

THE MILL NEWS LETTER

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In the Fortnightly Review of March, 1875, there is a tribute to the recently deceased Charles Austin, written by Lionel A. Tollemache. Included among Tollemache's recollections is the following passage, which serves as this issue's Milliana.

"With regard to political economy, he [Austin] could not remember a proposition in Ricardo's book from which he differed. He was sensible of the value of small holdings as a Conservative agency; but he thought that the Conservatism thus secured was, at the best, of a narrow kind; the peasant proprietors in France would support the Empire or any other bad Government, which undertook to leave each man in possession of his plot of land. Nor, again, was he one of those who wish property in land to be dealt with by the legislature as something apart and sui generis; he regarded landed property as differing from other property only as being exceptionally an object of desire. It will thus be seen that Mr. Austin differed widely from Mr. Mill. But he always spoke of him with an admiration which he expressed for no other of his contemporaries.

He was pained at the peculiarities, which he regarded as the aberrations, of Mr. Mill's later works. Yet, puzzled as he was with what he deemed Mr. Mill's weaknesses, he yet regarded them with tenderness. I remember his talking of his friend, when he happened to be eating a melon. 'John Mill,' he said, 'is very like this melon. There is a great spot in him, just as there is in the melon; and, just as the melon owes all its richness to the spot, so it is with John Mill also.' He had little sympathy with Mr. Mill's views on the rights of women; and much of the language commonly held on that subject, he described as 'nauseous.' That men and women could ever so far unsex themselves as to enter Parliament or the professions together, in a brotherly and sisterly sort of way, seemed to him incredible. Other social questions, such as euthanasia, and divorce for incompatibility of temper, he liked to discuss, and wished to bring under discussion,

but deemed unripe for legislation."

(Lionel A. Tollemache, "Mr. Charles Austin,"
Fortnightly Review, n.s. 17 (Mar., 1875), 327-8)

The articles in this issue begin with Bernard Lightman's (History, Queen's University) discussion of an aspect of Kant's thought and the light it throws on the relation between Mill's empiricism and idealism as revealed in An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy. We then have Dennis Christopher's (Philosophy, University of Toronto) rejoinder to David Nordquest's article on Husserl and Mill, which appeared in our last issue. Our final article, by James Harrison (English, University of Guelph), points to an interesting parallel between Origin of Species and On Liberty. There follow announcements, queries, and recent publications. The issue closes with J. R. Dinwiddys' review of a book edited by Jack Lively and John Rees, entitled Utilitarian Logic and Politics, and a brief progress report on the Collected Works.

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JOHN STUART MILL AND IMMANUEL KANT ON NATURE:
IDEALISM IN MILL'S EXAMINATION OF SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON'S PHILOSOPHY

Bernard Lightman

Traditionally scholars have turned chiefly to the Logic and the Essays on Religion for insight into Mill's epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of religion and philosophy of science, although Mill is concerned with these same areas of thought in An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy. The relative neglect of the Examination is peculiar in light of three points.¹ First, the Examination is one of Mill's longest books. Second, in the Examination Mill deals with aspects of his philosophy which he never discusses in any of his other works. The Logic did not pretend to investigate metaphysical problems, and in it, Mill dismissed all extra-logical questions to the realm of metaphysics. But the Examination is considered by Mill to be a metaphysical study, and an attempt to go beyond the focus of the Logic. Discussing its progress in an 1863 letter to Bain, Mill writes:

"The only point which I have yet developed at any length is the formation of the idea of externality, and consequently of matter, and this, I think, I have brought out more fully and clearly than had ever been done before, though my theory does not differ essentially from yours or from Grote's, as indeed from our premisses there can be but one theory. But I have grappled with the details of the subject in a manner which I have nowhere yet seen. I mean in this book to do what the nature and scope of the 'Logic' forbade me to do there, to face the ultimate metaphysical difficulties of every question on which I touch."²

Mill considered his Examination to be an important, ground-breaking piece. One might argue that although Mill wrote a lengthy treatise which deals with new aspects of his philosophy, this still does not grant to the Examination the status of a major work. Perhaps these new aspects are unimportant and do not give us further insight into Mill's thought. In opposition to this line of reasoning, and as a third point, I would argue that the metaphysical issues which Mill tackles in the Examination, such as mind and matter, freedom and causation, and the existence of God, are crucial for an understanding of his thought.

In the Examination Mill was reacting to questions raised by Kant, Hamilton, and the High Church's resident metaphysician, Henry Longueville Mansel (1820-71). The central theme in the book was the connection between epistemology and metaphysics, the philosophy of religion and the philosophy of science. An area of concern which is of crucial importance for all these topics is Mill's theory of knowledge, in particular as it relates to his concept of an external world of nature. Mill's treatment of this issue reflects his approach to the other major themes in the Examination. In no other work does Mill come to terms with the concept of an external world as forcefully and clearly as he does there.³ Nonetheless, many commentators, including those who are sympathetic to Mill's philosophy, have found his analysis of the problem to be of dubious value. Alexander Bain, Mill's friend and biographer, was highly critical of Mill's development of the idealist viewpoint.⁴ Both Thomas Henry Huxley and Leslie Stephen refused to accept Mill's theory of nature although they held the Logic in high regard.⁵ It is difficult to understand how Mill, the empiricist, can also be Mill the idealist.

Let me present the paradox of Mill's empiricism/idealism in a stronger light. It is generally accepted that Mill stresses experience and not intuition as the way to truth. But if Mill is an idealist who destroys external nature and ends up in solipsism, man merely experiences himself--so where is Mill's truth? Or again, most would agree that Mill emphasizes the senses in man's search for knowledge. In the Examination Mill states that his "model of certainty" is the testimony of the senses.⁶ What happens to Mill's certainty if the senses are only man's perception of his own body? What would be the role of a scientist if Mill adopts an idealistic scheme? Does the scientist analyze only permanent possibilities of sensation? It is indeed difficult to comprehend how a thinker who stresses the empirical and the perceivable could fly in the face of common sense and paradoxically maintain that the graspable is really man's own body and mind. However, Mill was not concerned with common sense (one should not forget that he was attacking the Scottish school of Common Sense), but rather the inherent logic of his position. I would argue that Mill found that to be a Benthamite empiricist he had also to be an idealist--that to stress the graspable, one must maintain that the individual can only be certain of his own graspable world. Mill tried to overcome the problems inherent in this idealistic stance as best he could but honestly faced up to certain difficulties in his epistemological assumptions.

Philosophers, such as Kant and Hamilton, had claimed that the

empiricist standpoint was inadequate. Mill's Examination was an attempt to answer the criticisms of a priori thinkers and vindicate empiricism. It is ironic that Kant in fact helps us understand how Mill ends up as both an empiricist and an idealist. Kant's Critique of Pure Reason represented the development of an epistemology which accounted for the possibility of natural science by justifying man's ability to have knowledge of an external world. The essence of Kant's theory of knowledge is his defence of the transcendental idealist standpoint. Kant maintained that nature is known only as appearance. He rejected the notion that man can know a self-existent, independent entity (a thing-in-itself). That which is completely unrelated to man is outside man's experience. This notion of unrelatedness is meant to signify a conception of nature as that which exists independently of man or that which would subsist even if man, as a species, perished. "By transcendental idealism," Kant explained, "I mean the doctrine that appearances are to be regarded as being, one and all, representations only, not things in themselves, and that time and space are therefore only sensible forms of our intuition, not determinations given as existing by themselves, nor conditions of objects viewed as things in themselves."⁷ While on a transcendental level, man and nature (appearances) are somehow connected, empirically man represents objects in space as being external to him. Kant maintained that the notion of transcendental externality excluded connection or relatedness, but that holding to the concept of empirical externality allowed one to assert simultaneously that on the transcendental plane there is a dialectical relationship between man and nature. The transcendental idealist could admit that on an empirical level, a dualism (self and not-self) existed without alienating himself from nature on the transcendental plane. This dualism signifies that from the empirical perspective both self and not-self are real (i.e., objective) phenomenal entities, and really are separate from one another in appearances (nature). Thus, the transcendental idealist is also an empirical realist (or dualist) as he admits the existence of matter without having to go beyond his self-consciousness:

"For he considers this matter and even its inner possibility to be appearance merely; and appearance, if separated from our sensibility, is nothing. Matter is within him, therefore, only a species of representations (intuition), which are called external, not as standing in relation to objects in themselves external, but because they relate perceptions to the space in which all things are external to one another, while yet the space itself is in us."⁸

Matter is perceived immediately as being external to us or in space on the empirical plane, but since space, from the transcendental perspective, is a form of intuition, man is related to nature (and nature is related to man), and thus man has his assurance of the empirical reality of nature. Kant stated that "external things exist as well as I myself, and both, indeed, upon the immediate witness of my self-consciousness."⁹ Kant believed that in maintaining this position, he could avoid the pitfalls of attempting to infer from an effect to a determinate cause:

"Now the inference from a given effect to a determinate cause is always uncertain, since the effect may be due to more than one cause. Accordingly, as regards the relation of the perception to its cause, it always remains doubtful whether the cause be internal or external; whether, that is to say, all the so-called outer perceptions are not a mere play of our inner sense, or whether they stand in relation to actual external objects as their cause. At all events, the existence of the latter is only inferred, and is open to all the dangers of inference, whereas the object of inner sense (I myself with all my representations) is immediately perceived, and its existence does not allow of being doubted."¹⁰

Thus, in viewing appearances as an effect, one is unable to reach the cause. If inner sense causes empirically external things, then everything is a Berkeleian illusion ("a mere play of inner sense"). Yet also, if transcendently external objects cause appearances, then we are unable to get to the transcendental cause which is outside us (i.e., it is an unrelated thing-in-itself). Kant feels he has overcome this difficulty:

"In order to arrive at the reality of outer objects I have just as little need to resort to inference as I have in regard to the reality of the object of my inner sense, that is, in regard to the reality of my thoughts. For in both cases alike the objects are nothing but representations, the immediate perception (consciousness) of which is at the same time a sufficient proof of their reality."¹¹

Nature, or appearances as a totality, must be given, for we are unable to treat it the same way as we do other objects of knowledge. Any attempt to analyse the transcendental status of nature in terms of cause and effect ends in failure, for by conceiving of the relationship between man and nature in a causal fashion, one posits a transcendental and empirical dualism which cannot be bridged unless one destroys the role of one of the two factors involved in the process. One is left with two transcendently separate and independent entities, man and nature. They may come into contact with one another but unless they are mutually transformed in the process there is no dialectical relationship between the two. In order to overcome this notion, which completely isolates man from nature, one can conceive of the relationship between man and nature in causal terms. There are two possibilities from this perspective, that (a) man causes nature (Berkeleian idealism) which destroys nature as a real factor, or (b) nature is its own cause which transforms man into a passive spectator. In the latter, man is not a factor in determining the type of relationship he has with nature, and is reduced to a receptor of sense data. Kant attempted to overcome the absurdity of both alternatives by granting duality (objective reality) to man and nature on the empirical level, but holding to ideality on the transcendental plane.

The epistemological position which ultimately had to resort to inference (i.e., cause and effect) was referred to by Kant as transcendental realism/empirical idealism. In opposition to transcendental idealism, the transcendental realist regards "time and space as some-

thing given in themselves, independently of our sensibility."¹² Similarly, nature (outer appearances) is interpreted as a thing-in-itself, which is a self-existing, independent entity. If the transcendental realist conceives of nature as a self-existing entity and asserts that time and space inhere in nature, he will claim that space and time are independent entities. By positing the existence (reality) of two entities on the transcendental level, the transcendental dualist (or realist) ends up dealing with the relationship between man and nature in terms of cause and effect. The transcendental realist is an implicit empirical idealist:

"It is, in fact, this transcendental realist who afterwards plays the part of empirical idealist. After wrongly supposing that objects of the senses, if they are to be external, must have an existence by themselves, and independently of the senses, he finds that judged from this point of view, all our sensuous representations are inadequate to establish their reality."¹³

In making nature a thing knowable in itself, the transcendental realist/empirical idealist is unable to be certain of the reality of external objects of the senses:

"If we treat outer objects as things in themselves, it is quite impossible to understand how we could arrive at a knowledge of their reality outside us, since we have to rely merely on the representation which is in us. For we cannot be sentient [of what is] outside ourselves, but only [of what is] in us, and the whole of our self-consciousness therefore yields nothing save merely our own determinations."¹⁴

The end result is that the transcendental realist/empirical idealist is forced to resort to inference, which never attains its object. Kant affirmed that "if we regard outer appearances as representations produced in us by their objects, and if these objects be things existing in themselves outside us, it is indeed impossible to see how we can come to know the existence of the objects otherwise than by inference from the effect to the cause: and this being so, it must always remain doubtful whether the cause in question be in us or outside us."¹⁵

If viewed through Kant's eyes the seeming contradiction of Mill's empiricism and idealism is no longer paradoxical. They are mirror images of Mill's transcendental realism. Proving that Mill adhered to the transcendental realist position that nature is an independent, self-existing entity is extremely difficult, for this type of concept is often an unspoken assumption deeply embedded in a thinker's mind. Mill rejected any notion of synthetic a priori judgments, whether on the level of the sensibility (i.e., time and space) or the understanding (i.e., the categories). Kant's notion of the categories of the understanding was intimately connected with his concept of nature as relational. It was only by virtue of the supposition that there is a dialectical relation between man and nature on the transcendental plane that Kant could speak of man as organizing the manifold of sense data, through the categories of the understanding, in order to make experience possible. One searches in vain for any indication

that Mill viewed nature as related to man. There are rare occasions when Mill makes statements which point to his transcendental realism. In the Logic, for example, Mill asserts that the sensible qualities we know do not bear an affinity to the thing-in-itself, for we cannot deduce from the effects "anything concerning the cause."¹⁶ He goes on to conclude that "of the outward world, we know and can know absolutely nothing except the sensations which we experience from it."¹⁷ Here we see Mill assuming the existence of an unknowable external world which exists independently of man and acts as the "exciting cause of sensations."¹⁸ And again in the Examination Mill expresses his belief that noumena are "wholly unknowable by us, except phaenomenally, through their effects on us."¹⁹ Mill is thus reduced to the position of attempting to infer from an effect to a determinate cause, always an uncertain process. He must dualistically deal with nature and man as if they are two completely separate entities, both on the empirical and transcendental level.

If Kant is correct that the transcendental realist becomes the empirical idealist, then Mill should have difficulty establishing the existence of an external world of nature. This is in fact the case in the Examination, where Mill proceeds to develop his theory of nature based on the assertion that the belief in an external world is not an intuitive, but rather an acquired, product. Basically, Mill asserts that although we weave our past experiences of sensation into a group of "permanent possibilities of sensation" by the laws of association, we then forget that we have done this and begin to conceive of them as having an external, independent nature:

"Setting out from these premises, the Psychological Theory maintains, that there are associations naturally and even necessarily generated by the order of our sensations and of our reminiscences of sensation, which, supposing no intuition of an external world to have existed in consciousness, would inevitably generate the belief, and would cause it to be regarded as an intuition,"²⁰

Mill felt that this type of psychological analysis completely accounted for man's tendency to conceive of the permanent possibilities of sensation (i.e., what man takes to be nature) as an independent entity, and in the process undermined Hamilton's natural realism:

"If the deductions in the preceding chapter are correctly drawn from known and admitted laws of the human mind, the doctrine which forms the basis of Sir W. Hamilton's system of psychology, that Mind and Matter, an ego and a non-ego, are original data of consciousness, is deprived of its foundation. Although these two elements, an Ego and a non-ego, are in (what we call) our consciousness now, and are, or seem to be, inseparable from it, there is no reason for believing that the latter of them, the non-ego, was in consciousness from the beginning; since, even if it was not, we can perceive a way in which it not only might, but must have grown up. We can see that, supposing it absent in the first instance, it would inevitably be present now, not as a deliverance of consciousness in Sir W. Hamilton's sense, for to call it so is to beg the question; but as an instantaneous and irresistible suggestion and inference, which has become by long

repetition undistinguishable from intuition."²¹

Mill believed that in addition to destroying the Scottish school of Common Sense's doctrine of a direct perception of external natural objects, he was also defeating the Kantian notion of matter as derived from the categories:

"But with most people, whether philosophers or common men, the evidence on which Matter is believed to exist independently of our minds, is either that we perceive it by our senses, or that the notion and belief of it come to us by an original law of our nature. If it be shown that there is no ground for either of these opinions-- that all we are conscious of may be accounted for without supposing that we perceive Matter by our senses, and that the notion and belief in Matter may have come to us by the laws of our constitution without being a revelation of any objective reality, the main evidences of Matter are at an end. . . ."²²

Thus, in debunking the notion that we perceive matter "by our senses" (Hamilton's natural realism) or that matter is "an original law of our nature" (Kant's categories), Mill hoped that he had demonstrated the futility of trying to prove the existence of nature as an entity independent of the mind. His chief aim had not been to prove that objects are external to man, but rather to account for man's belief that the permanent possibilities were real, external objects. In fact he emphasized that "I do not believe that the real externality to us of anything except other minds, is capable of proof."²³

Mill denied that his permanent possibilities of sensation culminated in solipsism. His discussion of how we come to believe falsely in external matter never directly addresses the ontological question of the existence of an entity which is independent and outside man. Mill was only concerned with the assertion that epistemologically one can never get to that which is external to man. Through various arguments (such as that one can prove the existence of other minds) Mill repudiated the charge that his position led to solipsism. But he honestly perceived that the premises he was working from did not allow him to prove the existence of external matter.²⁴ Mill admitted his idealistic tendencies: "Matter, then, may be defined, a Permanent Possibility of Sensation. If I am asked, whether I believe in matter, I ask whether the questioner accepts this definition of it. If he does, I believe in matter; and so do all Berkeleians. In any other sense than this, I do not."²⁵ Mill's problems with his theory of knowledge illustrate the impossibility of constructing a valid philosophy of science on an idealistic epistemology. On Mill's theory, scientific laws are conceived of as relations between sensation.²⁶

Mill's laws of association seem to resemble Kant's categories of the understanding in that both are mental laws which prescribe to the world. Another parallel with Kant is Mill's assertion that we can dismiss as irrelevant to man any attempt to know substance or the support of phenomena (i.e., Kant's thing-in-itself which is unrelated to man). In the Examination Mill states that we can think away substance but let the phenomena remain and be held together by

an internal law.²⁷ Kant would generally agree with this notion, but disagree with Mill on the status of this internal law. For Mill, it is a result of mere experience and therefore matter is not a reality (or nature is not objective), while for Kant the internal law is a priori and a condition of experience, inferring that matter, as appearance, is objective and real. Mill holds that nature becomes each man's individual illusion, while Kant insists that appearances are universal or shared by all men.²⁸ Given his principles, Mill had trouble explaining how permanent possibilities of sensation, which were peculiar to every individual (as they were formed by the law of association's effect on each individual's personal experiences), became the nature which men seem to see in common. Mill argued that merely subjective experiences knit by association into a false feeling of necessity become universal, objective necessities when they are shared by a number of people: "Feelings common to many persons, which are at once irresistible and unaccountable, almost always pass into equivalent judgments and beliefs. Indeed, this is the precise way in which the fact of our sensations is translated into belief in an external world."²⁹ Again Mill undercuts any attempt to bridge the gap between man and an objective, universal world of nature, leaving man with his own subjective world of illusion.³⁰ Mill constructed an empirical idealistic stance based on associationist psychology in response to Hamilton's natural realism.

J. H. Randall claims that, metaphysically, Mill simultaneously moved in "two different directions," towards Kantian idealism and a radical empiricism.³¹ Other scholars have found corresponding contradictory movements in Mill's thought. Anschutz states that Mill, in his epistemology, is caught "between the claims of materialism and idealism."³² Similarly Ryan views Mill as "torn between wanting to deny the existence of matter and wanting solely to explain our belief in it."³³ I would argue that it is more sensible to interpret Mill's epistemological stance through Kant's eyes--that Mill's empiricism and idealism are closely related. They are actually correlatives of one position. Mill recognized that dualism had to be overcome; his solution, however, is to attempt to make idealism and solipsism consistent with realism without including a notion of appearances (i.e., nature as relational). The unavoidable result is Mill's espousal of empirical idealism/transcendental realism.

Anschutz has pointed out that Mill's "scientific or metaphysical or realist theory of explanation should be regarded as the central conception of his philosophy" and that Mill's inconsistencies are made comprehensible if one accepts this statement.³⁴ I have argued to this effect specifically in reference to Mill's theory of nature. Here I would like tentatively to expand Anschutz's remark to include a much broader spectrum of Mill's thought. In a letter of 1863 to Bain, Mill discussed how Mansel had used Hamilton's theory of knowledge to justify a belief in an immoral God:

"It is true that these conclusions are very illogically drawn from Hamilton's and Mansel's own premisses, these being, that we do not know God as he is in himself, but know him as we do other things, in his relation to us--in other words, phenomenally; which places him

in exactly the same category as an object of thought, with our human fellow-creatures, and with Matter; which also we do not know as they are in themselves."³⁵

Epistemologically, then, Mill places God and other men with matter. In other words, man is transcendently separated from God and his fellow-men, just as Mill conceives of an infinite gulf between man and nature. But then Mill is only able to deal with man's relation to other men and God in causal terms (i.e., inference from cause to effect), which reduces both to objects. In Theism Mill could only accept those arguments for God's existence which assumed that God was an object in the world. Once he had rejected all a priori arguments for God's existence, he was left with the argument from design which meant that Mill could only conceive of God as a hypothesis to be proved or disproved due to the inconclusive nature of the argument. From this viewpoint, even if God existed, man's relation to God is on the scientific level. Man can know God only through inference from cause (God) to effect (design in the world). But this is to limit man's relation to God to the realm of objects in nature leaving out any notion of relation on the transcendental plane. This perspective underlies those sections in the Examination where Mill deals with the notion of God, particularly his attack on Mansel.

In the ethical realm Mill is continually struggling with the problem of freedom and necessity. Instead of conceiving of man as dialectically related to other men on the transcendental level, he tends to view man atomistically--as an independent object caught in the chain of cause and effect. Mill believed that it was possible to build a scientific ethical system which reconciled the notion of moral responsibility and the concept that man's character is a product of necessity. In the Examination he argued that "the object of moral education is to educate the will: but the will can only be educated through the desires and aversions; by eradicating or weakening such of them as are likeliest to lead to evil."³⁶ Ethics must use the laws of association in order to teach the mind to associate pain with wrong and thus make goodness "undistinguishable from any of our instincts or natural passions."³⁷ Mill affirmed that his ethical theory of "moral causationalism," though adhering to necessity, yet allowed for responsibility, unlike other varieties of necessitarianism such as "pure fatalism" or "modified fatalism."³⁸ Mill believed that if a person wanted to transform an unwanted aspect of his character, he would be unable to affect this change by a mere act of volition. "He must use the means which nature gives to ourselves," Mill affirmed, "as she gave to our parents and teachers, of influencing our character by appropriate circumstances."³⁹ Mill felt that a real fatalist would not try to change himself as he believes it to be futile, but his theory, an ethics for the "Moral Causationist," required responsibility. However, this position really never breaks out of the realm of cause and effect. Since, according to Mill, man can never change himself through his own mind (i.e., through volition), he must always go outside himself (i.e., cause circumstances to change) in order to build up a chain reaction of cause and effect (i.e., one causes circumstances to change which

causes our habits and character to be altered).⁴⁰ This is still conceiving of man as trapped in the chain of cause and effect, reducing man to an object. Hence both the issue of man's relation to other men and the subject of man's relation to God are dealt with in the Examination, and Mill approaches them in a manner parallel to his theory of nature.

One of the central themes of Mill studies is Mill's attempt to overcome the limitations of his father's Benthamite viewpoint. Mill never fully broke away from his Utilitarian heritage and I would suggest that it is his failure to examine the very grounds of his worldview which condemns him to remain within the Benthamite frame of mind no matter how hard he struggles. Once locked into the transcendental realist/empirical idealist position, Mill was forced to approach the question of man's relation to nature, God and other men in an undialectical manner if he wished to be consistent.

NOTES

¹A handful of scholars do give the Examination more than a cursory glance: Dallas Victor Lie Ouren, Hamilton: Mill on Hamilton (Ann Arbor, Mich.; London: University Microfilms International, 1977); John Herman Randall, Jr., "John Stuart Mill and the Working-Out of Empiricism," Journal of the History of Ideas, 26 (1965), 59-88; John Patrick Day, "Mill on Matter," Philosophy, 38 (1963), 52-60; R. P. Anschutz, "Relativity of Knowledge," in his The Philosophy of J. S. Mill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 115-23; H. J. McCloskey, "Metaphysics: The Nature of Reality," in his John Stuart Mill (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1971), 142-60; Karl Britton, "Appearance and Reality," in his John Stuart Mill (Melbourne, London, Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1955), 186-218; Alan Ryan, "Mind and Matter," in his John Stuart Mill (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), 87-101; Alan Ryan, "Hamilton, Comte and Religion," in his J. S. Mill (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), 218-47; and of course Ryan's splendid introduction to the new edition of the Examination, ed. J. M. Robson, Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Vol. IX (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979). But material on the Logic is far more plentiful than work on the Examination.

²The Later Letters, 1849 to 1873, ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, Collected Works, Vols. XIV-XVII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), XV, 816.

³See also Alan Ryan, J. S. Mill, 219.

⁴Alexander Bain, John Stuart Mill (New York: Kelley, 1969), 120-1.

⁵Life and Letters of Thomas H. Huxley, ed. Leonard Huxley (New York: Appleton, 1900), II, 420; Leslie Stephen, The English Utilitarians (London: Duckworth, 1900), III, 407.

⁶CW, IX, 125.

⁷Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press; Toronto: Macmillan, 1965), 345.

⁸Ibid., 346.

⁹Ibid., 347.

¹⁰Ibid., 345.

¹¹Ibid., 347.

¹²Ibid., 346.

¹³Ibid., 346.

¹⁴Ibid., 351.

¹⁵Ibid., 347.

¹⁶A System of Logic, ed. J. M. Robson, Collected Works, Vols. VII-VIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), VII, 62.

¹⁷CW, VII, 62.

¹⁸CW, VII, 63.

¹⁹CW, IX, 381.

²⁰CW, IX, 178.

²¹CW, IX, 188.

²²CW, IX, 204n.

²³CW, IX, 187n.

²⁴Randall, 59. Randall characterizes Mill's position as "Lockean subjectivism." He perceptively asserts (p. 63) that Mill's epistemology left him with the problem of how to get "from a mental subjective 'experience' to the 'external,' Newtonian world," which is a perfect description of the empirical idealist position.

²⁵CW, IX, 183.

²⁶Randall, 59.

²⁷CW, IX, 198.

²⁸Randall, 71. Randall mistakenly tries to demonstrate the fundamental similarity between the epistemology of Mill and Kant. Mill is not a Kantian, and the root of our disagreement is over the interpretation of Kant's philosophy. However, I agree fully with Randall's analysis of Mill's "Lockean subjectivism."

²⁹CW, IX, 261n.

³⁰Randall perceptively points to Mill's difficulties with the notion of an objective, external world of nature. So do Britton, 205; Ryan, J. S. Mill, 221.

³¹Randall, 81.

³²Anschutz, 180.

³³Ryan, J. S. Mill, 222.

³⁴Anschutz, 182.

³⁵CW, XV, 817.

³⁶CW, IX, 453.

³⁷CW, IX, 455.

³⁸CW, IX, 465.

³⁹CW, IX, 466n.

⁴⁰CW, IX, 465-6.

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HUSSERL AND MILL: A REJOINDER

Dennis Christopher

In "Husserl and Mill's Psychologism" David Nordquest sets out to show that in some non-trivial sense Mill is guilty of psychologism with respect to logic. Professor R. McRae had defended Mill against this

charge in his introduction to the System of Logic (Vol. VII of Mill's Collected Works). However, McRae had utilized only Husserl's statements regarding Mill from the Formal and Transcendental Logic and Nordquest argues that Husserl's original more exhaustive treatment of Mill in the Logical Investigations provides a critique of Mill to which McRae's defence is inadequate. More precisely, he contends that if we ignore Mill's general statements on logic, which are in themselves not decisive, and pay close attention to Mill when he tries to solve "some of the key questions of logic"¹ we discover with Husserl that Mill's analysis is psychologistic in character. In this short note I will argue that neither Husserl's analysis of Mill, nor Nordquest's extrapolation of it, prove Mill to have committed the psychologistic fallacy, and I will adduce some further evidence, in addition to what McRae has already supplied, that renders such a confusion on Mill's part very unlikely.

Both Nordquest and McRae accept four distinct senses in which a doctrine of logic may be said to be psychologistic and I will follow them here. These are: 1) making the psychological principles of sensationalistic empiricism the basis for logic; 2) making concepts, judgments, arguments, proofs, and theories psychic occurrences; 3) understanding logical necessity to be the practical inability to conceive the opposite; 4) confusing questions of validity and questions of fact. Nordquest relieves Mill of guilt with respect to (2)--an especially pernicious form of the fallacy which Husserl later identified with logical psychologism.² McRae indicated that Mill in fact not only explicitly sets the distinction out, remarking the confusion of other past philosophers with respect to it, he also condemns the use of terms in logic, e.g., "concept" or "judgment," which are ambiguous with respect to it.³

Nordquest also grants that Mill, explicitly at least, does not commit the mistake of confusing what we are logically entitled to judge with what we in fact do judge. This, too, is a rather significant form of the fallacy, for one of the chief motives of those who reduced the logical to the psychological was to re-interpret logical laws as descriptive laws of mental phenomena. An extreme point of this sort of view was Theodore Lipps' doctrine. Lipps held that "logic is a physics of thinking or it is nothing at all."⁴

The remaining points, (1) and (3), form the crux of our issue then. According to Nordquest, Mill "leaves the door ajar" for founding logic on the principles of sensationalistic empiricism, and further, his denial of necessity to logical laws leads Mill into inextricable difficulties. More precisely, Mill appears to hedge on the issue of the necessity of logical laws while maintaining that conceiving their respective opposites is "impossible as a mental fact." Nordquest seems to maintain that very probably Mill has conflated logical necessity with the practical inability to conceive the opposite; but even if he has not, other difficulties concerning the extent of his theory of logic present themselves.⁵

Nordquest's first point happens also to turn upon Mill's denial of necessity to logical laws. Nordquest reasons that if we take Mill seriously here, then the apparent necessity that we seem to find in thought might be explained by the empiricistic psychological principles

of sensation. Further, if there is nothing necessary about thought, how is a logic even possible? Nordquest concludes that even if Mill did not advocate the reduction to psychological principles, he certainly left an opening for it. However, McRae has given us a very complete reconstruction of the manner in which Mill thought his logic could be founded.⁶ In the actual event of tracing out the pre-suppositions of his logic of induction Mill makes almost no reference to psychological principles; rather he sees the foundation of inductive reasoning in the nature of causation. From Mill's text in the Logic it is plain that, as McRae states, his logic is grounded in empiricistic principles of observation, not in psychological principles. But provided that this is so, what force is there in the above criticism? It is certainly true that Mill takes no explicit measures to prevent a psychological or naturalistic explanation of thought processes, but what is there exceptional in this? In fact, the Husserl of the Logical Investigations offers no reason against this line of enquiry. Husserl would no doubt hasten to add that it is irrelevant to logic, but then, on the evidence of Mill's work on the foundations of his logic, so would he.⁷

By way of indicating that Husserl's criticism of Mill was not arbitrary, Nordquest directs our attention to Mill's treatment of the basic logical laws, especially the law of contradiction. Despite Mill's repudiation of some forms of the psychologistic fallacy, and his innocence on other counts, we apparently find a psychologism with regard to necessity in his treatment of this crucial logical principle. Moreover, Nordquest poses some formidable difficulties for any plausible interpretation of Mill's remarks regarding it. The question is put whether Mill's account of the principle is adequate, and implicitly, I think, whether any account remaining within the bounds of Mill's empiricism could be adequate. However, these issues do not bear directly on the charge of psychologism leveled against Mill and I will not pursue them here.

The crucial issue for us is the interpretation of Mill's claim that the denial of the logical laws is psychologically realizable. McRae maintains that Mill simply denied that logical propositions were necessary. This seems to me to be indisputable: the doctrine regarding logical truths is as clear in Mill as is his more familiar denial of necessity to mathematical propositions.⁸ In the section of the Logic where Mill discusses this he also reveals an awareness of something rather important for our interpretive task, viz. that on his theory he is obliged to account for the seeming necessity of mathematical and logical propositions.⁹ Mill, in denying that they are necessary, should be able to explain to us how it comes about that they are ordinarily referred to as, and thought to be, universally true necessary statements. A natural point for this sort of explanation is arrived at in Mill's discussion of Hamilton's philosophy of logic. After questioning Hamilton's elevation of the logical laws to quasi-metaphysical principles, Mill offers us a somewhat obscure passage designed, I would suggest, to explain the seeming necessity of logical laws. Mill tells us that they may be "inherent necessities

of thought" and continues:

"They [the logical laws] may or may not be capable of alteration by experience, but the conditions of our existence deny to us the experience which would be required to alter them. Any assertion, therefore, which conflicts with one of these laws--any proposition, for instance, which asserts a contradiction, though it were on a subject wholly removed from the sphere of our experience, is to us unbelievable. The belief in such a proposition is, in the present constitution of nature, impossible as a mental fact."¹⁰

There is an ambiguity present here, as Nordquest points out, appertaining to whether Mill is ascribing the impossibility to the present constitution of nature or to an inherent psychological condition. The footnote he adds referring to Spencer's psychological theory would appear to decide in favour of the latter.

Nordquest indicates this passage and continues his discussion at one point as follows: "If they [the logical laws] really are necessary and Mill says that they only seem so, he has, apparently equated necessity (in fact) with a psychological process."¹¹ I do not see how this can be taken as establishing any psychologistic fallacy on Mill's part. It implies only that Mill is wrong about logical laws being necessary: for if he had equated the two he would have had to deny the psychological feelings of compulsion as well. Moreover, if Mill had been guilty of any sort of conflation here one would expect him to construe the existence of the psychological constraint as evidence for the logical laws' truth. Nordquest reads him just this way even though it is an explicit doctrine of Mill's that any sort of psychologically grounded inconceivability is no test of truth. Spencer, the psychologistic thinker par excellence, employs this notion of conceivability as a criterion of all manner of truth and Mill's critique of this view should certainly caution us against a reading of Mill that suggests that he himself employs it.

Husserl quotes the passage from Mill displayed above in The Logical Investigations and immediately following it makes the following inexplicable inference: "We conclude from this passage that the inconsistency expressed in the law of contradiction, the impossibility of the joint truth of contradictory propositions, is seen by Mill as an incompatibility of such propositions in our belief. In other words, he substitutes for the impossibility that the propositions both be true, the real incompatibility of the corresponding acts of judgement."¹² This, however, is a complete non sequitur. We could be more charitable to Husserl's misinterpretation if there were some tenet of Mill's thought that could plausibly be seen as driving him to this conclusion--but in fact just the reverse is true. Husserl had quoted, not a page before, Mill's statement that the law of contradiction is an inference from experience, hence having no necessity to account for, and moreover an inference that takes some of its instances from the external world. There simply are no grounds for asserting that Mill took the law of contradiction to be about mental acts and hence none for the view that he thought the meaning of the law appertained to such an incompatibility--a position which Husserl has no trouble dismembering. One perhaps cannot be happy with the

gap that Mill leaves between the "instances" of contradictories and the generalization that he claims follows therefrom, but what he does say regarding its sense, viz. that it is a very general and perhaps identical proposition, in no way warrants Husserl's interpretation.

Husserl goes on to draw further consequences from the view of the principle he imputes to Mill, e.g., that it is demoted to the status of "a plausible surmise"; and, further, it develops that:

"At the very point where the last foundations of all science are in question we have recourse to this naive empiricism with its blind mechanism of association. Persuasions begotten without insight, through psychological mechanisms, and with no better justification than widespread prejudices . . .--these are to be the last grounds on which all strictly scientific knowledge is to be justified."¹³

The view about the justification of logical principles that Husserl here ascribes to Mill would involve a conflation of the justification of a belief with the psychogenesis of that belief, a confusion of logical with real necessity. Now it happens that Mill has occasion to discuss such a view and his remarks are worthy of our attention here.

In his notes to James Mill's Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind, Mill considers the implicitly psychologistic view--held by his father and Herbert Spencer--that belief consists in an indissoluble association of ideas. Their idea is that there is only a difference of degree between believing something and imagining that something: the effect of constant repetition having insolubly bonded the repeated ideas in the first case, and the association being relatively weaker in the second. Mill rejects this, firstly, on the grounds that constant association of two ideas is not sufficient to induce a belief in every mind, and, in cases of perceptual illusion, repeated association creates no delusion in anyone, save perhaps children. But Mill's most telling objection is, I think, instructive of Mill's attitude towards the "blind mechanism of association" and its utility as a justification of belief:

"Following up the same objection, it may be said that if belief is only an inseparable association, belief is a matter of habit and accident, not of reason. Assuredly an association, however close, between two ideas is not a sufficient ground of belief; it is not evidence that the corresponding facts are united in external nature. The theory seems to annihilate all distinction between the belief of the wise, which is regulated by evidence, and conforms to the real successions and co-existences of the facts of the universe, and the belief of fools, which is mechanically produced by any accidental association that suggests the idea of a succession or co-existence to the mind."¹⁴

NOTES

¹David Nordquest, "Husserl and Mill's 'Psychologism,'" Mill News Letter, XIV, 1 (Winter, 1979), 8.

²Cf. E. Husserl, Formal and Transcendental Logic, trans. D. Cairns (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1969), 153-4.

³A System of Logic, ed. J. M. Robson, Collected Works, Vols. VII & VIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), VII, xlii.

⁴Edmund Husserl, Logical Investigations, trans. J. N. Findlay, 2 vols. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), I, 93.

⁵Nordquest, 6. Nordquest maintains that even if Mill did not mean to indicate a psychological necessity here but rather that the state of the world at present makes logical laws true, then he is including in his theory of logic an implicit reference to a state of the world where logic is no longer possible.

⁶CW, VII, xlv-xlviii.

⁷See McRae's summation of this point, CW, VII, xlv.

⁸In one of the chapters of the Logic concerned with necessary truth Mill makes this quite explicit: "From these considerations it would appear that Deductive or Demonstrative Sciences are all, without exception, Inductive Sciences; that their evidence is that of experience . . ." (CW, VII, 253).

⁹Mill addresses this problem, in part, at the outset of chapter 5 of the Logic, CW, VII, 224.

¹⁰An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy, ed. J. M. Robson, Collected Works, IX (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 381.

¹¹Nordquest, 6.

¹²Husserl, Logical Investigations, 113.

¹³Ibid., 114-15.

¹⁴Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind, ed. J. S. Mill, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1869), I, 407.

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MILL AND DARWIN: THE NATURAL SELECTION OF IDEAS

James Harrison

"Hume observes that when we see two events constantly associated in nature, we assume that one must be the cause of the other. But we are not justified in so assuming, he says, and the true statement would be, not that cause has associated the two events but rather that their constant association has produced in our minds the idea of causation." Such a "reversal" or reassessment of cause and effect, argues A. Dwight Culler in "The Darwinian Revolution and Literary Form,"¹ is the precursor of similar reversals in the writings of Bentham, Malthus and Darwin. Bentham, for instance, in answer to a Christian or Stoic definition of true happiness as that which results from virtue, defines virtue as that which results in happiness. And Darwin, in answer to Paley's assertion that the enormous variety of species (as created by God) results in their being adapted to survive in the most diverse circumstances, replies that the process of adaptation so as to survive in diverse circumstances has resulted in the present enormous variety of species. Species do not survive because they are (i.e., have been created) fit to survive, but clearly are

fit to survive because they have survived. In the same year that Darwin published his Origin of Species Mill asks, in On Liberty, "What has made the European family of nations an improving, instead of a stationary, portion of mankind . . .?" He replies that it is "not any superior excellence in them, which when it exists, exists as the effect, not as the cause." Mill continues, redefining what had hitherto been considered a cause as an effect: "Not any superior excellence in them . . ., but their remarkable diversity of character and culture."² He is, at this point, merely enlarging his central thesis, that individuals must be permitted the maximum liberty to hold diverse opinions in order to arrive at the truth, and applying it by analogy to societies and nations. Within that central thesis itself, however, there is a similar, "Darwinian" reversal. "Because this is truth, all else is error," argue Mill's straw opponents. "Only because we can show, and continue to show, all else to be error," replies Mill, "are we justified in regarding this as truth." Nor is this by any means the only, or the closest and most obvious parallel between On Liberty and Origin of Species. Darwin insists that one of the most important requirements for natural selection to operate effectively is a sufficiency of variants from which the differing and sometimes changing circumstances of life can "choose" those fittest to survive. As early as Chapter 2, Darwin observes "that it is the most flourishing and dominant species of the larger genera which on an average vary most,"³ from which he concludes, by a predictable reversal, that variability leads to dominance rather than vice versa. Subsequently, in the fourth chapter in which he enunciates the theory of natural selection itself, he lists as first of the "Circumstances favourable to Natural Selection" the fact that "A large amount of inheritable and diversified variability is favourable" (147). He then proceeds to make the same point no fewer than seven times in the rest of the chapter.

Such variability confers two main advantages in the evolutionary process. Passively, it helps ensure that, when the climate or other environmental factors change, some members at least of a highly diversified species will prove sufficiently well adapted to the new environment to survive. Actively (and more importantly, in Darwin's view), it enables a species, through diversification, successfully to occupy a wider range of habitats and ecological niches, and thus to become dominant. Finally, argues Darwin, a species with many varieties and a wide range of life styles will, if it survives, have done so in much more diversified competitive situations, and have proved its fitness to survive more comprehensively (150-1).

Mill, for similar reasons and in not dissimilar language, is stressing the importance of maximum variability in customs and ideas. "I have said that it is important to give the freest scope possible to uncustomary things, in order that it may in time appear which of these are fit to be converted into customs" (269, my italics). The winnowing process by which such fitness becomes apparent, moreover, is frequently one of struggle. "Truth, in the great practical concerns of life, is so much a question of the reconciling and combining of opposites, that very few have minds sufficiently capacious and impartial to make the adjustment with an approach to correctness, and

it has to be made by the rough process of a struggle between combatants fighting under hostile banners" (254).

Even when we are reasonably assured as to what is the truth, Mill argues, constant "conflict with the opposing error" is necessary to keep it and our apprehension of it up to the mark, as in the case of dominant species. Nothing is so dangerous to truth as "the deep slumber of a decided opinion" (250). "The beliefs which we have most warrant for," says Mill elsewhere, "have no safeguard to rest on but a standing invitation to the whole world to prove them unfounded" (232). Much more frequently, however, the competition is between fragments of truth, some of which are more needed at one time, some at another. Hence the importance of a reservoir of such partial truths, to meet the challenge of the next "climatic" revolution.

"We have hitherto considered only two possibilities: that the received opinion may be false, and some other opinion, consequently, true; or that, the received opinion being true, a conflict with the opposite error is essential to a clear apprehension and deep feeling of its truth. But there is a commoner case than either of these; when the conflicting doctrines, instead of being one true and the other false, share the truth between them. . . . Hence, even in revolutions of opinion, one part of the truth usually sets while another rises. Even progress, which ought to superadd, for the most part only substitutes, one partial and incomplete truth for another; improvement consisting chiefly in this, that the new fragment of truth is more wanted, more adapted to the needs of the time, than that which it displaces. Such being the partial character of prevailing opinions, even when resting on a true foundation, every opinion which embodies somewhat of the portion of truth which the common opinion omits, ought to be considered precious, with whatever amount of error and confusion that truth may be blended."

(252-3, my italics.)

Variation in ideas presupposes variation in the individuals holding them. And this in turn, argues Mill, presupposes variation in social conditions, for "different persons . . . require different conditions for their spiritual development; and can no more exist healthily in the same moral, than all the variety of plants can in the same physical, atmosphere and climate" (270). Interestingly, and reassuringly, Mill is less Darwinian, despite the biological analogy, when treating of individuals than when treating of ideas. In Darwin, species vary so as to survive in different environments, whereas in Mill social environments differ so as to support varying species or individuals. In itself the point is unimportant. But it serves as a warning not to push the parallel between Mill and Darwin too far. For at the heart of Darwinism is a circular and self-defining process. Survival is achieved through fitness to survive as determined by free competition between varieties and species. But fitness to survive, as noted at the outset, is determined by survival as achieved through such free competition. In Mill, however, though we arrive at truth through the free play or competition of ideas, truth is never equated with, or defined as being nothing more than, what we arrive at through the free play of ideas. There may

hover always, in the background, a ghostly absolute which transcends Darwinism as it transcends utilitarianism.

Nevertheless, between these two texts published in 1859, there are very real parallels which, because mutual influence is so clearly ruled out, suggest all the more strongly that both books are products of their age--an age of competitive free enterprise and of individualism. That this is the case with On Liberty--and especially so under the latter head--is a self-evident truism. But many have found Darwin's theory to be in some respects less in tune than Lamarck's with that spirit of the times so engagingly captured, also in 1859, by Samuel Smiles' Self Help. To call attention, therefore, to the central importance in Darwin's work not only of competition but of variability is a useful corrective. At the same time, however, it underlines the sad irony that Darwinism was to provide far greater support for illiberal extremes of laissez-faire and racism, as exemplified in the writings of social Darwinians, than for Mill's quintessentially liberal concept of a free enterprise of the mind and a natural selection of ideas.

NOTES

¹The Art of Victorian Prose, ed. George Levine and William Madden (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 230; my italics.

²On Liberty, in Essays on Politics and Society, ed. J. M. Robson, Collected Works, Vols. XVIII & XIX (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), XVIII, 274; my italics. Subsequent references appear in the text.

³Reprint of 1st ed., ed. J. W. Burrow (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), 113. Subsequent references appear in the text.

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Announcements

The Japanese translation of the proceedings of the 1973 Mill Centenary Conference, held at the University of Toronto, has now appeared in print. The translation is the work of Professors Izumiya, Kashiwagi, Sugihara, and Yamashita.

The eighth Japan Mill Conference was held on 31 March, 1979, in Shizuoka, after the annual meeting of the Japan Society of British Philosophy. At both meetings, Professor Kashiwagi of Fukuoka University delivered a paper on Mill's essays on religion.

The fifteenth annual Conference on Editorial Problems will be held at the University of Toronto on Friday and Saturday, November 2nd and 3rd, 1979. The theme of this year's conference is the "Editing of Illustrated Books" and papers will be presented on topics ranging from emblem books to the editing of microfiche editions of the great illustrated books of the past and the art of fine printing. The speakers will include John Horden, G. E. Bentley Jr., Charlene Garry,

George Knox, and Thomas Lange. A number of special exhibitions of illustrated books will be mounted by local institutions. Registration forms and further information are available from Professor Desmond Neill, Librarian, Massey College, University of Toronto, Toronto M5S 1A5, Canada.

The George Eliot Centennial Conference will be held on 10-12 April, 1980, at the University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington 98416. The keynote speaker will be Gordon S. Haight, Professor Emeritus of English, Yale University. The deadline for submission of papers is 15 December, 1979. For further information contact Dr. Rosemary T. VanArsdel at the English Department, University of Puget Sound.

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Queries

In the Autobiography, Mill refers to Charles James Fox's wish "respecting the doctrine of resistance to governments, that it might never be forgotten by kings, nor remembered by subjects." We have been unable to locate this statement in Fox's writings or speeches.

Referring to John Sterling in the Autobiography, Mill notes that they did not meet often after the first year or two of their acquaintance. "But (as he said himself in one of his letters to Carlyle) when we did meet it was like brothers." The Sterling-Carlyle letter in question continues to elude us.

Mill's article "What is Poetry?" (Jan., 1833) contains a reference to a writer in Blackwood's who "defines poetry, 'man's thoughts tinged by his feelings.'" Though such a definition may appear in Blackwood's before January of 1833, we have not been able to find it.

In his Monthly Repository article on the "Writings of Junius Redivivus" (Apr., 1833), Mill observes, "Some men (it has been well said) are radicals, only because they are not lords." Despite gallant efforts, the original author of this creditable utterance has not been discovered.

Mill's review (London and Westminster Review [Jan., 1837]) of Arthur Helps's Thoughts in the Cloister and the Crowd mentions La Rochefoucauld's having been "inveighed against as a 'libeller of human nature.'" No identification has yet been made of this indignant inveigher.

Commenting on the state of American literature in his review (London and Westminster Review [Jan., 1838]) of William Ware's Letters from Palmyra, Mill remarks that the Americans "have not yet found leisure for much other employment of their activity than 'felling the largest tree in four minutes.'" The source of this quotation remains a mystery.

In his lengthy review (London and Westminster Review [Apr., 1838]) of Vigny, Mill characterizes his subject as "one who has no point to carry, no quarrel to maintain, over and above 'the general one of every son of Adam with his lot here below.'" To whom should we attribute this solemn observation?

Professor Robson and his staff would be very pleased to hear from readers of the News Letter who can assist them with their investigation of these unresolved references.

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Recent Publications

- Beaird, Richard Charles. "The Search for a Unified Theory of Individualism and Community as Found in the Political Philosophy of John Stuart Mill." Ph.D. thesis, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1978. (DAI 39, p. 6933A)
- Butler, Melissa Ann. "Images of Women in Political Thought: From John Locke to John Stuart Mill." Ph.D. thesis, Johns Hopkins University, 1979. (DAI 39, p. 5657A)
- Cherwitz, Richard A. and James W. Hixins. "John Stuart Mill's On Liberty: Implications for the Epistemology of the New Rhetoric," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 65 (Feb., 1979), 12-24.
- Crossley, Robert. "The Failed Educations of John Stuart Mill and Henry Adams," Journal of General Education, 30 (Winter, 1979), 233-53.
- Davis, Elynor Gay. "Three Essays on Unsettled Questions in the Economics of John Stuart Mill." Ph.D. thesis, Texas A&M University, 1978. (DAI 39, p. 6266A)
- Kinzer, Bruce L. "J. S. Mill and the Secret Ballot," Historical Reflections, 5 (Summer, 1978), 19-39.
- Krenis, Lee. "Authority and Rebellion in Victorian Autobiography," Journal of British Studies, 18 (Fall, 1978), 107-30.
- Paul, Elieu Frankel. "W. Stanley Jevons: Economic Revolutionary, Political Utilitarian," Journal of the History of Ideas, 40 (Apr.-June, 1979), 267-83.
- Pugh, Evelyn L. "John Stuart Mill, Harriet Taylor, and Women's Rights in America, 1850-1873," Canadian Journal of History, 13 (Dec., 1978), 423-42.
- Sarvasy, Wendy Joy. "From Democrat to Socialist: John Stuart Mill's Political Theory and Class Analysis." Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1978. (DAI 39, p. 3809A)
- Suh, Ti-Moon. "The Art of Life: A Study in the Concepts of the Training of the Moral Character in Browning, Mill and Ruskin." Ph.D. thesis, State University of New York at Albany, 1978. (DAI 39, p. 4289A)

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REVIEW

Utilitarian Logic and Politics: James Mill's 'Essay on Government', Macaulay's critique and the ensuing debate. Edited and introduced by Jack Lively and John Rees. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978. 270 pp.

The appearance together in one volume of James Mill's article on "Government" and of Macaulay's critique of it is extremely welcome. The ensuing controversy between the Westminster Review and Macaulay, consisting of three articles in the former and two more articles by the latter in the Edinburgh, has attracted much less attention than the initial exchange, and those who read through the debate will find this understandable. But Professor Lively and Mr. Rees have been able to show in their introduction and in a short appendix on Utilitarian ethics that Macaulay's contributions did contain several anticipations of what were to become common criticisms of Utilitarian thought. Mill's own rather oblique response to Macaulay in A Fragment on Mackintosh is not reprinted here, but is discussed in the introduction. The last item included is the chapter in John Stuart Mill's System of Logic where he criticized the "geometrical or abstract method" of social inquiry, which he associated with his father and Bentham. It would have been more even-handed perhaps, if the editors had also printed the preceding chapter, which criticized the "chemical or experimental method" recommended by Macaulay; but their decision to compress this chapter into a half-page precis may be regarded as justified by the title of their book.

The editors make it clear in their introduction that they are more concerned with the "problems in political philosophy" which the debate raises than with its context, and they act more as introducers than as editors. One editorial service they do perform is to record in footnotes the variations between the original published version of James Mill's article and the version printed later in the collected editions of his contributions to the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Some of the changes that were made--for instance the omission in the revised version of the statement that "it is for the sake of property that Government exists"--are of some significance. There are other matters, however, about which the editors are surprisingly incurious, or at least uninformative. In the table of contents, the articles in the Edinburgh Review are all listed as being "by T. B. Macaulay" but the Westminster articles are listed (inaccurately, because of a confusion between volumes and numbers of the periodical) without any attribution. The only information provided about their authorship is a statement in the introduction that the first reply to Macaulay "was written by Perronet Thompson, who incorporated in his article a condensation of a paper provided by Bentham on the history of his own ideas". This is the only mention of Perronet Thompson in the book. The reader is not told how much use he made of Bentham's paper, and is not informed that he was the author of all three Westminster articles, which were reprinted in his collected essays in 1842. Nor is it recorded that at the time when Macaulay's initial critique appeared the Mills had recently become estranged from Bowring and Perronet Thompson (respectively editor and proprietor of the West-

minster) and that it was apparent to some contemporaries that Mill's defence was not written by one of his most devoted followers.

The historical part of the introduction contains one or two slips and misconceptions that a historian familiar with the period could have spotted, and it seems a pity that one of the editors was not more interested in elucidating the context of the debate and in catering for students of early nineteenth-century politics and political argument. On the theoretical side, however, the editors provide a valuable discussion of the main issues in the debate and of some of the ways in which these have been tackled by more recent thinkers. The controversy that Mill initiated over a "science of politics" is dealt with more fully, except with regard to J. S. Mill's contribution, than it was by Fred Kort in his article on the subject some years ago. Also, the editors' treatment of the Utilitarian theory of democracy raises some very interesting points.

They themselves, insofar as they express opinions of their own, take a critical view of this theory. They imagine that the Benthamite commitment to democracy rested on the belief that voters would use the franchise, or could be induced to use it, for the promotion of "a single communal interest" rather than for the promotion of their own particular interests; and the editors ask how this communal interest could be achieved through the democratic mechanism if men acted on the self-interested motives that Utilitarian psychology imputed to them. But it is not clear that the assumption on which this objection is based is entirely valid. Bentham himself wrote (in 1809): "taking the whole body together, the interest of the whole can not in any other way be so completely and correctly provided for as in this, viz. that each individual, if supposed best qualified to judge what is his own best interest, should in his vote be guided by the pursuit of that object and no other: from the aggregate or majority of these separate interests would be formed the interest of the whole". There is some unfairness also, one feels, in the editors' argument that Mill's opposition to the establishment of a representative legislature in India in 1831 shows the Utilitarians' lack of sympathy for representative institutions in situations where they thought they could control government without them. In 1810, long before he or any other Utilitarian was in a position to influence the government of India, Mill had written in the Edinburgh Review that the people of India were not yet ready for a representative legislature.

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