

Introduction: The Victorian Poetry Palace

There is no style that Victorian poets share, one reason for which is that they had too many to choose from. They had available to them, as their predecessors did not, the full history of English poetry. They were the heirs, as George Saintsbury puts it, of materials that had been ‘furnished by the thought and work of a score of generations of English poets, by the growth and development of seven centuries of English language and English literature’.¹ Saintsbury’s claim might be extended. The first scholarly edition of *Beowulf* which probably dates from the ninth century was published by Tennyson’s friend, J.M. Kemble, in 1833, and Victorian poets were not familiar only with English literature. Shelley had to teach himself Greek after some lessons from his friend, Thomas Love Peacock, but his successors were, many of them, classically educated at their public schools to a level that neither earlier nor later poets could reach, and some of their female contemporaries such as Elizabeth Barrett and Augusta Webster matched their achievements. Many were also widely read in the poetry of continental Europe and beyond. D.G. Rossetti translated the early Italian poets, Swinburne translated from the medieval French of François Villon, and introduced his countrymen to the contemporary French of Charles Baudelaire. Edward FitzGerald’s translation from the eleventh-century Persian of Omar Khayyam became, after initial neglect, one of the century’s more unlikely best-sellers. Tennyson’s ‘Locksley Hall’ (1842) with its vision of ‘the great world’ spinning ‘for ever down the ringing grooves of change’ (The short-sighted Tennyson explained, ‘When I went by the first train from Liverpool to Manchester I thought that the wheels ran in a groove’) is properly recognized as a quintessentially

2 Reading Victorian Poetry

Victorian poem, but its idiosyncratic eight-stress trochaic line, ‘slides the bird o’er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag,’ (162) was probably borrowed by Tennyson from his Cambridge contemporary, Richard Chenevix Trench, who had himself found it employed in a German translation of a poem by another Persian poet, Omar Khayyam’s younger contemporary, Sa’adi Shirazi.² The British poets of the nineteenth century recognized, too, their debts to their American contemporaries. Arthur Hugh Clough who, because of his family’s American connections, was known to his Oxford friends as Yankee Clough, acknowledged that his own experiments with English hexameters were inspired by a reading of Longfellow’s *Evangeline*, and the metres of Swinburne and Hopkins bear the impress of their reading of Whitman.

Nineteenth-century poets lay claim to a far wider historical and geographical range than their predecessors. Felicia Hemans is in this respect typical. In her 1828 volume, *Records of Woman with Other Poems*, she speaks as Sappho in the sixth century BC, as the wife of Hasdrubal at the end of the third, as the wife of Rudolph von Wart in the fourteenth century, the wife of Charles V in the sixteenth, and as Arabella Stuart in the seventeenth. Her geographical range is equally wide, from American Indians to those of the sub-continent, from the Russia of ‘Ivan the Czar’ to the tropical island home that the exile dreams of in ‘The Palm Tree’. Nineteenth-century poets were conscious, as their predecessors had not been, that their poems had to find a place within a great poetry museum, which was, rather like the British Museum itself, remarkable for the breadth and the miscellaneousness of its collections. I begin with three poems, one from the beginning of the period, one from its middle and one from its end, all of which concern museums. All three are poems that reflect upon the state of British poetry in the nineteenth century, and all three poets seem tempted to represent that poetry as defined, rather like the space occupied by the Victorian museum, by its separation from the workaday world.

In Tennyson’s ‘The Palace of Art’ the palace is inhabited by a solitary ‘Soul’ who gains access, through its collections, to what Tennyson describes as ‘the supreme Caucasian mind’ (126). The phrase is indebted to an essay in which Arthur Hallam, Tennyson’s closest Cambridge friend and the friend he was to memorialize in *In Memoriam*, records his delight in contemplating ‘the bonds by which the Law of the Universe has fastened me to my distant brethren of the same Caucasian race’ (the expression is not for Tennyson and Hallam racially exclusive in the manner it has since become: for Hallam, for example, one of the principal constituents

of the Caucasian mind is ‘the Oriental, derived from the Arabians, and circulating especially through those provinces of Europe least remote from the extensive territories of their splendid domination’).³ In Tennyson’s palace the tapestries, paintings and stained glass make up a visual inventory of the contents of this mind, but in the version of the poem first published in his *Poems* of 1833 (it was heavily revised for its publication in the *Poems* of 1842: the earlier text can be recovered from Ricks’ edition of Tennyson’s poems) what impresses most about the character of this mind is how everything exists in it higgledy-piggledy. The stained glass windows, for example, seem over-crowded:

And in the sunpierced Oriel’s coloured flame
Immortal Michael Angelo
Looked down, bold Luther, largebrowed Verulam,
The king of those who know.

Cervantes, the bright face of Calderon,
Robed David touching holy strings,
The Halicarnasseän, and alone,
Alfred, the flower of kings,

Isaiah with fierce Ezekiel,
Swarth Moses by the Coptic sea,
Plato, Petrarca, Livy, and Raphaël,
And Eastern Confutzee.

There may be an attempt here at cultural comprehensiveness, but the selection seems merely random. It recalls the tables at Vivian-place in which the products of ‘every clime and age’ are displayed:

Jumbled together, celts and calumets,
Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava, fans
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,
Laborious orient ivory in sphere,
The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-clubs
From the isles of palm.

(*The Princess* (1847), ‘Prologue’,
17–22)

Hallam suggested finding a place in the Palace for Goethe, and Tennyson himself considered adding Pyrrho, Averröes, Virgil, and Cicero, but however many the additions it would still resemble a curiosity shop rather than

4 *Reading Victorian Poetry*

a museum, and the effect would remain Cole Porterish rather than studiously encyclopaedic:

You're the top! You're the Coliseum.
You're the top! You're the Louvre Museum.
You're the melody from a symphony by Strauss.
You're a Bendel bonnet,
A Shakespeare sonnet,
You're Mickey Mouse!

The stained glass windows offer the Soul pictures of Cervantes and Livy, not their works. What she relishes is culture reduced to a series of illustrations, as in a child's picture book. But even this seems at times too substantial to suit her taste. She often prefers to sit on a dais that offers her a perspective from which the pictures dissolve into a play of many-coloured light: 'rose, amber, emerald, blue / Flushed in her temple and her eyes' (169–70). At moments like this the palace is like a kaleidoscope, fragmenting and multiplying impressions until the world is reduced to a pattern of colour. The palace only pretends to be the Soul's university, and pretends so even less successfully than the foundation established by Tennyson's Ida in *The Princess*. The Soul delights in it not because she wants to learn anything, but because its contents are so varied that she is able to find something to match 'every mood / And change of [her] still soul' (59–60).

The Soul is one of a succession of enclosed maidens in early poems by Tennyson, taking her place beside Mariana enclosed in her moated grange, the sleeping beauty enclosed in years-long slumber, and Oenone secluded within her Idalian valley. Lionel Stevenson surmises that all of these women derive from Shelley's 'To a Skylark' in which the bird reminds the poet of a 'high-born maiden' enclosed in 'a palace tower' as well as 'a poet hidden / In the light of thought.'⁴ But what kind of poet does Tennyson's Soul put one in mind of? She is first of all, to borrow a distinction made by Hallam in a review of Tennyson's *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* of 1830, a poet of sensation rather than reflection. For the poets of sensation, for Keats, Shelley, and Tennyson, 'so vivid was the delight attending the simple exertions of eye and ear, that it became mingled more and more with their trains of active thought, and tended to absorb their whole being into the energy of sense.' Tennyson, Hallam insists, bears 'no more resemblance to Byron or Scott, Shelley or Coleridge, than to Homer or Calderon, Firdúsí, or Calidasa,' but the form of the claim, by so clearly recalling a window in the Palace of Art that Tennyson had neglected to describe, contradicts its

substance. Poets of sensation emerge, Hallam admits, only when the ‘first raciness and juvenile vigor of literature’ has vanished, ‘never to return’. But in losing its juvenile vigour, literature has gained a history. ‘The energy of sense’ that Hallam celebrates in the new school is generated less by the objects represented in the poems than by the thick literary medium through which they are glimpsed. If the senses of the poets of sensation ‘told them a richer and ampler tale than most men could understand’,⁵ then the principal reason was that they had read more poems. Tennyson’s *Soul* in 1832 feasts herself

With piles of flavourous fruits in basket-twine
Of gold, upheaped, crushing down
Musk-scented blooms – all taste – grape, gourd or pine –
In bunch, or single-grown –

But the flavours of these fruit are very evidently intensified by the Keatsian medium through which they are seen (compare, for example, the spread prepared by Porphyro for Madeleine in *The Eve of St Agnes* (1820).

Christopher Ricks finds sources for Tennyson’s *Palace* in *Ecclesiastes*, in *Luke*, in George Herbert’s ‘The World’, in Bacon’s *Advancement of Learning*, George Sandys’s *Travels*, Sir William Jones’s *The Palace of Fortune*, and in three poems by Shelley, but it is a poem so literary that the list might be extended almost indefinitely. The quatrain that Tennyson uses in which two ten syllable lines are separated by a line of eight syllables before the stanza closes with a six syllable line suggests that this is a poem that has its origin in the library as much as in life. It is the stanza of Henry Vaughan’s ‘They are all gone into the world of light’. Christopher Ricks believes that the stanza was ‘independently developed’ by Tennyson, an entirely reasonable supposition given that Vaughan’s poem was not reprinted until the 1840s, but *The Palace of Art* is dedicated to Richard Chenevix Trench, and it is surely more than a coincidence that in the summer of 1831, shortly before returning to Cambridge where he met Tennyson for the first time, Trench wrote of his ‘especial desire’ to read Vaughan’s poems.⁶ Tennyson himself might well have been irritated by any suggestion that he borrowed his stanza from Vaughan. ‘They allow me nothing,’ he complained to H.D. Rawnsley of his critics, and illustrated his point by adducing a celebrated line from ‘Ulysses’, ‘The deep / Moans round with many voices’ (54–5): “‘The deep”, Byron; “moans”, Horace; “many voices”, Homer; and so on.”⁷ Tennyson, far more intricately than

6 Reading Victorian Poetry

Vaughan, exploits the rhythmic possibilities of the stanza. He seems especially interested in finding how many metrical variations he can devise for the stanza's short final line. The effects are often very fine, as in the desert landscape:

One seemed all dark and red – a tract of sand,
And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
Lit with a low large moon.

(65–8)

The metre is adjusted to the sense so exquisitely that the attention is seized less by the scenery than the display of metrical skill. But, as so often in Tennyson, the display is not empty: it carries the poem's meaning. It is one of the principal ways in which Tennyson tempts his readers to imitate the Soul by responding to the world as if it was offered to them simply for their fastidious aesthetic contemplation.

This all seems very unlike the other most celebrated Victorian poet, Robert Browning, the rough texture of whose verse was from the first contrasted with Tennyson's smoothness, not least by Tennyson himself ('He can conceive of grand dramatic situations, but where's the music?'⁸). But Browning too focuses attention on his metrical effects even when these are quite different from Tennyson's. He draws attention, for example, to the doggerel movement of *Christmas-Eve* (1850) as assertively as Tennyson focuses attention on the silky movement of his quatrains in *The Palace of Art* (like Tennyson in *Locksley Hall*, Browning finds in the railway the most powerful emblem of modernity):

A tune was born in my head last week,
Out of the thump-thump and shriek-shriek
Of the train, as I came by it, up from Manchester;
And when, next week, I take it back again,
My head will sing to the engine's clack again,
While it only makes my neighbour's haunches stir,
– Finding no dormant musical sprout
In him, as in me, to be jolted out.

(249–56)

Browning asks his reader to relish a rhythm made out of the 'engine's clack', which reminds us that just as much as Tennyson, he needed to

fabricate his style. He set about it very much in the manner of his own Sordello engaged in the task that Dante would complete of inventing a new language for vernacular Italian poetry. Sordello ‘slow re-wrought’ the language of poetry, ‘welding words into the crude / Mass from the new speech round him, till a rude / Armour was hammered out’ (*Sordello*, 2, 574–7). This seems a self-conscious reflection by Browning on the manner in which he had forged his own poetic style, but the analogy is pointed by the contrast. Sordello in Mantua at the beginning of the thirteenth century stands at the very beginning of a poetic tradition: Browning, in a poem that he published in 1840, looks at Sordello through the long expanse of literary history that has intervened between them, a literary history that includes, for example, all the Elizabethan and Jacobean drama that was so important to Browning when he set about hammering out his own style.

It was sly of Tennyson to choose that particular quotation from ‘Ulysses’ when he wanted to mock scholarly source hunters, ‘the deep / Moans round with many voices’. He chose it surely because it is so unmistakably Tennysonian. Robert Douglas Fairhurst traces the line back to the stanza of *The Palace of Art* comparing the Soul to a traveller who ‘A little before moon-rise hears the low / Moan of an unknown sea,’ (279–80) and forward to the ‘moanings of the homeless sea’ of the 1850 *In Memoriam* (XXXV, 9), the ‘phantom circle of a moaning sea’ in *The Passing of Arthur* of 1869 (87), and ‘the waves that moan about the world’ in *Demeter and Persephone* (63), a poem published in 1889, just three years before Tennyson’s death.⁹ When John Churton Collins classed Tennyson amongst the ‘essentially imitative poets’, and supported the claim by adducing sources, classical, Italian, or English, for many of his most famous passages, Collins stood revealed, Tennyson told Edmund Gosse, as ‘a louse upon the locks of literature’. But Collins claimed that Tennyson’s was a trait common to all literatures ‘at a certain point in their development.’ Tennyson and his contemporaries had ‘inherited the splendours of Greece, of Rome, of Italy, and of the illustrious dynasties of English genius.’ They were, in a phrase that Collins courteously borrowed from Tennyson himself, ‘the heirs of all the ages’ (*Locksley Hall*, 178), which made it inevitable that their poems should be admirable for their refinement rather than their originality.¹⁰ Isobel Armstrong makes a similar point when she describes Victorian poetry as ‘overwhelmingly secondary’ in its character.¹¹ The Victorian poet, it seems, is as enclosed in the history of literature as is Tennyson’s Soul in her palace, and like the Soul, the belated poets of

the nineteenth century took their colour from the masterpieces of the past that they moved amongst. But the violence of Tennyson's response to such suggestions is an index of the very high value that was attached in the period to originality.

Victorian poetry may be 'overwhelmingly secondary', but style, many Victorians believed, should express the individual personality of the poet. In consequence much Victorian poetry has a paradoxical character of the kind nicely exemplified in the career of Robert Browning. So much of his poetry is dramatic in character, as if he were entirely willing to speak in the voices of others, and yet Browning manufactures, like his own *Sordello*, and like other Victorian poets such as Swinburne and Christina Rossetti and Hopkins, a poetic manner startlingly and unmistakably idiosyncratic. As the passage from *Sordello* suggests, Victorian poetic styles tend to be forged rather than found, and one result is that the poetic styles so energetically developed often seem like performances, as if poets had found their own voices when they had shown themselves to be their own best impersonators. When Everard Hall, the poet of Tennyson's *Morte d'Arthur* reads, 'mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,' ('The Epic', 50) Tennyson, although he probably wrote the poem in 1837–8, before he was thirty, is already so aware of himself as a Tennysonian poet that he could make a quiet joke of it ('He is', Hopkins wrote of Tennyson in a revealing joke, 'one must see it, what we used to call Tennysonian'¹²). Swinburne more flamboyantly ended his volume of parodies, *The Heptalogia* (1880) with 'Nephelidia', in which he contrives the most accomplished Victorian parody of his own poetic manner, singing from 'the depth of the dreamy decline of the dawn through a notable nimbus of nebulous moonshine' (1). In 'Poeta Loquitur' (published posthumously in 1918) he matches this achievement by launching an attack on his own verse that effortlessly outdoes even his most belligerent critics such as Robert Buchanan:

Mad mixtures of Frenchified offal
 With insults to Christendom's creed,
 Blind blasphemy, schoolboylike scoff, all
 These blazon me blockhead indeed.
 (25–8)

Tennyson's Soul wanders through her Palace, the rooms of which are 'fitted to every mood / And change of [her] still soul'. Nothing in the palace or in its accoutrements impinges on her perfect self-absorption. And yet

there is also a sense in which the Soul has no self, existing only in so far as she reflects the objects that she moves amongst, 'a manyfacèd glass'. These might seem antithetical, if equally disturbing, ways of figuring the artist's role, and the poets of the century seem to oscillate between them. Browning, for example, introducing in 1852 a volume of newly discovered letters by Shelley (the letters, it later emerged, were forged), was driven to ponder the relationship between the person of the poet and the character of the poems, and came to the conclusion that there were two quite different kinds of poet. There were objective poets whose work was wholly independent of their personalities, and subjective poets whose work was inexplicable unless read as an expression of those personalities. Browning imagined that a perfect poet might combine the qualities of both, rather as Aristotle had imagined that the same dramatist might excel in both tragedy and comedy. It was clearly the ambition that he harboured for himself, but the essay leaves it unclear quite how the two poetic characters might be reconciled.¹³

For most of its length *The Palace of Art* describes the galleries through which the Soul wanders. The organizational problem that seems most to exercise Tennyson is the question of where each stanza will show best, where it might most effectively be hung. In 1833, for example, the stanza describing the 'maid-mother', the Virgin with child, was daringly followed by a Venus, but Tennyson seems quickly to have decided that this arrangement was vulgar. In a version of the poem preserved in the Heath manuscript he inserts a stanza on the Magi, before allowing the Virgin to find her counterpart in another virgin, the traitress Tarpeia, and in 1842 we glide from the 'maid-mother' to Saint Cecily before we encounter a 'group of Houris' gracefully preparing to solace a 'dying Islamite'. The hanging decisions are usually intelligent, and yet they remain provisional. It would be rash to claim that any version of the poem achieved finality. Tennyson's decisions as to which stanzas to include and which to exclude from the poem seem equally casual. The poem's earliest readers, Tennyson's Cambridge friends, felt free to offer their advice. Hallam wrote to Tennyson: 'I hear that Tennant has written to dissuade you from publishing Kriemhilt, Tarpeia, and Pendragon. Don't be humbugged, they are very good.'¹⁴ In 1832 even the reader of the printed text is allowed to participate in this exercise. Tennyson includes notes in which he gives supplementary stanzas, inviting the reader to judge whether room should have been found for them in the printed poem. He admits into his poem a circumstantial description of

the architecture of the palace, and yet the poem that results serves only to underwrite Arnold's charge that contemporary poetry lacked the architectonic power that for him was most powerfully embodied in the Greek drama. Tennyson seems to have made the poem piecemeal, as he made *In Memoriam* and as he made his *Idylls of the King*. But in this he was, as Arnold allowed, the true representative of the century's poetry, even of Arnold's own.

The Palace of Art ends when description is replaced by narrative. The Soul's life of luxuriant ease breeds self-loathing, her solitude leaves her shrieking for very loneliness: 'No voice breaks through the stillness of this world' (259). She bitterly repents the life she has lived in the Palace: "Make me a cottage in the vale," she said, / "Where I may mourn and pray." (291–2) It seemed to John Sterling, a close associate of Tennyson's, a regrettable instance of monkish asceticism:

The writer's doctrine seems to be that the soul, while by its own energy surrounding itself with all the most beautiful and expressive images that the history of mankind has produced, and sympathising with the world's best thought, is perpetrating some prodigious moral offence for which it is bound to repent in sackcloth and ashes.¹⁵

The poem ends by repudiating the 'beautiful and expressive images' that make up the greater part of the poem. It is a gesture that several of Tennyson's contemporaries repeated. One thinks of Arnold devoting so much of the preface to his *Poems* of 1853 to an explanation of why he had chosen to exclude from the volume the major poem that he had published only the previous year, *Empedocles on Etna*, or Elizabeth Barrett ending *Aurora Leigh* (1857) by allowing her heroine to acknowledge the limitations of her masterpiece, a poem that is clearly very like *Aurora Leigh*. Hopkins's anxiety that his priestly and his poetic vocations might be incompatible is obviously a special case, and yet his anxiety, as the self-loathing of Tennyson's Soul suggests, was not as idiosyncratic as might be assumed. But *The Palace of Art* is not quite so conflicted as a summary of its plot suggests. The Soul delights in her palace, and loathes it, and leaves it, with an impartial gusto. The sequence of her actions mimes a moral progress, but our understanding of the import of her gestures is at every stage diverted into an appreciation of their charming, charade-like theatricality. It is somehow entirely appropriate that even the account of how the Soul is stricken by self-contempt yields a landscape as hauntingly

beautiful as any hung in the palace's picture galleries. The Soul comes to see herself as

A still salt pool, locked in with bars of sand,
Left on the shore; that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from the land
Their moon-led waters white.

(249–52)

It is, as John Sterling would say, a beautiful and expressive image, a memory of the Lincolnshire coast near which Tennyson grew up, but a memory so vivid that it slips the lead of the solemn moral truth that it seems intended to figure. In the introductory lines presenting the poem to Trench, Tennyson describes it as 'a sort of allegory' carrying the moral that 'Beauty, Good, and Knowledge, are three sisters' that 'never can be sundered without tears'. But in the poem that follows the sisters seem strangers to one another. As John Sterling rather stiffly points out, the poem's beauty seems almost wholly disconnected from the knowledge that it is supposed to impart.

The Palace of Art was prompted, Tennyson recalls, by Trench's remark, 'Tennyson, we cannot live in art.' It is the lesson learned in the poem by the Soul, but when she abandons her palace for prayer and a cottage, she asks that the Palace not be demolished:

Yet pull not down my palace towers, that are
So lightly, beautifully built:
Perchance I may return with others there
When I have purged my guilt.

(293–6)

The Soul's repudiation of the palace and of the life that she has lived there seems less than wholehearted. There may be an implication that the pleasures that the Palace offers are guilty only if their enjoyment is solitary. Tennyson described the poem as 'the embodiment of [his] own belief that the Godlike life is with man and for man,'¹⁶ but it seems more appropriately described as the embodiment of his own radical uncertainty as to what the poet's civic responsibilities might be. A letter from J.W. Blakesley offered Tennyson naively robust encouragement to step forward as a social commentator:

The present race of monstrous opinions and feelings which pervade the age require the arm of a strong Iconoclast A volume of poetry written in a

proper spirit, a spirit like that which a vigorous mind induces by the study of Wordsworth and Shelley, would be, at the present juncture, the greatest benefit the world could receive. And more benefit would accrue from it than from all the exertions of the Jeremy Benthamites and Millians, if they were to continue for ever and a day.¹⁷

Blakesley's reference is presumably to James Mill. His son, John Stuart Mill, took a rather different view. He distinguished writing addressed directly to its reader, writing that he termed eloquence, from poetry, which, he suggested, its reader only ever overheard.¹⁸ *The Palace of Art* does not choose unequivocally between the two kinds of writing, and it is precisely in its equivocations that it exemplifies a good deal of the century's poetry. It is a poem, like the two other museum poems that I will discuss in this chapter, preoccupied and puzzled by the relationship that poets should establish with their societies.

Tennyson's *Palace* accommodates an imaginary exhibition space (although the palace's architecture, as has often been noticed, is loosely based on Tennyson's Cambridge college, Trinity). D.G. Rossetti's, 'The Burden of Nineveh', a poem that he began in 1850, first published in the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* in 1856, and revised for its inclusion in the *Poems* of 1870, is set on the steps of the British Museum. The museum's impressive neoclassical façade looking onto Great Russell Street was completed only in 1848, and the main gates and forecourt still later, in 1852. But for Rossetti, despite the ongoing building work, it is a space almost as distant from the 'London dirt and din' (7) as Tennyson's palace:

In our Museum galleries
To-day I lingered o'er the prize
Dead Greece vouchsafes to living eyes, —
Her Art for ever in fresh wise
From hour to hour rejoicing me.

(1-5)

Greek art is at once 'for ever' and 'fresh', a thought that establishes Rossetti as the heir not only of classical sculptors, but of English poets. He has been lingering, as Keats had before him, over the Elgin marbles, and has been taught the lesson that Keats rehearses in his 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' (1820), that the paradoxical power of art is that it may be at once in time and out of it, 'For ever panting, and for ever young'. But that is how

Rossetti began his poem in 1870. In 1856, in its first printing in the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, the contents of the Museum had inspired less reverence, and Rossetti had scarcely lingered. He stays only an hour:

I have no taste for polyglot:
At the Museum 'twas my lot,
Just once, to jot and blot and rot
In Babel for I know not what.
I went at two, I left at three.

(1-5)

The contents of the Museum in mid-century were even more chaotically eclectic than the contents of Tennyson's Palace. It was, for William Cobbett, 'the old curiosity shop'.¹⁹ For Rossetti in 1856 it seems a cacophonous Tower of Babel. The museum's main staircase, for example, was dominated by three stuffed giraffes. The museum had its origin in the decision to purchase Sir Hans Sloane's collections for the nation in 1753, collections which, Horace Walpole observed, were highly valued by 'anybody who loves hippopotamuses, sharks with one ear, and spiders as big as geese' (the animals were not removed to the newly built Natural History Museum until the 1880s).²⁰ In the poorly lit reading room (construction of the great circular Reading Room did not begin until 1854) scholars were far outnumbered by novel readers, all the museum's British antiquities were displayed in four cases in a single room, and the treasures unearthed by Sir Austin Henry Layard in his Assyrian excavations, amongst them the 'wingèd beast from Nineveh' (10) that Rossetti witnessed as it was being hoisted up the museum's steps, were first displayed, for lack of space, in the basement.

In 1856 the Museum had not impressed Rossetti as offering any kind of haven from the city streets outside. Once the Assyrian bull-god is installed, the 'kind of light' that falls on it will be the light that 'London takes the day to be':

Here cold-pinch'd clerks on yellow days
Shall stop and peer; and in sun-haze
Shall clergy crimp their eyes to gaze;
And misses titter in their stays
Just fresh from 'Layard's Nineveh'.

(66-70)

Layard's dashing account of his excavations, *Nineveh and its Remains* (1848–9), became a best-seller. Layard succeeded in making the ancient history of Assyria a nineteenth-century craze. In a rather similar way, despite its Ionic façade, Sir Robert Smirke's museum was an emphatically Victorian building, equipped with revolving doors (in 1870, as Rossetti leaves, he makes 'the swing-door spin' (8)). Even for the serious students of the antique who take their lunch there, art is not a joy for ever so much as a branch of the fashion industry. In their lunchtime conversations 'Art' is 'slang'd o'er cheese and hunch' (72) (a hunch is a thick slice, a hunk, of bread), and the conversation centres on the attack on the Royal Academy by Rossetti and his associates, the self-named Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood:

Whether the great R.A.'s a bunch
Of gods or dogs, and whether Punch
Is right about the P.R.B.

(73–5)

Art in such conversations is emphatically not 'for ever': it is simply material for the gossip of the day. In the 1870 version of the poem, the Museum is presented more respectfully, but traces of the 1856 irreverence are preserved. Rossetti, for example, still imagines the Assyrian sculpture viewed by 'school-foundations in the act / Of holiday' (a devastatingly precise turn of phrase) who will vaguely connect it with popular anti-Catholic sentiment,

As a fact
Connected with that zealous tract:
'Rome, – Babylon and Nineveh'.

(78–80)

What clinches the joke here is that Rossetti himself will choose at the last not to look at the Assyrian bull-god as he looked at the museum's Greek sculpture, alert to its capacity to be at once 'fresh' and 'for ever', but with a gaze that more closely resembles the stupefied gaze of those schoolchildren as they are guided by their teachers through the Museum's galleries in their regimented crocodiles.

In 1870 Rossetti begins by offering his tribute to the art of Greece, but he does so in a stanza that decisively links his poem not with the Elgin marbles or a Grecian urn, but with the strange, grotesque 'wingèd beast' that, as he leaves the Museum, is being hoisted in. The proper comparison here is with the graceful 10-line stanzas of Keats's odes, 'Ode on a Grecian

Urn' or 'Ode to a Nightingale', in which an interlocking quatrain is followed by some variation on the sestet of an Italian sonnet. Keats's metre is equally graceful: the iambic pentameters may be clipped to a trimeter, 'And leaden-eyed despairs', or overflow into an alexandrine, 'And with thee fade away into the forest dim' ('Ode to a Nightingale', 28 and 20). Rossetti's ten-line stanza is unvaryingly octosyllabic, so that it is always threatening to break into the scamper of the opening lines in 1856, 'Just once, to jot and blot and rot' (3). The stanza consists of two groups of four rhyming lines inexpertly sewn together by rhyming the fifth with the final, tenth line, which, inevitably, given that each stanza ends with the word 'Nineveh', is an approximate rather than a full rhyme. It is like the stanza of a Keats ode caricatured by a hostile critic, and its effect is decisively to align Rossetti's poem not with the Greek sculpture that he has just been lingering over, but with the grotesque Assyrian bull that is being carried into the museum as he makes his exit. The poem has its origin in the event that Rossetti witnessed and in the stanza that he fashioned to record it. That stanza was already established in the poem's very earliest draft, two stanzas dating, William Rossetti recalled, from 1850 (they became the fifth and sixth stanzas of the poem in 1870). The stanzas describe the shadow that the beast casts, a shadow so dark that it admits '[n]o light, no shade', and so unvarying that it is 'shed the same' on London streets as it had been on the streets of 'Sardanapalus' Nineveh'. Greek art is a joy for ever because it has the power from hour to hour to rejoice the human spirit 'in fresh wise'. The 'wingèd beast' from Assyria seems its antithesis: the shadow it casts is unchanging and impenetrable.

Whereas Greek art frees the imagination, Assyrian art seems to mark its limit. It is as inscrutable as Blake's 'Tyger' (1794). Blake had asked, 'In what distant deeps or skies / Burnt the fire of thine eyes', and Rossetti echoes him: 'Ah! In what quarries lay the stone / From which this pigmy pile has grown' (91-2). Rossetti responds to the question, unlike Blake, by trying to domesticate the statue. The print that the statue still bears of its 'first rush-wrapping' prompts questions that recall the questions prompted in Keats by the Grecian Urn and the questions evoke forms of worship much like those that Keats imagines his Psyche deprived of:

What song did the brown maidens sing,
From purple mouths alternating
When that was woven languidly?

(23-5)

Keats's 'pale-mouthed prophet dreaming' becomes the Assyrian priests who '[y]earned pale in bitter ecstasy' (85). But the statue has a recalcitrant strangeness that refuses to be appropriated in this way:

A human face the creature wore,
And hoofs behind and hoofs before,
And flanks with dark runes fretted o'er.
'Twas bull, 'twas mitred Minotaur,
A dead disbowelled mystery.

(11–5)

Those runes are not translatable into Rossetti's Keatsian idiom. The shadow cast by the statue remains darkly obscure.

In the version of the poem published in 1856, Rossetti describes the beast as the 'elder' of any god of Greece, or Egypt, or Rome, prompting his brother to object that 'Egyptian civilization and art are far *older* than Ninevite'. Rossetti made the correction in his 1870 revision, and yet it is a revealing mistake. In 1856 Rossetti had whimsically imagined brown maidens singing from their purple mouths as the 'colour'd Arab straw-matting / Half-ripp'd' (21–2) was woven in which the beast was wrapped for the voyage that took it from the banks of the Euphrates to London. In 1870 the matting has impressed its pattern on the beast's flanks, so that there is no need to imagine a rush mat surviving through the centuries. But it remains a poem about the collapsing together of different times, a poem appropriate to the new British Museum, in which classical architecture is reproduced in an otherwise entirely modern building, and to the moment that the poem records, in which the winged beast casts on London stones the selfsame shadow that it had cast centuries before on the courts of Nineveh. A very similar conceit brings the poem to an end. Rossetti imagines London itself become, like Nineveh, an archaeological site and the 'Great Bull', disinterred again by Australasian excavators who will view it as 'a relic now / of London, not of Nineveh!' (179–80) At once the statue, its flanks fretted with 'dark runes' that had resisted Rossetti's best attempts to read them, becomes all too legible:

Those heavy wings spread high,
So sure of flight, which do not fly;
That set gaze never on the sky ...

(192–4)

Rossetti is reduced to a single, troubled question: ‘O Nineveh was this thy God, – / Thine also, mighty Nineveh?’ (199–200) The statue becomes fraught with meaning, but only when Rossetti stops looking at it as a work of art, and agrees to understand it simply as a symptom of the society that produced it, as a commodity rather like the ‘corpulent, straggling epergne’ that graces Mr Podsnap’s dining table in Chapter XI of Dickens’s *Our Mutual Friend*, and so perfectly embodies his philosophy of life that all his dinner guests feel as if it is being thrust down their throat with every morsel they eat. One impulse common amongst Victorian poets was to insist, just as stridently as the poets of the 1930s, that poets choose their subject matter from the here and now. It is a demand rehearsed robustly by Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her own aggressively modern epic, *Aurora Leigh*:

Nay, if there’s room for poets in this world
A little overgrown (I think there is),
Their sole work is to represent the age,
Their age, not Charlemagne’s,— this live, throbbing age,
That brawls, cheats, maddens, calculates, aspires,
And spends more passion, more heroic heat,
Betwixt the mirrors of its drawing-rooms,
Than Roland with his knights at Roncesvalles.

(*Aurora Leigh*, 5, 200–7)

But it countered another impulse, often, even for Elizabeth Barrett Browning, just as strong, to define poetry by its distance from the modern world, which might be an imaginative distance as in ‘The Palace of Art’ or a historical distance as in ‘The Burden of Nineveh’. Those poems, like Rossetti’s, in which the far off and the here and now collide seem especially characteristic.

The treasures that Layard excavated from Nineveh and transported to the British Museum inspired the Nineveh Court in the Crystal Palace when it opened in 1854, after being transported from Hyde Park where the building had housed the Great Exhibition. John Davidson would not have inspected the reproductions of Layard’s bull-gods when he visited the Palace in 1905 in the company of Max Beerbohm, and commemorated the event in a poem, because the Nineveh Court had been destroyed by fire on December 30, 1866, and was not rebuilt. Tennyson’s Palace is built according to an architecture of the mind. The British Museum was designed by Robert Smirke, the leading neoclassical architect of his day.

The Crystal Palace by contrast was less a product of architecture than of engineering. In its first incarnation it had been erected in Hyde Park at a speed and at a cost possible only because it was constructed from factory-made, endlessly reproducible parts. It was the brainchild of Joseph Paxton, who brought to the task his experience of designing the great conservatory at Chatsworth. Tennyson's Palace expresses an idea of culture as the possession of the individual, the enclosed Soul, but the Soul is already conscious that its enjoyments might be construed as self-indulgent. She dreams, after she abandons the building, that she might one day return to it with 'others'. When the British Museum was opened for the first time on a public holiday, on Easter Monday, 1837, it attracted 23 895 visitors, an impressive number but one that shrinks into insignificance beside the six millions who bought tickets for the Crystal Palace in the six months in 1851 when it housed the Great Exhibition. These are crude figures but they point to one of the most significant stories of the nineteenth century, the story of the democratization of culture, made possible by national education, restricted working hours, and the provision of public libraries, museums and galleries. It is a process that Tennyson seems to look forward to in 'The Palace of Art' and still more in the 1840s when he wrote *The Princess* in which the tale of the foundation of a university for women is framed by an account of a Mechanics' Institute fete in the gardens of a country house. Almost a quarter of a century later, Rossetti seems conscious only of his difference from his fellow visitors to the Museum, the 'cold-pinch'd clerks', the minor clergy crimping their eyes at the exhibits, and the 'misses' tittering 'in their stays'. Even when he revised his poem for its 1870 publication he insisted on the difference between his own response to the museum's treasures, and the dim responses of the compact files of schoolchildren three abreast. The great majority of the poets of the century failed to benefit from the new mass readership that supported the earnings of novelists such as Dickens and George Eliot. No doubt that economic discrepancy encouraged poets to cultivate a certain disdain for the popular, but they seem also to have felt a real anxiety. Joseph Paxton met successfully what must have seemed the all but impossible demand that he complete in nine months and at minimal cost a building six times the size of St Paul's by making his building from industrially produced sheets of plate glass and cast iron rods and girders. The anxiety was that the demands of the new reading public could be met only by writers just as willing to mechanise their methods of production. These are not fears one would have expected John Davidson to harbour when he visited the

Crystal Palace. He was after all a Scot, brought up in modest circumstances in Greenock, an unlovely industrial town on the Clyde,

where hammers clang
On iron hulls, and cranes in harbour creak
Rattle and swing, whole cargoes on their necks.
(‘A Ballad in Blank Verse’
(1894), 26–8)

But in ‘The Crystal Palace’ (1908) Davidson far outruns Rossetti in his disdain for the populace.

The poem begins abruptly, ‘Contraption, – that’s the bizarre, proper slang, / Eclectic word’ (1–2). ‘Contraption’ had once been a west-country dialect word. It only developed its modern sense in which it denotes an unadmired mechanical device during the nineteenth century. In the poem it is the just word for Hiram Maxim’s ‘captive flying machine’, a ‘portentous toy’ that had been erected outside the Crystal Palace in 1904, the year before Davidson’s visit. Maxim, best known for his invention of the Maxim gun that was to prove so effective in World War One, also experimented unsuccessfully with flying machines of which the captive flying machine was a by-product. The decline from the dream of powered flight to the provision of sophisticated fairground rides (in 1904 captive flying machines were installed at Earl’s Court, Blackpool and Sydenham) is itself a neat indication of what happened when the Crystal Palace was moved from Hyde Park to its new site south of the river. The building designed to house the Great Exhibition, which had been planned by Prince Albert to illustrate how science and art might be applied to industrial purposes and to demonstrate to the world Britain’s technological supremacy, became when it was re-erected in Sydenham the world’s first theme park. More pertinently, Davidson’s opening line alerts the reader to the fact that his own poem is a contraption at least as bizarre as Hiram Maxim’s. The whole poem is written in a ‘bizarre, proper slang’ that finds its proper emblem in Maxim’s flying machine, or, as the poem later describes it (Tibetans have been imagined to mistake the machine for an advanced kind of prayer wheel), ‘the Tartar’s volant oratory’ (67). The poet attempts to fix the flying machine as the object of his derision, but contrives somehow to manufacture a phrase so strange that it resembles the machine more persuasively than it mocks it.

In ‘The Burden of Nineveh’ chronology puckers: an Assyrian shadow falls on London stone. Something similar seems to happen in ‘The Crystal

Palace'. The building still seemed aggressively modern even in 1905. It is 'a shed / Intended for a palace' that recalls the 'fossil of a giant myriapod' (21–3). The thought is suggested, perhaps, by the Palace's Dinosaur Court that housed the first dinosaur sculptures in the world. But for Davidson the building itself is like a fossil because it seems independent of time: it resembles the prehistoric because it is posthistoric:

no mood
 Can make your glass and iron beautiful.
 Colossal ugliness may fascinate
 If something be expressed; and time adopts
 Ungainliest stone and brick and ruins them
 To beauty; but a building lacking life,
 A house that must not mellow or decay? –
 'Tis nature's outcast.

(28–35)

On the face of it, nothing could be more distant from the austere simplicity of Paxton's architecture than the style of Davidson's poem that so consistently calls attention to itself by its sheer oddity. Davidson, it is true, freely admits technical terms, a crustacean's 'gannoid skeleton' (18) (the word is more usually spelt ganoid), a mason's 'ashlar' (38), which might bring his poem into alignment with a building in which architecture is so firmly subordinated to engineering. The difference is that Davidson's technical terms are decorative, constituting not so much a rejection as a parodic reinstatement of poetic diction. A slice of lemon, for example, becomes a 'starred bisection' (193). Paxton's was a democratic building, suspicious of replicating the hierarchical spatial orders of conventional architecture (though these are not wholly avoided). The primary function of Davidson's diction, by contrast, is to secure his distance from the crowd, the mob, that, in Davidson's idiolect are denied even the tiny distinction of a definite article, 'here's crowd, here's mob' (42), 'For this is Mob, unhappy locust-swarm' (132), 'Crowd; Mob; a blur of faces featureless / Of forms inane' (144–5). Rossetti's amused detachment from the typical museum visitor has hardened into a fierce, proto-Modernist disdain. Davidson looks more sympathetically, perhaps, at the flush on the cheeks of the young slum-dwellers with their '[t]orn coats and ragged dresses' (91) as they cling together on the dance floor, 'solemn youths / Sustaining ravished donahs!' (86–7). He even borrows from them the vocabulary that he uses to describe them. 'Donahs' is a slang term for sweethearts that

derives from the Spanish or Portuguese and seems to have been first introduced by circus people. But Davidson accommodates such words within a syntax that maintains by its formality his distance from the dancers. So too do his rhythms. Davidson made large claims for his versification ('I use blank verse newly as Wagner did music'), and what he most prided himself on was not writing verse at all likely to make his readers tap their feet: 'You can't sing-song my blank verse'.²¹

It seems odd that John Davidson, who had left the west of Scotland where he was an underpaid schoolteacher to become an impoverished journalist in London, whose most famous poem, 'Thirty Bob a Week', celebrates the unnoticed heroism of the underpaid clerk, should so far outdo Tennyson and Rossetti in his contempt for the people. He presents the Crystal Palace, in an unusually flat phrase, as the 'Victorian temple of commercialism' (14), which he defines as the antithesis of the temple of art in which he is himself a worshipper. But if he points the antithesis more stridently than Tennyson or Rossetti, that may be because he was still less able than them to secure a living by the practice of his art. The visitors to the Palace are 'wedged / So tightly' they can 'neither clap nor stamp' (285-6), and yet the library is almost empty: 'Three people in the silent Reading room / Regard us darkly as we enter' (293-4). It is a mordant comment on the place of literature in English cultural life at the beginning of the twentieth century. Davidson parades rather ostentatiously a power of aesthetic discrimination that the designers of the exhibitions have failed to match. They have placed side by side in the sculpture gallery reproductions of Cellini's Perseus and 'a stupid thing' by Canova (258-9), 'Verrochio's Coleone' (270) (the spelling of neither word is standard, and one wonders whether Davidson's connoisseurship is quite so assured as he pretends), and an 'absurd' equestrian statue by Clesinger (268-9). But such supposed lapses of taste mean nothing to the '[c]ourageous folk' who dance a cakewalk 'beneath / The brows of Michael Angelo's Moses' (290-2) (folk who may have lingered in the mind of T.S. Eliot, an admirer of Davidson, when his women come and go, talking of Michelangelo). Success is available in such a world only to those like the curate encountered in the deserted billiard room who 'undertakes / to entertain and not to preach' (238-9):

It's with the theatre and the music-hall,
Actor and artiste, the parson must compete.
(240-1)

The man of letters is in the same unhappy predicament, but Davidson clearly finds the curate's cynicism shocking (like many nineteenth-century atheists he can often seem more pious than any but the most devout believer). Artistic integrity, it seems, does not allow such compromises, but Davidson's relationship with the Palace and its other visitors is more complex than this suggests.

It is a society of consumers. For visitors to the Palace '[t]he business and the office of the day' is '[t]he eating and the drinking', and in this, if in little else, Davidson joins the crowd. He still claims to be distinguished by the refinement of his taste, but this becomes a disconcertingly literal claim when exemplified in his enjoyment of a grilled sole that he accompanies with a choice claret 'a decade old; not more' (203):

The delicate texture of the foam-white fish,
Evolving palatable harmony
That music might by happy chance express.
(197-9)

All that distinguishes him from the vulgar diners seems to be that he has, for once in his life at least, the funds to be choosier. The crowd is attracted to the Crystal Palace by the exhibits. Davidson signals his superiority by inspecting the crowd as if it was itself the most striking object in the exhibition. But the superiority that he claims is precarious. In the end, 'The Crystal Palace', like 'The Palace of Art' and 'The Burden of Nineveh' works to problematise rather than to define the relationship between poets and the people, or between art and society.

This book will offer an introduction to Victorian poetry, that is, to the poetry written in the years that separated Romanticism from the Modernist poetry that began to be written in the second decade of the twentieth century. The descriptive labels that I have used suggest one way in which it differs from the poetry that preceded and followed it. Romanticism and Modernism denote literary programmes as much as they denote literary periods, even if they were programmes never clearly agreed by those supposed to have established them, and even if literary scholars have disputed ever since how those programmes might best be defined. Victorian poetry, on the other hand, denotes only a period. It refers simply to the poetry written in the reign of a particular queen. It is a very long period. Victoria remains the longest-reigning British monarch, although it is a distinction that she seems likely soon to lose. I have selected the three

poems on which I have focused in this chapter in part because to move from one to the other calls attention to that long lapse of years. For Arthur Hallam, Tennyson is a member of the same poetic school as Keats and Shelley. When John Davidson looks at revellers dancing the cakewalk beneath a cast of Michelangelo's Moses, he seems almost contemporary with T.S. Eliot. Rossetti, on the other hand, may gaze at a relic of Nineveh that seems to mock the passage of time, but he gazes at it, especially in the first version of the poem, from an emphatically mid-century London pavement. The statue had only recently been unearthed by Henry Layard, and the topic of conversation amongst the students taking their lunch at the Museum is the challenge to the authority of the Royal Academy newly orchestrated by Rossetti and his friends. Another of my reasons for choosing the three poems is that they all describe collections remarkable for the heterogeneousness of their contents. The cultural museums represented in all three closely resemble curiosity shops, and in this they accurately figure the poetry of the period. One of my aims in the chapters that follow is to represent as best I can the sheer variety of Victorian poetry. But I want also to suggest some of the qualities that seem characteristic of Victorian poetry, or at least a large number of Victorian poems. Any one of these qualities might, I am aware, be located in poetry of other periods. It is their co-presence in so much of the period's poetry that underpins my claim that they are representative, but I advance all such claims only tentatively.

The variousness of Victorian poetry might itself, I want to suggest, be thought of as a distinctive Victorian quality, and not just because Victoria reigned for so long. Variety is predictable in the work of poets who had internalized, as earlier poets had not, the long history of English poetry, a history which was supplemented for most of them by poetry in a number of other languages both ancient and modern. This is a book about British poetry. Indeed, it is very largely a book about English poetry, but in the nineteenth century that term was already ambiguous, signifying either the poetry of a particular nation or the poetry written in a particular language. I have registered that second sense not only by including some Scottish and Irish poets, such as John Davidson in this chapter, but also by accepting that a poet such as Toru Dutt, born in Calcutta, might also be thought of as Victorian poet. I have even admitted American poems when it seemed appropriate. This is not because I wish to join my voice to those who have argued that Victorian poetry is best thought of as an Atlantic phenomenon, but because an interest in America is so characteristic of Victorian England and its poets. It was not just because of his family connections

with America that Arthur Hugh Clough was known as Yankee Clough. Claude, the hero of *Amours de Voyage*, his finest poem, is a very English figure who cannot be understood without reference to the great English institution, the University of Oxford, that produced him, and yet Clough's poem was first published in a Boston magazine, the *Atlantic Monthly*. There was no English edition in Clough's lifetime. G.K. Chesterton's *Robert Browning*, first published in 1903, is the first great study of a Victorian poet, and Chesterton insists on Browning's emphatic Englishness, but Chesterton does not think that Englishness compromised by Browning's many American friends, nor by the fact that his poems were for many years more widely read in America than in his own country, which is why it seems so natural that Chesterton, when selecting a poet with whom to compare him, should so often happen on Walt Whitman. There is surely no more English a Victorian novel than Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, and yet Hughes, when he selected the verse epigraphs with which he introduces his chapters, chose, as well as two quotations from Tennyson, two quotations from James Russell Lowell.

I have already suggested that the poems by Tennyson, Rossetti and Davidson seem all to imagine a vexed relationship between art and its consumers. All three poems seem to have had their origin in exclusive (and, as it happens, exclusively male) gatherings of the like-minded. 'The Palace of Art', long before it was published, was celebrated amongst Tennyson's closest university friends, almost all of whom were members of the select Cambridge society known as the Apostles. 'Only think of an "Apostolic" dinner next Friday', wrote James Spedding to another member. 'Only think of "The Palace of Art"'.²² Rossetti first published his poem in the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, so that it seemed a by-product of his exuberant collaboration with the magazine's editor, William Morris, and Burne Jones in the production of murals for the Oxford Union. Davidson's 'The Crystal Palace' is the outcome of a more unlikely meeting, between the alcoholic Scottish poet and the dandiacal Max Beerbohm. But the exclusivity of those meetings prompts all three poets to consider their relationship with the wider public. Tennyson's Soul is inspired to make a high-minded promise that if she returns to her palace it will be 'with others'. This seems very unlike John Davidson's blustering disdain for the populace ('For this is Mob, unhappy locust-swarm' (132)), but the two have in common and share with many poets of the century a preoccupation with their relationship with the anonymous public that read, but still more often did not read, their poems. All three poems

exemplify the odd collisions that so many Victorian poems effect between the present and the past, between the modern world and those vanished worlds with which the poems of the past have to do. The three poems seem to me representative of the century's poetry, too, in their self-consciousness, a self-consciousness evident in their verse forms, in their rhythms and in their diction as much as in their self-reflexiveness. It is the self-consciousness of Victorian poetry that I will turn to in my next chapter.

Endnotes

1. George Saintsbury, *A History of English Prosody*, 3 vols (London: Macmillan, 1910), 3, p. 351.
2. See Robert Cummings (1992) 'Tennyson, Trench, Tholuck and the "Oriental" Metre of *Locksley Hall*, *Translation and Literature*, 1, 127–33.
3. See Arthur Hallam, 'The Influence of Italian upon English Literature', collected in *The Writings of Arthur Hallam*, ed. T.H. Vail Motter (London: Oxford University Press, 1943), pp. 216 and 218.
4. See Lionel Stevenson, 'The "High-Born Maiden" Symbol in Tennyson', in *Critical Essays on the Poetry of Tennyson*, ed. John Killham (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960).
5. Arthur Hallam, 'On Some of the Characteristics of Modern Poetry, and on the Lyrical Poems of Alfred Tennyson'
6. Richard Chenevix Trench, *Letters and Memorials*, ed. Mary Chenevix Trench, 2 vols (London: Kegan Paul and Trench), 1, p. 93.
7. Quoted in *Tennyson: Interviews and Recollections*, ed. Norman Page (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1983), p. 71.
8. *Tennyson: Interviews and Recollections*, ed. Norman Page, p. 64.
9. Robert Douglas-Fairhurst, *Victorian Afterlives: The Shaping of Influence in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 6–8.
10. John Churton Collins (1880) 'A New Study of Tennyson', *Cornhill Magazine*, 41 (January), 36–50. Tennyson annotated the article indignantly.
11. Isobel Armstrong: *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics and Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 3.
12. *Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. Claude Colleer Abbott (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 219.
13. Browning's essay is reprinted in Robert Browning, *The Poems*, ed. John Pettigrew and Thomas J. Collins, 1, 999–1013.
14. *The Letters of Arthur Hallam*, ed. Jack Kolb (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1981), pp. 661–2.

26 *Reading Victorian Poetry*

15. *Tennyson: The Critical Heritage*, ed. John D. Jump (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 121.
16. Hallam Tennyson, *Alfred Lord Tennyson: A Memoir*, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1897), 1, pp. 118–9.
17. Hallam Tennyson, *Alfred Lord Tennyson: A Memoir*, 1, 68.
18. In ‘What is Poetry?’ (1833), *John Stuart Mill: Essays on Poetry*, ed. F. Parvin Sharpless (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1976), p. 12.
19. Quoted in J. Mordaunt Crook, *The British Museum* (London: Allen Lane, 1972), p. 62.
20. *Yale Edition of Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, ed. W.S. Lewis, 48 vols, 20 (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 358–9.
21. *The Poems of John Davidson*, ed. Andrew Turnbull (Edinburgh and London: Scottish Academic Press, 1973), p. xxxi.
22. Hallam Tennyson, *Alfred Lord Tennyson: A Memoir*, 1, 85.