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## INTRODUCTION

*By* MARTHA VICINUS

THE FOLLOWING ESSAYS describe the major holdings in the Lilly Library concerning nineteenth-century London—specifically, its popular entertainments, and literature, and contemporary histories, surveys, and descriptions of the city. John A. Degen has written on the Lilly's holdings in nineteenth-century drama; Donald J. Gray has written about the general histories and guidebooks of the city, and about books describing or depicting its picturesque aspects; Martha Vicinus has written on material describing the “fast” pleasures, crime, poverty and other features of the life and appearance of dark London. We have not written bibliographical essays, but rather have tried to describe some of the principal kinds of material in the Lilly's collections of nineteenth-century British drama, books, and ephemera concerning London. The titles we cite are a representative selection of those available. We have not tried to be complete or objective, but have organized the essays and cited titles according to our own ideas about the possibilities for research in the history and culture of nineteenth-century London.

Four major collections are described; two in theatre and two in the London collection. The Keith L. Stock collection of nineteenth-century plays and the Carroll A. Wilson collection of Gilbert and Sullivan material form the basis of the Lilly's theatre holdings. The Wilson collection was purchased in 1961 and the Stock collection in 1965 and 1966; since that time materials related to Victorian theatre have been steadily added. In 1965 the first

purchase of the Stock collection included some 5,000 plays printed between 1800 and 1850, including numerous adaptations or early nineteenth-century stagings of earlier plays, translations of continental works, prompt books, playbills, etc. In 1966, 7,000 plays from 1850-1900 were added. Several smaller collections were also purchased, which included 1,200 theatre books, memoirs, biographies, and theatre histories, along with 800 late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century French plays (not described here) and 300 opera libretti, including a large collection of Gilbert and Sullivan. The Stock collection is also particularly rich in prompt books, which are useful guides to contemporary performances of plays. These collections form the core of the material described by John A. Degen.\*

The basis of the material described by Donald J. Gray and Martha Vicinus is the Michael Sadleir collection of low-life material, purchased in 1971. Consisting of some 500 items collected over many years, this is an irreplaceable file of primary sources for the study of London life, popular culture and entertainment in nineteenth-century England. Although much smaller than the theatre collections, the Sadleir collection has very little duplicate material, and each item is of interest to the historian or literary critic. This collection has since been augmented by the Virginia Warren collection of street cries, presented to the Lilly Library by Miss Warren in 1974, and numerous smaller collections supplementing areas of London life not covered by the original low-life definition of Sadleir's collection. The Warren collection contains illustrated street cries, dating from Shakespeare's time, but primarily published in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A very wide range of cries is available, from half-penny children's chap-



books to expensive hand-colored engravings. The material offers an excellent example of the permeation of popular culture through all levels of society. The Sadleir collection of scandal papers, swell's guides, street literature, and sensational fiction and journalism has been supplemented by the purchase of contemporary accounts of London, government reports of social conditions, maps (the Lilly now has maps for virtually every year of the nineteenth century), city plans, school district plans, plans for tram lines, tourist guide books, history books, and fiction. Approximately another 500 items have been added to the original core collection, largely in the area we have defined as "picturesque London."

We have not described here the government documents or the maps. Some of the more specialized history and guidebooks also have not been described, such as those dealing with specific parks or regions of greater London. To be useful in extensive research all of this more specialized material needs to be supplemented by historical and government documents available only in London libraries.

Obviously our interpretations of the scope and nature of this material is provisional, and necessarily subject to revision and refinement by scholars who investigate specific areas more intensively than we have done. We felt, however, that it was more useful to describe some of the materials and suggest their interest than it would have been simply to enumerate titles without explanation or analysis. We do not pretend to offer a guide to future research topics, but we hope we have provided an introduction to the Lilly Library's material which will help students and scholars to find their own topics of study. While we have each been responsible for our own section, we would like to emphasize the inter-connections;

just as the theatre is a rich source for the study of popular entertainment and culture in London, so too does the material found in “picturesque” and “dark” London offer a more complex and fuller view of the period’s drama. Other examples of these connections will strike the reader as he or she becomes familiar with the material. To draw a phrase from one of the works we describe, much of nineteenth-century London remains unknown and unexplored. We offer our essays not so much as a guide, but as an invitation to the exploration of these valuable collections.

\*The thoroughness of the Stock collections’ scope has been effectively suggested in a brief descriptive article by Walter Ray Stump, “Indiana University Acquires New Collection of Nineteen-Century Plays,” *Theatre Notebook*, 22 (1968), 120-121. However, Stump wrote before the second half of the collection became generally available, so he is misleading in implying that the collection primarily covers the first half of the century. In fact, it is as fully representative of the second half, and is particularly strong for the years 1850-70.



## VICTORIAN DRAMA

*By* JOHN A. DEGEN

**M**OST HISTORIANS OF Victorian life and art have not given sustained and serious attention to the drama and the theatrical environment in which it was produced. The theatre as a social phenomenon is forgotten in the wake of other, more pressing concerns—the growth of industry, labor legislation, public health, and political enfranchisement—while the drama written during the bulk of the century is generally looked upon as the black sheep of Victorian literature. Indeed, even historians of theatrical art tend to treat the nineteenth-century English theatre with overtones of derision, while most surveys of British drama seem to suggest that the genre underwent a nearly total eclipse between the plays of Sheridan and Shaw. Yet the Victorian theatre was one of the most vitally active in the long history of dramatic art. Particularly after the well-reported attendance of the newly ascended Queen Victoria made it unquestionably respectable, the theatre was a part of the lives of Londoners of all classes. And since the theatre was patronized by such a broad spectrum of the population, the study of the types of dramatic entertainment which were demanded and made available cannot help but be revealing of the society of the time.

As a repository for the resources for such a study, the Lilly Library is as richly endowed with materials relating to the nineteenth-century British theatre as it is in the street literature and other aspects of Victorian popular culture. The core of the Lilly's holdings in this area is the vast collection of nineteenth-century British

drama assembled by Keith L. Stock, C.B. This collection contains more than ninety percent of the plays published in England during the nineteenth-century, in addition to such invaluable ephemera as prompt books for Victorian productions of plays both contemporary and revived, part books, and advertising bills. Of particular value, in addition to the myriad individual acting editions in the collection, are the several series of plays, notably those of Cumberland, Lacy, French, and Dicks, which form the core of nineteenth-century play publication. As Walter Ray Stump has noted in his brief but effective descriptive article, cited in the general introduction to this issue of the *Bookman*, "most of those [series] listed in the *CBEL* are present in complete or nearly complete sets," and such thoroughness in a single location offers many opportunities for research. Indeed, the wide range of the collection should serve well not only the historian of Victorian drama, but also the bibliographer who finds the courage to attempt to untangle the elaborate web of Victorian play publication, a virtual nightmare of multiple editions (not so noted by their publishers), revisions, variant imprints, piracies, reissues and reprintings.

In addition to several runs of nineteenth-century theatrical periodicals and an array of miscellaneous ephemera relating to the Victorian theatre, the library has, since 1961, been in possession of Carroll A. Wilson's Gilbert and Sullivan collection. While it is not as strong in manuscript materials and in production ephemera as is the Reginald Allen collection of Gilbert and Sullivan at the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, and it does not include sound recordings, the Wilson collection is nonetheless an important resource for the study of Gilbert and Sullivan. It is the most complete collection in this country of published material relating to the work of

these two Victorian artists, and it contains some fascinating ephemeral material not found in the Pierpont Morgan collection. The acquisition of the Stock and Wilson collections has led the Lilly to continue to purchase play-scripts, playbills, prompt books, theatrical biographies and theatrical periodicals as they become available. The Lilly's catalogue of the plays of F.C. Burnand and of Dion Boucicault, to cite only two prominent examples, has been made even more complete since the arrival of the Stock collection. Similarly, the purchase of collections of Adelphi and Covent Garden playbills has expanded the library's resources of theatrical ephemera. These new acquisitions enhance the Lilly's status as the finest repository of materials for the study of nineteenth-century English drama in this country.

Given this impressive resource, there are any number of ways in which the student of Victorian drama might organize and focus his or her research, and it is the purpose of this essay to suggest a few of these directions. Perhaps the most convenient initial approach, given that the cataloguing of the entire Stock collection has now been completed, lies in the examination of the published plays of individual nineteenth-century dramatists.

In taking this approach, it is important to remember that the study of nineteenth-century British drama cannot be essentially an exercise in literary criticism. Not even the most passionate defender of the Victorian theatre could reasonably suggest that most of the plays produced by nineteenth-century English playwrights are worthy of any serious literary consideration. The professional dramatists of the period, unprotected throughout most of the century by any effective copyright legislation, had to turn out an enormous quantity of performable plays if they hoped to earn any kind of decent



living from their craft. As a result, the general body of Victorian dramatic literature tends to be formula hack-work, cranked out without notable artistic inspiration by authors whose prolificity is well attested to by the mass of the playscripts in the Lilly's collection.

That the Victorian drama is, to the serious critic, little more than a minor adjunct to the literature of the century is perhaps implicit in the absence from the roster of successful dramatists of those authors whom we typically think of in connection with the other fields of Victorian literature. Most of the important novelists of the century followed Thackeray's example and abjured the stage completely; those who, like Dickens, had an abiding love for the theatre more often than not confined their dramatic efforts to amateur theatricals. Commercial failure greeted most of the dramatic work of most of the major poets who, like Coleridge, Byron and Browning, tried their hands at writing poetic drama, and so they either abandoned dramatic poetry or retreated into the realm of closet drama.

Despite their general lack of success in production, the most famous writers of the nineteenth-century are well represented among the Lilly's holdings. Taking Lord Byron, for example, the library has both the J. Murray editions of *Sardanapalus*, *the Two Foscari*, and *Cain* (1821) and of the collected *Dramas* of 1837, as well as a wide range of editions of Byron's individual plays. *Manfred* (1817), typically, is present in its first British edition in each of the first three issues, its second British edition, the first and second American editions, and the later acting editions of both Lacy and Dicks, which were based on Macready's production of 1834.

Of particular interest to the student of the nineteenth-century novel, on the other hand, are the

myriad dramatizations which generally greeted the publication of any popular work of a Victorian writer of fiction, major or minor. Such authors as Scott and Dickens saw their works dramatized with unseemly haste; *Oliver Twist* was being played at the St. James' in a version by J.S. Coyne several months before the final chapters appeared in *Bentley's*, while the deaths of Nancy and Sikes were harrowingly enacted at the Adelphi in George Almar's adaptation within a month of their initial publication in 1838. Similarly, Harrison Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard* (1839) was featured in three London theatres in three different dramatizations (texts of all of which are among the Lilly's collection) before the year was out.

It is the professional men of the theatre, however, rather than the poets and novelists of the age who are the figures most extensively represented by the Lilly's vast collection of nineteenth-century playscripts. While they are generally less familiar to most students of the Victorian era, many of these men were fascinating, vital personalities, and their frequently prodigious output as dramatists can be highly revealing in regard to their particular careers, philosophies and the general dramatic climate of the period.

A couple of examples should suffice to indicate the extent to which the work of individual Victorian dramatists is available in the Lilly Library. John Baldwin Buckstone, like so many playwrights of his day, was intimately involved in all aspects of the theatre. One of the leading comic actors of the first half of the century, it is said that the mere sound of his voice from off the stage was enough to convulse an audience. In addition to his work as an actor, he was also a theatrical manager, heading the Haymarket Theatre in one of its finest periods during the 1850s. And finally, he was a most prolific

playwright, authoring more than a hundred stage pieces during a career which crossed five decades, from 1825 to 1865. Nearly every one of these pieces which received publication, approximately three quarters of the total, is represented in the Lilly's collection. The numbers tell the story of both the scope and the diversity of the representation of Buckstone's dramaturgy on the library's shelves; the scholar visiting the Lilly to study Buckstone's plays will find twenty serious melodramas, nine other plays styled "romantic dramas" by their author, twenty-five short farces, eleven full-length comedies, three pantomimes, two "burlesque burlettas," an opera libretto, and six more miscellaneous dramatic works given such nomenclature as "a dramatic duologue." Further, many of these works are available in multiple editions; Buckstone's most important Adelphi melodrama, *Luke the Labourer; or, The Lost Son* (1826), for example, has five separate editions in the Lilly's collection, while another, *The Dream at Sea* (1835), is present in six.

The extensiveness of Buckstone's works among the Lilly's holdings is not at all unique. Let us look, for example, to another theatrical and literary jack-of-all-trades who made his mark on the Victorian theatre between 1857 and 1885, Henry James Byron. H.J. Byron first achieved notice as a prolific and highly successful author of burlesques and pantomime openings, but after 1865 he expanded his dramatic authorship to include all genres, from melodrama to farce. He was especially successful as the author of full-length comedies, achieving his greatest success in that area with *Our Boy* (1875), which achieved a phenomenal run of 1362 performances in four years and three months, a run unequaled by any other theatrical offering of the century. Despite his success as an author, Byron, like Buckstone, did not limit



himself to playwriting. He was actively involved in the management of three different theatres in London and Liverpool at various times during the 1860s and 70s, and after 1869 he took up a further direction in becoming a very successful actor in light comedy. As if this activity were not sufficient, he was a frequent contributor to sundry comic journals and served as editor of three: *Fun* (at its inception in 1861), the *Comic News* (1863-64) and *Mirth* (1877-78).

As a playwright, Byron was extraordinarily prolific. In less than thirty years of dramatic authorship, he turned out 150 pieces for stage performance. Although he did not publish his stage works as extensively during the later years of his career, and although the Lilly does not hold as high a percentage of his published plays as it does those of Buckstone, the library offers as complete a collection of Byron's plays as is available anywhere in this country. Representing Byron's canon in the Lilly's catalogue are forty-eight burlesque-extravaganzas, sixteen comedies, ten farces, seven pantomimes, four melodramas, and an opera libretto, while for those who wish to investigate his work further there is a complete run of the Byron-edited *Mirth*.

While the accessibility of the author listings in the card catalogue may make the study of the works of individual dramatists the most convenient approach to the beginning student of the Victorian drama, it is, of course, hardly the only method of organizing and investigating the nineteenth-century playscripts in the Lilly's collection. As the numerical itemization of the library's holdings in the corpus of works by Buckstone and Byron cited above might indicate, the plays might also be examined in terms of genre. While the descriptive nomenclature attached to Victorian drama in advertisements and on

title pages might suggest an awesome range of dramatic types, the plays which were most apt to find favor with general audiences tended to be of one of four major genres: melodrama, light comedy, short farce, and burlesque-extravaganza. There were, of course, successful exceptions, but in the main the Victorian playwright was more certain of success if he restricted himself to these perennially popular forms.

Among the various forms of "serious" drama, melodrama was unquestionably ascendant throughout most of the century. The melodramas of the age tend to follow an essential formula. The particular plot might offer any assortment of thrills and chills, harrowing escapes, exotic climes or familiar domestic scenes—but moral retribution was the essential denouement of all such works, for the audience, fully as much as the stage censor, demanded that sin be punished and virtue rewarded. The Victorian playgoer, whether working- or leisure-class, was generally quite comfortable in his conventional morality. Fully aware that virtue did not invariably triumph in real life, audiences sought moral reassurance in seeing it triumph on the stage. Thus the world of Victorian melodrama is one of moral absolutes, in which heroes are entirely good and villains are entirely evil. Indeed, rare are the examples of melodramas like Buckstone's *Luke the Labourer*, in which the reasons for the villain's villainy are explained. Such understanding tended to create a modicum of sympathy for the villain, and this blurring of roles made the spectator uncomfortable. In an age filled with the rhetoric of "self-help," the theatre-goer preferred to escape into a more comfortable world of absolute moral determinism.

While the essential formula of the genre as a whole may have been relatively strict, the plots, subjects and



characters used to flesh out that central formula were of sufficient variety to constitute a number of distinct subgenres, each of which constitutes in itself a rich area of study. This brief article cannot attempt to offer an exhaustive catalogue of melodramatic subgenres; that task has been undertaken by such authors as Michael Booth, George Rowell, Frank Rahill, Maurice Willson Disher, and others whose studies of melodrama are readily available. But it does seek to give the student of Victorian drama some idea of the types of subgenres which existed, and to indicate how each is well represented in the Lilly Library's collection.

Among the more exotic types of melodrama, one might, for example, look into the Gothic and spectral melodramas which were especially popular during the first third of the century. The ghosts and demons which haunted "Monk" Lewis's *The Castle Spectre* (1797) and *One O'Clock* (1811) behaved just as fiendishly in Edward Fitzball's *The Flying Dutchman; or, The Phantom Ship* (1827), which was a sensation at the Adelphi near the close of the heyday of spectral melodrama. A kindred taste for monster melodrama, engendered in large part by J.R. Planché's *The Vampyre; or, The Bride of the Isles* (1820), also arose during the 1820s, a taste which neatly dovetailed with the public's fondness for dramatized novels in such pieces as R.B. Peake's *Presumption; or, The Fate of Frankenstein* (1823) and H.M. Milner's *Frankenstein; or, The Man and the Monster* (1828).

Equally thrilling, if less supernatural, appeals were provided in the enduringly popular brigand melodramas. During the early years of the century, the thrilling exploits of the robbers were regularly tied to the romantic appeal of exotic foreign settings, as in such masterpieces of the subgenre as Planché's *The Brigand*

(1829) or Isaac Pocock's *The Miller and His Men* (1813) and *The Robber's Wife* (1829). The popularity of the latter, for instance, is attested to by the presence of five separate editions in the Lilly collection. In the 1830s, however, brigand melodrama moved homeward although it still tended to be given the charm of distance through historical rather than contemporary settings. The trend towards romanticized depictions of British highwaymen was firmly established with the success of Fitzball's *Jonathan Bradford; or, The Murder at the Roadside Inn* at the Sadler's Wells Theatre in 1833, and it was furthered in the myriad adaptations of the Dick Turpin legend which followed in the wake of the 1834 publication of Harrison Ainsworth's novel *Rookwood*, a series among which Milner's *Dick Turpin's Ride to York or, Bonnie Black Bess* (1836) and G.D. Pitt's *Rockwood; or, the Legend of The Old Lime Tree* (1846) were perhaps the most prominent. The spate of Jack Sheppard pieces cited earlier in this survey added another enduringly popular brigand to the stage, and although the fervor of their public reception began to decline after mid-century, the romantic highwaymen continued to hold the stage throughout the Victorian era.

The brigands were not confined to land. The same period also saw a rash of pirate melodramas, perhaps best typified by Fitzball's perennial *The Red Rover; or, The Mutiny of the Dolphin* (1828). But in general, nautical melodrama belonged to that dashing, improbable hero, the Jolly Jack Tar. The attractive swagger, ringing patriotism, and shipdeck jargon of such figures as Long Tim Coffin in Fitzball's *The Pilot* (1825), Sweet William in Douglas Jerrold's *Black-Eyed Susan* (1829) and Harry Halyard in J.T. Haines' *My Poll and my Partner Joe* (1835) made these idealized stage representations of a type of

sailor that never really existed a great favorite of the playgoing public and served to establish the nautical melodrama as a readily identifiable subgenre in itself.

Alongside the exotic, the supernatural and the fantastic, another and more domestic set of melodramatic types also arose. In these, the melodramatic formula was applied to situations and concerns more immediately familiar to the members of the audience. Among these types, one might, for instance, choose to examine the series of plays revolving about a factory motif which arose in the 1830s—Jerrold's *The Factory Girl* (1832), John Walker's *The Factory Lad* (1834), G.F. Taylor's *The Factory Strike* (1836), B.F. Rayner's *The Factory Assassin* (1837), and J.T. Haines' *The Factory Boy* (1840) notable among them. Although the rage for plays with this particular orientation was shortlived, the theme continued to be used by melodramatists throughout the century, as it was by Dion Boucicault in his sensation melodrama *The Long Strike* in 1866.

More pervasive among the domestic melodramas of the century were the moralizing melodramas which sought to instruct the spectator about the wages of sin through an object lesson. The woes of unwed mothers and straying wives were a favorite subject, as one can see in such works as W.T. Moncrieff's *The Lear of Private Life; or, Father and Daughter* (1820), Haines' *Alice Grey, the Suspected One; or, The Moral Brand* (1839) and the long series of adaptations of Mrs. Henry Wood's novel *East Lynne* (1861) which continued to appear throughout the last forty years of the century. The evils of gambling were exposed in such pieces as Milner's *The Hut of the Red Mountain; or, Thirty Years of a Gambler's Life* (1827). But the vice which attracted the greatest number of melodramatic tirades was unquestionably alcohol. Beginning with



Jerrold's *Fifteen Years of a Drunkard's Life* (1829) and continuing through such pieces as G.D. Pitt's *The Drunkard's Doom* (1832), T.P. Taylor's *The Bottle* (1847) and Thomas Morton Jr.'s *Another Glass* (1855) to Charles Reade's *Drink* and Frederick Hazleton's *Intemperance; or, The Drunkard's Sin* (both produced in 1879 in the wake of Zola's *L'Assommoire*), temperance melodrama was a fixture of the London stage throughout most of the nineteenth century.

There are, of course, numerous other subgenres of melodrama which might be profitably studied in the Lilly Library—I have not, for example, even mentioned the “gentlemanly” melodramas adapted from the French or the sensation melodramas so popular during the 1860s—but it is to be hoped that those examples which have been given here will indicate the range of possibilities available to the scholar who chooses to undertake a generic approach to the Victorian drama.

The same approach can, of course, be applied to the lighter dramatic forms, although these tend to be less amenable to subgeneric classification than is melodrama. Of the traditional “legitimate” comic forms, the Victorian staples were full-length comedies and short farces. Comedy, probably the most “literary” of the popular dramatic forms, typically depended upon the twists and turns of plot complexities, as well as on a mannered style of presentation. Farce, the lower and generally more popular form, revolved around absurd situations, comic exaggeration, and physical activity, in which the performers were often more important than the text. Comedy, which required scope for plot development, tended to be written in full-length form with three to five acts; farce, which required only the establishment of situation and character and which required very little intellectual con-

temptation on the part of its audience, generally consists of one or two acts.

The Lilly Library's holdings in published nineteenth-century comedy and farce are fully as complete as in melodrama. One can readily trace the development of Victorian comedy beginning with the type common in the first third of the century. This kind of play, built upon the model of late eighteenth-century comedy, culminated in 1841 with the appearance of Dion Boucicault's *London Assurance*, although its presence is still apparent in such transitional works as Tom Taylor's *Our American Cousin* (New York, 1858; London, 1861). The kind of comedy popular at mid-century, epitomized in the less mannered domestic comedy of T.W. Robertson, is represented by such works as Robinson's *Society* (1865), *Ours* (1866), and *Caste* (1867). The line of development is completed in the late-century social comedy of Arthur Wing Pinero, Henry Arthur Jones, and George Bernard Shaw. Similarly, one can study the short farces tailored to individual performers, such as John Poole's *Paul Pry*, crafted for John Liston in 1825, or *Cool as a Cucumber*, composed by M.W.B. Jerrold in 1851 for the younger Charles Mathews; or one can delight in such clever situational farces as J.S. Coyne's *How to Settle Accounts with your Laundress* (1847), John Madison Morton's eternally popular *Box and Cox* (1847), and J.V. Bridgeman's *I've Eaten My Friend* (1851). Or one can study the full-length farces which evolved during the last quarter of the century, when the development of the single-play as an evening's bill had effectively dried up the market for short curtain-raisers and after-pieces, farces such as Pinero's *The Magistrate* (1885) and *Dandy Dick* (1887) or Brandon Thomas' still-performed *Charley's Aunt* (1892).

Another fertile area of study is the fourth of the

major popular Victorian genres, that uniquely nineteenth-century entertainment known as burlesque-extravaganza. This peculiar genre, which theatre historian George Rowell has called "the only spontaneous form of Victorian comedy," was, although it has been virtually forgotten today, one of the most popular of British theatrical amusements in its day. Consisting in the main of single act, with dialogue in doggerel rhymed couplets and a plethora of interpolated songs and dances, burlesque-extravaganza was typically an absurdly irreverent treatment of a familiar existing work, such as a fable, a play, a ballad, or a novel. The form drew much of its humor from an endless stream of self-consciously anachronistic allusions to issues, products, events, and persons of the day.

Almost any topic was grist for the burlesque writer's mill; all that was required was a familiarity with the original on the part of the audience, so they could appreciate the distortions brought to it by the travesty. The subject might be Shakespeare, as with Francis Talfourd's *Shylock; or, The Merchant of Venice Preserved* (1853) or F.C. Burnand's *The Rise and Fall of Richard III; or, A New Front to an Old Dicky* (1868); it might be a familiar episode from nursery lore, like H.J. Byron's *Blue Beard, from a New Point of Hue* (1860); or it might be a recent dramatic success, as when William Brough turned one of Boucicault's sensation melodramas based on Scott into *The Great Sensation Trial; or, Circumstantial Effie-Deans* (1863) or in the case of Burnand's rendering of Lord Lytton's *The Rightful Heir* into *The Frightful Hair* (1868). The library's holdings of burlesque extravaganzas are, if anything, even more complete than is the case with melodrama, comedy and farce. Francis Talfourd, for example, wrote nineteen performed burlesques, of



which eighteen were published; the Lilly has at least one edition of all of them. William Brough's twenty-one published extravaganzas are all on the Lilly's shelves. H.J. Byron published forty-nine of his sixty-six efforts in this genre; the Lilly has all but one. It is an exceptional mass of material, but, it like the other genres is quite manageable if organized by individual author or by such sub-genres as burlesques of Shakespeare or burlesques of melodrama.

In limiting the discussion of a generic approach to these four major popular genres, we are not, of course, by any means considering all of the dramatic activity of nineteenth-century England. In dealing with only these forms, I have, for example, slighted not only the more serious literary endeavors of such dramatists as Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Thomas Noon Talfourd, and W.G. Wills, to name only three, but also the entire range of the many types of vastly popular comic opera. The Lilly collection includes many of the myriad English adaptations of Offenbach, Herve and Lecocq during the 1860's and 70's. It also includes the *folies musicales* of H.B. Farnie and Robert Reece, such as *Nemesis; or, Not Wisely But Too Well* (1873) and *Wildfire* (1873), and the works of Gilbert and Sullivan and their imitators. Finally, the collection contains examples of the new musical comedy which began in 1894 with H.J. Dam and Ivan Caryll's *The Shop Girl*. Of parallel interest are the paratheatrical and quasi-legitimate stage entertainments like the music hall; although the fact that their bills consisted of a changing series of short skits, songs, and other attractions precluded the extensive degree of publication given to plays during the Victorian era, many music hall songs were preserved in sheet-music form and are included in the Lilly's Starr collection of popular sheet music.

Nor does a concentration on approaching the material in the Lilly in terms of author and genre preclude other potentially rewarding methods of investigating that material. One might, for example, examine with the aid of the daily theatre listings in any London newspaper the plays produced at a given theatre over a span of years. Although all theatres sought to appeal to as wide an audience as possible by offering a diverse range of entertainments on their evening's bill, each house tended to make a feature of one particular form or another. Thus Surrey and the Adelphi specialized in melodrama, while the Strand and the Royalty depended in the main on their production of burlesque. An examination of the listings, and then of the texts, of these plays might show shifting patterns in the offerings of any given theatre that in turn might well lead to some significant insights about the development of audience tastes and dramatic emphasis during the century.

Similarly, one might focus on the plays in which a particular actor appeared. Or one might investigate the trends in the publication of plays during the century. How notable, for instance, would be the discovery that in any given year Lacy chose to publish twice as many farces or burlesques or Shakespearean texts in his series than he had ten years earlier? Or if one were to find that the number of plays produced in East End theatres receiving publication declined while the printing of West End plays increased? The possibilities are as endless as they are intriguing.

For the Victorian scholar interested in a broader view, the drama of the time might also be examined as a reflection of the life and social concerns of the nineteenth-century London streets. Such a study, in fact, would be especially appropriate at the Lilly, as it would



bind the drama to the street literature and other popular entertainments of the period. But before undertaking such an approach, the student should be aware of a few caveats.

In discussing the serious social and political questions of the day in a direct and incisive manner, the dramatist suffered under a significant inhibiting influence from which the pamphleteer, the ballad-singer, and the hawker of street literature were spared—the censorship of the Lord Chamberlain's Examiner of Plays. All plays to be produced in the theatres of London had to be submitted to the Examiner, who had a free hand to demand whatever alterations he saw fit or to ban the piece altogether, with no appeal from his decision. Nineteenth-century Examiners routinely excised most references to matters religious, sexual, political, or (in the case of the major social issues of the moment) too controversial or "inflammatory."

Other considerations further tended to restrict the forthright depiction of London life and its concerns. Playwrights, virtually without copyright protection throughout most of the century, had to produce a vast number of scripts in order to earn a living, and one of their methods was the wholesale translation and adaptation of French plays, which could hardly be expected to speak directly to English issues. The insecurity of their livelihoods also led dramatists to avoid the discussion of serious social questions out of fear of alienating any portion of their potential audience.

The essential melodramatic formula, with its strict moral universe, also tended to work against the realistic depiction and discussion of pressing social issues in the melodrama of the age. But this does not mean that dramatists were unaware of the social and political milieu

or that they were unwilling to trade upon the controversies of the moment. The spate of factory melodramas in the 1830s enumerated earlier in this essay, for instance, were the result of the Factory Act of 1833 and the uproar concerning the administration of the Poor Law, giving the theme an extradramatic appeal beyond the standard conventions of melodrama.

Beyond the consideration of particular thematic motifs, a study of the type of escapism and entertainment sought in the drama by various segments of society can be revealing. One might, for instance, pursue the sociological implications of the fact, pointed out by Michael R. Booth in a recent article ("East End Melodrama," *Theatre Survey*, 17 [May 1976], 57-67), that exotic melodrama lingered in the theatres of the more predominantly working-class East End long after it had begun to give way to domestic melodrama in the more fashionable West End. Similarly, one might investigate the extent to which the popular brigand melodramas were a manifestation of the same impulse that led the public to delight in such street-literature as the descriptive guidebooks to "dark London."

The comic genres vary in the extent to which they offer promise to the student taking a sociological approach to the study of Victorian drama. Full-length comedy, while it frequently turned on the social fads and foibles of the moment, was generally, in its stylized mannerisms, little concerned with the realistic portrayal of every-day life. Occasionally, the "legitimate" comic stage did present London life. Perhaps the most prominent examples stem from the vogue during the 1820s for plays in imitation of W.T. Moncrieff's *Tom and Jerry*; or, *Life in London* (1821), itself derived from Pierce Egan's popular sketches. These plays, which consisted of a series

of scenes in which two comic characters encountered familiar London street scenes, were for a while attractive novelties, although their attractiveness had declined long before the mid-century arrived. The short farces of the century similarly showed a greater concern with comic convention than with contemporary point. Even in those instances in which dramatists crafted their farces about a situation of topical interest, as in the case of William Brough and Andrew Halliday's *A Shakespearean Reverie; or The Bard and his Birthday* (1864), the topicality tended to extend only to the framework within which the usual grotesqueries and absurdities were carried on.

The most potentially rewarding source for the study of Victorian daily life and thought as reflected in the comic genres is unquestionably burlesque-extravaganza. As with farce, extravaganza was occasionally given a central focus on a topical theme, as in the case of J.R. Planché's *The Drama at Home* (1843), in which personified dramatic forms discuss the implication of the theatrical reforms brought about by the Licensing Act of 1843, or in 1851, when such pieces as Shirley Brooks' *The Exposition* proliferated on the burlesque stage. In other instances, the traditional subjects of extravaganza were turned to contemporary point, as was *Robin Hood and Richard Coeur de Lion* (1846) by Charles Kenney, Shirley Brooks and J.H. Stocqueler, which teems with allusions to a recent decision by the Nottingham Planning Committee to promote residential development of parts of Sherwood Forest. But most consistently revealing is the extravaganza's basic device of deriving humor from anachronistic topical allusion. This device makes the genre a most effective barometer of what was on the public's mind at any given time. It also gives evidence of an extraordinary awareness on the part of the audience



of current events and of the artistic, literary and theatrical activity of the moment. Indeed, the shifting tastes and cultural awareness of the public are tellingly reflected in the allusions of burlesque-extravaganza. During the early years of the genre, for example, Shakespearean allusions, drawn from nearly all of the Bard's plays, abound; by mid-century, Shakespearean allusion tended to be restricted to a few of the more familiar speeches, like "To be, or not to be," a tendency which clearly testifies to the parallel decline in Shakespearean production and in the general public's familiarity with the entire Shakespearean canon.

Indeed, the pointed topicality of extravaganza probably serves to make it the theatrical form most comparable to the street pamphlets and ballads of the time. Yet the office of the Examiner of Plays and the bonds of convention served to mitigate any really serious consideration of the controversies of the moment. Burlesque might poke topical fun, but it was out of its element when it tried to proselytize, and such attempts at "serious" extravaganza as Tom Taylor's *Sense and Sensation; or The Seven Sisters of Thule* (1864), with its personified virtues and vices and its scenes set in sweatshops and corrupt law courts, were invariably flat failures.

This essay has been an attempt both to indicate the scope of the Lilly Library's holdings in nineteenth-century theatre and drama, and to suggest a few of the ways in which interested scholars might approach this material. It is hoped that students of Victorian culture will, once aware of the existence of this valuable resource, proceed more closely to examine its richness and to discover that the world of the Victorian theatre is not, as critic James Sutherland has termed it, "a dramatic vacu-

um," but rather a vital and potentially revealing aspect of the life and culture of Victorian England.

JOHN A. DEGEN *received his Ph.D. in Theatre and Drama at Indiana University, Bloomington, in 1977.*

## GENERAL HISTORIES, GUIDEBOOKS, AND HANDBOOKS

By DONALD J. GRAY

**M**OST OF THE books in what I will call the London collection in the Lilly Library are about parts of the nineteenth-century city—descriptions or histories of one or another of its districts, collections of sketches of some of its picturesque or appalling places and modes of life, miscellanies of antiquarian lore. The London collection includes only about a dozen histories of the entire city written in the nineteenth century. It includes more than twice as many guidebooks, handbooks and street directories. The general histories, especially those published in the first half of the century, were organized on a plan and within conventions that had been well-established by the beginning of the eighteenth century; with a few exceptions, these books were old-fashioned even in the years of their publication. The guidebooks and handbooks, on the other hand, seem to have been a kind of book almost peculiar to the nineteenth century, a response to the increased possibilities during the century for “strangers,” as some of the early-nineteenth-century guidebooks called them, to travel to London to see its sights. All these general descriptions of London suggest what its contemporary citizens thought was interesting in the city. These books also contain information that is useful to anyone studying the life of nineteenth-century London; the guidebooks, for example, often specify the prices of hotels, meals, cabs, clothing, theatre admissions, and other necessities and recreations in a visitor’s London. Finally, these books are interesting because their

authors or compilers often admire and enjoy the city. Its historians admire the city because they take a view of history in which institutions, even cities, improve in time, and the compilers of the guidebooks are writing to readers for whom the city will be a place of holiday.

*General Histories.* The Lilly holds copies of most of the standard accounts of London on which its nineteenth-century historians drew: John Stow's *The Survey of London* (begun 1598; the Lilly has the fourth edition of 1633, an edition of its continuation by John Strype published in 1720, and a sixth edition, "brought down to the present time," published in 1754-55); *Londinopolis* (1657) by James Howel (or Howell); *Historical Remarques and Observations of the Ancient and Present State of London and Westminster* (1681) by "Robert Burton" (Nathaniel Crouch), which was continued "by an Able Hand" and published as *A New View, and Observations, etc.* (1730); Thomas DeLaune's *The Present State of London* (1681); John Entwick's *A New and Accurate History and Survey of London* (1766); John Noorthouck's *A New History of London* (1773); Thomas Pennant's antiquarian study, *Of London* (1790); and Daniel Lyson's four-volume history of *The Environs of London* (1792-96). These books usually contain chapters on pre-Roman, Roman, and medieval London, and then embark on extensive descriptions when the plan, fabric, and social and political organization of the city their authors recognize began to take shape in the sixteenth century. They typically organize their histories of post-medieval London around descriptions of the public buildings, bridges, gates, and wards of the city, interspersing essays on such topics as sports and pastimes, civic disorders, the Fire and the Plague, and statistics of trade and population. Often they



conclude with a perambulation through the city and, in the eighteenth century, sometimes through its environs as well.

The attitude that typically presides over this miscellany of anecdote and information is exultant wonder. The preface to Stow's *Survey* states themes that persist. People in cities have increased opportunities for trade that enriches and conversation that civilizes. Since they are banded together, they can be better governed, the word of God flows more efficiently through their congregated numbers, and they can effectively stand together against the tyranny of kings (the history of the relationship between the City and the Crown is an important part of most of these accounts). Thus, science, art, religion, justice, freedom, comfort—all the signs and prizes of civilization flourish in cities; to revert from the practice of living in cities, Stow observes, “were nothing else but to Metamorphose the world, and to make wilde beasts of reasonable men.” After the resurrection of London from the Fire, its historians frequently added to their admiration of cities in general their opinion that London was the first of cities, present and past. Nathaniel Crouch in 1681 wrote that London was the largest and finest and “best inhabited” city in Europe certainly, and probably in the universe. John Noorthouck, who thought that commerce had been the agent that civilized “the natives of a rude and barbarous island,” argued that eighteenth-century London was a more powerful city than Rome, for the civilizing influence of trade extends farther than that of the sword, and its effect is to make other peoples rich, and not to impoverish them.

Nineteenth-century writers of general histories of London, especially early in the century, often took over



the schemes of organization and the opinions as well as the anecdotes and data of their predecessors. Typically, most of the general histories written between 1800 and the beginning of the First World War were compounds of chronological and topographical schemes. The chronological accounts often break down into little more than annals or scrapbooks of extracts from documents and previous histories. The topographical histories are usually in effect collections of sketches on the historical associations of places arranged, as the preface of one history puts it, "in the itinerary form" (W.W. Hutchings, *London Town Past and Present* [1909]: with a preface on the future by Ford Madox Hueffer). Sometimes the interest of these histories is largely antiquarian, as it is, for example, in Edward Wedlake Brayley's four-volume *London and Middlesex: or, An Historical, Commercial, and Descriptive Survey of the Metropolis of Great Britain* (1810-16), Thomas Allen's *The History and Antiquities of London, Westminster, Southwark, and Parts Adjacent* (1827-28), and J. Henage Jesse's well-known books, *Literary and Historical Memorials of London* (1847) and *Memoirs of the City of London and Its Celebrities* (1850), republished in 1870 in three volumes under the title *London: Its Celebrated Characters and Remarkable Places*. The impulse of these books, like that of collections of antiquarian sketches to be described in the section on "Picturesque London," is to use the contemporary city as a ground from which to launch an escape from it. The author of the preface to *Old and New London* (1875), a topographically organized series of histories, in six volumes, of the principal districts and boroughs of London (a companion history of London environs, Edward Walford's *Greater London: A Narrative of Its History, Its People, and Its Places*, was published in two volumes in 1898), laments that "Old London is passing

away even as we dip our pen in ink." He therefore invites his readers to walk with him "through a dreamland that will be now Goldsmith's, now Gower's, now Shakespeare's, now Pope's London."

Other historians, even when they concentrated on the relics of London's past surviving in the nineteenth-century city, claimed to do so in order to show that the present was better than the past. "Sholto and Reuben Percy" (J.C. Robertson and T. Byarly) in *London, or Interesting Memorials of Its Rise, Progress, and Present State* (1823) accompany handsome engravings of buildings and sites famous in London's history with accounts which "point out the means by which an industrious people have preserved their liberties against foreign and domestic invasion, and raised their city to a rank which is unparalleled among civilized nations." Henry Hunter's *The History of London and Its Environs* (1811) is mostly a compilation of curious anecdotes from Stow and others. But Hunter opens his history with admiring descriptions of recent improvements in docks, canals, roads, and the like, even though many of these constructions destroyed buildings, streets, and entire localities that were links to the past. George Rose Emerson in *London: How the City Grew* (1862), a collection of sketches first published in the *Weekly Despatch* on the growth of each of London's principal districts, is full of wondering statistics of the growth of population, the increase in gas and water consumption, the spread of railways and new roads, and similar testaments to progress. G. Lawrence Gomme in *London in the Reign of Victoria* (1827-1897), published in 1898, the year after the Diamond Jubilee, is puzzled by the admiration its citizens expressed for the London of 1837, with its "miserable Georgian architecture," gin palaces, and squalid slums. And he saw no limit to the improve-

ments wrought during Victoria's reign. "Bad as things were in 1837—and I think I have shown this sufficiently—bright and delightful as much of London life is, beautiful as London is, there is nothing yet which can be said to be in any way complete." (Gomme gives much of the credit for the improvement of London to the growth during the century of central local government, a topic he enlarges upon in *The Governance of London* [1907]. For that reason, an interesting companion to Gomme's history is *The History of London Street Improvements, 1855-97*, prepared by Percy J. Edwards for the London County Council and also published in 1898.)

In short, the authors of these general histories do not share the warnings and doubts about the city expressed by the writers of the sketches and books that will be described in the section on "Dark London." Their attitude toward the city, perhaps stated more moderately at the end of the century than at its beginning, remains that which "David Hughson" (Edward Pugh) took over from previous historians and stated in *London: Being an Accurate History and Description of the British Metropolis and Its Neighborhood, To Thirty Miles Extent, From an Actual Perambulation* (1805). London, he writes, "is the first metropolis in the world—a city without parallel."

This felicity . . . is not the upstart mushroom of the day; it is the gradual product of ages, which has been bravely obtained, carefully preserved, and wisely managed, so that like the sun, its influence has irradiated every quarter of the empire, and caused the surrounding nations to pay homage to British freedom, fixed as it is, on a basis never to be shaken.

Except for Gomme's books, these general histories of London are probably more useful for their expression of ideas about the nineteenth-century city than they are



as sources of information about it. Their compilations of statistics about the city tend to be miscellanies, and the figures are in any event more conveniently available in twentieth-century histories like Frances Sheppard's *London 1808-1870: The Infernal Wen* (1971: a copy is in the Lilly). Two late-century histories do deliberately try to fix for future historians the contemporary look and life of the city, even though both are limited to the boundaries of the old City of London. Charles Welch's *Modern History of the City of London: A Record of Municipal and Social Progress from 1760 to the Present Day* (1896) is an annals of the "all but total transformation of London within the walls" since 1760. Walter Besant in *London City* (two parts: 1910) planned his narrative to provide "instantaneous photographs of the day-to-day life of the citizens of the city in the present as well as in the past." It is in their pictures rather than in their prose, however, that these two books, and other general histories of the city as well, most effectively deliver nineteenth-century London to our imaginations. The books of Welch and Besant are profusely illustrated, the latter containing many photographs and an excellent map of the late-century city. W.W. Hutchings' more general *London Town Past and Present* (1909) also contains many photographs as well as reproductions of paintings and drawings of buildings and streets. Earlier books, especially the six volumes of *Old and New London* (1875) and the histories of Pugh ("David Hughson") also include engravings and maps depicting nineteenth-century London among their many illustrations.

*Guidebooks and Handbooks.* Almost all the guidebooks in the London collection were published after 1800. They necessarily emphasize the plan and places of the



contemporary city, although they also include some historical information. Two of the most popular early-century guidebooks were Richard Phillips' *The Picture of London* (later *The Original Picture of London*), first published in 1802 and in its twenty-sixth edition in 1827 (the Lilly holds the edition of 1808, and the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh editions); and Samuel Leigh's *The New Picture of London* (the Lilly holds the second edition of 1818, and editions of 1819, 1827, 1830 and 1834). The books are very similar. Both open with admiring accounts of London's history, salubrious situation, handsome architecture, and industrious and upright citizens; for example, Phillips states, "every class in London is superior in its moral character to every similar class in other countries." Then follow chapters on public buildings, hospitals, prisons, banks, docks, commercial houses, learned societies, newspapers and literary journals, hotels and coffee houses, art collections, public amusements, and similar topics. Each chapter is usually illustrated by six or seven small engravings, and each is full of brief descriptions, statistics (the lengths of streets, the circulation of newspapers, the salaries of judges), and the prices of hotels, theatre admissions and other diversions. In another (and very expensive: 63s.) version of his guidebook titled *Modern London: Being the History and Present State of the British Metropolis* (1805), Phillips included William Marshall Craig's "Plates representing Itinerant Traders," a collection of illustrated street cries (also cited in the section on "Picturesque London"). Leigh's book also sometimes included a collection of colored engravings by Thomas Lord Busby of "Costumes of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis," and Thomas Rowlandson's *Characteristic Sketches of the Lower Orders* was

published as a companion to Leigh's guidebook around 1820. Both guidebooks included a map.

Leigh advertised the currency of information in his guidebook, and he seems to have made his claim good. In 1834, for example, he included such new amusements as dioramas and cigar divans in his guide; he also added an alphabetical street guide to accompany the map, and an eight-day plan for visiting London, which mostly took the visitor to see buildings. His praise of the city in 1834 is also, interestingly, tempered by worry about the ostentatious display of new wealth and "a startling degree of corruption—the bane of all overgrowing cities" apparent in the life of London, with its distressing contrasts between happiness and misery, "riches and penury, virtue and vice, wisdom and folly, benevolence and cupidity." This qualifying note about London, and cities in general, is not dominant. Leigh's guide still pays tribute to "Mighty Imperial London" as the center of the world, "a mighty shrine of greatness and goodness." But it is a note that was sounded increasingly during the century, not in guidebooks (except in the guides to "fast" London life, which were excited by some of the corruptions of the metropolis), but in other accounts of the dark precincts of London to which the guidebooks rarely directed visitors.

The books that succeeded to the purposes and audiences of Leigh's and Phillips' guides may be divided into guidebooks and handbooks. The guidebooks published in the 1830's and after are more spare, less discursive, and probably more practical than those of Phillips and Leigh. They are typically organized not as essays on topics like "Commerce" and "Literature and the Book-selling Trade", but rather as a series of short paragraphs on the hotels, theatres, and other principal buildings and

places of the visitor's London. The handbooks are also usually collections of brief descriptions of particular places, arranged alphabetically or topographically. But their authors seem concerned not so much to guide their readers around London as to satisfy, or indulge, a general curiosity about its history and diversity, the curiosity of a resident who continually explores the city, rather than that of a short-time visitor to it.

The guidebooks published after 1830 are also usually cheaper than those of Leigh or Phillips. In the 1820's the latter sold for 5 or 6s., and the former for 9s. One of their competitors, *Kidd's New Guide to the "Lions" of London* (1835), announced itself as more useful than these elaborate "Pictures of London", and made a point of the fact that it sold for half the price of Leigh's guide. By mid-century guidebooks such as *Adams' Pocket Guide Book*, written by the journalist E.L. Blanchard (1850); *Cruchley's Picture of London* (first published in 1831; the Lilly holds the sixteenth edition, 1851); *London As It Is Today: Where to Go, And What To See, During the Great Exhibition* (1851); and *London, What To See, And How To See It* (1857) usually cost between two and four shillings (the guides that sold at 2s. or 2s.6d. sometimes cost a shilling more with a map). The ideal toward which these utilitarian guidebooks may be said to be moving was realized in Baedeker's *London and Its Environs*, first published in German in 1862. (The Lilly holds the first English edition for 1878, and succeeding English editions in 1885, 1889 and 1911.) Baedeker's guide opens with paragraphs on money, hotels, restaurants, baths, shops, theatres, divine services, concerts, and similar topics, including a very brief (four page) historical sketch of the city. Then it lays out a "Preliminary Ramble," and goes on to identify the sights to be visited in the City, the



West End, the Surrey Side, and in the environs of London. It contains a railway map of the city, and smaller maps of parts of the city which are keyed to a large map of the whole. It cites the prices of hotels and other expenses (in 1889 Baedeker estimated the cost of a day's stay in a first-class hotel, including theatre and cabs, to be 30-40s.; a more moderately expensive stay cost 15-20s. a day), ranks the quality of restaurants, organizes a section on shops by their commodities, and warns about pickpockets, hotels in Leicester Square, and the length of evenings at the theatre ("the latter part of the representation is apt to be more of a fatigue than a pleasure"). Baedeker's guides were relatively expensive, selling at 5 or 6s. British publishers competed with cheaper guidebooks of the same kind. *Routledge's Guide to London and Its Suburbs* (1880), for example, sold for a shilling, contained only one map but many illustrations, and told its readers how to take in the sight of "Rags, Poverty, and Wretchedness" on their tours of the city. The London collection also includes similar guidebooks published by Black (1870), Collins (1871), Murray (1879), and *A Popular, Pictorial, and Practical Guide to London*, in its seventeenth edition (and 76th thousand) in 1898.

Two of the handbooks in the London collection exemplify the mixture of purposes in these publications. Peter Cunningham's *A Handbook for London, Past and Present*, was first published in 1849, in two volumes, without a map, and at 24s. It clearly is not a practical guidebook (although later editions, which the Lilly does not possess, were published at 3s.6d., presumably in one volume). Neither is it a history, although it contains a great deal of historical information that Cunningham is proud to have extracted and verified. It is, as much as anything, a reference book to be used by anyone coming



to, living in, or curious about London. Cunningham tells his readers the best way to enter London (by river), where to buy the best beer, the best coffee, the best map (that of the Post Office Directory, available separately for 6d.), the annual volume of London's sewerage, the number of its houses ward by ward, the London a painter, a sculptor, and an architect ought to see, and similar information. The bulk of his book is a dictionary of London's streets, squares, and buildings, each entry including a brief description and short history of its subject, frequently decorated with quotations from the standard histories of London and from the journals, poems, and biographies of eminent personages associated with the places he describes.

*Dickens' Dictionary of London*, a series published by Dickens' son Charles from 1879 until nearly the end of the century (the Lilly holds the first edition and that for 1896-97), is arranged on the plan of Cunningham's *Handbook*. The subtitle of *Dickens' Dictionary*, however, is "An Unconventional Handbook," and its entries are directed toward needs and curiosities more diverse, more contemporary, and sometimes more raffish than those of Cunningham's readers. Dickens' readers, like Cunningham's, will learn something about the past and present of, say, Cannon Street, or the Strand. They will also learn the kind of bill currently being presented at each of London's theatres (and the railway and omnibus stations nearest each one), where to go to watch football, play tennis, roller-skate, or fish, where to rent evening dress or invalid chairs, the cost of lodgings and house-rent in each of the districts of London (house-rent is £150-200 a year in Bayswater, £500-600 in Belgravia), what to beware of ("Greenhorns, Tricks on"), and how to arrange to be awakened in the morning by the policeman on the beat.

There are a few other guides in the London collection that are more like handbooks than guidebooks. *Knight's Cyclopedia of London* (1851) is a one-volume abridgment for visitors to the Great Exhibition of Knight's six-volume *London* (1841-44), a collection of descriptions and brief histories of the sights and conveniences of the city. The sub-title of *London Illustrated* (1874) is "A Complete Guide to the Places of Amusement, Objects of Interest, Parks, Clubs, Markets, Docks, Principal Railway Routes, Leading Hotels." But the book is too large to be a practical guidebook; it is really a picture book of the contemporary city, and an advertisement for "First Class Reliable Houses—The Various Branches of Trade," and it is interesting—then, presumably, as now—for that reason. Similarly, Henry B. Wheatley's *London Past and Present* (1891), a three-volume revision of Cunningham's *Handbook*, is an unwieldy guidebook, but an interesting summary of the changes in the fabric of London since 1849.

The London collection also contains some guidebooks that are little more than street directories to the city at various decades in the century: James Lockie's *Topography of London, or Street Directory* (second edition, 1816); James Elmes' *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs* (1831); *Boyle's Fashionable Court and Country Guide and Town Visiting Directory. . . Containing Street and Alphabetical Arrangements of the Names and Places of Abode in Town and Country of All the Ladies and Gentlemen of Fashion* (1843); *Large's Way About London, Giving a Direct Route to Thousands and Thousands of Roads, Streets, Courts, Alleys, Etc., Etc.* (1869); and *Philips' Handy-Volume Atlas of London* (fourth edition, 1904), which seems to have been transformed into *The ABC Guide to London* (1911), whose format is like that of the present-day *London A to Z*. The

collection also includes a publication by the London County Council of a *List of the Streets and Places Within the Administrative County of London* (1901) in which the streets renamed in the last decades of the century are listed.

The uses of these books, from “pictures of London” to street guides, from utilitarian guidebooks to handbooks, for the study of the nineteenth-century city and its life are certain but hard to predict. Unlike the general histories, these books do not offer explicitly stated attitudes toward the city, although their existence testifies that for many literate nineteenth-century British men and women London was, among other identities, a fascinating recreation. They contain a great deal of information about the city. But much of it, like the information of the general histories, is more conveniently available in other sources. Even when it is not, casting about in these books for references to, say, opium dens (*Dickens’ Dictionary* contains an entry) is an inefficient and chancy mode of research. The uses of these books will rather proceed from the sense they provide of the most public realms of London in the year or decade of their publication. They tell us what its contemporaries thought then to be the most interesting of its districts, buildings, shops, and amusements, what they thought to be interesting about them, what people did when they enjoyed London in the conventional ways available to anyone with enough money, and how much these pleasures cost. These books are useful, then, simply because they do place us in the London of 1805, or 1851, or 1878, or 1898. To one degree or another, from one perspective or another, they help us to find our way around in the complex,

changing nineteenth-century city that is the object of our study, but in which we too are necessarily strangers.

DONALD J. GRAY *is professor of English, Indiana University, Bloomington.*



## PICTURESQUE LONDON

By DONALD J. GRAY

**T**HERE ARE MORE than 200 titles in the London collection of the Lilly Library describing the nineteenth-century city in the picturesque mode. In this mode writers and artists typically made the city into a gallery of the odd and quaint. They sought out the strange colonies and customs of its out-of-the-way corners, or they told the curious history of its familiar buildings and streets. They described the city made unfamiliar by night, or during a holiday, or from the special perspective of a detective or a flower-girl. They went to the police-courts and docks, and into the slums and the *demi-monde*, to find the unusual, and sometimes the sordid, and then they recounted what they saw from a distance and in compositions that make it entertaining. The characteristic form of their accounts is that of the sketch, verbal or pictorial: a striking, often strongly personal impression of a place or character. The characteristic structure, tone, and purpose of their collections of sketches are those of an amusing walk through the city during which each curiosity is remarked, exclaimed over, and left behind as the next scene comes into view. Little is connected; little is judged or speculated upon. Each of the sights of the city, even the grotesque, squalid, and reprobate, is taken as yet another sign of its astonishing size and diversity, its delightful contrasts and surprise, its eccentric energies.

The books of sketches in the picturesque mode in the London collection may be classified as: 1) collections of views of London, usually illustrations of important or historically interesting buildings, accompanied by brief

prose commentaries; 2) pictorial and verbal sketches of contemporary London scenes, events, and characters; 3) illustrated collections of London street cries; 4) antiquarian sketches, mostly verbal, with some illustrations; and 5) histories of particular wards, boroughs, parishes, and suburbs of the metropolis.

The books in the second and last of these categories are especially useful as sources of information about unusual aspects and pockets of life in nineteenth-century London, especially its public and private amusements, its ceremonial, commercial, and street life, its odd occupations and curious quarters. The collections of views, sketches of London scenes and character types, and some of the collections of antiquarian sketches are useful as repositories of illustrations of the contemporary city, including illustrations of some of the survivals from its past. These books include drawings by Thomas Shotter Boys, Thomas Rowlandson, Gustave Doré, and Charles Dana Gibson, among other artists, and some of the late-century books include photographs of the city. The books in all these categories are interesting in their attempt to take and to show the city as amusing and charming, if not beautiful. The very fact that these artists and writers found the life and appearance of London to be picturesque is, all by itself, important to any study of nineteenth-century attitudes toward the city. Even more can be learned by looking closely at what these artists and writers saw as picturesque, how they rendered it, and how their perspectives and tactics changed as decade by decade the city became larger, more exciting, more threatening, and less comprehensible.

Except for the collections of street cries published as juvenile literature, which sold for 6d. or 1s., few of these books were cheap. Some collections of prose sketches

and histories of particular districts of London, especially after mid-century, sold at five or six shillings a volume, and sometimes were remaindered for 3s. 6d. But more often such books were priced like novels, at ten or twelve shillings per volume. Charles Knight's *London* (1841-44), for example, clearly intended for a general audience, sold for 63s. in its six-volume edition, and 38s. in a later three-volume edition. Collections of views and books in which illustrations were important were often much more expensive. *London: A Pilgrimage* (1872), by Blanchard Jerrold and Gustave Doré, sold for 72s.; Thomas Shotter Boys' *Original Views of London As It Is* (1842) sold for 84s.; and John Thomas Smith's *Antiquities of Westminster* (1807) originally was priced at 105s. It seems clear that the audience of these books was a part of that moderately prosperous, educated, middle-class audience that bought, or procured through subscription libraries, the novels, travel books, histories, and biographies that Victorian publishers typically brought out in editions of 750 or 1000 copies, hoping for a larger sale but turning a profit if they sold only the bulk of the first edition. Few of these books on picturesque London went into a second edition. The interests they satisfied were, then, rather special, but they were steady. All through the nineteenth-century there seem to have been buyers and readers enough to make a market for books in which the city was perceived as neither fearful nor singularly grand, but rather as oddly amusing, quaint, and even conventionally pretty.

1) *Collections of Views*. Some of the collections of engravings of London views, usually published with an accompanying prose commentary that is clearly subordinate to the pictures, are picturesque in a quite conven-



tional way. These books contain drawings of buildings and streets, or of vistas onto parks and the river, in which human figures occasionally appear only to balance a composition or to suggest scale. Their atmosphere is clear and bright, and their masses delicate and pleasing. The intention of their artists is exemplified in Samuel Ireland's *Picturesque Views, with an Historical Account of the Inns of Court, in London and Westminster* (1800), which is "designed to celebrate the magnificence and antiquity of the public structures, which embellish a flourishing and wealthy city." William Henry Pyne's *The Microcosm of London* (1808-10), originally published in parts and then in three volumes, handsomely renders the public places of the city for the same reason. The collection is arranged like a dictionary, from the "Academy, Royal" and Astley's to "View of London, from the Thames," and in each of its seventy-five or so finely printed colored plates the architectural details are drawn by Augustus Charles Pugin (the father of Augustus Welby Pugin) and the human figures are by Thomas Rowlandson. Thomas Shotter Boys' *Original View of London As It Is* (1842: the Lilly holds a reproduction of this two-volume collection published in 1954-55); Robert Wilkinson's two-volume *London Illustrata: Graphic and Historic Memorials of Monasteries, Churches, Chapels, Schools, Charitable Foundations, Palaces, Halls, Courts, Processions, Places of Early Amusement, and Modern and Present Theatres, in the Cities and Suburbs of London and Westminster* (1819-25); and the reproduction of drawings by Thomas Shepherd in *The World's Metropolis, or Mighty London, Illustrated by a Series of Views Beautifully Engraved on Steel of Its Palaces, Public Buildings, Monuments, and Streets* (ca. 1860) similarly display the best-looking places of, to quote the preface of *The World's Metropolis*, "the most populous, the largest, the most



commercial, and the richest city in the world . . . ; the emporium of all nations, and the safest and wealthiest point of the universe." Shepherd's drawings were especially current at mid-century, and must have been important in affecting the ideas of many mid-Victorians about how London looked, or could be made to look. The engravings of *The World's Metropolis* were published uncolored under the title *Mighty London*; some were also published in the two series of *Views of Mighty London*, and in *Les Beantes Architecturale de Londres*, published in London by Ackerman and in Paris by H. Mandeville. All of these books are in the Lilly.

The Lilly also holds a complete set in the original eighty-eight parts of John Tallis' more utilitarian but equally attractive *London Street Views* (1838-40). The *Street Views* were originally published in numbers at 1 1/2d. per number (the Lilly also holds a collection of some of the views published in one volume in 1846-47). Each number is given to three or four of the major streets of the city. The number contains two engravings of principal buildings of the neighborhood, short prose descriptions of each street depicted, a directory to the shops and businesses of each street, small maps, and—the main feature—a "Street Chart" in which the buildings on either side of the street are represented in the clarified style of an architectural drawing, with the names of "the Public Buildings, Places of Amusement, Tradesmen's Shops, Name and Trade of Select Occupiers" neatly lettered on or above the drawing of the street front. Tallis intended his *Street Views* principally "To Assist Strangers Visiting the Metropolis, Through Its Mazes Without a Guide." The interest of the collection now, in addition to the attractiveness of the drawings, is that it shows the different kinds of businesses that congregated in differ-

ent neighborhoods, the mixture of churches, public, and private buildings, and of residential and commercial uses in many streets, and the relatively low elevations and varied facades of the street fronts of Victorian London. Some information is also included on tax rates and rents.

Some other collections of views are less elaborately produced than these books. *London in Miniature* (1816), a set of forty-seven small engravings (the edition in the London collection was published in New York), Charles Knight's *Pictorial Half Hours of London Topography* (1840), Tallis' *Illustrated London* (1851), and Herbert Fry's *London in 1880: Illustrated with Bird's Eye Views of the Principal Streets* (1880), like Tallis' *Street Views*, depict parts of the city as it appeared in these different decades to observers apparently more concerned to document it than to display its magnificence. *The Queen's London* (1896), a "Pictorial and Descriptive Record of the Streets, Buildings, Parks and Scenery of the Great Metropolis," is a collection of photographs that also document, without exclaiming over, London's bustle and variety, its new buildings and splendid survivals, its everyday as well as its exotic street life. If these plain or documentary views of the city are picturesque, it is because part of their appeal must have been to interests also satisfied by the views like those of Ireland, Boys and Shepherd, a wish to see and marvel at the spectacle of a city whose scale and diversity were among its excitements.

There are a few late-century books in the London collection in which the city is picturesque and enjoyable only when it is seen not in the large, or even in the present, but very selectively. Percy Fitzgerald's *Picturesque London* (1890) is intended to "show that the Metropolis is as well-furnished with the picturesque as any foreign city, and that there is much that is romantic and

interesting, which, without a sympathetic guide, must escape notice." Fitzgerald, however, finds the picturesque in drawings and descriptions of old churches, a Roman bath, the inns of court, and similar architecture of the past. *Charing Cross to St. Paul's* (1893), reproductions of pen-and-ink vignettes by Joseph Pennell, *London as Seen By Charles Dana Gibson* (published in New York in 1897), and W.J. Loftie's *The Colour of London, Historic, Personal, and Local* (1907), a commentary on some remarkable drawings by a Japanese artist, Yahia Makimo, are similarly selective in their subjects and refined or exotic in their treatment. Fitzgerald quotes Boswell's remark that London can be a different reality to each perception, "but the intelligent man is struck with it as comprehending the whole of human life in all its variety." But Fitzgerald does not try to comprehend the whole of the contemporary city. Instead, like some other late-century writers and artists in the picturesque, he cherishes what he calls "bits," usually survivals of the past, pieces of the whole that perhaps early in the century were pleasing because they bespoke the richness of experience in the city, but which now seem to please because they alone are colorful and comfortable amid the mass and stir of a London made in the nineteenth century.

2) *Sketches of Contemporary London Scenes and Characters*. Perhaps the most popular kind of book about picturesque London in the nineteenth century was a miscellany of prose sketches, always illustrated, of unusual places and events in the city. In *Sketches in London* (1838), for example, James Grant describes a day or an evening in a prison, a workhouse, Parliament, a lunatic asylum, a gaming house, at Bartholomew and Greenwich Fairs, in a penny theatre, and similar places. His object,



he writes, is "to exhibit London in some of the more striking aspects it assumes; and at the same time to lay before the reader such information respecting this modern Babylon, as may prove instructive as well as amusing." Sometimes, as in a sketch about the police, Grant does set out some facts about his subjects. More often, he tries rather to fix the feeling of a place or event, occasionally by inventing characters and episodes and dramatizing them in dialogue, often using the slang, dialects, and rhythms of the speech of the city. Grant's use of the devices of fiction and his knowledge of the odd and striking features of the city place his book in a line that includes Dickens' *Sketches by Boz*, published two years earlier, and the narratives of nights at the opera and days at Tattersalls that make up the fictions of Pierce Egan's *Life in London* (1821) and other stories and sketches of the "fast" life of the city.

The line continues, with very little change, through the nineteenth-century and into the twentieth. Authors of sketches continue to look high and low, and around corners, to find colorful London types (the comic actor, cabmen, clubmen), out-of-the-way places (ginships, the docks, the House of Commons smoking room), and interesting but not really exceptional events (Rag Fair, housekeeping in Belgravia). The titles of their collections continue to suggest that in them the reader will ramble around London in the company of an entertaining, knowing, curious, detached guide to scenes the ordinary Londoner rarely encounters or never really looks at: *Oddities of London Life* (1838); *The Little World of London* (1857; "random sketches . . . with an eye to the picturesque"); Henry Mayhew's *London Characters: Illustrations of the Humour, Pathos, and Particularities of London Life* (1874; some illustrations by W.S. Gilbert); J. Ewing Ritch-



ie's *Here and There in London* (1859) and *About London* (1860); Mark Lemon's *Up and Down the London Streets* (1867); *Wonderful London: Its Light and Shadows, of Humour and Sadness* (1878); George Augustus Sala's *Twice Round the Clock; or, The Hours of the Day and Night in London* (1862) and *Living London* (1883); Clarence Rook's *London Side-Lights* (1908). Like Egan, Dickens, and Grant, the writers of these sketches often worked as journalists. Sometimes a scene in a slum will end in a plea for private-or publicly-supported model housing, or a frivolous character in fashionable life will be mocked. But usually these writers report rather than judge or argue. They play the privileged against those who have gone under, humor against pathos, scenes that satisfy curiosity against scenes that shock, only to make the point that life in London is wonderfully diverse.

The subjects of the sketches of *Gavarni in London: Sketches of Life and Character* (1849: another edition in the London collection is titled *Sketches of London Life and Character*), for example, are often poor, distressed, or criminal. Along with evenings at the opera and Vauxhall, the prose and illustrations of the book describe beggars, street acrobats and musicians, crossing sweeps, coal heavers, and thieves. Gavarni (Hippolyte Chevalier) was a journalist and caricaturist who conducted the Paris *Charivari*, one of the models for *Punch*, and who came to London after the 1848 revolution. His book is a collaboration with Albert Smith, who edited it, Henry Mayhew, Robert Brough, and other writers for the London theatre and comic press. The usual work of all the contributors in forms of mid-Victorian entertainment made it easy for them to match Gavarni's lightly grotesque line with their own wry, detached commentary and thus to entertain their readers with the curiosities of misery as

well as frivolity. Even the deprivation sometimes grimly depicted in the plates Gustave Doré contributed to *London: A Pilgrimage* (1872) were quite properly placed by his collaborator, Blanchard Jerrold, within the conventions and appeal of this way of seeing the picturesque in slums and derelicts as well as gardens and old buildings:

It is impossible, indeed to travel about London in search of the picturesque, and not accumulate a bulky store of matter after only a few mornings. The entrance to Doctors' Commons; Paternoster Row; the drinking fountain in the Minories surrounded with ragged urchins; the prodigious beadle at the Bank; . . . a London cab stand; a pawnbroker's shop on Saturday; the turning out of the police at night; the hospital waiting room for out-patients; outside the casual ward; the stone yard in the morning; . . . the costermongers; the newsboys— . . . London an ugly place, indeed! . . . The work-a-day life of the metropolis, that to the careless or inartistic eye is hard, angular, and ugly in its exterior aspects; offered us pictures at every street corner.

Arthur Symons' *London: A Book of Aspects* (1909) is an interesting exception to the usual tone and statement of these collections of verbal and pictorial sketches of odd people and places in London. Symons, like other writers of picturesque sketches, takes London in its striking aspects. He is attracted by its look at night and in mist, and he is moved by its energy. But his mood changes: "First comes a splendidly disheartening sense of force, forcing you to admire it, then a deep sense of helplessness. London seems a vast ant-heap . . . In London men work as if in darkness, scarcely seeing their own hands as they work, and not knowing the meaning of their labour." He can no longer find the quaint London of Walter Savage Landor: "The old habitable London exists no more." It has been destroyed, he thinks, by the pace and privacy with which people move around in automobiles and

trains without seeing one another or the landscape, by a distribution of wealth that puts the rich and poor into distinct precincts, and, above all, by the size of the city. "Life in great cities," Symons concludes, "dishumanizes humanity."

But the picturesque, even at the end of the century, does not usually tolerate such bleak conclusions. The three-volume *Living London: Its Work and Its Play, Its Humour and Its Pathos, Its Sights and Its Scenes* (1902-3), edited by George R. Sims, is more typical. The book includes hundreds of drawings and photographs, as well as prose descriptions of subjects which range from "Sweated London," street gangs, and doss houses to clubs, "Ballooning London," and the telephone exchange. Sims and his collaborators are not at all unsettled by this variety. These scenes are all part of the "breathing, pulsing panorama that is London," and they describe them with confident comments (London County Council inspectors have improved conditions in the doss houses) which add to their air of knowing how to deal with this multitudinous London, of being able to move in it with the assurance that the more they see, the more interesting the city will be shown to be. As Sims writes in his own book, *Off the Track in London* (1911), it is only when one deliberately seeks the unusual and strongly marked that one sees "this vast city as it really is" and understands "something of the wonder-world of London, which is the world's wonder."

Some of the books given exclusively to the depiction of odd characters on the streets of London also record human degradation and pain that are picturesque only because artists and writers stand at a distance from them. *Extraordinary Characters of the Nineteenth Century*, published by J. Parry in 1805, and *Portraits of Curious Char-*



*acters in London*, published by the house of Darton (1809, 1814) present pictures and anecdotes of urban freaks and eccentrics with an intention, at least in the Parry collection, "to furnish amusement, and, it is hoped, instruction, for a leisure hour." Both collections are remarkable for their anecdotes about once respectable people who have fallen into poverty and eccentric habits. But if it is there that the instruction lies, it is overwhelmed by a fascination with the volume and range of eccentricity that may be observed in the city. In *Vagabondia; or, Anecdotes of Mendicant Wanderers Through the Streets of London; with Portraits of the Most Remarkable* (1817; reprinted 1874 and 1883) and *Etchings of Remarkable Beggars, Itinerant Traders and other Persons of Notoriety in London and Its Environs* (1815-16), the antiquarian John Thomas Smith regards the dwarfs, cripples, and sometimes crazed beggars who are his subjects as "public and disgusting nuisances" who will soon disappear from the streets of a progressive metropolis. But before they disappear, Smith adds, regarding them now not as nuisances but as quaint survivals threatened by progress, he ventures to hope that "a likeness of the most remarkable of them . . . would not be unamusing."

The London collection also includes a remarkable collection of photographs of *Street Life in London* (1877-78; republished in 1881 as *Street Incidents*) by John Thompson. Thompson's photographs are of cabmen, flower women, gypsies, recruiting sergeants, a group of women who live in the streets, a "Dramatic Shoe Black," and other unusually dressed, usually poor, sometimes abject people of the streets. His careful compositions give his subjects a dignity and odd integrity that suggest that Thompson took their pictures not to exploit their appearance or to arouse pity for them, but simply because



he liked the way they looked. The prose commentary, by Adolphe Smith, also expresses sympathy, admiration, and occasionally even envy. Smith likes gypsies, for example, because they "would rather not be trammelled by the usages of . . . regular settled labor." Although he tells stories of the accidents "that may bring a man into the streets, though born of respectable parents," he is more taken by the people of the street not as failures, but as industrious and tough survivors, like John Day, the temperance sweep, who once drank and prospered when he stopped, and the family photographed after a street flood in Lambeth, which in its calamity managed to save its piano.

3) *Illustrated Street Cries*. These responses to the urban poor and working class of curiosity, sympathy, admiration, and perhaps a willed ignorance of some of the darker meanings of their dress and untrammelled occupations are all apparent, sometimes mixed together, in the collections of street cries that were popular, especially as juvenile literature, from at least the middle of the eighteenth century through the first third of the nineteenth. The Virginia Warren collection in the Lilly Library contains scores of these books. Typically they are made of pictures, usually woodcuts, but occasionally highly finished engravings, of street sellers with the words of their cries printed beneath. In one tradition of these collections the street sellers are made picturesque in much the same way that London is made picturesque in early nineteenth-century engravings of handsome architecture and pleasing vistas. In Paul Sandby's *Twelve London Cries from the Life* (1760), and in a set of engravings of Francis Wheatley's *Cries of London* (1793-[1797]), the line is soft, the background full of shadows and soft

masses, the faces are made regular and the poses graceful. (The Wheatley collection also adds music for the cries.) In William Marshall Craig's *Description of the Plates, Representing the Itinerant Traders of London, in Their Ordinary Costume: with Notice of the Remarkable Places Given in the Background* (ca. 1812), and again in *London Cries and Public Edifices, from Sketches on the Spot*, by Luke Limner [John Leighton] (1847, 1851), the street sellers are seen as literally part of the architecture of the city. They are placed in front of famous buildings, and drawn to harmonize with the correct drawing of architectural detail. There is perhaps some wit in these juxtapositions, as when in Leighton's collection a match-seller, described as the poorest of itinerants who "subsist as much by donations as by the sale of their wares," is placed before the Bank of England. But the implication more often is that the street-sellers are no different from the buildings as interesting sights of the city. Craig's drawings, in fact, first appeared in an early nineteenth-century guidebook, Phillips' *Modern London* (1805). The London collection also includes collections of drawings of London street vendors and other odd characters by George Cruikshank (1829) and Thomas Lord Busby (1820).

Another tradition of books containing street cries is epitomized in Thomas Rowlandson's *Cries of London* (1799) and *Characteristic Sketches of the Lower Orders* (ca. 1820), the latter published as a companion to Samuel Leigh's guidebook, *The New Picture of London*. Rowlandson's London is full of life: his street sellers are not posed before buildings, but hard at work in scenes busy with boys, dogs, wagons, and people who actually seem to live in or use the lightly sketched architecture of the backgrounds. It is caricature, and Rowlandson sees only the surface of the working lives he draws. But it is a

caricature of noise and bustle that amuses not just because of its oddity, but also because of its own delight in the force of the people and scenes whose surface reality is vigorously rendered.

The spirit of Rowlandson's caricature was anticipated and preserved in the many books of illustrated street cries published as juvenile literature. These were usually priced at sixpence or less, contained two dozen or so simple woodcuts of street sellers, with the words of their cries and often a paragraph of information and moral reflection appended to each illustration. The preface to the first volume in a popular series, *The Cries of London as They are Daily Exhibited in the Streets*, published by Francis Newbery in 1775, emphasizes that knowledge is to be gained and virtue to be found in ordinary work, and not "in sleepy Cloisters" and "the subtilties of vain philosophy": "In England we find many a hero, many an honest man, and many a shrewd Philosopher . . . among the lowest and most unstudied; at the same time that we discover even among the Great, many who are utterly ignorant of every author except Hoyle, many a coward and many a Knave." This truculent practicality is assisted by a common-sense moralism in the verses that accompany each of the colored woodcuts. The verse appended to an illustration of a seller of mouse traps, for example, concludes: "And this advice still let me give / Void of excess be sure you live, / Else will disease your vitals sap, / For death lies lurking like a trap." But Newbery's preface also contains "A Poetical Description of the British Metropolis," a poem in which the streets of London are taken not as texts for moral instruction, but as the source of plain delight.

Houses, churches, mix'd together,  
Streets unpleasant in all weather;



Prisons, palaces, and shops,  
 Courts of justice, fatal drops [i.e., Newgate];  
 Exhibitions, masquerades,  
 Bridges bright—grand arcades. . .  
 Pipers, fiddlers, tumblers, harpers,  
 Puppets, pickpockets, and sharpers;  
 Beaux and pimps, and many a harlot,  
 Gamesters drest in lace and scarlet; . . .  
 Topsy barrow-women tumbling,  
 Dukes and chimney-sweepers jumbling:  
 Lords with milliners debating,  
 Ladies with their footmen prating;  
 Chairmen, carmen, kennel-rakers,  
 Catchpoles, bailiffs, and thief-takers; . . .  
 Many a bargain, could ye strike it—  
 This is London. How d'ye like it?

A tenth edition of Newbery's collection was published by his successor, John Harris, in 1810. It included the "Poetical Description" as well as a concluding piece in which the cries of this "fantastical crew" are mingled. This pleasure in the variety of the city is also manifest in some other collections of the cries of London's "moving market" published around the turn of the eighteenth century. *The Cries of London, As They Are Heard Daily*, published by J. Chappell early in the nineteenth century, opens with its own huckster's cry: "Then who would not up to London come, / To see such pretty sights / To see the bears and monkees dance, / And other strange delights." The note of advocacy of the industrious street sellers that is sounded in Newbery's collection, and an accompanying hostility to the affluent idle, also appears occasionally. In a late eighteenth-century collection a street-singer peddles "Wilkes and Liberty: A New Song," and an oyster seller is praised as more honest than "her betters." The preface to an early-nineteenth-century book, *Innes' Edition of the Cries of London, or, Pretty Moving*



*Market*, opens the collection disturbingly: "If half the world knew how the other strives,/'Twould spoil the comfort of their easy lives."

But increasingly in the nineteenth century the compilers of these books seem to use their pictures as occasions for offering useful information rather than political or social opinions. The first edition of *London Cries*, a collection published in 1810 by the house of Darton, another publisher of juvenile literature, opened with the statement that the intention of its poems and paragraphs was to assure that "while the eye traced terms familiar to the ear, from daily observation, the mind might gather a portion of instruction." What was to be learned in Darton's collections, which continued at least until mid-century, resided in invitations to reflect on how hard a water-cress seller worked, "the nature of the event" commemorated by hot-cross buns, and "the length of time we have enjoyed the comfort and convenience" of earthen ware. After the 1820's the popularity of these collections seems to have declined. In the few titles in the Warren collection published in the 1830's and 1840's, the pictures and cries appear without a gloss, and in a collection published by Darton in 1831 (and reprinted in 1840) the drawings are used only to illustrate an alphabet. The brightness and vigor of the woodcuts and engravings in the books published by Darton and others still make the city's streets attractive. But increasingly, perhaps as the streets themselves changed, the street sellers seem to be not so much picturesque citizens of London as they are familiars of that world of odd antiquities, like the characters of nursery rhymes, who made up part of nineteenth-century children's literature.

4) *Antiquarian Sketches*. The preface to Richard Thomson's *Chronicles of London Bridge: By an Antiquary* (1827) articulates a motive that, to some degree, seems to have had weight in all the many antiquarian sketches of London published in the nineteenth century. Compiled after the construction of the new London Bridge—the chronicles end with the laying of its first stone in 1825—they begin with a whimsical cry against the alterations that try “the strength of a London antiquaries’ Heart”:

What with pullings-down, and building-up; the turning of land into canals, and covering over old water-ways with new paved streets; erecting pert plaster fronts to some venerable old edifices, and utterly abolishing others from the face of the earth; London but truly resembles the celebrated keepsake-knife of the sailor, which, for its better preservation had been twice rebladed, and was once treated with a new handle.

Then, looking at the old bridge by moonlight, the tide glittering with silver fish and the bridge’s lamps shining like stars, the chronicler engages himself to tell “the interesting story of thy foundation, thine adventures and thy fate” so that when the bridge too disappears, it will live at least in memory.

And in pictures: like other books of this kind, the *Chronicles* is profusely illustrated with new drawings and reproductions of old woodcuts and engravings. John Thomas Smith, keeper of prints and drawings in the British Museum, published several volumes of antiquarian drawings and commentary, including *Antiquities of Westminster . . . Containing Two Hundred and Forty-Six Engravings* (1807), *Antiquities of London* (1791-1800), and *An Antiquarian Ramble in the Streets of London* (second edition, 1846). After mid-century John Timbs began publishing a series of antiquarian books, including *Curiosities of Lon-*

don, *Exhibiting the Most Rare and Remarkable Objects of Interest* (1855; enlarged edition 1867), *Romance of London: Strange Stories, Scenes, and Remarkable Persons of the Great Town* (1865), *London and Westminster: City and Suburb, Strange Events, Characteristics, and Changes of Metropolitan Life* (1868), and *Clubs and Club Life from the 16th Century to the Present* (1872). Antiquarian sketches of this kind were also common in periodicals. *London Scenes and London People* (1863; fourth edition, 1880), sketches of ancient customs and events by "Aleph" (William Harvey), was reprinted from newspapers, and Edward Walford's *Londoniana* (1879) is a collection of sketches, "mostly of an antiquarian cast," first printed in *The Times*, *Once a Week*, *The Builder*, and other journals.

In all these books the antiquarian usually means the colorful and curious of the centuries preceding the nineteenth—the beaux and high play of the eighteenth century, the origins of the Lord Mayor's ceremonies, executions in the Tower, fairs in the streets and on the frozen Thames. Timbs included in his books anecdotes about the O. P. Riots, Cobbett's eccentricities, and the literature of Seven Dials, and Harvey included a sketch on early nineteenth-century street music. It is probable that in antiquarian books published around the turn of the twentieth century—E.S. Machall Smith's *Our Rambles in Old London* (1895), George L. Apperson's *Bygone London Life* (1903)—what Symons called the London of Landor, perhaps even some of the pert plaister fronts that so depressed the chronicler of *London Bridge*, were frequently summoned up to invest late-nineteenth-century London with the charm of its early-nineteenth-century past. For one interest of all these books is that one can see again the need to make a growing and changing London knowable and pleasing by fastening on to what



has not changed, and therefore stands out from the dominant line, mass, and character of the contemporary city.

5) *Histories of Particular Places*. The London collection contains more than 100 histories and descriptions of London wards, parishes, districts, boroughs, and suburbs, from Highgate and Hampstead to Southwark, Lambeth, and Uxbridge, and of particular buildings and places. It is not practical here to try to do more than to call attention to their number and very generally to suggest their features. Early in the century this kind of book was more often given to a building or place—for example, Edward Wedlake Brayley's *History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of St. Peter, Westminster* (1818-23)—than it was to one of the neighborhoods of the city or suburbs. When a book was written about a London district or about one of the villages being absorbed into the metropolis, it was often antiquarian as well as historical in its interests, like Thomas Faulkner's *History and Antiquities of Kensington* (1820) and Douglas Allport's *Collections Illustrative of the Geology, History, Antiquities, and Associations of Camberwell* (1841). These attractions toward London buildings and places with historical associations, and these interests in the past of villages, parishes, and boroughs that were beginning to change, did not abate during the century. There are still titles like *Bygone Southwark* (1895), John Lloyd's *The History, Topography, and Antiquities of Highgate* (1888), and *Ludgate Hill: A Narrative Concerning the People, Places, Legends and Changes of The Great London Highway* (1892) published in the two or three decades before the first World War.

In these last decades of the century another kind of book began increasingly to appear in which, one by one,



by design and accident, each of the distinct parts of London was written up as if it were a city of its own. Some of these books, like W.J. Loftie's *Kensington Picturesque and Historical* (1888) and Charles James Feret's glossy three-volume *Fulham Old and New* (1900), called in the past to help make the present attractive. But when Walter Besant wrote *East London* (second edition, 1902), he found a place with little history; it had all been created, he claimed, after 1830. It also had no center, and no hotels, guilds, or bookstores. Yet the place had its complexities, even its "bits and corners" of beauty, and Besant wrote up its people, their work and pastimes, the landscapes of their streets and of the Pool, and so filled an informative and well-made book that includes many handsome black-and-white illustrations, some of them by Phil May and Joseph Pennell. Early in the twentieth century a series of relatively inexpensive (1s6d. or 2s.) books like Besant's was published under the title "The Fascination of London." It included volumes on Shoreditch and the East End (also by Besant), Chelsea, Clerkenwell, Hampstead and Marlebone, Mayfair, Belgravia and Bayswater, Kensington, Hammersmith, the Strand, and Westminster. These precincts surely hold different fascinations, some of them presumably historical and antiquarian. The series title, however, suggests again that one of the fascinations of London, of the entire, now enormous early twentieth-century metropolis, is simply that it contains so many distinct places of interest. The form of the series also suggests an idea that is manifest in many of the ways to see and write about London in the picturesque mode. By the end of the century one common way to enjoy the variety of London is not to contemplate the whole, and not even to play its contrasting districts and modes of life against one an-

other for the surprise and excitement of their dissonance, but rather to take the city in its parts.

## DARK LONDON

By MARTHA VICINUS

ANY DISTINCTION BETWEEN “picturesque” and “dark” London must be at least partially artificial, with overlapping categories. Nevertheless, this division is useful for emphasizing the interest in the fearful, exciting or titillating aspects of London. The literature of “dark London” has been defined here as that which seeks to show the reader the darker, quasi-legal, illegal, or potentially illegal side of London. Much of this material is frankly exploitative, seeking to cash in on the curiosity of the respectable, or the needs of those seeking illegal amusements, or the fears and desires of those awed by the extent of crime, violence, and poverty in “unknown London.” While the Lilly collection of low-life London materials is by no means complete—no collection of such popular ephemera ever can be—it does contain a representative selection of all the major types of literature, with particular strengths in popular journalism.

The five main categories to be discussed are: 1) *Fast life guides*: This includes fiction purported to be written by “men of pleasure” or prostitutes, guide books to London’s brothels, gambling dens and supper rooms, and a multitude of short-lived journals specializing in gossip, innuendo, and facetious tales. The most important single figure in this category is “Baron” Renton Nicholson (1809-61), whose Judge and Jury Trials were infamous throughout London. 2) *Night life guides*: This includes fiction written to introduce the general reading public to London, emphasizing its night life, from the highly popular music halls to the expensive brothels and gam-



bling dens. Also included here are reforming tracts, intended to warn the young and innocent from frequenting London's night places, and often attacking drink, gambling and loose living in general. Other works are simply descriptive journalism intended to inform by means of short fictionalized accounts of visits to famous, but socially remote, night spots, such as the East End's theatres. 3) *Ragged London*: This category includes the bulk of the journalistic accounts of London's poor, including down-and-outers, the disreputable, and the respectable poor. Many of these works focus on children and child labor, or on those obviously unable to survive the struggle for a livelihood in London's slums. The majority of these accounts also include some comment on recreational activities, including the music hall, theatres, pubs and trips out of London. 4) *Criminal London*: In contrast to category 1, this category includes accounts of outright criminal behavior and police activity. While virtually all of the authors purport to be reformers, like the editors of the journals purveying gossip and accounts of scandalous doings, they often emphasized the horrific and salacious over the improving aspects of their stories. This category also includes a good deal of popular ephemera—penny and two-penny broadsides and pamphlets describing famous murders, rapes, and trials. A small quantity of detective fiction and fictionalized autobiographies of detectives is also here. 5) *Reforming London*: This section focuses on reform books, in contrast to category 3, which includes books warning against the evils of night life. The bulk of this category includes mission works—accounts by and about city missionaries, attempting to bring the wayward back to Christianity, honesty, sobriety or other social virtues. A few books deal with prisoners and criminal-reform. A section on pros-

titution focuses on the Contagious Diseases Acts 1864, 1866 and 1869, and the agitation against them. Also in this category are descriptions of schemes for reforming prostitutes and training them for domestic service. The overwhelming majority of this material dates from the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and is part of the larger reform movements of the time. The best known book in this category is General William Booth's *In Darkest England and The Way Out* (1890), an account of the Salvation Army's work.

The audience for these works was very similar in many ways to those who bought and read books described in "picturesque London," though few of the books in this category were as expensive or as beautifully produced as some of the illustrated collections of views of London. Obviously certain works were available, and appealed to, a very limited audience. The readership of the fast-life guides must have been largely male, and mainly clandestine. The price, if not as high as that of eighteenth-century pornography or pictorial pronography, was often steep enough to exclude all but the wealthy. When material was priced at 6d. or lower, it was much more likely to be subject to legal prosecution. Quite frequently well-known publishers of erotica and gossip journals were arrested for publishing pornography. Adolphus Rosenberg, who published a variety of journals of gossip and "fast" fiction under titles such as *The Umpire*, *Town Tattler*, *Town Topics*, and *Tittle-Tattle*, repeatedly complained of legal harassment. Another common complaint of the publishers of this material was in regard to the difficulty of finding shops that would carry their publications on consignment. The shoddy paper used, and the familiar device of promising more than the contents delivered, also encouraged a limited

audience and a short life for these papers. At the other extreme, some popular fiction was read by hundreds of thousands. Even those who could not read had ample opportunities to hear serial fiction read aloud in pubs, kitchens and family rooms. The circulation of the most famous broadsides and pamphlets, recounting murders and trials, ran into the millions. G. W. M. Reynolds' *Mysteries of London* (1846-50) and *Mysteries of the Court of London* (1849-56) each sold over 200,000 copies in penny numbers. Reynolds is the most commonly mentioned author and publisher whenever popular fiction is mentioned in the nineteenth century. The Lilly collection includes a one-volume excerpted version of these two series; the complete versions are in the Main Library.

Between these two extremes most "dark London" literature was intended to reach a predominantly middle class and upper working-class audience. The very poor could not have afforded much beyond a penny pamphlet, and living conditions did not foster reading habits, even if such men and women wanted to read journalistic accounts of their lives. Popular fiction is rather scantily represented in the London collection. The focus, rather, is on journalistic accounts of low life—the journalist serves as an interpreter, exploring what George Gissing called "the nether region," and then returning to the respectable world to report on his findings. Even the reforming or admonitory works serve the purpose of interpreting an alien world to the ignorant. Indeed, some authors describe the evils of the music hall so glowingly that it is hard not to believe that the results were the opposite to those intended. The general perspective of the author is that of an expert reporting his findings on the "natives." Illustrations, anecdotes, conversations and



other devices are used to bring this world closer to the reader. However attractive or fearful it may be to both reader and author, it is an interpreted world that we see in print, and not an objective account of life in darkest London. The audience for this material was large, and remains so to this day. It was largely those with an interest in urban life, whether out of curiosity or fear, or reforming zeal, who wished to know and to experience more of and about their surroundings—the largest city in the world.

1. *Fast life guides: A: Guide books:* The majority of the fast-life guide books date from the first half of the century, and obviously come out of an eighteenth-century tradition of pornographic introductions to city life. Most are accompanied by at least one illustration, almost invariably of a half-dressed gentleman besieging the bed of a voluptuous prostitute. Many give addresses and names of the best brothels and most satisfying women. Information about gambling, thieves' argot, Judge and Jury clubs, poses plastiques and other titillating entertainments are also included. (A Judge and Jury Club involved dressing in costume, and carrying out mock-trials of the most famous contemporary "criminal conversation" cases; poses plastiques featured women and sometimes men in flesh-colored tights or semi-nude, in classical poses.) The very long titles best described the contents of such guides: "Jon Bee's" [John Badcock] *A Living Picture of London, and Stranger's Guide through the Streets of the Metropolis; Showing the Frauds, Arts, the Snares, and Wiles of All Descriptions of Rogues that Everywhere Abound with Suitable Admonitions, Precautions and Advice on How to Avoid, or Defeat their Attempts; Interspersed with Sketches of Cockney Manners, Life, Society and Customs; and Supported*

*Throughout by Numerous Cases, Anecdotes and Personal Adventures* (ca. 1828) is a more admonitory version of the guide book than most, but its moralizing information is couched in clearly pornographic terms. Bee argues in his preface that he detested “all attempts at teaching this most perilous of all worldly knowledge, by the machinery of ‘pretty novel’ or ‘amusing narrative,’ ” and had therefore told nothing but the bald truth. Defending himself against possible critics, he insists on his high principles in writing a guidebook, “the censor of scoundrels, the expositor of villainies, cannot be supposed capable of being conciliated by the filthy pretensions of him who dares to expect complacencies that belong only to the virtuous . . .” Bee’s elevated style and aggressive defense are characteristic of this genre.

The Hon. F. L. G. [F. Leveson Gower] published “for private circulation” *The Swell’s Night Guide through the Metropolis* (ca. 1840), warning in his introduction that the book “contains no lectures staid and starched, inserted as bugbears to frighten youth from participating in the good things of this world.” The hint of fear is frequently found in guidebooks—as great a fear as pick-pockets and thieves was venereal disease; virtually every author warned against it and had recommendations both for prevention and cure. “A Sporting Surgeon” in *Hints to Men About Town, or Waterfordiana* (ca. 1845-50) offered information on the cure and prevention of “venereal infection.” Gower prices accomodation houses at 5s. to £1, warning against giving money for information about a house, and recommending that the reader investigate before paying for services. The Lilly has several copies of *The Bachelor’s Guide to Life in London, with its Saloons, Clubs, Ball, Concert and Billiard Rooms, Theatres, Casinos, Comical Clubs, Exhibitions, Debating Societies, and All the Gaities that*

*Possess "a Local Habitation and a Name;" Useful Sporting Information, Boxiana, Gymnasia, etc. To which Is Added a Select List of Celebrated Chop Houses, Wine and Supper Rooms, etc. etc.,* published at mid-century by "Ward's Readable Book Depot" for 7/6. The relatively cheap price of the book, and the long list of entertainments are important reminders that not all fast-life guidebooks were primarily introductions to brothels. They prided themselves in offering complete guides to all forms of "gaities."

Most guidebooks included a section called "Hints to Yokels," explaining the dangers of London life for the uninitiated, and including a glossary of thieves' and/or Cockney languages. Indeed, some specialized in introducing the reader to this argot, such as *The Flash Mirror; or Kiddy's Cabinet, Containing Amongst Many Other Rum Goes, a Famous Guide to All the Flash Houses, Meeting houses, Boozing Kens and Snoozing Kens in London*, by "A Regular Slangsmen" (ca. 1830), or *Yokel's Preceptor, or Joskin's Vocabulary, "A Flat's Ogle's Opened," Flying Kens and Flask Cribbs of London*, "by a cove wot's seen a move or two" (1830's). George Cruikshank illustrated a rather pallid flash dictionary and guidebook, *Sinks of London Laid Open: A Pocket Companion for the Uninitiated, to which Is Added a Modern Flash Dictionary Containing All the Cant Words, Slang Turns and Flash Phrases Now in Vogue, with a List of the 60 Orders of Prime Coves* (1848). This form of guidebook became less common after 1850, and separated off into either pure pornography or into guidebooks emphasizing cant language and a more moralizing, fearful account of a thieves' London. These earlier books, in contrast, rarely show fear of London's darker side, despite numerous warnings against possible dangers; the gentleman-reader was presumed to be in control and to manage his affairs with a modicum of



good sense, even when drunk or in dishabille. If he were gulled, he should be careful to lose no more than he could afford.

B. *Fast life fiction*: Most of this fiction is frankly pornographic, playing upon a whole series of familiar themes, such as a hypocritical Jesuit and nun, in *Venus in the Cloister* (1839), or Spanish amours, in *The Cuckold*, or *Woman Unveiled* (n.d.) or *Horn Tales*; or *The Art of Cuckoldry Made Easy* (ca. 1810), or the revealing of a madame's secrets, usually coming from a well-known house, if not well-known person, as in the *Life of Mrs. Bertram*, or *Memoirs of Mother Bang* (ca. 1820) and "A Navel Officer's" account of *The Private Adventures of Mme. Vestris*, and *Mrs. Cornely's Entertainments at Carlisle House, Soho Square* (1840). There are several updates of and reprinted excerpts from John Cleland's *Fanny Hill* in the London collection. (Some of these excerpts were printed as pamphlets and are cited under various titles in a list of uncatalogued materials titled "London: Short Title List" that is available in the reading room of the Lilly Library.) There is also a series of "yellow back" double-columned paperbacks written in the style of G. W. M. Reynolds, with more lascivious and sensual descriptions, such as *The Outsiders of Society*; or, *The Wild Beauties of London* (ca. 1870), which is bound with Bracebridge Hemyng's *Women in London*, presumably published around the same date; *The Wild Boys of London*; or, *The Children of Night* (n.d.); *The Work Girls of London, their Trials and Temptations* (1865); *The Merry Wives of London, A Romance of Metropolitan Life* (n.d.), and "Lady Maude Annesley," *The Dashing Girls of London, or The Six Beauties of St. James* (n.d.). All of these sensual adventures include some account of thievery and illegal activities, showing the links between prostitution and crime as inevitable and yet still

enticing. Only *Fanny White and Her Friend Jack Rawlings: A Romance of a Young Lady Thief and a Boy Burglar* (ca. 1860) shifts the emphasis away from sex to crime, concluding with their end as the Earl of Stonecliffe and his lover. The fiction itself is simply a series of sexual or social adventures thinly tied together by a main character; the usual range of sexual activities are pursued, though few include scenes of male homosexuality, aside from *The Phoenix of Sodom, or, The Vere Street Coterie* (1813).

The London collection also contains two early-nineteenth-century periodicals which published pornography. There is a complete run of *The Rambler's Magazine; or, Fashionable Emporium of Polite Literature . . . the Gay Variety of Supreme Bon-Ton* (1822-23). *The Rambler's Magazine* emphasized fiction, and some of its contents often appeared in one or another kind of pornographic publication throughout the rest of the century. It was succeeded by the *New London Rambler's Magazine; or, Annals of Gallantry, Glee, Pleasure and Bon-Ton* (1828). Many advertisements of pornographic books and magazines, and some catalogues put out by publishers and booksellers of what they variously described as "select," "facetious," or "fast and funny" literature, are cited in the short-title list of uncatalogued materials in the London collection available in the reading room of the Lilly Library.

C. *Fast-life journalism*. Fast-life periodicals, usually weeklies that sold for a penny or two, were mixtures of guides to the carnal pleasures of the city, scurrilous gossip about prominent personages and obscure people identified only by their initials, sketches of individuals and types familiar in the town, sexually suggestive jokes, and nearly pornographic fiction. Usually they were illustrated by one or two woodcuts, almost always of an in-

nocuous scene sometimes made racy by a caption carrying sexual innuendo.

One of the most successful and best known of these journals was *The Town: A Journal of Original Essays, Characteristic of the Manners, Social, Domestic, and Superficial, of London and the Londoners*, a two-penny weekly published in the form of a newspaper from 1837 to 1842 (the Lilly holds the complete run). The owner and editor of *The Town* was Renton Nicholson, who was also the producer and principal performer of the Judge and Jury Society. (The Lilly also holds copies of Nicholson's *Autobiography of a Fast Man*, published in 1863, and of his *Sketches of Celebrated Characters, and Key to the Judge and Jury Society* [1844?].) Like one of its contemporaries, *The Crim.-Con. Gazette* (1838-40) (in its late numbers its title was *The Bon-Ton Gazette*), of which the Lilly has a complete file (82 numbers), *The Town* pretended to the classical role of the reforming satirist. "We are the good genii of London," Nicholson wrote in the first number of *The Town*, "the great moral reformer of men and manners." The *Gazette* specified as one of its purposes "to arrest as much as possible the progress of aristocratic vice and debauchery," and both journals sometimes seem to show a political bias in their attention to scandalous gossip about royalty and the aristocracy. Both also occasionally published exposés of such practices as false advertising and the marketing of spoiled meat, and *The Town* published attacks on the police, the courts, baby farming, and other institutions that harassed and outraged ordinary citizens. But it is hard to imagine anyone reading *The Town* or *The Crim.-Con. Gazette* for moral improvement or political and social enlightenment. What matters in the first is the gossip, and in the second the accounts of scandalous court cases. To these features were added reviews of



plays and “harmonic evenings” at pubs and free-and-easies, descriptions of gambling houses and brothels, and sketches of actresses, police officers, prostitutes, sportsmen, and the pretty women who run cigar shops—all written up in the mock elevations and knowing tone made popular by Pierce Egan and intended to make readers feel that they are not just learning about but also participating in the fast life.

The London collection includes a bound volume of numbers of each of several imitations of *The Town: Sam Sly, or, The Town* (1848-49); *Paul Pry, The Reformer of the Age* (1848-49); and *The Peeping Tom, Wit, Fun, and Facetia* [sic] (ca. 1850). Each sold for a penny and was published a weekly newspaper, except for *Peeping Tom*, published in quarto after its first numbers because “There is a feeling in all minds, that the subjects discussed . . . are not of the evanescent nature which characterizes our contemporaries.” Although all these journals published gossip, there is a drift perceptible in them toward the publication of fiction and other features and away from reports about the current events in the town. When *The Town* itself was revived in 1849-50, it no longer published gossip, but only sketches and serials (“Mrs. Lorimer Spinks, the Married Lady Who Was a Little Too Gay”). This formula was continued in *The Fast Man* (1850), which published accounts of trials for incest along with its serials (“Miss Lavendar Miffs, . . . by the author of Mrs. Lorimer Spinks”).

This change in the journalism of the fast life is also apparent in the equivalents of these periodicals published in the 1860’s and after. The format now was usually that of a magazine, like *Punch* and other comic weeklies. The tradition of satire that reforms was recalled in the titles of many of these papers: *The Showman*

(1860's); *The Castigator: A Journal of Politics and Guardian of Public Interests* (1860's); *Lucifer, or, The London Lamplighter* (1875); *The London Peep Show: Truths about Men and Women As They Are* (1879); *Sound Sense; Is the Talk of the Town and the Reformer of Abuses* (1879); *The Hot Member* (later *The New Babylon*; 1880); *The Rod* (1881); *Men and Manners: A Satirical and Critical Journal* (1893). (Most of these journals are cited in the short-title list of uncataloged material in the London collection.) The London collection contains only an issue or two of each of these journals, and it is therefore difficult to know whether they lived up to the fearful promise of some of their names. *The Day's Doings*, a three-penny weekly published in the 1870's and apparently revived in 1881 (the Lilly holds the first number of 1881 volume), attained notoriety by publishing gossip about the sexual liaisons of the Prince of Wales, an irreverence beyond those usually attempted in these journals. *Town Talk*, published and edited by Adolphus Rosenberg (1878-85)—the Lilly holds about forty numbers, most of them from the early years of its run—frequently published complaints that its vendors were harassed by authorities who thought the publication obscene. Rosenberg also published *Rosenberg's Little Journal, Independent and Plain Speaking* (1886-87), *Tittle Tattle* (1888), and *Town Topics* (1894)—the Lilly holds some issues of each of these journals—and did eventually go to jail for libel. But the gossip of most of these journals does not seem much different from that published in society papers given to news about fashionable life that was popular in the 1860's and after, and the rest of their content seems miscellaneous and spiritless: attacks on easy targets like money lenders, some illustrations exposing female legs, some fiction, and sometimes theatre, police, or sports news.

It is certainly wrong to take the relatively bland tone and unfocused interests of these journals as evidence that the nocturnal pleasures of London in the second half of the century were more staid and less available than those of the city during the Regency and early Victorian decades. It is more likely that changes in manners, and the enforcement of laws like the Obscene Publications Act of 1857—probably prosecuted more rigorously, as Rosenberg often complained, against cheap than against expensive books and periodicals—assured that the fast life of the city was celebrated differently, in the innocent exuberance of music-hall songs like “Champagne Charlie,” for example (copies are in the Starr collection in the Lilly). Its journalism also suggests that the character of fast life itself did change in the second half of the century, becoming not more staid but less coherent and more furtive than the realm which in the years of Pierce Egan and Renton Nicholson seems to be a distinct precinct of the city to be openly visited and enjoyed by young men, and by middle-aged men trying to recover the pleasures of youth.

2. *Night-Life guides*. The line drawn between “night-life” and fast-life guides is a fine one, but generally speaking, “night-life” guides have been defined as accounts of various London amusements, rather than descriptions that focus on sexual scenes and the demi-monde. The night-life guides are to legal places, with an emphasis upon—once again—the safety of the reader, and his concomitant enjoyment. The chief progenitor of this form is Pierce Egan and his *Life in London* (1821), popularly known as “Tom and Jerry,” describing Corinthian Tom’s introduction of his country-cousin, Jerry Hawthorne, to the sights of London. Egan wrote a play, and a



sequel, *Finish to the Adventures of Tom, Jerry and Logic* (1830), and numerous imitators published similar tales. The format of showing a greenhorn around the city had been used many times before, but the particular combination of the Cruikshank brothers' illustrations, thieves' slang, descriptions of actual places (Covent Garden, Astley's, thieves' dens, etc.), an oblique treatment of sex and a light-hearted view of danger, made the formula particularly attractive in the early nineteenth century. The Lilly has several versions of "Tom and Jerry," including five plays, and *Real Life in London* (1821-22), a two-volume account of Tom Dashall and Bob Tallyho, "Exhibiting a Living Picture of Fashionable Character, Manners, and Amusements by an Amateur," complete with illustrations of a generally inferior quality. Other similar titles include *Life in the West, or The Curtain Drawn, by a Flat Enlightened* (1828), Alfred Thornton's, *Don Juan; Volume The Second, . . . Containing Sketches, Scenes, Conversations, and Anecdotes of the Last Importance to Families, and Men of Rank, Fashion, and Fortune, Founded on Facts, Containing His Life in London, Or, A True Picture of the British Metropolis* (1822), *The Confessions of a Gamester* (1824) and Charles Malloy Westmacott's *Mammon in London* (1823). By the mid-century Egan's gay bachelors on a spree were transformed into heroes cast into the dangerous and uncontrollable world of G. W. M. Reynolds' *Mysteries of London* and *Mysteries of the Court of London*. The earnest, innocent (and passive) hero is propelled through an extraordinarily large number of mishaps before finally finding financial and matrimonial bliss—but evil always lurks at the periphery, to titillate and frighten readers.

London as a marvelous, exotic, but basically unthreatening place of pleasure did not survive long as a popular image. Only the wealthy Bohemians of the late

nineteenth century could afford to live in such a city, and by concentrating on the theatre and popular entertainment world, they thrive as commentators on Bohemia—often seen as bygone days. A very chic, late example of this format is Ralph Nevill's *Night Life in London and Paris* (1926). Little of the salacious or illicit is found in such accounts as Arthur a'Beckett's *London at the End of the Century: A Book of Gossip* (1900), *London in the Sixties* (ca. 1914) by "One of the Old Brigade" [Donald Shaw], Arthur Ransome's *Bohemia in London* (1907), the wife of a leading theatre producer, Mrs. Margaret Clement Scott's *Old Days in Bohemian London* (1919), and John Hollingshead's many publications on his life as a theatre director and manager. This world was safe in its raffishness because it was primarily concerned with the entertainment world, with its rapidly developing system of stars, agents and mass audiences, rather than the joint worlds of crime and pleasure.

While accounts of Bohemia written by its members seem exceptionally numerous, large numbers of admonitory books appear to have been written, particularly during the years 1850-70, when the theatres and music halls were beginning to gain a mass audience of single men looking for cheap and relatively safe entertainment. Hundreds of cheap songbooks were printed, often claiming to contain all the latest songs sung at some of the more famous night spots, such as the songster sold at *Evans's Supper and Music Rooms, Covent Garden* (n.d. [1871]) (other songsters are cited in the short-title list of catalogued material in the London collection.) The many volumes warning the young include [Margaret Eloise Harkness], *Tempted London: Young Men* (1888), and *Toilers in London, or Inquiries Concerning Female Labour in the Metropolis* (1889); Robert Machray's *Night Side of London*

(1902); and J. Ewing Ritchie's *Days and Nights in London; or, Studies in Black and Gray* (1880). The subtitle "Black and Gray" gives some indication of the changed tone of journalists exploring the night life of London; its dangers were more forceful than its pleasures for most by the 1880's, unless one stayed within the confines of the legal theatre and halls.

During this period the three major journalists to introduce dark London to a wider reading public were James Greenwood (1832-1929), George Augustus Sala (1828-96), and John Hollingshead (1827-1904), all reputable journalists who also were well known as commentators on picturesque London. Greenwood wrote a series of tales about Ratcliffe Highway's thieves, *Low-Life Deeps: An Account of the Strange Fish to be found there* (1876); an account of working-class recreations and day-trips, *In Strange Company* (1874); an exposé *A Night in the Workhouse* (1866); and a foray into the slums, *Journeys through London; or Byways of Modern London* (1873). Sala preferred the more picturesque aspects of London, giving an aura of romance to his descriptions of life among the poor, or the Bohemian, as in *London Up to Date* (1894), an account of London's latest conveniences, and a series of *Echoes of the Year* during the 1880's, presenting dramatic, social, political, sporting, legal, and literary events, reprinted from his articles of the previous year. Sala, at the other end of the scale from Egan, shades into the picturesque, with an emphasis upon curiosities rather than adventures. John Hollingshead, a man of many worlds, combined a career in the theatre, a close association with Charles Dickens through *Household Words*, and a reputation as a Bohemian. *Under Bow Bells: A City Book for All Readers* (1860) and *Rubbing the Gilt Off: A West End Book for All Readers* (1860) are typical of his collections of essays,



drawn largely from *Household Words*, and emphasizing the more picturesque elements of London life. His *Ragged London in 1861* (1861), based on letters originally published in the *Morning Post* under the title "London Horrors," describes the plight of the underemployed slum dwellers—numbering some million—in London, is similar to other reforming works published under category 3. Always one to find some part of London worth writing about, particularly in the scramble to earn a good living, Hollingshead also wrote a popular account of London's burgeoning system of sewers, water and gas supplies, *Underground London* (1862). The scope of the works written by these three men, without mentioning their theatre writings, is indicative of how wide a net popular journalists cast in their efforts to find amusing subjects for their readers.

3. *Ragged London*. Most of the authors in this category exhibit a reforming zeal characteristic of mid-Victorian England, but few had any practical solutions, though the Peabody Trust trumpeted its successes in establishing grim, prison-like model houses, in *Mr. Peabody's Gift to the Poor of London* (1865). The nature of this material—the outsider looking in, appalled and frightened by the enormity of what he finds—is well expressed by two of the most famous mid-century tracts, Thomas Beames' *The Rookeries of London: Past, Present and Prospective* (1850) on St. Giles and Bermondsey, and George Godwin's *Town Swamps and Social Bridges* (1850), describing, with numerous engravings, the conditions of housing and the entertainments of the poor. Child employment, unemployment and housing are the three areas most often discussed, with the highly visible housing of the slums taking precedence among reforming journal-

ists, with such titles as Godwin's *Another Blow for Life* (1864), Ellen Barlee's *Our Homeless Poor and What We Can Do to Help Them* (1860), Octavia Hill's *Home of the London Poor* (1875), Richard Rowe's *Life in the London Streets; or, Struggles for Daily Bread* (1881), which draws from current fiction, and uses Cockney dialect, and *The Great Army of London Poor* (ca. 1880), by "The River-side Visitor." The criminal and destitute were examined, along with their more honest peers, in John Garwood's *The Million-peopled City; or, One-half of the People of London Made Known to the Other Half* (1853), which describes London juveniles, the Irish, Chelsea pensioners, omnibus drivers, and the criminal class; and in the more narrowly defined *Our Plague Spot: In Connection with Our Polity and Usages* (1859) on the dangers of venereal disease and the problems of training women in proper employment. The London collection also contains an original edition of Henry Mayhew's ground-breaking study, *London Labour and the London Poor: A Cyclopaedia of the Conditions and Earnings of Those that Will Work, Those that Cannot Work and Those that Will Not Work* (1861-62). Originally published in the *Morning Chronicle* during the years 1849-51, and then as a two-penny weekly during 1851-52, this four-volume study remains the finest and most complete study of the London poor at mid-century. The illustrations, detailed recreations of conversations, and endless statistics add up to an unforgettable picture of the London poor struggling to survive.

From the 1880's more "scientific" studies of the poor proliferated, beginning with Charles Booth's pioneering *Condition and Occupations of the People of the Tower Hamlets, 1886-87* (1887), leading to Frank Hird's *The Cry of the Children: An Exposure of Certain British Industries in which Children are Iniquitously Employed* (2nd ed., 1898) and

three socialist-oriented accounts, *The Poor in Great Cities, Their Problems and What is Being Done to Solve Them* (1896), by Robert Woods, *et. al.*, Robert Blatchford's *Dismal England* (1899), and Edward G. Howarth and Mona Wilson, *West Ham: A Study in Social and Industrial Problems* (1907). The Lilly also has the seventeen-volume edition of Charles Booth's *Life and Labour of the People of London* (1902, 1903). Alongside these studies the more traditional curiosity-seeking journalism continued to thrive, with such publications as Philip Davis' *Street-land: Its Little People and Big Problems* (1915), Montagu Williams' *Round London, Down East and Up West* (1893), Marjory Hardcastle's *Halfpenny Alley* (1913), the outcome of six years of nursing in the East End of London, and Mrs. Cecil Chesterton's [Ada Elizabeth Jones] *In Darkest London* (1926), a fascinating account of how down-and-out women survive, written by a woman who herself lived among deserted, unemployed and unemployable women for several months at Salvation Army hostels, common lodging houses and other less savory places. B.S. Townroe's *The Slum Problems* (1928) contains a general description of nineteenth-century slums.

B. *Fiction*. Interesting though the early sociological and journalistic accounts of ragged London may be, late-nineteenth-century fiction should not be neglected. The works of Edwin Pugh, Arthur Morrison, and others brought a new advance in naturalistic fiction. The best-known works were Morrison's *Tales of Mean Streets* (1894) and *Child of the Jago* (1896), Edwin Pugh's *Tony Drum, A Cockney Boy* (1898), and A. St. John Adcock's *East End Idylls* (1897). Lesser-known works include James Greenwood's *The Little Ragamuffins: or, Outcast London: A Story of the Sorrows and Sufferings of the Poor* (1884), and Tag, Rag & Co.: *Sketches of the People* (1883). Watts Phillips' *The Wild*



*Tribes of London* (1855) is a fictionalized account of life in “the depths,” and reads like a combination of the sensationalism of Reynolds and the naturalism of Morrison. The Lilly’s selection of fiction is spotty, but most of these novels had very small runs, and unless a writer had a previous reputation as a journalist, interest in fiction descriptive of the poor waxed and waned with contemporary social and political concerns. No continuous history of social-realism fiction sustained an author, but instead he drew inspiration from the journalism of the explorers of slums.

4. *Criminal London*. The Lilly’s collection of books on crime is rather more limited than its fast-life material, and most of it shades into “ragged London” in its description of the life of the very poor co-mingling with that of the thieves and prostitutes of the neighborhood. Aside from *The Elegant Sharper; or, The Science of Villainy display’d* (1804), by “Peter Pindar, Jun.” [C.F. Lawler] and the virulent Robert Mudie, in *London and Londoners: or, A Second Judgment of Babylon The Great* (2nd. ed., 1836), virtually all the books, pamphlets, and broadsides on London crime date from 1850 to 1935, with the bulk from 1870-1900. A popular form of memoirs from the late nineteenth century was the detective’s—a figure that did not even exist in the first part of the century. Superintendent James Bent’s *Criminal Life: Reminiscences of Forty-two Years as a Police Officer* (1891), Sargeant B. Leeson’s *Lost London: The Memoirs of an East End Detective* (1934), George Hodder’s *Sketches of Life and Character taken at the Police Court* (1845; originally published in the *Morning Herald*) and several books by “Waters” [William Russell], such as *Recollections of a Detective Police Officer*

(1st. ser. 1856; 2nd. ser. 1859) and *Traditions of London* (1859), are examples of this genre.

A number of more enterprising journalists wrote about the world of thieves in a style similar to the accounts of Greenwood, Hollingshead and Sala about ragged London. Bart Kennedy's *London in Shadow* (1902) contains brief sketches of strikes, crowds, dock life, and the music hall, in addition to scenes of crime. *The Life and Adventures of a Social Wastrel: a Story of Real Life* (1875) is a fictionalized tale of an educated hunchback who makes his way as a tramp. Despite repeated efforts to find respectable employment or emigrate, he is continually forced on the tramp; one moderately successful venture was the writing of broadside verse. This rather mawkish tale represents a typical transitional view of the poor—the hunchback's parents are blamed for his fate, and a gentle-born hero is made as sympathetic as possible. But the insoluble problems of the poor are also described.

Later works frequently emphasized the plight of an individual, in an effort to personalize and make more manageable the overwhelming scale of London's ragged and criminal classes. Efforts were made consistently to contain the fears of readers, and to offer some explanation of the lives of the underclass. Rarely do we find a larger social analysis of the sources of criminality, though most explanations do show a conjunction of poor housing, poor education, and few if any job opportunities. The more colorful aspects of crime were minimized by the investigatory journalists, despite their plentiful use of anecdote; only cheaper, fictional forms of reportage emphasized bloody murders, sexual perversities, or exotic thieveries. One exception to this generalization is D. Moirer Evans' *Facts, Failures and Frauds: Revelations Financial, Mercantile, Criminal* (1859), a long and detailed

account of the “high art” of large-scale financial swindles. Ironically, Evans himself went bankrupt in 1873 and died the next year.

Many reporters of criminal London were reformers, and some wrote for specific organizations, such as the Howard Association (prison reform), or the various organizations against the Contagious Diseases Acts (see 5 below). “A Prison Matron” [Frederick William Robinson] wrote *Female Life in Prison* (1862) and *Memoirs of Jane Cameron, Female Convict* (1864), two detailed accounts of daily prison life, and *Prison Characters Drawn From Life* (1866), all advocating moderate suggestions for reform. *Whitecross and the Bench: A Reminiscence of the Past by the Author of Five Years’ Penal Servitude* (1879) gives details of sponging houses, street prisons, prison charities, rules of the bench, etc. Francis Peek, chairman of the Howard Association, wrote an attack on socialism, with suggestions of alternative reforms in *The Workless, The Thriftless and the Worthless* (1888); the title itself indicates his own rather mixed approach to those he was attempting to assist. Thomas Holmes, a later secretary of the Association, wrote *London’s Underworld* (1912). T. Whyte Mountain, of a new generation of journalists, contributed *Life in London’s Great Prisons* (1930). The most important study on Victorian prisons, however, in the London collection is probably the pioneering *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life*, by Henry Mayhew and John Binny (1862), with numerous illustrations. The Lilly also has a number of recent secondary sources on crime, which supplement the rather incomplete primary documents.

B. *Broadsides and street literature*. The London collection contains several hundred broadsides, ballads, cartoons (sometimes called “wall-papers”) and pamphlets,



most of them published in the 1860's and 1870's, that were sold for a penny or two on the streets. (Most of these items are cited in the list of uncatalogued material available in the reading room of the Lilly.) The subjects of this street literature were often crime, disaster, and (less often) the scandals and dangers of the fast life of London. The Tichborne trials of the 1870's, for example, engendered a variety of publications sold on the streets: ballads; pamphlets about the claimant, his counsel Kenealy, and the trial itself; lithographed cartoons; mock playbills, auction bills, advertisements, and reward posters; and the *Tichborne Times* and the *Tichborne News*, journals published to raise money for the claimant's legal expenses. The Mordaunt divorce case, in which the Prince of Wales was involved, is chronicled in several street ballads and pamphlets in the London collection. So is a curious case of transvestism ("The Funny He-She Ladies"); an "alleged disgusting indecent outrage" attempted by one Colonel Baker upon a respectable female in a railway carriage; the trial and execution of the criminal Charles Peace; and such sensational murders of the 1860's and 1870's as the Bravo case (poisoning), the Whitechapel mystery (dismemberment), and the Penge murder (the starvation of a young woman). The collection also includes issues of the *Police News*, the *Illustrated Police Budget*, *Police News Miscellany*, the *London Clipper*, the *Weekly Star*, *Sensation*, *The World We Live In*, the *World's Doings*, and *Penny Pictorial News and Family Story Paper*, all of them penny journals, most of them published in the 1860's and 1870's, and all of them featuring accounts of murder and divorce trials, train- and ship-wrecks, earthquakes, and other sensational disasters.

By the 1860's the popularity of street ballads and broadsides among the working classes of the city was

yielding before the growth of cheap daily and weekly newspapers. The ballads and broadsides in the London collection show, however, that the variety of topics treated in these forms was still extensive in the 1860's and 1870's. Street singers still sold ballads attributed to criminals on the eve of their executions, comic songs ("Tommy, Make Room for Your Uncle"), sentimental songs (" 'Twas Rank and Fame That Tempted Thee"), patriotic songs ("Lines on the Zulu War"), songs about nautical disasters, and songs taken over from the minstrel shows and now, in the 1860's some of the early music-hall performers. A few of the street broadsides and cartoons are political, some of them in forms popular since the beginning of the century ("The New Litany for 1871"; "A Dish of Facts and Scraps, or, a Touch at the Times"). There are broadsides attacking Gladstone ("return to your duty . . . or prepare to be sent to the imbecile ward of our nearest Union. Look out, Billy, I am not joking") and street cartoons attacking Disraeli. There are complaints about laws that limit Sunday trading and about taxes on beer and matches. There are cartoons attacking the Prince of Wales, ritualists, police brutality, Bismarck, the Pope, and nearly all other foreign powers, and there are ballads praising the Queen's visit to Whitechapel and the marriage of one of the royal princesses to a Briton, for a change. The collection also includes a remarkable street ballad mocking Darwin's ideas ("Dr. Darwin"), a curious and compelling "wall-paper" from the *Police News Miscellany* depicting various ways to die ("The Dance of Death"), and a colored cartoon which questions whether a Britain corrupted by scandal and sensation has the right to rule India and the pious institutions of its culture ("The Anglo-Indian Juggernaut").

The pamphlets included in this part of the London collection, and probably sold on the streets as well as through newsagents, are similarly various in their topics. Some purport to be exposés and warnings about the fast life of the city. These pamphlets range from variations on classic themes—*Crimes of the Aristocracy*, by a *Discharged Footman*; *Life in London*, by a *Town Traveller*; *The Modern Fanny Hill*—to more topical subjects: *A Story of the Argyll Rooms*, *Told By One Who Has Fallen*; *From the Rink to the Brink*; or, *Vice and Its Victims*, the latter a cautionary tale about skating rinks. There are several pamphlets and cartoons about Brigham Young, all of them amused by the domestic arrangements of polygamy. The visit of the Shah of Persia to London was the occasion for the publication of several short biographies of the Shah, and the Eastern question was considered in several cartoons and pamphlets about Turkish atrocities. There are also pamphlets revealing Popish plots and the Prince of Wales' debts, reprintings of Mother Shipton's prophecies, guides to the interpretation of dreams, and the famous and extremely interesting exposition of the means of birth control, *The Fruits of Philosophy* (first published in the 1830's), by the American Charles Knowlton, along with a reply, *The Fruits of Philosophy for Both Sexes*, which enlists the wisdom of the "Chinese Bible" in a refutation.

In sum, this small but representative collection of mid-century street literature testifies that its urban, mostly working-class and lower-middle-class audiences were fascinated by crime, disaster, and intimations of scandal and vice, especially among the respectable middle classes and an aristocracy still imagined as licentious. More important, the variety of topics and tones in this literature of the streets testifies again to the complexity of the city and responses to it. In this material, we can guess



at the tough, skeptical, truculent, insular, witty, sentimental sensibilities of some of the people who lived in districts and were at home in streets that were described by others, accurately but incompletely, as dark and vicious.

5. *Reforming London*. Obviously much of the journalism described in categories 3 and 4 could as easily be placed under 5, although most of it was not primarily interested in seeing specific reforms, but rather in emphasizing the necessity of some kind of reform. The books discussed in this category, however, are primarily about social evils and how to cure them—or, at times, how no cure appears possible. The majority are religiously based, and most often the author has had specific experience in a Christian “mission” to the slums of London. A. D. S.’s *Ups and Downs of a Blue Coat Boy* (ca. 1880) is the only reforming book in the Sadleir collection primarily dedicated to temperance and the evils of “foul drink.” Typical of the reformers’ work is John Blackmore’s *The London By Moonlight Mission: Being an Account of Midnight Cruises on the Streets of London* (1860). Blackmore was a Christian rescue worker among prostitutes, pickpockets and street thieves, who founded “Female Temperance Homes and Dormitories” for the homeless. Between 1853, when he began, and 1 January 1860, Blackmore helped 3,180 women in three separate missions. Of these, 474 were “restored to their parents and friends”; 733 were sent into service; 93 emigrated; 78 married; 15 were placed in business; 1,305 received “temporary assistance”; and 47 were still in the homes. Those who stayed for re-training stayed an average of nine months; obviously the majority could only be assisted for a brief period of time. Blackmore’s mission was

a small enough effort, given the few that could be served, but it was one solution to the crying need for cheap housing in London, so amply demonstrated by the books described in category 3.

James Dunn's solution in *Modern London: Its Sins and Woes and the Sovereign Remedy* (1906) was to take Christianity to the slums. Unfortunately, there is ample evidence of the failures of this remedy, as documented by Richard Free, an East End clergyman, in *Seven Years Hard* (1904), Canon Arthur Jephson of Southwark, in *My Work in London* (1910) (Jephson was the model for the vicar in Morrison's *Child of the Jago*), Rev. James Yeames in *Life in London Alleys* (n.d.), and by "A Travelling Correspondent" in *The Rev. William Cuff in Shoreditch: Realistic Sketches of East London Life and Work* (1878). Alexander Paterson, an elementary school teacher, came to many of the same conclusions as the religious in *Across the Bridges, or Life by the South London River-side* (1911), though he felt more confident about the ultimate benefits of education, and emphasized the strength of working-class families, and their good-hearted generosity instead of the grimmer aspects of slum life.

All of these works were clearly aimed at a middle-class religious audience, and indeed, Charles Bosanquet wrote a guide to "the numerous ways" middle-class newcomers, especially from the professional classes, could join organizations to help the poor. His optimism in *London: Some Account of Its Growth, Charitable Agencies, and Wants* (1869) is echoed in L. N. R.'s *The Missing Link, or Bible-Women in the Homes of the London Poor* (1860), describing outreach work to the "sunken sixth." A dabbler in reform, Olive Christian Malvery, wrote *The Soul Market* (3rd. ed., 1907) about her work among poor women, including an interesting account of dressing as a flower

girl to experience street-selling life. Her work, however, had little reference to specific organizations, and it is difficult to see what she accomplished. In contrast, the London City Mission had a long and honorable history of offering aid to all sorts of men and women, as recounted by R.W. Vanderkiste in *Notes and Narratives of a Six Years' Mission, Principally among the Dens of London* (1854), and John Matthias Weylland's two volumes, *Round the Tower; or, the Story of the London City Mission* (2nd ed., ca. 1874), and *These Fifty Years, being the Jubilee Volume of the London City Mission* (1884). The best seller of all was, of course, General William Booth's *In Darkest London and the Way Out* (1890), offering a religious and social solution to the poverty of London. Two books on the East End Jews are also part of this collection, C. Russell and H.S. Lewis, *The Jew in London* (1901) and J.H. Stallard, *London Pauperism Among Jews and Christians* (1867).

B. *Reforming prostitution*. Ordinarily this subject would not be given a special category, and would be more suited for either category 1 or 4, but Sadleir collected a substantial number of books and pamphlets on the agitation against the white slave trade, reforming homes for prostitutes, and general discussions of the problems of this social evil. In contrast to the novels and accounts discussed in category 1, few of these documents attempt to present the viewpoint of the prostitute herself, and most are chiefly concerned with reforming the prostitute, and seeking changes in the laws. James Greenwood, ever alert to the social problems of the day, wrote a series of articles, *The Seven Curses of London* (1869), discussing baby farming, pauper children, training thieves as in *Oliver Twist*, and—of course—prostitution. More characteristic, however, of this reforming journalism are such works as *The New Clarissa: A Story of the White Slave Trade of*



*the Nineteenth Century* (1885, translated from French), A. Arthur Reade, *The Tragedy of the Streets* (Manchester, 1912), and Henry Gladwyn Jebb, *Out of the Depths: The Story of a Woman's Life* (1859), and *Female Sorrow: or, The Lives and Adventures of Four Unfortunate Women of the Town* (18—?). More sociological studies include Ralph Wardlaw's *Lectures on Female Prostitution; Its Nature, Extent, Effects, Guilt, Causes and Remedy* (Glasgow, 1843), *A Life-Long Story: or, Am I My Sister's Keeper? Facts and Phases for the Times* (1859), "dedicated to the Women of England by one of themselves," C. J. Lecour, *La prostitution à Paris et à Londres, 1789-1870* (Paris, 1870), and Ellice Hopkins, *Work Among the Lost* (1878), about the Albion Hill Home in Brighton for reforming prostitutes through a two-year program involving virtual imprisonment during a period of probation.

The most sensational aspects of the "white slave trade" after the revelations of W. T. Stead in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1885, concerning the purchase of a bona fide virgin girl of less than 12 years for £5, made for many popular accounts and tales. A special supplement of the *Pall Mall Gazette's* "Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon," plus reports of the trial of Stead, and a translation into French of the articles (*Les Scandales de Londres dévoilés par la Pall Mall Gazette* [1885]) are in the Sadleir collection. In addition, there are Alfred Stace Dyer, *The European Slave Trade in English Girls: A Narrative of Facts* (1880; 9th ed., 1885), *The Story of a Terrible Life: The Amazing Career of A Notorious Procureess*, set down by Basil Tozer (1929), and W. N. Willis, *The White Slaves of London* (1912). Interest in the white-slave trade was obviously generated by newspaper revelations of daughters of the middle class being abducted by false promises to brothels in Brussels (the scene of one of Mrs. Warren's houses in Shaw's *Mrs.*

Warren's *Profession* 1898); the total number of women who were actually part of this kind of prostitution was very small, but their plight was more interesting than of the thousands of poor women who plied their trade each night on the streets of London.

Pamphlets on the Contagious Diseases Acts (1866-69) have been collected together and are in the list of uncatalogued material available in the reading room of the Lilly. Other material on Josephine Butler is scanty, but available in the main library, though a few of her pamphlets are included in the above collection. A related work in this area is *Our Plague Spot: In Connection with our Polity and Usages as Regards Our Women, Our Soldiers and the Indian Empire* (1859). The reforming zeal of those wishing to end prostitution did not usually find an outlet in seeking wider employment opportunities for women, so perhaps it was inevitable that with the passage of laws raising the age of consent from twelve to sixteen, the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts and the tightening of international laws in regard to women, much of the reforming impulse had spent itself. But, in the process of reform, the vital principle of the Salvation Army had been established, that "the fallen woman is a sister to be saved, rather than a sinner to be punished."

MARTHA VICINUS is Professor of English, Indiana University, Bloomington.









