

The limits of the linguistic approach to translation make themselves felt when Professor Newmark tries to define the specific features of literary texts. He sees the differences between literary, scientific-technological and political-journalistic writings in the terms of Bühler's expressive, informative and vocative functions of language rather than in the terms of their different overall communicative purposes and the corresponding structures and, consequently, finds the principal distinction between literary and non-literary texts in the presence and degree of their expressivity. Starting from this proposition, he freely mixes literary and non-literary utterances of the same expressive force in examples illustrating various points of his arguments. The result is not too satisfying, for in many instances he is obliged to provide additional specific comments on each group separately. Moreover, for translations of true works of art his suggestion of approaching the problem will not do. Below the surface of "careful, sensitive and elegant writing," which Professor Newmark passionately defends (he deserves our unqualified praise for doing so), the cultivated reader will look for a deep-seated correspondence between the thematic structure and the language used to bring it out and will regard the correspondence, where it exists, as the ultimate criterion of the translator's choice of language in literary texts. It should be added that this applies not only to poetry but also to prose, which is the most frequently translated (and, in the theory of translation, so much neglected) literary medium.

The fundamental soundness of the author's general observations is, however, impressive and numerous quotations, such as "the translator should produce a different type of translation of the same text for a different type of audience" (p. 10), could be adduced here to demonstrate this. It is thus a great pity that Professor Newmark has so far refrained from discussing the first principles of translation in a more comprehensive way, taking into account the function of the whole work translated; our hope is that he will do so in some of his next publications. In the meantime his book, reflecting the present state of translation studies, a period in which the interdisciplinary nature of the subject has been fully recognized but the gaps between the disciplines have not yet been successfully bridged in practice, will remain an invaluable companion for the translator and offer a seabed rich in pearls for anyone interested in the theory of the subject.

Aleš Tichý

Re-VIEWING VICTORIAN LITERATURE

J. M. Gray. **Thro' the Vision of the Night. A Study of Source, Evolution and Structure in Tennyson's Idylls of the King.** Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1980, pp. 179. Geoffrey Tillitson. **A View of Victorian Literature.** Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1978, pp. 396.

The above two volumes illustrate two very different approaches to the evaluation of literature. That of Dr J. M. Gray, as is clear from the sub-title, is severely limited and specific in theme and purpose, whereas the posthumously published work of Professor Tillitson is as wide in scope as it is in intellectual conception, being in fact originally planned as a volume in the *Oxford History of English Literature*, and now revised and prepared for separate publication by the distinguished Victorian scholar, his widow Kathleen Tillitson.

Claiming that the *Idylls of the King* has been too generally condemned as lacking in structure, Dr Gray sets out to demonstrate by way of close textual explication and analysis that Tennyson's work, drawing on "the best of Arthurian tradition" as well as "elements from a great range of heroic literature", is the result of the poet's "years of brooding over the whole theme" (p. 1), and of "a narrative drive or progression in the overall design" (p. 5).

In discussing Tennyson's use of the Arthurian legend (Ch. II), Dr Gray employs the theory of archetypes and Jungian formulations, but apart from demonstrating conclusively that Tennyson, in many respects, even details of presentation, closely follows Malory, fails to tell us why the closeness is of significance. I would suggest that one reason for his failure to present a convincing demonstration of dynamic relationship between Malory and Tennyson is contained in the assertion that "In the story of Balin and Balan, Malory is not concerned with opposing and complementary

forces, either on the psychic or the cosmic scale, at least not explicitly so" (p. 42). But poetry need not be explicit to be understood and accepted. It is with regard to the relevance of Malory's confrontation with life itself that Tennyson seems to have blurred his interpretation, and while Dr Gray does make his point with reference to the purposeful structure and deliberation of Tennyson's *Idylls*, he in no way convinces us that the Victorian poet's "Vision" is an advance on Malory's, or even in the same category, or in fact anything but the "respectable" Victorian rationalization of legend which so many critics have taken it to be.

Dr Gray's own terms of reference would seem unfortunately to preclude confrontation with William Morris's interpretation of Malory in his early works, for it is precisely the latter which have seemed to convey to the twentieth-century reader a more valuable perception of Malory. It is nevertheless surprising that Dr Gray pays so little attention to Morris (mentioned only in 4 footnotes, one of which is not noted in the index), although this may mean nothing more than that a Tennysonian Maloryite and a Morrisian Maloryite can scarcely come to terms. As Morris is reported to have said, "Tennyson's Sir Galahad is a rather mild youth", and mildness ranging to complacency is what many critics have found in Tennyson's version of Malory. If Dr Gray can help us to see a more serious and profound conception of life and of the purpose of literature than what has so often been dismissed as uncritical acceptance of a bourgeois Victorian ethic, it will be of value, and certainly this close analysis of style, structure and use of sources contributes to an understanding of Tennyson's purpose and method. Nevertheless the result of a critical approach which traces "the aesthetic and cognitive structures of the sealed system — the Idyll-world and precludes *comparison* with works outside the chosen corpus" (p.v) is a very limited one. In particular Dr Gray's arguments with the Victorian critics who objected to the bourgeois ethics of Tennyson's Arthur and other heroes lacks historical profundity (Chapter 8).

No greater contrast in critical method could be found than Geoffrey Tillitson's *View*. It is indeed a personal view — and therein lies its value, since for all its individuality it is an objective and mature summing-up by a critical intelligence which can range over the whole field, discovering relationships and interconnections which enrich our whole comprehension of Victorian literature.

The paramount importance of Carlyle to his contemporaries and to later Victorian writers has perhaps been more often asserted both by scholars and by writers themselves, than conclusively demonstrated. It is perhaps because it is so all-pervasive (like that of Shaw in the first half of the 20th century) that it is so rarely traced in convincing detail. Perhaps, too, it is because, of later scholars, those who have most appreciated Thackeray or Dickens, Eliot or Morris, have not been so immediately in sympathy with Carlyle. What Professor Tillitson does is to remind us vividly of just what it was in Carlyle that impressed his contemporary fellow-writers and his successors, what it was in his personality, creative work and philosophy of life which liberated English literature, enabling it to express the true quality of the age.

Among the most significant legacies of Carlyle's writings Professor Tillitson sees his "style", his language, selected deliberately to permit the "sense to come through clearly" (p. 102). Today we would scarcely term (as Carlyle does) what is the main source of this style either the "Scottish dialect" or "plain Scotch-English", since we know that it was in fact the "underground" stream of Scots or Lallans, a national language denied literary expression and a contemporary written norm in its own right, but thrusting itself through to counteract in its sister-language the deadening superabundance of what Morris — here considerably indebted to Carlyle — was to call "French and fine". Tillitson stresses the closeness of Carlyle's language to his thought: "His wording springs directly out of the Carlylean matter, and is not imposed on it by one who has turned away to dip into somebody else's chest of drawers for it" (p. 105). And again: "His disciples liked to borrow both his leading ideas and the words they had first been expressed in" (p. 105).

Every chapter brings its perceptions, whether on Dickens, the Brontës, Thackeray, Tennyson, Browning, but nowhere does the sensitivity of Professor Tillitson's approach show more clearly than in his delightful chapter on Elizabeth Gaskell, in which he duly stresses her "charm" and "femininity", but is most interested in her serious craftsmanlike approach to the art of writing and to the search for truth which Carlyle so greatly appreciated in her.

Clearly such a posthumous volume must show unevenness of execution, but in this case the editorial care of Kathleen Tillitson has reduced inconsistencies to a minimum. What we may perhaps as theoreticians of literature most regret is the lack of time granted to Geoffrey Tillitson to formulate more specifically the brilliant perceptions regarding certain long-term problems of literature: the relationship between drama and the novel; the significance and nature of style and form and a language related to life; the problem of veracity. All the chapters abound in mature opinions on these and other matters. Professor Tillitson did not live to sum them up comprehensively in relation to his theme: the loss is ours.

Of minor matters I would merely mention a factual mistake which seems to have crept in on p. 194 regarding the "country house in the north of England" which is Mr Rochester's seat. In fact, if we follow the movement shuttling North and South and North again from Mrs Reed's house to Lowood to Thornfield Hall to the mountainous country where Jane finds refuge with the Rivers family, and then back South to Thornfield, it is clear that the Hall, in spite of its rather "Northern" sounding name, is in fact considerably to the South. From Whitcross, Jane has a journey of 36 hours South to Thornfield to scenery "whose green hedges and large fields, and low pastoral hills (how mild of feature and verdant of hue compared with the stern North-Midland moors of Morton" (*Jane Eyre*, Ch. XXXVI), is clearly meant, as in Gaskell, to define the contrast, so real at the time, between North and South. The remarkable thing is that over such a wide range of material such inexactitudes should be so rare.

This is a book to return to again and again, not least because it sends us back to the great creative masterpieces themselves with renewed appreciation.

Jessie Kocmanová

Victorian Poetry: An Issue Devoted to the Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Vol. 20, nos. 3, 4, Autumn/Winter, 1982. West Virginia University. Guest Editor: William E. Fredeman.

After the special Morris double volume of *Victorian Poetry* (13, nos. 3, 4, Fall/Winter, 1975) there now comes a second double volume devoted to Rossetti, in commemoration of the centenary of his death, April 9, 1882. The distinguished scholar and outstanding bibliographer of the Pre-Raphaelites, Prof. William E. Fredeman of the University of British Columbia, has acted as Guest Editor in both cases. As Prof. Fredeman points out in Preface, over the 54 years since the centenary of Rossetti's birth (1928), Rossetti studies have been transformed; from the prevalent concentration on the supposedly "sensational" life-story, a more scholarly approach has prevailed, as adequate material has progressively become available. In spite of the great increase in biographical and critical studies, the present volume is the first set of collected essays dealing exclusively with Rossetti, for twenty years. There can be no doubt that the volume itself represents a landmark in Rossetti studies, being at the same time, on an all-over evaluation - and thanks to Prof. Fredeman's effective division into three parts, consideration of Rossetti as Poet, of Rossetti as Artist, and the establishment of reliable biographical and textual data - an essential tool for all Victorian scholars, and certainly in some of the essays an inspiration to new interpretations of the development of later 19th-century and 20th-century English poetry.

Given such a range of themes it is difficult and perhaps invidious to select individual studies for praise, but apart from the impact of the volume as a whole, with its freshness of scholarly approach and staggering wealth of beautifully presented illustrations, which alone would make the volume a valuable possession for any scholarly library, I have personally found most illuminating the study by Pauline Fletcher, "Rossetti, Hardy and the 'Hour which might have been'", illustrating the continuity of tradition from Rossetti to Hardy, with its bypassing of Eliot, and Dianne Sachko Macleod's fascinating examination of "Rossetti's Two Ligeias: Their Relationships to Visual Art, Music, and Poetry", throwing new light on the too-often neglected Pre-Raphaelite interest in music, and on Rossetti's little-known libretto plot-outline, "The Doom of the Sirens". Had this latter been completed and staged, infers Macleod, "it would have combined the arts of poetry, painting and music on a grand scale and been a veritable Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*". Striking, too,