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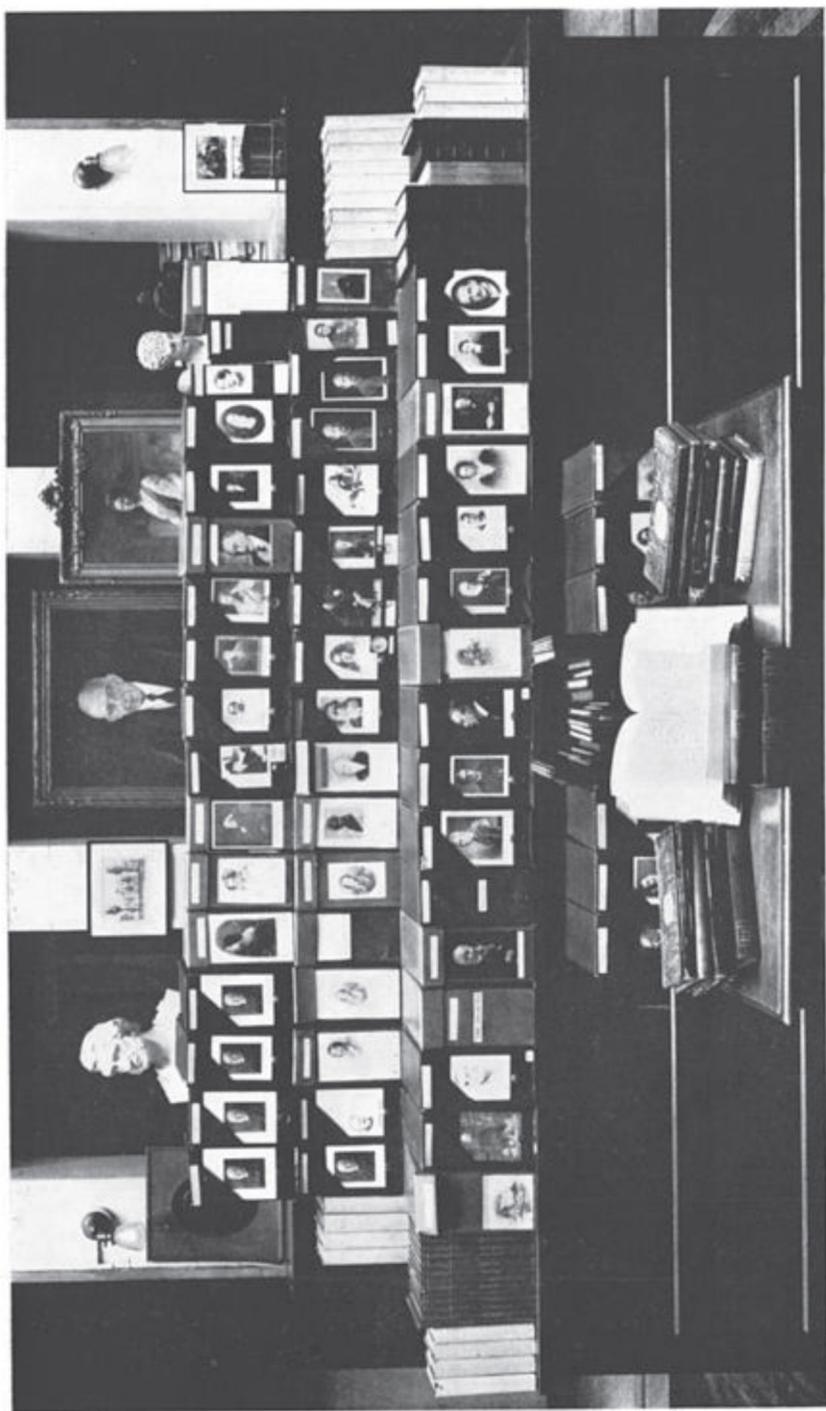
THE SYMINGTON COLLECTION

BY LESLIE A. MARCHAND

EARLY last spring there arrived at the Library from England five huge packing cases, the first of three shipments (seventeen cases in all—the last came in October) containing dozens of blue quarto manuscript boxes neatly labeled and with pictures of the authors pasted on the ends to make them easy to identify on the shelves. These, together with several hundred miscellaneous volumes, some of them rare, all came from the private library of J. Alex. Symington, for many years an ardent collector of books and manuscripts of English writers of the late nineteenth century. Mr. Symington will be remembered chiefly as a librarian and bibliographical scholar, and especially for his work and efforts to establish the Brontë Parsonage Museum at Haworth and the Lord Brotherton Library at Leeds. For the past twenty years he has been building up large collections, a rich store for future research. These materials are now in the possession of Rutgers University Library where students will have opportunities for many years of exploration into the fields of English literary history. Those privileged to work in the collections will profit from the labor of love already bestowed on the material by a man with a wide knowledge of English books and bookmen. The writer of this article had the pleasant adventure of securing for the Library this most important acquisition in recent years.

IT HAPPENED IN ENGLAND

AFTER dinner as the homemade Yorkshire pudding began to settle down comfortably in the stomach with the English roast beef (one sometimes does yet encounter it in that land of rationing—though he may have the guilty feeling that perhaps a month's rations have gone into that one display of hospitality), Mr. Symington took me into his library and there turned me loose to browse at my leisure. I had come up from London on his invitation to look at some Byroniana at his home in Yorkshire, but I had no



The Symington Collection in the Rutgers Library

idea of the variety of the treasure I had accidentally run into. I was first attracted by a shelf of richly bound autograph letters and manuscripts of Swinburne and a box of manuscripts of George Borrow. While greedily turning over the pages of these, I heard midnight strike and reluctantly retired to dream about what might be in the other boxes and volumes labeled "Stevenson," "Mrs. Gaskell," "Meredith," "Kipling," "The Brontës."

The next morning Mr. Symington led me to his library annex in a building a few steps down the road, and there I had another surprise. Along two sides of the room were book cases stacked to the ceiling with blue cloth-covered boxes, most of them with portraits instead of titles on the spines. I recognized John Ruskin, Thomas Hardy, Henry James, Victor Hugo, Conrad, and half a dozen more. And closer inspection revealed the physiognomies of about two dozen others: Shelley, Southey, Henry Arthur Jones, Edmund Gosse, John Drinkwater, Maurice Baring, Austin Dobson, Theodore Watts-Dunton, D. G. Rossetti, Browning, Henry George, R. M. Milnes (Lord Houghton), W. S. Landor, J. M. Barrie, Viscount Haldane, Mary Russell Mitford, T. J. Wise, John Wilson ("Christopher North"), and L. E. L., the popular sentimental poetess of the 1820's and 1830's.

Before I had dipped into half a dozen boxes the morning had passed and I was obliged to catch my train for the South, but my appetite was whetted for a longer browsing period and I came again twice, and after sampling the ore in a number of likely places I was convinced that it was an invaluable mine for research in English literature and literary personalities of the late nineteenth century. Then air mail letters crossed and recrossed the Atlantic until the whole collection was on its way to the Rutgers Library. Now with more time to look through the great mass of material, I am able to report in a little greater detail on its general richness and variety and on the special interest in some areas where I have stopped to read.

THE BRONTËS

It was to be expected that the Secretary of the Brontë Society and chief organizer of the fine Brontë Memorial at Haworth Parsonage would have accumulated a vast quantity of material relating to the marvelous children of the Yorkshire moors who built such an amaz-

spoken as — — q, instead of — or
and now in respect to the pronunciation. Since you have
been in all the countries such as Tripoli and Aleppo
and near at Hamar and sometimes in Syria also
and in other places, you must have observed some difference
in the pronunciation of the inhabitants of these districts.
Doctor Clodius says in his history of the Arabic language
and of its use, that this language is soft at Aleppo
deaf in Syria and pure in Egypt. Pray, have
you not observed the same thing.
I answer and say that the pronunciation varies with
the place and this is common to all languages. and
consequently this difference is found in the Arabic
except that the difference of pronunciation of the
inhabitants of Syria is by no means considerable.
Now now to consider the difference of the pronunciation
existing amongst the Arabs inhabiting the deserts who
if they are not scarce in grammar pronounce some
letters in different manner from the usual way.
especially the kaf which they pronounce like the
letter f of the Italians. and the letter kaf they pronounce
like the bh of the Italians. Therefore Niebuhr
says who in his account of Arabia says that in
the country of Mysor the letter j kaf is pronounced
in stead of the bh of the Italians. I say on this
account one who is not an inhabitant of the town
acquainted with their speech, cannot understand
them easily. What Doctor Clodius speaks is true in
regard to ~~the~~ the inhabitants of Egypt, but in
respect to Syria and Aleppo, the affair is the
reverse, for the pronunciation of the inhabitant

ing dream world in the confines of their small room. While most of the manuscripts and letters collected by Mr. Symington have gone into the Brotherton and Haworth libraries, there remains one item of prime interest: the original manuscript of Branwell Brontë's *History of Angria, No. I*, written in the microscopic script used by all the children in their stories of that secret and exciting world of romance they had created out of their combined imaginations and peopled with half-real historic characters, Wellingtonian and Byronic. This manuscript, consisting of nine minutely written pages like that reproduced in this number of the *Journal*, was printed in facsimile in the Shakespeare Head edition of the Brontës, but it has never been deciphered and transcribed. Other manuscripts of Branwell in the collection include a portion of "And the Weary Are at Rest" and "The Leyland Manuscripts."

In addition there are a number of letters and manuscript notes of Ellen Nussey, Charlotte Brontë's school friend and confidante, and other letters to Charlotte and Miss Nussey. Perhaps more valuable for a study of the Brontës, however, is a vast quantity of material, bibliographical and other, the accumulation of years and some of it now very difficult to acquire, rare books and pamphlets, magazine and newspaper clippings, details and transcripts of manuscripts and letters in the great Brontë collections such as the Brotherton and the Haworth libraries. A complete Brontë bibliography has yet to be done, and there is much useful material for it in this section, since it contains what was collected for the intended Shakespeare Head bibliography which was not completed.

GEORGE BORROW

Perhaps the most impressive array of original manuscripts in the collection are in the hand of George Borrow, who ordinarily wrote in a sprawling backhand, but also produced some very neat copies of his works in small straight even letters almost like script print. Among autograph letters are eight to Borrow's step-daughter Henrietta, the "Hen" of *Wild Wales*. They are without signature, for Borrow seldom signed his family letters. There is also a long letter from St. Petersburg, October 18, 1833, where Borrow had gone on business of the Bible Society. He was engaged in the transcription of the

“sacred Scriptures of Manchon, which will doubtless, when printed, prove of incalculable benefit to tens of millions. . . .”

The manuscripts include 123 items, ranging from scraps of a few lines on Ireland or Wales or the origins of words to 38 pages of the diary he used in his *Tour in Scotland* and 39 pages of the manuscript of his novel *The Romany Rye*. There are also portions of the original manuscripts of *The Bible in Spain* and *Wild Wales*, and corrected drafts of many of the *Danish Ballads*, together with the 11-page introduction by Sir Edmund Gosse in that eminent litterateur's neat hand. There are numerous drafts, in various stages of completion, of original poems and translations, of which Borrow made a great many, especially from Scandinavian and Celtic sources. Some of these and a few of the prose fragments are unpublished: all of them are of great interest for a study of one of the most versatile and individual of nineteenth century writers, about whom much remains yet to be written.

SWINBURNE AND HIS CIRCLE

Undoubtedly the most important body of material by and concerning any single writer of first rank represented in this collection is that directly connected with Algernon Charles Swinburne. This includes a large number of unpublished letters by and to him, a considerable number of original manuscript poems and prose pieces, the Watts-Dunton letter books from “The Pines,” a vast quantity of correspondence of Watts-Dunton, Edmund Gosse, and others directly connected with or deeply interested in Swinburne, and hundreds of chronologically arranged and bound transcripts of unpublished letters in various collections. Among printed works are some first editions, and numerous articles and excerpts from sources now difficult of access.

Of prime interest are the three quarto volumes, bound in brown morocco, in which are neatly mounted, along with complete transcripts, 95 long literary letters of Swinburne to William Michael Rossetti, brother of Dante Gabriel, the poet, and a literary critic and editor of note. The early letters (the series begins October 6, 1862, and runs down into the present century) have a good many references to Blake, whose works Rossetti was editing, while Swinburne was writing a critical essay on him at the time. Swinburne also

Algernon Swinburne to William Rossetti

A



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HARVARD COLLEGE

New Year's Day

Dear Rossetti

Marygale is safe in England,
in spite of illness, weather, & all dangers of
the one route open to her. It is a thing
to begin the year with thanking heaven
for. On the 3rd he will be in London

Many thanks for your notes
welcome. It is time about

The Halt before Rome.

Sept: 1/67

Is it so, that the sword is broken,
Our sword, that was half way drawn?
Is it so, that the light was a spark,
That the bird we hailed as the Lark
Sang in her sleep in the dark,
And the song we took for a token
Bore false witness of dawn?

2

Spread in the sight of the lion,
Surely, we said, is the net
Spread but in vain, and the snare
Vain; for the light is aware,
And the common, the chainless air,
Of his coming whom all we cry on;
Surely in vain is it set.

3

Surely the day is on our side,
And heaven, and the sacred sun;
Surely the stars, and the bright
Immortal inscrutable night;
Yea, the darkness, because of our light,
To no darkness, but blooms as a bower-side
When the winter is over and done;

4

Blooms underfoot with young grasses
Green, and with leaves overhead,
Wind-flowers white, and the Eves
New-dropped blossoms of now;
And on eves the May winds blow,
And on eves the March wind passes,
Flames with anemones red.

5

We are here in the world's bower garden,
We, that have watched out the snow.
Surely the Spirit-faller showers,
The splendor Sunbeams are ours:
Shall winter return on the flowers,
And the frosh after April harden,
And the fountains in May not flow?

7
We are ours if we doubt or dissemble,
We, if our hearts not abide.
Are our chiefs not among us, we said,
Great chiefs living and dead,
To lead us glad to be led?
For whose sake, if a man of us tremble,
He shall not be on our side.

6
We have in our hands the shining
And the fire in our hearts of a star.
Who are we that our tongues should falter,
Hearts bow down, head faster,
Who are clothed as with flame from the altar,
That the kings of the earth, repining,
Far off, watch from afar?

mentions Whitman, whom he found "somewhat violent and restless" in spite of his general admiration for the American poet, Kingsley, Mazzini, his hero at the time of his greatest interest in the Italian fight for freedom, and Arnold. In fact, these letters are of the greatest interest for the very frank views expressed to one of his most intimate friends on almost all of his important contemporaries as well as on the older writers. There is more of the uncensored Swinburne here than in his literary essays in which he modified or eliminated some of the impulsive first judgments. It is not surprising that he should refer to his arch-enemy Robert Buchanan, he who had written the devastating though unfair essay on "The Fleshly School of Poetry," as "the polecat." Nor is it unexpected when the chief of the anti-Victorians bursts forth with a diatribe against Tennyson.

On New Year's Day, 1868, Swinburne wrote:

Dear Rossetti,

Mazzini is safe in England, in spite of illness, weather, and all dangers of the one route open to him. It is a thing to begin the year with thanking heaven for. On the 3d he will be in London. . . . Whitman I have looked at—fine and full of truth and spirit, but again somewhat violent and restless, as I must maintain the seriously strong work of the world is not. . . .

In a postscript he adds: "What abject and vomitorial rot of Tennyson's is this in *Once a Week!*"

And in a long letter of March 31st of the following year he writes:

. . . . In the Cyclops, Shelley has twice made a mess and mull of the Greek, having evidently a corrupt text to work from. . . . Mazzini writes for me to a third person in return for a little poem of dedication I had forwarded to him. "I do not write to him only because the dedication is to *me*. But the last beautiful lines will strengthen, if there be need, the firmness of any actual purpose: they must be prophetic or a branding reproach."

That is a "critical notice" worth having—as much almost, perhaps, as the praise of *Saturday Spectators*.

"If there be need"—par exemple! Anyhow you see my poetry is "art and part" in the immediate action of the Republic, having given this feeling at so practical a minute to the leader.

The Swinburne manuscripts, some of them first drafts with many corrections, and some finished printers' copies written in a neat hand on that famous blue paper of which there seemed to be an inexhaustible supply at "The Pines," where Swinburne lived his last years

with Watts-Dunton, include several dozen separate items all nicely mounted and bound. Many of them have notations by T. J. Wise bound in with them, for they once belonged to that great collection which Wise bought from Watts-Dunton after the death of Swinburne.

Among the earliest manuscripts are "My Lady and Other Pre-Raphaelite Poems," Oxford, 1857-1858, and two small portions of the original draft of *Poems and Ballads*, 1866. Another volume contains "Miscellaneous Verses," some unpublished, and an envelope pasted in to hold a generous lock of that famous shock of hair of Swinburne (unfortunately not the brilliant red pictured in the caricatures, but quite gray, for it was clipped after death by the sister of Watts-Dunton, according to the accompanying note by Wise).

Two particularly interesting volumes are "Tristram of Lyonesse," portions of the first draft with corrections, and "The Halt before Rome," the carefully written copy sent by Swinburne to the *Fortnightly Review* where it was first published in November, 1867.

In one of the Swinburne boxes containing the manuscript of "Burd Margaret" is the first printing of another poem, "The Armada" in some pages of the *Fortnightly*, together with a curious wheedling letter in the hand of T. J. Wise asking Swinburne for permission to reprint it for private circulation among a few friends. Wise had seen an early copy of the *Fortnightly*, dated August 1, 1888, for on July 31 he wrote to Swinburne:

I want to ask you a great favor: I do hope you may see your way to grant it me. It concerns your "Armada" which the *Fortnightly Review* has just given us. Several of us collectors of your books, (Mr. Stopford Brooke, Mr. R. A. Potts, Mr. Slater, Mr. Buxton Forman, myself, &c.) have formed a resolution to privately print these glorious verses in a little quarto volume if only you will allow us to do so: now will you grant us your consent? I will undertake that no more than *a score* of copies shall be printed; or, if you consider that too many, we will be satisfied with a less number, & as many of them as you will be good enough to accept shall be placed at your disposal. I will also guarantee that at *no* time & in *no* manner shall *any* copy of the booklet be sold or offered for sale; so that I feel sure that no damage will be done to the poem as a literary property.

You may rely upon it that I will do my utmost, with the aid of artistic printing, handmade paper, & white vellum binding to make the little book worthy of the splendid lines its pages will contain.—Now Mr. Swin-

burne do please allow us to do this, & you will give us pleasure & satisfaction in a greater measure than perhaps you may think.

I have at last succeeded in obtaining a second copy of Hotten's print of your "Cleopatra." It is now in the binder's hands: when it comes home I shall so far trespass upon your goodness as to beg you to write a few words upon its fly-leaf. Trusting that your reply to this letter will bring your consent to my request,

I remain

Very faithfully yrs.

Thos. J. Wise

This letter, written at a time when Wise, according to evidence turned up in recent years, was already launched upon "his wild career of reprinting or pirating Browning, Shelley, Swinburne, &c. . . .", has a special interest for the light it throws on his methods of procedure. Since "The Armada" is not in the bibliography of Wise's Swinburne pamphlets, it may be assumed that the answer was negative and that this time Wise didn't risk a piracy. After the poet's death Wise acquired the manuscript and included a facsimile of the first page in his Swinburne bibliography.

The Watts-Dunton letter books, seven thick foolscap folio volumes, contain copies of his letters written from "The Pines," Putney Hill, while Swinburne was living there, and of course they are full of references to the poet whose business and social arrangements in those years were largely handled by his friend. The correspondents of Watts-Dunton included many publishers and editors, both in England and America, and literary men such as Arthur Symons, Clement Shorter, Edmund Gosse (Swinburne's biographer), Sidney Lee, Arthur Waugh, Grant Richards, Frank Harris, George Meredith, Max Beerbohm, Arthur Pinero, the dramatist, Marie Corelli, John Masefield, George Gissing, W. M. Rossetti, G. K. Chesterton, Hall Caine, and Alfred Noyes.

One has only to dip into these letter books, which cover the long and interesting period from 1889 to 1907, to discover that in them is the raw ore of much literary history. Watts-Dunton apparently looked out for the critical as well as the physical and social well-being of Swinburne, allowing only certain favored critics and periodicals to subject his friend to the indignities of that new device known as photography, keeping an eye on Arthur Waugh who was writing the article on Swinburne for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and inviting

others down to have tea and to meet the great poet. He was apparently most frank in his confession of his literary hates in his letters. On one occasion he speaks of W. E. Henley's sneering at a dead man (Stevenson?), and in another letter he says "Henley's henchmen are suggesting that H. invented Meredith."

In addition to the letter books there is a case containing many original letters of Watts-Dunton and a large number of manuscripts of his novels and essays. Among the letters in this group is a long one from Watts to Mrs. Havelock Ellis on Swinburne and several to Wise and Gosse on the same subject. Both here and in the Gosse section are some interesting anecdotes of the great man from the recollections of those who knew him. Miss Alice Bird, sister of Swinburne's doctor, wrote to Gosse in 1917 when he was gathering material for his biography: "Did I tell you of Swinburne's wish to build himself a tower 'with Seven stories in each of which the Seven Deadly Sins should daily be committed'!!" Thus did Swinburne bait the Victorian moralists; having earned the reputation of being Satanic he would make the most of it.

What makes this collection particularly valuable for the study of Swinburne is that in addition to all the letters to and from him, both the originals and the transcripts of hundreds of unpublished ones in other collections, there are many biographical and critical references, not only in the letters by and to Gosse and Wise, who had the interests respectively of biographer and bibliographer, but also in less expected places. In the Ruskin box, for instance, there is a letter from this early defender of the Pre-Raphaelites, dated Denmark Hill, 12 Sept., 1866:

Dear Mr. Coleridge

I am glad you wrote to me about Swinburne, and glad that you think I may do him good. But he is so boundlessly beyond me in all power and knowledge that the only good I can do him is to give him a more faithful—though not a less sorrowful admiration than others do. . . . the abuse she [Lady Trevelyan] heard about him was mostly false—the actual evil in him was only disease—very dreadful—but not in the deep sense, moral evil at all—but mentally-physical and ungovernable by his will. . . . his whole being is crude and miscreate at present—the divinity in the head of it sputtering in the wet clay—yet unconquered—But his clay is porcelain—jasper—I am bitterly anxious about him, not for the tone of his life—but for its endurance—I am afraid only of his dying. . . . There

are conceptions of *purity* in Swinburne (*Atalanta* & the opening speech of Althea to wit) beyond anything so strong a man ever wrote—as I remember (for Wordsworth's purity is half weakness). . . .

In the same box is a letter from Swinburne's father thanking Ruskin for his interest in Algernon.

THE ROSSETTIS

Less rich in manuscript material than the Swinburne boxes but still full of matter of great interest are those devoted to the Rossettis. Of Dante Gabriel, the poet, there are numerous transcripts of his letters to Watts-Dunton from 1827 to 1881, to his brother and others, besides printed works and letters and a large accumulation of reproductions of his drawings, and periodical and sale catalogue clippings.

Original letters of W. M. Rossetti to Wise, F. J. Furnivall, Sir P. Shelley, Watts-Dunton, and others, are supplemented with transcripts of his letters to Swinburne, the originals of which are in the Ashley Library. These last cover the same period as the originals of Swinburne to him in the Symington collection, so that the whole correspondence is here available.

There is also a collection of some original letters of the Rossetti family and many transcripts and the usual miscellanies that make all the files seem so bottomless. Here too is a great mass of notes and correspondence and pictures gathered, but never used, for a life of Elizabeth Siddal, model and wife of D. G. Rossetti.

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

While in quantity of original material and extent of ramifications the early nineteenth century writers are less well represented in the collection than those of the middle and late Victorian periods, several individual items stand out as of particular interest. Chief among these is the original manuscript of Southey's famous poem "The March to Moscow," written to entertain his children at a time when the English world was thrilled by the news of Napoleon's retreat and amused at the funny Russian names:

There was Tormazow and Jemalow
And all the others that end in ow;
Milarodovitch and Jaladovitch
And Karatschkowitch

And all the others that end in itch. . . .
 And Platoff he played them off,
 And Shouvaloff he shovell'd them off,
 And Markoff he marked them off. . . .
 And last of all an Admiral came,
 A terrible man with a terrible name,
 A name which you all know by sight very well;
 But which no one can speak and no one can spell. . . .

Other items of interest in this file include a long autograph letter of Southey to James Ballantyne, written in 1815, and another to John Kenyon in 1831. Of an earlier period are eleven lengthy letters to Southey from his lifelong friend Grosvenor C. Bedford, dated in 1798 and 1799. In addition there are transcripts of a long series of letters written by Southey between 1797 and 1835, mostly unpublished, arranged with notes and references.

In the Shelley box is a two-page letter of Godwin, dated 1822, the year of Shelley's death, and addressed to James Christie.

Three bound volumes of autograph letters in this group are of more than passing interest. One contains some early letters of William Wilberforce, famous for his activities in the anti-slavery movement. A second holds a series of 46 voluminous unpublished letters of John Wilson (the "Christopher North" of *Blackwood's Magazine*) to members of his family, written between 1812 and 1844. The third is a thick book of over a hundred unpublished letters of "L. E. L." (Letitia Elizabeth Landon), the most popular poetess of the 1820's and 1830's in England, whose sentimental verse filled the periodicals and the annuals of the time. Here is her correspondence with T. Crofton Croker, Irish antiquary and miscellaneous writer, during the years of her fame, 1827-38.

Most curious for its sober and conventional dullness is a manuscript poem by Henry James Pye, who in the early nineteenth century did much to make the office of Poet Laureate ridiculous. He was fair bait for satire in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* and was embalmed forever in the clear amber of Byron's later classic "The Vision of Judgment" where George III exclaims to the angel Michael: "What! What! Pye come again? No more—no more of that!" Almost a satire on itself is Pye's "Ode for His Majesty's Birthday, 1804," here preserved with an accompanying letter to one of the

by Mr. Southey at Keswick - 1813

The March to Moscow.

Buonaparte he would set off
For a summer excursion to Moscow;
The fields were green & the sky was blue,
Morbien! Parbleu!
What a pleasant excursion to Moscow!

Four hundred thousand men & more,
Key-ko for Moscow!
There were Marshals by the dozen, & Dukes by the score,
Princes a few, & Kings one or two;
While the fields are is green & the sky is blue,
Morbien! Parbleu!
What a pleasant excursion to Moscow!

There was Junot & Angereau,
Key-ko for Moscow!
Dombrowsky & Poniatovsky,
General Rapp, & the Emperor Nap.
Nothing would do
While the fields were is green & the sky is blue,
Morbien! Parbleu!
But they must be marching to Moscow!

Tory Lords close to George III. Drumming up enthusiasm for the lagging war against France, he urges all patriots to "Push to the field where George and freedom lead."

THE MID-VICTORIANS

Walter Savage Landor, "that deep-mouth'd Boeotian 'Savage Landor,'" as Byron called him in *Don Juan*, is a link between the early and the middle nineteenth century. A contemporary of the early Romantics, he lived to express his often dour opinions of later contemporaries among the Victorians. Some unpublished notes in his hand in the Symington collection apparently refer to Macaulay's *History*: "Can anything be more ridiculously pedantic than Macaulay's giving in french, italian, spanish, and dutch the notes and references. It is very questionable whether he himself has a perfect knowledge of these languages: how then can he expect that the greater part of his readers has. . . . We may expect our descendants to stare at such words in a grave historian as *lying Dick*, *living memory* (meaning memory of the living), *gigantic terraces*. . . ."

Other manuscripts of Landor include several poems: "To Filangiari," "An Italian Girl to Her Uncle Louis," "To the Princess Balgioso," and "Confession of a Pythagorean"; and four pages of an *Imaginary Conversation*, "Agatha and Theodore." In an autograph letter of Landor to W. C. Bennett in 1857 he says: "Beranger is a French Burns—but only in part." As a fitting climax, perhaps, to his outspoken career is his manuscript account of his trial for libel in 1857.

A fine group of manuscripts repose in the box devoted to Elizabeth Gaskell, Victorian novelist and first biographer of Charlotte Brontë. Of first interest is her correspondence with John Stuart Mill concerning a reference to Mill's wife in the Brontë biography. Two long letters of Mrs. Gaskell to Mill give her explanation and apology for quoting Mrs. Mill, and on the last page of one of these is the rough draft of Mill's reply. Other autograph letters of Mrs. Gaskell are addressed to Thurston Holland and to Mr. Proby.

In the same box is a four-page letter addressed to Mrs. Gaskell, May 23, 1852, from Charles Dickens, and another of equal length from Henry Chorley, a literary editor of the *Athenaeum* and a friend of many writers of the time.

The Gaskell family correspondence includes some manuscript letters to Miss Ellen Nussey, close friend of Charlotte Brontë. There is also a miscellaneous collection of notes and copies of letters gathered by C. K. Shorter toward a biography of Mrs. Gaskell which was never written, and the usual lot of transcripts from original letters, many of them dealing with the relations of Mrs. Gaskell and the Brontës.

Besides the letter of Ruskin concerning Swinburne, extracted earlier in this article, there are about two dozen in his clear hand to various correspondents, including a six-page one of July, 1854, on Art in Italy. There are also some letters of W. G. Collingwood, one of Ruskin's biographers, and some rare pamphlets and publications of the Ruskin Museum.

Other manuscript letters of the Mid-Victorians in the collection are several from Harriet Martineau to Miss Hennell, an early friend of George Eliot, and from Bulwer-Lytton, Matthew Arnold, and the Tennysons, and single letters from Carlyle and Victor Hugo. Secondary material concerns the Brownings.

LATE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

It is impossible in a short survey to do more than skim the surface of the vast quantity of primary and secondary material gathered by Mr. Symington in his long association with bookmen whose lives touched closely those of all the important literary figures of England during the past seventy-five years or more. This is the richest part of the collection because much of it has come without intermediary from his personal friends and other collectors of biographical material.

Large numbers of transcripts of unpublished letters from such men as George Meredith, Austin Dobson, Thomas Henry Huxley, and numberless others, fill in a valuable section of the web of literary associations in that as yet comparatively little explored field.

The most interesting Hardy items are two letters complaining of Andrew Lang's review of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (very "Langy" his objections to Hardy's phrase "President of the Immortals"), and Lang's own point of view in another letter. Again, as in most of the other boxes, there is a large file of copies of Hardy's letters to his personal friends, mostly unpublished.

Dipping into the Austin Dobson material we find 37 autograph letters from Dobson to S. T. Irwin of Clifton, written between 1902 and 1911, and the manuscript of Dobson's "The Happy Printer." There are also two volumes of the Dobson-Gosse correspondence in transcript, and many volumes of Dobson's works.

Maurice Baring, diplomatist and war correspondent, used de luxe paper on which to write his compositions. We have in this collection an 82-page manuscript of the quotations he used in his "Have You Anything to Declare?" a notebook with commentaries, written on handmade paper with the watermark of William Morris, and bound in Kelmscott parchment, and a poem written in red ink on fine embossed notepaper of the British Embassy, St. Petersburg, 1918. There is also the manuscript of another poem, unpublished, dedicated to Mopsyman TO., written on Foreign Office notepaper, and transcripts of his correspondence.

One thick red tome contains a collection of anecdotes and pictures for a book on Kipling, gathered mainly by Vaughan Bateson, who was associated with him in Masonic work. Bateson has delved into Kipling's family history in Yorkshire and has dug up some little known facts about his youth and his life in India. The photographs include several of the Poet of Empire, with his prodigious mustache, in such a quizzical pose that he looks exactly like Groucho Marx of motion picture fame.

Richard Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton), friend of poets and early biographer of Keats, corresponded with most of the famous literary men and women of the century. Inserted into the two volumes of T. Wemyss Reid's *Life, Letters and Friendships of Richard Monckton Milnes* are more than sixty autograph letters of Milnes to Lady Morgan (author of *The Wild Irish Girl*), Victor Hugo, Mary Howitt, Robert Browning, J. M. Whistler, and others.

One original manuscript letter and a volume of copies of Henry George's correspondence with Father Dawson, together with early pamphlets and various editions of his most famous book, *Progress and Poverty*, are the most noteworthy contents of the blue box devoted to the Single Taxer and social reformer. There are unfortunately no original Conrad or Stevenson letters, but several from members of the Stevenson family.

Henry James and George Meredith are each represented in the collection with a few manuscript letters, as are also John Drinkwater, Robert Bridges, Walter de la Mare, and Ella Wheeler Wilcox, American poet and journalist. The Drinkwater box has 32 letters and a few manuscript poems. Most of these items have the book-plates of Arnold Bennett.

Students of the theatre will find some things to attract their attention in the box bearing the picture of Henry Arthur Jones. Of chief interest are 66 letters from Jones to Clement Scott, the theatre critic. Written between the early eighties and the mid-nineties, they refer in some detail to the preparation, production, first nights, criticism and actors in the early plays of one of the pioneers of the modern theatre in England. There is also much gossip of the London stage of that most interesting period, and a comment on George Bernard Shaw as a thinker.

Bound into a thick quarto volume is material for a life of Hall Caine, the popular Manx novelist who was a best seller of the nineties and a friend and voluminous correspondent of Rossetti, Gosse, Watts-Dunton, and many others.

Those interested in French literature may find something of value in the 150 pages of manuscript letters from André Gide.

Since the big scandal of the Wise forgeries broke on the world in the 1930's it has sometimes been forgotten that Wise did much useful work as bibliographer and book collector (as the British Museum, which is now the proud possessor of the Ashley Library, can testify) and that his "Forging Ahead" occupied only a small part of a long career. His correspondence with scholars all over England and America was prodigious and the letters he received constitute probably the most various and extensive bibliographical mine yet unexplored. The Symington collection has some 3000 original letters to Wise, arranged alphabetically with a separate folder for each correspondent.

FOR GOOD MEASURE

A complete catalogue of the collection must include mention of Mr. Symington's systematic files of miscellaneous information, alphabetically arranged and vast in extent, concerning literary and historical personages, musicians, personalities of the theatre, etc., pictures and

prints and engravings covering hundreds of persons and subjects and ranging through several centuries.

And for good measure Mr. Symington has included a case filled with the accumulation of years devoted to one of his hobbies: ancient manuscripts and early forms of writing. Among the curiosities here are a sacred book from one of the temples of Ratnapura written on leaves of grass; a manuscript Koran on very thin parchment over twelve feet in length when unrolled, the writing being inside colored designed panels heightened with gold; a Babylonian baked clay cuneiform tablet of Sin-Gashid, King of Erech, recording the building of his royal palace about 1900 B.C.; an Arabic manuscript book of prayers written in red and black on glazed paper, with gold and blue rules; and some early Egyptian painted wooden mummy dolls covered with hieroglyphic writing.

It would be difficult to weigh the relative value of individual items or sections in the wealth of research material here assembled. The quantity of unpublished manuscripts, except in the Swinburne group and one or two others, is not tremendous, but its importance is increased by the immense amount of associated material gathered with it. Further investigation may reveal that the part of the collection most valuable to research scholars is that which has at once the greatest bulk and the least commercial value: the transcripts of thousands of unpublished letters and other manuscripts in various important collections and the supplementary assemblage of magazine, pamphlet, and sale catalogue material which represents years of labor on the part of the collector. These have a value that can hardly be calculated in any ordinary mathematical terms. Coupled with the original letters and manuscripts, they make the collection of first importance for any study of the writers and historical characters here most largely represented.