Catalog of the Peal Exhibition: Victorians I

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Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859) showed great precocity, at the age of eight planning a *Compendium of Universal History*. In his youth he also composed three cantos of *The Battle of Chevoit*, an epic poem in the manner of Scott’s metrical romances; a lengthy poem on Olaus Magnus; and a piece in blank verse on *Fingal*. At Trinity College, Cambridge, he twice won the Chancellor’s Medal for English Verse, and became a Fellow of Trinity. With “Milton,” his first essay in the *Edinburgh Review* (August 1825), he established a literary reputation that increased throughout his life; in 1829 he declined the editorship of the journal because of the location of its headquarters. The next year he took his seat as a Whig Member of Parliament, and in the subsequent debates on the Reform Bill he won recognition as a leading political orator. In public life he served in India on the Supreme Council (1834-1838); represented Edinburgh in Parliament (1839-1847, 1852-1856); and held the posts of Secretary of War (1839-1841) and Paymaster-General (1846-1847).

Despite these governmental obligations, he continued to write articles and books on a wide range of topics. He published *Lays of Ancient Rome* in 1842; a popular collection of his *Critical and Historical Essays* originally printed in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1843; and an enormously successful *History of England* in 1848 (Vols. I and II) and 1855 (III and IV). He also contributed to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* entries on Atterbury, Bunyan, Goldsmith, Dr. Johnson, and Pitt the Younger. In 1857 he was raised to the peerage, with the title of Baron Macaulay of Rothley. At his death he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

On 16 September 1842 he addressed a short letter to an unnamed...
correspondent, possibly the publisher Thomas Longman (1804-1879). Macaulay would be "much obliged" if the recipient would "urge the printer to speed" as he would like to have "all the proofs" in the near future. "The delay," he feels, "cannot be necessary; and it is in several ways inconvenient" to him. The letter probably relates to the edition of his Essays, which Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans published in 1843.

Peal 11,645.

129. GEORGE BORROW. Lavengro; The Scholar—The Gypsy—The Priest. 3 vols. London: John Murray, 1851.

As if driven by a gypsy in his soul, George Borrow (1803-1881) abandoned a law career to travel through England, France, Germany, Russia, Spain, and the East, mastering the languages of the countries he visited, including Turkish and Chinese. Protesting a piety of dubious sincerity, he became an agent for the British and Foreign Bible Society to finance portions of his wanderings. Although his claims as a philologist are open to question, his versatility as a linguist is undeniable.

He published a number of books based in part on his own bohemian life and on his thorough knowledge of gypsy society: The Zincali; or, An Account of the Gypsies in Spain (1841); The Bible in Spain (1842); Lavengro (1851); The Romany Rye (1857); and Wild Wales (1862). These racy, episodic novels are distinguished by a decidedly picaresque quality, with graphic depictions of gypsies, tinkers, rogues, and adventurers of all stripes, the whole permeated with the love of the open road and with the spirit of "the wind on the heath."

Lavengro took its title from the gypsy word for "philologist," applied to Borrow in his youth by Ambrose Smith, the Norfolk Gypsy, who appears in the book as Jasper Petulengro. In this novel, as in its sequel, The Romany Rye ("Gypsy Gentleman," another of Smith's names for Borrow), autobiography and fiction are inextricably mingled to tell the story of the author's early life. A vagabond from birth as the son of a military officer, he encounters, among other fantastic characters, a family of gypsies with whom he becomes intimate; pickpockets; and a tinker, the Flaming Tinman, who engages him in a herculean battle. In London he struggles to survive as a literary hack. Sections devoted to his comparative
... study of language allow Borrow pedantically to display his skills in the field. The book ends in the midst of his idyllic love affair with Isopel Berners, a sturdy wandering lass. *The Romany Rye* concludes the tale.

The engraving opposite the title page shows Borrow in the wide, floppy open collar made popular by Lord Byron. Indeed, the pose and the attire recall the 1814 portrait of Byron executed by Thomas Phillips, the artist for this painting of Borrow. John Murray, the publisher of *Lavengro*, likewise issued many of Byron's works. Peal 2,732-2,734.

130. THOMAS JAMES WISE. A.L.s. to Harry Buxton Forman, [ca. 19157].

Famed forger Thomas James Wise (1859-1937) began acquiring books at the age of seventeen. The Ashley Library, the result of his discriminating and thorough collecting, is one of the most remarkable collections of nineteenth-century English literature in existence. At the same time that he was assembling his unique literary trophies (including an ounce or two of Shelley's ashes), Wise was also producing a series of cunning literary forgeries that have become collector's items in themselves.

In 1885 Wise began a long and profitable friendship with Harry Buxton Forman (1843-1917). Forman was an expert on Shelley and like Wise an eminent bibliophile. In the letter on display, Wise offers Forman a full set of George Henry Borrow pamphlets (a set of minor Borrow items was issued by Wise in 1913-1914) in exchange for letters by "E.B.B." (Elizabeth Barrett Browning) or others by "Mary to Claire" (probably Mrs. Shelley to her sister Claire Clairmont). On the verso of the letter Wise suggests the swap of a good Borrow item for a "real fine Shelley letter."

Wise's affiliations with the Shelley and Browning societies placed him in fraternal contact with some of England's most respected scholars and collectors. His bibliographical expertise won their confidence completely. When these organizations sponsored facsimile reprints of scarce titles, Wise made arrangements on their behalf with the printers R. Clay and Sons. He used his rapport with the unwitting firm to generate—in addition to the society reprints—numerous, hitherto unknown "first editions" of English authors, which he would subsequently "discover." The ruse enhanced his
scholarly reputation and brought him the funds to buy more books and manuscripts. Ingenious though they were, Wise’s schemes were exposed shortly before his death by John Carter and Graham Pollard in *An Inquiry into the Nature of Certain Nineteenth-Century Pamphlets* (1934).

Peal 7,509.


In 1842, during the “agonies” of plotting the action of his latest novel, Charles Dickens (1812-1870) wrote to a friend that he paced up and down the house, “smiting” his forehead “dejectedly,” and “so horribly cross” that “the boldest” fled at his approach. He found even the naming of the book and its hero difficult business, and he discarded such surnames as Sweezleden, Sweezlewag, Chubblewig, and Chuzzlewig, among other possibilities, before settling on Chuzzlewit.

With *Martin Chuzzlewit* Dickens achieves a significant development in his career as a novelist. He had carefully planned the plot and meaning of *Barnaby Rudge*, his previous novel, but in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, for the first time, he informed all aspects of his story with a single theme—the propagation and growth of selfishness “from small beginnings.” His novels to this point seem more improvised than structured, with casually linked episodes and little dominating authorial intent. A new urgency of purpose now shares the page with Dickens’s familiar comic vitality, for *Martin Chuzzlewit* draws much of its strength from the inexhaustible energy of its satirical observations on various personifications of self-centeredness. From Chuzzlewit forward, the novels exude less ebullience but evidence more planning.

Before their publication in book form, Dickens’s novels appeared either as monthly serials or as weekly magazine installments. Those works published in monthly numbers between 1836 and 1866 were printed in twenty parts of thirty-two pages each; numbers XIX and XX, however, were always issued together as a “double-number” of only forty-eight pages. From January 1843 to July 1844, readers could follow through twenty (issued as nineteen) monthly parts *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit: His relatives, friends, and enemies. Comprising all his wiles and his ways, with an
books were


Although Dickens judged Chuzzlewit to be “in a hundred points immeasurably the best” of his novels to date, the parts sold poorly in comparison with those of his previous works. Nicholas Nickleby had sold fifty thousand copies and The Old Curiosity Shop as many as one hundred thousand, but the early sections of Chuzzlewit barely topped twenty thousand. To boost sales Dickens had Martin announce at the end of the fifth number that he had made up his mind to “go to America.”

Dickens himself had made his first tour of the United States only the previous year. The criticism he subsequently leveled at his host country in American Notes (1842) elicited shrill protests from individuals and the American press, but brisk sales identified an audience eager for sharp comment on the New World. Dickens again played to that group in Chuzzlewit. Thomas Carlyle wrote that Martin’s pointed observations on America and its citizens caused “all Yankee-Doodle-dum” to blaze up “like one universal soda bottle.” On the New York stage a copy of the unfinished book was thrown into the witches’ cauldron in a burlesque of Macbeth.

As W. Hugh Peal noted in an interview in 1977, Dickens based the marshy, pestilent, speculative settlement of Eden in Chuzzlewit at least in part on the town of Cairo, Illinois. In American Notes Dickens described the town at the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers as “a dismal swamp, on which the half-built houses rot away; . . . a hotbed of disease; . . . a place without one single quality, in earth or air or water, to commend it: such is this dismal Cairo.”

Yet the American episodes increased English sales by only three thousand copies. Like Martin’s “mad” transatlantic “enterprise,” Dickens’s hopes for reviving flagging sales had failed, and he brought his protagonist back to England for the remainder of the novel. With its completion he settled with his family in Italy for a year, writing and recovering from his disappointment over the low earnings of both Martin Chuzzlewit and A Christmas Carol, a short story he wrote concurrently with parts of the novel.

Martin Chuzzlewit featured “Illustrations by Phiz,” the pseudonym of Hablot Knight Browne (1815-1882). Of the sixteen
artists who illustrated Dickens's works in his lifetime, only two—George Cruikshank and Phiz—contributed significantly to the reader's enjoyment and understanding of the texts. However, Cruikshank, the best-known humorous artist of the period, illustrated only Dickens's early observations on life and manners, *Sketches by Boz* (1836) and one novel, *Oliver Twist* (1838). Phiz provided illustrations for ten of Dickens's fifteen novels as they appeared serially, drawing over five hundred scenes, title-page vignettes, and wrapper designs. More a caricaturist than a skilled draftsman like Cruikshank, Phiz nevertheless infused his work with a sensitivity and liveliness that superbly complemented Dickens's verbal artistry. G.K. Chesterton remarked that the two men were "as suited to each other and to the common creation of a unique thing, as Gilbert and Sullivan."

Phiz's talents developed during his lengthy association with Dickens. In the illustrations he did for *Chuzzlewit* his caricatures display a greater attention to drawing than is found in earlier works. Faces in particular acquire a new fineness and an amplitude of human variety. Even in crowd scenes Phiz made each figure an individual study. Richly symbolic details in furniture, wall decorations, and bric-a-brac enhance the meaning of many illustrations.

Owing to the speed with which Phiz had to prepare sketches for the monthly parts and engrave the steel plates, mistakes crept into the designs, despite the careful eye Dickens almost certainly cast over the proofs of each plate before it went to press. Thus, in the title-page vignette of *Dombey and Son*, Captain Cuttle's hook is transposed from the right to the left arm; and in the vignette to the first edition of *Chuzzlewit*, the handbill fastened to the signpost is headed "100£." Although sterling values were still occasionally written in that fashion in Dickens's day, in later editions of the novel the pound sign assumed its conventional place before the amount.

Whatever his shortcomings as a draftsman, Phiz created the prototypes of all but a few of Dickens's most famous characters. Drawing on the author's evocative word-paintings and pen-portraits, Phiz gave visual form to Mr. Pickwick, Sairey Gamp, Martin Chuzzlewit, and a host of other figures. For Chesterton, "no other illustrator ever created the true Dickens characters with the precise and correct quantum of exaggeration."

The Lewis A. Hird copy. Peal 7,936.

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Although Charles Dickens never pursued the dramatist's calling with which he flirted early in his career, he incorporated his passion for the stage in his novels. Consequently, unscrupulous theatre managers and playwrights, unencumbered by copyright laws, pirated Dickens's dramatic situations, strong characterizations, and extensive dialogue for their own theatrical productions.

Dickens himself proposed to dramatize *Oliver Twist*. Probably toward mid-March 1838 he broached the idea in a letter to the actor Frederick Yates (1795-1842); although less than half the numbers of *Nicholas Nickleby* had been published, Yates was enjoying great success as Mr. Mantalini in his own adaptation of that novel. Dickens writes that he does not see the possibility of "any other house" performing Oliver's "involved and complicated" story before Yates's next opening night; he is "quite satisfied" that no one has heard what he plans to do with the characters in the end as he himself does not know. Thus he thinks they are "tolerably safe on that head." Furthermore, Dickens feels that Yates's name on the bills as Fagin and his own as author "would knock any other attempts quite out of the field"; given these circumstances, no other theatre can possibly "steal a march" on Yates.

In fact, by the time Yates produced *Oliver Twist* in February 1839, five other dramatizations of the novel had premiered, even before the novel had finished its serialized run in *Bentley's Miscellany*. So awful was one of them that the agonized Dickens lay down on the floor of his box from the middle of the first scene to the play's conclusion.

While Dickens had no hand in Yates's version, he applauded the actor as Fagin and his wife Elizabeth Brunton as Nancy.

From the collection of Lewis A. Hird. Peal 12,609(21).

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133. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. George Cruikshank's Table-Book. Edited by Gilbert Abbott à Beckett. Volume I, Numbers 1-12, January-December 1845.

George Cruikshank (1792-1878) received his first commission as an artist at the age of twelve, and he remained active thereafter for
the next three-quarters of a century. His father, Isaac Cruikshank, as well as an older brother, Robert, were also artists. In a period rich with memorable illustrators (including such familiar names as Hablot K. Browne, John Leech, Samuel Lover, John Tenniel, and W.M. Thackeray), none has found more favor with collectors than Cruikshank.

Cruikshank's *Comic Almanack*, begun in 1835, was the precursor of the satirical English magazine *Punch*. Cruikshank also boasts the distinction of having illustrated the first full-length detective story, Angus B. Reach’s *Clement Lorimer; or, The Book with the Iron Clasps* (issued in parts, 1848-1849). In addition, he illustrated fiction by Thackeray, Charles Lever, and William Harrison Ainsworth, among others. Perhaps the most highly regarded of his illustrations among collectors are the twenty plates he executed for *German Popular Stories* by the brothers Grimm (issued in two volumes, 1823 and 1826). Not all of Cruikshank’s work is associated with literary narrative, however, for he produced many topical cartoons, often tinted by hand, treating political and social issues. His productivity was so immense that, in all, Albert M. Cohn has enumerated some 2114 items in *George Cruikshank: A Catalogue Raisonné* (1924).

Cruikshank’s style and outlook are strongly indebted to such predecessors as William Hogarth, James Gillray, and Thomas Rowlandson. His drawings are statements conceived in raucous and outrageous lines and delivered with side-splitting—occasionally skull-splitting—emphasis. His satirical work has been described as “scurrilous” and “grotesque.” He was not at all subtle, yet he was admired by no less an art critic than John Ruskin.

On view is *George Cruikshank’s Table-Book* in the twelve original parts, published monthly from January to December of 1845. (The contents were subsequently reprinted as a book.) Each separate issue contains one fine original etching by Cruikshank, and the whole provides another 116 of his drawings variously reproduced. The literary content is edited by Gilbert Abbott à Beckett (1811-1856), well known for his *Comic Blackstone* (1846), *Comic History of England* (1847-1848), and *Comic History of Rome* (1852).

Of the first issue, the Leeds Intelligencer noted warmly: "That deft and comical limner, G.C., comes out in brilliant style in this first number (for January) of his 'TABLE BOOK.' The first plate, 'Triumph of Cupid,' is an extraordinary and pregnant vagary—a
reverie of the artist in his easy-chair, puffing out a phantasmagoria of the blind god’s doings with the fumes of the narcotic weed.” The critic comments further on the publication’s “elegant typography and gilt-edged leaves,” which make it “a suitable trifle for the drawing-room or boudoir.” After a successful year, Cruikshank proposed to supersede the Table-Book with a new publication, Our Own Times, of which only four numbers appeared.

Shown is a presentation copy of the Table-Book with this inscription in the first number: “M.H. Barker, Esq. with the best regards of Geo. Cruikshank.”

The M.H. Barker-Moncure Biddle copy. Peal 7,052.


135. WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY. A.L.s. to Edmund Yates, 29 September 1855.

The Virginians is one of William Makepeace Thackeray’s least successful works critically, although during his lifetime it achieved a financial success surpassing even that of Vanity Fair. The Virginians was the culmination of two years of tedious labor, from November 1857 to October 1859. The novel was originally issued in a series of twenty-four parts, of which the Peal Collection has the first twenty-two, all in their original yellow wrappers and boxed in a red morocco-backed case. Criticized for its stale characters and aimless plot, The Virginians was the last major novel that Thackeray (1811-1863) published, and the last he was able to illustrate himself. Not feeling well enough to illustrate The Newcomes, a novel in the same series as The Virginians published in 1853-1855, Thackeray had given the task to the now celebrated artist Richard Doyle. Thackeray, however, was dissatisfied with the results of the collaboration, and resolved that The Virginians would be illustrated by his own hand.

Thackeray’s first ambition was to become a professional illustrator, and he developed an ardent admiration for George Cruikshank’s outrageous style and characterizations, which influenced his own work. After studying art in Paris for a few years and failing to find successful employment, Thackeray turned to journalism to support himself. He wrote for such popular
contemporary magazines as *Fraser's*, *Punch*, and Cruikshank's *Comic Almanack*. Literary success came in 1847 with the publication of the *Vanity Fair* series, but the peace of that achievement was soon broken. In 1849 Thackeray became ill with an internal disorder, undiagnosed at the time, which brought him very close to death. Although Thackeray recovered from this attack, he was frequently stricken with recurrences of the illness, which caused him excruciating pain and made it increasingly difficult to work. The irritation and worry of obtaining the money to support his extravagant lifestyle contributed to the attacks. The ill humor caused by these attacks has been used to explain some of the friction displayed in his later years in relations with friends and acquaintances.

In the year 1858, when Thackeray was writing *The Virginians*, Edmund Yates, an aspiring literary critic and author, framed a short descriptive essay on Thackeray. This was printed in *Town Talk*, a London magazine of which Yates was editor. Written hastily, according to Yates, and without malice, the essay nevertheless insulted Thackeray to the extent that he immediately wrote a letter to Yates demanding an apology. Yates refused and, in anger, Thackeray turned to the Garrick Club, to which both Thackeray and Yates belonged, asking the members to settle the dispute. Unfortunately, just before this incident, Charles Dickens, a close friend of Yates and a sometime literary rival of Thackeray, left his wife for a London actress. Dickens's ungentlemanly behavior caused an uproar in the Garrick Club, of which he was also a member. One of the critical parties was Thackeray. When the controversy between Yates and Thackeray erupted, Dickens quickly took the side of Yates, causing a split in the loyalties of the club and a further rift between Dickens and Thackeray.

The Garrick Club supported Thackeray solidly through the entire affair. Eventually it expelled Yates from membership for his refusal to apologize. But the scandal took its toll on Thackeray, too, for it aggravated his illness and even affected his writing. In the ninth serial number of *The Virginians*, Thackeray refers to a "young Grubstreet, who corresponds with threepenny papers and describes the persons and conversation of gentlemen whom he meets at his 'clubs,'" an obvious reference to Yates. The Peal Collection has many of Yates's letters, apparently collected for their autographs. One of these letters is from Thackeray, congratulating Yates on the birth of his twin sons, written in 1855 and showing...
early evidence of their association. Yates published the letter in his autobiography, *Fifty Years of London Life*. Thackeray lived five years after the confrontation with Yates. He died on 24 December 1863, brought down by the illness from which he had long suffered.

The Ernest Dressel North-William Warren Carman copy of *The Virginians*. Peal 8,754 and 12,609(56).

136. THOMAS CARLYLE. A.L.s. to Richard Doyle, 3 March 1853.

In reply to a query from William Butler Yeats, William Morris allowed that, among writers, John Ruskin and Thomas Carlyle had inspired the socialist movement of the 1880s. "But," Morris added, "somebody should have been beside Carlyle and punched his head every five minutes." This mixture of admiration and exasperation is typical of the responses to Carlyle's highly individual prose style, with its imperatives, direct address, unusual metaphors, word coinages, exclamations, and startling juxtapositions of thought and phrase. His writing, to be fully appreciated, should be read aloud, for Carlyle was as famous a conversationalist in his day as Dr. Johnson had been in his. According to Charles Darwin, Carlyle was "the best worth listening to of any man" he knew.

Born in the same year as Keats, though grouped with the Victorians rather than the Romantics, Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), a native of Ecclefechan, Scotland, turned from teaching and brief law studies to literary work, contributing to the *Edinburgh Encyclopaedia*, reading German literature (then little known in England), and writing *The Life of Friedrich Schiller* (1823-1824). In 1824 he translated Goethe's influential novel *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship and Travels*, which he followed with further translations from and essays on German authors.

On a visit to London that year he met Coleridge, who impressed him greatly. For other men of letters, like Lamb, De Quincey, and Campbell, he expressed only contemptuous pity.

He married Jane Welsh in 1826 and two years later retired to her ancestral farm at Craigenputtock where he continued to write articles for the *Edinburgh* and other reviews. *Fraser's Magazine* published his spiritual autobiography *Sartor Resartus* in installments in 1833-1834; it first appeared as a separate volume in Boston in 1836, the English edition not coming out until 1838.

In the summer of 1834, at John Stuart Mill's urging, the Carlyles
moved to London, settling permanently at 5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea. (Carlyle’s friendship with Mill ended by mid-century when he became a vigorous opponent of Mill’s liberal democracy.) There Carlyle embarked upon his ambitious *History of the French Revolution*. After long study and composition, he completed a draft of the first volume, which he lent to Mill to read. A maid carelessly burned the sole copy of the manuscript, but Carlyle doggedly rewrote it and saw it through the press in 1837. The work proved a major success and relieved his financial difficulties.

In subsequent essays, lectures, and biographies, he attacked the contemporary industrial system, particularly the “dismal science” of *laissez-faire* economics, the disgraceful working conditions in factories, and the soul-destroying character of machine labor. Only through the leadership of great individuals, he argued, would society improve. Illustrative of these philosophies are *Chartism* (1839), *On Heroes and Hero-Worship* (1841), *Oliver Cromwell* (1845), and *Frederick the Great* (fourteen years in the writing, published 1858-1865). In *Past and Present* (1843) he attacked the mediocrity and spiritual sterility spawned, he felt, by industrialism and democracy, while advocating a return to medieval conditions and to the rule of a strong just man, a benevolent despot.

Carlyle’s last years brought full recognition of his greatness and, through J.A. Froude’s frank authorized biography, the revelation of intimate personal matters. In 1865 he was appointed Rector of Edinburgh University. In 1874 he accepted the Prussian Order of Merit from Bismarck, but the next year declined an English baronetcy from Disraeli. At his death the Dean of Westminster, Arthur Stanley, offered a burial place in the Abbey, but as directed in his will, Carlyle was interred near his parents in Ecclefechan.

From Cheyne Row on 3 March 1853 Carlyle wrote to Richard Doyle (1824-1883), an artist and caricaturist for *Punch*, about certain prints that Lady Ashburton had brought to Doyle’s attention. The pictures have “at length come,” brought to Carlyle’s house “by a kind of mistake,” and he wonders when Doyle can call to give his “judgement” on them. He proposes Saturday afternoon, at Bath House, the Ashburton residence in London, where “Prints, Printseller’s List, and all other useful apparatus” can be assembled; “even a fire in the room is bespoken.” He thinks they might, “in no long period, get thro’ this little bit of business.” Carlyle hopes that Doyle will soon write to confirm this appointment.

From the collection of Herman T. Radin. Peal 9,263a.
From his marriage in 1846 until his wife’s death in 1861, Robert Browning (1812-1889) published only two new titles, in 1850 *Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day*, two poems of doubt and faith, and in 1855 *Men and Women*. Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s health was frail, and she absorbed much of her husband’s attention. Also, their living in Italy for almost all of their married years cut Browning off from the English literary scene, and tempted him to pass his time revelling in the rich Italian culture. Nevertheless, under the influence both of his wife and of Italy, Browning compensated with the quality of *Men and Women* for the meagreness of his output. “I am writing,” explained Browning in 1853, “lyrics with more music and painting than before, so as to get people to hear and see.”

In only a few of the poems of *Men and Women* does Browning speak in his own voice. Many are dramatic monologues, a form employed by poets as far back as Theocritus and used by Browning in *Dramatic Lyrics* (1842) and *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics* (1845). Here, however, with such memorable poems as “Andrea del Sarto” and “Bishop Blougram’s Apology,” Browning brings the dramatic monologue to a new pitch of excellence. *Men and Women* and *Dramatis Personae* (1864) are Browning at his finest.

Browning carried a manuscript of fifty poems with him when he and his wife arrived in London for a visit in July 1855. *Men and Women* was already being printed when, in September, he added a fifty-first lyric, “One Word More,” with which he dedicated the collection to his wife.

The Peal copy of *Men and Women* is a first edition, a set of two small volumes which appeared in November 1855. Of the poems in these volumes, only “The Twins” and a portion of “Saul” had appeared in print before.

Peal 7,887-7,888.
139. Cabinet photograph of Browning, by Elliott and Fry, London.
Peal 10,445.

140. ROBERT BROWNING. A.L.s. to William Charles Macready, [18407].

In his poem "A Light Woman," published in Men and Women, Robert Browning dubbed himself "a writer of plays," an accurate description of his major literary activity in the decade from 1837. Though pronounced "not for acting" by its author, his long dialogue poem Paracelsus (1835) attracted the attention of William Charles Macready (1793-1873), one of the greatest English tragedians and the future manager of London's Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. At his urging, Browning wrote his first full-length play, Strafford (1837), which Macready subsequently staged, with himself in the title role. The actor, however, rejected Browning's next unsuccessful attempts in drama, King Charles and King Victor (1839, 1842) and The Return of the Druses (1843).

In an undated letter now in the Peal Collection, Browning writes to Macready to thank him for comments that have put "fresh heart" into the writer. Browning is so "sure" that Macready "will like this labour" of his that he means "to spend a day or two in making a fresh copy" of it from the "portentous scribble" of the original manuscript. Macready should receive it within two days.

Browning probably refers to his play A Blot on the 'Scutcheon, which he submitted to Macready late in 1840 with the assurance that the plot was full of "action... drabbing, stabbing, et autres gentillesses." Dickens praised the tragedy as a perfect vehicle for the actor's talents, but Macready doubted its quality; he reported that at the first reading, the actors laughed. Proceeding half-heartedly, Macready did not perform the drama until February 1843. By that time jealousy and distrust had estranged player from playwright.

Peal 8,378.

141. MATTHEW ARNOLD. A.L.s. to Friedrich Max Müller, 15 May 1860.

The eldest son of Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby, the winner of the Newdigate Poetry Prize (1843), and a graduate of Balliol
College, Oxford, Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) became a fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, in 1845. Four years later he began his literary career with the publication of *The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems*, dominated by the contrast between the life of strained action and that of detached serenity. *Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems* (1852) advanced Arnold's growing belief that poetry should be charged with thought, especially religious and philosophical. His work as a critic dates from 1853, when he set forth criteria for the modern poet to follow in the preface to *Poems: A New Edition*, the first volume to carry his name on the title page. *Poems, Second Series* appeared in 1855. In 1857 he became the first layman to hold the Chair of Poetry at Oxford. He held the office for ten years, breaking with all precedent by giving his required lectures in English rather than in Latin.

In his later prose, as an apostle of culture and a defender of the humanistic tradition, he sought to enlighten and direct the "Philistine" middle class. He also argued in his essays that literature was a criticism of life and that literary criticism involved a discovery and analysis of the best ideas advanced in writing.

On monogrammed stationery belonging to his wife Frances Lucy, Arnold replied on 15 May 1860 to a request from an Oxford colleague, Friedrich Max Müller (1823-1900). A naturalized British subject, Max Müller came to England from his native Germany in 1846. As a student at the University of Leipzig he had mastered Sanskrit, and on commission from the directors of the East India Company he brought out an edition of the Sanskrit *Rigveda* (1849-1873). He settled in Oxford in 1848. After holding a deputy professorship from 1850, he served as Taylorian Professor of Modern European Languages from 1854 to 1868, and as a curator of the Bodleian Library from 1856 to 1863 and again from 1881 to 1894.

Arnold wrote to assure Max Müller of his "vote," probably for the Chair of Sanskrit at Oxford for which Max Müller was a candidate. He also promised to do what he could to enlist others' support, although "hoary judges" were "hard to bring to the scratch." Despite Arnold's backing, Max Müller lost to Sir Monier Monier-Williams, largely because of his foreign birth and liberal theological views. With his defeat he turned his energies toward "The Science of Language," the subject of two lectures at the Royal Institute in 1862 and 1863. Max Müller became Professor of Comparative Philology at Oxford in 1868, a chair he occupied until
his death, although he retired from active teaching in 1875. Thereafter, he devoted his energies to the study of comparative mythology and comparative religion, to the editing of the *Sacred Books of the East* (48 vols.), to general writing, and to politics.

From the collection of Herman T. Radin. Peal 9,255.


To characterize *The Cloister and the Hearth* (1861) as Charles Reade's masterpiece is to risk the cantankerous author's contumely. "If that's your opinion," he once snapped, "you ought to be in a lunatic asylum." Whether the distinction rightly belongs to *Hard Cash* (1863), which Dickens praised as "incomparably" Reade's "best production," or to *Griffith Gaunt* (1866), Swinburne's preference, the novel subtitled "A Tale of the Middle Ages" alone among Reade's two dozen novels remains popular.

After a brilliant university career at Oxford, Reade (1814-1884) first directed his literary talents toward the theatre, where he achieved success with such dramas as *Masks and Faces* (1852, which he adapted later that year into his first novel, *Peg Woffington*) and *Drink* (1879, based on Zola's novel *L'Assommoir*). As with certain of his plays, most of his novels glow with Dickensian reforming ardor. *It Is Never Too Late to Mend* (1856) attacks prison conditions, *Hard Cash* exposes the appalling circumstances in insane asylums, and *Put Yourself in His Place* (1870) objects to the injustices of trade unions to workers.

Of another kind entirely, however, is Reade's historical novel, *The Cloister and the Hearth*, enlarged from his slight story *A Good Fight*, published serially in *Once a Week* in 1859. Reade insisted on, and succeeded in, making his audience see, hear, and feel the tangible objects and atmosphere of an era, in this instance, fifteenth-century Europe. The story deals with Gerard Eliasson, his thwarted love for Margaret Brandt, and his picaresque adventures in quest of a contemplated art career in Italy. Falsely informed of Margaret's death, Gerard takes the Dominican habit. Although they meet years later, he resolves to pursue his religious work (the cloister), while she continues her domestic life (the hearth), caring for their son Gerard, who grows up to become the great Dutch scholar and humanist Erasmus.
and the Latin version by its side, to show the various character.

' 'Show it me!'

Gerard brought the work to him in fear and trembling; then stood, heart-sick, awaiting his verdict.

When it came it staggered him. For the verdict was, a Dominican falling on his neck.

That the next day an event took place in Holland, the effect of which on Gerard's destiny, no mortal at the time, or even my intelligent reader now, could, I think, foresee.

He hastened up to Eli's door

Print here. 359—366. of Vol. 2

Endnote. in line with the text

A page from The Cloister and the Hearth, with Charles Reade's instructions for abridgment (item 142)
Reade thoroughly researched the historical background, but no smell of the lamp or scholarly mustiness lingers about the work. For Walter Besant and many succeeding critics, *The Cloister and the Hearth* "is a picture of the past more faithful than anything in the works of Scott."

The Peal Collection contains Charles Reade's copy of the second edition of *The Cloister and the Hearth* (1861), with the author's manuscript corrections and directions for adapting the four-volume novel into three. At the end of Chapter IX, Volume III, page 212, for example, appears an autograph transitional paragraph and Reade's notation, "print here. 359-366. of Vol 2 enclosed in loose pp herewith."

Peal 6,748-6,751.

143. CHARLES READE. A.L.s. to A. Hall, 8 August 1858.

Also in the collection is a letter dated 8 August 1858 that Reade wrote from 6 Bolton Row, Mayfair, on Garrick Club stationery. In reply to an offer from "A. Hall" he says he does not wish "to part with the copyright" of *It Is Never Too Late to Mend*, his novel of prison abuses published by Richard Bentley two years earlier. Nor does he think any publisher can afford to buy it, "encumbered" as it is "with a heavy stock" of five- and two-shilling editions that Bentley "obliged" him to buy.

Reade is, however, willing and able to consider selling the temporary use of the story "to an illustrated paper," one or two of which are now "after it." If such an offer suits Hall's views, and he is not afraid to venture into Reade's "den," he will find the author at home on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday.

Peal 11,027b.


Frederick Locker (1821-1895), known as Locker-Lampson after 1885 when he added his second wife's maiden name, worked for a time as a clerk at Somerset House, London, and in the Admiralty. In 1857 he published *London Lyrics*, which he continued to revise and reissue up to 1893. The second edition displayed appeared in 1862. A presentation copy, it is inscribed on the flyleaf, "Thomas
Woolner / from the Author / 8 August 1863." Woolner was an original member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. As a poet he published four volumes of verse, and as a sculptor executed the statue of John Stuart Mill on the Thames Embankment. Meeting with little success he sailed for the Australian gold mines, his departure inspiring Ford Madox Brown’s painting, "The Last of England" (1852).

As London Lyrics demonstrates, Locker specialized in vers de société, light, witty verse concerned with manners and customs, often with a slight vein of social satire running through it. He frequently takes as his subjects familiar places and objects—Pall Mall, Piccadilly, an angora cat, a hansom cab—and treats them with a witty pathos. He later brought out Lyra Elegantiarum (1867), an anthology of verse of similar character; Patchwork (1879), a miscellany of verse and prose; and My Confidences, in prose, which appeared posthumously in 1896. Throughout, his verses possess an elegance, irony, and polish seldom equaled in English in the genre.

Locker also distinguished himself as a book collector, stressing the smaller, well-defined "cabinet collection" over the omnivorous library. Kate Greenaway, noted illustrator and author of children’s stories, designed his bookplate. The Rowfant Club, an important society of bibliophiles in Cleveland, takes its name from Locker's home.

The Thomas Woolner copy. Peal 12,231.

145. GEORGE ELIOT [pseud. of MARY ANN EVANS]. A.L.s. to Frederick Locker, 13 June 1870.

Mary Ann (or Marian) Evans (1819-1880), who published The Mill on the Floss, Middlemarch, and her other novels as George Eliot, wrote to Frederick Locker from "The Priory," Regent's Park, London, on 13 June 1870. He had recently sent her a new edition of his London Lyrics, and although he had told her not to acknowledge the gift, she did "not forbear to please" herself by thanking him for the "delicate and tender charm" of his verses.

Later in the week she would be leaving town for "the Yorkshire coast" due to "Mr. Lewes's nervous exhaustion." (She lived with the versatile writer George Henry Lewes from 1854 until his death in 1878. Because he had an estranged wife whom Victorian law
forbade him to divorce, Miss Evans was branded an adulteress and compelled to bring out her works pseudonymously or anonymously.) She hoped that Locker would not let them "drop" from his mind during their absence, and that he would let her have the pleasure of seeing him again when they were all in London.

She signed the letter "M.E. Lewes."

From the collection of Herman T. Radin. Peal 9,272a.

146. JOHN STUART MILL. Autobiography. London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1873.

Thomas Carlyle scornfully labeled John Stuart Mill’s Autobiography (1873) that “of a steam-engine.” Nevertheless, the work stands at once as a revealing social history of England in the first three quarters of the nineteenth century and as a personal though dispassionate account of the development of the author’s spirit and prodigious mind.

The opening chapters to an extent justify Carlyle’s slur. The eldest of the nine children of James Mill, disciple of Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) received from his father a rigorous education, studying Greek at the age of three, Latin at eight, most of history and philosophy by thirteen, and science and political theory by sixteen. Literature and religion had no place in the father’s pedagogical system. Benthamite “utility,” which promoted “the greatest happiness of the greatest number” as “the measure of right and wrong,” informed the ethical teachings of Mill père. Mill wrote in the first chapter that although his “biographical sketch” lacked public interest as a narrative, it might still prove useful as a record of an “unusual and remarkable” education, in which the mind pressed ever forward, “equally ready to learn and to unlearn either from its own thoughts or from those of others.” Psychologists assign to Mill one of the highest IQs of modern times, placing him in the company of Newton, Leibniz, and Einstein. To develop an association between personal happiness and positive service to society, James Mill started his son as a clerk in the Examiner’s Office of the East India Company, where he himself worked. By his retirement in 1858, the younger Mill had advanced to the position of Examiner of India Correspondence, the second highest post in the company’s home service.

As he records in the fifth chapter, “A Crisis in My Mental
History," Mill at the age of twenty suffered a severe nervous breakdown and in his depression contemplated suicide. He found consolation in Wordsworth, whom he read for the first time in 1828 (from reading Byron he "got no good, . . . but the reverse"). Wordsworth's poems addressed themselves powerfully to one of Mill's strongest "pleasurable susceptibilities, the love of rural objects and natural scenery." The poetry proved a "medicine" to his state of mind because it expressed "not mere outward beauty, but states of feeling, and of thought coloured by feeling, under the excitement of beauty." The healing power of Wordsworth's verse impelled Mill to make "the cultivation of the feelings . . . one of the cardinal points" in his "ethical and philosophical creed." He subsequently modified Benthamism through his realization that fundamentally social progress depends upon "the internal culture of the individual."

Thereafter Mill extended his reading and his contacts beyond the utilitarian bounds prescribed by his father. He derived much from Coleridge (on whom he wrote an essay in 1840), from German thinkers like Goethe and Kant, and from the French philosophers Saint-Simon and Comte. He counted Carlyle as a friend for some time, and lent him materials for his history of the French Revolution.

In 1830 he commenced his "most valuable friendship" with Harriet Taylor. They fell deeply in love, but did not marry until after her husband died in 1849. What Mill owed to her, "even intellectually," was "in its detail, almost infinite." They worked together on several of his essays, including On Liberty, published in 1859, a year after her death, which holds that "Mankind are greater gainers by suffering each other to live as seems good to themselves, than by compelling each to live as seems good to the rest." He reiterated this libertarian outlook in Considerations on Representative Government (1861) and On the Subjugation of Women (1869). In the first treatise, he argued that free institutions could better promote healthy growth and liberty than the best of dictatorships; in the second, influenced by his wife and written at the behest of his stepdaughter, he championed the advancement of women's rights.

He edited the London and Westminster Review, founded by Bentham with the assistance of James Mill, and for three years from 1865 he represented Westminster in Parliament. After his defeat in 1868, he moved to Avignon, where he died in 1873.
In the *Autobiography* Mill progresses from a narrow individualism to a widely tolerant liberalism, exhorting his audience to “consider one’s opponents as one’s allies, as people climbing the hill on the other side.” Mill wrote part of the *Autobiography* in 1861, the remainder after 1870.

Peal 9,429.

147. CHARLES DARWIN. A.L.s. to Violetta Darwin, 3 May 1879.

Charles Darwin (1809-1882), son of a physician, grandson on his father’s side of Erasmus Darwin, poet and physician, and on his mother’s of Josiah Wedgwood, the potter, studied medicine at Edinburgh University until the sight of surgery filled him with revulsion. Thereafter he attended Christ’s College, Cambridge, to prepare for the Anglican priesthood. His real interest, however, lay with natural science (he wrote his first scientific paper at age seventeen), and in 1831 he embarked as a naturalist on H.M.S. *Beagle*, commissioned by the Royal Navy to circumnavigate the earth, surveying little-charted coastlines, especially those of South America, to improve existing maps. He returned in 1836 and three years later published his *Journal of Researches into the Geology and Natural History of the Various Countries Visited by H.M.S. Beagle*. These findings, augmented by his acceptance of the Malthusian theory that population increases in a geometric ratio while food supply increases arithmetically, caused him to arrive at the theory of natural selection. In 1858 Darwin received from the English naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace a manuscript containing an explanation for the origin of species that closely resembled his own argument. Darwin published this document, along with his letter of 1857 to the American biologist Asa Gray that outlined his thoughts on the topic. In 1859 appeared Darwin’s great work, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection; or, The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*. In *The Descent of Man* (1871) he proclaimed that human beings were also the product of natural selection, probably descendants of anthropoid apes. Other writings treated of plant behavior. Between 1876 and 1881 he set down *Recollections of the Development of My Mind and Character*, commonly titled *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin*. Intended solely for his children, the manuscript was edited and published by his granddaughter Nora Barlow in 1887. With honesty
and modesty he traced his evolution from an evangelical believer and a lover of music, Wordsworth, and Milton, to an agnostic (a word coined by his friend and supporter Thomas Henry Huxley at a dinner party in 1869) and a scientist.

Darwin died on 19 April 1882 and was buried in Westminster Abbey next to his intimate, the geologist Sir Charles Lyell, near the grave of Sir Isaac Newton. Among his pallbearers were Huxley, Alfred Russel Wallace, the botanist Sir Joseph Hooker, and James Russell Lowell, the American minister to England. Thomas Hardy sat quietly in the congregation.

On 3 May 1879, Darwin wrote to his cousin Violetta Darwin from Down, the residence in Kent where he lived in semi-retirement from 1842 to his death. He planned to be away for three weeks, during which time he hoped to make “a beginning” on his “Preliminary sketch,” to which he would “stick” on his return home.

Peal 9,694.


149. AUSTIN DOBSON. A.N.s. to Edmund Gosse, 4 December 1893.

A native of Plymouth, England, Austin Dobson (1840-1921) studied as a youth in Strasbourg, where he came in contact with the French literature that he esteemed and imitated as an adult. Returning to England at the age of sixteen, he accepted a clerkship at the Board of Trade, where Edmund Gosse worked as a translator from 1875 to 1904. Dobson remained for nearly half a century, but he always regarded government employment only as a means to a livelihood; he considered his true profession to be that of a man of letters.

As a scholar, he preferred the eighteenth century, when “electric light / Not yet had dazed their calmer sight.” He wrote biographies of some of that era’s principal figures, among them William Hogarth (1879), Horace Walpole (1890), and Fanny Burney (1903); edited many of its masterpieces; and produced studies of its manners and literature. As a poet, he demonstrated a proficiency at light verse, creating heroic couplets with Popean polish. From the
French he learned the insouciance of vers de société, reproducing the triolet, ballade, and rondeau with finesse. Until 1884 Dobson concentrated on his poetry, some of his best work appearing in *Vignettes in Rhyme and Vers de Société* (1873), *Proverbs in Porcelain* (1877), *Old World Idylls* and *At the Sign of the Lyre* (1885). Thereafter, he wrote mostly prose.

A shy, nervous man, Dobson worried that his literary pursuits might give offense to his business superiors. Retirement from the Board of Trade in 1901 freed him from such concerns and permitted him to live and write in a congenial, scholarly world.

The Peal Collection includes a first edition of Dobson's *Vignettes in Rhyme and Vers de Société* (1873), dedicated to Anthony Trollope, as well as a note Dobson wrote on “Dec. iv, 1893,” to Edmund Gosse. In his distinctive hand, Dobson thanks Gosse for his “letter about Daniel,” probably the Oxford printer Charles Henry Olive Daniel, but he is “dreadfully doubtful” that any of his work is “worth reprinting in any form.” It seems “such faded rubbish” when he reads it.


Peal 6,951 and 11,469.