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‘Another race hath been’: Vaughan, Milton, and the ‘Immortality Ode’

By Ian M. Emberson

WHEN MILTON HAD COMPLETED *PARADISE LOST*, he apparently lent the manuscript to his young friend, the Quaker, Thomas Ellwood. The latter read it through, and on returning it remarked: ‘thou hast said much here of *Paradise Lost*, but what hast thou to say of *Paradise Found*?’[1] Ellwood’s observation was significant – especially as it led to the composition of *Paradise Regained*. However, it was also slightly unjust. *Paradise Lost* isn’t a tragedy in the usual sense, since, before their final expulsion from Eden, Adam and Eve listen to the long narration of the Archangel Michael (Book Eleven), which definitely ends in hope. His message isn’t altogether a matter of *Paradise Found*, at least not to begin with, since once they are expelled from the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve will no longer be able to feel ‘the radiance which was once so bright…’. The theme of the latter part of Book Eleven could be summed up in common parlance as ‘making the most of the world as it actually is’. Only in Book Twelve do we get a foretaste of the true theme of *Paradise Found* – or rather of *Paradise Regained*, but the idea of focusing on Christ’s temptation in the wilderness seems to have been a later development.

The brief quote above regarding ‘the radiance which was once so bright…’ is, of course, from that other great poem about a lost paradise – Wordsworth’s ‘Ode’: *Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood* – popularly known as the ‘Immortality Ode’. In this essay I want to place it alongside the ending of *Paradise Lost* and Henry Vaughan’s short poem, *The Retreat*.[2] The aim isn’t primarily to show how Wordsworth echoes his predecessors, in both theme and symbolism, but rather to suggest that consideration of these influences can throw light on the full meaning of the ‘Ode’ itself. Along with the ‘Ode’, I want to consider two pieces of closely related writing: the note on the work of Wordsworth later dictated to Isabella Fenwick; and the very brief poem, ‘My heart leaps up when I behold’.

Let us first take Milton’s *Paradise Lost* – the main emphasis being on the latter part of Book Eleven. This deals with the story after the temptation and fall – when Adam and Eve are already aware that they will be driven out of the Garden of Eden. Amongst the other losses which Adam laments are the flowers:

> …O flowers
> That never will on other climate grow,
> My early visitation and my last
> At even, which I bred up with tender hand
> From the first opening bud, and gave ye names,
> Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
> Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial font?
> (Book Eleven, lines 273-79)

[1] A. N. Wilson, *The Life of John Milton* (New York: Oxford UP, 1983) 228-29.
[2] Henry Vaughan, *Selected Poems*, ed. Robert B. Shaw (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1983) 26-7.

God then sends the Archangel Michael down to Eden, where he leads Adam up onto a high hill, and sets before him a vision of mankind's future. Adam thereby sees panoramas of sinful licence, with only a few just men standing out as exceptions. Such a person is described thus:

> Of middle age one rising, eminent
> In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
> Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace
> And judgement from above: him old and young
> Exploded,[3] and had seized with violent hands,
> Had not a cloud descending snatched him thence,
> Unseen amid the throng…
>
> (Book Eleven, lines 665-71)

This is generally taken to be a reference to Enoch, the sixth direct descendant of Adam. The notion of the cloud snatching him up to heaven seems to have come from the pseudepigraphical Etiopic *Book of Enoch.*[4] But the story is obviously very similar to the tale of Elijah being carried to the celestial regions by '…a chariot of fire and horses of fire…'[5] – and the traditions merge in line 706: 'Rapt in a balmy cloud, with winged steeds'.

The climax of Book Eleven comes with Noah and the flood. I think the modern reader finds it difficult to take the story of Noah seriously. This is partly because of its association with that once-loved childhood toy – 'The Noah's Ark'; and also due to the rather absurd tale of Noah getting drunk, and lying in his tent naked – which immediately follows the description of the flood. Milton, however, treats Noah very seriously, introducing him as '…the only son of light / In a dark age…' (Book Eleven, lines 808-9) – words which might almost apply to Christ himself. And, in fact, Noah is something of the precursor of Christ – the only just man who saves the world from destruction. The Archangel Michael narrates to Adam the familiar story of the flood, and its eventual subsidence, and ends with that wonderful symbol of hope – the rainbow, which the blind poet seems to have seen as 'tripled-coloured' – rather than counting the seven colours usually attributed to it:

> [God] makes a covenant never to destroy
> The earth again by flood, nor let the sea
> Surpass his bounds, nor rain to drown the world
> With man therein or beast, but when he brings
> Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
> His triple-coloured bow, whereon to look
> And call to mind his covenant; day and night,
> Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,
> Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things new,
> Both heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell.
>
> (Book Eleven, lines 892-901)

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[3] The curious use of the word 'exploded' is explained by its Latin meaning, i.e. – hissing an actor off the stage.

[4] *John Milton*: *Complete English Poems, Of Education, Areopagitica,* ed. Gordon Campbell (London: Dent, 1990) – footnote on page 416. All quotations from Milton are taken from this edition.

[5] *Authorised Version of the Bible*, Second Book of Kings, Chapter Two, Verses eleven and twelve.

From Milton's 'triple-coloured bow' it is a very short step to one of Wordsworth's most famous minor poems – a poem with close links with the 'Immortality Ode':

> My heart leaps up when I behold
> A rainbow in the sky:
> So was it when my life began;
> So is it now I am a Man;
> So be it when I shall grow old,
> Or let me die!
> The Child is Father of the Man;
> And I could wish my days to be
> Bound each to each by natural piety.[6]

The thought is purely Wordsworthian, yet, short as it is, the poem has two distinct links with Milton. The first is the image of the rainbow – as already noted. The second is that memorable line: 'The Child is Father of the Man'. This is clearly an echo from *Paradise Regained* – '…the childhood shows the man, / As morning shows the day…' (Book Four: 220-21). The irony is that Wordsworth puts the sentiment into his own persona; whilst Milton places the words in the mouth of Satan!

The close biographical link between the short poem above and the 'Immortality Ode' is clearly from Dorothy Wordsworth's journal. At the end of her entry for Friday, March 26, 1802, she notes: 'While I was getting into bed he wrote the *Rainbow*'. And the entry for the very next day begins: 'A divine morning. At breakfast William wrote part of an ode'.[7]

I think that, even without this clue, we might guess at the strong affinity – in manner as well as matter. Despite the vast difference in length, both poems clearly divide into two halves. With *My heart leaps up when I behold*, the first six lines give us the strong visual impact, and the poet's immediate reaction; whilst the last three present a more general philosophic viewpoint. The corresponding break in the 'Ode' comes at the end of the fourth stanza. The first part is full of vivid images, some of which recur later – like themes in a symphonic movement. The whole of this exposition builds up to a question: 'Where is it now, the glory and the dream?' Wordsworth at this stage didn't seem to have known the answer, and the poem lay fallow for about two years.

If Wordsworth looked back to *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* in the rainbow poem and the 'Immortality Ode', he certainly didn't imitate them as regards outward form. Instead he seems to have been influenced in this respect by such works as Abraham Cowley's *The Muse*,[8] and Henry Vaughan's *Regeneration*.[9] The verse tradition here is that each line ends with a rhyme, but the line lengths are greatly varied, and, in Cowley's case, there is also considerable variation in the rhyme-patterns themselves. Wordsworth goes beyond even this, in that the stanza lengths are

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[6] Quotations from Wordsworth's poetry are taken from: *Selections from William Wordsworth*, ed. Sir Ifor Evans (London; Toronto; Sydney; Wellington: Methuen, 1966) and *The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, ed. John Morley (London: Macmillan, 1889). This latter includes the notes dictated to Isabella Fenwick.

[7] *Home at Grasmere: extracts from the journal of Dorothy Wordsworth*, ed. Colette Clark (London: Penguin Books, 1983) 188-90.

[8] Abraham Cowley, *A Selection of Poems*, eds. G. D. H. Cole and M. I. Cole (London: Noel Douglas, 1927) 31.

[9] See n2, p. 22.

also irregular. It was the first time he had attempted this form, but none-the-less he uses it with consummate skill. Another of Vaughan's poems, although more conventional in outward form, is closer to the 'Ode' in spirit – namely *The Retreat*.[10] It begins with lines which hint at Wordsworth's famous opening – in sentiment – but not in symbolism:

> Happy those early days! when I
> Shin'd in my Angell-infancy.

The rest of the poem has a similar philosophic standpoint to that suggested in the second part of the 'Ode' – although perhaps nearer to the usual Christian tradition. Two lines in particular foreshadow in their symbolism one of the most enigmatic lines in Wordsworth. The two lines from Vaughan are: 'Appointed for my second race' and 'That shady City of Palme trees'. We will return to this theme later.[11]

It seems uncertain exactly how much of the opening of the 'Immortality Ode' Wordsworth wrote at breakfast time on March 27, 1802 – it must have been a prolonged breakfast! He was obviously in a pretty creative mood, yet some think that the fourth stanza, ending with the question quoted earlier, was written later. However, that question is already inherent in the first three stanzas, where we learn 'That there hath passed away a glory from the earth'.

The following day William and Dorothy visited Coleridge at Keswick, where William read the start of the 'Ode' to his fellow-poet. Coleridge reacted to this with the *Ode to Dejection* – originally in the form of a letter to Sara Hutchinson. To compare the two odes in detail would take us too far from the subject of this essay – though no doubt it would make a fascinating study. Suffice to say that the poems echo each other in their symbolism, and yet provide the clearest proof of the difference between Wordsworth and Coleridge – both as men and writers. When it came to composing that second part, which didn't happen until 1804, Wordsworth's thought was linked far more closely with Vaughan and Milton, than with anything Coleridge had to offer. It begins with that wonderful line: 'Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting…'. This is like a trumpet introducing a new theme in an orchestral movement. The stanza goes on to describe how in childhood we can easily recapture our sense of this life before birth, since: 'Heaven lies about us in our infancy'. In boyhood and youth, however, other concerns impinge on our minds, and the initial vision becomes fainter, until eventually: '… the Man perceives it die away / And fade into the light of common day'.

Wordsworth was much criticised by his more orthodox friends for introducing this concept of a life before birth, and urged to change the wording. However, he resisted these pressures, and later defended himself in the note he dictated to Isabella Fenwick. Here he states that the idea is:

> …far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of Man presents an analogy in its favour…[12]

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[10] Ibid 26-7.

[11] There is perhaps an even stronger affinity between Wordsworth's 'Ode' and the poems of Thomas Traherne (1637-1674). However, there is no question of any influence, since Traherne's poems remained undiscovered until 1896.

[12] *The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, ed. John Morley, 358.

Later on he explains that:

> I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorising me to make for my purpose the best use I could as a poet.[13]

One wonders, by analogy, whether Milton literally believed in the story of the Garden of Eden. Judging by all the fictional elements he ornamented it with, the reader is inclined to surmise that he didn't. Perhaps, like Wordsworth, he made the best use of it that could 'as a poet'. The thing expressed was more a matter of feeling than of dogma.

Stanza six, seven and eight of the 'Ode' are largely concerned with the compensations granted us for this loss of vision as 'Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own'. Stanza seven lists the various stages of life as we sample these experiences, and is clearly an intended echo of the famous speech of Jacques in Shakespeare's *As you like it*. Stanza eight addresses the original 'little Child' whose '…exterior semblance doth belie / [His] Soul's immensity…'. Stanza nine is more intimate and personal, in that it refers to Wordsworth's own childhood, when he experienced:

> …those obstinate questionings
> Of sense and outward things,
> Fallings from us, vanishings;
> Blank misgivings of a Creature
> Moving about in worlds not realiz'd…

The Isabella Fenwick note explains this more fully:

> Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being … it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that my difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in my own immortal nature. Many times when going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to reality.[14]

As a man Wordsworth would no doubt be aware of similar ideas expressed in the philosophy of George Berkeley. However it is interesting to note that in this case the feeling seems to have been instinctive.

Part of the message of the 'Ode' is resignation – to accept the inevitable. But it is also an expression of gratitude for:

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[13] Ibid.
[14] See n12, pp. 357-58.

Those shadowy recollections,
Which be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day…

Thanks to these:

Though far inland we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Thus the question posed earlier: ‘Where is it now the glory and the dream?’ is answered both by the compensations as: ‘Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own…’ and by memories of that initial vision – still accessible to the mature mind. This leaves the poet free to fill the two final stanzas with a mood of rejoicing, reusing many of the images heard at the beginning: the birds, the lambs, the meadows and the groves. The feeling is like the jubilant finale to a Haydn symphony – albeit with the odd darker chord thrown in.

The ‘Immortality Ode’ is full of resonances and suggestions. Like certain other outstanding poems, it means something different every time one reads it, and to attempt to tie it down to some sort of fixed explanation is a mistake. In general the reader is always aware of the main trend of Wordsworth’s thought, but there are some very puzzling lines, and the most enigmatic occurs in the final stanza: ‘Another race hath been, and other palms are won’. So skilful is the versification, that when the poem is read, one might not question the meaning. It is only on careful reading that the quandary arises. Judging by the punctuation, it is part of the sentence beginning: ‘I love the Brooks which down their channels fret’, yet it seems to have precious little to do with the preceding seven lines, and its connection with the rest of the poem initially appears obscure. Another complication is that in English the word ‘race’ has two meanings – both spelt the same: ‘race’ as in Olympic Games; and ‘race’ as in the human race. I’m not aware that Wordsworth shared his friend Charles Lamb’s love of puns, but both meanings seem hinted at here. The word ‘palms’ suggests some award for victory in a competitive sport. The other meaning makes somewhat better sense grammatically. Both take us back to Vaughan and Milton. The first stanza of Vaughan’s *The Retreat* contains a foretaste of the beginning and the end of Wordsworth’s ‘Ode’:

Happy, those early days! when I
Shin’d in my Angell-infancy.
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy ought
But a white, celestiall thought,
When yet I had not walkt above
A mile or two, from my first love,
And looking back (at that short space,)

Could see a glimpse of his bright-face;[15]

By implication his first race was a pre-existence before birth. Presumably the 'first love' referred to is the 'God who is our home' – though it is curious that 'his' in the final line doesn't have a capital 'H'. In the last of the three stanzas Vaughan longs to '…travel back / And tread again that ancient track…' – in other words to return to that 'white, celestiall thought' mentioned in stanza one.

Other interpretations of the line lead us back to the rainbow poem, and to *Paradise Lost*. As we saw earlier, Book Eleven of Milton's epic ends with the Archangel Michael's narration of the story of mankind up until the flood. Taken literally, the flood marked the end of a race, since the only survivors were Noah and his family, plus the animals in the Ark. Then, after the trauma of the flood, the waters subsided, and God placed the rainbow in the sky as his covenant with mankind. *Paradise Lost* tells us that at this point in the story: 'Adam, erst so sad, / Greatly rejoiced…' Thus to Noah and Adam, and at a later date to Milton and Wordsworth, the rainbow was a great symbol of optimism.

The last four lines of the 'Ode' use a symbol which has already been heard several times before, and which also occurs in the poems which appear to have influenced it – namely, the flower. In stanza four 'The Pansy at my feet' is one of the things which speak of '…something that is gone'. And in stanza ten, in one of those darker moments in the otherwise jubilant finale, we learn that: 'nothing can bring back the hour / Of splendour in the grass, and glory in the flower'.

Henry Vaughan, in the second stanza of *The Retreat*, likewise links the flower image with those early visionary years:

When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an houre,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity…[16]

Whilst Milton, as we have seen, puts into the mouth of Adam those words of lament over the flowers which he and Eve will lose sight of once they are banished from Eden – flowers 'That never will in other climate grow' – it is to be presumed that in exile they will still see flowers, which will remind them of '…that imperial palace whence [they] came'. And Wordsworth ends his 'Immortality Ode' with a similar sentiment:

Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blooms can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

[15] See n2, p.26.
[16] See n2, p.27.

‘A trifle like the current undertaking’: Charles Lamb’s Adaptation of George Chapman’s *The Odyssey*

By Hilary Newman

CHARLES LAMB’S HIGH OPINION OF GEORGE CHAPMAN’S *HOMER*, which was composed of *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, is testified to by Lamb’s correspondence with several of his friends. Lamb wrote to Manning on February 26, 1808, that he had just finished writing his *Dramatic Specimens* and *The Adventures of Ulysses*. He wrote that the latter was

> intended to be an introduction to the reading of Telemachus! it is done out of the Odyssey, not from the Greek. I would not mislead you: nor yet from Pope’s Odyssey, but from an older translation of one Chapman. The ‘Shakespear’s Tales’ suggested the doing of it.[1]

Lamb had been aware of and had admired Chapman’s *Homer* for several years prior to the writing of his own version. For example in a letter to Coleridge of October 23, 1802, Lamb wrote:

> I have just finished Chapman’s Homer. Did you ever read it? – it has most the continuous power of interesting you all along, like a rapid original, if any; and in the uncommon excellence of the more finished parts goes beyond [Edward] Fairfax [‘s translation of 1600] or any of ‘em.[2]

Lamb retained his respect and affection for Chapman’s *Homer* late in his life as a letter to Burton of August 10, 1827, testifies:

> Did you ever read my ‘Adventures of Ulysses’, founded on Chapman’s old translation of it? for children or *men*. Ch. is divine, and my abridgment has not quite emptied him of his divinity.[3]

However, Lamb’s *The Adventures of Ulysses* is far more than a simple paraphrase of Chapman’s *The Odyssey*. Though there are many similarities, there are even more differences. These include narrative order and techniques; the language and form of prose versus poetry; many omissions, the reason for which will be investigated; an unremitting focus on Ulysses and an improving of his character; and the modern versus the classical. Lamb’s correspondence with his publisher, William Godwin, and his Preface to *The Adventures of Ulysses* both also cast some light on Lamb’s aims and achievements in his adaptation from Chapman. This article will examine the areas enumerated above.

[1] *The Letters of Charles and Mary Ann Lamb, Volume II 1801-1809*, ed. Edwin W Marrs Jr. (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1976), letter no. 222, p. 272.
[2] Ibid letter no. 136, p.82.
[3] *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb, Volume VII Letters 1821-1834*, ed. E.V. Lucas (New York: GP Putnam’s Sons; London: Methuen & Co., 1905), letter no.404, p.745.

The ways the narrative of Ulysses's adventures is presented differ greatly in the respective versions of Charles Lamb and George Chapman. Lamb begins at the beginning of the incidents that occurred during Ulysses's return from Troy, after the Greek war and victory against the Trojans, which Chapman had narrated in his earlier translation of *The Iliad*. Lamb then gives a straightforward chronology of events as they befell his hero. Chapman's *The Odyssey* has a much more complex narrative form. The first four books of Chapman's *The Odyssey* are mainly devoted to Ulysses's son Telemachus, apart from the opening of Book I, which presents the gods and goddesses debating the fate of Ulysses, currently the prisoner of the besotted Calypso. Chapman's and Lamb's books and chapters respectively, therefore, by no means coincide. Chapman did not employ the obvious narrative technique used by Lamb, which he based on a straightforward chronological presentation of events. Books IX to XII of Chapman's *The Odyssey* give a long first-person retrospective account by Ulysses of the adventures and trials which had befallen him since he left Troy. His narrative brings the reader right up to Ulysses's current situation as the guest of King Alcinous, his wife Arete and their daughter Nausicaa. Lamb alludes to this complex structure when, in chapter VII of *The Adventures of Ulysses*, he refers to the hero's retrospective narrative:

> Then at the King's request he gave them a brief relation of all the adventures that had befallen him, since he launched forth from Troy.[4]

In Chapman's translation of Homer's *The Odyssey*, the hero's long retrospective account is actually inserted at this point in the narrative. By contrast, Lamb had already narrated this material in the order the events occurred, so he continues with his story according to the straightforward chronological method he has adopted. The basis of the material which formed Lamb's chapters that he took from the various books of Chapman's *The Odyssey* may be compared. The left column will state the chapter number in Lamb's *The Adventures of Ulysses*, while the right column will show which book of Chapman's *The Odyssey*, from which Lamb took his material.

Lamb's Chapters	Chapman's Books
I	IX, X
II	XI
III	XII
IV	I, V, VI
V	VII

VI	VIII
VII	XIII, XIV
VIII	XV
IX	XVI
X	XVII, XIX, XXI, XXII, XXIII

This comparison demonstrates that Charles Lamb, unlike George Chapman, did not begin in the middle, go back to the beginning later and then continue chronologically after the early material presented in the middle section. This is a typical feature of epics, which Milton continued in his *Paradise Lost*. It was the custom of epics to start their action '*in medias res*' or in the middle. Lamb broke with this epic tradition in his own *The Adventures of Ulysses*.

Lamb adheres fairly closely to Chapman's text during the central retrospective narrative, but far less so afterwards, when events are greatly abbreviated. Chapman provides a summary of the events of each of his twenty-four books at the beginning of each book in his brief 'Arguments'. Lamb followed this tradition in his own version of *The Adventures of Ulysses*. Towards the end of Lamb's version, complete books of Chapman's epic are entirely omitted. An example of this can be found in Book XX of Chapman's *The Odyssey*, where 'The Argument' reads:

> Ulysses, in the Wooers' Beds
> Thinking first to kill the Maids;
> That sentence going off, his care
> For other objects doth prepare.[5]

Charles Lamb was very selective in what he took and adapted to his own version of the adventures of the Greek hero. Not only does he omit books XX and XXIV altogether, but from book XV onwards, vast swathes of Chapman's translation are simply disregarded, as irrelevant to the story. Sometimes instead of omitting a whole book, Lamb will take an extract. An example of this is to be found in the middle lines of Chapman's 'The Argument' of Book XVI:

[4] *The Adventures of Ulysses* in *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb Volume III, Books for Children*, ed. E.V. Lucas (New York: GP Putnam's Sons; London: Methuen & Co., 1903), pp.247-8. All future references are to this edition.

[5] *Chapman's Homer, The Odyssey*, edited with introduction, textual notes, commentary and glossary by Alardyce Nicoll with a new Preface by Garry Wills. Bollingen Series XLI (Princeton: Princeton UP and Oxford, 2000), p.377. All future references are to this edition.

> By Pallas's will
> Telemachus is given the skill
> To know his Father. (p.277)

Lamb's *The Adventures of Ulysses* ends with the happy reunion of Ulysses and Penelope and a brief concluding paragraph suggests that the state of the country will soon be improved, now that its king has returned. This marks the end of Book XXIII in Chapman's *The Odyssey*. Chapman's final book is actually number twenty-four, in which we see the reunion of Ulysses and his old father Laertes, and the reconciling of the wooers' friends and relatives to their slaughter at the hands of Ulysses and Telemachus. Further, Ulysses's future sufferings are hinted at in George Chapman's translation, whereas Lamb ends his version in the present happiness of Ulysses and his family.

A crucial difference between George Chapman's *The Odyssey* and Charles Lamb's *The Adventures of Ulysses* is, of course, that the former has a poetic form, whereas Lamb wrote in prose. In another part of the letter quoted earlier in this article, Lamb wrote about the poetic form of Chapman's *Homer* to Coleridge:

> The metre is fourteen syllables, and capable of all sweetness and grandeur. Cowper's portentous blank verse detains you every step with some heavy Miltonism; Chapman gallops off with you at his own free pace. Take a simile for example….

This is a curious error by Lamb, for actually Chapman used lines of fourteen syllables only in the first volume of his Homer, *The Iliad*. Perhaps Lamb had only finished reading the first volume! Certainly the poetic form of the second volume, *The Odyssey*, is completely different. As Garry Wills wrote in his Preface to the 2000 edition of Chapman's *Homer*:

> The fiery heroes of Chapman's *Iliad* were as though showering meteors. The same poet's *Odyssey* is an altogether quieter affair…. The quieter epic calls for a less strained metre than the almost frantic 'fourteeners' used by Chapman in his *Iliad*. (p.vii)

George Chapman used pentameters in his *The Odyssey* and rhyming couplets (and occasionally triplets). As he was not writing his version in poetry, Lamb did not need to bother himself with all the paraphernalia of versification.

Chapman's translations of Homer were made in the reign of James I, and *Ulysses* from 1614-1615. Nicoll and Will's edition of Chapman's *Homer* recognises the difficult and archaic nature of some of the language used in this early seventeenth-century translation. To help the reader with these difficulties, a substantial glossary has been supplied at the end. Now Lamb was not only writing in prose but also for children, so it is unsurprising that he greatly simplified and modernised the language he had found in Chapman's text when he came to create his own *The Adventures of Ulysses*. Lamb used an elegant and simple prose which children would easily be able to understand.

The type of narrator used by Lamb and Chapman also differed. Lamb stuck to a consistent third person narrator, except for brief direct quotations of speech from his characters. He did not deal with the sort of sustained first person narrative that constitutes the middle books of Chapman's epic.

Neither were Chapman's vast epic similes, so central to this poetic form, suited to Lamb's purposes in his *The Adventures of Ulysses*. Lamb simply disregards them as they have held up the pace of his narrative. By contrast, George Chapman sometimes draws attention to these by writing in the margin in italics 'Simile'.

The omissions generally and in particular occur for a variety of reasons. It is first and foremost a practical necessity, for as a children's writer he could not expect to have accepted work of such a length as Chapman's *Homer*. Again the intended audience of children makes some of the material unsuitable; and for, this reason too, some of Chapman's details are omitted. Finally, Lamb chose to focus almost entirely on the character of Ulysses himself, a sensible device for one writing within such limitations of length. Lamb also improves Ulysses's character by omitting certain passages in which his hero does not appear in a favourable light. Examples of all these types of omission will be given below.

As befits a child audience, Lamb omits many of the gory and bloodthirsty details which are given in Chapman's translation and also some of its sexual content. Lamb and William Godwin, his publisher, discussed some of these brutal details. In a letter to Lamb written on March 10, 1808, Godwin brought up the differences between an author (which Godwin had been) and a bookseller (as he now was). As a bookseller he is most concerned that his product should sell. He continues:

> You or some other wise man I have heard say, it is children that read children's books (when they are read); but it is the parents that choose them. The critical thought of the tradesman puts itself therefore into the place of the parent, & enquiring what will please the parent, & what the parent will condemn.
>
> We live in squeamish days. Amidst the beauties of your manuscript, of which no man can think more highly than I do, what will the squeamish say to such expressions as these? 'devoured their limbs, yet warm and trembling, lapping the blood' p.10 or to the giant's vomit p.14, or to the minute and shocking description of the extinguishing of the giant's eye, in the page following. You I daresay have no formal plan of excluding the female sex from among your readers, & I, as a bookseller, must consider that, if you have, you exclude one half of the human species.
>
> Nothing is more easy than to modify these things, if you please; & nothing, I think, is more indispensable. (pp.278-279 letter attached to no.223)

In his reply, Lamb agreed that the giant's vomiting was indeed 'nauseous' and it was removed from the published text. The other passages that Godwin objected to, Lamb would not consent to removing. He argued that there were many similar passages and that by its very nature the tale of Ulysses has 'lively images of *shocking* things' and will sometimes '*shock*' the reader. He protested that 'I cannot alter those things without enervating the Book', and he will not do so, even if it means he cannot find a publisher. To the other examples Godwin cited, Lamb responded:

> I think *the terrible* in those two passages seems to me so much to preponderate over the *nauseous* as to make it rather *fine* than *disgusting*.

As a friend of Godwin's, Lamb appeals to him not to 'plague yourself or me with nonsensical objections'. He ends his letter by saying that he will 'not alter one more word'.

Although Lamb refused to alter his text, he had already exercised a degree of self-censorship in omitting some of the most horrible passages. Examples can be cited almost at random. In Book XI George Chapman gives a disgusting and detailed account of vultures consuming the liver of Tityus:

> On his bosom sat
> Two Vultures digging through his caule of fat
> Into his Liver with their crooked Beakes
> (As Smiths their steele beate) (ll.783-786)

Lamb does not exclude this event altogether but his description is less graphic: 'Two vultures sat perpetually preying upon his liver with their crooked beaks' (p.225).

Lamb omits giving any details about the individual maids who surround Penelope and have been corrupted by the suitors. Chapman gives an account of a maid called Melantho who speaks insolently to the disguised Ulysses in both books XVIII and XIX. Chapman is preparing the reader for the shocking butchery of the disloyal maids by Ulysses and Telemachus. At the killing of the suitors and 'huswives', Chapman gives a great detail more description than does Lamb. Particularly cruel in Chapman's translation is the way in which the wanton maids are first sent to clear up the dead bodies and blood spattered all over the hall, before themselves being put to a horrible death (Book XXII ll.508-602). In Lamb's version, the suitors are put to death, but the maids are not. Possibly a description of such an event would have shocked or offended contemporary early nineteenth-century opinion and tastes.

Lamb in his *The Adventures of Ulysses* also avoids some sexual details that are provided by Chapman. For example, he omits the incestuous marriages between the six sons and six daughters of Aeolus. Similarly, Lamb omits the tale of adultery between the gods and goddesses, particularly that between Mars and Venus and the revenges of the lame god Vulcan on his wife and her lover. Yet Lamb did not follow this rule consistently. With the exclusion of a faithless wife, one might have argued that it was not a fit subject for children and is, therefore, avoided. But the story of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, however briefly, is recited. It is difficult to explain this, other than that Agamemnon and Clytemnestra are treated more like an erring modern couple than the gods and goddesses could be. Agamemnon sounds like an early nineteenth-century wronged husband:

> Clytemnestra, my wicked wife, forgetting the vows which she swore to me in wedlock, would not lend a hand to close my eyes in death. But nothing is so heaped with impieties as such a woman, who would kill her spouse that married her a maid. When I brought her home to my house as a bride, I hoped in my heart that she would be loving to me and my children. (p.223)

Although this is not altogether dissimilar to the passage in Chapman, it is given a modern twist by Lamb. Similarly Lamb extols monogamous married love for his hero Ulysses and Penelope, despite the blandishments of various goddesses and suitors. It is clear that in Chapman's translation of *The Odyssey*, Ulysses becomes the lover of both Circe and Calypso. The latter's offer of immortality is refused in both texts, but it is Lamb who explains this refusal:

> But death with glory has greater charms for a mind heroic, than a life that shall never die, with shame; and when he pledged his vows to Penelope, he reserved no stipulation that he would forsake her whenever a goddess should think him worthy of her bed, but had sworn to live and grow old together: and he would not survive her if he could, nor meanly share in immortality itself, from which she was excluded. (p.233)

Again this sounds more like a modern ideal of marriage than a classical one. For in Chapman's translation, the bedding of Ulysses by the two goddesses is open and unambiguous. Ulysses merely stipulates his terms and there is no suggestion of disloyalty to Penelope:

> I never will ascent thy bed before
> I may affirme that in heaven's sight you swore
> The great oath of the Gods, that all attempt
> To do me ill is from your thoughts exempt.
> I said; she swore – when all the oath rites said
> I then ascended her adorned bed. (Book X l.455-460)

A final example of what seems to be a modern comment by Lamb may be cited here. He describes Nausicaa's mother, Queen Arete, who is evidently engaged in tasks which Charles Lamb considered suitable for upper-class women:

> The queen her mother was already up, and seated among her maids, spinning at her wheel, as the fashion was in those primitive times, when great ladies did not disdain housewifery. (p.240)

There are two omissions from Chapman's translation of *The Odyssey* which are surprising. Perhaps it was merely because they were such well-known incidents that Lamb set them aside. The first is the moving recognition of the disguised Ulysses by his very old and faithful dog Argus, who immediately after their reunion is content to expire. The other notable omission is the recognition of Ulysses by his old nurse Euryclea. The nurse even remembers how her former charge sustained the wound that left the scar in a boar hunt. These are two very human moments in the epic and it seems a shame that Lamb thought it best to omit them.

But it was perhaps precisely because these incidents humanised Ulysses that Charles Lamb omitted them, for he seemed to want to present his hero as little lower than the gods themselves. As we have seen, in his greatly abbreviated version of Chapman's *The Odyssey*, Lamb has firmly focused on Ulysses himself. Lamb is not concerned with presenting the relationships between other characters. For example, Chapman gives us an interesting insight into the relationship between Penelope and Telemachus. The threat to Telemachus from the suitors is mentioned several times in Chapman's translation, but Lamb rarely alludes to the wooers' plots to put Telemachus to death.

Chapman also presents Ulysses's faults and imperfections. In Book VIII of Chapman's translation, there is a note in the margin that reads: 'Ulysses angry' (p.135). This occurs because the young men at King Alcinous's court insist that Ulysses proves himself at sporting activities. Ulysses is hardly in the mood or state to do so, but does eventually ungraciously agree to participate. Lamb transforms this into the following passage:

> Ulysses modestly challenging his entertainers, performed such feats of strength and prowess as gave the admiring Phaeacians fresh reason to imagine that he was either some god, or hero of the race of gods. (p.245)

Chapman's Ulysses is also criticised by the goddess Pallas who resents that he has not yet learnt to have complete trust in her. She calls him a 'Wretch' and indicates that his own status and abilities are far below those of the gods and goddesses:

> Yet I, a Goddesse, that have still had share
> In thy atchievements and thy person's guard,
> Must still be doubted by thy Braine – so hard
> To credit any thing above thy power. (Book XV ll.70-73, p.349)

A final example of Ulysses's all too human side is found in Book XX when he is so enraged by the behaviour of the wanton maids that he nearly destroys his carefully planned course of action for the destruction of the suitors in his desire for immediate vengeance. Seeing the suitors and disloyal women,

> his heart did sting
> Contending two wayes, if (all patience fled)
> He should rush up and strike those strumpets dead.
> (Book XX ll.8-10 p.347)

Charles Lamb gives no hint of such characteristics of Ulysses, as he wants to present him as an untarnished hero, indeed, to imbue his character with a godlike radiance.

Finally a quotation from Charles Lamb's own Preface to his *The Adventures of Ulysses* reveals his aims in writing this work and how closely they were connected with George Chapman's *The Odyssey*:

> The ground-work of the story is as old as the Odyssey, but the moral and the colouring are comparatively modern. By avoiding the prolixity which mars the speeches and descriptions in Homer, I have gained a rapidity to the narrative, which I hope will make it more attractive and give it more the air of a romance to young readers…. The attempt is not to be considered as seeking a comparison with any of the direct translations of the Odyssey, either in prose or verse, though if I were to state the obligations which I have to one absolute version [that is, Chapman's *Homer*], I should run the hazard of depriving myself of the very slender degree of reputation which I would hope to acquire from a trifle like the present undertaking. (p.207)

In conclusion, Lamb enjoyed George Chapman's translation of Homer's epics so much that he wrote his own abbreviated version of it in prose. Lamb retained a lifelong admiration of Chapman's translation, after his own publication of his version of it in 1808. He did not adhere slavishly to Chapman's translation, changing particularly the chronological order, the narrative form (from poetry to prose) and the language. Charles Lamb's 'trifle' – *The Adventures of Ulysses* – remains alive and well, having celebrated its bicentenary last year.

Independent Scholar, Epsom, England

An Elian Rowlandson? — An Entertainment

By D. E. Wickham

IN JUNE 2003, I CUT OUT OF A LOS ANGELES BOOK DEALER'S CATALOG the entry offering an original watercolour drawing by Thomas Rowlandson depicting 'The Old India House' and used as an aquatint in Ackermann's *The Microcosm of London*, 1808. Naturally, it was expensive.

Every few months the cutting rose to the top of an archival pile of paper, I would re-read it, sigh, and poke it back down again. In January 2008, I decided to do something about the watercolour and 'Googled' the book dealer, only to learn that the establishment had closed down, suddenly and unexpectedly, in July 2007. The stock had apparently been dispersed between long-term specialist customers and a London auctioneer, not 'sent for auction in London', as you might expect, though I think that that was what was meant.

Not hoping for much, I 'Googled' the exact details of the picture – and found it – slightly cheaper than before – in London – with a famous dealer – and illustrated on his website. It was an interior. I had expected an exterior, but I already have numerous engravings of the outside of East India House in Charles Lamb's time. (Permission to smirk, Mr. Chairman?) Thereupon things began to unravel.

I spent the evening with Prance's *Companion*, Weinreb and Hibbert's *The London Encyclopedia*, and William Foster's *The East India House*, 1924. The latter's floor-plan made it difficult to show where the huge room fitted and to explain the use of 'Old' in the title. Finally I consulted my copy of Ackermann's *Microcosm*, formerly belonging to our fellow Elian, Charles Branchini. There is, of course, an aquatint of the Sale Room interior at the India House (II, pl.45). The watercolour was not it. I discovered all that on a Thursday, then managed to last in limbo until Monday, when I checked everything in London's Guildhall Library. Then I went to see the dealer. Do you like having your emotions wrenched around like this? The watercolour was on his wall. It even bore a faded and early but obviously incorrect manuscript title 'The Old India House'! But it wasn't. It was obviously the basis of the aquatint of the Long Room in the Custom House (I, pl.28). So it was not Elian. And I did not want it.

As that man almost says at the end of that novel: 'The President of the Immortals (in Aeschylean phrase) had finished his sport with David!'

There was an unexpected coda to all this. I had spent the morning studying the dealer's online catalogue, which I assumed to be up-to-date. I had four questions. 'May I see item X from your online catalogue?' 'Sold'. 'May I see item Y from your catalogue?' 'Sold'. The third question concerned the Rowlandson. The fourth concerned C. E. Brock's illustration for Lamb's *Essays* published by Dent in 1899 and reused at other times thereafter. Several years ago the entire group of these much-loved representations came up at auction and Dr. Tim Wilson and I clubbed together to make a joint bid. This same dealer drove us effortlessly into the ground. I have never seen a later reference to these drawings and not even Brock's name appears in the same online

catalogue. I wondered who had bought them: not an Elian, as far as I knew, but could it be a collector of Brock's work? The assistant knew nothing about them but another assistant could add a line: '[The dealer] wanted to keep them around a bit'. 'Goodness', I said, 'He must have an extraordinarily valuable stock, to be able to keep things like that on the shelf all these years'. At that point the penny dropped, that the dealer apparently has, or may have, a private collection of Brock's works, including the Dent/Elia drawings – but at least I was asked to record my name and address and specific interest before leaving the gallery.

New Writings of William Hazlitt, Edited by Duncan Wu, 2 vols., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-19-920706-0. £170

DUNCAN WU'S EXTRAORDINARY EDITION OF PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN WRITINGS by William Hazlitt is an immense achievement and surely one of the most important modern research contributions to the literature of the Romantic period. In the first place, it is a striking demonstration of scholarly fortitude: the scale of the task that must have presented itself to the editor at the outset is enough to make one wonder where on earth he began, let alone how he brought the project to such fulsome completion. These new writings were not uncovered in a lost archive of unpublished manuscripts but were pieced together from endless hours surely spent re-examining the many periodicals and journals within which Hazlitt made his precarious living. Wu reminds us that Hazlitt was first and last a journalist and he has searched meticulously through an enormous body of Romantic writing, most of which was published anonymously, in the process selecting the various contributions (over two hundred of them in total) that match a profile for Hazlitt's work in theme, style, and time and place of publication. Of course, since Hazlitt spent over two long decades at the grinding end of the journalistic profession, able by his own admission to turn words out at careless speed, scholars have reasonably assumed that in spite of Howe's magnificent edition of the *Collected Works*, there must be further material by him lurking in the periodical press of the 1810s and 20s. But it is abundantly clear just how incredibly difficult the task must have been of identifying where and then which of these individual pieces are. In its way, this is a peculiarly appropriate job for the scholar of Hazlitt, whose writings provide frequent insight into the tough job of the modern critic beset by the weight of what has come before. The striking account of Coleridge in *The Spirit of the Age* begins with recognition of this: we stare at the monuments of the past, uncertain how to measure up to them. In the end, we have to conclude that Wu has few such qualms. His superb edition of the known writings of Hazlitt took up from where Howe left off and with this new work he simply leaves his forebear behind. Howe in his notes often leaves us frustrated with lack of evidence but Wu provides us with an account of every twist of his own thought. If we are to wonder about his findings, it is only because he has been over the issues already and provided us with the evidence to bring questions to life. His claims are often equivocal and this is exactly what modern readers need and expect: herein Wu is a model of the modern textual scholar. This edition communicates at once the quantum of faith required by its editor but balances this with a simply unrivalled grasp of the journalistic culture of the time.

Aware of the constraints of his project, Wu employs a necessarily judicious method of attribution in his edition. Each of the various pieces is presented within a carefully reconstructed context that explains the process of his deduction and, in relevant cases, offers us as well an attribution history behind the claims, one that makes clear the role of previous scholars, in particular Stanley Jones or Jules Douady, in keeping the search for the new Hazlitt alive over the years. The temptation to rely upon will and ear at the expense of evidence and judgement has been apparent in a number of recent literary discoveries, but in each case here, Wu builds his argument tentatively and locally, and a useful grading system (A-C) is employed to differentiate between those attributions that are more or less watertight and others, in which a degree of intelligent speculation is needed. This works well for a task in which the eminence of the editor has to be

respected: his subject's pre-eminent biographer and editor, no one in short can claim to know the work of Hazlitt better than Wu, and evidence of his unrivalled knowledge of his subject is apparent throughout. Many of those in the C-class are short pieces where there isn't much to go on beyond their fitting a general profile as short fragments of Hazlitt's prose – reports, notices, editorial interventions etc. – but in both volumes there are remarkable findings that current scholars simply cannot ignore, and the less important writings only help to build a picture of this new Hazlitt that sheds considerable light on areas of the career about which we haven't formerly known enough. Throughout, the wide-ranging quality of the learned annotations is remarkable and with these volumes careful readers of Romantic prose will feel themselves once more to be in great debt to Wu for further animating the vibrant, if occasionally messy literary scene within which Hazlitt was working.

Recent years have seen great developments in scholarly accounts of the Romantic period's republic of letters and we can be forgiven for thinking that the periodical culture of the Regency is rather well known, that there is little to unsettle us in our sense of what was going on in the best-loved periodicals. Wu has the capacity to make the matter fresh again and it's surprising just how many of the newly attributed works are really valuable for revising our sense of what was going on. He hasn't simply pulled together an enormous collection of minor commissions. There is enough in the frankly magisterial whole to interest anyone with a keen interest in the period but inevitably the greatest rewards are for readers concerned with the reviewing culture of the early nineteenth century, and especially for anyone interested in the history of periodical culture. Romantic scholarship has moved away from a belief in the individual imagination as the quintessence of the period towards an understanding of the essentially collaborative nature of its literary production and this edition contributes excitingly to this. A decade ago, Paul Magnusson described the public context of Romantic literary publication as its essence. His signal point was that we have got the period wrong if we think it either as a time of isolated creativity or indeed of merely local dialogues. And his valuable message is amply illustrated in this edition. Hazlitt can come across as such a difficult character with his unique voice, tricky private life and recondite set of personal views that he plays up to a preconception that readers have of his remote distance from the public sphere on which he was so clearly an incisive commentator. From this edition, there emerges a writer who loses none of his rarity but for whom a restored position within the collaborative context serves only to enhance his genius. After the famous duel, when the editor of *The London Magazine*, John Scott, lay in York Street, being bled by the leeches that would drive him (more surely than Christie's bullet) to a tomb round the corner in St Martin's in the Fields, it was Hazlitt who stepped in and filled the editorial post. The event provides a moving moment in this edition. Of course, there isn't much to go on in 'The Lion's Head' editorials of early March 1821. They are short and punchy pieces that sound as if Hazlitt may have written them. But here, as elsewhere, knowledge of context is vital. Wu has discovered that Hazlitt took over the editorship for those uncertain months, when against the odds, some of the most brilliant numbers of the magazine were produced. One cannot ignore the editorial role of Wu here and he seems to feel a keen sense of the moment when Hazlitt must have pulled the *London* together in a period of anxiety as Scott lay bleeding to death. To those with affection for that magazine, it is surely a welcome revelation.

A number of the most interesting articles suggest that Hazlitt worked alongside his editors and fellow writers to craft a voice that built upon the work of others to comment incisively on the cultural events of the time; some indeed show him working with other significant figures such as Thomas Griffiths Wainewright, Leigh Hunt and John Hamilton Reynolds. One of the most scorching pieces in these new writings is a review of the *Christabel* volume, published in the *Edinburgh* in 1816. It raises a number of questions. Circumstantially, the review fits Hazlitt's profile well but it isn't particularly heartening to find him with so little to admire in such an exemplary collection of Romantic writing. By this time, Hazlitt had broken so irreparably with Coleridge that he was fully capable of personal nastiness. The prose is forceful and characteristic and yet it doesn't in many ways do Hazlitt any favours. But it has to be admitted that it sounds genuine. Of 'Kubla Khan', he writes: 'The lines here given smell strongly, it must be owned, of the anodyne, and, but that an under-dose of a sedative process produces contrary effects, we should inevitably have been lulled by them into the forgetfulness of all things' (I, 215-6). Here is a rather sinking antithesis of the gusto that he so admires elsewhere at this time. A reading of Coleridge's poetry, rather than exciting the fellow senses, dulls them into soporific hell. Of course, this is in part the point of 'Kubla Khan' – it comes from the depths of the unconscious. Hazlitt, ever a contrary Romantic ideologue, knew only too well what Coleridge was about, and was better placed than almost any other writer to hit where it hurt. He isn't always right and perhaps a sense of the uncomfortable is an emotion that we must be prepared to reckon with when new writings are uncovered. Personally, I wonder whether Hazlitt had his own thoughts affected by the awareness that he was writing in large degree within the purview of Jeffrey, and allowed his instincts, which surely understood these poems, to become perverted by necessity. This would make some sense. One of the most interesting reviews in these volumes is of Hunt's *Rimini*, also from the *Edinburgh* of 1816. Here, Wu concludes that it can only merit a 'B' because although most of the review is by Hazlitt, the paragraphs that top and tail the piece, which do jar horribly with the rest, are almost certainly by Jeffrey.

In his attribution of the *Christabel* review, Wu follows the *Wellesley* and in the broadest sense, although clearly a substantial addition, it isn't one that tells us something new about the progressively anti-Coleridgean trajectory of Hazlitt's career. Elsewhere there are more transformative discoveries. Wu is so alive to the nuances of Hazlitt's own individual prose that he cannot allow this to be anything but the ground base of his attributions, and a feeling for Hazlitt's idiosyncrasies springs off the page throughout; nowhere more than where he has visited forgotten corners of the work. Apart from the *Edinburgh* and *The Examiner*, several publications emerge as more significant to Hazlitt's career than was formerly recognized, including the *London Weekly Review*. In particular, Wu emphasises the role of *The Yellow Dwarf*, a publication whose significance he reinstates by examining Hazlitt's own copy. Apart from a brief period to which I've already alluded when he took over the *London*, this was Hazlitt's main foray into editing a periodical. It is an odd, edgy publication taken on at the behest of the Hunts, and was a central site for Hazlitt's deliberations in 1818 when, it is now revealed, he covered the trial of William Hone. These reports are remarkable and with the reinstatement of Hazlitt's central role at that publication, we have a key moment in his own political consciousness brought back to life. Along with two invaluable, if tough letters on Malthus and metaphysics with which the edition begins (both of which will be

fundamental to any future reckoning with Hazlitt's philosophy), these seem to me to be some of the most rewarding new findings in this work for anyone interested in the politics of the period. *The Yellow Dwarf* is the site of some of Hazlitt's most important, and indeed spiky, political writing. One essay in particular has long stood out for me as central to Hazlitt's achievement, an uncollected piece on opera in which he diagnoses a condition of near soporific magnetism that he finds in the audience. Of course, his main point is one that has to do with the social status of the appeal of opera. Its audience cares less about what they are seeing than what they expect, and expectation conditions the quality of the experience. The audience are lulled into sleep by opera and they refuse political engagement from a form that resists realism. Hazlitt's engaged appreciation of the live arts (whatever form they take) is fundamental: whether Shakespeare or boxing or street entertainment are his subjects, each stands or falls only in so far as it is real, and seems to stand for something. Wu has undertaken his most stalwart research in this arena. He has unearthed a whole corpus of reviews that weren't previously known but which we must read alongside the best of Hazlitt, which he collected together as his own critical inheritance in, among other works, *A View of the English Stage*.

Beyond those already mentioned, perhaps Wu's most exciting findings come from the work of Hazlitt's last years. They are certainly the most poignant, and include an intelligent, detailed review of Wordsworth's 1827 *Poetical Works*, which focuses on 'Laodamia', a poem whose pathos Hazlitt loved. Theodore Fenner, the scholar of Romantic period opera, argued some time ago for the attribution to Hazlitt of a series of operatic reviews that appeared in *The Atlas* in 1827-8. Wu reprints these in one of a number of interesting appendices, although he is sceptical about the attribution. Elsewhere, that newspaper is shown to be vital to the end of Hazlitt's career when he was a rather broken, if occasionally defiant figure. His life at the end was one of straitened circumstances and the essays and notices from *The Atlas* that Howe gathers in the nether reaches of the *Collected Works* seem almost relentlessly to deal with lost creativity. But there is poignancy to the reflective quality of some of the new late essays too. 'The Past, the Present, and the Future', 'The Disappointed Man', and 'An Apology for Man and Mandeville' all show him returning to the philosophical themes that had earlier preoccupied him and in tone they put one in mind of such famous pieces as 'A Farewell to Essay-Writing' and 'The Letter-Bell'. Elsewhere in *The Atlas*, Wu finds evidence that Hazlitt went on reviewing the live arts almost to the end of his life, and it is to the further credit of this edition that we finally have a sense of the whole of Hazlitt's writing career and are able fully to appreciate his unparalleled achievements in their entirety.

Matthew Scott

Charles Branchini (1908 - 2009)

CHARLES BRANCHINI, ONE-TIME HOTELIER AND CELEBRATED RESTAURATEUR, and latterly a philanthropist and supporter of countless good causes, died at his care home in Wimbledon on 16 January 2009, aged 100.

I knew Charles as a fellow member of the Charles Lamb Society and as a devotee of the National Liberal Club, where the Society occasionally met and dined as his guests; but others around the UK will recognise him as a Friend and supporter of more than thirty charitable organisations and societies connected with the arts, health, politics, the environment and animal welfare.

Though he later became a man of considerable independent means, Charles was inducted early into the family hotel and restaurant business that had been founded by his remarkable maternal grandfather, Signor Pinoli, in 1880. Pinoli had come to England from America, where he had already spent three years as a successful restaurateur, to run The Hyde Park Restaurant in Oxford Street. He afterwards established his own eating place, Pinoli's, in Wardour Street (the faded logo can still be seen engraved on a gable), where, before the First World War, according to *Dining Round London* (1947), 'amazing crowds would come to enjoy the six-course one shilling-and-sixpenny lunch, and the dinner which fetched sixpence more and for which a further two courses were added'. Pinoli also opened a City branch of his burgeoning empire in Newgate Street over which the family lived and where his only daughter Anna was born.

Charles was born in 1908 in Claridge's, where his father was general manager. After school at Dover College he joined the family's expanding business, travelling in France, Italy and Germany, learning the hotel and restaurant trade, and acquiring fluent French, Italian and good German. On his return, he began working with his father and by 1944 was running Pinoli's with his mother, though by now the price of a three course dinner with *hors d'oeuvres* had risen to 4 shillings.

The business was so successful that by middle age Charles was able to retire and devote himself to his many outside interests. He had an extensive library and his love of English, French and Italian literature (he translated Dante) and of the liberal arts generally, together with his capacity for making friends, was reflected in his membership of many societies, including (in addition to the Charles Lamb Society) The Johnson Society of London, the Wordsworth Trust, and the Emile Zola Society. He contributed to the latter's lecture programme and attended its meetings right up to his mid nineties.

A Liberal Democrat in politics, he was a liberal and a humanitarian in his social outlook, and a keen environmentalist, being a supporter of the Palestine Solidarity campaign, a contributor to Medical Aid for Palestinians, a supporter of Friends of the Earth and of the League Against Cruel Sports, among many other causes. He was also an active Friend of many local hospitals and health charities.

His philanthropy was well known. He contributed to the restoration of Keats's final home in the Spanish Steps, Rome, and ensured that the Richmond Shakespeare Society found a permanent home for its Mary Wallace Theatre on the Thames at Twickenham. A lover of music, and of Handel and Verdi in particular, he donated a piano to the Royal Academy of Music and set up scholarships for intending opera singers at the Royal College. Recently, he was delighted to hear that a cousin, Susanna Branchini, had achieved success as an opera singer in Italy and abroad.

R.M. Healey

Society Notes and News from Members

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

IT WAS A PLEASURE TO BEGIN THE NEW SEASON OF EVENTS with a highly interesting and informative talk from Richard Lines of The Swedenborg Society, describing the state of Swedenborgian activity in London in Lamb's day. Members who attended this meeting were given a 'behind the scenes' tour of Swedenborg House by Richard and shown some of the library's treasures.

We are delighted to welcome several new members to the Society: Professor Mark L. Reed of the University of North Carolina; Marilise Bertin of the University of Sao Paolo in Brazil; Bryan Jones of Redruth, Cornwall (who tells me that he joined after reading a Society leaflet picked up at Coleridge Cottage in Nether Stowey); and Helen Walton, the owner of Lamb's Cottage in Edmonton.

At the AGM in May the Society decided that, despite the current financial squeeze, which has affected our reserves as much as anyone else's, the Society should maintain at least some grant aid for educational purposes. We shall be donating £1,000 to the University of Manchester in 2010 to continue the programme of bursaries to postgraduates awarded in memory of our sometime editor, Bill Ruddick; as well as £500 to the Friends of Coleridge to provide two bursaries of £250 each for postgraduates attending next year the twelfth Coleridge Conference at Cannington.

While on the subject of Coleridge, it is good to report that a very healthy representation of Elians were to be found enjoying the Somerset air and intellectual breeze early in September at the annual Kilve Study Weekend. Sadly, for once these did not include Mary Wedd, who is recovering after breaking her wrist in a fall.

Members should note that the title of Stephen Burley's lecture on 10 April has been changed to 'Trying to like Scotchmen: Lamb, Hazlitt and Cockney anti-Caledonianism'.