," *Fortnightly Review,* LI (Jan., 1889), 108.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] "The Present Condition of Norway," *Fraser's,* LXXXIX (Feb., 1874), 180; "Ibsen Jubilee," *Spectator,* XLVIII (Mar. 27, 1875), 401-402; "Ibsen's New Drama," *Academy,* XIII (Jan. 12, 1878), 42-43.

[8] "Ibsen as He is Translated," *Time,* XXII (Jan., 1890), 37.

[9] M. A. Franc, *Ibsen in England* (Boston: Four Seas Co., 1919). P. 24.

[10] "Ibsen as He is Translated," *Time, loc. cit.*

[11] These three plays composed the volume *Pillars of Society and Other Plays,* edited at a later date by Havelock Ellis.

[12] "Realism," *Theatre* (Nov. 1, 1880), p. 284 and pp. 127-130.

[13] "Breaking a Butterfly," *Theatre* (April 1, 1884), p. 214.

[14] "Henrik Ibsen," *St. James,* XLVIII (March, 1881), 110. See also: "A Dramatist at Bay," *Saturday Review,* LV (Jan. 13, 1883), 43-44, and "Two Dramas by Ibsen," *Academy,* XXIII (Jan. 6, 1883), 5-6.

[15] "Ibsen's Social Dramas," *Fortnightly Review,* LI (Jan., 1889), 107-121.

[16] "Henrik Ibsen's Dramatic Experiment," *Theatre,* XXII (Feb. 1, 1889), 73-81.

[17] "Henrik Ibsen," *Universal Review,* III (April, 1889), 571.

[18] "A Doll's House," *Spectator,* LXII (June 22, 1889), 853-854. See also "Drama: the Week," *Athenaeum,* I (June 15, 1889), 769.

[19] "Ibsen Again," *Academy,* XXXVI (July 27, 1889), 61. See also "Ibsen in London," *ibid.,* XXXV, 419 and 432.

[20] "The Pillars of Society," *Theatre,* XXIII (Aug. 1, 1889), 94-97. For the whole of this debate see *ibid.,* pp. 19-22 and 38-41.

[21] "The Works of Henrik Ibsen," *Nineteenth Century,* XXVI (Aug., 1889), 256. See also: "Henrik Ibsen: His Men and Women," *Westminster Review,* CXXXIII (June, 1889), 626; "Ibsen's 'Peer Gynt,'" *Contemporary Review,* LVI (Aug., 1889), 287; and "Ibsen the Force," *Academy,* LVII (July 22, 1889), 80-81.

[22] "Ibsen and English Criticism," *Fortnightly Review,* LII (July, 1889), 33.

[23] "The Last Two Plays of Ibsen," *Academy,* XXXVII (Jan. 18, 1890), 38, and "Henrik Ibsen's Prose Dramas," *ibid.,* pp. 296-297.

[24] *Daily Chronicle* (Aug. 28, 1890); "Ibsen and English Criticism," *Fortnightly Review,* LII (July, 1889), 33; Shaw, *Quintessence of Ibsenism,* pp. 89-91.

[25] "Ibsen's Plays," *Saturday Review,* LXIX (Jan. 4, 1890), 16; "Henrik Ibsen's Prose Dramas," *ibid.,* p. 475 and pp. 352-353.

[26] Havelock Ellis, *The New Spirit* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1926). P. 173.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] "Ibsen's Social Dramas," *Quarterly Review,* CLXXII (April, 1891), 305. See also: "Henrik Ibsen's Poems," *Contemporary Review,* CXXXVI (Sept., 1891), 333-347, and "Henrik Ibsen," *Temple Bar,* XCIII (Sept., 1891), 97-105.

[29] "Ibsen's 'Brand,'" *Westminster Review,* CXXXV (March, 1891), 427. See also: "A Scene from Ibsen's 'Brand,'" *Contemporary Review,* LX (March, 1891), 407-423, and "Brand," *Saturday Review,* LXXII (Dec. 19, 1891), 705.

[30] "Some Ibsenisms," *Saturday Review,* LXXI (Feb. 28, 1891), 497. See also "Ibsen's New Play," *ibid.,* p. 145.

[31] "Ibsen," *Theatre,* XXVI (April 1, 1891), 196, 205-206, 257.

[32] "Ibsen's New Drama," *Fortnightly Review,* LV (Jan., 1891), 13, and "The Free Stage and the New Drama," *ibid.,* LVI, 671.

[33] "The Ibsen Question," *Fortnightly Review,* LV (April, 1891), 740.

[34] Shaw, *The Quintessence of Ibsenism.* Pp. 89-91.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] "The Week," *Athenaeum,* I (March 21, 1891), 387-388.

[37] Franc, *Ibsen in England.* P. 44. For Archer's article, see "The Drama in the Doldrums," *Fortnightly Review,* LVIII (Aug. 1, 1892), 146-167.

[38] "Two Books on Ibsen," *Academy,* XLI (Mar. 12, 1892), 247-248. See also Philip Wickstead, *Four Lectures on Ibsen* (London: Sonnenschein, 1892).

[39] "Ibsenism," *London Quarterly,* LXXVIII (July, 1892), 227-241.

[40] "Mr. Beerbohm Tree on Ibsen and Maeterlinck," *Gentleman's Magazine,* XLVIII (Jan., 1892), 48. See also "Peer Gynt," *ibid.,* XLIX, 533.

[41] "Ibsen's Last Play," *Spectator,* LXX (March 4, 1893), 286.

[42] "The Week," *Athenaeum,* I (Feb. 25, 1893), 258. See also "The Master Builder," *Saturday Review,* LXXV (Mar. 4, 1893), 241-242; "Some Plays of the Day," *Fortnightly Review,* LIX (April 1, 1893), 473; "Ibsen as an Artist," *Westminster Review,* CXL (Nov., 1893), 506-514.

[43] "Ibsen in London," *Theatre,* XXXIII (Oct. 1, 1894), 169.

[44] "Ibsen's New Play," *Saturday Review,* LXXVIII (Dec. 15, 1894), 662.

[45] "Ibsen and the Morbid Taint," *Belgravia,* LXXXIII (Jan., 1894), 65. See also: "Henrik Ibsen," *Saturday Review,* LXXVIII (Sept. 29, 1894), 360, and "The Works of Henrik Ibsen," *Spectator,* LXXII (May 12, 1894), 653.

[46] This article, expanded, appeared in 1908 in book form as *The Sanity of Art: An Exposure of the Current Nonsense About Artists Being Degenerate.*

[47] "'Little Eyolf'—A Plea for Reticence," *Dublin Review,* CXX (Jan., 1897), 121-125. See also "A Note on Ibsen's 'Little Eyolf,'" *Fortnightly Review,* LXIII (Feb. 1, 1895), 277-284, and "Little Eyolf," *Saturday Review,* LXXXIII (Jan. 30, 1897), 114.

[48] See the following articles on Ibsen in the *Saturday Review*: LXXIX, 280-281; LXXXII, 492, 542-544, 563-564, 623, 654; LXXXIII, 114, 507-509, 539, 575; LXXXIV, 12-14; LXXXV, 428-429, 821.

[49] "Ibsen's New Drama," *Fortnightly Review,* LXXIII (April 1, 1900), 575.

CHAPTER VII

[1] "A Russian Novelist," *Spectator,* LIX (July 10, 1886), 938.

[2] CVIII (1877), 215.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Journal of Arnold Bennett* (New York, Literary Guild, 1933). P. 21 (entry for Oct. 12, 1896).

[5] "Count Leo Tolstoy's Novels," *Nineteenth Century,* V (April, 1879), 651.

[6] "Count Tolstoy's Novels," *Saturday Review,* LXIII (Jan. 1, 1887), 23.

[7] "Tolstoi's 'War and Peace,'" *Spectator,* LX (Feb. 5, 1887), 202.

[8] "Count Leo Tolstoi," *Contemporary Review,* LII (Aug., 1887), 253.

[9] "The Present State of the Novel," *Fortnightly Review,* XLVIII (Sept., 1887), 412.

[10] "Count Leo Tolstoi," *Fortnightly Review,* XLVIII (Dec., 1887), 783-799.

[11] "Two Russian Realists," *London Quarterly Review,* LXX (April, 1888), 57.

[12] "Count Tolstoi's Life and Works," *Westminster Review,* CXXX (Sept., 1888), 282.

[13] Havelock Ellis, *The New Spirit* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1926). P. 250.

[14] *Ibid.,* p. 210.

[15] Edmund Gosse, *Critical Kit-Kats* (New York, Dodd, Mead, 1903). Pp. 116 and 131.

[16] "An Appreciation of Russian Fictional Literature," *Westminster Review,* CXLIV (Dec., 1895), 539.

[17] "Tolstoi's New Novel," *Academy,* LVII (Sept. 9, 1899), 255.

[18] "The Philosophy of a Saint," *Contemporary Review,* LXXVIII (Dec. 12, 1885), 395.

[19] "The Russian Novelist Dostojewsky," *Academy,* XXVII (Dec. 12, 1885), 395.

[20] "A Russian Novelist," *Spectator,* LIX (July 10, 1886), 938.

[21] *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson to his Family and Friends,* ed. Sidney Colvin (New York, 1899). II, 24 *et seq.*

[22] "Dostoevsky and His Work," *Macmillan's Magazine,* LV (Jan., 1887), 187-199.

[23] "Two Russian Realists," *London Quarterly Review,* LXX (April, 1888), 66.

[24] For a detailed study of Dostoevsky's fame in England, see Helen Muchnic, *Dostoevsky's English Reputation* (1881-1936), in *Smith College Studies in Modern Languages,* XX (April and July, 1939).

[25] *Charles Dickens, A Critical Study* (New York, 1898). Pp. 284-294.

[26] *Op. cit.,* p. 178.

[27] "Count Tolstoi's Early Reminiscences," *Spectator,* CXII (June 1, 1889), 763.

[28] "An Appreciation of Russian Fictional Literature," *Westminster Review,* CXLIV (Dec., 1895), 539.

CHAPTER VIII

[1] *A Look Around Literature* (London, Ward, 1887). Pp. 303-304.

[2] "Émile Zola," *Fortnightly Review,* XXXVII (April, 1882), 439 *et seq.*

[3] "Realism and Romance," *Contemporary Review,* LII (Nov., 1887), 687-693.

[4] *Essays Speculative and Suggestive* (London, Chapman and Hall, 1893). P. 262. See also pp. 56-57.

[5] "Realism and Idealism," *Fortnightly Review*, XLVIII (Sept., 1887), 429.

[6] *Essays Speculative and Suggestive*. P. 420.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 426-428.

[8] *Key of Blue*. P. 111. Reprinted from "La Bête Humaine," *Fortnightly Review* (Oct., 1891).

[9] Meredith, *Letters Collected and Edited by his Son* (New York, Scribners, 1912). II, 401. See also II, 351, 398, 399, and 533.

[10] Chapter XIII.

[11] *Diana of the Crossways*. Ch. 1.

[12] *Longman's Magazine*, I (Nov., 1882), 74, 77.

[13] Reprinted from *The Magazine of Art in Sketches and Criticism* (New York, Scribners, 1898). P. 267.

[14] Reprinted from *Longman's Magazine* (Dec., 1884) in *Sketches and Criticism*.

[15] "The Morality of the Profession of Letters," *Fortnightly Review*, XXXV (April, 1895). Reprinted in *Sketches and Criticism*. P. 285. For other articles on the Realism-Romance controversy, see: Edmund Gosse, "The Limits of Realism," *Forum*, IX (June, 1890), 391; "The Relation of Art to Truth," *Forum*, IX (March, 1890), 36-47; "The New Battle of the Books," *Forum*, V (July, 1888), 564-574; "Mr. Stevenson on Realism and Idealism," *Critic*, XXIII (March 7, 1891), 129; "Realism of Today," *Nineteenth Century*, XXV (April, 1894), 618-628; "The Husk of Technique," *Academy*, LVIII (April 14, 1900), 317.

[16] Reprinted in *Partial Portraits* (New York, Macmillan, 1888).

[17] *Letters of Henry James* (London, Macmillan, 1920). I, 49.

[18] "Émile Zola," *The Atlantic Monthly*, XCII (Aug., 1903), 196.

[19] "Some of Balzac's Minor Pieces," *Fortnightly Review*, LII (Oct. 1889), 491-492.

[20] *Impressions and Opinions* (New York, Scribners, 1891). P. 67.

[21] *Journal of Arnold Bennett* (New York, Literary Guild, 1933). P. 82 (entry for June 24, 1898).

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 19 (entry for Sept. 29, 1896).

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 71 (entry for Jan. 11, 1898).

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 87-88 (entry for Jan. 3, 1899).

[25] Reprinted in *Epigrams*.

[26] "Balzac in English," *Pall Mall Gazette* (Sept. 13, 1886).

[27] "Russian Novelists," *Pall Mall Gazette* (May 2, 1887).

[28] "Balzac in English," *Pall Mall Gazette* (Sept. 13, 1886).

[29] (June 25, 1890.)

[30] *Epigrams*.

[31] *Studies in the Seven Arts* (New York, Dutton, 1906). Pp. 3-7.
[32] "Conclusion," *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York, Dutton, 1919). Pp. 325-328.

CHAPTER IX

[1] "Introduction," *The New Spirit* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1926), fourth edition. Pp. 5-8.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. ix.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. xii.
[4] "Reticence in Literature," *Yellow Book,* I (April, 1894), 201-219.
[5] "Reticence in Literature," *Yellow Book,* II (July, 1894), 259-269.

Index

A.

Academy (magazine), review of Flaubert, 100; Goncourts, 101; Maupassant, 104; Zola's *Paris,* 105; Ibsen and Herford defense, 121-22; Tolstoi, 139; Dostoevski, 140; G. Moore's *Evelyn Innes,* 165

Adam Bede (G. Eliot), 9

Aestheticism, "Art for Art's Sake," 17, 28; in literature, 17; link with Baudelaire, 63; and Realism, 143; Russians, 144; influence on Bennett and Moore, 167; Symons, 171 (*See also* "Art for Art's Sake")

All the Year Round (Dickens), 169

American Tragedy, An (play), 22

Anna Karenina, 133, 135

Arabian Nights (Burton), 94

Archer, William, anti-Victorian, 21; Ibsen, 32; Vizetelly petition, 99; tr. Ibsen, 116-19; Ibsen lecture, 120; controversy over morality, 122, 125

Archibald, Mr. Justice, 69

A Rebours (Huysmans), 112

Arnold, Matthew, 12-13, 101, 135-36

Art, in literature, 17; *vs.* morality in Baudelaire, 71; mission of, 91; modern, 151-53; Stevenson, 159-60; George Moore, 163-64; Wilde's "Decay of Lying," 168-69; in Symbolism (Symons), 171; and morality, 183

"Art for Art's Sake," connection with Realism and Naturalism, 17; beliefs, 28; called "Nincompoopiana," 73; Saintsbury, Beerbohm, Wilde, Moore, Whistler, Rossetti, Swinburne, Burne-Jones, Symons, Beardsley, 72-4; Moore, 106, 163-64; Realism and Idealism, 152; Wilde, 167 (*See also* Aestheticism)

"Art of Fiction" (Henry James), 160

Aurora Leigh (E. B. Browning), 9

Assommoir, L' (Zola), attacked by Swinburne, 82; produced as play, "Drink," by Charles Reade, 84; attacked for sensualism by *Spectator* and *Westminster Gazette,* 105

Athenaeum, attacks Realists, 21; Rossetti letter "Stealthy School of Critics," 68; Swinburne letter, Zola & Hugo, 83; Edmond About on Daudet, 86-7; Symons on Goncourts, 102; Zola's *Paris,* 105; Ibsen, 121, 126-7; Wagner, Whitman, Baudelaire, 126; *Wild Duck,* "a joke," 127; Ellis' *New Spirit,* 178

Atlantic Monthly, 88, 161

Austen, Jane, 14, 39-40

B.

Balzac, Honoré de, Realist, 15; science, 24; materialist, 26-27; translations, 32, 49-50; Thackeray, 41-42; in England, 49-61; *Le roman experimental,* 49; French Realism, 49; morals in, 50, 86; Hoffman influence, 51; press controversy, 51-53, 56-61,

113, 124; praised by James and Swinburne, 55-56; resemblance to George Eliot, model for Browning, 55-56; Victorian reaction, 57, 115; Realism and Naturalism, 57-58; compared with Zola, 57-58, 111; reputation established in England, 57; "woman of 30," 58; Holbein of literature, 60; influence on Europe and America, 60; called "divine spy," 61; influence on Goncourts, 102; Dickens' opinion, 169; Taine, 169; *Comédie Humaine,* 169-70
Baudelaire, Charles, fined in France, 22; aids Naturalism cause, 28; *roman experimental,* 49; Henry James' article, 55; revolt against Romanticism, link with Realists, Naturalists, Pre-Raphaelites and Aesthetes, 63; Swinburne introduction, 63-64; in English, 63-77; death, 65; Swinburne elegy, 65; held source of decadence, 66; attacks on, 64, 67-69, 76, 77, 113, 126, 147; Buchanan, Stigand attacks, 69; Saintsbury defense, 70; artistic basis of writings, 71-72; Waugh, 75-77; Bennett and Symons' defense, 77; accepted, 77, 79, 129; compared with Ibsen, 126; controversy, 131, 175; Naturalism, 167
Beardsley, Aubrey, 73
Beerbohm, Max, 73
Belgravia (magazine), 69, 104, 127
Bennett, Arnold, influences, 32-33; hostility to Naturalism, 80; his "synthetic impressionism," 164-65; Zola's "Experimental Novel," 164-65; writings, 164-67 *passim;* review of Moore's *Evelyn Innes,* 165; *Journal,* 165, 166; turn to Realism, 165; Flaubert, Goncourts, Maupassant, Burne-Jones, 165-66; "Composition," 166
Bentley's Miscellany, 53
Bernard, Charles de, 86
Bête Humaine, La, 107, 153 (*See also Human Beast, The*)
Beaumont and Fletcher, 98
Beauty, Cult of, 73
Birmingham Daily Mail, 95
Bowring, Sir John, 132
Black and White, 125
Blackwoods Magazine, attacks Realists, 21; joins purity drive, 69; on Daudet, 88, 97; on Maupassant, 97
Bourget, Paul, 94, 98, 101
Bowdlerism, 11, 22, 92, 118
Bradford Observer, 95
Breaking a Butterfly (version of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*), 118-19
Brontë, Charlotte, 9, 44
Brothers Karamazov, 140
Browning, E. B., 9
Browning, Robert, 12, 56
Brunetière, 44-45
Buchanan, Robert ("Caliban"), 66; attacks on Rossetti and B.'s ostracism, 69; attack on Baudelaire, 69; backed by *Christian World,* 70; retracts Rossetti attacks and inscribes *God and Man* to him, with eulogies in "Look Around Literature," 74; admires Zola, 75; signs Vizetelly petition, 99; defends Zola, attacks *Saturday Review* and Pre-Raphaelites, 147-48; called misanthrope by Crackenthorpe, 182
Bulwer, Henry, 45-46
Burne-Jones, Sir Edward, 73, 166
Burney, Frances (Fanny), 40
Burton, Sir Richard, 34, 94
Byron, 28, 136

C.

Caine, Hall, 99
Carlyle, Thomas, 10, 12

Cathedral, The (Huysmans), 111
Censorship, 21, 24-26, 98-99, 106
Chameleon (magazine), 21
Charcot, 89
Chaucer, 14, 34-35
Cherbuliez, Victor, 81, 86
Clarissa (S. Richardson), 36-37
Clarke, Sir Edward, 98
Colburn's New Monthly, 87
Colvin, Sidney, 69
Colonel Jack (Defoe), 35
Comédie Humaine (Balzac), 32, 55, 59, 60
"Comic Spirit," 38, 155-56
Comte (Positivism), 43
Conrad, Joseph, 103
Contemporary Review, attack on Realists; on Balzac, 57, Swinburne, Baudelaire, Tennyson, 67-68, Zola, 84; article "Fleshly School of Poetry" by "Thomas Maitland" on Rossetti, 67; attacked by critics in Rossetti's defense, 69; quotes Gladstone on French lewdness, 100; on Tolstoi, 134-35
Controversies, Victorian, 13-17, 21-24; over Zola, 49, 63, 109; over Ibsen, 32, 63, 113, 115-30; on Vizetelly, 49; on Rossetti in "Fleshly School of Art" and his answer: "Stealthy School of Criticism," 72-75; Huysmans, 113; Realism and Romanticism, 150
Cornhill Magazine, 21
Country Gentleman, 95
Crackenthorpe, Hubert, 16, 33, 80, 179-82
Crime and Punishment, 140
Curé de Tours, Le (Balzac), 51

D.

Daily Chronicle, 125
Daily Telegraph, 105-6, 121
D'Arcy, Ella, 33
Darwinism, felt indirectly, from Continent, 18-20, 24; palingenesis theory cited, 68; and Daudet, 102; preceded Freud and Humanitarianism, 113; and religion, 144; proclaimed by Ellis and liberal critics, 150, 177-78, 182
Daudet, Alphonse, "scientific influence," 25, 89, 102; translated, 32; meets Henry James, 85; D. and Dickens, 86-87, 96; Victorians oppose novels; and friends as models, 87-89; preferred to Naturalists by James, 88-89; dedicates *L' Evangeliste* to psychiatrist Charcot, attacked by Catholics, 89; and *Blackwood's,* 97; praised in *Sat. Rev.,* 102; Conrad tribute, 103; final acceptance, 113; D. and Tolstoi, 134
Days Doings (magazine), 70
"Death-in-life" art of Zola, 105
Débâcle, Le (Zola), 105
"Decay of Lying" (Wilde), 168
Defense of Poesy (Sir Philip Sidney), 35
Defoe, Daniel, Realism, 14; Romantic aspects, 15; "to teach truth," 35, 36, 44; and Balzac, 52, 55; Zola, 98
Degeneration (Nordau), 127-28
Dickens, Charles, outstanding Victorian, 9, 10, 12; Realism, 14; Romantic aspects, 15; as reformer, 40; praised by Crackenthorpe, 80; compared with Daudet, 96; *London Quarterly,* 136; despised by Buchanan, 148; D. on Balzac, 169
Diderot, 25, 26, 50, 176
Doll's House, A (Ibsen), 118-19, 121, 129
Dome (magazine), 21
Dostoevski, Mystical and Realistic in, 15; pub. in England, 90; *Quarterly*

Rev., 124; *Spectator*, 131; D. and Victorians, 132; and Tolstoi, 134; *London Quarterly*, 136; French trans. read in England, 140; *Brothers Karamazov*, 140; Religion, 140-43; "imperialist conservative," 142; "strangeness" of novels accepted, 143; compared with Dickens, 143; critique by Wilde, 170
Dowson, Ernest, 33
Dreiser, Theodore, 16, 22
Drummond, Henry (clergyman), 19-20
Dublin Review, 89, 128
Dublin University Magazine, 54
Dumas, Alexandre, 53
Du Maurier, George, 99

E.

Edgeworth, Maria, 40
Edinburgh Review, 21, 56
"Egerton, George," 33
Egoist, The (Meredith), 154
Eliot, George, art, 9, 12, 21, 41; as teacher, 35, 41; "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists"; Darwin, 43; truth, 44; morality, 55; Balzac, 56, 59; *London Quarterly*, 136
Elizabethan Critical Essays (Gregory Smith), 35
Ellis, Havelock, *vs.* Victorianism, 21; eulogizes Diderot, 26; *vs.* Naturalism, 80; Vizetelly petition, 99; "Zola," in *Savoy*, 106-10; champions "science," 108, 176-84; on Ibsen, 123; on Russians, Flaubert and Zola, 137; Dostoevski, 143; *The New Spirit* 143, 176-84
Emperor and Galilean (Ibsen), 117-18
Encyclopédie (Diderot), 25
Enemy of Society, An (Ibsen), 118
En Ménage (Huysmans), 111-12
En Route (Huysmans), 112
Era (magazine), 125
Etudes philosophiques (Balzac), 50
Evangeliste, L' (Daudet), 89
Evergreen (magazine), 21
Evolution (theory), 17, 177 (*See also* Darwin)
Examiner (magazine), 69
"Experimentalism," 171
"Experimental Novel," 33 (*See also Roman experimental, Le*)

F.

Fabian Society, 122
"Falsism," 52
Family Herald, 80
Farrell, James, 16
Faulkner, William, 15, 16
Fecondité (Zola), 162
Ferdinand Count Fathom (Smollett), 37-38
"Fiction, Art of" (H. James), 160
Fielding, Henry, Realism, 14; Romantic aspects, 15; Naturalism, 38; social reformer, 40; F. and Thackeray, 42; Balzac, 56; Zola, 98; and Realists, 150
Flaubert, Gustave, Realist, 15; "science," 24-25; Eng. trans., 32; *le roman experimental*, 49; F. and James, 55, 85, 88; "Art for Art's Sake," 72, 167; Balzac, Turgenev, 85; Saintsbury (*Fortnightly*), 86; F. and Daudet, 88; Vizetelly, 90; attacked by "Vigilants," 98; Wm. Sharp (*Academy*), 100; F. and W. Scott, 101; Oxford lecture by Bourget, 101; F. and Zola, 111; Victorians, 115; and Bennett, 165-66; "impersonalism," 171
"Fleshly School of Poetry," 63-77
Fleurs du mal, Les (Baudelaire), 22, 64-65, 68, 72
Foreign Quarterly, 51, 132
Forman, H. Buxton, 69

Fortnightly Review, liberalism, 21; George Eliot, 43; defense of Victorian sex standards, 54-55; Balzac, 55, 57, 60; Swinburne for Rossetti, 66; Saintsbury, 70, 95; A. Lang on Zola, 84; *Nana* attacked, 90; H. James on Maupassant and Goncourts, 97; on Flaubert, 102; Goncourts, 102; Maupassant, 103; Zola, 107; Gosse on Ibsen, 116, 124; Tolstoi and Russians, 134-35; G. Moore on Balzac, 162; Wilde's "Preface to Dorian Gray," 168
Foules de Lourdes, Les (Huysmans), 112
Fraser's (magazine), 116
French Realism, 31-33 (*See also* Realism; Naturalism)
Freud, 113, 182
Frierson, W. C., 33
Fromont Jeune (Daudet), 87
Front Page, The (play), 23
Furniss, Harry, 99
Furnivall, Frederick James, 99

G.

Gaboriau, Emile, 82
Gaiety Theatre, 118
Galaxy (magazine), 69, 85
Garnett, Richard, 99
Gautier, Théophile, 53, 55, 72, 86
Geante, La (Baudelaire), 77
Gentleman's Magazine, attacks Realists, 21, 96-97; on Balzac, 56, 60; on Zola (as reformer) 84; on Ibsen, 125-26; and attack by Beerbohm Tree, 126
German Realists, 52 (*See also* Realism)
Ghosts (Ibsen), 118, 123, 125, 129
Gilbert, H. M., 33, 74
Gilbert, John, 99
Gissing, George, 33, 143
Globe (magazine), 94-95
God and Man (Buchanan), 74
Goethe, 120, 136
Gogol, Nikolai, 90, 136, 137, 139
Goncourt, Edmond de, and brother Jules, Naturalism, 14; "science," 24-25; trans., 32, 90; and Henry James (85), on Daudet, 88, 89; *Journals* bowdlerized, 101-102; influence on Zola, 102; compared with Balzac 102; newly invented style seen by Symons, 102; compared with Pater, 102; Zola, 110; Tolstoi, 134; influence on Bennett's "synthetic impressionism," 165; "Experimentalism," 171
Gosse, Sir Edmund, *vs.* Victorianism, 21; backs Ibsen, 32, 116-18, 124-25; hails new realistic writers, 80; defends Vizetelly, 99; introduces Ibsen in *Fortnightly* article, 116; suggests Ibsen write poetry, not prose, 117; *Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe*, 117; defends Realism, 117, 125; eulogizes Tolstoi, 138
"Gossip on Romance, A" (R. L. S.), 157
Gothic romances, 39
Gray, David, 66
Griffith Gaunt (Kingsley), 9
"Grundy, Mrs." rebellion against, 9, 12; and Naturalism, 28, 164; and Wilde, 170; and Crackenthorpe, 182-83
Guardian, the (magazine), 94

H.

Hall, Radcliffe, 22
Hannigan, D. F., 101
Hardy, Thomas, attacked, 9; greatness conceded, 12; and new Realism, 21; Naturalistic influences, 32-33; Vizetelly petition, 99
Harland, Herbert, 33

Hart, R. E. S., 106-7
Hawk (magazine), 125
Haymarket Theatre, 122
Hedda Gabler (Ibsen), 77, 123-24
Heine, Heinrich, 22, 100, 176
Hemingway, Ernest, 15, 16
Heptameron, 98
Hind, C. Lewis, 165
Herford, English critic, 121, 122
Howells, William Dean, 85, 89
Hugo, Victor, 15, 26, 82, 83
Human Comedy (Balzac), *see Comédie Humaine*
Humanitarianism, 17, 113
"Humble Remonstrance, A" (Stevenson), 159, 160
Huxley, Aldous, 15
Huxley, Thomas, 12, 19, 20
Huysmans, J. K., mystico-Realism, 15; "science," 25; translations, 32, 111; discussed in *Sat. Rev.*, 111-12; final acceptance, 113; mysticism, 172

I.

Ibsen, Henrik, Naturalism, 14; censored, 22; and "science," 25; trans. 32, 115; Balzac, 60; Victorians, 79, 115; controversies, 113, 118, 121, 125, 127-28, 131, 136; in England, 115-30; Archer Gosse and Shaw, 116; *Fortnightly* intro. by Gosse, 116-17; English drama, 119; Tolstoi, Howells, Maupassant, 120; Symons, 120; Wedmore, Clement Scott, 121; defense by Archer, Wedmore, journals, 121-22; at Haymarket Theatre, 122; called socialist by G. B. S., 122; Ellis' and other reviews, 123-28, 175-76, 182; in *Degeneration*, 127-28; established in England, 129; Joyce tribute, 130-31; attacked, 147
Ibsenism, Quintessence of (Shaw), 125
Idealism, 16, 109, 152
Illusions Perdues (Balzac), 169
"Impersonalism," 171
Impressionism, 106, 127, 164
Influence du naturalisme français sur les romanciers anglais 1885 à 1900, L' (Frierson), 33
Influence of French Naturalism on English Fiction (Margery Oliver), 32
Irish Quarterly Review, 53

J.

Jack (Daudet), 87
James, Henry, and Realism, 15; influences, 33; on French writers, 49, 55; on Balzac, 55-56; *vs.* Naturalism, 80; on French Naturalists and Turgenev, 85, 133; *Madame Bovary* as high point of Realism and morality, 85-86; holds Daudet above Zola, the Goncourts and Flaubert, 88, 89; translates *Port Tarascon* (Daudet), 89; finds sex exaggerated in Maupassant, 97; on Dostoevski's *Crime and Punishment*, 140; Stevenson's "Humble Remonstrance" answer to James' "Art of Fiction," 159-60; letter to R. L. S., 161; drift from Naturalists in *Atlantic Monthly* article, 161-62
Jane Eyre, 9, 44
Journal de Goncourts, 101-102, 165
Journal of the Plague Year (Defoe), 35
Joyce, James, 15, 129-30
Jude the Obscure (Hardy), 9
Jung, C. J., 182

K.

Kingsley, Charles, 9, 12, 40
Kock, Paul de, 51
Korolenko, 139
Kreutzer Sonata (Tolstoi), 124

L.

Là Bas (Huysmans), 112
Lamartine (*Les premières méditations*), 26
Lang, Andrew, *vs.* Naturalism, 80; explains English neglect of Zola, 84; objects to Swinburne attack on *L'Assommoir*, 84; considers *Nana* vicious, 84; compared with Swinburne and Pre-Raphaelites, 149; denounces Zola and Naturalism, 149-50
Lawrence, D. H., 15, 22
Lecky (historian), 43
Lee, Vernon, 106-107
Lermontov, 90, 139
Lettre sur les aveugles (Diderot), 25
Lewes, George, 43
Lewis, Sinclair, 16, 22
Lilly, W. S., 57, 84
Little Eyolf (Ibsen), 127, 128
"Locksley Hall Sixty Years After" (Tennyson), 92
Lomas, John, 142
London Illustrated News, 121
London Quarterly, 126, 136, 142
London Society, 88
Longfellow, H. W., 81
Look Around Literature (Buchanan), 74
Lord, Harriet Frances, 118
Lowell, Amy, 11
Lowey, H. D., 33
Lyell, Sir Charles, 12

M.

Macmillan's (magazine), 87, 102, 142
Madame Bovary (Flaubert), 32, 72, 135, 163
Maeterlinck, 15
Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon, The (W. T. Stead), 93
"Maitland, Thomas," 67-69
Manet, 115
Marthe: Histoire d'une Fille (Huysmans), 111
Marx-Aveling, Mrs. Eleanor, 118
Master Builder, The (Ibsen), 126
Materialism, 144 (*See also*, Naturalism, Realism)
Maugham, W. Somerset, 33
Maupassant, Guy de, Naturalism, 14, 15; influence of "science," 25; translations, 32, 90; meets Henry James through Turgenev, 85; attacked in *Blackwood's*, 97; held too carnal by James, 97; publisher fined, 98; critical reviews, 103-104; partial acceptance, 114; with Realist-Naturalists, 115; and Meredith, 155; "objectivism," 171
Médecin de Campagne, Le (Balzac), 51
Mendès, Catulle, 155
Meredith, George, *Richard Feverel* held "indelicate," 9; among great Victorians, 12; his *Modern Love* defended by Swinburne, 65; M.'s hostility to Naturalism, 80-81, 155; attacked by "Vigilants," 147; influence of "science," 154; on Maupassant, 155; "Comic Spirit," 155-56; *vs.* Realism, 157-59; synthesis of Romanticism and Realism, 162
"Mermaid Series" (Old English Dramatists), 90
Mill, John Stuart, 12, 21
Millais, John, 99
Mirecourt, 53
Modern Love (Meredith), 65
Modern Novelists of Russia (Charles Turner), 137
Moll Flanders (Defoe), 36
Monthly Review, 21, 45-46, 51

Moore, George, Realism, Impressionism, Romanticism, Sentimentalism, 15, 21; Naturalist and French influences, 32-33; hails Balzac, 59; "Art for Art's Sake," 73; *vs.* Naturalism, 80; banned by circulating libraries, 82; arranges for publication of Zola's *La Terre* in England, 92; twits W. T. Stead, reformer, on ban of his *The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon,* 93; *vs.* censorship by "Vigilants," 98; defends Naturalism and Zola, but turns to "Art for Art's Sake" and Impressionism, 106; attacks Mudie's Circulating Library, 106; defends Ibsen, 125; on Turgenev, 133; attacked by "Vigilants," 147; critical estimate of Moore, 162-65; creates distinction of "thought-mind" (Turgenev) and "fact-mind" (Zola), 163; Aestheticism and Naturalism, 163-65
Morality, influence of Darwinism, 21; disregarded by Realists, Naturalists, 27-28; misunderstood, 34; influence of novels on, 46; absence of, in Balzac, 49-61; Baudelaire spreads paganism, 63; deprecated by Saintsbury as an essential to literature, art, 71; hostility to Naturalism, 81; indifference of Balzac to, held fault by H. James, 86; Daudet least offensive to, 86; threat of materialistic sciences, 91-92; morality deepened, 180; in art, 183
Morley, Henry, 99
Morley, John, 93
Morris, William, 12, 69, 73, 167
Morrison, Arthur, 33
Mother and Daughter (Balzac), 49
Mudie's Circulating Library, 9, 82, 106
Musset, Alfred de, 55
Mysticism, 15, 172 (*See also* Pre-Raphaelites; Religion)

N.

Nana (Zola), 90, 91
National Vigilance Association, *See* "Vigilants"
Naturalism, as "scientific" Realism, 15-17; effects on Victorian life and letters, 18, 47, 74; N. *vs.* Continental Realism, 24; as an expression of faith, 25; as outgrowth of French Realism, 27-28; colored by Positivism (Comte), 43; challenges Victorian conscience, 47; N. in Balzac, 57-58; hostility from writers, clergy and press, 80-81; Zola attacked, 84-85; Daudet accepted, *L'Evangeliste* concerned with religious fanaticism, 86, 89; N. in England, 79-114 *passim;* "Old" and "New" N., 90; controversies abate, 100, 113; defended by G. Moore, 106; attacked in lit. revs., 113, 122-23, 128; progress from Darwin to Freud, 113; N. not English Realism, 119; N. and Turgenev, 132-33; Zola, 133; Tolstoi, 134; French N. materialistic, 144; changes in N., 148-49; Henry James on N., 161; G. Moore, 162; influences traced, on Moore and Bennett, 167; attack by Wilde, 168; Aesthetes and Symons' reply to N., 171
Natural Law in the Physical World (Drummond), 20
Neoclassicism, 26
Newcastle Chronicle, 95
Newman, Cardinal, 12
Newman, Ernest, 101
New Spirit, The (Ellis), appraises Ibsen, 123; on Tolstoi, 137; Dostoev-

ski, 143; questions Naturalism, 179; survey of Victorianism, 175-184 *passim*
Nicolson, Harold, 12
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 115
"Nincompoopiana," 73 (*See also* Aestheticism; "Art for Art's Sake")
Nineteenth Century (magazine), 46-47, 91-92, 133, 168
Norah (version of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*), 118
Nordau, Dr. Max, 127-28
Nott's Daily Express, 94
Novelty Theatre, 118, 119

O.

"Objectivism," 171
Oblat, L' (Huysmans), 112
Obscenity, Massachusetts Act on, 22-23
Observer, 121
Oliver, Margery, 32
Oliver Twist, 10, 40
One of Our Conquerors (Meredith), 155
Opera Comique, 118
Ordeal of Richard Feverel, The (Meredith), 9
Origin of Species (Darwin), 19, 43
O'Shaughnessy, 17

P.

Pageant (magazine), 21
Pall Mall Gazette, 93, 94, 169
Pamela (Richardson), 36
Parade (magazine), 21, 113
Parker, Louis, 118
Parnassians, 28, 74
Pater, Walter, 102, 164, 167
Patience (Gilbert), 74
Paul, Elliot, 25
Pecksniffs, 11, 22
Pendennis (Thackeray), 41-42
Physiology of Marriage (Balzac), 52
Piccadilly (magazine), 95
Pictorial Times, 81
Picture of Dorian Gray (Wilde), 168
Pigott, Smyth, 128
Pillars of Society (Ibsen), 118
Pinero, Arthur, 99
Planche, 53
Poe's Tales, 81
Poems (D. G. Rossetti), 66
Poems and Ballads (Swinburne), 66
Pornography, 93-94 (*See also* "Vigilants"; Censorship; "Mrs. Grundy")
Port Tarascon (Daudet), 89
Positivism, 17, 144
Premières meditations, Les (Lamartine), 26
Pre-Raphaelites, and Baudelaire, 63; attacked by Buchanan ("Caliban"), 66; defended by Saintsbury, 70; tolerated, 79; listed in Nordau's *Degeneration*, 127; and Oscar Wilde, 167
Princess's Theatre (London), 84-119
Pushkin, 136, 139

Q.

Quarterly Review, attack on Realists, 21; hostility to French people, 46; on French writers, 50; attack on Swinburne, 66; purity drive, 69; die-hard defense of Victorianism, 113; attack on Ibsen, Balzac, Whitman, Thackeray, Dostoevski and Zola, 124
Quarto (magazine), 21
Quintessence of Ibsenism (Shaw), 125

R.

Radical Leader, 95
"Rationalism, Influence of," George Eliot, 43

Ray, Catherine, 118
Reade, Charles, 84
Realism, controversies on, 13, 18, 21-22, 24, 80, 84, 96-97, 109, 120, 136, 142, 152, 181-83; in modern novelists, 15, 44; and Naturalism, 15, 24, 27, 115, 119; definitions and origins, 14-18; R. *vs.* Victorian standards, 18; pulpit and press attacks on, 21-22; Continental R. *vs.* Naturalism, 24; faith in R., 25; displaces Romanticism, 26-27; French R., 31-33; R. in Defoe, G. Eliot, 44; source of Naturalism, 27; German R., 52; in Balzac, 57, 60, 115; praised by Gosse, 80; objections to, in Zola, 84; *Bovary* "peak" of, 85-86; Henry James, 86; Barnett Smith denunciation of, 96-97; Goncourts' responsibility for, 102; *vs.* Idealism in Zola, 109; R. and French Naturalists, 115; English tradition and Ibsen impetus, 119, 120; Russian R. unlike French, 131, 144; Tolstoi, 134; criticism of, 136; R. L. S. *vs.* R., 142; English switch to Aestheticism, 143; and Early Victorians, 150; R. and Art, 152; Meredith, R. L. S., 156-59; psychological R. and H. James, 161; Symons, 171; R. *vs.* Romanticism, 181-83
"Realism, Note on" (R. L. S.), 158
Recollections of the Dead House (Dostoevski), 143
Regeneration (answer to Nordau's *Degeneration*), 128
Religion, study of, by "science," 17; *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, 20; R. and Darwinism, 20, 144; in Tolstoi's work, 138; Dostoevski, 140-43; in Russians in general, 143-44; and Positivism, 144; Wilde on R., 170; R. and *New Spirit*, 176-77 (*See also* Mysticism)
Republique des Lettres, La (magazine), 82
"Reticence in Literature" (debate), 179-81
Reve d'Alembert, La (Diderot), 25
Richardson, Dorothy, 15
Richardson, Samuel, 36, 52, 110
Robinson Crusoe (Defoe), 35
Roman Experimental, Le, 49, 164-65 (*See also* Experimental Novel)
"Romance, A Gossip on" (R. L. S.), 157
Romanticism, 14-16, 26, 181-83 (*See also* Idealism; Realism; Naturalism)
Rome (Zola), 162
Rose Leaf (magazine), 21, 113
Rosmersholm (Ibsen), 118, 122-24
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, with top Victorians, 12; *vs.* Victorianism, 21; attacked with other Pre-Raphaelites, 63; *Poems* eulogized by Swinburne, 66-67; attacked in "Fleshly School of Poets" signed "Thomas Maitland" discovered to be Robert Buchanan ("Caliban"), 67-68; R. defends self in article, "Stealthy School of Criticism," 68-69; fatal results of attack, 68-69, 75; R. and Aestheticism, 73; works edited by William Michael Rossetti, 74; vindication of; apology by Buchanan and inscribing of his *God and Man* to R., 74; attack by "Vigilants," 147 (*See also* Pre-Raphaelites)
Rossetti, William Michael, 66, 74
Rougon-Macquart, Les, 85, 149, 162
Rousseau, 50
Ruskin, John, 12, 21, 167
Russia, Modern Novelists of (Charles Turner), 137
Russians in England, 131-45 *passim*

S.

St. James Gazette, 170
St. Paul's Magazine, 21, 54
Sainte-Beuve, 135
Sainte Lydwine de Schiedam (Huysmans), 112
Saintsbury, George, on Realism, 15; *vs.* Victorianism, 21; editor of Balzac, 32, 60; French writers, 49, 86, 95; Baudelaire and Pre-Raphaelites, 70; defends Baudelaire against French regime, 70; "Art for Art's Sake," 71-72; on Zola, 95, 100; Maupassant, 103-104; Russians, 135
Salammbô (Flaubert), 32
Sand, George, 51, 55, 80
Sandeau, 86
Sapho (Daudet), 89, 91, 94, 95
Saturday Review, Rossetti, 74; Daudet, 87, 88, 89, 102; *vs.* Zola's *Nana,* 91; Huysmans, 111-12; *vs.* Ibsen and Naturalists, 122-23; Shaw eulogizes Ibsen, 122; *S. R.* attacks Ibsen plays, 124, 127; abuses Shaw on Ibsenism, 125, 128; on Tolstoi, 133-34; *S. R.* called moribund by Buchanan, 147
Savoy (magazine), 21, 102, 108, 113
Scenes from Parisian Life (Balzac), 49
Schopenhauer, 115, 148
Schreiner, Olive, 99
Science, Realism dominated by, 17; effect on poetry and religion, 19-21; influence on letters, 26-29; effect on Daudet, 89; Goncourts, 102; Symonds, 150-51; Meredith, 154; Zola ("Scientism"), 171; *The New Spirit,* 175-7 (*See also* Darwinism, Naturalism, Realism, Religion)
Scotland Review, 69
Scotsman (magazine), 95
Scott, Clement, 121
Scott, Walter, 15, 38-39, 101, 150
Scottish Leader, 95
Scottish Review, 89
Sex, 9, 54, 93, 100, 110 (*See also* Censorship; Realism; Naturalism)
Sharp, R. Farquharson, 120
Sharp, William, 99, 100
Shaw, G. B., anti-Victorian, 21; defends Ibsen, 115; calls Ibsen socialist before Fabians, 122; mocked for eulogizing Ibsen by *Sat. Rev.;* writes *Quintessence of Ibsenism,* 125; in American magazine *Liberty* refutes Ibsen attack by Nordau (*Degeneration*), 128; on Ibsen in *Sat. Rev.,* 128-29
Shelley, 28, 67
Sidney, Sir Philip, 35
"Silly Novels by Lady Novelists" (George Eliot article), 43
Sinclair, Upton, 22
Smith, Barnett, 96-97
Smith, Gregory, 35
Smith, Samuel, 94
Smiths' Circulating Library, 82
Smollett, Tobias, 37, 98
Society for Suppression of Vice, 69-70, 74
Soeurs Vatard, Les (Huysmans), 111
Specimens of the Russian Poets (Sir John Bowring), 132
Spectator, attacks Realists, 21; Balzac held decadent, 57-58; *Fleur du Mal,* 64; Meredith's *Modern Love,* 65; satire: "Session of the Poets" on Swinburne signed "Caliban," by Buchanan, 66; Daudet, 89; Zola, 89, 100, 101, 102, 105; Dickens and Daudet, 96; Goncourts and Balzac with Zola, 101-102; Maupassant, 103, 104; helps send Gosse to Scandinavia on literary surveys, 116; Ibsen, 121, 126-27; Russians, 131;

Tolstoi, 133-34, 144; Dostoevski, 140; on Ellis' *New Spirit*, 178
Spencer, Herbert, 12, 20, 147
Sporting and Dramatic News, 125
Stage (magazine), 125
Standard (periodical), 95
Stead, W. T., 92-93
"Stealthy School of Criticism, The" (D. G. Rossetti), 68, 72, 77
Steinbeck, John, 15, 16
Stephen, Leslie, 55, 99
Sterne, Laurence, 98
Stevenson, Robert Louis, as eminent Victorian, 12; *vs.* Naturalism, 80; extols Dostoevski in letter to Symonds, 141-42; *vs.* Realism, 142; calls Zola erotic, 148; defines Romanticism; articles "A Gossip on Romance," and "Note on Realism," 157-58; correspondence with Henry James on "Humble Remonstrance," 159; R. L. S. on Art, 159-60; letter from James, 161; admiration by George Moore, 164
Stigand, William, 69
Strachey, John St. Loe, 99
Strachey, Lytton, 10
Street, G. S., 33
Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe (Gosse), 117
Sue, Eugene, 51, 53
Sunday Times (London), 121
Swift, 98
Swinburne, Algernon Charles, champions revolt of anti-Victorians, 12, 21; sponsors Baudelaire, 49, 63-65; on Balzac, 56; enthusiasm for B. abates, 65; elegy to B. "Ave Atque Vale," in book on Blake, 65; defends Meredith's *Modern Love*, 65; S.'s *Poems and Ballads* satirized by "Caliban," 66; eulogizes Rossetti's *Poems*, 66; called "naughty" in "Fleshly School of Poets" article, 68; defends Rossetti, 69; sued and loses, for libelous letter on Buchanan in *Examiner* signed "Thomas Maitland," 69; denounced in *Christian World*, 70; "Art for Art's Sake," 73; Waugh predicts S. doomed to oblivion, 76-77; S. attacks Zola, 82, 83; S. accepted by Victorians, 129; S. and "Vigilants," 147; identified with Aesthetes, 167
Symbolism, 171-72
Symonds, John Addington, revolt against Victorianism, 21; *vs.* Naturalism, 80; petitions Vizetelly release, 99; endorses Darwinism to blend Christianity and science, 150-54; seeks synthesis of Romanticism and Realism, 162
Symons, Arthur, *vs.* Victorianism, 21; tribute to Balzac, 60; Aestheticism, 73; proclaims Baudelaire, 77; hostility to Naturalism, 80; petitions Vizetelly release, 99; discovers Goncourt brothers' new literary style, 102; praises Daudet, attacks Zola, 102; summarizes Aestheticism's objections to Zola, 106-107; edits *Savoy*, 108; on Huysmans, 112; hails Ibsen, 120, 125; S. and Realistic and Naturistic movements, 171-73; and Symbolism, Mysticism and Huysmans, 172
"Synthetic Impressionism," 164-65

T.

Tablet, The (Catholic magazine), 94
Taine, Hippolyte, 42, 45, 169
Tale of Two Cities, A, 9, 148
Temple Bar (magazine), 21, 56, 58, 69, 104
Temptation of St. Anthony (Flaubert), 72

Tennyson, Lord Alfred, 9, 12, 92
Terre, La (Zola), 92-93, 97, 124
Thackeray, attacked by Victorians, 9, 10, 12; Realism, 14, 21; Balzac and, 41-42, 56, 59; morality in, 55; *London Quarterly,* 136; called "no gentleman," 148; and Realists, 150
Theatre Magazine, 119, 121, 124
Thérèse Raquin (Zola), 84
Time (English magazine), 96
Tinsley's Magazine, 66
Tolstoi, Naturalism, 14; influence of "science," 25; translated, 32, 90; compared with Zola, 111; in Nordau's *Degeneration,* 127; approved by Victorians, 131-33; *Contemporary Rev.,* 133-39; French Naturalism and T., 134; Realism and T., 134, 139; Arnold on T., 135-36; *London Quarterly,* 136; compared with Goethe, 136-37; other Russians, 137; Gosse on, 138; T. and Zola, 138; Realism, 138; *Westminster Rev.,* 139; *Spectator,* 144; Bennett, 166; Wilde, 169-70; Ellis on T. in *New Spirit,* 175-76
Tom Jones (Fielding), 38, 42
Traill, H. D., 99
Tree, Beerbohm, 126
Trollope, defense of purity, 10; attacks Naturalists in his *St. Paul's Magazine,* 21; T. preceded Naturalism, 41; morality, 46, 47, 54
Truth (magazine), 121, 125
Turgenev, influence of "science," 25; morality, 55; under French influence, friend of H. James, 85; *Spectator,* 131; arouses English interest, 132; identified with French Naturalists, 132-33; Henry James, 133; George Moore, 133; T. and Tolstoi, 134; *London Quarterly,* 136; Ellis, 137; *Westminster Gazette,* 139; T.'s "thought-mind" (Moore), 163; Bennett, 166; Wilde, 169
Turner, Charles, 137

U.

Uncle Tom's Cabin (H. B. Stowe), 81
United States Customs Bureau (& Post Office), 23
Universal Review, 96
Utilitarianism, 17

V.

Vanity Fair (Thackeray), 9
Verité (Zola), 162
Vestris, Madame, 119
"Vice, Society for the Suppression of," 69-70, 74
Victoria (Queen), 9-11, 125, 129, 175
Victorianism, Early V., 9-29 *passim;* as paradox of productiveness, not clearly defined, 10; anti-Victorians, 11; and patronizing attitudes, 12; as dynamic force, 12-13; clash with Realism, 21-22; revolt against V., 21-29; Realism as reaction to Romanticism, 24; hostility to foreign Realists, 28; French and F. drama attacked as immoral, 45-46; conflict with Naturalism awakes conscience, 47; reaction to Balzac, 57-59; paganism in English letters traced to Baudelaire, 63, 73; changes in, 79; threats to by Baudelaire and Ibsenism, 79; Daudet welcomed, but V. upset by *Le Nabab,* 86, 87; Flaubert and Bourget accepted, 101; Ellis defines V. attitude re: Zola, 108; V. called *le cant Britannique,* 110; Huysmans' Naturalistic novels rejected; religious-Mystical accepted; Naturalist controversy ends, 111-

13; Ibsen reviled in press, 125; interest in Russians provoked by Turgenev, 132; Russians preferred to French Realists on Christian morals, 144; Late Victorianism, revolution in, and vindication, 175-184 *passim* (*See also* Bowdlerization)
Vigilance Committee, Illinois, 23
"Vigilants" (Nat'l Vigilance Ass'n), attack Zola and Vizetelly on French "pornography," 93-94, 118; again, for Flaubert, Bourget, Maupassant, 98; ineffectual by time of Diamond Jubilee, 114; Buchanan as ally, 147; Meredith likened to "Vigilants," 155
Vizetelly, Ernest (son of Victor), 92-94
Vizetelly, Victor (publisher), in controversy on obscene literature, 49, 81-83; introduced Poe, Longfellow, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, French writers, 81-82; Zola, 82-83; French and Russians, 90; in court for *La Terre*, open letter comparing Zola with Elizabethans and pre-Victorians fined, jailed, writers' petition for release, 91-99, 136, 181

W.

Wagner, Richard, 115, 126, 127, 147
War and Peace (Tolstoi), 133-34
Waring, Herbert, 127
Watch and Ward Society (Boston), 22
Waugh, Arthur, deplores lack of reticence in writing; on Baudelaire and Swinburne, 75-77; called last bastion of Victorianism, 79; W. and Crackenthorpe, 179-81
Wedmore, Frederick, 101, 121
Weekly Dispatch, 95
Well of Loneliness, The (Hall), 22
Western Daily Express, 95
Westminster Gazette, 105
Westminster Review, freethinkers' journal, 21; George Eliot article "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists," 43; Balzac defended, 50-53; deems Flaubert superior to Walter Scott, 101; praises Daudet for attention to morals, 102; attacks Zola for sensualism, 105; *Hedda Gabler* held not up to Ibsen's standard, 124; on Russians, 132, 139, 145; eulogy of Tolstoi, 136
What Price Glory, 23
Whistler, J. McN., 73
Whitehall Review, 95
Whiteing, Richard, 33
Whitman, Walt, cited by Zola, 109; Ibsen classed with W., 123; admirers of, attacked in *Quarterly Rev.*, 124; in *Athenaeum*, 126; as idealist, 153; championed in Ellis' *New Spirit*, 176
Wild Duck (Ibsen), 127
Wilde, Oscar, and tradition, 21; and Aestheticism, 73-74, 167-71; satirized in "Patience," 74; anti-Naturalism, 80, 168; trial, 98; as high priest of Aestheticism, 167-68; "Decay of Lying," *Picture of Dorian Gray*, as Preface in *Fortnightly*, 168; attacks on Zola, 168-69; admiration for Russians, 169-70; religion, 170-71
Wilson, H. Schütz, 84, 140
Winslow, Mrs., 122
Woolf, Virginia, 15
World (magazine), 178
Wylie, Rev. W. H., 70

Y.

Yellow Book (magazine), Crackenthorpe on Realism and Idealism, 16; revolt on tradition, 21; Beerbohm

on Aestheticism, 73; Waugh on reticence, 75-76; in Ibsen controversies, 113

Z.

Zola, Emile, attacked by church and journals, 9, 27-28, 49, 79, 81-85, 88-89, 92-96, 98-100, 104-105, 113, 115, 118, 131, 136, 147-48, 155, 169; Naturalism, 14-15, 25-26, 74, 79, 133, 161; Z. as Romantic, 15, 163; Diderot, 26; translations 32; controversies, 49, 74, 81, 115, 131, 147; Z. and Balzac, 58, 60; admired by Buchanan, 75, 147; Z. and Henry James, 88-89, 161; Swinburne attack, 82; *Republique des Lettres* ban, 83; *Nana,* 90; *L'Assommoir,* 90, 169; *La Terre,* 92-93, 97, 124; Tennyson criticism, 9, 92; *Legion of Honor,* 97; Saintsbury attack, 95-96, 100; influence on Goncourts, 102; welcomed on English visit, 105; "death-in-life" art, 105; influence on G. Moore, 106, 163; defended by Vernon Lee, 106-107; Ellis' essay in *Savoy,* 108-111; Z. *vs.* Victorians, 115; Z. and "Vigilants," 118; Realism, 119; accepted, 129; Z. and Tolstoi, 134; Stevenson attack, 148; *La bête humaine,* 153, 161; Meredith opinion, 155; *Rome, Fecondité, Verité,* 162; "fact-mind," 163; "Experimental Novel," 164-65; "Scientism," 171; and "New Spirit," 175