Parodies of the romantic age.

Stones, Graeme

# PARODIES OF THE ROMANTIC AGE

VOLUME 5

Edited by John Strachan

REJECTED ARTICLES

# 江苏工业学院图书馆 藏 书 章



LONDON
PICKERING & CHATTO
1999

Published by Pickering & Chatto (Publishers) Limited 21 Bloomsbury Way, London, WC1A 2TH

Old Post Road, Brookfield, Vermont 05036, USA

http://www.pickeringchatto.com

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BRITISH LIBRARY CATALOGUING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA Parodies of the romantic age: the poetry of the Anti-Jacobin and other parodic writings 1. Parodies 2. Romanticism 3. English poetry – 18<sup>th</sup> century I. Stones, Graeme II. Strachan, John. III. Anti-Jacobin 827.7'08

ISBN 1851964754

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING IN PUBLICATION DATA Parodies of the romantic age: the poetry of the Anti-Jacobin and other parodic writings / edited by Graeme Stones and John Strachan.
Includes bibliographical references and indexes.
Contents: v. 1. The Anti-Jacobin – v. 2. Collected verse parody – v. 3. Collected prose parody – v. 4. Warreniana – v. 5. Rejected articles.
ISBN 1-85196-475-4 (set: acid-free paper)
1. English literature – 19th century. 2. Humorous poetry, English. 3. English wit and humor. 4. Verse satire, English. 5. Satire, English. 6. Romanticism. 7. Parodies.
I. Stones, Graeme. II. Strachan, John.
RR1111 .P38P37 1998
821'.70917—dc21

1

CIP

Set ISBN 1 85196 475 4

This publication is printed on acid-free paper that conforms to the American National Standard for the Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials

> Typeset by Antony Gray, London Printed and bound in Great Britain by Redwood Books Ltd, Trowbridge

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#### INTRODUCTION

Echoing in title and governing conceit Horace and James Smith's enormously successful collection of parodies Rejected Addresses: or the New Theatrum Poetarum (1812), P. G. Patmore's Rejected Articles, published anonymously by Henry Colburn in 1826, masquerades as a collection of contributions discarded from the most notable periodicals of the Romantic period (Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, the Edinburgh Review, the London Magazine, the New Monthly Magazine, Cobbett's Register). This device enables Patmore to imitate the style of some of the most notable essayists of the post-Napoleonic period; Cobbett, Hazlitt, Hunt, Lamb, Jeffrey and Wilson amongst them. The laudatory review of the second edition of the Rejected Articles published in the Literary Chronicle in August 1826 sets out the bill of fare which is placed before the reader:

He can dream with *Elia* in Dessin's Hotel, or wander with him to the market-place of Calais . . . Or should he prefer Old England and politics, to Calais . . . he may listen to an address from William Cobbett to the ploughboys and labourers of Hampshire, to the identity of which we should almost imagine that W. C. himself might safely swear . . . Or Horatio Smith shall build up for him all the airy fabrics which eternally decorate 'To-morrow'; or we shall *dine out* with the same gentleman . . . Or, (and was ever critic in such delicate and delightful embarrassment as to choice?) he may discuss the merits of Shakspeare's Romeo and Juliet with Professor Wilson, – lose all sense of critical dignity for a full month, in consequence of coming into contact with The Grimm's Ghost of James Smith, – bury himself under a heap of beautiful metaphors and amusing parodies, with the author of Table Talk, – criticise Brother Jonathan in company with Francis Jeffery [sic], or recline under the Greenwood Shade, and talk of Boccaccio and Fiametta with Leigh Hunt.

of his working life was spent as a journalist in a career which saw him involved with many of the significant periodicals of the day: Blackwood's, the London, the New Monthly, the Retrospective Review and the Westminster Review. His most notable association was with the New Monthly, for which he wrote for over thirty years, eventually acting in an editorial capacity between 1841 and 1853. Nevertheless, Patmore's first significant experience as a literary journalist was with Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, to which he contributed poetry and reviews and acted as a de facto London dramatic critic. However, it was in his other capacity, as Secretary to the Surrey Institution, that Patmore first encountered the man who was to be such a presence in his life, William Hazlitt. Patmore met Hazlitt in late 1817 when the latter arrived to discuss the arrangements for his course of lectures on the English poets. Early in the following year, he visited the critic's home, asking to borrow the manuscripts of the lectures and to discuss what must have seemed to Hazlitt a most unlikely, and possibly threatening, request:

My reception was not very inviting; and it struck me at once (what had not occurred to me before) that in asking facilities for criticizing William Hazlitt in Blackwood's Magazine I had taken a step open to the suspicion of either mischief or mystification, or both. However, I soon satisfied him that my object and design were anything but unfriendly. To be what he called 'puffed' in so unlooked-for a quarter was evidently deemed a god-send; it put him in excellent humour accordingly; and the 'Lake Poets' being mentioned, and finding me something of a novice in such matters . . . he talked for a couple of hours, without intermission, on those 'personal themes,' which he evidently 'loved best,' and with which, in this instance, he mixed up that spice of malice which was never, or rarely, absent from his discourse about his quondam friends, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey.<sup>2</sup>

Patmore was allowed to contribute his first 'Notice of a Course of Lectures on English Poetry, now delivering at the Surrey Institution, London, by W. Hazlitt, Esq' to the February 1818 Blackwood's3 and returned to the lectures in the issues for March and April. However, despite Patmore being allowed to 'puff' Hazlitt, the magazine as a whole had not changed its views on the essayist. In April 1818, Patmore's final respectful account of Hazlitt's lectures was immediately followed by a riposte by 'A. Z.' which repeated Blackwood's

Patmore's adroit imitative methodology, which at first sight appears to have more in common with eighteenth-century techniques than much Romantic period parody, is acknowledged in the title which he uses from his third edition (1834) onwards, Imitations of Celebrated Authors. However, this is not to say that Patmore's work lacks critical insight; here 'imitations' have much to say about their 'originals'. Though Patmore's imitations are not without their faults, several of them, especially those of his friends Lamb and Hazlitt, are subtle, wellachieved and critically illuminating. Other pieces, notably two of the imitations of the brothers Smith, 'Grimm's Ghost' and the second edition's 'Dining Out', shed interesting light on early nineteenthcentury Horatian prose satire. Both of these, along with the 'London Letters to Country Cousins', are also socially revealing documents, preoccupied as they are with the minutiae of contemporary late Georgian London life. And in the highly successful Blackwood's imitation, the 'Review of Tremaine', Patmore demonstrates that he, too, can write acerbic, partisan parody. Not republished since it reached a fourth edition, in 1844, this is the first scholarly edition of the Rejected Articles. This introduction addresses Patmore's life and career in the years leading up to the publication of the book and explores the cultural context of the Articles in contemporary literary journalism.

Peter George Patmore, who lived from 1786 to 1855, was an author, journalist and editor. He is generally mentioned in literary history by virtue of association, as the father of the Victorian poet Coventry Patmore and the friend of John Hamilton Reynolds, Charles Lamb and, most notably, William Hazlitt (most of the letters which were worked up into the latter's extraordinary confessional document Liber Amoris (1823) were originally addressed to Patmore). However, he was a journalist of some consequence from the late 1810s onwards and produced several books, two of which, Rejected Articles and My Friends and Acquaintance, offer useful critical and biographical accounts of some of the major prose stylists of the Romantic period. He was a Londoner, the son of a Ludgate Hill jeweller (Patmore's mercantile antecedents are put to good use in his 'London Letters to Country Cousins'). His mother was the daughter of the German painter Baeckermann. Patmore refused to follow his father into the family business and most

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jeer of 'pimpled Hazlitt'.<sup>4</sup> Patmore protested to William Blackwood about the jibe; inevitably, his admiration for Hazlitt and acquaintance with Leigh Hunt did not augur well for a permanent connection with Blackwood's. It is probable that his link with Taylor and Hessey's London Magazine, a house magazine to the Cockneys to the minds of Maga's principal contributors, was the final influence in his conversion from favoured contributor to whipping-boy. By 1820, Patmore was assisting the editor John Scott and beginning to contribute to the London, and by the summer of that year he was firmly established as Blackwood's 'Tims',<sup>5</sup> the empty-headed Cockney youth, friend of 'pimpled Hazlitt' and 'Signor Le Hunto' (Patmore's remarks on nicknames in the Rejected Addresses' 'The Spirit of the Age. Mr Hazlitt', are heart-felt).

1821 saw Patmore contributing theatrical reviews to the *London*'s January and February numbers with a view to becoming chief drama critic, a post previously held by Hazlitt. However, the latter month also saw perhaps the most significant event in his life, which itself originated in the controversies between *Blackwood's* and the *London*. On 16 February 1821, Patmore acted as second to John Scott in his duel<sup>6</sup> with Jonathan Christie, the intimate friend of John Gibson Lockhart. Scott was seriously wounded, dying ten days later as a consequence of his wounds. Rightly fearing prosecution, Patmore fled to France (his French experiences were to provide the source material for the *Rejected Addresses*' imitations of Lamb and James Smith). Returning to England for trial, he was eventually acquitted, but the incident seriously damaged his reputation.<sup>7</sup>

His employment with the *London* ending abruptly and tragically, Patmore turned to the *New Monthly*, to which he contributed extensively during the 1820s, recycling his contributions in a series of books. The most impressive of his earliest books is his first, *Letters on England by Victoire*, *Count de Soligny* (1823). Heavily influenced by Robert Southey's *Letters from England by Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella* (1807), Patmore's book offers a lively portrayal of English letters and society as seen through the eyes of a visiting foreign nobleman. His former employers at *Blackwood's* greeted the book with disdain, gleefully noting that 'Victoire' was actually a French woman's name and later labelling the book the work of a money-grubbing 'blockhead'. 8 Some

of the letters originally appeared in the *New Monthly*, as did Patmore's 'London Letters to Country Cousins', a series which concludes in the *Rejected Articles* itself. Drawing on his maternal cultural inheritance, Patmore also supplied a series of impressionistic critical essays about paintings housed in British collections to the *New Monthly*. These were worked up into *British Galleries of Art* (1824) which contains accounts of works held at various palaces and stately homes (including Hampton Court, where some of his grandfather's portraits were held), Beckford's by then dispersed collection at Fonthill and Charles Mathew's collection of theatrical portraiture. Similarly, material originally published in the *New Monthly* informs Patmore's *Mirror of the Months* (1826), 'a Calendar of the various events and appearances connected with a Country and a London life, during each successive Month of the Year'. <sup>9</sup> 1826 also saw the publication of the *Rejected Articles*, shortly before Patmore first met Lamb:

My first introduction to Charles Lamb took place accidentally, at the lodgings of William Hazlitt, in Down-street, Piccadilly, in 1824 [actually 1826] . . . Mr. Colburn had published anonymously, only two or three days before, a jeu-d'esprit of mine . . . [Hazlitt had] a book in his hand [and] I found, to my no small alarm, it was the book which occupied all my thoughts.

This was an ominous commencement of my investigation; for the book contained a portrait of Hazlitt himself, drawn with a most unsparing hand, because professing to be his own, and to have been 'Rejected', for obvious reasons, from his own 'Spirit of the Age', then recently published. Hazlitt's looks, however, which were an infallible criterion of the temper of his mind at the moment of consulting them, were quite sufficient to satisfy me that he was not displeased with what he had been reading.<sup>10</sup>

At this point Lamb and his sister appeared and Hazlitt, to Patmore's horror, informed Miss Lamb that 'There's something there about Charles and you. Have you seen it?'. Mary Lamb read the imitation of Elia and expressed 'feelings about what she had read, which indicated that her first impression was anything but a favourable or agreeable one'. It seems that Mary particularly objected to the notion of her brother being capable of describing women's clothes and Charles writes in the following year that 'An imitator of me, or rather pretender

to be *me*, in his Rejected Articles, has made me minutely describe the dresses of the poissardes at Calais! – I could as soon resolve Euclid.'<sup>12</sup> However, from this inauspicious beginning, Lamb and Patmore established an acquaintance which saw Lamb write some of his finest letters to the author of the *Rejected Articles*.<sup>13</sup>

In Letters on England, Patmore dwells on the contemporary importance of the periodical press: 'the periodical works of the present day in England . . . probably exhibit more talent and learning, and exercise a more decided and obvious influence on the existing taste and literature, than the same class of writings ever did before in any country'. 14 This remark is highly pertinent to the Rejected Articles, a volume which draws on Patmore's experience as a literary journalist, purporting to include articles 'rejected' from the most 'celebrated' periodicals of the period. In Letters on England, he draws a distinction between 'Reviews' and 'Literary Magazines' and both are represented in the Rejected Articles. The reviews, exemplified by the Edinburgh and the Quarterly Review, 'are devoted to the notice and criticism of the original works that appear from time to time', whilst the literary magazines, Blackwood's and the New Monthly the most notable, are best characterised by their original writing: 'there has been opened to the reading part of the English community, within these few years, a vast fund of original writing, of every possible description, in the form of what are called Literary Magazines'. 15 The 'best among them', writes 'Victoire' in what is, in effect, a lengthy puff for Patmore's principal employer, is Colburn's New Monthly, which is 'scarcely . . . susceptible of improvement' and contains 'the most various, agreeable, useful, and comprehensive miscellany that has ever been offered to the public'. 16 Similarly published by Colburn, a publisher whose cross-promotional techniques were legendary, if not notorious, during the period, 17 the Rejected Articles also salutes the New Monthly, given that several of the volume's articles (that by 'P. G. P.' and those ostensibly by Hazlitt, James Smith and Horace Smith) are modelled upon work originally published in the journal. The New Monthly replied in kind by praising the Rejected Articles highly: 'No one conversant with the style and character of the writers whose lucubrations are here so amusingly united for the benefit of their respective admirers, will fail to recognize

the original portraits, even without bestowing a glance at the indicatory page of contents. Indeed they appear drawn to the life; and it is less like perusing an imitation than the real authors themselves.'18 The magazine's 'original essays', writes Patmore, are 'for the most part light and gay in their character', 19 characteristics which, though inapplicable to Hazlitt of course, clearly apply to the Smiths' work for the New Monthly. The Rejected Articles pay extensive tribute to the brothers. The whole book is in one sense an imitation of the duumvirate's most notable work, its title inviting comparison with the Rejected Addresses (the Literary Chronicle argued that Patmore's book 'is scarcely inferior to the work which suggested its title, and we would recommend all admirers of Rejected Addresses to possess themselves speedily of Rejected Articles'). 20 Apart from the homage paid in Patmore's nomenclature, he also includes imitations of the Smith's prose work for the New Monthly. The first, 'To-morrow; A Gaiety and Gravity', is an imitation of Horace Smith's 'To-day', a whimsical meditation on temporality which was published in the New Monthly in January 1823. The second imitates the urbane social satire of the pretensions of bourgeois society evident in James Smith's New Monthly series 'Grimm's Ghost'. The Smiths, writes Patmore in Letters on England, are writers 'who enjoy the most brilliant reputations of the day as writers of comic verse'. 21 He also lauds their prose contributions to the New Monthly, the 'playful and elegant terseness' of Horace's prose and the 'irresistibly amusing' nature of James's, and his imitations aim to capture these qualities.

The Rejected Articles were published by Henry Colburn in May 1826 with a second edition following by August of the same year. A third edition, retitled Imitations of Celebrated Authors; or, Imaginary Rejected Articles, followed in 1834 with a fourth appearing in 1844. It should be noted that there is a significant difference between the first and second editions of 1826. The first edition includes Patmore's parody of Blackwood's, the 'Review of Tremaine', where Patmore has Blackwood's fulminating against the Revd Robert Plumer Ward's 1825 novel Tremaine, or the Man of Refinement, published anonymously by Colburn, as the work of the 'low-bred and ignorant cockney' Tims. The joke against Blackwood's is that its intemperate rage against the Cockneys

has led it to misinterpret one of its own, an Anglican high Tory. However, in all subsequent editions this is omitted in favour of a second imitation of Horace Smith, 'Dining Out', and Patmore's slight imitations of Byron, 'Demoniacals. (Posthumous.) By Childe Harold' (these are included in an appendix to the present edition). Attentive readers of the third edition, for instance, will note that the volume has no pp. 107-10, due to the slight discrepancy in length between the original 'Review of Tremaine' and the replacement imitations. The edition is otherwise identical, apart from the omission of the spoof 'Preface', and appears to have been printed from the first edition's plates (the pagination is exactly the same and the running heads give the original title). The majority of the reviews of the Rejected Addresses are of the second edition and the first edition is very rare (only one of the English copyright libraries, the British Library, has a copy). These facts, and the short length of time between first and second editions in comparison to the eight years between second and third and the ten years between third and fourth, suggest that Patmore worked up the Smith and Byron efforts in some haste to replace the 'Review of Tremaine'. It is likely that the removal of the Blackwood's parody was the consequence of pressure from either Plumer Ward or Colburn (or conceivably both). The offence to the despised Blackwood's can have had little to do with the decision to cut the parody, but perhaps the author of Tremaine, Plumer Ward, who was acquainted with Patmore. 22 failed to see the joke or its publisher, Colburn, also the publisher of the Rejected Articles, was concerned about the possible effect on its sales. The absence of the impressive 'Review of Tremaine', where Patmore settles scores with his former employers at Blackwood's, severely weakened the book in its later editions and also inadvertently made 'Tims' seem a model of saintly restraint in his handling of Wilson in the 'Letters on Shakespeare', which from the second edition onwards became the only imitation of Blackwood's in the book.

The absence of the 'Review of Tremaine' also deprived the Rejected Articles of its one foray into overt and acerbic parody. Patmore's general methodology is imitative. His own description of the work in his biographical collection My Friends and Acquaintance (1854), which addresses its difference from the generality of early nineteenth-century

parody, captures its manner well: 'a jeu-d'esprit of mine, which aimed at being, to the prose literature of the day, something like what the "Rejected Addresses" was to the poetry, - with this marked difference, however, that my imitations [sought] to re-produce . . . rather than to ridicule, the respective qualities and styles of the writers imitated; merely . . . pushing their peculiarities to the verge of what the truth permitted'. 23 The New Monthly's review of the second edition of the Rejected Addresses praised Patmore's imitative skills highly: 'They certainly present us with a more difficult, yet withal a successful application of the idea of the "Rejected Addresses". The resemblance is never carried to a degree of extravagance; its humour consists less in mere burlesque or parody than in an exact imitation of the peculiarities, the turn of thought, and manner of the imitated . . . That the author, indeed, is rather a Proteus than a parodist, metamorphozing himself into whose shape he pleases, is apparent, we think, in the Unsentimental Journey, by Elia; in Brother Jonathan, and the Letter to the Ploughboys of Hampshire.'24 Leaving aside the slighting remarks on parody, the New Monthly is right to stress Patmore's ventriloquism, but this is more than 'exact imitation'. Patmore uses imitation critically, adopting each writer's mannerisms in a fashion which often offers great insight into the characteristics of his work.

It must be admitted that, despite the excellence of the imitations of Blackwood's, Lamb and Hazlitt and the skill of the Cobbett and Smith pieces, the Rejected Articles is not without its faults. Several of the imitations are perhaps too long. Patmore's prolixity offended the Monthly Review which in its antipathetic review compared the Rejected Addresses unfavourably to The Anti-Jacobin, declaring 'it to be almost as necessary that a jeu d'esprit should be short as that it should be witty. A joke of 60 pages (the average length of each of these Rejected Articles) becomes a very serious affair. Who would ever have read the "Loves of the Triangles", if that brilliant production had been as long as the Botanic Garden?' . 25 The Monthly's wilfully faulty mathematics apart, the contributor may have a point, though in fairness to Patmore his articles generally aim to imitate the length of their models. A particular offender is the Jeffrey imitation, 'Brother Jonathan', where the quotations from the novel under discussion seem decidedly over-

generous. However, this shows Patmore to be an honest imitator; the proportion of citation to criticism in Jeffrey's reviews often strikes the modern reader as unnecessarily high. It should also be noted that the *London*'s dismissal of the *Articles* in terms of their failure as overt comedy judges the book against a model not employed by its author. The imitative criticism of the *Rejected Articles* is not intended to inculcate hilarity.

Patmore's 'To-morrow' suffers from imitating a model, Horace Smith's whimsical meditative prose for the New Monthly, which has not aged well, and it must be acknowledged that the Hunt imitation. 'Boccaccio and Fiametta' is simply leaden. Even the Literary Chronicle, which warmly endorsed the rest of the Rejected Articles, described it as an 'entire failure' in imitative terms: 'we could rarely trace the delicate . . . tact and power which characterise the prose writing of Leigh Hunt'.26 And, whatever its merits, 'London Letters' is not an imitation in any sense of the term and one might also add that it is something of an impertinence on Patmore's part to devote so many pages of his book to what is, in effect, a piece of self-advertisement. Nonetheless, despite these reservations, the Rejected Articles have considerable merits. The opening imitation, of the London's Elia essays, 'An Unsentimental Journey', however misguided it might be on the subject of Lamb's capacity to describe feminine apparel, is a penetrative and often subtle account, capturing what it calls Lamb's 'humours and oddities', but also addressing the underlying mournfulness and preoccupation with mortality evident in many of his essays. 'Rich and Poor', the second imitation, ably captures Cobbett's vein of tub-thumping satirical polemic against the land-owning aristocracy, though it perhaps suffers from being in competition with the brothers Smith's masterly 'Hampshire Farmer', from that other uneven parodic collection, the Rejected Addresses.<sup>27</sup> Nonetheless, taken on its own merits, the piece offers insightful commentary on Cobbett's personal prejudices and stylistic mannerisms. The Wilson imitation, 'Letters on Shakespeare', ably captures what one might label the house-trained side of that savage critical wit and is a fine complement to 'Christopher North's' 'Review of Tremaine'. The Jeffrey imitation, 'Brother Jonathan', whilst perhaps not the equal of the Hazlitt, Lamb or Wilson efforts, offers an interesting

portrayal of a critical encounter between patrician British criticism and American experimental prose. 'London Letters to Country Cousins', with its attention to fashionable ephemera and consumerism, is a valuable social document. And, preoccupied as it is with commercial and architectural aspects of the metropolis, the essay offers a useful corrective to those of us whose Romantic vision of London is dominated by Blake's psychologically-charged topography or Wordsworth and Coleridge's antipathetic testimonies. 'The Spirit of the Age. William Hazlitt' sees Patmore imitating Hazlitt's manner whilst simultaneously offering an account of the critic's achievement. The portrait, 'drawn with a most unsparing hand, because professing to be his own' anticipates Patmore's later verdict that 'the only passion of his soul was a love of Truth'. 28 Patmore's account of Hazlitt as self-willed and stubborn, but at the same time a prose writer of genius, 'shoot[ing] forth winged words like arrows' is one of the most insightful contemporary accounts of the essayist. Like much else in his book, Patmore's imitation warrants renewed attention.<sup>29</sup> Though the *Rejected Articles* is undeniably a flawed collection, it deserves to be rescued from the oblivion in which it has languished for over one hundred and fifty years.

#### NOTES

- 1 Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review, No. 379 (19 August 1826), p. 519. The review declares that 'this is a volume of extraordinary pretensions, and it is gratifying to find that it pretends to no more than it achieves'.
- Quoted in P. P. Howe, The Life of William Hazlitt (London: Hamish Hamilton, revised edition, 1928), p. 229. Patmore captures Hazlitt's preoccupation with 'personal themes' in his imitation of Hazlitt. Howe, the great partisan of Hazlitt, faults, rightly, Patmore's accuracy with respect to dates and his general attitude is that Patmore's biography of Hazlitt stresses unduly the negative side of his personality (p. 316). He has little time for Patmore's imitation either, though his description of it as an imitation of Table Talk (p. 350) rather than The Spirit of the Age suggests that his antipathy to Patmore may not have led him to consider the piece in great detail.
- 3 Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, II (February 1818), pp. 556-62.
- 4 Ibid., III (April 1818), p. 75.
- 5 As early as September 1819 'Tims', 'the little exulting Cockney', appears in

- the special issue of Blackwood's, 'The Tent', (V (September 1819), p. 639). Patmore may at least have found his title during his ill-fated time with Blackwood's, which in its December 1819 number jocularly proposed to produce a volume of 'Rejected Articles' consisting of discarded letters from Whig correspondents (VI (December 1819), p. 290).
- 6 See Leonidas M. Jones, The Life of John Hamilton Reynolds (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1984), pp. 217–25 for a detailed account of the duel and the subsequent trials. Ironically, as in the Rejected Addresses, here Patmore was in the slipstream of the Smiths, given that Scott originally asked Horace Smith to act as his second. Smith refused.
- 7 For instance, see Thomas Hood's remark that Patmore 'apparently sacrificed Scott to the éclat of a duel' (The Letters of Thomas Hood, ed. Peter F. Morgan, (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1973), p. 232).
- 8 In the Noctes Ambrosianæ, No. XXVII (Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, XX (July 1826), p. 105). In 'The Battle of the Blockheads. By Mr Secretary Mullion', a mock epic on the subject of Blackwood's triumph over the London, Westminster and the Edinburgh, Patmore is associated with the iniquitous likes of Bentham, Hazlitt, Hunt and Hone:

Let us think of Tims, who keeps Hand on hinderland, and weeps That no golden grain he reaps From Victoire! -

Lean pates! to Whiggish pride Aye so faithful and so true, Who in pan of scorn were fried, With grey Jerry the old shrew: The Westminster's fond wings o'er you wave! While loud is Hazlitt's growl, And Hunt and Hone condole, Singing sonnets to the soul Of each knave! (11.60-72)

- 9 P. G. Patmore, Mirror of the Months (London: Geo. B. Whittaker, 1826),
- 10 P. G. Patmore, My Friends and Acquaintance: being Memorials, Mind-Portraits, and Personal Recollections of Deceased Celebrities of the Nineteenth Century: with Selections from their Unpublished Letters (referred to as MFA in the footnotes to this edition), 3 vols (London: Saunders and Otley, 1854), vol. I, pp. 3-5. Patmore, incidentally, travelled from Newbury with Hazlitt after the famous contest between Hickman and Neate described in Hazlitt's 'The Fight'.

#### INTRODUCTION

- 11 Ibid., vol. I, p. 6.
- 12 The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb, ed. E. V. Lucas, 7 vols (London: Methuen, 1903-5), vol. 7 (1905), p. 757. Lucas labels 'An Unsentimental Journey' a 'superficial imitation of some of Lamb's mannerisms, as unlike him as could well be' (p. 758) and quotes the butter-women passage as evidence. This dismisses an imitation which to my mind goes beyond surface 'mannerisms' and offers a darker and more profound Lamb than is usually evident in contemporary criticism of Elia. Patmore's real crime is perhaps the essay in My Friends and Acquaintance, which lacks sufficient reverence for Lucas's 'St. Charles', a personification which itself has done Lamb's reputation little good. See also Bertram Dobell's views on Patmore in Sidelights on Charles Lamb (London: published by the author; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903).
- 13 Patmore was the first to publish the famous letter about the dog Dash (see MyFriends and Acquaintance, vol. I, pp. 29-40).
- 14 Patmore, Letters on England by Victoire, Count de Soligny (referred to as LoE in the footnotes to this edition), 2 vols (London: Henry Colburn, 1823), vol. II, p. 221.
- 15 Ibid., vol. II, pp. 228-9.
- 16 Ibid., vol. II, p. 230.
- 17 Journals owned or part-owned by Colburn (the New Monthly and the Literary Gazette most notably) would print puffing reviews of books published by Colburn. The New Monthly's review of the Rejected Articles is perhaps a case in point. See the discussion in Jones, op. cit., pp. 253-6.
- 18 New Monthly Magazine, XXI (April 1827), p. 143.
- 19 Patmore, Letters on England, vol. II, p. 230.
- 20 Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review, No. 379 (19 August 1826), p. 520.
- 21 Patmore, Letters on England, vol. II, p. 232.
- 22 He is one of the 'deceased celebrities' described in My Friends and Acquaintance. Patmore acted as editor for Tremaine 'during its passage through the press'. My Friends and Acquaintance sheds no light on the excision of the 'Review of Tremaine'.
- 23 Patmore, My Friends and Acquaintance, vol. I, pp. 3-4.
- 24 New Monthly Magazine, XXI (April 1827), p. 143. Cf. the Literary Chronicle: "But be these verities?" we too are inclined to ask with Alice in the old play, from which the author takes his motto; for really we have been more than once tempted to suspect that we were actually cogitating with Charles Lamb, or conversing with William Hazlitt. This is a book which a reviewer feels to be after his own heart. It affords him all sorts of facilities, sentimental or satirical, grave or lively.' (p. 519).

- 25 Monthly Review, N.S.II (July 1826), p. 332.
- 26 Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review, No. 379 (19 August 1826), p. 520.
- 27 The Monthly Review's antipathetic notice of the Articles makes this point: 'The admirable imitation of Cobbett in the Rejected Addresses ought, we think, to have warned the author off these premises. He has only succeeded in catching the coarsest feature of that popular writer his vein of abuse: when he attempts any thing beyond it, he sinks into a mere plagiarist.' (Monthly Review, N. S. II (July 1826), p. 333).
- 28 Patmore, My Friends and Acquaintance, vol. I, p. 97.
- 29 There is almost no twentieth-century criticism of the Rejected Articles. David Kent and D. R Ewen in their Romantic Parodies, 1797–1831 (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1992) argue that the book is part of 'a large literature of undistinguished imitations, including Horace Smith's Horace in London (1813), the anonymous Posthumous Parodies and Other Pieces, P. G. Patmore's Rejected Articles (1826) and his later Imitations of Celebrated Authors (1834)' (p. 14). Given that the Rejected Articles and the Imitations of Celebrated Authors are the same book with different titles, it is possible that their reading in Patmore has not been enormously attentive. Their only other reference to Patmore is in the bibliography, which renders My Friends and Acquaintance as My Friends and Acquaintances.

#### NOTE ON THE TEXT

The present edition is based upon the Edinburgh University Library copy of the first edition of the *Rejected Articles* (1826). The text of the 'Appendix to the Rejected Articles' is taken from the third edition (1834). A small number of silent corrections are set out in the schedule on p. 248. Patmore's footnotes are flagged by asterisks and editorial footnotes by superscript numbers.

#### PREFACE.

It may be laid down as an axiom, in regard to Magazine writing, that it must not be too good. Who, that is gifted with 'a literary turn,' is not in the constant habit of finding, that those passages of his Papers which happen to be expunged by the remorseless pens of Periodical Editors, are invariably the best? Indeed the merest novice in these matters knows perfectly well, that it is only necessary to write an Article rather better than usual from beginning to end, to ensure its rejection altogether. When, therefore, the Editor of the present Volume states, that it is the joint production of several gentlemen who have long been distinguished for the piquancy of their / Periodical writings, and that every Article it contains has been 'Rejected' from at least one celebrated Journal of the day, he not only settles the pretensions of the Work he is appointed to usher into the world, but explains its nature in a way that must render any further remarks from him superfluous.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Charles Lamb.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> William Cobbett.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Horace Smith.

John Wilson.
 James Smith.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> William Hazlitt.

Peter George Patmore.
 Francis Jeffrey.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Leigh Hunt.

#### INTRODUCTORY NOTE

(to An Unsentimental Journey)

This imitation of Charles Lamb sees Patmore profiting from his enforced sojourn in France, after the 1821 duel between Scott and Christie, in his description of Elia's impressions of a supposed trip to Calais. Elia, that devotee of old books, is here himself imitative, following the route of Sterne's Yorick. Imitating Lamb is no easy task. 'The style of Charles Lamb', declares the Literary Chronicle in its review of the Rejected Articles, 'above that of any author of the day, seems to breathe defiance to the imitator'. This is fair, though one might add that it might be easy enough to produce an ersatz version of Lamb which simply rehearses the mannerisms which are too often superficially seen as the quintessential Elian literary habits. This hypothetical imitator might ladle in puns, whimsicalities and the familiar cast of characters and places (cousin Bridget, the India House, Mackery End and so on) and label the stew 'Elian'. However, though Patmore does all of this, his penetrative and often subtle account of Lamb does much more besides. It captures what the imitation calls Lamb's 'humours and oddities', but also the underlying mournfulness and preoccupation with mortality evident in many of his essays. Patmore comments in My Friends and Acquaintance that 'there was a constitutional sadness about Lamb's mind'<sup>2</sup> and in 'An Unsentimental Journey' he writes of 'a serious joy, interfused with a still more serious melancholy', a concept which has a wide application in the essays of Elia.

In a biographical sketch of Lamb which was written during the essayist's lifetime but not published until the 1850s, Patmore offers a description which sheds light upon his intentions in 'An Unsentimental Journey':

There is the profound melancholy of the poetic temperament, brooding

fondly over the imagination of what it feels to be unattainable, – mixed into a 'chance medley' of all sorts of quips, quibbles, and quiddities of the brain. There is the gravity of the sage contending with the gaiety of the humorist; the pride and solemnity of the philosophic observer of human nature, melting into the innocent playfulness of the child, and the mad fun of the schoolboy.<sup>3</sup>

Patmore's imitation offers a "chance medley" of all sorts of quips, quibbles, and quiddities of the brain, but also engages with Lamb's elegiac qualities, his attention to dreams and reveries and his unsettling defamiliarisation of the supposedly familiar. In both the meditation on the English air and the pastoral set-piece description of the French butter-women, the Elian yearning for lost prelapsarian states is beautifully captured. The *Literary Chronicle* argues that despite the difficulty of Patmore's self-imposed task he achieves his goal: 'How few could catch the expression of [Elia's] quaint originality, intense depth of thought, and amiability of feeling! This task the author of the Rejected Articles has essayed and overcome'5.

#### NOTES

- 1 Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review, No. 379 (19 August 1826), p. 520.
- 2 MFA, I, p. 27.
- 3 Ibid., I, p. 13.
- 4 The *Chronicle* thought particularly highly of this passage ('We are in love with the description') and quotes from it at length.
- 5 Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review, No. 379 (19 August 1826), p. 520.

# AN UNSENTIMENTAL JOURNEY.

#### BY ELIA.

READER, thou art haply one of those persons who feel themselves bound in honour to earn (in their own estimation) whatever title it may please others to bestow upon them. If so, reading thyself every day addressed as 'reader,' (not to reckon the flattering additaments of 'gentle,' 'generous,' 'tasteful,' 'learned,' 'critical,' and so forth,) thou hast doubtless felt thyself constrained in conscience to prove the validity of thy title, by perusing every Work (so we puny moderns are minded to denominate our poor, pigmy productions) that comes before thee in a questionable shape: meaning thereby, every one that thou art in the least likely to be questioned about, as to whether it has been perused by thee, or not. In this case, thou hast perchance whiled away an odd half hour now and then, in turning over and tasting the leaves of / certain lucubrations, <sup>1</sup> erewhile distilled by driblets from the adust <sup>2</sup> brain of one Elia.

I will suppose thou hast, at any rate. An author would drive a sorry trade indeed, if he were not privileged to *suppose* the case of his having readers. To nine out of ten it is the only means of securing any. And even to the tenth it is much the same.

Thou *hast* read Elia, then, and art therefore not absolutely incognizant of the turn of his humours and oddities, and the character which habit and nature, uniting together, have succeeded (and failed) in impressing upon his mental and bodily man. I put it to thy candour, then, whether, being thus informed, if any but Elia himself were to come and make averment <sup>3</sup> before thee, that they had encountered his pale face, and attenuated form, beyond the confines of his own

- <sup>1</sup> Elaborate nocturnal meditations.
- <sup>2</sup> Dusty.
- <sup>3</sup> I.e. a declaration.

England, thou wouldest not have treated the tale as an ingenious, albeit an ill-conceived fiction, and greeted the teller with a glance chiefly compounded of the *incredulus odi*?<sup>1</sup>

Perchance thou sufferest the equivocal happiness of being, like Elia himself, a pun-propounder:<sup>2</sup> (for *punster* is 'a weak invention of the enemy'<sup>3</sup> of puns, and not to be uttered by one who honours them:) in which case thou wilt doubtless exclaim, 'Elia incontinent! it cannot be;' and wilt add, – as Othello / did when a charge of being similarly situated was made against his gentle mistress, – 'I'll not believe it!'<sup>4</sup>

Thou art altogether in the right, and Elia himself hereby thanks thee for thy well-placed confidence in his consistency. And yet Elia himself is at the same time constrained to assure thee, that thou art altogether as wrong as thou art right: for nothing is more easy (and hard) than to be entirely both, in regard to one and the same matter.

Look at the transparent tegument (mis-named paper) on which these uneven words are ecrivated. On turning it over, thou mayest, by following the fashion of the Hebrew, read them almost as well on the wrong side as on that which is not the right. Glance thine eye, too, towards the top of the page. It is dated 'Calais.' There is no gainsaying the fact. Elia is, like Bottom, 'translated'<sup>5</sup> from his own modest, low-roofed parlour, looking out upon the little Ever-Green (here they would think it a strip of baize) that stretches before the plain, uni-painted door of his quiet domicile, in the suburban village of 'Shacklewell,<sup>6</sup> near Hackney, near London, England –' for such is the endless supererogation which he is obliged to inscribe upon the letter which he has just dispatched (what a word, when they tell me it will / not reach her these three days!) to his dear cousin Bridget<sup>7</sup> – he is translated, I say, from the above spot (apt title, spot, when compared with the

'infinite space' of which at present he is denizen) to a magnificent Scene in the Play which seems to be continually acting here, called 'Dessin's Hotel.'

Reader, if thou wilt accord me a more than ordinary share of thy patience, I will recount how this seeming inconsequentiality came about: for thy confidence in its unlikelihood merits *my* confidence in return.

As I have begun *supposing* for thee, I may as well go on. I suppose, then, that thou art not ignorant of the signal change which, a brief while ago, (brief it is by the book, though to me it already seems an age – so crowded has it been with thoughts, feelings, fancies, imaginations, and what not), took place in my terrene condition, in virtue of my becoming a 'superannuated man.' Some of the consequences of this change I have elsewhere related; but the 'greatest is behind.'

If thou hast perused, reader, the relation I have just alluded to, touching the first impressions of a man who just begins to feel his freedom press upon him, with a weight

Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life.4 /

thou wilt readily conceive \* \* \* \*. In short, something was evidently \* \* \* \* \*. Besides which \* \* \* \*.

And moreover, what so natural to expect from Elia, under extraordinary circumstances, as that which nobody who knew him would expect from him?

Suffice it that I 'made up my mind' to go. (The phrase is singularly 'german to the matter' - that is to say, not within some hundreds of miles of expressing what it is meant to express: but let it pass.) So I clapped a shirt in my pocket; (it is hard that we cannot do the simplest of actions without incurring the suspicion of being *imitatores servum* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> 'I, disbelieving, hate' (Horace, Ars Poetica, 188).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cf. MFA: Lamb 'would joke, or mystify, or pun, or play the buffoon; but he could not bring himself to prose, or preach, or play the philosopher'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Colley Cibber, The Tragical History of King Richard III (1700), Act V, sc. vii, l. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Othello, III. iii. 279.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> A Midsummer Night's Dream, III. i. 113-4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Site of Elia's 'neat suburban retreat' ('The Old and the New Schoolmaster').

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Bridget Elia, cousin of our narrator.

Material.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lamb published his meditation on retirement, 'The Superannuated Man', in the *London Magazine* in May 1825.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Macbeth, I. iii. 117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Wordsworth, 'Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of early Childhood', l. 131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> A punlet adapted from *Hamlet*, V. ii. 155.

pecus: 1 people will say I borrowed the idea, of putting a clean shirt in my pocket, from Yorick: as if the abstract idea of a clean shirt did not instinctively become a part of every man's consciousness, the moment he thinks of leaving home!) I put a shirt into my pocket; hurried a kiss, with no very firm or florid lip, on the faded cheek of my cousin Bridget; (we have never been separated for twelve hours since we came together twice twelve years agone); got into the Shacklewell stage, as was my wont every morning for all those years; and as was my wont also, when it set me down at the Bank as usual, I proceeded towards my accustomed haunt / in Leadenhall Street, 2 and should assuredly have taken my accustomed seat on the accustomed stool, but that, just as I was stepping up, under the magnificent portico of that Palace of Commerce, I felt an *un*accustomed weight – *not* upon my heart, reader: I declare to thee that that waxed lighter and lighter every step I approached towards the spot where its rest had so long been set up; but - bobbing against the calf of my sinister leg. It was the bundle that Bridget had squeezed into my pocket. This roused me from my reverie; and I turned back, just so as to reach in time the great monster that was to bear me on its back, (not more against my will than that of the water,) to the shores of France.

#### THE VOYAGE

I hate all Steam, and all that it can do, except when it comes singing its soft sweet tune, from out the mouth of a half bright, half black tea-kettle, on a December evening fire. But above all I hate it, when, as I have chanced to see it once or twice, it gets possession (like a bad demon) of some otherwise dead hull, and drives it scrambling, splashing, heaving, straining, and roaring along, *up* our noble river Thamisis, <sup>3</sup> belching

forth / fire and smoke, and invading, terrifying, and polluting the sweet solitudes of Twickenham and Richmond, with its hideous brawl.

I once watched one of these new 'infernal machines',' as it came towards me while I was wandering under those fine old trees near Brandenburg House<sup>2</sup>; and I perceived that the poor victim of Steam was straining itself against the water, and lifting its breast partly out, at every stroke of its relentless task-master; just as a half-heart-broken stage-coach horse strains against the collar, up a steep hill, at the stroke of the whip. And yet the stroke came (as it does in the other case) as regular as clock-work. There was 'damnable iteration's in it; it sent me home sick; and I have hated Steam better than ever, ever since.

And yet here did I find myself, at eleven of the clock on a sweet sunshiny day of September, in the actual clutches of this abhorred power; prepared, nay *expecting* to be borne by it – to the clouds, as likely as not, in a clap of thunder; and to come down from thence, scorched to a cinder, and hiss as I fell into the water, and sunk at once to the bottom like a bit of burnt coal!

When I am in good health, (good, I mean, for me,) and have my wits about me, I feel but one care concerning / Death: it is that I may meet him not absolutely unlooked for, and in my own bed with the old dark crimson damask hangings; and with my cousin Bridget *not* beside me. And yet here was I, willingly, or rather wilfully, putting myself in the way of half a dozen of the most hideous of all deaths, (for the name of Steam is not one but Legion,)<sup>4</sup> without even having a choice in them.

It was not to be thought of. So I seated myself at once on the first projection that came to hand – looked down towards my feet – and as I heard the bowels of the great creature begin to grumble within it, and felt its body move beneath me, luckily the thought came across me of Sinbad the sailor, when he was inveigled, by some unaccountable fascination, to trust himself on the back of the Old Man of the Sea.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> ['O,] imitators, you slavish herd' (Horace, *Epistles*, I. xix. 19).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lamb worked at the East India House in Leadenhall Street for over thirty years. 'Thirty years have I served the Philistines', wrote Lamb to Wordsworth, 'and my neck is not subdued to the yoke.'

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A poetical term for the Thames. Cf. 'The Old Margate Hoy': 'I would exchange these sea-gulls for swans, and scud a swallow for ever about the banks of Thamesis.'

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> An explosive device disguised as a familiar object.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In Fulham. The building was demolished in 1822.

<sup>3 1</sup> Henry IV, I. ii. 88.

<sup>4</sup> See Mark 5:9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The malevolent personage unwillingly carried by Sindbad the Sailor in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*.

This recollection, by virtue of the associations I had connected with it, partly restored me from myself; and I did not return till I was called back by an indescribable jargon of tongues, as if some foreign Bedlam or Bank Rotunda¹ had broke loose at midnight – from which I could gather nothing, but that I was actually arrived in the port of Calais. But this was more than enough; so I resigned myself into the hands of fate, under the form of a French waiter, and after a few ceremonies / which I did not seek to understand, found myself in a spacious sleeping apartment of

#### DESSIN'S HOTEL

I am not the person to go gadding after other men's fancies. I have enough to do to keep pace with my own. I was never fond of 'follow my leader,' even at school. I would not follow, and did not want to lead. And yet, reader, I am fain to confess to thee, that peradventure if it had not been for Hogarth<sup>2</sup> and Sterne, 'The gates of Calais' would never have shut upon Elia; and even if they had, the hundred harpies from its Hotels would in all probability have divided him amongst them, instead of one being permitted to spirit him away in the name of 'Dessin' in particular.

To be sure there is, in regard to the latter point, something to be said for the determination which the before-named *one* had evidently formed, as to the necessity of my following *him*, and no one else. 'Sare – you *shall* go to Mister Dessin,' he repeated, close into my ear, twenty times at least. And when a man *shall* do a thing, he must. So I went./

I need scarcely tell the 'travelled' reader, that on this first moment of my setting foot in a foreign land, I was in no disposition to note very carefully the localities through which I was led by the absolute person into whose hands I fell. It must suffice to say, that I retired to my unrest,

in the midst of indistinct and confused visions, of an immeasurable Gateway, an illimitable Court-yard, an incomprehensible Coach and Horses, an unitelligible Chambermaid, and an inaccessible Bed.

My dreams on that night favoured me by being fantastical than I have known them for many a long year: for, as I think I have otherwhere informed thee, reader, I am but a poor hand at dreaming. 1 My dreams put me out of conceit of myself. Anybody might dream them. But on that night, methought, among other matters, that I suddenly sank into the sea, and was (Jonas-like) swallowed by a whale; and that the passsage through his throat to his belly, where I lodged, was exactly like that between Lombard Street and Cornhill, where Mr. Myers<sup>2</sup> the fishmonger lives, and that it smelt of fish much the same as that does; and that, when I had got through it, I found myself in a great paved court-yard, the extremities of which I could not see, which was partly lighted by what seemed to be the creature's / great lidless eye; and that, while I was passing across its dreary spaciousness, I heard a number of what the children call crackers<sup>3</sup> go off just outside, and then saw, by the glimmering light, a sort of carriage like Neptune's conch come clattering, drawn by three animals, (a-breast,) which seemed to be compounded of half Meux's4 dray-horses, half mermaids; and from the side of one of which I could see depending that enormous sign of a Boot and Spur, which has so long delighted the eyes of all the urchins who inhabit the Borough of Southwark. Methought, too, as I looked up towards the ceiling of my new apartment, it seemed to be intersected by enormous black beams, just like my cousin's great barn at Mackery End,<sup>5</sup> in Hertfordshire, where I used to sit upon the wheat-sheaves, and read Burton:<sup>6</sup> and yet I could see the stars shine through it.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> I.e. a madhouse or a trading floor.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lamb published 'The Genius and Character of Hogarth' in Hunt's Reflector in 1811.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A reference to Hogarth's 1749 print 'Gate to Calais: O the Roast Beef of Old England'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Lamb writes in 'Witches, and other Night-Fears' that 'The poverty of my dreams mortifies me'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The noted purveyor of 'London fish'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Exploding fireworks.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The brewer.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See 'Mackery End, in Hertfordshire' in Elia.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Cf. Lamb's praise of 'old Burton' in 'Mackery End'.