

century, although men were the ones deputised to preach it. Joel Westerholm (1993), Colleen Hobbs (1994), Lynda Palazzo (1997) and Robert Kachur (1997) have written significant articles on the feminine and feminist aspects of Rossetti's theology in the devotional texts. It strikes me that juxtaposing these interpretations with a reading of Rossetti's later poems might have found in the latter more evidence of continuing struggle than of a "circumvent[ion of] questions of gender and genre to address the inward preoccupations of the truly representative self."

But it is perhaps churlish to wish for more in a study of this size and with these specifications. *Christina Rossetti Revisited* is published in Twayne's English Author Series and the fact that a feminist critic has been commissioned to position her subject on this roll is perhaps indicative of a new phase in Rossetti's critical reputation. Certainly Smulders's concluding claim seems valid: "even though the voice of the past is always, to some extent, inaccessible to the present, Rossetti has begun to emerge not merely as a regret but as a tradition." Smulders's own work will contribute to this development.

Kelly Stephens

Dickens's 'Young Men': George Augustus Sala, Edmund Yates and the World of Victorian Journalism, by P. D. Edwards. Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, 1997.

When they reached old age and wrote their memoirs, the great Victorian journalists reminisced nostalgically, and often through a haze of brandy-fumes, about a convivial world of clubs and dinners, good talk and good cigars, amateur theatricals and jaunts to Paris. But the day-to-day reality of life in mid-nineteenth-century Grub Street was, as P.D. Edwards reveals, a good deal less snug. Existence for professional writers was frequently nasty and brutish, sometimes short, and the groupings that formed and re-formed around editors and magazines have the appearance of mutual benefit societies, sharing out the juiciest assignments and uniting to snipe at the opposition. Allegiances often divided along class lines: Thackeray's protégés (Oxbridge and clamorously genteel) sneered at Dickens's acolytes (streetwise and socially a bit iffy); Sala's manners were never dependable enough to secure him a seat at the *Punch* table. Resentments flickered in the pars of the gossip columns and sometimes erupted into open warfare, as in the famous unpleasantness at the Garrick Club in 1858, when Yates (predominantly a Dickens man) got summarily expelled for penning a snide profile of Thackeray.

Even writers who managed to negotiate their way between these armed camps of loyalty and patronage were not assured of survival. Magazines and newspapers came and went in bewildering profusion (sometimes lasting hardly longer than their inaugural dinners) and aspirant contributors were well advised to hedge their bets by writing for several at once. That in turn meant being prepared to try your hand at anything, from war reportage to comic verse, from society gossip to serial fiction. The ceaseless struggle to stave off creditors by

meeting deadlines commonly ended in defeat (Sala for one knew the inside of the debtors' prison), and even when it didn't the published result was all-too-often flatulent hackwork or a thinly disguised réchauffé of old material.

It is this hectic, chancy world of professional authorship that P.D. Edwards sets out to explore in *Dickens's 'Young Men'* by expertly charting the careers of two of its leading denizens. Sala and Yates were, on the surface, strikingly similar figures. Both men came from theatrical backgrounds, both owed a good deal of their early success to Dickens (and kept on saying so), both tried their hands at practically every variety of literary expression (including, in Sala's case, advertising copy and pornography) and both were excessively fond of large meals (by 1881, Edwards reports, Yates weighed in at seventeen stone). The two remained, with occasional quarrelsome interludes, on companionable terms for over thirty years, and Sala's side of their correspondence (recently edited by Judy McKenzie) provides a racy commentary on their personal and professional relationship.

Beneath the superficial resemblances, however, Edwards detects an entrenched difference. Sala proudly identified himself, from the start of his career, as a Bohemian, which in his case meant sailing close to the wind and then writing about it. An habitu  of London's (indeed, Europe's) nighthouses and gaming-rooms, he evoked, in appropriately tinselly prose, a raffish *demi-monde* which could simultaneously fascinate and repel his middle-class readership. His is the knowing voice of the urban cicerone who can rub along with everyone from dukes to costermongers and who can nudge and wink you into vicarious familiarity with the city's best-kept secrets. As Edwards points out, the model for his fiction is less Dickens than Balzac, the self-proclaimed physiognomist of French society whose project was to do for Paris what Buffon had done for the animal kingdom.

At his best, Sala's Bohemianism can inform a mode of cultural analysis which reveals hidden connections between the apparently discrete strata of the city's life, or which can uncover symptomatic meanings in the commodities it values. But Sala is not, alas, very often at his best. Squandering money as soon as he made it (and he made and squandered a lot), he never had time to concentrate his gifts, and his frequent boasts about the sheer quantity of his output suggest a defensive awareness that quality had too regularly been sacrificed. Generally one step ahead of the bailiffs, scrambling to complete commissions (and often failing), Sala fulfils his potential only intermittently.

Unlike Sala, Yates was never—or never quite—a Bohemian. He cannily exploited the risqu  milieu of pretty horsebreakers and blackleg baronets for a lucrative series of sensation novels, but he was careful, after an early experiment or two, to be properly censorious about it. A more efficient storyteller than Sala (whose plots usually go haywire after a couple of chapters), his fiction—his writing generally, indeed—lacks the older man's quirky insights and brilliant technicolour set-pieces. Good at meeting deadlines and spotting talent, assiduous at transacting editorial business (he practically ran *Temple Bar* while Sala was nominally in the chair), Yates was destined for success, and it came in 1874 when he founded *The World*, a paper for all tastes with a staple diet of society scandal, highbrow reviewing (Archer and Shaw were contributors) and serial novels by bestselling writers like Wilkie Collins and Mary Braddon. Yates, to be sure, had his ups and downs (like Sala, he was once declared bankrupt and he did a short stretch in Holloway for publishing a story

about Lord Lonsdale's sex-life), but when he died in 1894 he left a personal estate of over £38,000; Sala, who survived him by nineteen months, left next to nothing and had been, for the last weeks of his life, in grateful receipt of a Civil List pension.

Yates, then, was Dickens's industrious apprentice; Sala, even if he can hardly be accused of indolence (though his book on Hogarth does betray a sneaking sympathy for Tom Idle over Francis Goodchild), was self-destructively feckless and improvident. Edwards tells their intertwined stories with zest and precision, distilling the results of exhaustive research with self-effacing skill and offering an abundance of new material and fresh insight. One is only sorry, indeed, that he has not cast his net wider to catch up some of the other 'young men' of the 1850s whose names he tantalisingly lists in the first sentence of his Introduction. Still, it would be ungrateful to demand more when so much has already been provided, and *Dickens's 'Young Men'* will be an invaluable resource for students of Victorian writing for many years to come.

Robert Dingley

***Anna Jameson: Victorian, Feminist, Woman of Letters*, by Judith Johnston.
Aldershot, Hants: Scolar Press, and Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing,
1997.**

Many scholars will have come across the works of Anna Jameson. Art historians will be familiar with her *Sacred and Legendary Art*; students of travel writing will know her *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*; Shakespeareans may well have encountered the book now usually called *Shakespeare's Heroines*; those examining the mid-nineteenth-century "Woman Question" will recall Jameson's involvement with the Langham Place group, plus her lectures of the 1850s, *Sisters of Charity* and *The Communion of Labour*. But Jameson published in so many genres that it has hitherto been difficult to gain a sense, either of her literary career as a whole, or of recurrent motifs which might give her *oeuvre* some coherence. Such critical studies as have treated Jameson's writings, too, have each tended to focus on only one genre, and hence the breadth and significance of her overall achievement have not been fully appreciated.

Judith Johnston's new book is therefore very welcome as a detailed study of Jameson's contributions to a range of literary genres. The three elements of her subtitle—"Victorian, Feminist, Woman of Letters"—are all important to the way she defines her subject. The book makes a convincing claim that Jameson be acknowledged as a "woman of letters"—in the context of a critical tradition which, well into this century, could only recognise the male of the species. It explores as well how the more conservative aspect of Jameson's own outlook (to take one notable implication of "Victorian"), plus her awareness of what would be acceptable to her readers, inflected much of her writing. But Johnston also argues that Jameson's output was underpinned and to some extent unified by a consistent concern with the distinctive qualities and potential of women, as well as with the evils of their current situation, such that she was