

Introduction: 'Mr Popular Sentiment': Dickens and Feeling

Bethan Carney

Anthony Trollope's 1855 novel *The Warden* famously satirized his fellow novelist Charles Dickens as 'Mr Popular Sentiment'. This characterization was an early note in a chorus of critical condemnation of Dickens's use of sentiment that swelled in the late nineteenth century and grew ever louder in the twentieth. James Fitzjames Stephen, Justin McCarthy, Walter Bagehot, G. H. Lewes, and Aldous Huxley, among others, accused Dickens disparagingly of being a sentimentalist. And it is incumbent upon anyone writing about Dickens and feeling to mention Oscar Wilde's famous quip that 'one must have a heart of stone to read the death of Nell without laughing'.¹

In the last forty years or so, historical contextualization has made scholars more willing to understand, if not excuse, Dickens's sentimentality. Philip Collins charts the incursion of the eighteenth-century philosophy of sensibility into the nineteenth century through the cultural form of sentimentality, which then fell out of fashion in the mid-century. Collins attributes the rise and fall of nineteenth-century sentimentality to the rise and fall of Evangelicalism — a doctrine that prided itself on being a heartfelt religion rather than an intellectual one — and to the subjugation of emotions in the service of imperialism.² Fred Kaplan has also argued that Victorian sentimentality originated in eighteenth-century moral philosophy, which sought to locate moral actions in good feelings. Kaplan distinguishes between 'sensibility' as 'a state of psychological-physical responsiveness' and 'sentimentality' as 'the possession of innate moral sentiments', arguing that the man of sensibility (the 'man of feeling') evolved into the Romantic hero in retreat from the world and that the 'man of sentiment' became the Victorian hero inspired to do good through the exercise of his moral sentiments.³ So, although Little Nell and similar sentimental characters are often judged harshly according to the criteria of realism, this is to mistake their purpose. According to Kaplan, they were never intended to be realistic but were the agents of moral reformation, strengthening the readers' moral sentiments by arousing grief at their death. They worked in opposition to a growing rationalism, utilitarianism, and scientific materialism, which used the language of realism.⁴

The critical debate on Dickensian sentiment took a new direction in an issue of *19* on *Rethinking Victorian Sentimentality* which appeared in 2007.⁵ The essays in that issue

attempted to move scholars beyond a tepid acceptance of Victorian sentimentality through historical contextualization. They interrogated the suspicion with which sentimentality is often viewed and sought both to reclaim some of the enjoyment that readers may surreptitiously feel in sentimental works and to give sentimentality more critical credibility. Three essays in the collection reconsidered sentimentality in Dickens. Heather Tilley, focussing on the treatment of sight and blindness in the *Christmas Books*, showed how the use of these motifs embodied the eighteenth-century theory of the moral sentiments. Emma Mason reconsidered Dickensian sentimentality in the light of recent scientific research that stresses the indivisibility of thought and feeling. Such work shows that the division between cool rationality and hot-blooded emotion is far less clearly demarcated than critics have been wont to argue. Sally Ledger wrote about Dickens's 'affective mode', showing how Dickens used the conventions of melodrama to powerful effect, juxtaposing 'sentimental' scenes with grotesque and comic ones and drawing upon melodrama's stock characters to produce a 'realism of affect, rather than a representational realism'.⁶ The essays in *Rethinking Victorian Sentimentality* were a welcome corrective to traditional scholarly disdain for Dickensian feeling, although some manifestations of sentimentality have still not been fully rehabilitated in academic circles.⁷

The Manichean structure of nineteenth-century melodrama relies heavily upon the sentimental topoi of suffering children, ravished maidens, and afflicted mothers. And Dickens's complex melodramatic affect has become much more critically acceptable in recent years, largely due to critics such as Ledger and Juliet John, whose *Dickens's Villains: Melodrama, Character, Popular Culture* (2001) rereads Dickens's oeuvre through the cultural politics of melodrama.⁸ Their reappraisal of Dickensian melodrama forms part of a wider critical interest in melodramatic aesthetics.⁹ Sentimentality, however, has yet to achieve this critical interest or acceptability and, in popular culture, the word is often used simply as a term of abuse.¹⁰

This introduction considers how the hostility to Dickensian sentiment arose and argues that the pejorative associations that it acquired were principally political. By drawing attention to the way nineteenth-century critics of Dickens attack his class bias in favour of the poor while condemning his sentimentality and his humour, I argue that inspiring any strong emotion in the reader, laughter or tears, came to be viewed as problematic in books which charted systemic abuses and which were read by all classes of

society. Responding to Trollope's jibe, I suggest that it was Dickens's populism coupled with his popularity that caused his sentiment to be viewed as problematic.

I

Nineteenth-Century Responses to Dickensian Sentimentality

The hostility generated by Dickens's sentimentality in his critics of the 1850s onwards was extreme and, surely, disproportionate. However much the authors believed his representations of pathos to be overdone, inauthentic or insincere, the levels of anger aroused are mystifying. Furthermore, the hostility to the writing often segued into ad hominem assaults on his personality in a way that also requires some explanation. Such attacks on Dickens commonly focused on his emotionalism and a lack of 'educated' or 'refined' intelligence; and these qualities were frequently associated with femininity, childishness, and lower-class behaviour. These qualities were also commonly attributed to his readers. Occasionally it is hard to tell whether the negative focus is on the works, the author, or the audience, as the rhetoric elides the differences between them.

Perhaps the most virulent attack occurred in 1859, when the barrister and journalist Sir James Fitzjames Stephen described *A Tale of Two Cities* as 'puppy pie and stewed cat'. Continuing the culinary trope and extending it to encompass contagion, he wrote that Dickens had a 'system of cooking [...] [which] enabled him to infect the literature of his country with a disease which manifests itself in [...] repulsive symptoms'.¹¹ The offence that Stephen apparently felt at Dickens's novel manifested itself in turn in an extreme offensiveness. The *Saturday Review*, in which this criticism appeared, had a reputation for consistently hostile reviews but other contemporary reviewers of Dickens were almost as insulting.¹² This piece was just one shot in a barrage of criticism by Stephen who waged an extraordinary war of words against 'light literature' but principally against Dickens.¹³ A year earlier, Stephen wrote:

Mr Dickens was led by nature as much as by art to mix up a very strong dose of sentiment with his caricature. From first to last, he has tried about as much to make his readers cry as to make them laugh; and there is a very large section of the British Public — and especially of the younger, weaker, and more ignorant part of it — which considers these two functions as comprising the whole duty of novelists. [...] There is a sex in minds as well as in bodies, and Mr Dickens's literary progeny seem to us to be for the most part of the feminine gender.¹⁴

This review blends Dickens's nature, his art, and his readership. Just as his audience is held to be young, weak, and ignorant (presumably the 'weaker' part of the British public are the women, and the more ignorant the lower classes), so the books, Dickens's 'literary progeny', are characterized as feminine. Stephen also implies that Dickens himself is effeminate, when he says that Dickens was 'led by nature' to sentimentalize.

In a similar vein, Walter Bagehot, a political commentator and economist, wrote that Dickens was deficient in 'those masculine faculties [...] the reasoning understanding and firm far-seeing sagacity'. He continues:

[he had] an extreme sensibility to circumstances, — a mobility [...] of emotion, which is easily impressed, and still more easily carried away by impression, [...] a character peculiarly unfitted to bear the flux of time and chance. [...] Mr Dickens was too much inclined by natural disposition to lachrymose eloquence and exaggerated caricature.¹⁵

Bagehot, like Stephen, did not stop at reviewing the books; part of their project entailed reviewing the man. Both authors associate crying with a lack of masculinity. Interestingly, both authors also suggest that laughing (or exaggerated caricature) is a female characteristic. This may be more surprising to readers today than the insinuation that crying is a particularly feminine quality. Another contemporary, the Irish journalist Justin McCarthy, also found Dickens too emotional and this, he thought, operated to suppress intellect. Writing anonymously in the *Westminster Review* in 1864 he insisted that Dickens's 'intellect is [...] crushed and dwarfed by his emotional faculties'.¹⁶ G. H. Lewes wrote in 1872 that 'the logic of feeling seems the only logic he can manage. Thought is strangely absent from his works [...] his was merely an *animal* intelligence, *i.e.*, restricted to perceptions'.¹⁷ Lewes's article also dwells on Dickens's minimal education, his poor library, and his lack of interest in philosophy, science, and 'the higher literature'.¹⁸ Stephen's accusation that the members of Dickens's audience were ignorant was thereby extended by Lewes to Dickens himself. Lewes closed this analysis by claiming that 'for the reader of cultivated taste there is little in his works beyond the stirring of their emotions', and that such readers enjoy his works 'like children at a play, laughing and crying at the images which pass before us'.¹⁹ The picture painted by each critic is the same: feminine, childish, uncultivated works created by a feminine, childish, uncultivated author for a feminine, childish, and uncultivated audience. The rhetoric employed in these examples, which associate 'excessive' displays of sentiment with women, children, the weak-minded, and the uneducated, works to create a discourse by which 'sentimentality'

could be marginalized. Once associated with such subaltern groups, little further reasoning was needed to reject it.

Such critique contrasts strongly with reviews from the late 1830s, which did not find Dickens sentimental or effeminate. In October 1838, Thomas Henry Lister wrote an anonymous review of *Sketches by Boz* (1836), *Pickwick Papers* (1836–37), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838–39), and *Oliver Twist* (1838), saying of Dickens: ‘his humanity is plain, practical, and manly. It is quite untainted with sentimentality’.²⁰ Richard Ford, also writing about *Oliver Twist*, said that Dickens ‘never then indulges in false sentimentality, or mawkish, far-fetched verbiage’.²¹ Another review of *Oliver Twist* from 1839 insists that Dickens ‘has not one particle of that sentimentality which intoxicates and vitiates while it seems merely to etherealize’.²² Despite registering some unease about certain types or uses of sentimentality, these critics did not believe that Dickens was guilty of indulging in it.

It is possible that the views of later critics, such as Stephen, Bagehot, McCarthy, and Lewes, simply reflect a more general cultural move away from a taste for affective display, particularly pathos. But they were not simply reflecting changes that they played no part in forming. Through their articles, these eminent writers, political commentators, philosophers, and jurists helped to create the cultural conventions of the day. Furthermore, by attending to the context of their criticisms, it is possible to identify what in particular inspired their ire and by doing so, to pinpoint the real threat that sentimentality represented and why it needed to be contained and neutralized. From Stephen’s ‘puppy pie’, to Aldous Huxley in 1930 who wrote that Dickens had a heart that ‘overflowed with such curious and even rather repellent secretions’, the language of ‘poisoned food’, infection, disease, madness, hallucinations, and possession abounds.²³ Reviews which universally condemned Dickens’s emotionalism invariably resorted to highly emotional responses. Why did sentiment, and Dickensian sentiment in particular, have to be silenced so vehemently?

Tears and laughter, along with blushing, are ways in which ‘embodied thoughts’ manifest themselves in public.²⁴ Not always fully under an individual’s conscious control, they are discernible to others but not dependent upon verbalization. Sometimes embarrassment at their public and revealing nature is projected outwards in anger at the person or circumstance that triggered the reaction. The terminology of ‘disease’, ‘poison’, and ‘infection’ explains involuntary and embarrassing bodily symptoms in the reader while focusing blame on the carrier or transmitter of the pathogen. Like other shameful

and uncontrolled bodily secretions, such as vomiting and incontinence, tears are to some extent excused if pathologically induced. Such language might imply that these reviewers were not immune to the affective appeal of Dickens's work, but wished to excuse their bodies' involuntary receptivity. I will be arguing that it also indicates a concern about widening spheres of influence: after all, disease spreads.

Lewes is perhaps the most honest about the way in which all readers (not merely subaltern ones) are prompted to tears and laughter by Dickens's novels, although this affective power causes him some unease. He writes that 'a revulsion of feeling at the preposterousness or extravagance of the image may follow the burst of laughter, but the laughter is irresistible'.²⁵ Other critics deny that they experience such responses and instead express concern about Dickens's influence on the less resilient, conjuring up a manipulable audience of acquiescent and indiscriminating readers. Justin McCarthy describes 'the great brotherhood of novel readers [...]. Under the spell of a favourite author they are rapt and passive'. It is evident that for McCarthy some brothers are more equal than others, and sisters are rarely equal at all: 'men immersed in active life have neither leisure nor inclination for fiction. But to the young of both sexes, and to very many grown-up women, novels are the staple article of intellectual food.'²⁶

McCarthy's concern is framed within the context of references to Dickens's large readership — and to the way in which this readership crosses gender and also class boundaries: 'as regards mere popularity he has certainly no rival [...] we may say that in England these works have been read by everybody without distinction of age or rank.' McCarthy then goes on to ask whether 'the vast power [Dickens] has wielded has been exercised for good or not'.²⁷ Stephen, reviewing *Little Dorrit* in 1857, also positions his concern with Dickens's use of emotion in the context of Dickens's influence on impressionable readers and his wide circulation figures:

Such teachers [novelists] can never be otherwise than influential, but in the present day their influence is enormously increased by the facilities which cheap publication affords to them. Upwards of a million of the cheap shilling volumes which ornament railway book-stalls are disposed of annually, and the effect of these publications on the whole mind of the community can hardly be exaggerated [...] we believe Mr Dickens's tales sell about 40,000 copies on publication.²⁸

Stephen goes on to bemoan the

influence exercised by such novels over the moral and political opinions of the young, the ignorant, and the inexperienced. [...] They tend to beget hasty

generalisations and false conclusions. They address themselves almost entirely to the imagination upon subjects which properly belong to the intellect.²⁹

The context makes the reviewers' concerns clear: cheap publication means that many more people than before are reading novels. These are women, children, and the poor — people newly enabled to buy books, once luxuries reserved for the wealthy. This democratization of readers is particularly true in the case of Dickens, whose large readership crossed class divisions. The concern provoked by this new state of affairs is evident. These readers cannot be relied upon to reach the right conclusions on the right issues, because they include the uneducated, the young, women, and lower-class men.

Stephen was writing from the centre of a revolution in book trade economics which was combined with sharply increasing literacy. Book prices had risen from the 1780s to reach a peak around 1830, when prices began to fall.³⁰ This was due to a combination of changes in manufacturing techniques and the desire to exploit a mass market readership. *The Times* had first used steam printing machines in 1814 and by 1840 they were being generally used by book publishers in place of hand labour. The price of paper also reduced. In 1837, paper duty was halved and it was abolished altogether in 1861. The cost of paper was further cut by using machine manufacture and, in 1857, by using esparto (a form of grass) as an ingredient instead of rags. By the 1880s wood pulp was being used. Having kept book prices deliberately high at the beginning of the century to maintain their 'luxury' status, some publishers began to cater to a mass market 'common reader', seeking to make profits by selling at a lower margin but higher volume. From 1840 there was a steep increase in the circulation of cheap part-issue fiction. Mudie's circulating library opened in 1842, while W. H. Smith started his railway bookstalls in 1848 when cheap railway novels, or 'yellow-backs', entered the market.³¹

Also significant was the impact of part-publication and magazine serialization. The innovative publishing of *Pickwick Papers* (1836) showed that the part-issue of new fiction could be profitable.³² Thackeray, Ainsworth, Lever, and Trollope, as well as Dickens, issued new novels in monthly numbers and this practice continued until the seventies when cheap one-volume reprints and magazine serialization killed it off.³³ Usually priced at a shilling, these number-issues spread the cost over a longer period and the combined price was less than a normal three-decker novel (one pound rather than a guinea and a half) bringing it within the reach of those with a lower income.³⁴ Part-publication and serialization boosted readership numbers. John Sutherland asserts that 'the monthly serial

in shilling numbers probably did more than anything else to open up a mass market for fiction'.³⁵

It is hard to ascertain exactly how many people attended school in the nineteenth century and how many could read. Literacy for census purposes was judged by signatures in the marriage register but some who could not write could probably read and some who could write their name may not have been able to read or write anything else. But increasing access to education (through charitable provision, Sunday schools, factory schools, and mechanics institutes), however inadequate, did improve literacy.³⁶ The first nationwide report on literacy in 1841 (based on how many people who married in that year could sign their name) suggested that just over half the population was literate. This increased to 69.3% of men and 54.8 % of women in 1851, 75.4% of men and 65.3% of women in 1861, and 80.6% of men and 73.2% of women in 1871.³⁷ The figures show that women's literacy rates were consistently lower than men's but the gap narrowed over the period.³⁸ The Forster Education Act of 1870 continued this increase.

Along with literacy improvements, rising incomes allowed greater spending on books. Richard D. Altick tells us that 'in 1850–51, 83,300 families were in the £150–400 bracket; in 1879–80 there were 285,100. Meanwhile the average income of a lower-middle-class family rose from £90 in 1851 to £110 in 1881'. This was at a period when prices of goods were falling, leading to further increases in real incomes.³⁹ The combined result of all these factors was an explosion in novels and novel reading. Altick suggests that the 1850s could be seen as a great turning point in the history of the book trade's relations with the mass public.⁴⁰ The reviewers' turn away from the 'sentimental' in Dickens corresponds almost exactly with the expansion of novel reading.

The qualities certain upper-middle-class men ascribed to Dickens and to his novels changed, in the same period that the composition of the reading public changed, to become the qualities of the new subaltern readers. It is not, or not only, that Dickens's novels and Dickensian sentimentality become labelled as 'lower-class' through association. The reviewers universally objected to Dickens's 'political' use of sentiment. Declaring that Dickens's 'deathbed scenes exceed in number and variety that of any other author', McCarthy complains that Dickens made 'political capital' out of feeling. He refers to a graveyard scene in *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840–41) which contrasts the burial mounds of poor men with the neighbouring graves and headstones of rich men and describes a nearby ass in a pound 'looking with hungry eyes' on the clergyman's horse

which is allowed to crop the grass in the graveyard.⁴¹ McCarthy is unhappy with this tendentious use of feeling in such a setting:

There is no objection to meditations in a country churchyard, but it is odd that any one who felt the influence of the place sufficiently to care to write about it at all, should have had his attention strongly directed to the difference between rich and poor, and to the exclusive privileges of the clergy. [...] Mr Dickens has been trifling with the sympathies of his readers for an unworthy purpose.⁴²

It is hard to avoid the suspicion that sentiment directed towards a different (and less political) purpose would not be viewed as sentimental at all. In a similar vein, Stephen complains:

we wish he had dealt as fairly and kindly with the upper classes of society as he has with the lower [...]. His injustice to the institutions of English society, is, however, even more flagrant than his animosity to particular classes in that society.⁴³

A conviction that Dickens's work was biased towards the poor and against both the rich and those civic institutions that they maintained, and of which they were the principal beneficiaries, goes hand in hand with the accusations of sentimentality in nineteenth-century reviews.

Returning to Trollope, we see what is by now a familiar nexus of concerns:

In former times great objects were attained by great work. [...] An age was occupied in proving a grievance, and philosophical researches were printed in folio pages, which it took a life to write, and an eternity to read. We get on now with a lighter step, and quicker: ridicule is found to be more convincing than argument, imaginary agonies touch more than true sorrows, and monthly novels convince, when learned quartos fail to do so. If the world is to be set right, the work will be done by shilling numbers. [...] Mr Sentiment is certainly a very powerful man, and perhaps not the less so that his good poor people are so very good; his hard rich people so very hard; and the genuinely honest so very honest.⁴⁴

Clustered around the objection to Dickensian sentiment (the 'imaginary agonies' which touch more than 'true sorrows') are the same issues as those expressed by the other critics: the power of the author, his large readership, and his bias towards the poor at the expense of the rich. Trollope also hints at the anxiety provoked by the relatively cheap nature of the publications in his gibe at 'shilling numbers'. Although a shilling number would still be out of the reach of the very poorest people, it was not a price only payable by the richest either. When Trollope started working as a clerk in the post office in 1834 he earned ninety pounds a year (thirty-five shillings a week); after seven years he made one hundred and forty pounds a year, a respectable middle-class income.⁴⁵ In the mid-1860s a

female telegraph clerk earned about eight shillings a week, a farmhand about fourteen, a London labourer could earn twenty, and a London artisan about thirty-six shillings a week.⁴⁶ In an 1839 review of *Oliver Twist*, Richard Ford was explicit about the concern that poorer readers could now afford to purchase shilling numbers:

We are not afraid that the rational portion of Boz's readers may be misled by examples which they know never did and never can exist in reality, and which they presume were invented in order to exaggerate the pathos, and throw by contrast an additional horror on vice: yet the numerical majority of the young, and of the lower orders — (for whom books in shilling Numbers have the *appearance* of being mainly designed) — judge from feelings, and are fascinated by the brilliant fallacies which reach the head through the heart.⁴⁷

The lower orders and children could afford to buy Dickens's stories and did so in large numbers. Disempowered groups, including the poor, women, and children, were thus reading (many for the first time) pathetic scenes that represented people like themselves in pitiful situations. It is at this historical juncture that critics become concerned about such readers' susceptibility to emotional appeal.

Ford worried that readers were naive enough to believe the 'brilliant fallacy' that a character such as Oliver could really exist. Such perfection may not be impossible, but it would not be found in a workhouse boy. 'Less absurd', he exclaims, 'would it be to expect to gather grapes on thorns, to find pearls in dunghills, violets in Drury Lane, or make silk purses out of sows' ears'.⁴⁸ Ford complains that Oliver 'is represented to be a pattern of modern excellence, guileless himself, and measuring others by his own innocence; delicate and high-minded, affectionate, noble, brave, generous, with the manners of a son of a most distinguished gentleman'. Ford does not accuse Dickens of sentimentality — he absolves Dickens of 'false sentimentality' in this review — but his complaint about the 'exaggerated pathos' of this 'absurd' depiction of a pauper who shares the virtues and sensibilities of the higher classes, shares qualities of the later accusations of sentimentality.⁴⁹ Writing in 1839, Ford does not anticipate a 'realistic' aesthetic which would say that Oliver is more virtuous than a 'real' child; rather his concern is that '*workhouse* boys are not born with original virtue'.⁵⁰ As in accusations of sentimentality, the context for Ford's unease about exaggerated pathos is the explosion of cheap novels onto the marketplace.

Walter Bagehot's review of the cheap edition of the works of Charles Dickens shares all the same concerns. Acknowledging that 'there is no contemporary English writer, whose works are read so generally through the whole house, who can give pleasure

to the servants as well as to the mistress, to the children as well as to the master', he goes on to attempt to defuse such universal popularity.⁵¹ He targets Dickens's 'ostentatious exhibition' of pathos, alleging that Dickens 'dwells on dismal scenes [particularly deathbeds] with a kind of fawning fondness' (p. 479). He is explicit in denouncing Dickens's politics and, in case the reader fails to make the connection between deathbeds and politics, Bagehot characterizes his writing as 'sentimental radicalism' (p. 480). By saying that Dickens 'is an example both of the proper use and of the abuse of the sentiment', Bagehot makes it explicit that what is disguised and naturalized as an aesthetic judgement originates as a purely political one (p. 481). Bagehot goes on to compare Dickens's later novels unfavourably to his earlier: the latter contain excellent descriptions of abuses such as debtors' prisons in *Pickwick* and the old parochial authorities in *Oliver Twist*, whereas the former do not:

He began by describing really removable evils in a style which would induce all persons, however insensible, to remove them if he could; he has ended by describing the natural evils and inevitable pains of the present state of being in such a manner as must tend to excite discontent and repining. (p. 481)

The underlying logic of Bagehot's argument is that Dickens's use of sentiment is only an abuse when directed at certain institutional evils; sentiment is not sentimental when directed in the right way. By rousing feelings at 'inevitable' wrongs, Dickens's novels threaten to stir up the masses, who fail to understand the inevitability (the 'naturalness') of current social conditions. Such 'sentimental radicalism' is dangerous: a writer who is as popular with the servants as with the master of the house cannot be allowed to 'excite discontent and repining'.

The fear of the mob underlies these reviews. Stirring feelings in readers is more acceptable if they are the right sort of middle- and upper-class readers. The real danger is that the sentimental portrait will be effective in eroding the privileges of class and status. The turn away from sentimentalism corresponds to a period when the upper classes had good reasons for fearing an uprising by the 'lower orders'. There were Chartist riots in 1839 and Chartist protest continued into the next decade fuelled by the economic downturn and the poor harvests of the 1840s.⁵² In the same period, Wales saw the Rebecca riots, in which toll gates were attacked in protest at high taxation. There were also continued protests at the Corn Laws until their repeal in the late 1840s. By 1848, the British establishment was looking fearfully to the Continent and the uprisings spreading across Europe in the Year of Revolutions. Dickens himself was not immune to these fears

but he had a complex attitude to and relationship with the mob, as Gail Marshall reminds us in her essay in this issue.

In an anonymous article published in 1845 in the *New Quarterly Review; or Home, Foreign and Colonial Journal* the author denounces the ‘virtuous indignation’ of Dickens’s heroes, his heroines for ‘*protesting*’ and ‘his children for precocious tenderness and instinctive virtues superior to every evil chance of circumstance, temptation, and temperament’.⁵³ This, the reviewer suggests, is dangerous and may incite dangerous imitations. Again, the fear of ‘poisoned food’ is invoked:

Well do we know what may be urged in excuse and exculpation of proceedings which, in their progress, turn excitement into poison. We are ready to bear the reproaches of lukewarmness, indecision, cowardice; to have the sincerity of our benevolence doubted, to lie under the imputation of undue sympathy for the ‘constituted order of abuses,’ and aristocratic tyrannies and corruptions. Better these, we boldly say, than anarchical licence and folly [...]. Once moved, ‘the masses’ hardly ever stop at the prescribed point.⁵⁴

This critic perceives both sentimental and melodramatic representations as modes of protest. They are dangerous, with potential to incite mass responses. The language of ‘infection’ and ‘poison’ is rooted in the fear that emotion once kindled will spread among the masses causing riot, rebellion, and revolution.

Bagehot finishes his review by claiming that ‘the most characteristic part of [Dickens’s] audience, the lower middle-class, were ready to receive with delight the least favourable productions of his genius’.⁵⁵ Fear of a mass readership’s response to literary images of social oppression is transmuted into a class-based denigration of their judgement, thus enabling their ‘discontent’ to be ignored, as an over-emotional and ‘low class’ response. The lower middle classes inhabit a nebulous, uncomfortable space between the upper and lower classes, posing a particular threat to the ‘special’ status of the elite because of their bridging position between the classes and their relatively minor differences from the upper middle class. The result is that these small differences consequently need to be policed and emphasized.⁵⁶ Conveniently, such class-based criticism can also result in aspirational lower-class individuals seeking to improve their status by disassociating themselves from the questionable behaviour with the result that radicalism and revolt are stifled from within.

We might ask, therefore, in response to these reviewers’ anxieties, whether Dickens’s most famously sentimental characters, such as Little Nell, are really politically radical figures. Ledger has drawn attention to the way melodrama was well established as

‘an aesthetic of protest’ before Dickens utilized it, but we are not accustomed to viewing sentimental characters or scenes in this way.⁵⁷ McCarthy certainly recognized *The Old Curiosity Shop* as radical, in a way that is surely more difficult for readers today. As we have seen, McCarthy commented unfavourably on the churchyard scene in *The Old Curiosity Shop*, but there are also other incidents he does not mention in which Nell becomes a figure for the poor and destitute. After Nell and her grandfather have left Mrs Jarley’s waxworks, they have a final nightmare journey. On their way they pass carts loaded with coffins, orphans crying, and bands of unemployed labourers gathering by torchlight to be urged on to ‘frightful cries and threats’ by their leaders. Starving and exhausted, Nell is forced to beg for food, knocking upon the door of a hovel. She is repulsed by a man who points to his own dead child, saying that he and five hundred men were thrown out of work three months earlier, and telling her ‘that is my third dead child, and last. Do you think I have charity to bestow, or a morsel of bread to spare?’⁵⁸ These scenes depict the desperate need caused by recession and poor harvests, conditions which provoked popular unrest in the Chartist riots that occurred a few months before Dickens began writing the novel.⁵⁹ Nell and her grandfather’s poverty, sickness, unemployment, homelessness, and itinerant lifestyle are mirrored in those they meet.

Following Nell’s death, the old, ‘the deaf, the blind, the lame, the palsied, the living dead in many shapes and forms’ gather around her grave.⁶⁰ In one reading, Nell has become a Christlike figure, gathering the poor and suffering to her. In another, Nell’s sufferings are themselves the sufferings of the poor, the ill, the unemployed, and the desperate. Both readings come together in the well-known passage from the gospel of Matthew:

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. [...] Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.⁶¹

The account of Nell’s last few hours recalls her dreaming of those who had helped her and saying ‘God bless you!’⁶² While she may be dead, there are many like her (such as those described as gathering around her grave) who could still be helped. Nell’s death was not only an occasion for awakening the moral sentiments but also functioned as a radical call to arms to help those in need. This is not a single-issue campaign, such as against the New Poor Law or Yorkshire schools, but rather an all-embracing call for justice. No wonder

that for those of Dickens's middle- or upper-class contemporaries who thought of themselves as Christian, the affective power of her death proved profoundly uncomfortable, and led some to see in Dickens's deathbeds a form of radical politics.

Ledger, noting that contemporary critics tended to dislike *Bleak House*, points out that

the government institutions that were the target of *Bleak House*'s uncompromising satire were largely stewarded by the middle and upper ranks of society. It was this that made it such uncomfortable reading for reviewers, who by and large were firmly rooted in these social groups.⁶³

As I have illustrated, a depiction of the socially deprived made for similarly uncomfortable reading in many of Dickens's so-called 'sentimental' scenes. It is noteworthy that the characters chiefly dismissed as 'sentimental' are children, the poor, the disabled (or a combination of these characteristics such as Tiny Tim). These are the most vulnerable members of society in a time and place with little protection for the powerless. The critique of sentimentality aims to marginalize them, and neutralize their affective power. With this in mind, it is striking that, in contrast, Trollope's warden, Mr Harding, a middle-aged, male professional, though an affecting portrait, is not normally dismissed as 'sentimental', despite his story being as politically biased and as unrealistic as any in Dickens's novels.

Trollope's critique of 'Mr Popular Sentiment' ends by noting that 'the artist who paints for the million must use glaring colours'. He clearly believed that his own colouring was more natural than Dickens's.⁶⁴ But is Trollope's aesthetic judgement really distinguishable from his conservative political stance? *The Warden* is not apolitical: it is a plea for the status quo, an argument for leaving things as they are for fear of getting something worse. As the narrator comments of the reformer, Mr Bold,

it would be well if one so young had a little more diffidence in himself, and more trust in the honest purpose of others — if he could be brought to believe that old customs need not necessarily be evil, and that changes may possibly be dangerous.⁶⁵

There would appear to be little real want or need in Barchester worth shouting about. Mr Harding's claim to the snug sinecure rests upon the fact that he is a nice man, that the bedesmen are better off than they would have been without a place in Hiram's Hospital, and the unspoken but clear indication that there is (apparently) no one else standing in need of charitable assistance. Bold's lack of judgement is confirmed when the bedesmen themselves suffer by Mr Harding's departure (through the Bishop's, surely unwarranted,

refusal to appoint another warden). It is a cosy world that Trollope has to paint to give even the impression of a real moral dilemma about the correct use of the charitable funds: there is no desperate poverty, no unemployment, no sickness in need of alleviation. The only choice is between making the bedesmen rich or providing Mr Harding with a ‘modest eight hundred pounds’.⁶⁶ (It is noteworthy that the same amount of money split between twelve men would ‘enrich’ paupers while being merely sufficient to make one gentleman ‘comfortable’.) There are no glaring colours in this world because there is nothing in particular that needs to be brought to anyone’s attention; the muted tones are as political as the strong ones — designed to militate against social upheavals and to naturalize and help the reader feel comfortable with the status quo.

The *New Quarterly Review*’s 1845 review of ‘the comic philanthropists’ declared that ‘once moved, “the masses” hardly ever stop short at the prescribed point’ and warned of the danger of turning ‘excitement into poison’.⁶⁷ The poisonous excitement of both Dickens’s humour and his pathos became apparent to his reviewers at a particular historical moment when changes in literacy levels and mass market publishing meant that the masses might become ‘infected’ by it. ‘Mr Popular Sentiment’ was simply too popular. The politics of sentiment meant that Nell had to be written out and Mr Harding written in before the revolting masses overstepped the point prescribed for them. Sentimentality is sometimes described as ‘cheap’ and Dickensian sentimentality did indeed belong to, and represent, the poor and marginalized. Undoubtedly uncomfortable reading for the upper middle classes, it is not perhaps surprising that their own emotional response was overwhelmingly anger.

II

Dickens and Feeling

The essays in this issue of *19* originated in the 2010 Dickens Day symposium, “‘Mr Popular Sentiment’: Dickens and Feeling’.⁶⁸ They continue the academic sentimental journey, reappraising the Trollopian critique of the ‘absurdly strong colouring’ of Dickensian affect.⁶⁹ Drawing attention to the complex and diverse nature of affect in Dickens’s novels and the differing emotional responses they provoke, these essays take the debate about Dickensian feeling in exciting new directions.

Catherine Waters reminds us of the nineteenth-century criticism of Dickens's use of sentiment before showing that James Fitzjames Stephen's famous jibe about Dickens's 'stock' of deathbeds engages as much with Dickens's preoccupation with the material culture of mourning as with his sentimentality. She argues that Dickens's work evinces a concern (equal to Stephen's) with the question of how mourning customs and mementos can convey authentic feeling in an era of mass production. Gail Marshall also considers Dickens's preoccupation with death in her essay 'Popular Sentiments and Public Executions'. Placing the iconic moment of Sydney Carton's execution in *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) in the context of Dickens's horror of capital punishment, she argues that Carton's death is not a sentimental moment (as is often assumed) but a complex response to public executions and an articulation of profound human fears: of death, of a life wasted, of being forgotten once we are gone.

Two of the essays here share the current critical interest in Victorian fatherhood. Wendy Parkins shows how William Morris used *Great Expectations*' Joe Gargery and his catchphrase 'Wot larx!' to express deeply personal feelings for his daughters and explores the affinity between the parenting styles of Dickens and Morris as they attempt to perform the role of loving father. Valerie Sanders starts with an account of Dickens's response to his son Charley's convulsions of joy on being reunited with his parents following an American tour. Using this as a departure point to interrogate Dickens's lifelong fascination with the troubling emotions surrounding parent-child separations and reunions, she investigates how these scenes are mediated in his novels.

Daniel Tyler also writes about *Great Expectations* (1860–61) in order to investigate its depiction of hope. Often overlooked in attending to the emotional encounter with Magwitch in childhood, Pip's psychology is shaped as much by his imagined future as it is by his traumatic past. Tyler expounds on the psychic catastrophe caused by the implosion of Pip's expectations and his consequent need to rewrite the narrative of his life.

Jonathan Buckmaster argues that Dickens fashioned the edited autobiography, the *Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi* (1838), in order to present Grimaldi as 'a man of great feeling and sensibility' in the manner of his own creation, Pickwick. He goes on to make the case that Dickens's *Grimaldi* reconciles the potential inauthenticity of theatrical representations in a model of the 'feeling performer' whose roles are true because truly felt. Turning to consider Dickens's emotional legacy, Catherine Malcolmson reflects on

the affective power of the Charles Dickens Museum and reveals how, when establishing the museum, the Dickens Fellowship constructed the house as a space of intimate access to both Dickens and the characters he created there.

In a series of shorter commentaries, the contributors to our forum, 'Bicentennial Sentiment: Dickens and Feeling Now', are also occupied in one way or another with the emotional residue of Dickensian feeling. Three of the pieces address the bicentenary celebrations and the emotions that Dickens and these (prolonged) festivities are inspiring. Our first forum piece is a lively roundtable discussion on the bicentenary by staff and students at the University of Leicester. Gail Marshall, Ian Higgins, Catherine Malcolmson, Kris Siefken, and Holly Furneaux seek to open up debate on the politics and aesthetics of Dickensian feeling, the nature of centenary commemoration, and continuities with the 1912 celebrations.

Juliet John considers the still current nature of Dickens's appeal, asking why we care about a writer who was born two hundred years ago. She argues that the comfort zone of cosy nostalgia often inhabited by the heritage industry is only one side of the story; the other is the urban alienation Dickens captures so effectively and which generates the need for solace, comfort, and a communal past. Ben Winyard's essay seeks to queer Dickensian feeling by thinking about the negative emotions Dickens and the bicentenary celebrations can inspire. Focussing on the coercive nature of celebration, and of Dickensian sentimentality, he argues for a queer approach that resists compulsory or mandated feelings and looks towards more variegated, troubling, and marginalized responses.

John Drew and Tony Williams discuss the exciting *Dickens Journals Online* (*DJO*) project, which is creating, for the first time ever, a freely accessible and easily searchable online edition of Dickens's weekly periodicals, *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. This project was enabled through generous institutional support and funding, but of equal importance were the 3000 or so unpaid volunteers, who worked tirelessly to correct the online text. The abiding interest in Dickens's work and the collaborative nature of the *DJO* project have created the sort of geographically dispersed yet affectively united community Dickens himself sought to create in his journals' readership. The last magazine was corrected on the morning of the bicentenary and the site itself launched on 29 March 2012.

Finally, and fittingly, John Jordan writes movingly about Dickens and partings. He draws attention to the awareness of our mortality which underlies our discomfort in saying

goodbye and which finds expression in the profusion of sentimental farewells and deathbed scenes in Dickens's work. Dickens's writing is founded on a common experience of loss, and readers in 2012 can share the same sorrow that Victorian readers felt at the death of Paul Dombey. Whether or not we weep at Dombey's death, we hope that this essay, and the other essays collected here, will help us reconsider how we feel about Dickens and about Dickensian feeling in the bicentenary of his birth.

Many thanks to Nicola Bown, Jonathan Tee, Catherine Waters, and Ben Winyard for reading an earlier draft of this introduction and for their helpful comments.

¹ Quoted by Gill Ballinger, 'The Old Curiosity Shop', in *A Companion to Charles Dickens*, ed. by David Paroissien (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), pp. 328–37 (p. 328).

² Philip Collins, *From Manly Tear to Stiff Upper Lip: The Victorians and Pathos* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1975).

³ Fred Kaplan, *Sacred Tears: Sentimentality in Victorian Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 33.

⁴ Kaplan's thesis has been criticized for importing eighteenth-century terms of reference into the nineteenth century without addressing what is specifically Victorian about Victorian sentimentality. For an overview and commentary on that debate, and on the current critical work on Victorian sentimentality, see Carolyn Burdett's 'New Agenda Sentimentalities: Introduction', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 16.2 (2011), 187–94.

⁵ *Rethinking Victorian Sentimentality*, ed. by Nicola Bown (= *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 4 (2007)) <<http://19.bbk.ac.uk/index.php/19/issue/view/67>> [accessed 27 April 2012].

⁶ Emma Mason, 'Feeling Dickensian Feeling' <<http://19.bbk.ac.uk/index.php/19/article/viewFile/454/314>> [accessed 27 April 2012], Heather Tilley, 'Sentiment and Vision in Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, and *The Cricket on the Hearth*' <<http://19.bbk.ac.uk/index.php/19/article/viewFile/457/317>> [accessed 27 April 2012], and Sally Ledger, "'Don't Be so Melodramatic!": Dickens and the Affective Mode' <<http://19.bbk.ac.uk/index.php/19/article/viewFile/456/316>> [accessed 27 April 2012], all in *Rethinking Victorian Sentimentality*, ed. by Bown.

⁷ See for example Gill Ballinger, who writes of the death of Nell: 'strained prose like this makes little headway among contemporary readers, who tend to deplore such obvious pathos' and describes it as 'turgid and preacherly writing' (Ballinger, 'The Old Curiosity Shop', p. 331).

⁸ Juliet John, *Dickens's Villains: Melodrama, Character, Popular Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Sally Ledger, *Dickens and the Popular Radical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁹ For a useful overview of the recent critical work on melodrama, see Juliet John, 'Melodrama and its Criticism: An Essay in Memory of Sally Ledger', in *Victorian Theatricalities*, ed. by Michael Dobson (= *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 8 (2009)) <<http://19.bbk.ac.uk/index.php/19/article/viewFile/496/356>> [accessed 27 April 2012].

¹⁰ Before her death, Sally Ledger was proposing to turn her attention to Victorian sentimentality. It is likely that she would have been as influential in changing the terms of the debate in this area as she was in that of melodrama and it is a cause of much regret that we cannot share the insights she would have brought to bear.

¹¹ James Fitzjames Stephen, 'A Tale of Two Cities', *Saturday Review*, 17 December 1859, repr. in *The Dickens Critics*, ed. by George H. Ford and Lauriat Lane (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 38–46 (pp. 38–39).

¹² Philip Collins, 'Introduction', in *Dickens: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by Philip Collins (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1971), p. 13.

¹³ Collins, *Dickens: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by Collins, p. 366.

¹⁴ [Stephen], 'Unsigned Review of the Library Edition of the Works', *Saturday Review*, 8 May 1858, repr. in *Dickens: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by Collins, pp. 383–86.

¹⁵ Walter Bagehot, 'Charles Dickens [Review of the Cheap Edition of the Works of Charles Dickens]', *National Review*, 14 (1858), 458–86 (p. 486).

¹⁶ Justin McCarthy, 'Modern Novelists: Charles Dickens', *Westminster Review*, n.s., 26 (1864), 414–41 (p. 441).

¹⁷ George Henry Lewes, 'Dickens in Relation to Criticism', *Fortnightly Review*, 11 (1872), 141–54 (p. 151) (emphasis in original).

¹⁸ Lewes, 'Dickens in Relation to Criticism', p. 152.

¹⁹ Lewes, 'Dickens in Relation to Criticism', p. 154.

²⁰ [Thomas Henry Lister], 'Dickens's Tales', *Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal*, 68 (1838), 75–97 (p. 77).

²¹ Richard Ford, 'Oliver Twist [review]', *Quarterly Review*, 64 (1839), 83–102 (p. 90).

²² Anonymous, 'Oliver Twist [review]', *Monthly Review*, 1 (1839), 29–41 (p. 41).

²³ See 'ART. V. The Story of a Feather', *New Quarterly Review; or, Home, Foreign and Colonial Journal*, 5 (1845), 384–402 (p. 396), which talks of 'turning excitement into poison'; Aldous Huxley, 'The Vulgarly of Little Nell', repr. in *The Dickens Critics*, ed. by George H. Ford and Lauriat Lane (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 153–57 (p. 153). Huxley also described Dickens's sentimentality as 'pathological' (Huxley, p. 157). Lewes declared that 'in no other perfectly sane mind [...] have I observed vividness of imagination approaching so closely to hallucination' and went on to suggest that the hallucination was catching: 'so definite and insistent was the image, that even while knowing it was false we could not help, for a moment, being affected, as it were, by his hallucination' (Lewes, 'Dickens in Relation to Criticism', pp. 144, 145). McCarthy suggests that Dickens does not possess imagination, he is 'possessed' by it (McCarthy, 'Modern Novelists', p. 420).

²⁴ The anthropologist Michelle Z. Rosaldo describes feelings as 'embodied thoughts' (cited in Nicola Bown, 'Introduction: Rethinking Victorian Sentimentality', in *Rethinking Victorian Sentimentality*, ed. by Bown <<http://19.bbk.ac.uk/index.php/19/article/view/453/313>> [accessed 27 April 2012], p. 11).

²⁵ Lewes, 'Dickens in Relation to Criticism', p. 144.

²⁶ McCarthy, 'Modern Novelists', p. 414.

²⁷ McCarthy, 'Modern Novelists', p. 415.

- ²⁸ Stephen, 'The Licence of Modern Novelists', *Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal*, 106 (1857), 124–56 (p. 125).
- ²⁹ Stephen, 'The Licence of Modern Novelists', p. 125.
- ³⁰ Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800–1900* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998), p. 379; J. A. Sutherland, *Victorian Novelists and Publishers* (London: Athlone Press, 1976), p. 11.
- ³¹ Altick, *English Common Reader*, pp. 260–317.
- ³² Sutherland, *Victorian Fiction: Writers, Publishers, Readers* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 87–91.
- ³³ Altick, *English Common Reader*, p. 279; Sutherland, *Victorian Novelists and Publishers*, pp. 21–23.
- ³⁴ Altick, *English Common Reader*, p. 280; Sutherland, *Victorian Novelists and Publishers*, p. 21.
- ³⁵ Sutherland, *Victorian Novelists and Publishers*, p. 24.
- ³⁶ An organized Sunday school movement had begun in Gloucester in 1780. The British and Foreign School Society was founded in 1808. In 1809, the National Society for the Education of the Poor was founded. 1833 saw the first state aid for elementary schools, although state aid remained limited until the 1870 Education Act. The Factories Act of 1833 required school facilities in factories for children. Although conditions were often poor, by the 1850s government inspectors had noticed an improvement. The Mechanics Institutes movement started in 1824. Dr George Birkbeck had a significant place in the inception of this movement. He taught science to Glasgow artisans at the beginning of the century, and in 1824 a London Mechanic's Institute was founded with Birkbeck as first president (Altick, *English Common Reader*, pp. 141–212, 379–80).
- ³⁷ Altick, *English Common Reader*, p. 171.
- ³⁸ In 1841, women's literacy was 51.1% and men's 67.3%. In 1871, women's was 73.2% and men's 80.6% (Altick, *English Common Reader*, pp. 170–71).
- ³⁹ Altick, *English Common Reader*, p. 306.
- ⁴⁰ Altick, *English Common Reader*, p. 294.
- ⁴¹ McCarthy does not reference it but it is taken from the start of Chapter 16 of *The Old Curiosity Shop*.
- ⁴² McCarthy, 'Modern Novelists', 414–41 (p. 434).
- ⁴³ Stephen, 'The Licence of Modern Novelists', pp. 126–27.
- ⁴⁴ Anthony Trollope, *The Warden* (Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1994), p. 115.
- ⁴⁵ Altick, *English Common Reader*, p. 276.
- ⁴⁶ James Skipper and George P. Landow, 'Wages and Cost of Living in the Victorian Era', *The Victorian Web* <<http://www.victorianweb.org/economics/wages2.html>> [accessed 27 April 2012].
- ⁴⁷ Ford, 'Oliver Twist', p. 96 (emphasis in original).
- ⁴⁸ Ford, 'Oliver Twist', p. 96.
- ⁴⁹ I quoted from Ford's review earlier in this introduction; Ford, 'Oliver Twist', p. 90.
- ⁵⁰ Ford, 'Oliver Twist', p. 96 (emphasis added).
- ⁵¹ Bagehot, 'Charles Dickens', p. 459. Further references are given after quotations in the text.
- ⁵² Sally Ledger has shown how Chartist made particular use of a melodramatic aesthetic, see Chapter Five of her *Dickens and the Popular Radical Imagination*.

⁵³ ‘Story of a Feather’, p. 395 (emphasis in original).

⁵⁴ ‘Story of a Feather’, p. 396.

⁵⁵ Bagehot, ‘Charles Dickens’, p. 486.

⁵⁶ *The Diary of a Nobody* (1888) by George and Weedon Grossmith is a well-known late nineteenth-century comic exploration of the position of the lower middle classes.

⁵⁷ Ledger, *Dickens and the Popular Radical Imagination*, p. 7.

⁵⁸ Charles Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, ed. by Norman Page (London: Penguin, 2000), pp. 341–43.

⁵⁹ Paul Schlicke, ‘The Old Curiosity Shop’, in *Oxford Reader’s Companion to Dickens*, ed. by Paul Schlicke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 435.

⁶⁰ Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, p. 543.

⁶¹ Matthew 25. 35–40.

⁶² Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, p. 541.

⁶³ Ledger, *Dickens and the Popular Radical Imagination*, p. 209.

⁶⁴ Trollope, *The Warden*, p. 117.

⁶⁵ Trollope, *The Warden*, p. 11.

⁶⁶ Trollope, *The Warden*, p. 9.

⁶⁷ ‘Story of a Feather’, p. 396.

⁶⁸ Organized by Birkbeck, the University of Leicester and the Dickens Fellowship, it was held at the Institute of English Studies (IES), Senate House, London on 16 October 2010. Many thanks are due to Holly Furneaux, Ben Winyard, Michael Slater, and Tony Williams for co-organizing the day, to Jon Millington of the IES for the huge amount of work involved in its administration and to all who participated by giving papers, asking questions, or participating in discussions, making it such a lively and stimulating day. My thanks also to the contributors to this issue, in particular to my co-editor Cathy Waters for all her help, in addition to her own contribution.

⁶⁹ Trollope, *The Warden*, p. 117.