

THE MILL NEWS LETTER

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Published by University of Toronto Press
in association with Victoria College



Please address communications to the Editor, Victoria College, University of Toronto, Toronto, 5, Canada

Volume III, Number 1

Fall, 1967

We in Canada have been very busy this year celebrating our centennial, and in the Soviet Union certain loud noises have been made concerning the fiftieth anniversary of their Revolution. Another anniversary has, so far as I can see, gone almost unnoticed. In Carlyle's image, the great changes are seldom signalled by a great booming horologe, but surely the quiet tintinnabulation of Mill's voice in the British House of Commons, when he moved to amend the Representation of the People Bill by substituting the word "person" for "man," has in fact echoed down through time. The revolution for sexual equality is now recognized as entailing some of the most significant changes in our century, and we should at least mention one of the important early moves in that revolution. Constance Rover, in her recent Women's Suffrage and Party Politics in Britain, 1866-1914 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; Toronto: University of Toronto Press), to be reviewed in the next issue, has much to say of Mill's part, but I beg leave at this point simply to introduce some passages from Mill's speech On the Admission of Women to the Electoral Franchise (20 May, 1867) to remind us of his views and activities, and of one of the great areas of difference between 1867 and 1967.

"[The] simple question [is] whether there is any adequate justification for continuing to exclude an entire half of the community, not only from admission, but from the capability of being ever admitted within the pale of the Constitution, though they may fulfil all the conditions legally and constitutionally sufficient in every case but theirs. Sir, within the limits of our Constitution this is a solitary case. There is no other example of an exclusion which is absolute. If the law denied a vote to all but the possessors of £5000 a year, the poorest man in the nation might--and now and then would--acquire the suffrage; but neither birth, nor fortune, nor merit, nor exertion, nor intellect, nor even that great disposer of human affairs, accident, can ever enable any woman to have her voice counted in those national affairs which touch her and hers as nearly as any other person in the nation."

"[The exclusion of women] violates one of the oldest of our constitutional maxims--a doctrine dear to reformers, and theoretically

acknowledged by most Conservatives--that taxation and representation should be co-extensive."

"[There] is one practical argument of great weight, which, I frankly confess, is entirely wanting in the case of women; they do not hold great meetings in the parks, or demonstrations at Islington."

"[There] has taken place around us a silent domestic revolution: women and men are, for the first time in history, really each other's companions....In former days a man passed his life among men; all his friendships, all his real intimacies, were with men; with men alone did he consult on any serious business; the wife was either a plaything, or an upper servant. All this, among the educated classes, is now changed. The man no longer gives his spare hours to violent outdoor exercises and boisterous conviviality with male associates: the two sexes now pass their lives together; the women of a man's family are his habitual society; the wife is his chief associate, his most confidential friend, and often his most trusted adviser."

"When men and women are really companions, if women are frivolous, men will be frivolous; if women care for nothing but personal interest and idle vanities, men in general will care for little else: the two sexes must now rise or sink together."

"[If given the suffrage, women] would no longer be classed with children, idiots, and lunatics, as incapable of taking care of either themselves or others, and needing that everything should be done for them, without asking their consent."

"Sir, it is true that women have great power. It is part of my case that they have great power; but they have it under the worst possible conditions, because it is indirect, and therefore irresponsible. I want to make this great power a responsible power. I want to make the woman feel her conscience interested in its honest exercise. I want her to feel that it is not given to her as a mere means of personal ascendancy. I want to make her influence work by a manly interchange of opinion, and not by cajolery. I want to awaken in her the political point of honour. Many a woman already influences greatly the political conduct of the men connected with her, and sometimes, by force of will, actually governs it; but she is never supposed to have anything to do with it; the man whom she influences, and perhaps misleads, is alone responsible; her power is like the back-stairs influence of a favourite. Sir, I demand that all who exercise power should have the burthen laid on them of knowing something about the things they have power over. With the acknowledged right to a voice, would come a sense of the corresponding duty."

And, as those who have read the whole text know, he has a great deal more to say, in one of his most carefully reasoned arguments.

In this issue we are pleased to have a paper on Mill's socialism, which I hope will call forth some other comments on this contentious question. You will also find a rewritten summary of the argument of Murray Baumgarten's dissertation on the ideas of history found in

Carlyle and Mill; I hope to include similar items in future issues. We have a few queries in this number, the usual bibliographical items, and also a correspondence concerning the review in the last number of Donald Winch's edition of James Mill. A friend has written to say that the News Letter should contain more controversy; here is a start, and the rest is up to you.

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JOHN STUART MILL AND SOCIALISM

L.E. Fredman and B.L.J. Gordon

In considering the effects of socialist doctrines on the thinking of John Stuart Mill, it is difficult at the present time to accept bold claims that he was an ancestor. The claim has been made by moderns, but most particularly by a well-known contemporary, Sydney Webb, in a well-known collection of essays: "The publication of John Stuart Mill's Political Economy in 1848 conveniently marks the boundary of the old individualist economics. Every edition of Mill's book became more and more Socialistic. After his death the world learnt the personal history, penned by his own hand, of his development from a mere political democrat to a convinced Socialist."¹

Even a quite casual acquaintance with the body of Mill's better-known writings indicates that he was never a "convinced Socialist." He did not mention the Scientific or Marxian school; and, although prepared to set down and consider the views of Fourier, he did not advocate fanciful blueprints for a perfect, future society as did the Utopian school.

On the other hand, Mill showed his sympathy and concern for Socialism in some possible sense of the term. In his Autobiography, he stated that, after 1850, the beliefs in the ultimate improvement of society entertained by both himself and his wife, "would class [them] decidedly under the general designation of Socialists."² These beliefs were expressed in the third edition of the Principles of Political Economy in 1852, when a rewriting of the chapters on Property and an enrichment of detail made his discussion of Socialism appear much more sympathetic. He indicated as much in a short preface in which he said that he never intended in earlier editions to condemn Socialism "regarded as an ultimate result of human progress."³

In addition, his step-daughter, Helen Taylor, published after Mill's death three articles on Socialism in the Fortnightly Review during 1879.⁴ Written during the late 1860's, these show an interest, although quite critical, in the issues raised by earlier English and French Socialist thought. In practical politics, Mill sat in the House of Commons between 1865 and 1868. It seems that he accepted candidacy mainly to press for the representation of women and the working classes.⁵ However, as Karl Britton observes, Mill's "programme was a stern one and often seemed to conflict directly with working-class aims."⁶ From 1870 until his death three years later, he was an active member of the Land Tenure Reform Association and

spoke in defence of their programme. One of their main aims, taxation of "the future unearned increase of the rent of land," and Mill's defence of it, anticipates Henry George, another radical liberal who wanted to make the existing system work better, and no Socialist.

That elements of or an interest in Socialist thought occupy an important place in the body of Mill's social and economic analyses is undoubtedly true. At the most, he was no "convinced Socialist" but leaned toward a "cautious associationism," to use the phrase of Joseph Schumpeter;⁸ to the approval of which he joined a belief that eventually some form of Socialist organisation might evolve out of the development of capitalist society.

Here, as in a number of other instances, Mill's complexity of thought and his sensitive and receptive intellect continue to defy attempts to make ready classification of such a strongly individual thinker. We wish to draw attention to three enduring themes which characterize Mill's thought and life as a whole, and which seem to have prevented any whole-hearted embracing of Socialist doctrines of whatever school. His writings and particularly the Principles of Political Economy should be read as a whole, and due attention paid to his oft-repeated adjective, "ultimate."

The three inter-related themes most relevant to this study are: his adherence to Malthusian population theory; individuality as the touchstone for social judgment; his belief in the power and necessity of education.

A convinced Malthusian could never place his hopes in some form of Socialism as a panacea for the poverty of the nineteenth-century industrial worker. Socialism, scientific or Utopian, sought to eradicate injustice by institutional adjustment. But any such adjustment ignored the Malthusian thesis that, however society may be organized, basic individual needs and attitudes would remain. An expanding population would bring that society hard up against the margin of cultivation and a subsistence minimum for the vast majority of people. The Malthusian doctrine clearly implied that the terrain in which Socialists might seek to grapple with social evils was essentially a battleground for side issues. Marx, for one, recognized this uncomfortable fact and hated the Malthusians for it. Of Malthus's population treatise he wrote, "in its first edition it was nothing but a sensational pamphlet and plagiarism from beginning to end into the bargain. And yet what a stimulus was produced by this libel on the human race!"⁹

Mill also saw that if Malthus were correct there was little point in mere institutional adjustment. Hence, his abiding concern was to urge voluntary restraint on births as the only sound way to enhance the material well-being of the masses. As a young man of eighteen, Mill had been brought before the magistrates for distributing birth-control literature. His concern as a mature man and scholar is well illustrated in the fourth book of the Principles of Political Economy where, up to the seventh and last chapter, he wrestles with the problems posed by the onrush of the "stationary state" as forecast by the logic of Ricardian-Malthusian economics. Given a populace which practised restraint, a stationary state would not necessarily mean

general poverty and squalor, particularly if restraint was accompanied by an alteration of the inheritance laws, the introduction of labour-saving machinery, and an extension of workingmen's cooperatives and peasant proprietorships. In short, Mill envisaged an acceptable path to reform within the framework of the capitalist system, once the Malthusian spectre had been laid to rest. It was not essential to propagate Socialism to check this fundamental threat to the material well-being of the masses; indeed, by itself, Socialist adjustment offered no logical defence to this threat.

Another theme in the body of Mill's writings which must raise doubts whether he was a "convinced Socialist" is his belief in individuality, or spontaneity and liberty of action. This, he categorically states, is the test of any system.¹⁰ Society should be based on the free, uncoerced choice of individual personalities, and it is only through such choices that a man grows toward full stature. Directives by organs of authority should be minimized, and spontaneous acts should be interfered with only where society has a clear interest or where a distinct obligation to another has been violated ("other-regarding acts.")¹¹ Having made such a claim, it is not surprising that Mill offers a succinct and consistent answer to the argument of the Philosopher-King, and indeed to the authoritarian strand of Socialism, long before Lord Acton's similar and classic phrase: "The power of compelling others into it [freedom] is not only inconsistent with the freedom and development of the rest, but is corrupting to the strong man himself."¹² In 1840, in reviewing part of De Tocqueville's Democracy in America, Mill had echoed the author's warning that a tyranny of prevailing opinion and taste could emerge in an egalitarian society. This lingering thought and the willingness of some contemporary reformers to advocate violent solutions led him to write his classic and most durable work, On Liberty.¹³

These underlying beliefs help to explain Mill's unsocialistic adherence to the principle of laissez-faire. He justifies it as a general principle in the long chapter which terminates the Principles of Political Economy; and his argument is supported in part by a moral conviction that there is a space "entrenched around" in which government regulation should not interfere.¹⁴ Certainly, Mill was highly critical of many aspects of the laissez-faire principle in operation in the England of his day; but he emphasised that most abuses arose from the lack of true competition, not from the faults of competition and the private ownership of resources. It is common to quote a passage from the chapter on Property in the Principles, and stop short of this vital qualification. For reasons of space, the passage is given in skeleton form, together with the usually-omitted section: "If, therefore, the choice were to be made between Communism with all its chances, and the present state of society with all its sufferings and injustices;...until the most fatiguing and exhausting bodily labour cannot count with certainty on being able to earn even the necessaries of life; if this or Communism were the alternative, all the difficulties, great or small, of Communism would be but as dust in the balance. But to make the comparison applicable, we must compare Communism at its best, with the régime of individual property, not as it is, but as it might be made. The principle of

private property has never yet had a fair trial in any country; and less so, perhaps, in this country than in some others."¹⁵

Connected both with individuality and the Malthusian doctrine in accounting for Mill's unsocialistic preoccupations was his belief in the power and necessity of education. From an early age, he was impressed with the "unlimited possibility of improving the moral and intellectual condition of mankind by education."¹⁶ Although in later years he was often discouraged by what seemed to him to be endless instances of individual and class selfishness, and defective tastes and ideas, this conviction remained. With an improved education system, the individual could grow in mental stature and freedom; the masses would realize the need for restraint of population; and by acquiring skills and setting up cooperatives, the better-educated workers could add a profit factor to the limited fund available for wage payments. Mill was remorselessly consistent. He argued that literacy should be made a qualification for the suffrage, and that the better-educated should be granted a plural vote.¹⁷ Here again, he revealed his fear of the possible tyranny of the ill-educated masses. In short, Mill expected to achieve through education a great number of reforms without any prior changes in the mode of production and distribution under the existing social order.

Thus, if we read together the chapter on Property in the Principles of Political Economy; the several chapters on peasant proprietorships; Book Four on the stationary state and the probable futurity of the labouring classes; and Book Five with its long terminal chapter justifying laissez-faire as a general principle, Mill's meaning is clear enough. Competition is beneficial; wages can be increased only by restraint, education and cooperatives; Fourierist communities can be tried within, and without hurt to, the wider, existing system; but given the present, rather than the ultimate capabilities of human nature, the political economist for a long time to come will be concerned with improvements in the system of private property and distribution of the product. In emphasising the prior need to change human nature, Mill was echoing the criticisms of the Christian Socialists.¹⁸

To claim Mill as a "convinced Socialist" is therefore to overstate the case. As a scholar and philosopher and public figure, he was characterized by open-mindedness, receptivity to new ideas, and a strong sense of public duty. These traits prompted an interest in Socialist ideas. But in the general context of his thought, Socialism was essentially an ultimate, a remote but interesting possibility. This very interest was a facet of the radical Liberal tradition which revealed the possibilities of Parliamentary representation to the first members of Socialist and Trade Union organizations, and which drew forth from them an electoral programme and not a misty or dogmatic panacea.

NOTES:

¹G.B. Shaw, ed., Fabian Essays in Socialism, 1st. ed., 1889 (London, 1948), 54-5. J. West, author of Fabian biographical tract no. 168 on Mill (1913), suggests that he was the first Fabian. For a similar modern view, see Ruth Borchard, John Stuart Mill: the Man

(London, 1957), 99.

²John Stuart Mill, Autobiography (London, 1873), 230-2; henceforth references are to the edition published in 1924 from the original MS by the Columbia University Press, in which this passage occurs on 161-2.

³Principles of Political Economy with some of their Applications to Social Philosophy, in Collected Works (Toronto, 1965), II, xciii, 199-214 ("Of Property").

⁴"Chapters on Socialism," in Collected Works (Toronto, 1967), V, 703-53. W.J. Ashley, in his edition of the Principles (London, 1909, 985) and F.A. Hayek (John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor [Chicago, 1951,] 266) consider that Mill reverted to earlier opinions and became more critical of Socialism after his wife's death in 1859. His exaggerated statements of her powers have led to much comment. See, apart from Hayek and the biographies, Alexander Bain, John Stuart Mill: A Criticism with Personal Recollections (London, 1882), 263-74, and H.O. Pappé, John Stuart Mill and the Harriet Taylor Myth (Melbourne, 1960).

⁵Autobiography, 196-214.

⁶Karl Britton, John Stuart Mill (London, 1953), 39.

⁷See Dissertations and Discussions (London, 1859-75), IV, for their programme and several speeches.

⁸Joseph Schumpeter, History of Economic Analysis (New York, 1959), 457, 531-2.

⁹Marx to J.B. Schweitzer, 24 Jan., 1865, from Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Correspondence (Moscow, 1953?), 186.

¹⁰Principles, II, 208-9; Autobiography, 162.

¹¹Mill, Utilitarianism, On Liberty and Representative Government, Everyman ed. (London, 1910), 115-6, 137-8.

¹²Ibid., 124.

¹³Ibid., 68; Dissertations and Discussions, II, 1-83; Mill to Harriet Taylor, 15 Jan., 1855, from Hayek, Mill, 216.

¹⁴Principles, III, 936-71, esp. 938. Mill also included practical arguments, including "the superiority, which was in the circumstances simply not open to doubt, of the businessman's administration of the productive resources over what could possibly have been expected from the public official of his day" (Schumpeter, History, 549).

¹⁵Principles, II, 207. The passage is quoted, stopping short of the word "balance" in a survey much used by students, H.W. Laidler, Social-Economic Movements (London, 1949), 180.

¹⁶Autobiography, 75.

¹⁷Utilitarianism, On Liberty, and Representative Government, 276-92.

¹⁸See Laidler, Social-Economic Movements, 719-38; George L. Mosse, et al., eds., Europe in Review (Chicago, 1964), 315-6.

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THE IDEAS OF HISTORY OF THOMAS CARLYLE AND JOHN STUART MILL:

A Summary Statement

Murray Baumgarten

In 1831, both Thomas Carlyle and John Stuart Mill turned their attention from the exploration of the traditions in which they had been raised, to a study of the nature and meaning of history. At the centre of their new interest lay a common notion of the place of literature in historical inquiry. Despite their very different perspectives, in 1831 Mill, in "The Spirit of the Age," and Carlyle, in "Characteristics," asserted that history is an autonomous branch of study: neither a science nor a branch of philosophy or literature, it is a discipline sui generis.

Their friendship, which began at this time, quickened their interest in history, thereby bringing both men to develop their conception of the relation of literature and history. At the same time, their dialogue forced them to confront one another. As each took the other's view of the relation of literature and history into account, he began to change his own. The common conception of literature separated into two: the idea of history which, to all intents and purposes was the same for both in 1831, separated into two philosophies of history.

While Carlyle and Mill continued to adhere to their original view that the historian studies the organization of social experience in human consciousness, manifested in symbolic actions, their sense of the nature and significance of these symbolic actions changed. While they agreed that by probing the intention, the mode, and the manner of the consciousness of the men of the past, the historian seeks to ascertain the spirit of a historical period, they came to disagree as to the nature and significance of that spirit.

In 1831, they agreed that literature expresses the meanings which an age perceives in its institutions. Revealing the subjective experience of an era, literature thus enables the historian to comprehend the consciousness of an age. By examining the relation of this subjective experience to what Mill and Carlyle thought were the factual, objective events of the past, the historian can ascertain the spirit of an age. Balancing a literary interpretation of the symbolic actions of men, against a scientific view of the events of an era, the historian can ascertain the world-view of that age.

By 1843, Carlyle had turned from historical investigation to an enunciation of the religious lessons of history. By 1843, Mill was certain that unless the student of society could show how the spirit of one era turned into that of succeeding ages, the historical enterprise was irrelevant. Mill made history into the handmaiden of sociology at the same time that Carlyle was transforming the study of the past into a mode of religious knowledge. In effect, Carlyle was arguing that all history is one and forms the record of man's singular moral life. Mill was asserting that there are many histories--how to relate them to one another is the issue which he set his science of society to resolve.

Throughout the course of their literary careers, Mill and Carlyle expressed their agreement about history by discussing it in essentially the same terms and images. Adopting the terminology of the eighteenth century, they agreed that "history is philosophy teaching by experience." What in 1831 they conceived as the art of relating "philosophy" and "experience," however, soon turned either into a religious or a scientific enterprise. Carlyle began to view "philosophy" as a substitute for Augustine's God, while Mill more and more interpreted it as a scientific perspective.

Less and less constrained by fact, Carlyle began to interpret the acts of men as religious symbols. He promulgated a historical perspective which, depending upon an emotional experiencing of the past, thereby precluded any rational comprehension of history. By 1843, this view led him to hero-worship, a rejection of reason, and a demand for order at all costs. Mill began to interpret men's symbolic acts as humanistic, eternal demands for liberty and true self-knowledge. Increasingly balancing fact and meaning, by 1843, he created a science of society which would, he believed, enable men to direct their social life towards these ends.

The discussion of the developing ideas of literature of Carlyle and Mill leads, in my dissertation, to the definition and exploration of the changes in their ideas of history. The difference in their view of history, which depended upon their divergent notions of the role of literature in historical inquiry, is reflected in the rhetoric of each. Where Carlyle wrote an impassioned prose, Mill argued deliberately. Requesting the assent of the reader to rationally presented, analytic statements, Mill never obtruded his own personality between the subject of discussion and his audience. By contrast, Carlyle always forced the reader to accept for his own the point of view of the Carlylean persona. Once that is granted, all his statements follow.

Through a stylistic analysis, I have investigated and explored the ways in which the rhetoric of Carlyle and Mill shapes, and in turn is shaped by, the view of history of each man. My inquiry covers the full span of their working lives, concluding with a sketch of the influence which the dialogue of Mill and Carlyle had on some of their contemporaries and immediate successors who were concerned with questions of the nature and meaning of history.

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Queries.

Professor Wilford Paul, of New Mexico State University, writes concerning a passage in Mill's Logic (Bk. III, Chap. v, Section 11, para. 4, of the 8th ed.). The passage reads: "To my apprehension, a volition is not an efficient, but simply a physical cause. Our will causes our bodily actions in the same sense, and in no other, in which cold causes ice, or a spark causes an explosion of gunpowder. The volition,

a state of our mind, is the antecedent; the motion of our limbs in conformity to the volition, is the consequent. This sequence I conceive to be not a subject of direct consciousness, in the sense intended by the theory. The antecedent, indeed, and the consequent, are subjects of consciousness. But the connexion between them is a subject of experience." Professor Paul, noting that the passage was introduced in the 3rd ed. and not thereafter altered, asks whether the last sentence should not read "...not a subject of experience"?

Professor Robert McRae of Toronto (who is now working on the Introduction to the Logic for the Collected Works) replies: "Mill is contrasting consciousness and experience. In the context of the discussion the terms correspond to the difference between an allegedly a priori and an a posteriori knowledge of the effect which follows upon the cause. This contrast is implicit in the following statement (my italics): "But in the case of our voluntary actions, it is affirmed that we are conscious of power before we have experience of results.... This feeling [i.e. consciousness] of energy or force, inherent in an act of will, is knowledge a priori; assurance, prior to experience, that we have the power of causing effects." Mill does not, of course, deny that in the experience under discussion we are conscious of both antecedent and consequent, but he is denying that in the consciousness of the antecedent we have any a priori knowledge of what the consequent will be. Only experience can reveal this. Thus: "The antecedent, indeed, and the consequent, are subjects of consciousness. But the connexion between them [by "connexion" Mill is referring to his own theory of cause as "unconditional antecedent", not to the "efficient cause" of those he is criticizing] is a subject of experience. I can not admit that our consciousness of the volition contains in itself any a priori knowledge that the muscular motion will follow". Mill was saying what he meant: there is no error in the text."

Professor Jacob Viner, on behalf of Professor William Lockwood (both of Princeton), would like help in identifying the following passage, attributed to Mill: "History shows that great economic and social forces flow like a tide over communities only half conscious of what is befalling them. Wise statesmen foresee what time is thus bringing and try to shape institutions and mold men's thoughts and purposes in accordance with the change that is silently coming on."

Professor R.H. Super of Michigan, editor of the fine edition of Matthew Arnold's prose works now in mid-flood, asks whether anyone can locate the place where Mill refers to the Church of England as "the dominant sect," dislike of which "seems to transport [him] with an almost feminine vehemence of irritation" (says Arnold).

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- Fryer, Peter. The Birth Controllers. London: Secker and Warburg, 1965.
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- Himmelfarb, Gertrude. "The Politics of Democracy: The English Reform Act of 1867," Journal of British Studies, 6 (1966), 97-138.
- Juleus, Neils. "The Rhetoric of Opposites: Mill and Carlyle," Pennsylvania Speech Annual, September, 1966.
- Morgan, Peter F. "Francis Place's Copy of the Westminster Review," Notes & Queries, 13 (1966), 330-2.
- Morris, John N. Versions of the Self: Studies in English Autobiography from John Bunyan to John Stuart Mill. New York: Basic Books, 1966.
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- Pugh, Evelyn L. "John Stuart Mill in America: The Early Impact, 1843-1873." Dissertation, American University. (Dissertation Abstracts, 26, 1324A.)
- Randall, John Herman, Jr. The Career of Philosophy. 2 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1966.
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Mill's notes on Browning's Pauline, which have received considerable attention from Browning scholars, have been dignified as a separate essay in Philip Drew's Robert Browning: A Collection of Critical Essays (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), 176-7.

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- Barker, S.F. The Elements of Logic. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965, 235-8, 305-9.
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Forthcoming and In Progress.

The January issue of Philosophy will be devoted to Mill, reports Godfrey N.A. Vesey, Director of the Royal Institute of Philosophy. Included will be: R.J. Halliday, "Some Recent Interpretations of John Stuart Mill"; G.W. Spence, "The Psychology behind J.S. Mill's 'Proof'"; C.L. Ten, "Mill on Self-regarding Actions"; A.R. Louch, "Sins and Crimes"; and Jean Austin, "Pleasure and Happiness."

F.P. Sharpless, The Literary Criticism of John Stuart Mill (Studies in English Literature) has been announced.

Sydney Eisen of York University has begun a study of various problems connected with Mill's religious views.

J. Stanley Yake of the State University of New York at Buffalo, having completed his M.A. on Mill's essay on Plato, is going on to doctoral work on broader aspects of Mill's Platonism.

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I am most grateful to those who have sent (and continue to send) corrections and additions to the Bibliography of writings on Mill. It now seems best not to record them all until we finally reach "Z" (yes, there are entries for that whoreson letter), perhaps at the end of 1969. By that time, I fear, the list of addenda and corrigenda will be a long one, but I again beg you to add to it, as we hope to publish the bibliography in separate form, with cross-indexes and annotations.

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* * * * *

Replies to Reviewers.

The review in the last number of Donald Winch's edition of James Mill's economic writings has called forth two replies, one by George J. Stigler to Samuel Hollander's comment on the insignificance of Mill's economic thought, and the other from Mr. Winch in answer to Robert Fenn's remarks about his bibliography. Here they are, with an answer from Mr. Fenn, and a further comment by Mrs. Esther Houghton of the Wellesley Index.

Professor Stigler writes: "Although my vocabulary is never strained when I praise James Mill, I do not believe Professor Hollander is right in dismissing his economics with the remark that it cannot be taken seriously.

Mill was, in fact, the man who first gave content and significance to Say's law of markets, and in a more just world this famous proposition, I once argued, would be called the Mill-Ricardo law. (See my Essays in the History of Economics, 312ff., 318.) A recent independent reassertion of Mill's claims is made by John S. Chipman, "A Survey of the Theory of International Trade," Econometrica (Oct., 1965), 709n. In brief, Say never distinguished the proposition that an economy can operate with all commodities selling at remunerative prices, no matter how much capital is accumulated, from the tautology that any offer is a demand.

This is the only topic on which I admire Mill's economics, but it is one of such great importance as to be decisive."

Mr. Winch writes: "In the last issue of the News Letter, in addition to the kindly review of my edition of James Mill's economic writings by Samuel Hollander, you also published a note by Robert Fenn, ostensibly dealing with the bibliography of Mill's writings which is appended to my volume. Since it would be impossible to tell from the tone and contents of Mr. Fenn's remarks that I specifically disclaimed any intention of compiling a complete bibliography, I should like to make this clear to readers of the News Letter as I did to Mr. Fenn himself when he wrote asking for my assistance. My sole aim was to leave some record of the bibliographical by-products of my own research on one aspect of Mill's intellectual career as a starting point for later scholars. Mr. Fenn speaks of minor and major errors of detail and hints darkly of "errors of principle". The evidence for these assertions will no doubt become clear when his own definitive bibliography is published. I for one will be very pleased to see my own limited efforts superseded. My only regret is that the results of Mr. Fenn's systematic survey were not available to me earlier.

But I feel I have real cause for complaint against Mr. Fenn's concluding paragraph in which he turns his attention to the main body of the work. He has found two uncorrected printing errors in the footnotes to my introductory biographical sketch. In a book of 452 pages containing over 400 footnotes Mr. Fenn can hardly expect to be congratulated on his acumen. I am guilty, for example, of a "howler" in allowing "December 1918" to stand instead of "December 1818" in the citation of a letter from Mill to Dumont, a mistake which though regrettable will hardly puzzle any intelligent reader for long. Perhaps I may be forgiven for thinking that if this is a fair example of what Mr. Fenn regards as a "howler" I have little to fear from his revelation of my minor errors. Nevertheless, Mr. Fenn proceeds immediately to the sweeping conclusion that: "Ultimately what is destroyed is one's confidence in the accuracy of the printed texts." The seriousness of such a charge when made against an enterprise of this kind would seem to require rather more compelling evidence derived from the texts themselves, and not mere innuendo.

I should also like to mention here that Mrs. Esther R. Houghton, whose assistance I received in compiling my bibliography, has recently pointed out to me that there are several discrepancies between the tentative list for the Edinburgh Review which she sent me, and the final version which appeared later in the first volume of the invaluable Wellesley Index of Victorian Periodicals. Additional Mill attributions for the forthcoming Westminster Review, not included in my list, will be given in the second volume of the Index."

Mr. Fenn replies: "Mr. Winch's remarks are directed at both aspects of my review: my remarks on his bibliography and some minor remarks concerning the general text. My remarks on the bibliography need no apology. I made it perfectly clear what I meant by "errors of principle" (Winch's seeming inability to quote correct titles of articles was one), and I regret that I did not add that it was not the incompleteness of his bibliography that bothered me but the slovenliness of what he did print. Only considerations of space prevent me from going into tedious detail on these errors. My point is a simple one: in an edition which is unlikely to be superseded it is surely desirable that what is done is correctly done.

However, my remarks on the general nature of the text were unjustifiably harsh. I completely withdraw my remarks and, if I may make a belated compliment, I wish that we had a similar edition of Mill's political writings."

And finally Mrs. Houghton has written renewing the promise of the editors of the Wellesley Index to help anyone wishing information about attributions, but asking please that anyone so aided should make a final check with the editors before publication to make sure that all attributions are consonant with the latest findings. Mrs. Houghton also calls attention to the uncertainty attaching to the items mentioned at the end of the lists of personal attributions under the heading "See"; these should be treated as doubtful, as the Introduction to the Index indicates.

* * * * *

Critical Notice.

The Collected Works of Walter Bagehot, Volumes I and II. The Literary Essays. Edited by Norman St. John-Stevás, with an Introduction by Sir William Haley. London: The Economist [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press], 1965.

This notice is already delayed, but with the special interests of readers of the News Letter in mind, it seems best to hold a full review until the materials more directly relevant to Mill studies appear. No one will regret that Bagehot is appearing in a new collected edition; we shall again be able to examine the validity of the reiterated comment, originating with G.M. Young, that Bagehot was the "truest Victorian." But few will regret that these first volumes fall short of the standards of twentieth-century editing. Rather than list the failings here, I shall simply refer the reader to Robert H. Tener's review in the University of Toronto Quarterly, 36 (Apr., 1967), 310-12, which deals with them in detail.

* * * * *

Collected Edition of Mill's Works. Volumes IV and V, Essays on Economics and Society, with an Introduction by Lord Robbins, have now been published. Work on the next volume, now entitled Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society, is virtually complete, and it should go into production before the end of the year, for publication in 1968. The System of Logic now looms large; checking of the collation is now underway, and the editing work is scheduled to be finished in a year. Professors Mineka and Lindley are still hoping to deliver themselves of the bulk of the Later Letters before the end of the year; we cannot yet, however, promise an early end to the incubation period.

* * * * *

2

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