

THE MILL NEWS LETTER

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Published by University of Toronto Press
in association with Victoria College

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Vol. XXII, No. 1

Winter, 1987

Given the number of times we are asked if we are still grinding Mill, it was inevitable that one of us would come up with this number's Milliana. Rea Wilmshurst it was who read in a detective novel by Lilian Jackson Braun:

"Would you drive to Rattlesnake Lake to act as one of the judges in a contest?"

"Bathing beauties?"

"No. Cake-baking. It's the statewide thing sponsored by the John Stuart Flour Mills. They do a lot of advertising, and we promised we'd send one of the judges."

(The Cat Who Saw Red [New York, 1986], 111.)

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Continuing our policy of providing previously unpublished Mill letters, the issue proper begins with an article by Dr. Jean O'Grady (Mill Project) based on a correspondence between Mill and James Fitzjames Stephen, beginning in 1864 as Stephen asks for advice about leaving the law for literature and continuing through 1871 as he considers the central idea of *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*. Next is an article by John M. Robson on Mill's brother George, centring on their mutual interest in field botany. Recent publications, forthcoming publications, and two reviews conclude the issue.

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Jean O'Grady

Eight letters between Mill and Fitzjames Stephen, the only ones known, have recently come to light in the Cambridge University Library and are here published with the Library's kind permission. Stephen is best known to Mill scholars for his attack on Mill's democratic liberalism, shortly before Mill's death, in *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* (1873). Yet he had previously worked with Mill in various liberal causes and continued to think of himself as a Liberal--of the old school, certainly. Taking him at his word, John Colaiaco in *Fitzjames Stephen and the Crisis of Victorian Thought* (1983) has discussed the theoretical differences between the two men as illustrations of the varieties of liberal thought in the nineteenth century. The letters do not invalidate this view; but they do offer a fascinating glimpse into the personal relations between the two men, and, read in conjunction with published documents, point to divergencies of temperament and attitude that make their disagreement seem inevitable.

At the time of Stephen's first letter to Mill, dated 9 April, 1864, the two men had been acquainted for probably a year or so. The thirty-five-year-old Stephen had been a barrister for ten years, achieving a modest success in the midland circuit; he had also been a prolific writer in the *Saturday Review* and the *Cornhill*, and had produced a book, *A General View of the Criminal Law of England* (1863), still considered a milestone in legal literature. He looked up to Mill for his *Logic* and his *Political Economy*. Mill in turn admired some of Stephen's journalism. It is true that after reading Stephen's anonymous "English Jurisprudence" in the *Edinburgh Review* of October 1861, he had remarked in a private letter that the author "does not seem to know much of the subject beyond what he has learnt from the two books he is reviewing" (LL, CW, XV, 757)--a judgment which, he might have said later, was rather wide of the mark. But in the fifth edition of the *Logic* (1862) he had highly praised Stephen's reviews of Buckle in the *Cornhill*,¹ quoting the essays to emphasize the point that the course of history is always modified in unpredictable ways by individuals (CW, VIII, 941). Perhaps it was to thank him for this favourable notice that Stephen wrote to Mill in Athens in July, 1862, or perhaps his letter had to do with Rowland Williams, a clergyman charged with violating ecclesiastical law in the *Essays and Reviews* case whom Stephen had defended in court: Mill was eager to receive word from England on the judgment in this case.² At any rate, in a letter of 21 July, 1862, Mill tells Fawcett that he has received a very pleasant note from Stephen, and requests him to "pray thank him for me, and say that I look forward with pleasure to our better acquaintance" (LL, CW, XV, 788).

Mill returned to England in December 1862, and almost certainly met Stephen during 1863 at the Political Economy Club, which Stephen had joined in 1862. They became well enough acquainted to embolden Stephen to ask Mill's advice on an intellectual but personal matter. In

a letter of 9 April, 1864, Stephen sets out his dilemma. He thinks of abandoning both his careers, as a barrister and as a periodical writer, to become a County Court judge or police magistrate--both comparatively undemanding jobs, apparently, which would allow him to devote some of his considerable energies to writing a book he had long meditated, "on the fundamental problems of religion and morals." "It would be great folly," he writes, "to throw up good prospects for the sake of writing a bad book or even any but a book of high importance and permanent value. The point on which I want to ask your candid opinion is whether from what you know of my writings you think it probable that I could produce such a book? ... If you candidly think that I should make nothing of it you would not only give me no pain but some satisfaction by saying so."

Mill's reply, of which we have a draft dated at Blackheath Park, 12 April, 1864, nicely blends the sought-after candour with a disinclination to give such advice and an evident lack of enthusiasm for the subject Stephen contemplated:

"Dear Sir--You have put to me a question which it is very difficult, or rather impossible, to answer satisfactorily. There is no one living of whom I would venture to affirm beforehand that he might be expected to write such a treatise on the fundamental problems of religion and morals that it would be good for him to give up a profession he likes and change his plans of life rather than not write it. I should expect confidently that if you threw your whole mind into writing such a book, or indeed any other book which you are at all likely to write, it would at the least contain a great deal that would be valuable. But it deserves consideration whether even the best book that could be written in our day, on morals and religion generally, would do more good than may be done by the continual illustration and discussion of the leading points of those subjects, in connection with particular speculative or practical questions. For such discussion you have a decided talent, and it would afford the materials of many books as well as periodical writings. However this may be, the question is one which no one but yourself can decide. It is my creed that any one who can do anything, of an intellectual kind, well, is usually a better judge than other people what he can do best, and what it is of most use for him to attempt.

"We leave for Avignon before next Sunday, but after our return I shall be happy to have any discussions you may desire with you."

Stephen evidently found Mill's reply helpful, and he wrote a brief note on 14 April thanking him and remarking, "I think it probable that I shall decide to let matters take their course." In the event he did not abandon his career, and though to the end of his life he continued to meditate on schemes for a great book on metaphysics and morals,³ his major work, on the English criminal law, in fact followed Mill's prescription of linking theoretical concerns to practical applications.

The next extant letter is from Stephen, dated May 1865. It bears witness to a continued contact, beginning by thanking Mill for the

present of his *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* (1865) and for his kind notice of Stephen's *Essays*.⁴ The letter also asks for a testimonial to the Committee of Legal Education at the Inns of Court recommending Stephen for the place of Reader in Constitutional Law and Legal History; Stephen remarks, "I should attach greater weight to a testimonial from you than to almost any other that could be produced." We do not know Mill's response, but Stephen was not appointed.

Mill's next letter, dated from Mont Doré les Bains, 18 June, 1865, replies to one now lost, apparently soliciting Mill's advice about a collection of essays that Stephen contemplated publishing (though he did not in the event do so):

"Dear Sir

Of the articles you mention, the only ones I distinctly recollect are those on Newman and Merivale, and of those I well remember that I thought highly.⁵ What points there were, if any, on which I differed from you, I could not say from present recollection. But I should suppose that the amount of thought, not of a commonplace kind, which they contain, and their applicability to existing and important controversies would quite warrant their republication. I will however look at them again. I have most of the numbers of Fraser for the last few years, and could probably turn to all the articles you mention.

I am glad that you have thoughts of standing at the election, and should be much pleased by your success.⁶

I hope to see you at the Club on the 7th, when we may perhaps be able to arrange a walk or a talk before you go on circuit.

Yours very truly,
J.S. Mill"

At this time, then, the two men were on cordial terms, working together in the causes of liberal politics and empirical thought. Unfortunately, we are obliged to turn to published documents to trace the breakdown of this accord, as there is gap in the correspondence in the very years, mid-1865 to 1868, when it would prove most interesting. Mill and Stephen had quite different reactions to the disturbances preceding the Reform Bill of 1867. Though Mill did not become a member of the Reform League, disliking their advocacy of manhood (without womanhood) suffrage and of the ballot, circumstances led to his assuming a conspicuous role as their sympathetic friend. He spoke in Parliament for their right to hold their mass meeting in Hyde Park. Permission being refused, a few days later he helped to persuade the leading working-men not to persist in their attempts, thus perhaps averting violent confrontation, and on 30 July he addressed and encouraged frustrated Leaguers as they packed by the thousands into the Agriculture Hall--it was one of his finest hours (*Autobiography*, CW, I, 278-9). Stephen, on the contrary, lacked enthusiasm for the inevitably approaching democracy, and had nothing but contempt for the Conservative government's weak handling of the Hyde Park riots. As in the case of the Revolution of 1848 in France, he took the side of the beleaguered authorities against what he considered to be a mob.⁷

Stephen's belief in the assertion of law and order was not indiscriminating, however, for in late 1865 he began to work with Mill on the Jamaica Committee, attempting to bring Governor Eyre and his subordinates to justice for the use of excessive force in putting down the Jamaican rebellion of 1865. This celebrated case provides a critical illumination of attitudes towards authority in the nineteenth century, since prominent thinkers tended to form into two opposing teams, behind the Jamaica Committee or the Eyre Defence Fund; Stephen shows his anomalous position by first acting as legal counsel for the Jamaica Committee and then resigning. The disagreement between Mill and Stephen over the tactics to be pursued led, Leslie Stephen tells us, to a coolness in a relationship which had perhaps never been more than mildly warm.⁸

Stephen and Mill were equally convinced that a wrong had been committed in Jamaica. Stephen's reaction, however, was essentially that of a lawyer, while Mill's was that of a crusader. Stephen, with Edward James, wrote the legal opinion of the Committee, which maintained that martial law was only the common-law right of a ruler to put down armed rebellion by any amount of force necessary, and that the ruler was answerable to the law for any unnecessary use of force or for acts of force performed after the rebellion had been put down.⁹ In executing G.W. Gordon after the emergency had passed by sentence of a court-martial, Eyre had seized the opportunity to get rid of a black-rights agitator who had not been directly involved in the rebellion; he was thus technically guilty of murder. This did not mean, however, that he was the sadistic tyrant portrayed by the Jamaica Committee. As Stephen explained when *The Times* wondered at his "ghastly courtesy" towards Eyre while seeking to have him indicted for murder, he considered Eyre a brave and honest man, "entitled on many grounds to respect and sympathy," who had done what he considered moral and expedient while knowing that the legal evidence was insufficient to warrant it.¹⁰ Unfortunately, in so doing he had threatened the rule of law that was England's precious gift to her colonies--a gift whose value was to become even more apparent to Stephen during his years in India. Stephen therefore made eloquent speeches seeking indictments against Nelson and Brand (the subordinates) in Bow Street Magistrates' Court (6 February, 1867) and against Eyre at the Shropshire Magistrates' Court (27 March). In the latter application he was unsuccessful, but Nelson and Brand's case did proceed to the Grand Jury; in spite of a charge sympathetic to the Jamaica Committee by the Lord Chief Justice, however, the Grand Jury on 10 April refused to find a true bill. At this point Stephen recommended that the case be dropped. His respect for legal forms is probably at the root of this opinion. The case had had the hearing provided by the law, and regretfully Eyre must now go free; to attempt to prosecute him further would smack of persecution.¹¹ Stephen had written in his *General View* of the humanity of the English law, praising its solicitousness for the rights of the individual in contrast with the French law;¹² here, it seems, was a case in which the criminal received the benefit of the doubt.

For Mill and the Jamaica Committee, the case was more a moral than a legal one. They tried desperately to overcome the inadequacies of

the law, and exhausted all legal forms to bring to justice the cruel and vindictive exercise of authority. They engaged a new lawyer, attempted to have Eyre committed for murder at Bow Street (27 February, 1868), finally succeeded in having him indicted under the Colonial Governors' Act, and only admitted defeat when the Grand Jury threw out that bill (2 June, 1868). The situation is reminiscent of those cases of domestic brutality which Mill and Harriet publicized in the 1840s and 50s: public opinion winked at atrocities and, embodied in weak-kneed juries, refused to convict. *The Subjection of Women* several times compares the position of women with that of slaves; the Jamaica case (in which ex-slaves proved to have few rights) may well have sharpened Mill's sense of a parallel.

Cases of physical cruelty were practically the only ones in which Mill felt that the law should be strengthened and penalties increased. Loathing of tyranny was, as we know, a dominant force in his personality, leading him in his relations with Harriet to an unwillingness to make even the shadow of a suggestion that might appear to be dictating to her judgment. Possibly he was reacting to the close supervision over his thoughts and actions that his father had exercised, and resisting on behalf of others what he had failed to resist for himself. At any rate, he often felt that the law itself was an instrument of tyranny. The arbitrary powers of the existing English law had engaged his attention from his earliest days, when he wrote against the powers of judges to define libel or of magistrates to throw offenders into jail. Stephen was much more contented with the general state of English law, and maintained that judge-made law was a useful application of general law to specific circumstances.¹³ Though he had begun his legal career as a Benthamite, he became increasingly impatient of sweeping criticisms and convinced of the need for the strong authority of the law--an attitude which was to culminate later in his well-known pronouncement that the criminal law was a necessary, institutionalized expression of society's moral indignation at the criminal.¹⁴ As a judge, at the end of his life, he was said to be somewhat fierce and dogmatic.¹⁵ Whereas Mill had characteristically signed one of his early letters to the editor "No Lawyer" (CW, XXII, 33), Stephen as a practising barrister understandably became fascinated by the institutions of the law, and prone to defend them. In Austin's terminology, he was more interested in jurisprudence than in legislation. Thus the activity for which he is best known, besides the writing of the *History of the Criminal Law*, is codification: a quintessentially Benthamite activity, certainly, but not one that necessarily requires sweeping changes. For Stephen the fundamental need was to get the law clearly set forth and pruned of excrescences, at which time it would provide a tolerable framework for individual activity.¹⁶

Given these differences of outlook--to return at last to the correspondence--one is not surprised to find Mill's politeness sorely taxed, though Stephen seems as confident as ever of receiving a warm welcome. On 24 April, 1869, he writes to Mill thanking him for a gift of his edition of James Mill's *Analysis*,¹⁷ which he hopes to find time to read soon. He remarks, "It must I think be almost a year since I last had the pleasure of seeing you," and suggests a walk together at

Blackheath. In this long letter Stephen alludes to three other areas in which the two still shared an interest. The first was the Westminster petition, in which Stephen acted for Beal and others in an attempt to unseat W.H. Smith for bribery and treating in the Westminster election of 1868 (when he narrowly defeated Mill). The second was his growing interest in Indian affairs. Finally Stephen tells Mill of his intention to answer the vehement attack on Utilitarians in Lecky's *History of European Morals*.¹⁸ Mill's reply exists in a heavily-revised draft dated 17 May, 1869:

"I am very glad to hear that you intend to answer Lecky on Utilitarianism. It is a subject which finds an active and doughty champion in you. From what I hear it seems that Lecky's ideas on it are both superficial and confused. He has been so useful in popularizing some good ideas that it is a pity he is not only commonplace but even of an antiquated form of commonplace; unluckily he is not the only useful and clever man I know in this predicament.

I am not surprised that you do not find time to read the Analysis. I am often surprised at the great industry you exhibit but I should like to see a review of the Analysis by yourself and the book as originally written without the aid of the notes is almost a necessary foundation for efficient thought both in law and politics, for which the doctrine of the Association of Ideas as there developed is all-important.

I shall be in England early in July and shall be happy to see you if you think you can derive either pleasure or profit from the society of such very decided believers in progress."¹⁹

The touch of asperity at the end, alluding to himself and Helen Taylor, was not the only one contemplated. After saying that Lecky's ideas seemed to be of rather antiquated commonplace, Mill had originally continued, "I wish there were no subjects on which yours seem to me the same"--but evidently thought better of it and cancelled the clause.

Amusingly, we have evidence of Mill's personal opinion of Stephen at this time in a letter to Cliffe Leslie written nine days previously. The paragraph begins, "I agree with you in exceedingly disliking the insolent and domineering affectations of Fitzjames Stephen," and complains generally of Stephen's boorishness, as seen for instance in his boast that he always goes to sleep at the Political Economy Club (*LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1600). It is characteristic of Mill, however, to say that one must overlook Stephen's offensive mannerisms "if he is in earnest about anything. One cannot help hoping he is because he is clever enough to do a good deal of good or of mischief." Stephen obviously had the same respect for Mill's intellect, but the personal conflict is unmistakable. What Stephen's brother often describes in the *Life* as downrightness or manliness might well suggest the adjectives of Mill's letter to Leslie, "brutal," "presumptuous," and "domineering." Stephen, on the other hand, subscribed to a traditional ideal of masculinity and considered Mill deficient in it. Mill seemed to him to neglect the grand passions and to be over-intellectual and

over-sensitive;²⁰ no doubt Mill's championing of the rights of women, intensely irritating to Stephen, provided him with confirmation of this view.

Certainly Stephen cannot be thought over-sensitive in that he seemed unaware of the impression he was creating. The last letter in the series consists of four closely-written pages in which he addresses Mill in touchingly friendly and expansive fashion from Simla on 3 August, 1871, after he had become the legal member of the Indian Viceroy's Council. Stephen's Indian experience is admitted to have been the culminating factor in separating him from Mill's political ideas and weakening his faith in parliamentary government. Yet there is no sense of awkwardness as he alludes to the benefits of authoritarian rule: "I could not have believed if I had not seen it with my own eyes that such a small body of men should do so much and do it so well. I hope some day to be able to set forth certain qualifications to your Essay on Liberty which it has led me to believe in." This is a remarkably breezy way of announcing the germ of *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*; had he no notion, one wonders, of the consternation his book would cause as a sweeping attack on Mill? Or had he a sublime confidence in Mill's acceptance of intellectual debate? If so, his confidence was probably not misplaced, for Mill's only known remark on reading the essays as they first appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* was the mild one recorded by Bain, that the author "does not know what he is arguing against; and is more likely to repel than to attract people."²¹ And meanwhile, Stephen in one respect at least was faithful to his earlier Utilitarian creed. In this letter he alludes to his work on consolidating the Indian laws of evidence, and on the Introduction that he was writing on the principles of evidence viewed in the light of the inductive and deductive principles of Mill's *Logic*. Ever seeking advice, he continues: "I also enclose four prints of the beginning of my book²² containing the only part of it which would be of much interest to you. If you could make a few marginal notes, and send it back to me ... I should be very much obliged. You will see that you play the principal part in it." Mill's marginalia, if any, do not survive. But let us hope that he was gratified to find that the principles of his *Logic*, at least, had remained valid to a colleague who had travelled very far from their original shared beliefs.

NOTES

¹"The Study of History," *Cornhill*, III (1861), 666-80, and IV (1861), 25-41. These were also anonymous, but it seems likely that Mill knew the authorship of works that he quoted at length.

²Stephen had published his *Defence of the Rev. Rowland Williams, in the Arches' Court of Canterbury* (London: Smith, Elder), in the spring of 1862.

³Leslie Stephen, *The Life of Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, Bart., K.G.S.I., a Judge of the High Court of Justice* (London: Smith, Elder, 1895), 353.

⁴That is, his *Essays by a Barrister* (London: Smith, Elder, 1862), from which Mill had quoted in the *Hamilton* (CW, IX, 71n-2n).

⁵"Dr. Newman's Apologia", *Fraser's*, LXX (Sept. 1864), 265-303, and "Merivale's Sermons on the Conversion of the Roman Empire", *ibid.*, LXXI (Mar. 1865), 363-82. Evidently Stephen contemplated a collection of articles on religious subjects (Leslie Stephen, *Life*, 226).

⁶Stephen contested Harwich for the Liberals in 1865, but was notably unsuccessful. This was of course the election in which Mill gained his seat.

⁷Leslie Stephen, *Life*, 107-8, 224.

⁸*Ibid.*, 229.

⁹"The Jamaica Committee", *The Times*, 16 Jan., 1866, 3. For another version see J.F. Stephen, *A History of the Criminal Law of England*, 3 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1883), I, 207-16.

¹⁰Leading article, *The Times*, 30 Mar., 1867, 9; Stephen, letter to the editor, *The Times*, 2 Apr., 1867, 12.

¹¹Leslie Stephen, *Life*, 230.

¹²*General View*, 232-3.

¹³*Ibid.*, 328.

¹⁴*History of the Criminal Law*, II, 82.

¹⁵Leon Radzinowicz, *Sir Fitzjames Stephen, 1829-1894, and His Contribution to the Development of Criminal Law* (London: Quaritch, 1957), 39.

¹⁶For the many practical improvements which he did suggest, see *ibid.*, 25-6.

¹⁷James Mill, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, 2nd ed., ed. John Stuart Mill, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, et al., 1869).

¹⁸*The History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1869), Chap. i.

¹⁹Stephen's lack of enthusiasm for the notion of progress had been expressed, for instance, in "Christian Optimism," in *Essays by a Barrister*, 114-22.

²⁰Leslie Stephen, *Life*, 230-1.

²¹Alexander Bain, *John Stuart Mill. A Criticism: with Personal Recollections* (London: Longmans, Green, 1882), 111.

²²*The Indian Evidence Act (I. of 1872) with an Introduction on the Principles of Judicial Evidence* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink, 1872), esp. 18-25.

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GEORGE GROTE MILL: ANOTHER FIELD BOTANIST

John M. Robson

Very little is known about John Stuart Mill's siblings, who seem destined to fill one of those narrow historical slots reserved for the relatives of the great who disturb pure geneticists' theories. There certainly is reason for regret that we are well informed only about the eldest child of Harriet and James Mill, who had the best documented, but perhaps not the best, education of any of the family.

Probably the most generally recalled fact about any of John Mill's eight sisters and brothers, apart from the vague notion that he was their major teacher, is that George Grote Mill (1825-53), the second youngest boy, received a stinging rebuke for making inappropriate comments about John's marriage to Harriet Taylor. The fullest information in print about George's life is to be found in F.A. Hayek's *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor: Their Friendship and Subsequent Marriage* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1945), which indicates at least some of the times the boy spent with the Taylor children as well as with their mother and his brother from the mid-1830s to the mid-1840s. The account, however, is quite spotty, the high points being a trip to Paris from July to November 1836, and trips to Walton, where Harriet lived, in the early 1840s. By the late 1840s George betrayed signs of the fatal family disease, tuberculosis, and in an attempt to recover in 1849 went with his sister Clara to Madeira. It was from there in May 1851 that he wrote his misjudged (and probably misinterpreted) letters about the marriage of John and Harriet, and there that he anticipated the conclusion of his disease by committing suicide in July 1853.

To this all too sad brief tale it is pleasant to add one published reminiscence that, as it is little referred to, is worth repeating at length. David Masson, in his *Memories of London in the 'Forties*, recounts his meeting the Mill family through another of the peripatetic Scots who infiltrated London literary life, John Robertson, the assistant on the *London and Westminster Review* who caused John Mill such grief. After recalling his encounters with Mill in the India House, Masson mentions that they led

"to hospitable reception in more domestic fashion at Kensington Square, and so to pleasant relations there with the other members of the Mill household. They were a remarkable family. When they were all together, you saw, at the time I speak of [1844], besides Mill himself, then thirty-eight years of age, his mother, a widow since 1836, still a comely lady for her years, and a kindly and most competent hostess; four daughters, yet unmarried; and one younger son;--all these five looking up to John now as their head, and their link of honour with the rest of the world; but all of them, even to the youngest, remembering also their dead father, by whom, to the very last days of his life, they had been carefully and even vigorously educated. Not one of the five but bore the stamp of their upbringing in a certain superiority both of character and intellect. Of the five, I came to know ... most particularly of all, George Grote Mill, the youngest but one of the whole family. [The youngest, Henry, had died in 1840 of tuberculosis.] He was younger than his brother John by seventeen or eighteen years. For some time already he had been associated with him in the India House, holding a junior clerkship in the important department [the Examiner's Office] in which his brother was one of the chiefs. I had seen him at his desk among other clerks in one of the large rooms on the lower floor of the India House; but it was in the house in Kensington Square that we came most easily and naturally together. We were nearly of the same age; and he had taken

strongly to me, and I strongly to him. Hence, in the autumn of 1844, when he had gone with his mother and two or more of his sisters to country quarters which they had taken in the village of King's Langley in Herts,--John Stuart Mill then off somewhere else for his holiday,--an invitation to me to spend a day or two at King's Langley was very welcome. This accordingly was the occasion of my first railway journey."

After recalling what he remembers of his travelling to King's Langley, and of the countryside, Masson says:

"But what I remember best and most fondly is that it was this visit to King's Langley that sealed the friendship I had begun with young George Mill.

While the fame of John Stuart Mill has gone through the world, few can know now as I do what a fund of beautiful promise there was in this younger bearer of the Mill name. Less tall than his brother, but of compact and agile figure, with finely-cut features, bright eyes, and a most winning sweetness of expression (the face altogether much resembling, as I have since noted, that of Thomas Brown, the metaphysician), he had inherited no small share of the keen family ability; had been accurately taught, and self-taught, in a considerable range of subjects, was nearly as much at home in French as in English, and was otherwise well accomplished. Full of affectionate admiration for his brother, and nurtured, at any rate by family tradition, in the tenets of the Radical school of politics, he cherished, no less strongly than his brother did, the conviction that existing social institutions are iniquitous in many essential respects, and that the rectification of social wrongs and miseries is the supreme duty of all who have the power and the opportunity. Modestly aware, however, of his own inability to give effect to this conviction by any such public exertions as befitted the larger intellect and wiser capabilities of his brother, he made no open profession of the conviction, but carried it within himself as a simple constitutional axiom, in which form he did hold to it, as one found, with an almost Shelley-like intensity of belief, quiet and undemonstrative in the main, but that might break out suddenly in some Shelley-like action. But this you had to discover gradually, so gentle was his demeanour, so sweetly reasonable his talk, so ready was he for anything gay or humorous in things in their yet unamended state, so docile to anything he could learn from the opinions or experience of others whose antecedents had been different from his own. All in all, I have known no more lovable nature than young George Mill."¹

This account is a healthy corrective to the picture that might be inferred from his great brother's caustic comments. There clearly had been affection and coincidence of opinion between them and, as we shall see, of avocation as well. Masson's account of his pleasant memories of King's Langley includes mention of walks through the countryside. That John Mill took such walks is well known, and that during them he botanized will be much better known when Volume XXVIII of

the *Collected Works* gives the texts of his botanical writings. Most of these were published in *The Phytologist: A Botanical Journal*, which appeared in monthly parts between 1841 and 1863 in two series, the first (5 vols., 1841-54, with an anomalous concluding number in January 1857) conducted by George Luxford, A.L.S., F.B.S.E., but owned by Edward Newman, the second ("New") series (6 vols., 1855-63) owned and edited by Mill's friend and fellow field botanist, Alexander Irvine.

It is quite pleasing to find three contributions by George Mill in the first two volumes. While many of the articles in the journal, which mainly conveyed information about stations to fellow amateur enthusiasts, consist principally of lists of plants, almost all reveal strong feelings about the flora of the world, often mixed with autobiographical or theoretical considerations. So it is with the first of George Mill's contributions, "Observations on the Dissemination of Seeds of Plants," as part 432 of Article 192 in the number for January 1844 (I, 846-8). He was then in his eighteenth year, and shows some of the combativeness of his elder brother at the same age, as well as sharing some of his less well known views, such as the utility (note the frequency of the word "pleasure" and the concern for the future) of scattering seeds in the hedgerows. Like a majority of the articles in the *Phytologist*, this is presented as a communication, dated from Kensington, 9 December, 1843.

"As a question has been raised by Dr. Bromfield, whether it be right to 'assist nature in the dissemination of plants' (*Phytol.*, 806),² and this being a question on which it seems desirable that botanists should make up their minds, I think it may not be amiss to discuss it at greater length than has been done by that gentleman, especially as he has taken the negative side. The main reason given by Dr. Bromfield for entertaining this opinion, is the confusion which would be created in Vegetable Geography, if botanists were to take upon themselves to scatter seeds. It is true that another reason is glanced at, but in reference to this perhaps I may be allowed to say, that I cannot see any greater moral iniquity in sowing seeds to gratify the eye, than in sowing them to gratify the palate. With respect to Vegetable Geography, the most interesting part is that which treats of the affinity of certain plants for certain soils; and it appears to me that this is not only not endangered by the course which Dr. Bromfield denounces, but that it is assisted rather than otherwise. Thus, the seeds of a plant found usually on a gravelly or sandy soil, are perhaps sown by the botanist on a chalky soil, where, if they germinate and flourish, an error may be corrected by its being shown that such a plant is not so peculiar to a sandy or gravelly soil, as that it will not flourish upon a chalky one; on the other hand, if the seeds perish, or if the plants produced from them do not flourish, there is at least strong presumptive evidence that the chalky soil is not adapted for their growth. In either case, it is not likely that a botanist will be led into an error in this respect. As to the geographical distribution of plants, a study which, when separated from the other branch of the subject, is a matter of much less interest, it can never, I think, be endangered by the occasional assistance afforded by

botanists in the production of plants, especially if they make known (as they should do) the fact of their having given such assistance; but even if this information were withheld, the fact of such assistance having been rendered would in most cases be apparent, especially if the plants disseminated are known to be otherwise peculiar to other countries. There is another objection stated by Dr. Bromfield, namely, that the working botanist is misled and disappointed, in finding that he has in reality only discovered an artificial station, when he had flattered himself he had met with a new natural one. It is true, that in such a case, the botanist will in all probability undergo some disappointment, and that this disappointment will most likely exceed the pleasure of finding the plant, and seeing it growing there, before and after he knows this. To prevent such disappointment as much as possible, care should be taken to make known the fact of the station's being an artificial one. Against the disappointment of the botanists of the day, however, is there not to be placed a large amount of pleasure to be derived by future botanists, from the possession of the naturalized plant, when the artificial station shall have become a natural one? Examples may easily be adduced of the pleasure derived by ourselves from such a source. *Impatiens fulva*, for instance, as is well known, grows in the greatest luxuriance along the banks of the river Wey, from considerably above Guildford down to the Thames at Weybridge, and even as low as Barnes (*Phytol.*, 814).³ Now it is not probable that Vegetable Geography will ever be endangered by this fact, the plant being known to be of American origin: on the other hand, what a pleasure is it to the botanist to see this beautiful plant luxuriating in this country, and to possess in his herbarium specimens of it gathered with his own hand! There may even be instances in which error as to the distribution of a plant might arise by not assisting Nature. For example: the only spot in Britain where *Cyperus fuscus* has been found, is a little marshy meadow surrounded by houses, near Walham-green, Middlesex. There can be no manner of doubt that at some time hence, perhaps even in one year, this meadow will be drained, and either built upon or ploughed up; and then, if no one has taken the precaution of removing some of the plants of *Cyperus* elsewhere, there will be a species lost to Britain. Are we to look on quietly and see our species become extinct before our very eyes, and not move a finger to save them? In such cases at least, may not every objection be made against *not* meddling, which is raised by Dr. Bromfield against the doing so? Indeed it is only just to future botanists to take care that we do not deprive them of pleasure in gratifying ourselves. It is, of course, not desirable that botanists should make a practice of scattering the seeds of any but the rarer plants; but I think we should never run the risk of allowing any species to become extinct. Neither do I think it would be advisable to naturalize many foreign plants: it is more interesting for each country to have its own species; and as far as the geographical distribution of plants is concerned, it might become difficult to register them, and to remember that such species were only naturalized, if this were done to any great extent. I can however see nothing to blame in a botanist's sowing (as has been done by Dr. Bromfield in the case of *Urtica*

Dodartii) the seeds of a plant which is found in but two or three places in a country, because there is no fear, even if this should ever be rendered a common plant, that a sufficient number of others will not remain rare, especially since it is likely that as the study of Botany extends, there will be a greater demand for rare plants. On the contrary, I think we have every reason to thank a botanist for his kindness in propagating a rare plant, not so much for the pleasure we ourselves are to derive from it, as for the pleasure it will in all probability afford to the botanists who are to succeed us."

While this article makes reference to the area in which the Mill family habitually spent the summer months, in the vicinity of Guildford, the next reveals the time George spent with Harriet Taylor and her children. And his brother's presence is indicated by Henry Trimmen, who says John "is believed to have helped in the compilation"⁴ of the catalogue given in the article, which appeared in the *Phytologist* for June 1844, headed: "List of Flowering Plants found in the neighbourhood of Great Marlow, Bucks, in the early part of the Summer of 1843" (that is, a year before David Masson met and walked with him). It begins with a general account:

"The country about Marlow, in Buckinghamshire, is scarcely if at all known to the botanist; indeed it is very little known to any except those in the immediate neighbourhood, and to a few anglers who visit it from its proximity to the Thames.

After passing three summer months there, and being well repaid, as far as botanical researches went, I think it will probably be interesting to the readers of *The Phytologist* to have some account of the plants of that neighbourhood.

The plants which grow there are either those of a chalk country, or such as are fond of the banks of rivers and the neighbouring alluvial soil, with the swamps and deep ditches which usually attend it; there are also the plants of wet woods, of which there is no lack in the country, it being composed for the most part of low ranges of thickly-wooded hills.

The plants of which there is a deficiency are such as grow on a sandy or dry gravelly soil, on open heaths, or on wet spongy commons, as will be seen by the following list."⁵

He proceeds to give 337 entries, most listing one species; the first few entries will suggest the kind of information and the tone, both of which are typical of the journal as much as of the author.

"*Clematis Vitalba*. Hedges, frequent.

Thalictrum flavum. About New Lock and Medmenham abundant, and by the Thames generally.

Ranunculus aquatilis. Ponds, etc.

----- *Hederaceus*. In ponds on a common by the Oxford Road, about half way between Marlow and Stokenchurch.

----- *Flammula*. Cookham-dean, etc.

----- *Lingua*. By the water called the Strand, Cookham."

A few entries give a greater sense of the context of the find:

"*Myriophyllum verticillatum*. There are few ditches or ponds about Marlow which do not produce this plant; it grows more especially, however, in the deep ditches above the suspension bridge; also copiously in the wood by Sir W. Clayton's park near the house, as well as in a little pond in the middle of a field immediately under Bisham wood, about half way between the river and the Maidenhead Road." (986.)

"*Barkahusia foetida*. This plant, which formerly grew, though very sparingly, in Bisham wood, does not appear to grow there any longer, but it occurs in the waste ground on the north side of the Great Western Railway, close to the Maidenhead station, though but sparingly. It may easily be distinguished in any state by its root, which has a powerful smell of bitter almonds." (989.)

"*Pyrola minor*. This extremely beautiful little plant grows in all the woods round Marlow-common; I have also seen it growing in woods to the right of the Wycombe road. There can be no doubt that it grows in most of the woods in this neighbourhood, for it must undoubtedly be the same as the *Pyrola* of the Stokenchurch woods, which Sir J.E. Smith suspected might be *P. media*, and which was found, under the same name, by Mr. W. Pamplin, near Henley-on-Thames." (990.)

George Mill's third article, published in March 1847, illustrates in its title yet another of the common types, the short account of a single station: "Note of the New Locality for *Cyperus fuscus*." Its text, however, returns to the matter and manner of his first article. It reads, in its entirety:

"In announcing his discovery of the rare *Cyperus fuscus* on Shalford Common, near Guildford, Surrey (*Phytol.*, II, 609), Mr. Salmon is naturally anxious to know whether the habitat is a genuine one, or whether the plant has only been naturalized in that spot by some botanist, desirous, like myself, that it should not be lost to the Flora of Britain. I am happy to say that so far as I am concerned, the new locality is perfectly genuine.

It would only be right that those who naturalize rare plants, should give publicity to the fact; and should I ever do so, I shall not fail to make the readers of the *Phytologist* acquainted with the particulars."⁶

Still we do not know much about George Mill, but it surely is pleasing to find him with his brother among the early environmentalists, combining individual and social utility in a healthy if, alas, not in his case life-preserving search for flora.

NOTES

¹*Memories* (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1908), 101-7.

²William Arnold Bromfield, "Urtica pilulifera in the Isle of Wight," *Phytologist*, I (Dec. 1843), 806-7, dated from Ryde, 1 November, 1843. Bromfield suggests that an earlier correspondent, G.S. Gibson, had mistakenly identified *Urtica Dodartii* as *Urtica pilulifera*, Bromfield himself having scattered the seeds of the former near Ventnor where Gibson had made his find. He then goes on to condemn his own practice as, "if not morally wrong," at least scientifically "highly reprehensible, as creating confusion in Vegetable Geography, by registering false stations, and cruelly misleading the working botanist."

³Alexander Williamson, "Note on *Impatiens fulva*," *ibid.*, dated from Kew, 8 November, 1843.

⁴"His Botanical Studies," in *John Stuart Mill: A Memorial*, ed. H.R. Fox Bourne (New York: Holt, 1873), 45.

⁵*Phytologist*, I (June 1844), 983. The article runs to p. 995.

⁶*Ibid.*, II (Mar. 1847), 771-2, dated again from Kensington, February 1847. The reference is to J.D. Salmon, "New locality for *Cyperus fuscus*, Linn.," *ibid.*, (Sept. 1846), 609, in which there is reference to George Mill's first article, and a direct question: "Has Mr. Mill or any other gentleman carried out the suggestion in the article referred to, by introducing the plant" on the "margins of Peat-pond, on Shalford common"? (Salmon writes from Godalming, 17 August, 1846.)

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Forthcoming Publications

Gouinlock, James. *Excellence in Public Discourse: John Stuart Mill, John Dewey, and Social Intelligence*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1986.

Wood, John Cunningham, ed. *John Stuart Mill: Critical Assessments*. London: Croom Helm, 1986. The sixth in a series dealing with major economists.

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Boylan, Thomas A., and Timothy P. Foley. "Notes on Leland for John Stuart Mill: The Cairnes-Longfield Manuscript," *Hermathena*, No. 138 (Summer, 1985), 28-39.

Brandis, R. "Distribution Theory: Scientific Analysis or Moral Philosophy," *Journal of Economic Issues*, 19 (Dec. 1985), 867-78.

Brülisauer, Bruno. "Die Idee der Gerechtigkeit," *Studia Philosophica*, 38 (1979), 207-25.

Buckley, Jerome Hamilton. *The Turning Key: Autobiography and the Subjective Impulse since 1800*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984.

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- Day, J.P. "Collective Liberty and Religious Liberty," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 23 (July 1986), 243-54.
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- Lonoff, Sue. "Cultivated Feminism: Mill and *The Subjection of Women*," *Philological Quarterly*, 65 (Winter, 1986), 79-102.
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- Novak, Michael. *Freedom with Justice: Catholic Social Thought and Liberal Institutions*. Cambridge: Harper and Row, 1984.
- Riley, J. "On the Possibility of Liberal Democracy," *American Political Science Review*, 79 (Dec. 1985), 1135-51.
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- Spinks, Graham. "Frege on the Second-Orderliness of Ascriptions of Cardinality," *Ratio*, 27 (Dec. 1985), 133-48.
- Trela, D. "A New (Old) Review of Mill's *Liberty*: A Note on Carlyle and Mill's Friendship," *Carlyle Newsletter*, 6 (1985), 23-7.
- Wright, R.G. "A Rationale from J.S. Mill for the Free Speech Clause," *Supreme Court Review*, 1985, 149-78.
- Zastoupil, Lynn Barry. "J.S. Mill and the British Empire: An Intellectual Biography," Ph.D. thesis, University of Minnesota, 1985. (DAI, 47, 284A.)

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Book Reviews

The Economics of John Stuart Mill. By Samuel Hollander. 2 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985. Pp. xx, 1037.

Samuel Hollander's impressive study of the economics of John Stuart Mill may be read at two levels. On one it is a systematic elucidation of particular doctrines that is at once the most sophisticated and comprehensive ever undertaken. And on this level it forms a virtual compendium of recent Mill interpretation, replete with Hollan-

der's own glosses, which are invariably useful and refreshing. Instances where he adds substantially to what we previously knew abound. To mention just two: the matters of small numbers and expectations as these affect market equilibration (I, 289ff., 301ff.). On a second level, this two-volume study marks the completion of a connected investigation of Smith, Ricardo, and now Mill, in which is adduced the evidence to sustain a two-part thesis, to wit, that Smith "provided the archetype of 'abstract' theorizing for the nineteenth century" and "the economics of Ricardo and J.S. Mill ... comprises in its essentials an exchange system consistent with the neo-classical elaborations" (I, 3; II, 931). In other words, there is an essential methodological and doctrinal continuity running from Smith to the neo-classicals. Without meaning to slight Hollander's detailed investigations, there is little doubt that it is this thesis that will provoke most interest among historians of economics, and which raises issues of concern to all intellectual historians, and for those reasons I shall concentrate on it.

The methodological congruence of Smith and Ricardo has been argued at length in Hollander's study on Ricardo and elsewhere.¹ In this he agrees with Schumpeter, from whom, however, in many other matters of interpretation he takes distance.² If we may regard that congruence as in some sense established, what has to be shown in the Mill volumes is that Mill was at one with Ricardo on method; that Mill's economics was essentially Ricardian, emendations and extensions notwithstanding (here Hollander disagrees with Schumpeter and Blaug, among others); and that "Ricardian economics--the economics of Ricardo and J.S. Mill--in fact comprises in its essentials an exchange system fully consistent with the marginalist elaborations."³

This connected set of propositions threatens to turn much recent and traditional interpretation of nineteenth-century economics on its head. In particular, it implies that there was no Mill-Ricardo "methodological revolution," towards the abstract and hypothetical and away from Smith's empirical approach, *pace* Hutchison.⁴ Notice too that James Mill becomes odd man out in the Smith-Ricardo-Mill line that Hollander seeks to establish. James Mill's "geometric" demonstrations in political economy and government are not the same as Ricardo's "tendency" statements, and they proved methodologically unacceptable to his son, who opted for multiple causation and propositions true only in the abstract. Nor did Mill senior exercise the kind of influence over Ricardo's writing and doctrines that we had been led to think.⁵ Furthermore, Hollander argues that John Mill's economics involved no fundamental departures from Ricardo's; by implication, Schumpeter is mistaken in his view that there were logical inconsistencies that only Mill's misguided "filial respect" for Ricardo obscured. Finally, as Hollander would have it, there was no "marginal revolution" in the early 1870s, in the sense of a "paradigmatic displacement."⁶

Hollander will convince all but the most intransigent that Mill and Ricardo held the same views on method and that the analytical core in Mill is "profoundly" Ricardian (see I, 245). Chapters i and ii of the present study trace the evidence on method, while Chapters v, vi, and

vii are the key chapters for the (non-monetary) economic analysis. Many too, among whom I count myself, will not be unsympathetic to *part* of the larger endeavour; i.e., to the attempt to show that Mill was less lacking in self-awareness and was more consistent than is often maintained. There are problems, however, in extending this to mean also that Mill was both "profoundly" Ricardian and "essentially" neo-classical.

First, to make his point Hollander is driven to defending Mill against virtually all modern commentators who, on the whole, have agreed with Schumpeter that while the "Smith-Mill-Marshall line is clear enough ... the middle term is not on a par with the other two, owing to relative insufficiency of labor applied."⁷ There is inevitably for Hollander a need to claim both that Mill was aware of deeper implications in his own analyses than the moderns have given him credit for *and* that it was all in Ricardo anyway. His insistent portrayal of both Mill and Ricardo as having seen it all (or almost all) is tedious at times. Not surprisingly, too, it sometimes seems strained. One example must suffice.

If the inverse relation between wage and profit rates lies at the heart of Ricardian economics, and if this economics is not at odds with neo-classical (i.e., allocative, general equilibrium) economics, it ought to be possible to trace in Mill and Ricardo the impact of an increase in wages on relative prices in the case where factor proportions are not uniform. Hollander recognizes this as a sort of test case (I, 358). Following a wage increase profits everywhere will be reduced, at prevailing prices; but the wage change will affect capital-intensive industries relatively less, and a new pattern of outputs and long-run supply prices will emerge as a result of the constraint that profit rates ultimately must be equalized throughout the system (*ibid.*).

Now technically (as Hollander also explicitly notes) it will not do in a neo-classical general equilibrium approach to "enter" first the new, lower profit rate and then estimate the new equilibrium outputs and prices as if that lowered *general* rate rather than the changed *structure* of returns on capital is what determines producer-reactions (I, 282-3, 359). But Hollander has to admit that that is how Mill and Ricardo typically reason: the actual adjustment mechanism is "never explicitly spelled out" (I, 359). His argument at that point becomes counterfactual: they *must* have seen what was required in a proper treatment, because supply-and-demand interactions and profit-rate equalization were central for them both (*ibid.*). Ever meticulous, Hollander acknowledges that there are problems with this reading. If the allocative mechanism were uppermost in their minds, why did they stress so much the basic distribution theorem in terms of the standard commodity? Why did Mill flirt with the idea in the *Principles* that capital can be reduced to labour? Why did Mill express his fourth proposition on capital as if the final pattern of demand is irrelevant? Hollander's summing up is exemplary: "Here we have a case where caution is the better part of valour in our interpretation" (I, 362). This judicious conclusion notwithstanding, however, somehow the reader is left with the distinct impression that at worst a lapse, and most

likely only convenience in modelling, are involved here. Supply and demand and the allocative mechanism are still "central." Indeed, as it is put in the conclusion to the study as a whole: "It has emerged from our investigation that the economics of Ricardo and J.S. Mill in fact comprises in its essentials an exchange system consistent with the neo-classical elaborations. In particular, their cost-price analysis is pre-eminently an analysis of the allocation of scarce resources, proceeding in terms of general equilibrium, with allowance for final demand, and the interdependence of factor and commodity markets." (II, 931; emphasis added.) Notice that the language here is not, "their analysis is in principle ...," but "their analysis is...." What ought to have been done, but was not, is subsumed in this more sweeping and positive evaluation.

Second, not only does Hollander's portrayal of Mill and Ricardo as incipient neo-classicals sometimes seem to be stretching things, but one is led to ask, How could so many modern commentators have got their interpretations so wrong? Unfortunately, Hollander nowhere addresses this directly, and gives us only scattered hints towards an answer. Thus, for example, the twin "errors" that Smith's "concern for application and social arrangement" signifies a method of analysis that was different from Ricardo's, and that "the 'Smithian' form of Mill's *Principles*" implies a breakaway from Ricardian theory, are ascribed to "a neglect of the intended audience" (I, 167). Again, the accusation that Mill had to display "remarkable ingenuity" in explaining how contrary evidence did not undermine Ricardian doctrines is dealt with by the suggestion that this neglects the fact that Mill was not trying to make specific predictions (II, 945). These suggestions are intriguing, and one may agree with them fully; but they cry out for further elaboration and fall short of the attempt at integrated explanation that seems to be called for by the radical implications of Hollander's own thesis.

Finally, it is troublesome that in order to draw logical connections between Ricardo and Mill and from them to the neo-classicals Hollander has to stress supply and demand as the common analytical framework. This is a little like seeking the lowest common denominator, and I believe it is uninformative.

Before elaborating, a couple of points of clarification. It is now generally recognized that the so-called "marginal revolution" was a complex process, extending over several countries and decades, rather than an event. Presenting it as an event brings out only the aspect that there was a multiple discovery of the idea of marginal utility by Jevons in England, Menger in Austria, and Walras in Switzerland. Hollander is well aware of this, and the important element in his thesis refers less to the revolution as event than to the notion that there was a paradigm shift.

Hollander favours Marshall as historian of doctrine⁸--Marshall stressed the continuity of thought between Ricardo, Mill, and the self-proclaimed revolutionaries of the 1870s--and he needs Marshall as representative neo-classical because of his use of supply-and-demand analysis. But if it is more in order to speak of a transition to neo-classical economics than to focus on a marginalist revolution (event),

we must also recognize that neo-classical economics itself is a many-sided thing. Demand-and-supply analysis was Marshall's preferred tool, but to Jevons, demand was merely the superficial phenomenon which needed to be explained by something "deeper," namely, utility. For Walras, interrelations between markets was the focus of attention, and to a second-generation neo-classical such as Pareto, economics was best thought of in terms of transformations of commodities to satisfy "tastes" and overcome "obstacles." While Walras's and Pareto's equilibrium conditions might loosely be thought of as "equivalent" to supply-and-demand equality, the equivalence is more apparent than real, simply because in Marshall's supply-and-demand models many conditions are "frozen"--the equilibrium is partial, not general--so that it is not clear how far results reached by his method will hold when the restrictions are relaxed.

These differences still may not seem fundamental--just differences of focus--but there are conceptual differences too that make it difficult to collapse the classical and neo-classical approaches into one via supply-and-demand analysis. In particular, as the recent researches of Philip Mirowski have made plain,⁹ the mathematics used by the pioneer (and many second-generation) neo-classicals, and the metaphor they employed for value, were taken over from mid-nineteenth-century engineering physics. This statement does not apply to Menger, but it does in high degree to Jevons, Walras, Pareto, Edgeworth, Laundhardt, Auspitz and Lieben, and Fisher. In a general sense it has long been known that classical mechanics was important to many of the neo-classical pioneers; but Mirowski takes this much further, showing in great detail how complete the borrowing by economists was, and what consequences this had for their analysis. In the case of Fisher, whom Mirowski takes as paradigmatic,¹⁰ there is a striking (if still imperfect) awareness of the parallels. Maximizing net utility (utility minus disutility) is treated as akin to maximizing the sum of "energy" minus "work," where total utility to the individual may be likened to the integral with respect to marginal utilities, just as (kinetic) energy is defined as the integral with respect to impelling forces.¹¹ The "translation" of the physics into economics here is incomplete and somewhat confused; but there was at least a strong inclination to go beyond the parallels just mentioned and to treat utility as constitutive of a field (cf. commodity "space"), by analogy with energy as virtual; and there was a recognition of the need to specify constraints to define value and equilibrium and thereby give substance to the idea of optimal choice within the utility "field."

An important consequence of this fascination with energetics was that economists experienced (predictable) difficulty in fitting supply (production) into the same framework as they had adopted--and which seemed so obviously useful--for demand and optimal choice. The important principle of conservation applies naturally enough to the field notion of value or utility; but what is conserved in production, where inputs are transformed into outputs that are different both qualitatively and quantitatively? Mirowski points out that neo-classical economists used a number of devices to minimize this difficulty.¹² Thus Walras defined net income and the value of capital goods in terms

of "services" to consumers, and Pareto adopted a very abstract mode of expression in which production is viewed as strictly analogous to transformation in exchange. These were really attempts to reduce production to consumption. Fisher chose another route: he regarded income as incurring a disutility (labour) cost as it is generated. None of these (or many other devices that have been tried) was wholly satisfactory, because, Mirowski is inclined to argue, production seems more naturally linked to value as "substance" rather than value as "field."

Hollander points out that for Ricardo and Mill wealth is that which embodies a flow of future utilities, and that materiality as such is irrelevant; hence there is no conflict between a labour and a utility theory of value (I, 250). It is a direct implication of Mirowski's work, however, that to the extent that the neo-classicals did indeed choose to adhere to the field concept of value from physics, the conservation principle posed a problem for them in integrating value and production in a single conceptual framework. This problem does not disappear when we treat produced goods as a flow of services or utilities. Nor, it should be plain, does the implied symmetry of the supply-and-demand framework really touch this difficulty, which has to do with the limitations of the metaphor chosen by the neo-classicals.

One final point. A test of the usefulness of Hollander's continuity hypothesis is whether, using the supply-and-demand framework and applying it to Ricardo's problem--distributive shares in a growing economy subject to diminishing returns and Malthusian pressures--would yield the characteristic Ricardian propositions. Hollander actually adopts a weaker test, perhaps because he feels that this one would turn out badly. Repeatedly, he speaks of Ricardian economics as being not incompatible with neo-classical analysis (e.g., I, 421). But that is too weak a claim. If the supply-and-demand framework, which in some measure will establish compatibility, is not also able to motivate the distinctive research traditions of Ricardian and neo-classical economics, then the claim is historically uninteresting.

I have deliberately given over all my allotted space to assessing Hollander's controversial major thesis. Clearly I am unpersuaded by his argument. That should not be allowed to obscure the fact that this study is a contribution to scholarship of the very first order. It will become an indispensable reference work on Mill for its coverage and its meticulous attention to detail. As a work of exploratory exegesis it must be judged extraordinarily creative. And that it is already provoking debate about its main contention merely confirms that it crowns the most lively and challenging reassessment of classical economics since Schumpeter's *History of Economic Analysis*.

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NOTES

¹Samuel Hollander, *The Economics of David Ricardo* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 652 ff.; see also his *Economics of John Stuart Mill*, I, Chap. i.

²J.A. Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1954).

³Samuel Hollander, "On the Substantive Identity of the Ricardian and Neo-classical Conceptions of Economic Organization: The French Connection in British Classicism," *Canadian Journal of Economics*, 15 (Nov. 1982), 590; cf. his *Economics of David Ricardo*, 10 and 689; and his *Economics of John Stuart Mill*, II, 931, where almost the same words occur.

⁴T.W. Hutchison, *On Revolutions and Progress in Economic Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), Chap. ii.

⁵Again, pace T.W. Hutchison, in his "James Mill and the Political Education of Ricardo," *Cambridge Journal*, 7 (1953), 81-100; and in his *On Revolutions and Progress*.

⁶Hollander, "On the Substantive Identity," 608.

⁷Schumpeter, 53.

⁸Hollander, "On the Substantive Identity," 587.

⁹Philip Mirowski, "Physics and the 'Marginalist Revolution,'" *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 8 (Dec. 1984), 361-79; and his *More Heat than Light* (forthcoming, Cambridge University Press, 1986).

¹⁰*More Heat than Light*, Chap. v.

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²*Ibid.*, Chap. vi.

Mill. By William Thomas. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. Pp. 134.

William Thomas's new book in the Past Masters series is not a biography of John Stuart Mill. Rather, it is a study of Mill-the-thinker designed to illustrate that "unity of conception" that Thomas and various others of late have found in his work. Thomas insists that the unified character of Mill's thought is really the measure of the influence of his teachers, in particular his father, James Mill. Apparently the *aperçu* derives from a statement contained in a short resumé of his life that Mill wrote for a biographical dictionary shortly before he died, that "he had been educated wholly by his father" (Preface). Taking this statement seriously, and attaching a somewhat stronger meaning to the word "education" than others might, Thomas has written an intriguing study of the "formative influences" to which Mill was exposed and the resonance of these in his writing throughout his life.

The "influences" were three: "the ethical and legal thought of Bentham, the political economy of Ricardo, and the psychological theory (then called metaphysics) and educational policy of his father James Mill" (5). The resonances were many. Thomas's conclusion is simple:

"No one in the Bentham circle had been more thoroughly imbued with its doctrine and outlook, and despite all the influences, reactionary and romantic, which modified individual doctrines, Mill retained the abstract, schematic cast of mind of his teachers" (123). "Here and there," he allows, "[Mill] would differ from his father's views ... but the overall theme is the same in the writings of father and son: that the ideal government would be one of philosophers earnestly engaged in educating and improving their fellow citizens" (124). We are back to Mill's education--but for somewhat novel reasons.

Mill's education is the most famous received by any nineteenth-century Englishman. Described at length in his *Autobiography*, it was begun at a very early age, administered almost exclusively by his father, and designed to produce the consummate utilitarian. Whether it succeeded or failed is a complex question with several possible ramifications. The reduction of history to biography can be carried too far. But in light of the role of quintessential liberal in which John Stuart Mill is often cast the answer to the personal question--whether, in fact, he rejected utilitarianism while experiencing the "mental crisis" of late adolescence described at such length in his *Autobiography*--has an obvious bearing upon the answer to the larger question: Does the bridge between utilitarianism and liberalism constitute a single arch? Many of those who have looked at Mill from the perspective of the *Autobiography* have concluded that his education was a failure--as Currin Shields put it, an example of "what *not* to do in cultivating the intellect of a bright and sensitive child." In this context the *Autobiography* becomes "the inside story of why the British Utilitarian movement finally ended in intellectual bankruptcy" ("Editor's Introduction," John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography* [New York, 1957], xiii). His "mental crisis" and the ultimate resolution of the strained relationship between him and his father that surfaced at the time of the "crisis" become therapeutic experiences freeing him from utilitarian orthodoxy and enabling him, whether on his own initiative or as the agent of his wife, to go on to write such things as *On Liberty*.

Thomas belongs to another school, which he described implicitly a few years ago when he distinguished between "those who are more interested in what Mill wrote . . . than his motives for writing" (*The Philosophic Radicals* [Oxford, 1979], 169). For him the "mental crisis" had little if anything to do with Mill's emotions. It was the simple consequence of overwork (33). Nor did it mark a decisive break. He allows that Mill's subsequent denials that he was a utilitarian suggest "an element of real disillusionment" (34). But this, he insists, should not be exaggerated. Ostensibly, Mill never lost his intellectual control nor his commitment to the goals his father in particular had tried to infuse. Indeed, Thomas describes the resolution of the "crisis" in essentially voluntaristic and instrumental terms: "[Mill] sought ... to make his inherited opinions less dogmatic. Eclecticism was a device to gain more converts." He quotes Alan Ryan: "[Mill] wanted 'to expand, not to renounce his inheritance'" (36-7). Handled in this fashion, the problem on which various other students of Mill have focused (Gertrude Himmelfarb in particular, *On Liberty and Liberalism* [New York, 1974]), whether the "simple prin-

ciple" of *On Liberty* is really compatible with utilitarianism, ceases to be a problem. The stringent limitations contained in the statement, "that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection," becomes merely a "sharpened-up version of the political economists' view that certain activities are better left to the individual than the State" (95).

A long-time student of both father and son, Thomas brings enviable erudition to the building of his case. His description of the "main elements" of Mill's education is succinct and clear; so, too, his tracing of particular themes in different works; his effort to fit *On Liberty* into the utilitarian mould shows great ingenuity; his speculations about the functions of Mill's different works within his oeuvre as a whole show great sensitivity to the logic of the problem. But the larger argument is not altogether convincing--and this, in part, because, as he notes, the evidence on which he focuses is not unambiguous. Concerning Mill's writings during the ten years between the "crisis" and his father's death he observes that "it is very hard to be sure whether his comments are to be read as expressions of open rejection, covert criticism, or merely the reaffirmation of one part of his heritage against another." Opting for the last, but without really explaining why, he criticizes those who have ignored this possibility for assuming "that the ideas in which he was educated formed a logically coherent system, altering one part of which implied overhauling the whole" (34). In effect, it is not quite clear what a "unity of conception" would look like without a "logically coherent system" to start with.

The book is a useful introduction to what Thomas refers to at one point as Mill's "vocabulary" (36). As such it will take its place in a growing library of Mill studies.

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4 vols/1526 pp/Cloth ISBN 0-8020-2602-8/\$175.00/December

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MICHAEL LAINE is a member of the Department of English at the University of Toronto.

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