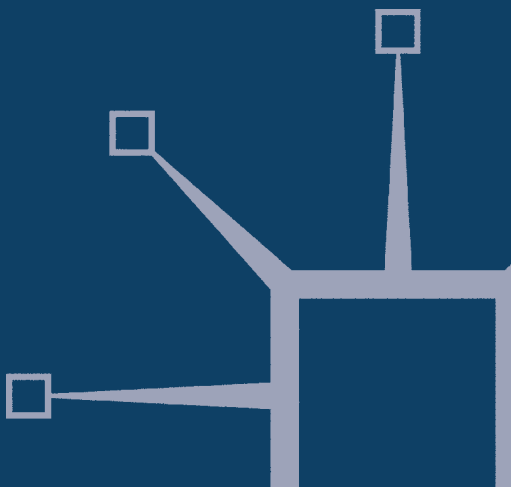
palgrave
macmillan

Women Poets and Urban Aestheticism

Passengers of Modernity

Ana Parejo Vadillo



Palgrave Studies in Nineteenth-Century Writing and Culture

Palgrave Studies in Nineteenth-Century Writing and Culture is a new monograph series that aims to represent the most innovative research on literary works that were produced in the English-speaking world from the time of the Napoleonic Wars to the *fin de siècle*. Attentive to the historical continuities between 'Romantic' and 'Victorian', the series will feature studies that help scholarship to reassess the meaning of these terms during a century marked by diverse cultural, literary, and political movements. The main aim of the series is to look at the increasing influence of types of historicism on our understanding of literary forms and genres. It reflects the shift from critical theory to cultural history that has affected not only the period 1800–1900 but also every field within the discipline of English literature. All titles in the series seek to offer fresh critical perspectives and challenging readings of both canonical and non-canonical writings of this era.

Titles include:

Laurel Brake and Julie F. Codell (*editors*)
ENCOUNTERS IN THE VICTORIAN PRESS
Editors, Authors, Readers

Dennis Denisoff
SEXUAL VISUALITY FROM LITERATURE TO FILM, 1850–1950

Laura E. Franey
VICTORIAN TRAVEL WRITING AND IMPERIAL VIOLENCE

Lawrence Frank
VICTORIAN DETECTIVE FICTION AND THE NATURE OF EVIDENCE
The Scientific Investigations of Poe, Dickens and Doyle

David Payne
THE REENCHANTMENT OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY FICTION
Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot and Serialization

Ana Parejo Vadillo
WOMEN POETS AND URBAN AESTHETICISM
Passengers of Modernity

Palgrave Studies in Nineteenth-Century Writing and Culture
Series Standing Order ISBN 978-0-333-97700-2 (hardback)
(*outside North America only*)

You can receive future titles in this series as they are published by placing a standing order. Please contact your bookseller or, in case of difficulty, write to us at the address below with your name and address, the title of the series and the ISBN quoted above.

Customer Services Department, Macmillan Distribution Ltd, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS, England

Women Poets and Urban Aestheticism

Passengers of Modernity

Ana Parejo Vadillo

palgrave
macmillan

First published in 2005 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS and
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010
Companies and representatives throughout the world.

PALGRAVE MACMILLAN is the global academic imprint of the Palgrave Macmillan division of St. Martin's Press, LLC and of Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. Macmillan® is a registered trademark in the United States, United Kingdom and other countries. Palgrave is a registered trademark in the European Union and other countries.

ISBN 978-1-349-51785-5 ISBN 978-0-230-28796-9 (eBook)
DOI 10.1057/9780230287969

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Parejo Vadillo, Ana
Women poets and urban aestheticism : passengers of modernity / Ana Parejo Vadillo.
p. cm.—(Palgrave studies in nineteenth-century writing and culture)
Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.

1. English poetry – Women authors – History and criticism. 2. Women and literature – Great Britain – History – 19th century. 3. Meynell, Alice Christiana Thompson, 1847–1922 – Criticism and interpretation. 4. Tomson, Graham R., 1863–1911 – Criticism and interpretation. 5. Levy, Amy, 1861–1889 – Criticism and interpretation. 6. English poetry – 19th century – History and criticism. 7. Women – England – London – Intellectual life. 8. Field, Michael – Criticism and interpretation. 9. London (England) – In literature. 10. City and town life in literature. 11. Aestheticism (Literature). 12. Women in literature. I. Title. II. Series.

PR595.W6P37 2005
821'.8099287—dc22 2004060603

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
14 13 12 11 10 09 08 07 06 05

To Diego Parejo Corraliza and Petra Vadillo Tapia

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

List of Illustrations

Acknowledgements

This book would not have been written without the encouragement, cooperation and support of numerous individuals and institutions. I am especially indebted to Isobel Armstrong and Josephine McDonagh, who passionately encouraged this book from its earliest stage. They have been an inspiration and I thank them for their intellectual generosity and enduring support and interest. I cannot say enough about Palgrave Macmillan's general editor, Joseph Bristow, who read and criticised many drafts of this book and offered many important critical and theoretical suggestions. I gratefully acknowledge the European Social Funds, La Consejería de Educación y Juventud (Dirección General de Enseñanzas e Investigación) and La Junta de Extremadura for granting me a scholarship which enabled me to undertake this research.

This book has benefited immeasurably from the excellent critical guidance of Yopie Prins and Margaret Stetz, who offered careful readings of and penetrating commentaries on the whole manuscript. I would also like to thank Cora Kaplan and Anne Janowitz for their wealth of advice and suggestions for improvement. Special thanks are also due to Paula Kennedy (Palgrave Macmillan) for her attentiveness and patience. This book is also indebted to the generosity of *fin-de-siècle* scholars, many of whom read parts of this book and shared their yet unpublished work with me, and I would like to acknowledge here the help of Linda Hunt Beckman, Susan Bernstein, James Diedrick, Emma Francis, Linda K. Hughes, Sonny Kandola, Ruth Livesey, Christine Pullen and Marion Thain. Working on this book would not have been possible without the support, stimulation and challenge of many colleagues and friends who have contributed, directly and indirectly, to the project. Here I want to thank in particular: Graham Bentley, Lola Daimiel, Ross Forman, Hilary Fraser, Kyriaki Hadjiafxendi, Andrew King, Harriet Knight, Mark Knight, Sally Ledger, Polina MacKay, Ulrika Maud, Veronica O'Mara, Luis Parla, Lola Pérez, Chelo Pineda, John Plunkett, Diego Torres, Pedro Vargas, Joanne Woodman, Chris Willis, Maite Zahonero, and the British Library clique. I would also like to thank the School of English and Humanities of Birkbeck College and the Birkbeck Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies for providing a most conducive and intellectual context for this research. Finally, my greatest debt and warmest gratitude are to Sanjeev Sharma, without whose unfailing support this book could not have been written.

I am grateful for the assistance provided by the staff at The Bodleian Library, The British Library, The British Museum Central Archive, Camellia Plc, The John Rylands University Library, Guildhall Library (The Corporation of London), London Topographical Society, The London Transport Museum,

The Museum of London, The National Gallery of Canada, The Pennsylvania State University (Special Collections Library), University College London and The William Andrews Clark Memorial Library of the University of California, Los Angeles. In the few instances where material is still in copyright, every effort has been made to secure permissions for reproduction. If I have failed in any case to trace a copyright holder, I apologize for any apparent negligence and will make the necessary arrangements at the first opportunity. I would like to thank Camellia Plc for permission to quote from the Amy Levy Archive. I would also like to thank Leonie Sturge-Moore and Charmian O'Neil for permissions to quote from the Michael Field papers at the British Library.

Earlier versions of a number of the chapters have appeared in collections and journals. An earlier version of Chapter 1 was first published as 'Phenomena in Flux: The Aesthetics and Politics of Traveling in Modernity' in *Women's Experience of Modernity 1875–1945*, edited by Ann L. Ardis and Leslie W. Lewis, copyright 2003 by The John Hopkins University Press. It is reprinted in an expanded and revised form with permission of The John Hopkins University Press. An earlier version of Chapter 2 was first published in *Nineteenth-Century Geographies: The Transformation of Space from the Victorian Age to the American Century*, edited by Helena Michie and Ronald Thomas, copyright 2002 by Rutgers, The State University. Reprinted with revisions by permission of Rutgers University Press. I thank *Victorian Poetry* for permission to reprint in an extended and revised form parts of Chapter 4, which appeared in its pages as '*Sight and Song:* Transparent Translations and a Manifesto for the Observer'.

Finally my most heartful thanks must go to Diego, Elisa, Juan Vicente and to my parents, Diego Parejo Corraliza and Petra Vadillo Tapia. To them this book is dedicated.

Introduction: Passengers of Modernity

> The first thing I saw on entering the Underground at 3 o'clock was Death of Robert Browning, and I wept.
>
> Violet Hunt[1]

> Tennyson is dead. We saw it in the Underground this morning.
>
> Michael Field[2]

The deaths of Robert Browning and Alfred Tennyson provided Victorian poetry with a symbolic sense of closure. Browning and Tennyson, as Isobel Armstrong has stated, 'continued to write on questions central to the later part of the century until the end of their writing lives' but by the time of their deaths, new poetries and poetic formations were already in place.[3] Browning died on 12 December 1889. That same year, the avant-garde publisher T. Fisher Unwin published one of the most inventive and vanguard collections of lyrical poetry of the late nineteenth century, Amy Levy's *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse*.[4] The collection included poems such as 'London Poets' and 'Ballade of an Omnibus', an inspiring celebration of modern urban mass transport.[5] Indeed what was radically new about this collection was Levy's recognition of the poetics of London and her innovative articulation of women's experiences of urban life.

Alfred Tennyson died three years later, on 6 October 1892. Katharine Bradley and Edith Cooper (the aunt and niece who wrote under the male pseudonym of 'Michael Field') made a note of his death that very same day in the 1892 volume of their joint journal diary, *Works and Days*.[6] Earlier that year, 11 May 1892, Michael Field had published what was probably their most experimental book of poems, *Sight and Song*.[7] This unique experiment consisted in translating into poems the poetics of a collection of paintings. The backbone of this modern collection, which was published by Elkin Mathews and John Lane, the favourite publisher of many aesthetes and decadents, was the 'Preface' to the volume, a proposal for an aesthetic of transport based on a phenomenological poetics of perception which was

drafted by Edith Cooper in that same journal volume for 1892.[8] (The final version of the 'Preface' appeared in the entry for 15 February 1892.)[9] The underlying philosophy of this most unusual collection was the autonomy of the art-object. But even more remarkable was Michael Field's claim that to enjoy a work of art one must transport one's subjectivity to the work of art itself if the subject is to appreciate its intrinsic beauty.

This emphasis on transportation is not incidental. If, as Theodor W. Adorno has argued, a poem could be defined 'as a philosophical sundial telling the time of history', then the poetry of Levy and Michael Field tell the time of late-nineteenth-century British culture.[10] What this culture was will be one of the central concerns of this book, but here it is sufficient to say that it resonates in the diary entries of the proto-modernist novelist Violet Hunt and the poet Michael Field. These records are worth exploring because, contrary to more traditional accounts of modern urban cultures, what they reveal is the active presence of women in the public sphere. Indeed, what is particularly striking about these entries is not that they record the deaths of these two colossi of Victorian poetry. Rather, these entries are emblematic, in a particularly telling way, of the modernity – and women's experiences of modernity – of the *fin-de-siècle* years. Violet Hunt, Katharine Bradley and Edith Cooper were no 'angels in the house': they were passengers travelling on the underground.

The implications of this statement are complex and multiple and will be examined in detail later in this introduction and in subsequent chapters, but here it is important to remark that it offers new understandings of poetics and of gender in late-Victorian London. Margot Finn has recently noted that '[i]n literary and historical studies alike, the past decade has seen the publication of an array of works in which the Victorian era figures not as a bulwark of conservative repression but rather as an age of social, sexual, and spatial emancipation'.[11] This book examines the poetics of a group of late-Victorian women poets by concentrating on an overlooked aspect of nineteenth-century urban life, the new systems for public urban mass transport (omnibuses, trams, underground and suburban railways), which truly made such emancipation possible, especially for middle-class women.

Women Poets and Urban Aestheticism: Passengers of Modernity is a study of four London-based women poets in the late nineteenth century: Amy Levy, Alice Meynell, 'Graham R. Tomson' (Rosamund Marriott Watson) and Michael Field.[12] Taking as its starting point Michel de Certeau's dictum that '*space is a practiced place*' (italics in the text), it draws on contemporary and nineteenth-century studies of London as it attempts to provide some social, historical and geographical basis for the study of their work.[13] To do so, it includes maps of areas of London inhabited by these poets and proposes that the new public transport system provided them with another means with which to explore late-Victorian urban aesthetics. Recognising that the relations between women's new urbanity and lyric writing will generate new

principles for reading the *fin de siècle*, this book will show how for this group of *fin-de-siècle* women poets the figure of the urban passenger became an emblem of the modern poet and of modernity itself.

But before I address these issues, this introduction seeks to set out the groundwork for writing the studies that follow – Amy Levy in Bloomsbury, Alice Meynell in Kensington, Graham R. Tomson in St John's Wood, and Michael Field in suburban London – by outlining the main lines of enquiries I shall be following in this book. The first rationale relates to the question of women poets and their articulation of an urban poetics in the late-Victorian period. My aim here is to situate the lyric writings of these four *fin-de-siècle* women poets in the context of late-Victorian urban aestheticism. The second rationale comes under the banner of what we might call 'women and modernity'. Here, I am interested in tracing the new relationships established between three rather problematic concepts, namely late-Victorian London, modernity, and women, to argue that current scholarship is based upon an urban epistemology that gives primacy to walking over any other form of urban mobility. These two sections will pave the way for my third and last rationale: the key concept of the (sub)urban passenger. Here, a brief history of the emergence and evolution of mass-transit in London as it slowly but gradually became more accessible and readily available to the general public, and particularly to women, will set the stage for my main focus: an articulation of the late-Victorian aesthetics of transport.

Women poets and urban aestheticism

What often goes unnoticed in Walter Pater's eponymous bible of British aestheticism *Marius the Epicurean* (1885), is his observation that '[l]ife in modern London […] is stuff sufficient for the fresh imagination of a youth to build its "palace of art" of'.[14] This recognition of London as a source of intellectual and aesthetic stimulation became a guiding principle of the *fin de siècle*'s poetics of modernity. London was synonymous with modernity; and 'the test of poetry which [professed] to be modern', as the poet Arthur Symons claimed, was 'its capacity for dealing with London, with what one sees or might see there, indoors and out'.[15] *Fin-de-siècle* poets eagerly endorsed the new poetic principles. Richard Le Gallienne observed that with the 'revival of interest in the town and urban things', poets 'awakened simultaneously to the poetry of London', and he also remarked that 'in prose as well as in verse there was, for a time, quite a cult of London and its varied life, from costers to courtesans'.[16] Certainly, the vast number of works concerned with the city, which included Amy Levy's *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse* (1889), W. E. Henley's *London Voluntaries* (1893) and *London Types* (1898), Ernest Rhys' *A London Rose* (1894), Symons' *London Nights* (1895), Laurence Binyon's two runs of *London Visions* (1896 and 1899), and Alice Meynell's *London Impressions* (1898), to name but a few, confirm the

fin de siècle's intense engagement with the subject.[17] Poets not only wrote about the city, its people, and its streets, but also about everything related to the metropolitan way of life: the conditions of living in London, the world of entertainment and the music hall, prostitution, the new urban technologies, consumer culture, and, of course, the role of the modern poet in the new urban environment.

As might be expected, the aesthetic uses of London were manifold. Some poets used it to explore the everyday life, others to emphasise their determination to escape from the materialism of modern life. Some took pleasure in its painterly effect: Meynell's 'November Blue' and Lord Alfred Douglas's 'Impression de Nuit: London' are but two examples of the many painted lyrics which invoked impressionistic recreations of the effect of electric lighting on the city. Others used the figurality of its streets to examine the relationship between the urbanscape and consciousness (A. Mary F. Robinson's 'The Ideal'). If Rosamund Marriott Watson drew on the traditional subject of the 'seasons' to render London as a mythic city ('London in October'), the same subject was invoked by Levy to describe the excitement of urban encounters ('London in July'). If John Davidson's *Fleet Street Eclogues* revisited the pastoral dialogue to capture the complexity of the urban condition, and Levy's 'The Village Garden' expressed the modern poet's preference for the city in detriment of the countryside, then Marriott Watson's beautiful 'A Song of London' reworked the division between the natural and the artificial world by conjuring up this alluring image: 'the grey streets of London/ They blossom like the rose'. Furthermore, if Levy celebrated the London omnibus because it embodied her aesthetics of the modern woman poet as passenger ('Ballade of an Omnibus'); and Oscar Wilde saw the omnibus as a metaphor for decadence ('Symphony in Yellow'); Symons, by contrast, refused to give a voice to the woman passenger in his provocative poem 'In an Omnibus'.[18]

This brief overview of aesthetic responses to London makes immediately apparent that women's contribution to the new poetics was significant and widespread. At this juncture it might be also useful to explain why I have called this artistic response 'urban aestheticism'. Jonathan Freedman has defined the term 'aestheticism' by noting that it designates 'the perfection of the act of perception, particularly visual perception, wrought most frequently, but not exclusively, by a work of art'.[19] In line with Freedman, the term 'urban aestheticism' alludes primarily to the aesthetic responses brought about by the act of perception of the city as both a cultural phenomenon and a work of art. It also describes the aesthetic and cultural terms with which the *fin de siècle* approached the ethos of urban life. Subsequent chapters will also offer more in-depth examinations of women poets' use of urban aestheticism. But in order to advance my thesis, it is important to examine first how recent criticism has discussed the link between *fin-de-siècle* poetry and modern London, to explain why women are absent in this narrative and what we might learn by focusing on the work of women poets.

Two early works that successfully highlighted the predominantly urban poetics of the 1890s were R. K. R. Thornton's *Poetry of the 'Nineties* (1970) and G. Robert Stange's essay 'The Frightened Poets' (1973).[20] In his much-acclaimed anthology of the period, Thornton argued that it was 'inevitable that artists and writers who subscribed to a theory which placed the artificial above the natural should come to paint and write of the city'.[21] More important, the crucial point he made evident was the link between the 1890s vision of the modern city and modernist poetics, in particular the poetry of T. S. Eliot. To this effect, he included two sections on London, 'London! London! Our Delight' and 'London Types'. But, although the anthology incorporated a limited number of poems by women (Olive Custance, Michael Field, Alice Meynell and Dollie Radford), the absence of women poets in the London sections was very significant and was subsequently revised in the second edition, as we shall see. A more detailed examination of the 1890s poetics of space was G. Robert Stange's 'The Frightened Poets', one of the chapters in H. J. Dyos and Michael Wolff's influential collection of essays *The Victorian City* (1973), which I shall be discussing at a later point. Though Stange's aim was to examine London's urban aesthetics in the Victorian period, his chapter was very helpful in illuminating many of the aesthetic principles used by late-Victorian poets in their explorations of London. He thus claimed that '[i]t was only in the nineties that, for poets, painters, and novelists, London ceased to be regarded as a noxious drain or force of devastation'. Noticing that '[t]he change in viewpoint' came 'suddenly' and that it was 'extraordinarily widespread', he argued that it was precisely this difference in viewpoint that established a break with High Victorian poetics, a change that he linked to French literature, in particular to Charles Baudelaire, and to twentieth-century modernism, most notably James Joyce, Ezra Pound, Virginia Woolf and T. S. Eliot.[22]

But by far the most exhaustive and significant study of the subject to date is William B. Thesing's prize-winning book, *The London Muse* (1982). Drawing on Stange, he reiterated that if '[i]n 1876 the poet Austin Dobson seemed hesitant about accepting the city as the new territory for poetry', in the eighteen-nineties 'poets welcomed and even celebrated the "strangeness" of London in their poetry'.[23] He argued that '[w]hat appears with varying fervor throughout the nineties is a confidence that the poet could and ought to make poetic statements regarding the people, spirit, and conditions of London'.[24] What is most disappointing about Thesing's work is the complete absence of women poets. This absence is even more notable because some of the poetry collections examined here, namely W. E. Henley's *A London Garland* (1895) and Wilfred Whitten's *London in Song* (1898), two very successful gift books that took London as their lyric subject, included the work of poets such as Levy and Tomson.[25] Indeed in his short introduction to *A London Garland*, Henley singled out Tomson (by then Rosamund Marriott Watson) as a major representative of urban aesthetics at the

fin de siècle. As he put it: '*A London Garland*, being selected from some five centuries of verse, will be found to example many differences in method and the point of view, which have ruled and passed in English Poetry in the long years dividing the London of Chaucer's Prentice and Dunbar's panegyric and the London of *Piccadilly* and *In the Rain*.'[26] Choosing Tomson's 'In the Rain' (1891) to represent the 1890s poetry of London was not a small matter, as I will discuss in Chapter 3. Placed in the context of Frederick Locker-Lampson's 'Piccadilly' (1857), Tomson's poem exemplified the new poetics of the passenger, offering thus a sharp contrast to Locker-Lampson's more traditional representation of London, which ended in a high moral tone.[27]

By privileging male poets, Thesing failed to recognise the key role of women poets in the formation of the cultural discourse of urban aestheticism. Thus for instance, in an otherwise damning review of Levy's *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse*, Charles Whibley, a great friend and admirer of Henley, had to concede to and indeed praise Levy's originality in choosing London as her lyric subject (hers was arguably the first *fin-de-siècle* collection of poems solely dedicated to London). His attack ended with the observation that London had still to find its poet, meaning of course Henley himself.[28] A few years later, however, the anonymous reviewer of Rosamund Marriott Watson's *Vespertilia and Other Verses* equalled Watson's achievements to Henley's, declaring that '[a]s a poet of London she stands next to Mr. Henley, witness the charming "Song of London" '.[29] In other words, what I am suggesting here is that women poets' response to urban aestheticism demands further attention. We have only to look at Anna Adams' two important anthologies of the subject to recognise the urgent need for rescuing women's contribution from oblivion: *Thames: An Anthology of River Poems* (1999), which includes only one nineteenth-century woman poet, Alice Meynell; and *London in Poetry and Prose* (2003), which does not feature a single nineteenth-century woman poet.[30]

The key question is why they are absent. In their re-valorisation of British aestheticism, Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis Psomiades have offered a very useful explanation. They write that '[t]he neglect of women's writing began with the first histories of aestheticism, which were mostly written by men who had been active in the movement and who recorded primarily the activities of their own predominantly male circles. Yeats, Holbrook Jackson, Richard Le Gallienne, and Osburt [sic] Burdett, writing in the early years of the twentieth century, all recorded an aestheticism that centered mostly on tragically short-lived male poets'.[31] This 'skewed image of the movement', as Schaffer puts it, has been 'perpetuated in subsequent scholarship'. And, as a result, as she compellingly claims, 'men and women who had similar status in the 1890s have wildly divergent images today'.[32] She contends that '[i]n the late-Victorian era, these writers were rivals, equals, and friends', adding that 'the gulf between the foremost and the forgotten is our experience, not theirs'.[33]

To be sure, the first histories of the movement failed to acknowledge women's contribution to urban aesthetics. Jackson's *The Eighteen Nineties* (1913) is a case in point. He noted that 'London inspired a renaissance of wonder' and that 'the men of the Nineties certainly added a new meaning to their worship of the great place'.[34] Tracing back the origins of this new urban culture to Baudelaire, he claimed that 'the essential dandyism of the decade [...] needed an urban background'.[35] What was implicit here was, of course, Jackson's understanding of the movement as intrinsically linked to men's experiences of the new urbanism. Moreover, he was also determined to draw attention to male poets' cultivation of a public urban life. As he explained, '[a]n artificial and half-hearted attempt was made to revive the literary tavern, and literary discussions were actually heard once again in so unpromising a quarter as Fleet Street, as they once had been heard in the days of Samuel Johnson. The Rhymers' Club foregathered at the Cheshire Cheese, and members read their poems to one another and discussed the great business of poetry and life.'[36] As Schaffer and others have argued, by focusing on The Rhymers' Club, which specifically excluded women poets, and their gatherings at the Cheshire Cheese, Jackson obscured women's engagement with the subject *and*, I would add, women's participation in the new urbanism.[37] In addition, he oversimplified the role of the city in the formation of aestheticism by leaving out other urban spaces which were either favoured by women or which fostered the intellectual exchange between male and female poets. The most notable of these spaces was the literary *salon*. But the community of *fin-de-siècle* poets also met at other London venues, such as Bernard's Inn, where Paul Verlaine gave a lecture on 'Contemporary French Poets'; or the London Institution, where Walter Pater lectured on Prosper Mérimée. Literary clubs and museums, in particular the British Museum Reading Room, were also key spaces in the formation of urban aestheticism, especially for women poets. And visits to London's National Gallery, for instance, were at the core of Michael Field's *Sight and Song*, as I shall argue in Chapter 4.[38]

Thus, a consideration of the lyric writings of *fin-de-siècle* women poets will not only offer a new characterisation of late-Victorian urban aestheticism but it will also suggest fresh new understandings of the role of the city in the formation of metropolitan aesthetics. At this point, one might claim that recent research has already started to map, in Schaffer's words, 'The Women's World of British Aestheticism'.[39] Indeed Schaffer's *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes* and Schaffer and Psomiades' collection of essays *Women and British Aestheticism*, have been pivotal in re-evaluating the role of gender in the formation and development of this period. Though Schaffer's work is concerned mostly with women writers of prose and fiction, her examination of Meynell's prose has been very helpful in my thinking about Meynell's urban aesthetics.[40] In the context of aesthetic poetry, I have found Linda K. Hughes' vital work on Tomson particularly inspiring.[41]

One might also argue that there is already an important body of work that focuses on *fin-de-siècle* women poets. Since the 1990s, the critical canon of *fin-de-siècle* poetry has gone through a profound transformation. The work of literary scholars such as Isobel Armstrong, Linda Hunt Beckman, Virginia Blain, Joseph Bristow, Linda K. Hughes, Angela Leighton, Yopie Prins and Margaret Stetz, to name but a few, has been crucial in identifying and bringing to the forefront the work of the female poets of the late-Victorian period.[42] Since then, we have witnessed a gradual rediscovery of poets such as Amy Levy, Michael Field, Alice Meynell and Graham R. Tomson (Rosamund Marriott Watson), A. Mary F. Robinson, Mathilde Blind, Olive Custance and Dollie Radford, among many others.[43] In addition, websites such as the Indiana Victorian Women Writers Project and recent anthologies by Leighton and Margaret Reynolds, Armstrong and Bristow, and Hughes have made the work of these women poets available to students and scholars alike, bringing to light the hitherto neglected rich poetry by women that grew out of the late-Victorian period.[44] Few scholars would dispute that this revalorisation has already helped to re-consider *fin-de-siècle* literature. R. K. R. Thornton's second edition of his *Poetry of the 1890s* (1997), co-edited with Marion Thain, is a direct response to the substantial developments in women's poetry: the new edition features two new sections ('The Making of the New Woman' and '*She* is an Artist, Too'), with women poets now included in the London sections.[45]

My own examination of *fin-de-siècle* women's poetry owes a tremendous amount to the work of these scholars, as my discussion in later chapters will make evident. Where this study differs, however, is in that it pays attention to the relations between women's poetry and the new forms of urbanism in late-Victorian London. What this book will show is that London was for poets such as Levy, Tomson/Watson, Meynell and Michael Field both an important cultural centre that fostered intellectual exchange and creative work *and* an aesthetic object with which to articulate modernity. More important, I want to call attention to Levy's, Tomson/Watson's, Meynell's and Michael Field's aesthetic writings by concentrating on an ignored aspect of urban life that fostered women's presence in the public sphere: the new vehicles for public transport. By doing so, the aim of this book is not just to explore how each of these women writers articulated the theme of the modern woman in the city, but also to discuss how these women engaged with urban aestheticism as both poets and passengers.

Since what I am proposing here is the existence of a group of *fin-de-siècle* women who incorporate the idea of urban mass transport into the very core of their poetics, it should be clear from the outset the way in which this book explores the lyric genre in relation to the urban and social history of women in late-Victorian London. Theodor W. Adorno's suggestive definition of the poem 'as a philosophical sundial telling the time of history' rests on the principle that at the root of lyric poetry is society. He begins by posing

the following question: 'Can anyone, you will ask, but a man who is insensitive to the Muse talk about lyric poetry and society?'[46] He responds that this is possible if 'lyric works are not abused by being made objects with which to demonstrate sociological theses but if instead the social element in them is shown to reveal something essential about the basis of their [lyrical] quality'.[47]

Accordingly, the work I am presenting in these pages aims to show how the historical and social elements of the poetry of Levy, Meynell, Tomson and Michael Field reveal something essential about the lyric self and the lyrical quality of their writing and of the urban aesthetics of the *fin de siècle*. Thus, for example, if Adorno's thesis is based upon a unified and fixed (male) subjectivity, then an examination of the lyric form as a mode of transportation between the 'I' and the urban social will reveal that what unifies the lyric work of these women poets is their intention to attain mobility and transience in a variety of ways: Levy by creating a transient self in the poet-cum-passenger, Meynell by experimenting with the mobility of the passenger's eye, Tomson by disrupting the boundaries between the lyric self and the city, and Michael Field by transporting the lyric subject into the object. I will not be proposing, therefore, that the new material and technological conditions of urban life directly produced certain new kinds of aesthetic responses. Rather what I hope to map out is a more dynamic and fluctuating relationship between the two. Such a flexible relationship will allow us to reflect upon women poets' construction of the lyric self in new ways, offering us new prisms through which to illuminate the relations between women poets and urban aestheticism.

Women and modernity in late-Victorian London

At this point, we need to consider the way in which current social and literary studies have discussed women's participation in the modern urban social world of late-Victorian London. Over the last decade, the subject of women and modernity has emerged as an important new discipline within both nineteenth- and twentieth-century studies, and I would like to begin my discussion with a brief overview of how research on this field has brought to life the late-Victorian metropolis and, more to the point of this book, how women have figured within this history.

Coinciding with the rise of urban studies and with the first translation into English of Walter Benjamin's influential study of modernity *Charles Baudelaire: An English Poet in the Era of High Capitalism* (1973), new lines of enquiry into nineteenth-century studies were opened up by the publication of H. J. Dyos and Michael Wolff's co-edited collection of essays *The Victorian City* (1973) and the appearance of Raymond Williams' *The Country and the City* (1973).[48] Interested in 'the ways in which the circumstances of urban life had influenced, or were influenced by, the ideas, the values, and the

creative expressions of men and women living' in an urban environment, Dyos and Wolff claimed that to 'study the inhabitants of Victorian Britain as city-dwellers was therefore to come upon them in their most telling role, the prototype of modern urban man'.[49] With essays such as 'The Literature of the Streets', 'The Frightened Poets', 'Metropolitan Types' and 'The Power of the Railway', 'Slums and Suburbs', or 'London, the Artifact', their interdisciplinary book painted a vivid portrait of the Victorian city, most notably of London, by delving into the multiple layers of the social, industrial and cultural experiences of urban life.[50] This early identification of nineteenth-century London with modernity was also intimated by Williams' work, an examination of the way in which English writers had regarded the opposed concepts of country and city. What was particularly fascinating about Williams' influential book was his assertion that 'the new qualities of the modern city had been associated, from the beginning, with a man walking, as if alone, in its streets'.[51]

As it is well known, this perception of the modern urban man as a male stroller is a key concept in Benjamin's work.[52] It is also one of the major tropes within the examination of metropolitan modernities, one that has instigated in recent years an intense debate about the presence of women in the streets of late-Victorian London. But before discussing these issues it is, however, essential to remember that contemporary studies of London owe a great deal to the literature on modernity that emerged during the 1970s and 1980s. One might go so far as to say that much of the framework that underlies current investigations of nineteenth-century London originates in the philosophical discourse of modernity and that research on this subject is as much a response to, as well as a critique of this literature. Perhaps the most significant of these influences has been Marshall Berman's *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air* (1982), whose reading of Benjamin's *Charles Baudelaire* enthused many of the formulations of his groundbreaking book.

Though a great deal has been written about modernity, there seems to be no consensus upon its definition. Berman's memorable explanation, however, still frames discussions of this concept: '[t]o be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world – and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything that we have, everything that we know, everything we are'.[53] According to this account, modernity offers individuals the power of transformation but it also threatens them with dissolution; it is both exciting and dangerous. He understood the modern experience in the dialectics of modernisation and modernism, which he explored in his discussion of the cities of Paris, St Petersburg and New York. And though he saw modernity as an all-embracing movement evolving in three phases (1500–1789; 1789–1900; and 1900 onwards), the book focused mostly on the second period.[54] This definition of modernity is important for our investigation into women's experience of modernity because, as Wendy Parkins

notes, current research on this field has 'tended to focus on the city and the opportunities for adventure and danger, pleasure and harm, which the metropolis offered to women'.[55] But more pertinent here is to draw attention to Berman's influential examination of Baudelaire in the streets of nineteenth-century Paris. Indeed, drawing on Benjamin, Berman's inquiry helped to establish Paris as the capital city of the nineteenth century, the *flâneur* as the emblem of modernity, and Baudelaire as its poet.

Recent work on this subject has begun, however, to interrogate Berman's totalising narrative.[56] Two of these critiques are of particular interest for this book. The first concerns Berman's geographical mapping; the second focuses on his blindness to gender. An exponent of the first critique is Miles Ogborn. Drawing on critics such as Paul Gilroy and Derek Gregory, he argued in his provocative examination of late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century London, *Spaces of Modernity* (1998), that 'Berman reruns the same story of capitalist modernisation and urban transformation in Paris, St. Petersburg and New York, flattening the differences in the specific and localised experiences of its reconfigurations as he does so.'[57] He thus intimated that any account of modernity had to be historically and geographically specific. In her innovative *Victorian Babylon* (2000), Lynda Nead also rejected Berman's formulation on similar grounds. Arguing that '[t]o shift the object of study from Paris to London in the nineteenth century, is to tell a different story of modernity', Nead importantly suggested an alternative critique by paying particular attention to the local elements that constituted London in the mid-nineteenth century.[58] She thus offered a specific understanding of the modernisation process by focusing on London's rapid technological transformations during those years.

But in addition, and here we enter into the second critique, the critique of gender, Nead has deepened modernity's historical dimension by extending its 'history […] from the official discourses of government to the intimate experiences of individuals', in particular women.[59] Nead's intelligent work is built upon a wealth of feminist criticism that has interrogated since the mid-1980s many of the gender-biased assumptions of modernity. This critique has perhaps been best expressed by Rita Felski, who recognised in *The Gender of Modernity* (1995) that '[m]any of the key symbols of the modern in the nineteenth century – the public sphere, the man of the crowd, the stranger, the dandy, the flâneur – were explicitly gendered'.[60] Although some very recent work has begun to challenge the pre-eminence of the *flâneur*, it is no exaggeration to say that the centrality of this figure in the discourse of modernity still haunts any discussion about women's participation in urban social practices.[61] This is because, as Griselda Pollock writes, the *flâneur* 'symbolizes the privilege or freedom to move about the public arenas of the city observing but never interacting, consuming the sights through a controlling but rarely acknowledged gaze, directed as much at other people as at the goods for sale'.[62]

Given the contentious nineteenth-century ideology about the gendered division of the public and private sphere, what is at stake in these accounts is whether women could have participated in the phenomenon of *flânerie*.[63] As I write, positions seem to be shifting from critics for whom such a possibility could not have been historically possible to critics who confidently use the term *flâneuse* to speak of women's urban ramblings.[64] I would argue, however, that what has been most useful in this debate is that the attention paid by critics to the conflict inherently posited by the gendered discourse of modernity (i.e. whether modernity represents or can represent women's lives) has turned into an important reflection upon the physical presence, and the social and cultural practices of women in cities.

In the context of late-Victorian London, these concerns have been mostly explored in three main arenas: the regularisation of London's (sub)urban space; the world of entertainment and the music hall; and the rise of consumer culture. As Elizabeth Wilson observes, the rise of suburbia and the regularisation of London's public space in the nineteenth century were centred upon the presence of middle-class women in the streets. She explains that '[w]omen […] were perceived as the objects of both regulation *and* banishment', an argument also echoed in Judith Walkowitz's *City of Dreadful Delight* (1992).[65] Specifically, Wilson states that though '[i]t was recognised that women would continue to work' and therefore they 'could not be entirely excluded from the public sphere' – hence 'the policed city, cleansed of temptation', '[a]t the same time, the suburban ideal always acted ideologically to debase and delegitimate the pleasures and possibilities of urban life'.[66] Judith Walkowitz has similarly used the dynamics of pleasure and control to reveal that with the new forms of entertainment both working and middle-class women asserted their physical presence in the streets of London. She demonstrates that women were not simply figures in London's landscape of male spectators but active participants in the stories of metropolitan life, and describes among these new positions women in the music hall, charity workers, the new woman, lady journalists, and shopping ladies. It is perhaps the arena of consumer culture which has become key in re-assessing the relations between women and modernity.[67] As Erika D. Rappaport has explained in her monumental examination of consumer culture, *Shopping for Pleasure* (2000), the emergence of London's department stores showed that 'as writers and readers, workers and shoppers, middle-class women fashioned the late-Victorian and Edwardian West End as a shopping district, a tourist sight, an entertainment center, and an arena for female work and politics'.[68]

This historical revalorisation of women's presence in London's public sphere has enabled critics to expand the existing literary canon of women's writing in the late-Victorian period to include women's writing about city literature. These studies have focused on explorations of the street, using primarily the figure of the *flâneur* as a prism through which to argue for an

urban aesthetics of modernity. Thus, in this context, we may begin to see that the notion of women 'walking the Victorian streets', the suggestive title of Deborah Epstein Nord's (1995) examination of women in nineteenth-century London, has turned into a questioning of the role of women's participation in the formation of a literature of rambling.[69] Indeed, her innovative work starts by asking this crucial question: 'If the rambler was a man, and if one of the primary tropes of his urban description was the woman of the streets, could there have been a *female* spectator or a vision of the urban panorama crafted by a female imagination?'[70] Her impressive book was the first of its kind in offering a genealogy of women's vision of the nineteenth-century city.

These concerns are at the centre of my study and they lead me to propose an alternative approach in addressing the subject of women and modernity in late-Victorian London, and to offer another viewpoint to rethink women's poetry of the *fin de siècle*. The underlying idea that unites these studies is that their epistemological account of London and of urban spectatorship is based on the notion of walking. Thus, although Walkowitz, Nead and Rappaport all touch on the role of public transport in facilitating the movement of middle-class women – which they almost invariably link to shopping – walking is still considered as *the* epistemological category that best defines the nineteenth-century notion of modernity for both men and women.[71] What I will be suggesting in this book, however, is that an examination of the various other forms of urban mobility in late-Victorian London (i.e. omnibuses, trams, underground and suburban trains) provides us with new and differing ways of assessing women and modernity aesthetics at the *fin de siècle*.[72]

Christoph Asendorf has observed that in modernity '[m]obility is defined as freedom and freedom as mobility'.[73] And mobility, as Nead has claimed, was 'the primary goal' of London's modernisation process in the nineteenth century.[74] Late-Victorian women were acutely aware of the emancipatory possibilities imbued in this identification of movement with freedom, as the following remark by Michael Field shows. Notice how Michael Field situates the significance of women's mobility in terms of modernity, and in terms of aesthetics:

> A woman's mobility is in her favour, when once she is awaked to life, also her eagerness for experience, that raw material of had, which has been selected for her & limited grudgingly through the centuries. A true modern not only feels the zeit-geist but acts on its contagious motives, without wasting a moment in delay.[75]

Recent studies are keen to call attention to the physical presence of women in London. They show middle-class women hard at work at the British Museum Reading Room, visiting galleries and exhibitions, attending lectures, doing philanthropic work at the East End, working as journalists,

strolling around the West End, promenading in Hyde Park, going to the theatre and to restaurants, visiting *salons*, and shopping, among many other activities. Yet, the question that begs to be asked is how did women get to these places? How did women move around London in the late nineteenth century?

The answer is of course a self-evident one: men and women moved around the city in the new systems of public transport. This is manifest in many of the visual images of London, images that explicitly reveal a city populated with vehicles for mass transport in which men and women travel. See for example Sidney Starr, *The City Atlas* (1889) or G. W. Joy, *The Bayswater Omnibus* (1895) (Figures 1 and 2). It is explored in poems such as Levy's 'Ballade of an Omnibus'. And it is also revealed in more intimate documents such as the following extract from the diary of Michael Field, in which a journey by tram and by omnibus turns into a metaphorical ride into Michael Field's past. Notice in particular how Michael Field uses these vehicles as critical tools with which to remember with nostalgia past struggles; past friendships; and their first book of poems, *Long Ago* (1889), published some ten years earlier to great critical acclaim:

> Mick ['Michael', i.e. Katharine Bradley] & I [Edith Cooper] one of these last days go to Hampton Court to leave large room for Dr. John & Amy – We ride on the top of a tram through the wide chestnut-nave of Bushy Park. The grass in some of the courtyard is extreme emerald & the water still splashes over it while we burn. Inside we are swept by draughts & by winds of long ago. […] Where is the lovely guide who made the rooms into valleys of happiness? But it is all right in the gardens, save that the sun that makes the late flowers glory in being wide, almost slays us & we turn with relief to an omnibus that will save us & return us to Richmond.[76]

What I am implying then is that to this understanding of a Victorian modernity based on walking, we must add the idea of an urban culture that incorporates public transport as a vehicle of modernity. Focusing on urban mass transport would allow us to deepen current examinations of the public/private divide by asking how did women negotiate the public space through the use of mass-transit vehicles? And it would also pose further questions about the dynamics of women and the aesthetics of modernity in the late-Victorian metropolis: What did it mean to be a passenger at the *fin de siècle*? How did poets such as Amy Levy, Alice Meynell, Graham R. Tomson and Michael Field experience urban mass transit in late-Victorian London? Did they see it as a new form of urban spectatorship? Did they use it as a tool with which to explore urban aestheticism? Did their lyric writings correspond with new ways of seeing things? What does an examination of urban mass transport reveal about the relations between the lyric self and the city? Moreover, although this book focuses on metropolitan mobility, a

Figure 1 Sidney Starr, *The City Atlas* (1889)

consideration of the concept of travelling will allow us to expand our understanding of women's mobility by including cosmopolitan travelling, as my last chapter, on Michael Field, will make manifest.

Theodor Adorno has warned us, however, that '[s]ocial concepts should not be applied to the works [of art] from without but rather drawn from an exacting examination of the works themselves'. 'To determine that', he adds,

Figure 2 G. W. Joy, *The Bayswater Omnibus* (1895)

'requires both knowledge of the interior of the works of art and knowledge of the society outside.'[77] Thus, before turning to examine these issues in the book proper, a brief history of London's public transport as it grew from its first omnibus line to a complex network of mass-transport structures must first be sketched. This will supply us with a historical understanding of the rise of the passenger as an intrinsic urban type. And it will also provide us with an insight into the intricate mobility patterns and new speeds of late-Victorian London. Such history forms the basis for the four main ideas upon which the study of this group of women poets rests: the growing mechanisation of urban mobility, the epistemology of travelling, the passenger's relation to consumer culture, and the changes in perception brought about by acceleration.

Becoming passengers

We can situate the origins of London's public transport in July 1829, when George Shillibeer, who copied the idea from Paris, introduced his first omnibus line between Paddington and the Bank (see Figure 3):[78]

> OMNIBUS – G. Shillibeer, induced by the universal admiration the above vehicle called forth at Paris, has commenced running one upon the Parisian mode from PADDINGTON to the BANK.

Figure 3 Oil painting of George Shillibeer's *Omnibus* of 1829, outside his Bloomsbury workshop

> The superiority of this carriage over the ordinary stage coaches for comfort and safety must be obvious, all the passengers being inside and the fare charged from Paddington to the Bank being one shilling, and from Islington to the Bank or Paddington sixpence.
>
> The proprietor begs to add that a person of great respectability attends his vehicle as conductor; and every possible attention will be paid to the accommodation of ladies and children.
>
> Hours of starting:- From Paddington Green to the Bank at 9, 12, 3, 6 and 8 o'clock; from the Bank to Paddington at 10, 1, 4, 7 and 9 o'clock.[79]

Until 1829 the only mode of transport existing in London was the stage coach, which joined the suburbs with central London but had no right to stop in the city to pick up passengers (a right only reserved to hackney vehicles: coaches, chariots, and cabriolets). This first omnibus line was successful because the route chosen had the heaviest traffic from the north-western suburbs to central London, which was also notably outside the jurisdiction of the hackney coaches. Omnibuses could thus stop to take up or drop down passengers freely without infringing the law.[80] Covering five miles in 40 minutes and at the price of one shilling for all the journey, and sixpence for half (Islington to the Bank, or Islington to Paddington), the service was

an immediate success with the middle classes, to whom Shillibeer appealed by stressing its respectability, its safety and comfort and, of course, its Parisian cachet. But what really made the omnibus a middle-class facility was that it could only be used by people who did not need to be in the City before 10 o'clock in the morning; hence excluding automatically the working classes.[81] Furthermore, the workers could not travel daily at those prices.[82] The working classes thus still walked wherever they had to and many, and this was not unusual, walked as far as four miles to their place of work and back.

As Roy Porter has argued, the omnibus started a transportation revolution that turned into a 'commuter revolution' as London started to grow outwards.[83] The omnibus was instrumental in bringing about a new social configuration, as the middle classes, thanks to the gentility of the omnibus, were able to escape from London's congested city centre to newly created suburbs. The working classes, however, either remained in the city centre or moved into inner-city suburbs which were no more than three or four miles away from their workplace. The conditions of the poorer classes were worse, as they were forced to remain in the congested slums of London unable to pay for decent accommodation and for transport. But this division of the metropolis also engendered urban space in new ways, as middle-class women remained in suburbia while men came daily into the city to work (see Chapter 4).[84] Omnibuses, and subsequently other forms of public transport, were responsible for the gendering of suburbia and were also key in enabling women to travel to and explore the city.

From the early origins of the transport system women were targeted as passengers. Shillibeer's interest in attracting middle-class women to use the service is particularly illuminating. When he advertised the Paddington–Bank Line he emphasised that 'every possible attention will be paid to the accommodation of ladies and children'. He was thus not only promoting the gentility of the vehicle; he was also selling a fetish of the modern for the fashionable woman. This he did by associating the service quite distinctly with shopping and fashion, a crucial subject to which I will shortly return and which will be discussed further in Chapter 2. The omnibus (and later the underground) proved very successful with middle-class women, as these were their only means of accessing the city, unless they were sufficiently well off to own a carriage. Omnibus companies needed and encouraged this kind of traffic. The reason was purely based on economics: omnibuses (and later the underground for exactly the same reason) were eager to attract middle-class women who would fill buses and trains in the afternoon, when the flow of early-morning commuters had abated.[85]

Another form of transport that was widely used in the first half of the nineteenth century was the steamboat.[86] This service was quite popular because, as L. C. B. Seaman remarks, it 'could carry hundreds of passengers considerable distances with reasonable celerity'.[87] However, its high rate of

accidents and its dependency on the weather made the service quite unreliable.[88] Meanwhile, the first London railways started to appear. The first line joined Deptford to Spa Road (Bermondsey) in 1836, and to London Bridge in December of the same year.[89] From the beginning it was clear that the line could be used for short-distance passengers. Many used the line to get to work in London, but the company made most of its profit going out to the suburbs rather than vice versa, and doing more business on weekends and holidays than on weekdays.[90] This was generally what happened with all the railway lines until 1863, even though they continued their expansion throughout this period. Like the omnibus, the railway helped to promote suburbs for the middle classes, but instead of creating a regular form of transport for the commuter, the lines were mostly used for holidaymakers and pleasure trips.[91]

During the 1840s and 1850s omnibus lines and omnibus traffic continued to grow. It was especially the Great Exhibition of 1851 that gave the omnibus a crucial boost, as Londoners queued up in great numbers to obtain an omnibus seat that would take them to see the great wonders of the Exhibition (see Figure 4).[92] But the boost was followed by a profound crisis, as omnibus companies were left with an excess of vehicles, which forced them to reduce their fares drastically. The crisis led to the formation of the London General Omnibus Company [LGOC] in 1855.[93] By the end of the 1850s, however, due to the increasing volume of omnibus traffic, London's busiest streets became increasingly congested, to the point that it was quicker to travel by foot than to get an omnibus or a cab.[94] It was not just that the city was full of vehicles of all sorts, it was also that the metropolis lacked a system of wide roads through which the traffic could flow easily.[95] In addition, London's city centre was dangerously overcrowded. The population of London grew considerably during the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the nineteenth century London had a population of 865,000; in the 1830s it had nearly doubled to 1.5 million; and by the 1880s, it was fast approaching 5 million.[96] Immigration from rural areas and from the continent was at its highest and (as already remarked) the lower and poorer

Figure 4 The Great Exhibition of 1851 at Hyde Park

classes tended to concentrate in the city centre, next to their place of work in the infamous slums of London.[97]

A radical solution to London's congestion problem was thus required and this came from Charles Pearson, the founder of the Metropolitan Railway. His vision was of an underground system of railways that would link all the main railway stations in London, thus clearing the roads of all traffic. More importantly, he advocated cheap public transport affordable by the working classes, which would potentially allow them to leave the slums for the newly created suburbs in the outskirts of London. The first underground line in the world, 'The Metropolitan Railway Line', opened in London on 9 January 1863. It joined Paddington Street Station to Farringdon Street Station via Edgware Road, Baker Street, Portland Road (today Great Portland Street), Gower Street (which is now Euston Square Station) and King's Cross. It was a great accomplishment, *The Illustrated London News* noted, because 'for the first time in the history of the world, men [could] ride in pleasant carriages, and with considerable comfort, lower down than gaspipes and waterpipes, and besides sewers and mains'.[98] To these first underground passengers it must have been uncanny. A few years earlier, London had been crying out for a proper sewage system that would clean the metropolis, and now, in 1863, the population could travel underneath the earth, in comfort, next to the sewers.[99]

The following day, 10 January 1863, when the line opened to the public, a crowd of spectators rushed to the stations eager to undergo the unique experience of travelling underground. The *Daily Telegraph* reported that '[o]n Saturday, from as early an hour as six o'clock in the morning until late at night, trains filled with people were running at short intervals of time between Paddington and Farringdon Street [the two ends of the Metropolitan Railway Line]'.[100] In its first day the line recorded more than 30,000 passengers and the company took nearly £850 in fares.[101] It was a complete and total success, well beyond the expectations of the Metropolitan Board. The stations 'became crowded with intending travellers', but 'poor were the chances of a place to those who ventured to take tickets at any mid-way station, the occupants being, with but very rare exceptions, long-distance or terminus passengers'.[102] The phenomenal success of the Metropolitan Railway, which secured the construction of further lines, was thus reported in the *Daily Telegraph*: 'the crowding at King's Cross was immense. This station is certainly the finest on the line, throwing even the termini into the shade. Here the constant cry as the trains arrive of "No room!" appears to have a very depressing effect upon those assembled.'[103] *The Illustrated London News* remarked that 'the desire to travel' had taken the Metropolitan Railway by surprise. It seemed as if the masses had left the streets of London to crowd the platforms of King's Cross station. Londoners agglomerated on the platforms to express their readiness to accept this new technology, but their desire was far beyond what was available to them during this period.

And certainly, what this incident showed to the Metropolitan Company and to the government was that the urban dweller was willing to break out of the shell of the pedestrian.

The opening of the Metropolitan Railway Line in 1863 was the beginning of a new era in urban mass transport. According to T. C. Barker and Michael Robbins, in 1854 '200,000 people came into the City daily on foot and 15,000 by steamboat'.[104] In addition, 'there were about 6,000 commuters a day by railway', and 'omnibuses might have brought in nearly 20,000 people'.[105] In other words, although mass transport was becoming more and more common in the metropolis, until practically 1863, people walked wherever they had to go. The arrival of the underground marked both psychologically and technologically the beginning of a new era. Passers-by and the masses were ready to travel, to move through the city comfortably and at high speed. And with the arrival of the underground, with tickets as cheap as a two-penny return for the early morning trains, the omnibus had to reduce drastically its fares if it wanted to compete.[106] The middle-class character of the omnibus disappeared as the working classes started to use the omnibus. It was an extremely important change, one which changed totally the use of the transport system in the metropolis, and a change whose effects can be seen today, since now the price of a bus journey is considerably much cheaper than the tube's. Between 1863 and 1885 the number of passengers increased rapidly and steadily. In addition, a new form of transport, trams, was developed. Although there had been some attempts at opening tramway lines in the metropolis as early as 1857, the experiments had failed.[107] During the 1870s, however, a whole network of tramway lines was created. Tram traffic grew rapidly in the metropolis becoming, in effect, the form of transport of the working classes, as its fares were considerably lower. By the mid-1870s trams were transporting nearly as many passengers as the LGOC.[108] By the end of the nineteenth-century London had been transformed into a complex network of mass-transport structures. Trams transported about 280 million passengers annually; 300 million passengers travelled by omnibus; and the underground carried a total of 131 million passengers.[109] These figures speak for themselves: London had become a city of passengers.

The most obvious effect of the new locomotive conditions of modern London was that urban dwellers began to use public transport to move around a city full of travelling machines. Arthur Symons described this important change in the following terms: 'it is a pain to walk in the midst of all these hurrying and clattering machines; the multitude of humanity, that "bath" into which Baudelaire loved to plunge, is scarcely discernible, it is secondary to the machines'.[110] It is perhaps surprising that it was Baudelaire

who first envisaged the influence and transformation that mass transit would bring both to urban life and to the modern urban poet. In one of his most famous prose poems, 'Loss of a Halo', a poet and an ordinary man run into each other in what seems to be some kind of risqué place, possibly a brothel. The poet is explaining how he has lost his 'halo' in the street:

> My friend, you know my terror of horses and vehicles. Well, just now as I was crossing the boulevard in a great hurry, splashing through the mud in the midst of a seething chaos, and with death galloping at me from every side, I gave a sudden start and my halo slipped off my head and fell into the mire of the macadam. I was far too frightened to pick it up. I decided it was less unpleasant to lose my insignia than to get my bones broken. Then too, I reflected, every cloud has a silver lining. I can now go about incognito, be as low as I please and indulge in debauch like ordinary mortals. So here I am as you see, exactly like yourself.[111]

The poem, as Marshall Berman has argued, describes the desanctification of art, the loss of halo of the modern poet.[112] What is interesting about this poem, however, is that the poet has lost his halo while crossing the road. He is afraid of horses and vehicles and prefers to leave behind his halo rather than take the risk of being run over. The description of traffic as 'death galloping at me from every side' clearly indicates that a profound change, an ontological transformation, is taking place. The imminent menace of death has shocked the urban poet, forcing him to become different. For Berman, this change is the mutation of the poet into a man of the streets. But, in my view, the poet's fear, the fact that he is afraid of going across the street, underlines a much more complex issue. It problematises the presence of 'man' in the streets, because the urban space has been colonised by vehicles for mass transportation. And indeed the poet does not venture to cross the road again; traffic has pushed him aside. 'For the flaneur [sic]', as Susan Buck-Morss puts it, 'it was traffic that did him in.'[113] Baudelaire found the loss of halo certainly positive, as now the poet could wander in the metropolis unnoticed. However, traffic was in essence controlling or re-directing the wanderings of the poet.

It was Arthur Symons who brought forward Baudelaire's fear of traffic, as London became the capital of a complex network of mass-transport structures. He realised that public transport had introduced a new mode of experiencing urban life, travelling. The result, as he quite bluntly put it, was that walking was becoming obsolete in London:

> Does any one any longer walk? If I walk I meet no one walking, and I cannot wonder at it, for what I meet is an uproar, and a whizz and a leap past me, and a blinding cloud of dust, and a machine on which scarecrows perch is disappearing at the end of the road. The verbs to loll, to

> lounge, to dawdle, to loiter, the verbs precious to Walt Whitman, precious to every lover of men and of himself, are losing their currency; they will be marked 'o' for obsolete in the dictionaries of the future. All that poetry which Walt Whitman found in things merely because they were alive will fade out of existence like the Red Indian. It will live on for some time yet in the country where the railway has not yet smeared its poisonous trail over the soil; but in London there will soon be no need of men, there will be nothing but machines.[114]

Symons was quite right in perceiving a change in the peripatetic character of urban life. He saw that every day there were fewer people who lolled, lounged, dawdled and loitered in London, so much so, that he believed that these verbs, which represented modes of existence in the metropolis, were disappearing, and would become totally obsolete. Or, if they remained, it would be in areas where public transport did not exist. But in addition, Symons' use of these verbs was expressive of something else. Lolled, lounge, dawdle, and loiter are of course verbs directly associated with the *flâneur*. Therefore, what Symons was suggesting here was that the appearance of public transport shook the foundations of the epistemology of the *flâneur*, because fewer people went out walking. The *flâneur* thus was losing 'his' 'currency' as new cultural values were being rapidly absorbed by society, and old forms of urban life were being altered or transformed.

Symons was certainly alarmed by this transformation. His description of omnibus passengers as scarecrows is symbolic of this fear. A scarecrow is literally a 'figure of man hung with old clothes and set up in field [sic] to keep birds away, object of baseless fear, badly dressed or grotesque-looking or skinny person' (OED). This is exactly what Symons was afraid of, that human beings would mutate into grotesque, mechanised mannequins. But there is more to Symons' metaphor. The passenger, like the scarecrow, is 'hung and set up' in the city (clearly he is referring to passengers travelling on the top of omnibuses), to keep 'birds' (i.e. *flâneurs*) away. And here we can clearly hear echoes of Baudelaire's 'Loss of a Halo'. But Symons' rejection of traffic is much more visceral and vicious. Baudelaire saw that mass transport had positively transformed the urban poet into an ordinary man. Symons rejected this transformation because it would ultimately lead to the disappearance of the *flâneur*. Consequently, the disappearance of these verbs was for him something more than a simple linguistic evolution, it was also an epistemological transformation.

Symons was not alone in this critique of modern urban technology.[115] The New Woman prose writers George Egerton (Mary Chavelita Dunne Bright) and Evelyn Sharp also viewed with scepticism the passenger's aesthetics of modernity. George Egerton's *Yellow Book* short story 'A Lost Masterpiece. A City Mood, Aug. '93' is a case in point.[116] What is most striking about this rather strange and ironic tale is that it uses travelling and

walking dialectically to examine the relations between modern (urban) writing and the real. In the story, Egerton's central character, eager to observe the urban panorama, takes a river steamer bound for London Bridge and later travels across London in an omnibus. The passenger's experience, however, becomes 'a lost masterpiece' when 'near Chancery Lane' 'a foreign element cropped up and disturbed the rich flow of the [passenger-cum-writer's] fancy'. This foreign element is a streetwalker or *flâneuse*, and is characterised as 'a feminine presentment of the wandering Jew' whose determination to walk the streets of London spoils the creative impulse of the omnibus rider. She keeps disrupting the passenger's view as she briskly manages to keep up with the pace of the omnibus, whose progress is limited by its need to stop and pick up and drop down passengers. After describing the streetwalker/*flâneuse* as a '*pompier*' the passenger goes on to ask: 'What in the world is a *pompier*? What connection has the word with this creature who is murdering, deliberately murdering, a delicate creation of my brain, begotten by the fusion of country and town? […] I am convinced *pompier* expresses her in some subtle way – absurd word!'[117] As it is well known, 'L'art pompier', or official art, is a term applied to the nineteenth-century French neoclassic tendencies in painting. By extension, the term refers to any literary work that is outmoded, pretentious and ridiculous.[118] Hence, the passsenger's ironic use of the word *pompier* seems to suggest that the figure of the *flâneuse*/streetwalker is outmoded, her walking rhythm directly disrupting the modernity of this 'lost masterpiece':

> What business had she, I ask, to come and thrust her white-handled umbrella into the delicate network of my nerves and untune their harmony?
>
> Does she realise what she has done? She has trampled a rare little mind-being unto death, destroyed a precious literary gem. Aye, one that, for aught I know, might have worked a revolution in modern thought;[119]

The story ends in a rather paradoxical way. For though the streetwalker/*flâneuse* 'kills' the passenger's story, the omnibus rider 'finds' a new masterpiece (i.e. the story we are reading), which, strangely enough, restores to the *flâneuse*/streetwalker her heroic character.

At this juncture, and to highlight the distinguishing features of the late-Victorian culture of transport, it might be useful to consider the four significant differences that can be found between the movement of the passenger and that of the *flâneur*. Chris Jenks' description of the *flâneur* is quite helpful in understanding these profound differences: 'the *flâneur* possesses a power, it walks at will, freely and seemingly without purpose, but simultaneously with an inquisitive wonder and an infinite capacity to absorb the activities of the collected – often formulated as "the crowd" '.[120] The first difference is that the passenger does not use his or her legs to move across the metropolis.

His or her movements are produced by an organised transport system, which is becoming more and more mechanised as the century ends (from horses to steam engines to motor buses in 1900). This implies that passengers are not in control of their journeys: they can choose the line and the form of transport they want to use, but the journey is pre-determined by the line and vehicle in which they travel. Secondly, the passenger's field of vision is framed by the vehicle in which he or she travels. For this reason, to travel becomes in essence the verb that best describes the urban epistemology of the passenger. Thirdly, passengers have to pay for their transport. This in effect means that passengers are consumers. And fourthly, travelling affects the passenger's perception as he or she is transported at speed across London. Unlike the *flâneur*, the passenger travels across the metropolis at a faster pace, a pace that is produced not by the passenger him or herself, but by the vehicle in which he or she is travelling.

A way of beginning to recognise the importance of the late-Victorian aesthetics of transport in the development of a new urban epistemology is to consider these points in further detail. This will help us to conceptualise in later chapters the way in which women poets related to the new cultural conditions.

I. Mechanising the passenger

These two forms of urban mobility, walking and travelling, were widely reflected in the poetry of the period. An interesting example is Amy Levy's 'A March Day in London', where the speaker, who is strolling the streets of London, depicts the ruminations of her mind in terms of urban transport: 'The little wheel that turns in my brain;/ The little wheel that turns all day,/That turns all night with might and main.'[121] For many, travelling not only affected the way in which the urban dweller experienced the metropolis, it also effected a wider and more important transformation, what Arthur Symons called the 'automobilisation of the mind'.[122]

Symons' metaphor, which is indicative of the internalisation and incorporation of mechanisation into consciousness, expressed a real phenomenon: the increasing mechanisation of urban mobility. This, of course, had been the aim of the transportation system from its very origins. For instance, the first steam omnibus (1833) was very appropriately called the 'Era' by his inventor Walter Hancock because it symbolised truly the beginning of a new era in urban mass-transport technology. Indeed, strangely enough, he named another of his inventions the 'Autopsy', presumably because it was a vehicle in which passengers could perform a post-mortem examination of the 'old world' while dissecting the roads at high speed. It is important to mention that these buses did actually travel across London for a certain period of time. Both inventions failed, however, because they continually broke down. But it was his third, and most successful invention, the 'Automaton' (1835) that really indicated the kind of changes that the transport system

would bring about in the nineteenth century: the automation and mechanisation of the metropolis, and with it, the automation of the urban dweller.[123]

The urban critic Richard Sennett has described the structure of the London underground as the modern arteries and veins of London, for '[d]uring the day, the human blood of the city flowed below ground into the heart'; and 'at night, these subterranean channels became veins emptying the mass out of the center, as people took the Underground home'.[124] Despite the usefulness of this metaphor, it hides the technological transformation to which London was being subjected, giving thus, by contrast, the impression of a metropolis which was becoming human (i.e. the circulatory system of the metropolitan body). Symons' description of London gives us a good idea of the direction in which London was mutating:

> There is hardly a street left in London where one can talk with open windows by day and sleep with open windows by night. We are tunnelled under until our houses rock, we are shot through holes in the earth if we want to cross London; even the last liberty of Hampstead Heath is about to be taken from us by railway. London has civilised itself into the likeness of a steam roundabout at a fair; it goes clattering and turning, to the sound of a jubilant hurdy-gurdy; round and round, always on the same track, but always faster; and the children astride its wooden horses think they are getting to the world's end.[125]

It is perhaps not surprising that the human body had also started to be regarded as an automaton, as a mechanised being in the mechanical city. A very interesting example of this is J. Milner Fothergill's *The Town Dweller* (1889), a study of the necessities and wants of nineteenth-century Londoners. Fothergill explained thus the eating habits of the urban dweller: '[t]he body has often been compared to a locomotive. The locomotive requires fuel to convert water into steam, which, by the elaborate mechanism of the engine, in its turn produces motion. It also requires a certain amount of material, mainly iron to repair daily wear and tear. It requires a great deal of the first, and very little of the latter. So with the body.'[126] The functioning of the human body was now explained in terms of the machine. As Hal Foster has observed, the history of the automaton was the emergence of the machine from tool (i.e., 'suited to the craftsman and subservient to him') to 'model': first in mechanistic terms (man-as-machine), and later in energistic ones (human motor).[127]

This change was already taking place at the end of the nineteenth century, and while some Darwinian scientists of the period interpreted the use of machinery as a prosthetic tool of man, for others, mass-transport facilities were becoming, in the words of Foster, 'demonic masters' of the metropolis. James Cantlie, for instance, was deeply concerned with the effects of the city

on urban dwellers. He claimed that people in the countryside lived longer because urban dwellers were suffering from what he called 'urbo morbus', literally 'city disease'.[128] One of its effects was the lack of energy for walking. Human beings were getting tired of walking because of lack of oxygen in London. The arrival of urban mass transport was for him a consequence of the debilitation of the human race in cities. Machinery was replacing the human body, and '[i]n place of our hands and arms we use machines now-a-days, and in place of our legs we have railways, omnibuses, cabs, etc., to supplant the necessity for their use'.[129] He thus explained the appearance of public transport as the new prosthetic human legs of the urban dweller. For Arthur Symons, on the other hand, mass-transport facilities were becoming the demonic masters of the metropolis, and in their demonic character, they 'had killed' London. Not only had machines taken over the streets of the city, as Max Beerbohm noted;[130] but also London was mutating into a 'mechanical city, out of which everything old and human has been driven by wheels and hammers and the fluids of noise and speed'.[131]

II. A new urban epistemology: travelling

Either as a prosthetic body or as a demonic master, travelling was undoubtedly modifying the connection that had existed between the urban dweller and London. The passenger's experience of modernity was mediated by the vehicles in which the passenger travelled through space. To know London, to exist in the metropolis, the urban dweller had to become a passenger. This quite drastically implied that travelling was now more than just a crucial part of urban life. Rosalind H. Williams has argued that the construction of the London underground by the method of excavation opened up new realms of urban life in the metropolis. It became, she claims, 'a central metaphor for intellectual inquiry in the modern age'.[132] Michael Field very interestingly observed this transformation in one of their visit to the poets Ernest and Dollie Radford. Michael Field wrote, '[w]hat a life Londoners lead! He [E. Radford] shares & thinks holy thoughts – & then bursts to the Underground for his remaining share of meditation'.[133] Mass-transport facilities were not just vehicles for moving across the different cartographies of London. They were vehicles, tools of modernity, which the passenger used to inquire about modern life.

It was a poetic example of what much later Michel Foucault denominated 'le parcour d'un sense', literally 'the movement of a meaning'.[134] Thinkers such as Michel Serres and Michel de Certeau have argued that in modernity, knowledge and poetics cannot be understood outside 'travelling'.[135] It is in the journey that poetics are created. Although both theorists have discussed this relationship in narrative, this view is also applicable to poetry. Serres describes poetics as 'un transport, une errance, un voyage à travers des variétés spatiales séparées'.[136] Poetics is a transport, an errant, a journey through diverse and differentiated spaces. This sentence captures quite precisely the

epistemology of the passenger. De Certeau's definition of 'mass transportation' is also at the core of this new epistemology. He argues that

> [i]n modern Athens, the vehicles of mass transportation are called *metaphorai*. To go to work or come home, one takes a 'metaphor' – a bus or a train. Stories could also take this noble name: every day, they traverse and organise places; they select and link them together; they make sentences and itineraries out of them. They are spatial trajectories.[137]

Here de Certeau describes the relationship established between poetics and metaphors, which he associates literally and symbolically with mass transport. A story, or equally a poem, traverses and organises spaces, produces meaning and poetics. The poet, as the passenger who is transported in these vehicles, achieves meaning and poetics through travelling, through transport.

III. The passenger as consumer

The introduction of urban transport brought about the radical concept of space as a commodity item, where passengers had to pay in order to occupy a seat.[138] It is perhaps not surprising that it was during the time of the Exhibition of 1851 that this notion of space as a commodity seems to have come to the forefront. As has been mentioned, the Great Exhibition caused a great expansion of omnibus transport in London. But the omnibus infrastructure was not ready for this flood of passengers and the inevitable result was the overcrowding of omnibuses, as the illustration for 'The Great Exhibition of 1851 at Hyde Park' shows (Figure 4 on page 19). Many, naturally, objected to this overcrowding. It was then, as Henry Charles Moore notes, that '[t]he law had declared that every passenger was entitled to sixteen inches of room on the seat; that he might measure it, and any person hindering him from doing so was liable to a penalty of £5'.[139] According to Moore, many people started carrying 'yard-measures in their pockets, and insisted upon having their full space'.[140] The problem was of course those sixteen inches, as many men and women 'could not possibly squeeze themselves into it; and, because of their inability to do so, quarrels between thin and stout people were of everyday occurrence'.[141] Paradoxically, the seat of the passenger became the regulator of the passenger's body.

But there was more to this concept of space as a commodity item. Because the passenger paid for the length of his/her journey, this in effect meant that passengers paid to be transported from one point in the city to another. In this sense urban transport transformed the metropolis into a commodity.[142] The passenger became a potential consumer of space and mass-transport companies encouraged their passengers to consume the metropolitan space, as the Map of the Metropolitan Railway (Figure 5) shows. Around the map, the underground companies advertised commercial and tourist sites which

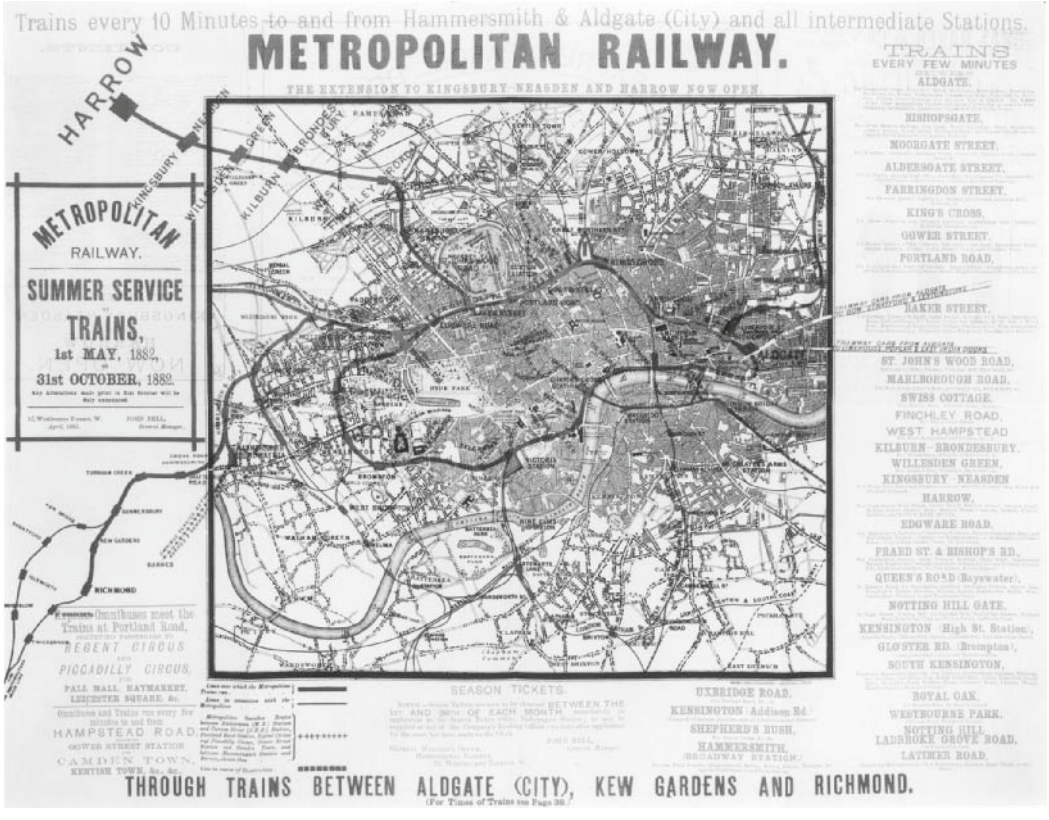


Figure 5 Map of the Metropolitan Railway

they thought passengers may be interested in. For example, under Gower Street, they added 'for Euston Station, all the Theatres, Tottenham Court Road, Hampstead Road, British Museum, Kentish Town, Somers Town and Camden Town'. Under 'Queen's Road (Bayswater)' they noted 'for Kensington Gardens, Inverness Terrace, Royal Oak, Kensington Palace Gardens, Princess Square, Paddington Baths, Westbourne Hall, Whiteley's and Westbourne Grove'. Locations were mixed with places for tourism, leisure and consumption, and the underground, in this particular case, tried to urge passengers to travel around London for leisure or for consumption.

Shopping areas such as Oxford Street, Bond Street, Kensington and Tottenham Court Road were by far the busiest in London. This was no coincidence. Mass transport was an essential part of consumer culture, and certainly the development of the department store in London, as Alison Adburgham writes, was directly linked with the expansion and growth of mass transport.[143] In the process, not only did transportation produce an acceleration of the market economy, it also transformed space into a commodity, and the passenger into a consumer: 'Now it is early in the afternoon – a slack time for 'busmen. Here comes a Road Car with every seat vacant, but the silk-hatted driver is keeping a sharp look-out, and soon picks up three ladies bound for Westbourne Grove.'[144] Mass transport was an essential part of consumer culture (notice here that the women were going shopping to Westbourne Grove, one of London's most fashionable districts, where Whiteley's was based). Department stores such as Harrod's, Whiteley's or Shoolbred's attracted large numbers of consumers who came shopping by omnibus or tube. The opening of Bayswater station, a few minutes walking from Whiteley's, was an important factor in the commercial success of the shop, just as for Shoolbred's was the opening of Gower Street Station.[145] According to Barker and Robbins,

> [b]y 1885 more than 700 omnibuses per day brought customers to Whiteley's, and when the L.G.O.C. refused to put on a special service to bring in well-to-do shoppers from fashionable Regent's Park and prosperous Maida Vale, the Universal Provider for a time ran one of his own. […] By 1892 the District Railway even found it worth while to start a parcels service, chiefly to relieve shoppers on their homeward journey.[146]

Whiteleys' omnibus line ran every 12 minutes, and so successfully, that the LGOC was forced to create an omnibus line that ran from Camden Town to Westbourne Grove.[147] The store even sold railway tickets.[148] It was in the financial interest of mass-transport companies to push (women) passengers into these lines so as to fill vehicles that would have been otherwise empty, as women would travel in the afternoon. And certainly, mass-transport companies encouraged women to travel between 10 and 4, by producing posters such as Gladys May Rees' 'Shop Between 10 and 4. Avoid the Crowded Hours' (1920) or Fletcher's 'Shop Between 10 and 4. The Quiet Hours' (1926).[149]

Public transport facilities expanded and further developed the influence of commodity culture. It even transformed the categories of space and time into commodities, because passengers were paying for a journey that would take them to a certain place and the journey would take a certain amount of time. The passenger paid exactly for those two commodities. Consider Figure 6. This advertisement by the Metropolitan Line was located at Notting Hill Gate station. Here we can see again how the Metropolitan publicises their timetable together with the 'places of interest' that are closest to each of the underground stations. But, more important, what the Metropolitan Line is advertising is that its services are *faster* than that of the District Line, despite the fact that the fares are the same in both lines. Time is money. Passengers, the advertisement suggests, should pay according to the time they spend in the journey. In this sense, the District Line comes out as the more expensive of the two. Once again the passenger is a consumer but, in this particular case, a consumer of space and time.

IV. Perception in flux

Wolfgang Schivelbusch has argued that one of the consequences of the railway revolution of the nineteenth century was the view that travelling had effected a loss of vision.[150] John Ruskin, for example, argued against railway journeys because the passenger could not *see* the space he or she was travelling through. Speed made it impossible, thought Ruskin, to observe properly the landscape as it rushed by, and his greatest fear was the loss of sight that speed could produce.[151] Similar arguments were used in the metropolis when mass transport became part of everyday life. Arthur Symons warned that the present race for speed and velocity would determine a physical change in the passenger and an annihilation of sight: '[t]he creatures that we see now in the machines are hardly to be called human beings, so are they disfigured out of all recognition, in order that they may go fast enough not to see anything themselves'.[152]

It is interesting to compare Arthur Symons' fear that speed would produce a visual crisis with a formal complaint that a passenger by the name of Mr Jenkins put forward to one of the major omnibus companies in 1891. Mr Jenkins complained that advertising on omnibuses was obstructing the passenger's view, and asked emphatically for its removal:

> [Mr. Jenkins] hit […] upon a real grievance. On nearly all omnibuses a long narrow board bearing some advertisement, such as 'To Swan and Edgar's', was fixed, outside, across the middle of the side windows. Mr. Jenkins, declared, with truth, that the boards obstructed the view of passengers inside the omnibus, and thereby frequently caused them to be carried beyond the place where they wished to alight. On the same grounds he denounced the transparent advertisements stuck on the side and front windows. His complaint was warmly supported by the public,

METROPOLITAN RAILWAY

THE BEST, CHEAPEST, MOST CONVENIENT, AND EXPEDITIOUS ROUTE
TO THE UNDERMENTIONED PLACES OF INTEREST IN LONDON
IS BY
THE METROPOLITAN
RAILWAY.

NOTE THE FARES AND TIME OCCUPIED ON JOURNEY

(FROM THIS STATION)

To the undermentioned nearest Stations on the Metropolitan and District Railways respectively, and

SAVE YOUR TIME

By in all cases asking the Booking Clerks for Tickets to the Metropolitan Stations, and

SEE THAT YOU GET THEM.

COMPARE THESE FARES AND TIMES WITH THESE

PLACES OF INTEREST.	BY THE METROPOLITAN RAILWAY DIRECT, VIA KING'S CROSS. NEAREST STATION.	FARES. SINGLE. 1	2	3	RETURN. 1	2	3	TIME OCCUPIED ON JOURNEY. MINUTES.
		D.	D.	D.	S. D.	D.	D.	
	FARRINGDON ST.	8	6	4	1/-	9	6	21
	ALDERSGATE ST.							23
	MOORGATE ST.	8	6	4	1/-	9	6	25
	BISHOPSGATE							27
	ALDGATE	8½	6½	4½	1/1	9	7	30

BY THE DISTRICT RAILWAY VIA TEMPLE. NEAREST STATION.	FARES. SINGLE. 1	2	3	RETURN. 1	2	3	TIME OCCUPIED ON JOURNEY. MINUTES.
	D.	D.	D.	S. D.	D.	D.	
BLACKFRIARS	8	6	4	1/-	9	6	29
MANSION HOUSE	8	6	4	1/-	9	6	32
CANNON STREET							34
MONUMENT	8½	6½	4½	1/1	9	7	36

N.B.—The public are respectfully informed that the above-mentioned Places of Interest are in each case within easy distance from the Metropolitan Company's Stations, which are the most conveniently situate therefor.

Figure 6 Advertising campaign for the Metropolitan Railway located at Notting Hill Station

> and the objectionable boards, together with the advertisements on the front windows, were ordered to be removed.[153]

This anecdote illustrates the eagerness with which passengers wanted to *see*. They wanted to know where they were going, and which urban spaces they were crossing, without the interference of consumer culture. They simply preferred to see the fluid urbanscape as it rolled in front of their eyes rather than the ever-present and unchangeable sight of advertisements such as those of Swan and Edgar's.[154] Moreover, the passenger needed to see the urbanscape to know when to alight. Advertising after this complaint was thus confined to the outside of the vehicle. These examples provide us with an excellent basis to study the changes in perception brought about by the mass-transport revolution of the nineteenth century. The passenger, just as the *flâneur*, loved to watch the kaleidoscopic spectacle of the metropolis, its buildings, the masses, its restless and transient life. But unlike the *flâneur*, the passenger's sense of perception was bound to the spatial and technical characteristics of omnibuses, trams and underground trains. The eye of the passenger was both framed by the windowpane of these vehicles, and subjected to the speed of mass transport.

It is no coincidence that Jonathan Crary situates the appearance of a new observer in or around the 1820s, the decade in which omnibuses appeared in the metropolis, although he never actually makes that connection. In his own words: 'a reorganization of the observer occurs in the nineteenth century before the appearance of photography. What takes place from around 1810 to 1840 is an uprooting of vision from the stable and fixed relations incarnated in the camera obscura.'[155] It is this 'uprooting' of vision that seems to me to suggest that the advancement of mass transport was crucial in this reorganisation. For it presupposed that this new observer was no longer 'fixed' but rather a transient participant of modern and fluid urban life. This seems to reinforce the suggestion that mass-transport facilities effected a profound transformation in the field of vision and its representation in aesthetics by locating the sense of sight in the figure of the passenger. Technology, as Nietzsche has suggested, was used to understand not just how the human eye saw, but also how the transient eye got accustomed to new ways of seeing: '[w]ith the tremendous acceleration of life mind and eye have become accustomed to seeing and judging partially or inaccurately, and everyone is like the traveller who gets to know a land and its people from a railway carriage'.[156]

Nietzsche's comparison between the impact that the acceleration of life had had on the human eye, and that of the passenger is not fortuitous. In fact what he is suggesting is that it is the passenger who best represents the way in which vision in modernity is organised.[157] For Nietzsche, as for Walter Benjamin and Beatriz Colomina, in modernity people have had to 'adapt' to the speed of modern life, to a faster urban rhythm in which

everything and everyone is moving.[158] As Jonathan Crary explains, 'vision in the nineteenth century was inseparable from transience – that is, from the new temporalities, speeds, experiences of flux and obsolescence, a new density and sedimentation of the structure of visual memory'.[159] In the words of Beatriz Colomina:

> What is 'strange' about the 'big city' to which, as Benjamin argues, people now have to 'adapt' is the speed, the continuous movement, the sense that nothing ever stops, that there are no limits. […] With this restless movement that effaces boundaries comes a new mode of perception that has become the trademark of modernity. Perception is now tied to transience. If photography is the culmination of centuries of efforts to arrest the image […] is it not somewhat paradoxical that once the fleeting image is fixed, the mode of perception is what becomes fleeting? Now the observer (the flaneur, the train traveler, the department store shopper) is what is transient.[160]

So the appearance of speed produced two parallel effects, the adaptation of the human eye to the transient, *and* the transformation of the observer into a transient figure. Mass-transport facilities were crucial devices because they fostered this adaptation to the transient and because they transformed the observer into a passenger. Moreover, the advancement and regularisation of mass transport also regularised vision, perhaps more than any other optical device. In fact, what I will be suggesting in this book is that these vehicles for mass transport were optical devices which poets such as Amy Levy, Alice Meynell, Graham R. Tomson and Michael Field used for the observation of modern life. Notice, for example, how Crary describes the appearance of the transient observer as a result of the creation of the diorama. If one was to substitute the word 'diorama' for omnibus, tube or tram, then this quotation seems to me to represent the way in which mass transport had fostered and regularised a new observer:

> [T]he diorama [was] based on the incorporation of an *immobile* observer into a mechanical apparatus and a subjection to a predesigned temporal unfolding of optical experience. The circular or semicircular panorama painting clearly broke with the localized point of view of perspective painting or the camera obscura, allowing the spectator an ambulatory ubiquity. One was compelled at the least to turn one's head (and eyes) to see the entire work. The multimedia diorama removed that autonomy from the observer, often situating the audience on a circular platform that was slowly moved, permitting views of different scenes and shifting light effects. Like the phenakistiscope or the zootrope, the diorama was a machine of wheels in motion, one in which the observer was a component.[161]

Mass-transport vehicles were based on the 'incorporation of an immobile observer' into a 'mechanical apparatus'. He or she was then subjected to a temporal unfolding of an optical urban experience. Interestingly, Shillibeer's first omnibus carried an advertisement of the Diorama in Regent's Park in its outside casket. There is however an important difference between the diorama and mass-transport vehicles: that unlike the diorama, the urban experience is not predetermined, even if the journey is. In the omnibus, the passenger obtained an *ambulatory ubiquity*, for like the diorama, the zootrope, the phenakistiscope, and the camera, the omnibus 'was a machine of wheels in motion, one in which the [passenger] was a component'. The passenger's body had adapted the 'few main fundamental forms of motion'. If 'one feature of the modernization in the nineteenth century was the "uprooting" of vision from the more inflexible representational system of the camera obscura', then mass-transport vehicles represented that modernisation. Omnibuses, underground trains, and trams were both vehicles that produced motion and which created a passenger whose vision was always in the transient. Indeed this marriage of transport and new technologies for optical recreation became evident in early film practices like Hale's Tours, a company that specialised in producing travel films that were exhibited in theatres, which used railway cars, as Lynne Kirby explains, for 'its "thrill" effect'. As she puts it: 'The apparatus [...] seated "passengers" in railway cars while painted scenery rolled past the windows.'[162]

Of course, as Beatriz Colomina has noted, the passenger is not the only transient figure of modernity. The *flâneur*, the shopper, and the prostitute were equally transient observers. Yet their modes of experiencing the modern and transient metropolis do vary with each form of transience: browsing in a department store, travelling or walking produced different forms of representation. The *flâneur*, the prostitute and the passenger may be seeing the same metropolis, but their different modes of existence, walking and travelling, implied differences in the way in which each of these figures perceived urban life. As has been seen, this is because speed affected vision. Moreover, the particular spatial characteristics of omnibuses, trams and trains modified not just the sense of perception, but also, interestingly enough, the visual field itself. Ruskin had claimed that passengers' vision would be compromised by speed, but George Augustus Sala argued quite the opposite, that in fact one could see more.

The omnibus, Sala remarked, was a vehicle that crossed not just the metropolitan space, but also the frontiers that separated the private from the public sphere: 'The things I have seen from the top of an omnibus!' he wrote. Like a voyeur in a peep-show he took pleasure from seeing '[n]ow a married couple enjoying an animated wrangle in a first-floor front; [...] now a demure maiden lacing her virgin bodice before a cracked triangle of a looking-glass, at an attic window.'[163] Indeed, Sala recognised the spectacular possibilities of the omnibus, and described the experience as

'vehicular panorama':

> All these dramas on four wheels may be seen by him on the top of the omnibus, who may, if of a caustic turn, rub his hands, and cry, 'Aha! little do you reck that a chiel is above you taking notes, and, faith, that he'll print them!'
>
> You see, there are some elements of sadness, nay, of deep and terrible tragedy, in these vehicular panoramas – the unconscious show-vans.[164]

From the privileged position of the passenger's seat (and by privileged I do not mean class privilege, but the privilege of site, of visual site) Sala saw both the private and the public life of the urban dweller. This transgression of public/private space is one of the large concerns of this book. In the following chapters I will be discussing the way in which Amy Levy, Alice Meynell, Graham R. Tomson, and Michael Field experienced the metropolis as passengers, and especially the way in which these vehicles for mass transport helped to transgress the frontiers between the public and the private, something of which, as women, they were extremely aware, and preoccupied with. In fact, one of the things that we will notice is that, unlike male passengers, who travelled both to enjoy the metropolis but also to look at women (notice, for example, Sala's voyeuristic descriptions of the private and how his 'male gaze' is fixed on women and their private lives), women were as interested as men in urban life, but their approach to, and love of mass transport was due to the democratising possibilities that mass transport offered to women.

But the difference between the *flâneur*, the shopper and the passenger goes further than the question of the position of the eye. These social actors existed in different urban spheres, and at different speeds, for the passenger, unlike the shopper and the *flâneur*, experienced urban life in a mass-transport vehicle. Indeed the position of the passenger was very much that of the observer of a zootrope, seeing movement through its keyholes, or the stereoscope (one of the favourite images of the stereoscope was, not very surprisingly, congested cities), the diorama, or the camera. The mechanisation of everyday life seems to have produced, interestingly enough, a mechanisation of vision and a transformation of everyday life into a cinematic event. It is as if, borrowing Gianni Vattimo's phrase, transportation had produced a 'Transparent Society', one in which reality appeared in the transparency of the windowpane of the omnibus or the train.[165]

Mapping passengers of modernity

To address these many issues this book has been structured into four chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the work of the Anglo-Jewish poet Amy Levy. I will begin by examining Levy's Bloomsbury in the late nineteenth century

to argue that this nomadic space was at the core of Levy's formulation of urban aestheticism. I shall propose that Levy's greatest achievement is her contention that the passenger is the new poet of modernity. For Levy, I shall suggest, omnibuses and underground trains were tools not only to discuss modernity, but also to destabilise gender and race in the metropolis.

Chapter 2 discusses the work of Alice Meynell. Beginning with an examination of the artistic and literary circles of late-Victorian Kensington, this chapter then moves on to examine Meynell's complex engagement with mass transport and the roads of London. Here a reading of Meynell's lyric poetry and prose will reveal that Meynell used omnibuses and trains as vehicles for her impressionistic poetics.

Chapter 3 discusses the work of Graham R. Tomson. She lived in St John's Wood, which was considered 'the fastest neighbourhood in town'. Tomson was one of the most radical and transgressive poets of the *fin de siècle*, and her poetics and life were at one with this metropolitan space. She was a fast poet, living a fast life-style. I will propose to read this notion of 'fastness' in relation to three different but interrelated concepts: firstly in terms of the sexual dissidence of this quarter of London; secondly, in relation to the ephemeral; and finally in relation to the way in which 'velocity' significantly altered urban life.

The final chapter, 'Modernity in Suburbia: Michael Field's Experimental Poetics', examines the phenomenon of suburbia and the aesthetics of the passenger by focusing on the work of Michael Field. Using as a metaphor the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Line, the one mainly used by Michael Field, I will propose that this particular commuter line was at the core of the production of their experimental book of poems *Sight and Song* (1892).

1
Amy Levy in Bloomsbury: The Poet as Passenger

> I wonder if I shall see anything of you? It seems simply ages ago that I said good-bye to you in the Underground Railway (of all places); do you remember?
>
> Amy Levy to Vernon Lee[1]

> [The Jew] hardly has left, when all is said, a drop of bucolic blood in his veins.
>
> Amy Levy, 'Jewish Humour'[2]

After a century of critical demotion, it would not be an exaggeration to say that Amy Levy (1861–1889) has been elevated back into the literary canon. Since the publication in 1993 of Melvyn New's critical edition of *The Complete Novels and Selected Writings of Amy Levy*, scholars have not stopped paying critical attention to her poetry, prose, and literary theory. Vital in this revival has been the publication of the first ever book-length biography, *Amy Levy: Her Life and Letters* by Linda Hunt Beckman (2000), a biography that has stimulated further interest and developments in the field. In 2002, The University of Southampton organised an international colloquium on Levy, and critical editions of Amy Levy's novels *The Romance of a Shop* (1888) and *Reuben Sachs* (1888), edited by Susan Bernstein, are forthcoming from Broadview Press. As Emma Francis and Cynthia Scheinberg have argued, Levy's work is receiving so much critical attention because, as Scheinberg puts it, 'so many of the issues she addresses in her writing speak to concerns of the contemporary critical moment: Jewish Diasporic identity, lesbian identity, women's emancipation, and more general theories of "otherness" within the English literary tradition'.[3] But, in addition, I would suggest, the subject of Amy Levy is an important one now because she is increasingly being recognized as crucial to our understanding of the *fin-de-siècle* period, since her writings challenge the way in which we think about the interconnections between the discourses of gender and race in British aestheticism and the New Woman novel.

This chapter focuses on an aspect of Levy's work which urges one to think of the late-Victorian and early-modernist era in a new way: her urban aestheticism. A Londoner by birth, 'the pulses of London', as she put it in her poem 'Straw in the Street', define Levy's poetics.[4] She was, to use her own terminology, a 'London Poet'. Enthused by the metropolitan way of life, Levy equated London with modernity and urban mobility with revolution. Consider the following letter that Levy's sister, Katie Solomon, sent to the editor of the London *Observer* in 1929, in which she enclosed Levy's poem 'Ballade of an Omnibus':

> Dear Sir, – In connection with your article about the omnibus, your readers might be interested in the following verse. The writer was among the first women in London to show herself on the tops of omnibuses. She excused herself to her shocked family circle by saying that she had committed the outrage in company with the daughter of a dean, who was also the granddaughter of an Archbishop of Canterbury.[5]

This letter draws our attention to Levy's use of the omnibus, in proper aesthete fashion, to *épater les bourgeois*. It is worth remembering, however, that while it was absolutely normal for women to travel by omnibus, they normally sat inside and not on top. Solomon's letter thus alerts us to the social, political, and aesthetic transgressions Levy saw in the omnibus.

But, if Levy used the omnibus to represent the fundamental urban experience, what shall be argued here is that she also used the passenger's seat to put forward an argument for a poetic modernity based upon urban movement and transport. Such an argument, of course, recalls Virginia Woolf's critique of Edwardian realism in her 1924 essay 'Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown'. As Rachel Bowlby has observed, Woolf used the train to construct a feminist critique of realism, which crucially highlighted 'the masculine force that lies behind the seemingly neutral Edwardian equipment'.[6] Indeed, in terms of literary movement, Levy's writing sets up an important precedent to modernist thinking and modernist writing both in terms of aesthetics and in terms of gender. There is, however, another vital link between Levy and Woolf: Bloomsbury. Between 1885 and September 1889 Levy resided at 7 Endsleigh Gardens, Bloomsbury, London, where she committed suicide nine days after having corrected the proofs of her last volume of verse, *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse* (1889).[7]

This chapter then begins to recover Levy's urban aestheticism by paying attention first of all to Bloomsbury itself. Until today, the history of Bloomsbury has been the history of the Bloomsbury Group and of modernism. Navigating the cultural geography of Levy's Bloomsbury, as well as its social and racial fabric, however, will not only call attention to the *fin-de-siècle* urban roots of the modernist movement, but it will also help us recover the

transgressive and anti-establishment urban aesthetic of this area of London, which provided Levy with the cultural framework for her urban poetics. We will then concentrate on what I see as Levy's most important and radical act of imaginative exploration of urban aestheticism: her formulation of the female passenger both as a modern urban type and as the poet of modernity. The passenger allowed Levy to produce a critique of nineteenth-century theories of space not only by challenging more traditional views on the peripatetic nature of Jewish history, but also by locating women at the centre of the modern city. Today critics have often observed that the energy of Levy's work arises from her search for poetic formulations that question the way in which women, and women's experiences of modernity, have been relegated to the margins of modernity. What I shall be suggesting here is that for Levy, the figure of the passenger had important social and political implications because it was as passengers, she argued, that women poets could become spectators of modern life, challenging masculinist representations of women in the modern metropolis, and transgressing the incarcerating ideology of the private/public spheres.

Moreover, linking specifically spectatorship with travelling, this chapter will also explore Levy's development of a new aesthetic paradigm centred on the 'travelling eye'. Walter Benjamin has argued that the predominance of the visual in modernity had its roots in urban mass transport. Quoting Georg Simmel at length in the following passage, he suggests that mass-transport facilities forced new kinds of visual intimacy on urban dwellers:

> People had to adapt themselves to a new and rather strange situation, one that is peculiar to big cities. Simmel has felicitously formulated what was involved here. 'Someone who sees without hearing is much more uneasy than someone who hears without seeing. In this there is something characteristic of the sociology of the big city. Interpersonal relationships in big cities are distinguished by a marked preponderance of the activity of the eye over the activity of the ear. The main reason for this is the public means of transportation. Before the development of buses, railroads, and trams in the nineteenth century, people had never been in a position of having to look at one another for long minutes or even hours without speaking to one another.' This new situation was, as Simmel recognized, not a pleasant one.[8]

This visual culture, I will propose, is at the core of Levy's urban aestheticism as she used omnibuses and underground trains as optical devices, as cameras, with which to chronicle city life.

But before we turn to the discussion of these many issues, I need to clarify what is at stake in Levy's use of the figure of the passenger in terms of the lyric. Undoubtedly, the figure of the passenger helped Levy to engage with the lyric in radical new ways. To begin with, Levy 'strove to scale/The icy

peaks of unimagined rhyme' as her friend, the novelist Grant Allen, put it.[9] Discarding the dramatic monologue, the form that had characterised her two earlier volumes of poetry, *Xantippe and Other Verse* (1881) and *A Minor Poet and Other Verse* (1884), in *A London Plane-Tree* (1889), her third and last volume of verse, she started to experiment with new lyric structures (most notably ballads, ballades, sonnets, and roundels) in an attempt to explore new rhythmic textures and urban rhythms with which to represent new forms of metropolitan mobility. William Sharp, in his otherwise unfavourable critique of the volume, rightly suggested that 'the most notable pieces are poems so brief that they would be fragmentary were they not rounded and complete in their concision'.[10] William Thesing has usefully observed that the late-Victorian poet began to use 'a variety of shorter poetic forms – ode, eclogue, ballad, lyric, sonnet – to record his individual impressions of the city'.[11] Levy's experiments reflected this new trend in poetics.

More radical was her construction of a mobile lyric self. Indeed Levy's formulation of the figure of the passenger was grounded in the relationship between urban navigation and a modern, unfixed, subjectivity. To understand such formulation and its implication for Levy's understanding of the passenger as the poet of modernity, it is important to dwell here on Levy's phenomenology of self. Levy's extraordinary poem 'Felo de Se. With Apologies to Mr. Swinburne' is a microcosm of Levy's conception of modern selfhood. It was first published in *Xantippe* in 1881.[12] In September 1889, however, in the final proof stage of *A London Plane-Tree* she decided to add this allegorical poem to the 'Moods and Thoughts' sequence.[13] Levy chose the following verses from Omar Khayyám to introduce the section: 'I sent my Soul through the Invisible/Some letter of that After-life to spell;/And by and by my Soul returned to me,/And answered, 'I Myself am Heaven and Hell'.[14] These lines expose the main premise of 'Felo de Se', which translates as 'suicide': the agony of the 'soul' in the afterlife. The inclusion of such a poem might seem irrelevant but its significance was major. Levy's aim in *A London Plane-Tree* was to express modern London, and the inclusion of 'Felo de Se' offered, at least in principle, a shift in perspective because it did not deal with the city, but with the disembodied self.

Algernon Charles Swinburne stood behind the poem's irony and intensity. What Levy had learnt from Swinburne's poetry was that the self was created and defined by pain. The poem also alluded, somewhat ironically, to Swinburne's sadomasochistic practices in Circus Road, in London's St John's Wood, through her use of images such as the 'Circle of Being' and the 'Circle of Pain'. But, in addition, the poem was an enactment of Arthur Schopenhauer's philosophy of pessimism, most notably his perception of life as 'a constant struggle for […] existence', and his definition of suicide as another manifestation of the 'will to live' (against the Judeo-Christian tradition).[15] Levy knew Schopenhauer's theories extremely well. Her friend

Helen Zimmern was the author of the first English critical biography of the philosopher, a book she was to praise in her 1886 essay 'Middle-Class Jewish Women of To-day'.[16] Schopenhauer's 'sad' 'Philosophy', as she defined it in the last poem of *A London Plane-Tree*, 'To E.', was embedded quite explicitly in her poetry.[17] 'The Two Terrors', for instance, found nourishment in Schopenhauer's claim that 'as soon as a point is reached where the terrors of life outweigh those of death, man puts an end to his life'.[18]

In 'Felo de Se', Levy gives prominence to Schopenhauer's philosophy by examining the soul's perpetual struggle and its 'will to live' even after death. The poem starts with the suggestion that modern man is in a profound crisis, he is tired of being chained to the speed of modern life:

> For repose I have sighed and have struggled; have sigh'd and
> have struggled in vain;
> I am held in the Circle of Being and caught in the Circle of Pain.
> I was wan and weary with life; my sick soul yearned for death;
> I was weary of women and war and the sea and the wind's wild breath;
> (ll. 1–4)

The speaker's use of words such as 'repose', 'struggle', and 'weary' reiterates the individual's strenuous (though ineffective) attempts to preserve his autonomy in the face of a world that is always in motion. But the speaker, analysing his condition and expressing his despair, refuses to be absorbed by the speed of modern life. And tired of being forced to move on, to exist always in the fleeting, the speaker decides to commit suicide. This yearning for death is none other than a desire to stop, to remain still. But after committing suicide, the 'soul' realises its mistake because 'for that which is "I" indeed the gods have decreed no rest'. In other words, the soul recognises that that which is the subject, is and exists in the transient:

> And I cast it in crystal chalice and drank of it till I was dead.
> And the mould of the man was mute, pulseless in ev'ry part,
> The long limbs lay on the sand with an eagle eating the heart.
> Repose for the rotting head and peace for the putrid breast,
> But for that which is 'I' indeed the gods have decreed no rest;
> No rest but an endless aching, a sorrow which grows amain: –
> I am caught in the Circle of Being and held in the Circle of Pain.
> (ll. 6–12)

According to Levy, what characterises the modern age and modern individuals is that both exist in the fleeting. They are both, so to speak, in a state of fast forward. In the words of Schopenhauer: '[t]he striving after existence is what […] maintains them in motion'.[19] Levy reinforces this idea through her use of Swinburne's rhythmic structures. As James Richardson has noted,

one of the effects of Swinburne's lyrics is the sense of velocity, of speed: '[w]e are conscious of changes in gravity, of acceleration and deceleration, moving up and down to go forward'.[20] Levy, likewise, used strong rhythmic textures to suggest motion and speed, to the point in which even reading the poem becomes an exhausting experience. And tellingly the speaker remarks that if existence is to be always in motion, then, rather than being shut in the 'circle of being', modern people must embrace their transient existence in the world:

> Bitter indeed is Life, and bitter of Life the breath,
> But give me life and its ways and its men, if this be Death.
> Wearied I once of the Sun and the voices which clamour'd around:
> Give them me back – in the sightless depths there is neither
> light nor sound.
>
> (ll.13–16)

Thus for Levy the crisis must be resolved into a reformulation of being in modernity, as the soul calls for a return to the phenomenal, fleeting world. It is the world of the senses that the speaker longs to enjoy, as the material world is sought as a refuge from the sightless, soundless agony of 'being'. This is in effect the reason why Levy included one of her first poems in her last volume of verse: it was a form of closure to her poetics and reaffirmed her earlier beliefs in the spatiality and mobility of modern selfhood.

But Levy deepened her construction of the modern lyric self by portraying the soul as a representation of the figure of the Wandering Jew who has been condemned to wander in eternity. Levy used this figure, I would argue, not to consider issues of Jewish religious identity (she was an atheist), but to suggest both racial identity *and* cultural modernity.[21] Levy's representation of the Wandering Jew is reminiscent of Wagner's version of the tale in *The Flying Dutchman*, which he wrote during his artistic exile around 1840 in Paris. Levy sets up the link between the speaker and the 'Flying Dutchman' right at the beginning of the poem when the speaker, a sea-weary mariner, expresses his weariness 'of women and war and the sea and the wind's wild breath'. In the Wagnerian canon, as Timothy P. Martin and others have noted, *The Flying Dutchman* represents the problem of the artist in exile. (Michael Field's poem 'Men, looking on the Wandering Jew' is another such example).[22] Martin claims that '[i]mplicit in the Dutchman's longing for "home" and for Senta [the woman who would eventually redeem him] … is the desire for the artistic recognition that escaped Wagner during his first sojourn in Paris'.[23] He adds that '[i]n comparing himself to the Wandering Jew and his nautical cousin, Wagner was participating in a Romantic notion of the artist, "cursed" by his superior sensitivity and "exiled" by his refusal to conform to artistic and moral standards'.[24] Similarly, Levy used the idea of the Wandering Jew to describe her longing for artistic recognition and

as a metaphor for the Jewish artist in exile: both major themes in Levy's oeuvre; consider, for example, her second book of poems, appositely entitled *A Minor Poet and Other Verse*.

Levy's appropriation of the ancient Christian stereotype, however, requires further clarification, because as Jonathan Freedman writes, '[i]f "wandering" indeed "has a central place in the Jewish imagination", it is not exactly a happy or a healthy spot – or an exclusively Jewish one. It is a trope that has also functioned throughout *Western* accounts of Jewish identity to describe the eternally and unhappily homeless conditions of Jews'.[25] Levy, in my view, uses the trope to do both: she re-appropriates the figure of the Wandering Jew to reclaim politically the streets of London, but she also challenges the Christian stereotypical image of the Jew as Wandering Jew. For indeed, looking back at Levy's delineation of modern subjectivity discussed above, it is worth noting the soul's final claim for an end to alienation and for a return to the ephemeral yet concrete world, because it signals a need for change. Thus while Levy links the mobility and racial identity of the figure of the Wandering Jew with modernity and the modern lyric self, the end of the poem gestures towards transcendence and emancipation from (artistic and racial) exile and, of course, from wandering. In this sense, the theory of the passenger Levy puts forward is built upon a dynamic of urban assimilation and mobility that, crucially, encompasses a concrete need to catch the train of modern life. Or to put it in other words, Levy's materialisation of the unfixed, unstable subject in the passenger allowed her to move beyond the figure of the Wandering Jew, to open the door for a consideration of the (female) Jewish poet as a passenger of modernity.

Amy Levy in Endsleigh Gardens

Amy Levy resided in Bloomsbury during a crucial historical period, when this urban district was in transition from a monumental upper-class neighbourhood to a more transgressive one, as anti-establishment groups began to have greater presence in the district. What made Bloomsbury such a successful and aristocratic district in the early years of the nineteenth century, both financially and architecturally, was that its urban living space was centred around the square.[26] Indeed Bloomsbury owed its identity as a stately neighbourhood to this special type of urban design, which offered the illusion of a natural space in a fast-growing metropolis. As Richard Sennett writes, it was an 'island of nature in the midst of new urban housing', and created the illusion of a static space, by isolating the space of the square and giving it a sense of intimacy which was becoming rare in London.[27] Moreover, these squares controlled traffic and trespassers with strategically placed iron gates at the entrance of major squares and roads, which were guarded by gatekeepers.[28]

This image and feeling of a natural and tranquil space began to be challenged in 1832, when Euston Station was built, and trains started to arrive into this part of London from the provinces. But it was the opening of Gower Street Underground Station in 1863, and especially the opening of the underground Inner Circle Line in 1884, which produced an enormous and rapid expansion of passengers and traffic, that completely transformed the neighbourhood. So much so that by the 1890s the gates had to be pulled down 'in the name of progress' to give way to a more fluid space.[29] And by the end of the nineteenth century Bloomsbury had become a 'vagabond', a 'nomadic' space. Anthony Vidler describes what he calls 'vagabond architecture' as a 'generalized critique of conventional monumentality, of fixed urban architecture, in favour of the mobile and the nomadic'.[30] It is an architecture, he tells us following Walter Benjamin, that 'transforms the city [...] into an autocritical artifact' by confronting 'a fixed context with an unfixed and roving subject'.[31] Because this type of architecture is produced by the living, transient body who creates it in his/her journeys across the city, it ultimately challenges the immobility and stasis of monumental buildings and cities by refusing to be framed, to be enclosed within a particular structure, be it architectural or social. Vagabond, nomadic architecture is one which privileges movement and travel; it is one which creates moving cities, moving spaces, and moving passengers. It constructs a fluid, smooth space that contrasts sharply with the fixed and squared urban design.

Euston Railway Station was arguably the first nomadic structure in Bloomsbury. It was a majestic station that extended Bloomsbury and the metropolis beyond itself by connecting London to the provinces. The station was a most impressive sight. Its Doric arch had been built in 1838 as a 'great triumphal arch to mark the arrival of a wonderful new means of transport, a symbol of the solidity and endurable nature of the railway, representative of the successful marriage of steam and progress'.[32] The station was so impressive that Aubrey Beardsley once claimed that 'Euston station made it unnecessary to visit Egypt'.[33] Indeed the classical arch was a passageway to London, and for many arriving from the provinces the sight of this beautiful arch signalled the arrival into an exciting and exotic city.

But Beardsley's comment also suggests that the station was the entrance to a very specific type of social space. As Melvyn New has remarked, Bloomsbury was an area 'where middle- and upper-class Anglo-Jews settled in large numbers during the 1860s and 1870s'.[34] New is partially right here. There was a strong middle-class Anglo-Jewish community in Bloomsbury, which had moved to the district to be near University College, which was then non-sectarian, and to the Jews' College in Tavistock Square, both 'centers of higher learning for Anglo-Jews in the Victorian era'.[35] At the *fin de siècle*, the upper classes had moved to other areas of London such as Kensington and Bayswater (more stately and authoritative urban spaces, as I will suggest in Chapter 2), and upper-class Anglo-Jews followed this trend, as Levy's own socio-geographical

study of Jewish life, *Reuben Sachs* (1888), clearly shows.[36] Edward Verrall Lucas has left us a very vivid description of Bloomsbury and its social and racial structure:

> Bloomsbury, which is the adopted home of the economical American visitor and the Hindoo student; Bloomsbury, whose myriad boarding-houses give the lie to the poet's statement that East and West can never meet; […] Lawyers and law students live here, to be near the Inns of Court; bookish men live here, to be near the Museum; and Jews live here, to be near the University College School, which is non-sectarian. Bloomsbury is discreet and handy: it is near everything, and although not fashionable, anyone, I understand, may live there without losing caste. […] Bloomsbury, as I have said, gives harbourage to all colours.[37]

Euston was originally designed with this classical look because they thought that 'nothing but architecture of the highest classical order was good enough to commemorate it'.[38] It is interesting to see how what was a classical Greek structure had been transformed in the eye of Londoners into a more oriental image, which now represented the racial hybridity of the neighbourhood. As Beardsley's comment suggests, it became the landmark of a racially marked space, hence the aesthetic shift.

But what really pushed Bloomsbury into a more fluid and flowing space was Gower Street Underground Station. The station was situated in a most strategic site, at the corner of Gower Street and Euston Road. The latter was one of London's busiest roads. Together with Marylebone Road, King's Cross Road, and Farringdon Road, Euston Road formed a major route across London from Paddington to the City. It was a road that joined the West of London with the East and, because it received all the vehicles coming out from the stations of Paddington, Euston and King's Cross, it carried quite a very heavy load of swelling traffic.[39] Gower Street, on the other hand, was Bloomsbury's 'aorta'.[40] It was through Gower Street that visitors entered the space of Bloomsbury to go to University College, to the British Museum, and to its Reading Room. It also joined Bloomsbury to Covent Garden Market and Oxford Street. Parallel to Gower Street ran Tottenham Court Road, which was another major roadway in Bloomsbury, especially because it connected Euston Road with Oxford Street, Leicester Square, and Piccadilly. According to John Wolfe Barry it was one of the four busiest roads in London. He recorded that a total of 661 vehicles and 5586 'foot-passengers' passed through Tottenham Court Road in one hour.[41] Barry was one of the engineers who built the Inner Circle Line. For this reason it is worth noting Barry's use of the term 'foot-passenger' which illustrates to what extent human legs are now understood in terms of mechanised transportation and not as part of the human body. For Barry the foot-passenger was an ancestor

of the passenger, the new urban social actor. It was really Oxford Street that created this traffic as endless numbers of shoppers that arrived by bus and underground invaded the street and its surroundings. Between 1884 and 1907 the neighbourhood's mass-transport infrastructure expanded drastically and by 1907 it was surrounded by a complex underground network: Tottenham Court Road station was opened in 1900 for the Central Line, and in 1907 for the Northern Line; Russell Square opened in 1906; Goodge Street in 1907; Warren Street (then called Euston Road) in 1907; Holborn in 1906; and the British Museum Station in 1900.[42] In or around 1907 all major entrances to Bloomsbury could be accessed by underground.

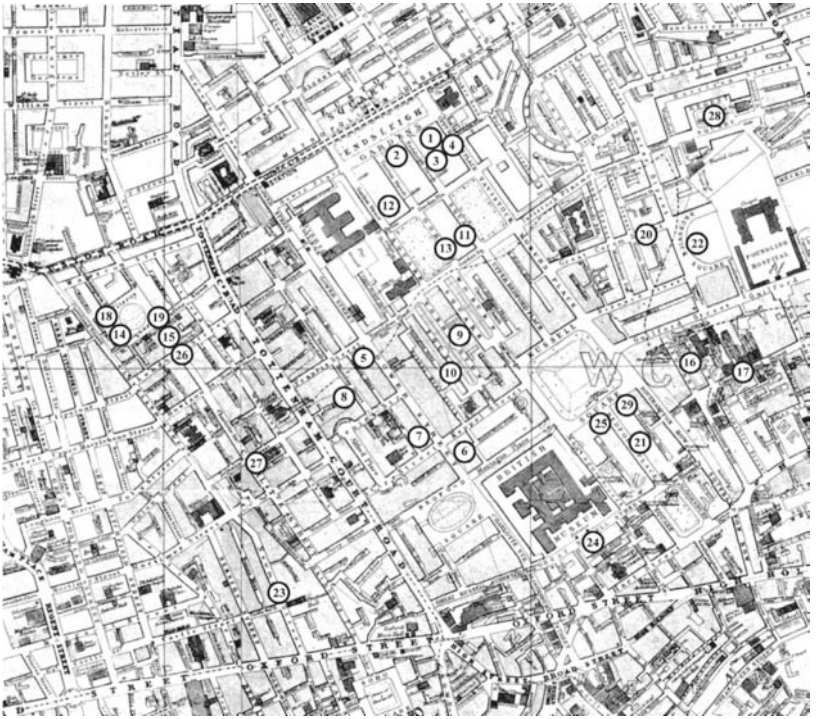
In visible contrast with the transience of Bloomsbury's roads, the British Museum stood out, seemingly appearing as a static and solid space within the fluidity of Bloomsbury. Yet the British Museum was an odd mixture of stasis and nomadism. An example of this mixture was the British Museum's Reading Room. It was one of London's most precious spaces, especially for women writers. Here the South African novelist Olive Schreiner (who became a member on 28 June 1883), the Fabian socialist reformer and historian Beatrice Webb (who joined the British Museum on 14 April 1886), and Amy Levy (who became a member on 15 November 1882) among many others, all came to work.[43] Another example is Eleanor Marx, founder of the Socialist League and daughter of Karl Marx, who translated into German Levy's novel about London's Jewish life, *Reuben Sachs* (1888). She joined the library on 22 October 1877, and moved to 32 Great Coram Street (today Coram Street) on the death of her father, as Yvonne Kapp has noted, 'to be nearer the British Museum and also to her friends, [the late-nineteenth-century poets] Dollie and Ernest Radford, who had married in July and were living round the corner in Brunswick Square'.[44] The Reading Room represented British culture, and it attracted readers and researchers of all kinds of political and intellectual backgrounds that came regularly or temporarily to visit and study. As Levy put it in her article 'Readers at the British Museum': 'The "Room" has indeed become a centre, a general workshop, where in these days of much reading, much writing, and competitive examinations, the great business of book-making, article-making, cramming, maybe said to have their headquarters.'[45]

This influx of intellectuals had a crucial impact on Bloomsbury's urban habitat and architecture, as family houses started to disappear to give way to large numbers of boarding houses which were desperately needed to accommodate the increasing flux of visitors. As W. G. Morris suggested in his little pamphlet *The Squares of Bloomsbury*, Bloomsbury '[t]o-day […] contains more private hotels than any other part of London, and many of the houses originally associated with famous men and women are now boarding-houses, and open their doors to visitors and others who desire a temporary home'.[46] This meant that not only had Bloomsbury become a transitory space, but also that a great number of its residents were passing visitors.[47] A clear example

is Mathilde Blind, who in 1886 moved to Russell House, Tavistock Square (a boarding house for lady-students for the Slade School which was recommended to her by William Michael Rossetti through his sister Christina).[48] Another example is the republican poet James Thomson, author of *The City of Dreadful Night*, whose poetry greatly influenced Levy. He chose to 'live' in a boarding house to be near the British Museum. (Thomson's dwellings were at 35 Alfred Street, later renamed and renumbered as 7 Huntley Street; see Figure 7).[49] Thomson, who died at University College Hospital (opposite Gower Street Station) in 1882 after having drunk himself to death, was a dissident whose poetry described the anti-humanist existence of man in the city to attack the ideology that had created such forms of life. He used both his life and work to denounce the bourgeoisie's love of the fixed, stable, and secure realm of the private to declare himself in favour of a more fluid, nomadic and freer existence. Levy and Thomson never met, but as Joseph Bristow writes, 'Levy's identification with Thomson' was such 'that she dedicated the opening poem in *A Minor Poet* to him'.[50] Such identification was neatly captured by Leonard Woolf, who wrote an inscription from the verses of Levy's 'A Minor Poet' in his own copy of Thomson's *The City of Dreadful Night*.[51]

Another example of the British Museum's static/nomadic hybridity was its exhibition rooms. Lucas remarked that '[o]ne may turn in from Oxford Street and in half an hour pass all the nations of the earth, commanding and servile, cultured and uncouth, under review. The finest achievements of Greek sculpture are here, and here are the painted canoes of the South Sea Islander.'[52] Its exhibition rooms were large, spacious rooms where its roving visitors contemplated the power of the British Empire. But what is interesting here is how Lucas associates the British Museum with Oxford Street. Oxford Street offered to the 'foot-passenger' the marvels and wonders of the British Empire, as Max Beerbohm's famous picture of D.G. Rossetti offering Liberty's most exclusive and oriental textiles to his sister Christina Rossetti so intelligently shows.[53] But one did not need to go to Oxford Street; all the Empire could offer was in the British Museum. The British Museum represented the British Empire, and a culture of consumption (visual consumption) which was curiously enough quite absent from Bloomsbury (except Tottenham Court Road, the neighbourhood was quite free of shops).[54] In this sense, the British Museum was both a static and a transient space. It represented iconographically British history and its powerful empire, but here its roving subjects consumed its iconography.

But perhaps the clearest description of the British Museum as a fleeting space was Lucas' claim that '[t]he lesson of the British Museum is the transitoriness of man and the littleness of his greatest deeds'.[55] There was certainly a strong connection between the British Museum and Gower Street Station in this sense. Both represented the ephemeral character of the modern age, and presented *fin-de-siècle* Bloomsbury as a transient space both historically



1. **Amy Levy (1885–1889):** 7 Endsleigh Gardens.
2. **William M. Rossetti (1880–1890):** 5 Endsleigh Gardens.
3. **Dorothy Richardson (1896–1905):** 7 Endsleigh Street.
4. **Louise C. Moulton**: 6 Upper Woburn Place.
5. **A. Mary F. Robinson**, **Mabel Robinson**, **Vernon Lee (late 1870s-1883):** 84 Gower Street.
6. **Millicent (Garrett) Fawcett (1877–1922):** 2 Gower Street.
7. **Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (1848):** 7 Gower Street.
8. **James Thomson (1876–1882):** 7 Huntley Street.
9. **Christina Rossetti (1876–1894):** 30 Torrington Square.
10. **Mathilde Blind (1877):** 52 Torrington Square.
11. **Mathilde Blind (1886):** Tavistock House, Russell Square.
12. **Charlotte Mew (1888–1922):** 9 Gordon Street.
13. **Virginia and Vanessa Woolf (1904):** 46 Gordon Square.
14. **G. Bernard Shaw (1887–1898):** 29 Fitzroy Square; **Virginia and Adrian Woolf (1907–1911):** 29 Fitzroy Square.
15. **Clementina, Grace and Constance Black (c.1886–c.1888):** 27 Fitzroy Street.
16. **William Morris (1865–1877):** 26 Queen's Square.
17. **Working's Men's College**: 45 Great Ormond Street.
18. **Ford Madox Brown (1865–1881)**: 37 Fitzroy Square. In 1875, the Madox Browns shared their residence with W.M. and Lucy Rossetti and Mathilde Blind.
19. **Herbert Horne, Selwyn Image and Lionel Johnson**: 20 Fitzroy Street. This is where the Rhymers' Club was founded.
20. **Eleanor Marx (late 1883–summer 1884):** 32 Great Coram Street.
21. **Dollie Radford (1883):** 29 Bedford Place.
22. **Ernest and Dollie Radford (1883–1885):** Brunswick Square.
23. **Edward Aveling (1883):** Newman Street, Tottenham Court Road.
24. **Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling (summer 1884–1885):** 55 Great Russell Street.
25. **Emmeline Pankhurst (1889–1893):** 8 Russell Square.
26. **Olive Schreiner (1884):** 32 Fitzroy Street.
27. **Olive Schreiner (1885):** 19 Charlotte Street.
28. **Sergei Stepniak (1885):** 45 Regent Square.
29. **Mrs. Humphry Ward (1881–1890):** 61 Russell Square.

Figure 7 Bloomsbury at the *fin de siècle*.

and geographically: the underground offered a synchronic geographical journey across the metropolis, and the British Museum a diachronic journey through history. The Museum even kept cinematoscopic images of the streets of London.[56] The British Museum was part of this culture because it brought London's street life to the Museum. One no longer needed to travel across the city. One just needed to visit the British Museum to become a passenger in London. Amy Levy, for instance, evoked that ephemerality in her novel *The Romance of a Shop* (1888). Here the main characters, the Lorimer sisters, who are photographers, travel by omnibus and by underground to go to the British Museum to study photography.[57]

So, how did this nomadic space influence its residents? Did this spatial convulsion result in a social convulsion? Was the nomadic space of Bloomsbury 'an autocritical artifact', as Walter Benjamin put it, with which to criticise the bourgeoisie? It was a Bloomsbury resident, and a friend of Amy Levy, the essayist and novelist Vernon Lee, who has shone some light on how Bloomsbury's nomadic character transformed its social habitat. Vernon Lee's short story 'A Worldly Woman' (1892) is the story of Valentine Flodden, a modern young woman who travels by 'bus and by underground across London. She has developed an interest in pottery and has been given a letter of introduction to a famous Bloomsbury potter, Leonard Greenleaf. The quarters where Valentine and Leonard reside (she lives in 5 Eaton Square, near Sloane Square and Belgravia, and Leonard lives in Bloomsbury) typify their social and ideological differences in this story.[58] Valentine Flodden is a wealthy modern woman, and Leonard Greenleaf a socialist artist. She goes to meet him at his studio in Bloomsbury. After their meeting, Valentine is leaving, and Greenleaf, who has classified her as a 'lady', offers to call for a hansom. To his surprise, she prefers to leave Bloomsbury by underground or bus.

> 'Shall I call you a hansom?' he asked, wondering whether he had been rude.
>
> 'Thank you; I think I'll go by the Underground. You cross the big square, and then along the side of the British Museum, don't you? I made a note of the way as I came. Or else I'll get a 'bus in Tottenham Court Road.'[59]

Valentine leaves Greenleaf and walks through Russell Square towards Gower Street Station. It is an extraordinarily symbolic moment because it represents the migration of the upper classes to other areas of London, the impact of mass-transport technologies in Bloomsbury, and their wide use by women of all classes. Lee knew that Bloomsbury was no longer a fashionable neighbourhood and she represented this social transformation in Valentine Flodden's exit from Bloomsbury via the underground. It is Greenleaf who offers the key to this reading when he sees her 'disappearing down the black

Bloomsbury street', and he reflects on her 'unlikely apparition' in this area of the city 'whence fashion had retreated long, long ago, with the last painted coach which had rumbled through the iron gates, and the last link which had been extinguished in the iron extinguishers of the rusty areas'.[60]

In the late nineteenth century, Bloomsbury was a neighbourhood in decline. The *Architect*, for example, had claimed that Russell Square was 'unquestionably the worst for its age' and its richer residents were moving to the suburbs.[61] In 'A Worldly Woman' Lee describes the shabby and run-down conditions of Bloomsbury, as the 'rows of black Bloomsbury houses with their garlanded door-lintels and wornout doorsteps'.[62] The description is most accurate. The *Builder*, for instance, wrote that Gower Street was 'one of the dullest, gloomiest thoroughfares in town … [with its] depressing vista of … blackened house-fronts, their monotonous elevations wholly unbroken or unrelieved'.[63] It was clear that even if the district was renovated and transformed to new high standards, the upper classes would not be satisfied anyway with the new social and geographical character of the district:

> It is said that the Duke of Bedford [the owner of the Bloomsbury State's leasehold] means, if he can, to stem the tide of fashion which has set in so long towards South Kensington. The leases are falling in on his property in Bloomsbury-square and the neighbourhood, and he means to build fine houses there in the hope of attracting fine people to that once fashionable but now less favoured district … it is doubtful if he will overcome the objection which most persons will entertain to living so far from the parks. They will be close to the theatres, it is true; but they will be a long way from the Row, a long way from Bond-street, and, above all, a long way from Pall-mall and the clubs … the ladies won't like the first, their husbands won't like the last.[64]

This westward migration of the well-to-do towards Kensington and the continuous influx into Bloomsbury of daily and temporary visitors transformed the social and cultural patterns of the neighbourhood. During the 1850s and 1860s the area had been associated with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, who met at 7 Gower Street (where it had been founded). In the 1880s it still maintained some vestiges of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, which the presence of Christina and William Michael Rossetti at 5 Endsleigh Gardens and 30 Torrington Square respectively helped to maintain, but the social and artistic status of Bloomsbury had completely changed. Since the rents were now lower than they had ever been, and Bloomsbury had this bohemian, nomadic character, aspiring artists, socialists, intellectuals and poets started to move into the neighbourhood.[65] The poet A. Mary F. Robinson, the American poet Louise Chandler Moulton and later, at the close of the century, Virginia Woolf and the experimental modernist novelist Dorothy Richardson moved into the district at the early stages of their careers.

The neighbourhood's profound spatial transformation encouraged the settlement of groups of political dissidents and other anti-establishment groups. They seemed to have found here an open ground for a social revolution (both in class and gender terms) which they felt was so badly needed in London. This is also reflected in Lee's description of the nomadic life of the social artist in Bloomsbury in her 'A Worldly Woman':

> In his monotonous life of artistic work and social study – in those series of quiet days, as like one another as the rows of black Bloomsbury houses with their garlanded door-lintels and wornout doorsteps, as the spear-heads of the railings, the spikes of blossom on the horse chestnuts, and the little lions on the chain curbs round the British Museum – the weekly firing of his pottery kiln at Boyce's Works near Wandsworth, the weekly lecture to workingmen down at Whitechapel, the weekly reception in the sooty rooms of Faber, the Socialist poet and critic who had married the Socialist painter – all these were the landmarks of Greenleaf's existence, and landmarks of the magnitude of martello towers along a sea-shore.[66]

The story is an exact portrait of the social life of the typical Bloomsbury resident: work in the studio, visits to the factory, lectures to workingmen in Whitechapel and in Great Ormond Street, and of course, visits to the numerous 'at homes'. The residents were connected with socialist and anarchist movements (Eleanor Marx, Edward Aveling, Sergei Stepniak, and the poet William Morris, all lived in the neighbourhood).[67] Its fame was comparable to another area of London, St John's Wood, which was, however, far more favoured by radical artists, thinkers and poets, as we shall see in Chapter 3. Bloomsbury was populated by artists associated with socialism and anarchism, such as, for example, William Michael Rossetti (who moved to St John's Wood in 1890).[68] W. M. Rossetti seems to be the model for one of the characters of Lee's 'A Worldly Woman'. Lee describes Faber as a 'Socialist poet and critic who had married the Socialist painter'. Rossetti was a well-known republican and his wife, Lucy Rossetti, daughter of the painter Ford Madox Brown, was also a painter. His fictional name, Faber, is clearly a rephrasing of the Fabian Society (many of whose members lived here). And like his fictional character, Rossetti had weekly receptions at his house, which Levy (who was their next-door neighbour) visited quite regularly.

Constance and Clementina Black, both very close friends of Amy Levy, were also active members of the socialist and anarchist groups in London. The Blacks were living in a flat on the top floor of a house at 27 Fitzroy Street. According to Levy, the two sisters did 'their own housework, & [were] quite & completely domestic, unless when they [were] attending Socialist or Anarchist meetings'.[69] Constance was Levy's classmate first at Brighton High School for Girls and later at Newnham College, Cambridge. She joined the Fabian Society and was eventually elected to its Executive Committee.[70]

Later, after her marriage to Edward Garnett (son of Richard Garnett, the superintendent of the Reading Room, and a close friend of Mathilde Blind) she started to be involved in anarchist groups in London, especially through her friendship with the Russian anarchists Peter Kropotkin and Sergei Stepniak.[71] She became in later years a translator of Russian literature and introduced the works of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Chekhov to England. Her sister Clementina, Levy's closest friend (to whom she dedicated *A London Plane-Tree*) was also a well known and highly respected socialist. She first joined the Fellowship of the New Life, and later became a very active member of the Fabian society, although she rejected the State Socialism Beatrice Webb defended.[72] She was, like Levy, a very close friend of Eleanor Marx and was particularly preoccupied with the situation of working-class women.[73] In 1887 she was elected secretary of the Women's Protective League (Levy was a supporter too of the League) and became the editor of the *Woman's Union Journal*.[74]

The Blacks' daring household arrangement was dictated by their political attitudes. Living by themselves and doing their own housework was first of all a rejection of bourgeois attitudes they so much criticised, in so far as they rejected the comfort of the middle classes. But it was also an attack on the division of classes, because they refused to have servants. And thirdly, and most importantly, it was a frontal attack on Victorian gender attitudes. Their household *ménage* was by far more revolutionary and daring, in this sense, than that of Levy or Virginia Woolf. Levy was committed to socialism and regularly attended meetings at the Fabian society, but as she once wrote to Vernon Lee: 'I confess, that my own Philistine, middle-class notions of comfort wd. [sic] not be met by their *ménage*.'[75] Levy's political interests were devoted to the situation of women, but her strong attack on bourgeois forms of culture was formulated in her vision of the passenger, in her vision of the woman poet always in the transient without being attached to the patriarchal sphere of the private. Virginia Woolf's thoughts were very similar. Between 1907 and 1911, Woolf lived at 29 Fitzroy Square – this was in fact the house of George Bernard Shaw, one of the most active intellectuals of the Fabian Society, who had lived in the property between 1887 and 1898.[76] Other interesting residents of Fitzroy Square were Herbert Horne, Selwyn Image and Lionel Johnson, members of the Rhymers' Club, and Ford Madox Brown and his wife, who resided at 37 Fitzroy Square between 1865 and 1881.

Bloomsbury was also one of London's most radical spaces for women. A. Mary F. Robinson and her sister, the novelist Mabel F. Robinson studied at University College, London. Indeed the opening of University College and the British Museum to women encouraged a great number of 'independent' women to move into the neighbourhood to live 'en garçon' (in the words of Levy).[77] As Leonard Greenleaf tells us in Lee's 'A Worldly Woman', Bloomsbury was full of 'independent and studious spinsters'. As the map of Bloomsbury at the *fin de siècle* shows, the neighbourhood was especially rich

in women writers, poets, and feminists such as Olive Schreiner, who resided briefly at 32 Fitzroy Street and later at 19 Charlotte Street; Millicent (Garrett) Fawcett, who lived in 2 Gower Street between 1877 and 1922, whom Levy met at a dinner party in 1889;[78] and Emmeline Pankhurst who resided at 8 Russell Square between 1889 and 1893 – the last two women were leaders of the militant movement for women's suffrage.

And it was in the weekly 'at homes' in the numerous salons of Bloomsbury that ideology and poetics mixed.[79] Levy was a regular visitor to three of the most fascinating salons in Bloomsbury: William Michael Rossetti's, A. Mary F. Robinson's and Louise Chandler Moulton's. It was at Rossetti's house that Levy met the poet and theorist of the decadent movement Arthur Symons and the poets Augusta Webster and Mathilde Blind; the latter was also Jewish.[80] Levy was a great admirer of another Bloomsbury poet, Christina Rossetti, and considered her one of the greatest living poets. Levy contributed an article on 'The Poetry of Christina Rossetti' to Oscar Wilde's *Woman's World* (1888), and it was as a result of this article that Levy made contact with Christina Rossetti.[81]

Amy Levy lived next door to W. M. Rossetti, very close to A. Mary F. Robinson and Louise Chandler Moulton, and most importantly, very near to the British Museum, where Levy often went to study. Endsleigh Gardens was one of Bloomsbury's most attractive squares in a most strategic site. It was virtually next door to two major transport junctions, Gower Street Station, and Euston Station, and her house looked out on to Euston Road and the square's gardens. In 'The Village Garden' Levy declared her love for the transient metropolis: '[f]or me', she wrote, 'the roar and hurry of the town'.[82] Bloomsbury facilitated travelling. In addition, the Jewish character of the neighbourhood was also especially important for Levy. In her article, 'The Ghetto at Florence' (1886), she argued that '[t]he Jews have ceased to dwell in the Ghetto, but they have by no means ceased to dwell in the city', and loved Florence because here one could not distinguish the Florentine from the Jew.[83] Bloomsbury was in this sense quite the hybrid neighbourhood she was so anxious to find. Soon after she moved to Bloomsbury, her poetics started to show the influence that this very precise social space had on her writings. It was here that she published all her most innovative work, the novels *A Romance of a Shop* and *Reuben Sachs*, both in 1888, and, in 1889, the book of verse *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse*.

The poet as passenger

The posthumous publication of *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse* in December 1889 caused a stir among London's literary circles. The volume exposed the almost breathtaking originality of Levy's modernity, but reviewers found the volume deeply unsettling. 'Poor little Amy Levy!', wrote the *Literary World*, '[w]e sigh as we take up the slender volume of verse, of which the proofs were corrected by her hand only a week before that hand was quiet

forever'.[84] '[T]he book contains many prophetic notes; signs seen ominously now, in the light of what has happened since the poet revised the sheets but a week before her death', intimated the poet and novelist William Sharp in *The Academy*.[85] Levy had identified herself in her 1883 two-part article 'James Thomson: A Minor Poet' as one of those who 'at some time or other of our lives have wandered in the City of Dreadful Night'.[86] She was a great admirer of Thomson's poetry, and indeed, her second book of poems, *A Minor Poet*, was predictably read in the context of the late-Victorian poetics of pessimism.[87] But her death fuelled further comparisons between the two poets: '[s]ome minor poets of the day with less force than Thomson appear to take a ghastly pleasure in hugging their despair', argued John Dennis in *Leisure Hour*. 'One of them with a rare lyrical gift,' he continued, 'whose sweetness of touch led to the hope of something higher and better in the future, will be sadly remembered even by those who knew her only through her verses, as having recently died a mournful death.'[88]

A London Plane-Tree was without a doubt her most challenging collection of poems and, of course, James Thomson's *The City of Dreadful Night* was behind it. Levy's poetry shared with Thomson's the consciousness of pain, a questioning of religious faith, and more in the context of this chapter, a deep interest in the urban experience; both were after all Bloomsbury poets. Indeed, in this collection Levy aligned herself with Thomson's poetics by geographically and literally placing herself within a tradition of urban writers immersed in the production of a nomadic space. Consider for example the sonnet 'London Poets (In Memoriam)':

> They trod the streets and squares where now I tread,
> With weary hearts, a little while ago;
> When, thin and grey, the melancholy snow
> Clung to the leafless branches overhead;
> Or when the smoke-veiled sky grew stormy-red
> In autumn; with a re-arisen woe
> Wrestled, what time the passionate spring winds blow;
> And paced scorched stones in summer: – they are dead.
>
> The sorrow of their souls to them did seem
> As real as mine to me, as permanent.
> To-day, it is the shadow of a dream,
> The half-forgotten breath of breezes spent.
> So shall another soothe his woe supreme –
> 'No more he comes, who this way came and went.'[89]

'London Poets' derives its power from the creation of a topography of poetic identity which takes London as it centre. It is an impassioned poem that, by the chain of associations, identifies Levy herself as a 'London Poet'. But of

course, its melancholic tone and the references to mourning and wandering suggest a more profound reading of Levy's urban aestheticism by bringing into the equation the haunting presence of the past. Its subtitle, which is a dedication (In Memoriam), with its direct allusion to Thomson via Tennyson, necessarily incorporates and interconnects the past and the present in terms of urban space, time, and poetics creating an economy of continuity and mobility. This haunting presence of the past, of memory, does not destabilise the poem; quite the contrary: what it offers is a reinforcement of poetic and urban identity. Moreover, the idea of 'In Memoriam' suggests of course the notion of death. Levy incorporates the dead (urban poet) by suggesting that the city has memory, that it remembers its past and will therefore remember the present, already envisaging the presence of future ghosts, one of which will be the speaker herself.

Levy's urban aestheticism did not go unnoticed, and certainly after her death, reviews oscillated between sympathetic readings of the volume and fierce criticisms of Levy's metropolitan aesthetics. The *Literary World*, for instance, emphasised Levy's love for 'the stress and contact of the city'.[90] A later reviewer, Ada Wallas, equally observed that, '[a] genuine love of London, its varied life, its sights and sounds, has touched the depths of her nature'.[91] But, while *The Atlantic Monthly* declared that '[h]er musical power [was] undoubted',[92] William Sharp asserted that Levy's return to the lyric form was very disappointing and declared that there was in the volume 'little or nothing of that strenuous realism which characterise[d] the author's prose studies, *Reuben Sachs* and *The Romance of a Shop*'.[93] Sharp disliked in particular the lyric rhythms in the first section of the collection, 'A London Plane-Tree', the section most overtly linked to her metropolitan aesthetics, and offered a very strong critique of the volume's metre, using as an example Levy's celebration of urban mass transport in 'Ballade of an Omnibus'. But it was in particular Charles Whibley's review, 'Poetry in Petticoats', published in *The Scots Observer* (then edited by W. E. Henley), which produced the most damaging attack. Whibley claimed that one could 'easily imagine *A London Plane-Tree* and the rest of the city poems so written – expressed in terms so resonant and exact – that they should have had a fair chance of immortality. But London has still to find her poet, and Miss Levy's achievement is only interesting – exists as not art but "a document." '[94] He was criticising Levy's work on account of what Georg Simmel has called 'Sociological Aesthetics' ('the influence of aesthetic forces upon social facts').[95] For him Levy's poems exactly represented life in the modern metropolis, but as such they were 'documents' not poems. He also attacked Levy on another crucial ground; he wrote that 'being a woman – which is, being interpreted, a mimic – and having to write of love, she writes not as a woman writing of man but as a man writing of woman', and called her poems 'a falsehood'.

Women poets rallied to defend Levy's urban aestheticism. Graham R. Tomson was so appalled by the review that she was compelled to express her

dismay at the Literary Ladies Dinner, as the following extract from a letter from Henley to Whibley shows:

> Why did you let yourself be tumbfiddled by Graham R. to the extent of believing that she was vexed by that article for Amy Levy's sake and not her own? Did you read her speech to the L.L.'s [Literary Ladies' Dinner]? I think I never heard such drivel in my life. The worst is, it shows my offence to be rank. Indeed the women are all in arms – (and in the wrong sense, too!) – about that article.[96]

Henley insinuates that Graham R. Tomson's defence of Levy's poetry was not for Levy's sake but her own. Tomson's rage can be easily understood. Her urban aestheticism, like Levy's, placed women at the centre of the modern metropolis. Tomson knew that her work would be condemned for exactly the same reasons: her radical anti-theist thoughts, her rejection of bourgeois institutions, her aesthetics of flux, and finally because of her gender.[97] But this letter also shows something else: *A London Plane-Tree* situated Levy at the head of a radical group of women writers for whom London became the site of a new cultural and poetic identity. (After Levy's death Louise Chandler Moulton, for instance, read 'some lines on Amy Levy' to Michael Field during their visit to Moulton in Paris in 1890.[98]) Indeed her 'London Poets' became a poetic manifesto for London-based women poets who understood the key role of the city as both a poetic archive and a place for signification and being. It is worth remarking here that in the original manuscript the poem's final line read 'She comes no more who this way came & went'.[99] In the final stages of proof-reading *A London Plane-Tree*, Levy changed the line to 'No more he comes, who this way came and went', altering significantly the gender of the poem.[100] Linda Hunt Beckman has suggested that this alteration was made 'to make the autobiographical nature of the lyric less obvious'.[101] But what is clear is that in its manuscript version the poem revealed a discursive link between women poets and London. For Levy, as for all women poets studied here, writing the city, writing London, marked a sense of exciting newness, of poetic self-discovery and presence. And it was most certainly this distinct celebration of urban life and the way in which Levy seamlessly sewed up women's urban lives into late-Victorian metropolitan aesthetics that set Levy's poetics apart from James Thomson's, inaugurating a new way of understanding the urban experience.

But before we consider in more detail Levy's urban aestheticism in *A London Plane-Tree*, it is worth examining here the book's two illustrations, both by J. Bernard Partridge – who was later to work for *Punch*. These two pictures, which were commissioned by Levy, were supposed to capture the essence of the book. An examination of the illustrations, however, will allow us to highlight not only the issues Levy wanted to address in the collection but also the problems her urban aestheticism encountered. We know from

Levy's social diary that on 18 May 1889 she called on Partridge to discuss the illustrations to the book. What the terms of their agreement were we do not know but what we do know is that she received the pictures on 15 July 1889, because she wrote in her diary 'Mr Partridge horrid pictures came'.[102] The following day she took the manuscript to the publisher T. Fisher Unwin, noting in her diary: 'Paid Mr. Partridge' (from which we can safely deduce that the illustrations were paid by Levy and not the publisher). The first illustration 'A London Plane-Tree: The Temple Church' (see Figure 8) corresponds to the book's frontispiece. Joseph Bristow has noted that the picture shows 'a man leaning against a railing outside a small rounded church next to a plane-tree in full leaf'. He also remarks that

> if featuring an isolated plane-tree, this picture is not quite the reformulation of the Romantic solitary that we might at first imagine it to be. As we turn the pages of the volume, this memorable image encompasses the concerns of a broad group of city-dwelling writers who, like Levy, were grounding their work on decisively un-Romantic territory: a terrain where they celebrated the seemingly incongruous connection between poetry and metropolitan life.[103]

Bristow is right in suggesting the incongruity of the illustration. But, in addition, I would add that what is interesting about this picture is that it is an illustration of 'The Temple Church', one of the oldest *Christian* temples in London. A twelfth-century church, it was set up by the Knights Templar, a military order established at Jerusalem for the protection of pilgrims to the Holy Land. In fact, the church owes its design to the holiest place in the Crusader's world: the circular Church in the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.[104]

Partridge thus placed Levy's *A London Plane-Tree* within a clear Christian tradition. It is interesting to compare Partridge's views with those of the anonymous reader for Macmillan. Levy took the manuscript of *A London Plane-Tree* to Macmillan on 8 April 1889,[105] but it was rejected on the advice of its anonymous reader:

> I have noticed this lady's verse occasionally in *The Spectator* and elsewhere – but I fear she has no quality to raise her above the very minor or even minimous order of poets. There is not much tune, and the thought, if thought there be, is vague and obscure. I should guess that the poetess aims at the moods of Rossetti – but she has not his gifts of colour or music either. There are all very puny pieces – more like the Jew's harp than any more resourceful instrument.[106]

Thus if the reader rejected the manuscript on account of its artistic and racial 'minority', and in clear anti-Semitic terms, then Partridge's illustration eradicated its Jewishness, creating a Christian-centred urbanism. There is also

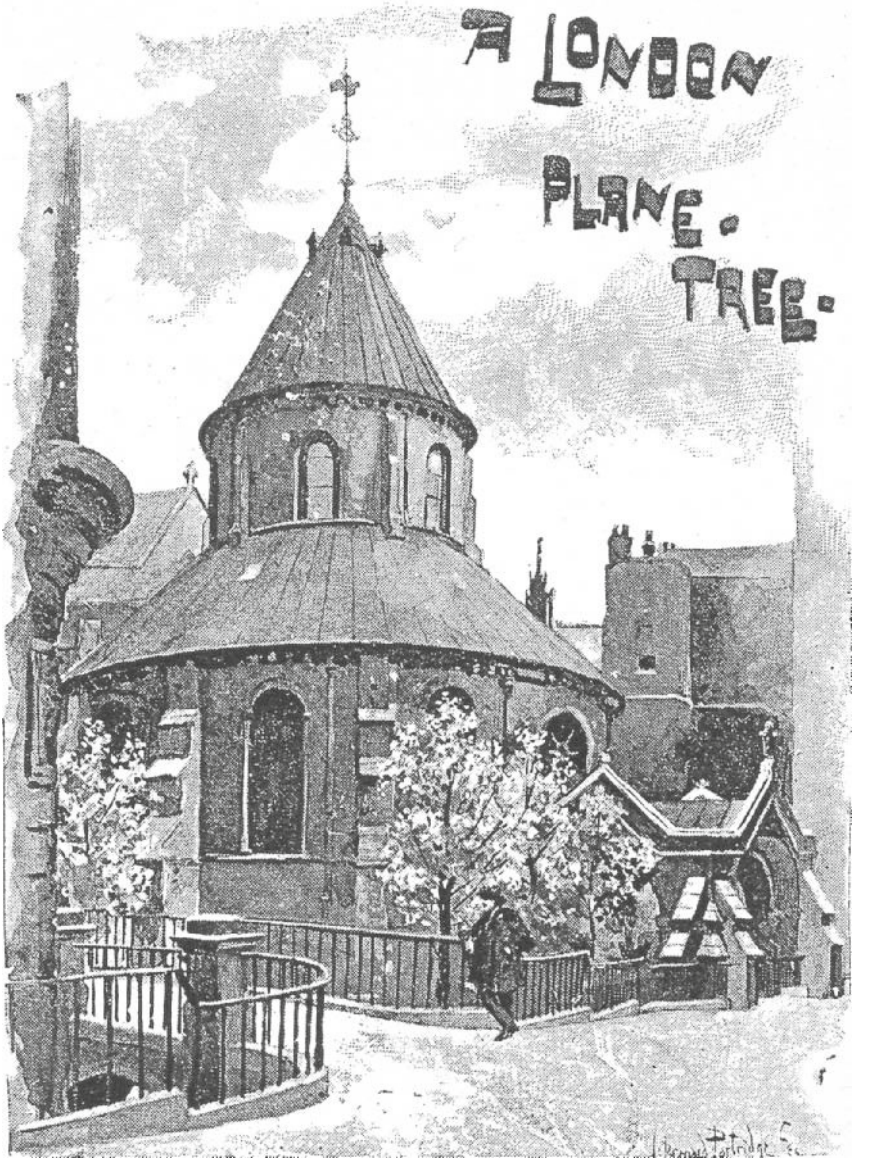


Figure 8 J. Bernard Partridge, 'A London Plane-Tree: Temple Church' from Amy Levy, *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse*

another and equally possible interpretation: that the single figure outside the church is a representation of the Jewish poet as an outsider. One could therefore also read the illustration as a metaphor for the urban Jewish poet in exile. However we interpret the picture, what is clear is that the illustration challenges and questions the bond between London and the Jewish poet.

The second picture, 'Odds and Ends' (Figure 9) introduced the book's fourth section, dedicated to the figure of New Woman. Deborah Epstein Nord has described the illustration as a 'young woman seated, hand on brow, at a desk, surrounded by papers that cover the desk and spill off onto the floor. Placed in front of an open window through which the spires and rooftops of city buildings can be glimpsed, she is the quintessential

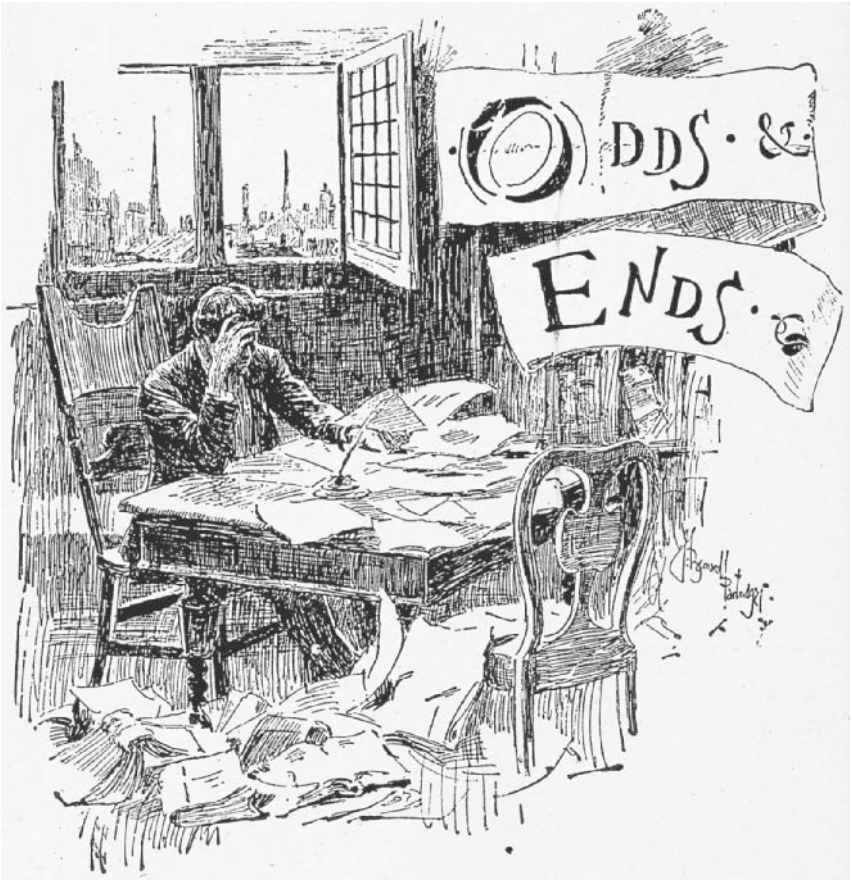


Figure 9 J. Bernard Partridge, 'Odds and Ends' from Amy Levy, *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse*

woman writer alone with her work in a London garret'.[107] I would argue, however, that if this is a portrait of a young woman, she is then portrayed in a rather mannish way. The figure is wearing a pair of trousers and a jacket. Indeed the illustration looks more like a caricature of the New Woman. There is another reason why Levy would have disliked this illustration: the poet has his/her back to the city. This book was about the presence of women in city life, and the illustration portrays the figure of a (mannish) poet turning his/her back to the city. The spires and rooftops of city buildings, as Nord claims, can be glimpsed, but not by the poet who seems to be lost amid a bunch of manuscripts oblivious to the life outside the garret-pane. Little wonder Levy disliked Partridge's illustrations: he had completely misunderstood the volume.

The vortex of *A London Plane-Tree*, as its title helps elucidate, was London. The collection was organised into four sequences: 'A London Plane-Tree', 'Love, Dreams and Death', 'Moods and Thoughts' and 'Odds and Ends', and it was in the first sequence, where Levy proposed her most extraordinary and revolutionary idea: that *fin-de-siècle* poetics should celebrate the fluid character of the modern world and become passengers of modernity. As has been noted, she had already suggested this in her poem 'Felo de Se'. But in 1884, Levy started toying with the idea of the passenger, and began to think about what kind of poetics would best represent the modern world. In that year she published a most interesting article, 'The New School of American Fiction', where she questioned the state of fiction and analysed the work of Henry James and his followers, William Dean Howells, Frances Hodgson Burnett, and Francis Marion Crawford.[108] The essay is most interesting not just because it shows Levy's engagement with new fiction but because we can see how Levy had already started to think about the characteristics of this new aesthetic:

> In an article published some time ago in the *XIXth Century*, Mr. Ruskin complained that the persons of George Eliot's novels suggested nothing so much as the sweepings of a Pentonville omnibus. What would he have said of a literature which, if the expression be allowed us, occupies itself so largely with the Pentonville omnibus of the soul?[109]

Interestingly, Levy turned to Ruskin to produce a critique of contemporary fiction. It was his suggestion about the characters of George Eliot's novels just quoted that prompted Levy's critique of both modern fiction and Ruskin's aestheticism.[110]

Ruskin was one of the first critics to attack the railway revolution, arguing that it would bring about a loss of vision, because speed would make it impossible to observe the landscape as it rushed by. Ruskin could not criticise George Eliot on account of her narrative technique. He complained, however,

that *The Mill on the Floss* was 'the most striking instance extant of this study of cutaneous disease' which characterised the railway novel: an interest in the 'vulgar reader for the vilest character' (the Pentonville omnibus joined the city centre with one of London's low-middle class northern suburbs).[111] He strongly rejected for this reason the novel's two main characters, Maggie and Tom, and described the rest of the characters as 'the sweepings out of a Pentonville omnibus'.[112] Levy consciously rephrased Ruskin's expression and argued that modern fiction had evolved into 'the Pentonville omnibus of the soul'. In other words, what characterises modern fiction is its overly detailed characterisation. According to Levy, modern fiction lingered too much on the character's inner self. For Levy what is wrong with this technique is that it does not represent modern life:

> Are people in real life perpetually on the *qui vive* to observe the precise shade and meaning of one another's smiles, to attach precisely the right interpretation to one another's monosyllables? Some of us take a certain melancholy pleasure in reflecting that we live in a morbid and complex age; but do the most complex of us sit tense, weighing our neighbour's turn of head, noting the minute changes in his complexion?[113]

It was a very astute critique of fiction, because what is implied here is that modern fiction needs to break with realism and naturalism, clearly anticipating Virginia Woolf's 'Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown'.[114] But the point here is Levy's emphasis on the need to produce a much more fluid narrative, one that does not take into consideration every single aspect of a character (a theory she would develop in *Reuben Sachs*, appositely subtitled *A Sketch*). What the novelist and the poet must do is to allow the text to participate in the fleeting character of the modern world. And it is here that she turns Ruskin's phrase inside out by implying that the technique of the 'Pentonville omnibus' may actually represent better the complexity of the world, provided that one does not use the omnibus as a microscope with which to analyse a character down to his or her smallest cell. However, Levy did not seem to realise that what she was in fact insinuating (and she never made it explicit in this essay) is that modern narrative – and modern poetry – should elaborate and produce what we may call an 'aesthetics of the omnibus'. Instead of seeing the omnibus as a microscope, she appears to be proposing (using Ruskin's phrase but rejecting his anti-modern aesthetics) that the omnibus is an optical device to see the modern age as it glides across one's eyes. Indeed, what Levy was suggesting but not quite saying just as yet was that the poet and novelist needed to move from the microscope to the camera, from the cell to the city, from the spectator and analyst, to the passenger.

It was in *A London Plane-Tree* that this conceptual leap finally materialised. The book begins with the poem 'A London Plane-Tree', a celebration of the

city (in ballad stanza) in which Levy reveals the problematic presence of the woman poet in the metropolis.

Green is the plane-tree in the square,
The other trees are brown;
They droop and pine for country air;
The plane-tree loves the town.

Here from my garret-pane, I mark
The plane-tree bud and blow,
Shed her recuperative bark,
And spread her shade below.

Among her branches, in and out,
The city breezes play;
The dun fog wraps her round about;
Above, the smoke curls grey.

Others the country take for choice,
And hold the town in scorn;
But she has listened to the voice
On city breezes borne.[115]

The remarkable regularity of this poem, and its division into four quatrains (again four-line stanzas) takes us to the square where the plane-tree is situated. Here we see the social and the spatial architectonics of Bloomsbury at work, and we realise that the poem is a representation of the position of the urban woman poet in the metropolitan space of Bloomsbury. Indeed the poem's regular rhyme (four line stanzas rhyming abab) further reinforces the parallelism between the poem and the square, and gives the impression of a harmonious urban space. The poem is thus the textual square in which Levy is laying out this urban scene: a woman poet is observing a London plane-tree from her window. A close reading of the poem reveals how both the speaker (the woman behind the window) and the object of the poem (the plane-tree) occupy the same structural position with respect to the city and to the square. They are both situated in a square-shaped structure, and both love the city. In this sense, both the plane-tree and the woman poet are set apart from other urban dwellers who object to the conditions of urban life. The greenness of the plane-tree stands out among those brown trees which are longing for 'country air'. 'She' (interestingly enough Levy uses the feminine pronoun to describe the tree) by contrast, 'loves the town'. By transforming the plane-tree into a 'she', Levy prompts the reader to recognise that an analogy exists between the experience of the plane-tree and that of the woman poet: 'Here from my garret-pane, I mark / The plane-tree bud and blow, / Shed her recuperative bark, / And spread her shade below.' In fact, the

plane-tree and the woman poet both seem to be reflecting (i.e. reproducing) the other's action. The plane-tree is in the square, the woman poet is in her garret, the plane-tree is celebrating urban life, the woman poet celebrates urban life with this poem. In this sense, the poem is an expression of the freedom that London seems to offer to both the urban dweller and the urban woman poet. She sees the city breezes play with the tree, while the curly greyness of the London fog wraps lovingly the tree. Despite the tree's fixed position in the square, the 'city breezes' and the urban fog are moving the tree to the rhythm of the metropolis.

But although both the tree and the woman poet are reflections of each other, they are not in similar positions. The tree is free in the square; the woman poet is not. She is behind the windowpane watching the city. These two positions – on the one hand, the metaphorical incarceration of the woman poet, and, on the other hand, her spectatorship – are at the core of *A London Plane-Tree*, and it is this double condition that makes this collection, and in particular this poem, so fascinating. Although the poem is clearly situated within a whole discourse of city literature which deals with the dichotomy city/countryside, it seems to me that what makes this poem so very crucial within Levy's aesthetics is the position of the woman behind the windowpane, both a prisoner and a spectator. The woman is confined in a transparent prison. Only one line in the poem is dedicated to her: 'Here from my garret-pane, I mark'. The rest of the poem is devoted to describe the free play of the plane-tree in London. This transparency is however symbolic. It seems to mock the illusion of the modern transparent, the illusion that the space that separates the woman from the plane-tree 'appears as luminous, as intelligible, as giving action free rein' (the phrase is Henri Lefebvre's).[116] But, paradoxically, it is because of this transparency that the woman poet can be a spectator of modern life (hence 'I mark', which accurately presents the woman poet as a spectator). The windowpane is that which frames and confines the woman poet and that which situates her outside urban life, and it also posits her as a spectator.

The questions Amy Levy sought to answer in this poem were: how can the speaker break through the barriers of the window? How can the woman poet enter the space of the city and be a spectator of modern life? Levy achieved this transgression through both empathy and metaphor. Indeed, the woman in the poem identifies so powerfully with the plane-tree that she seems to participate in its physical sensations. She is so absorbed in contemplating the plane-tree that she becomes what she contemplates. This identification, this becoming the plane-tree, is moreover achieved through a metaphorical device, because just as the plane-tree loves the city, so does the urban woman poet. In addition, Levy's *feminisation* of the plane-tree further points out to the woman poet being that plane-tree. Like the plane-tree she lives in the square and loves the town. In 'A London Plane-Tree' the woman metaphorically crosses the garret-pane to become the plane-tree. It is through metaphor (in de Certeau's sense), literally through 'transportation', that the speaker is placed at the centre of modernity.

Cynthia Scheinberg has noted that 'the poems in *A London Plane-Tree* explore, among other things, a particular affinity for the urban life of Jewish London'. Two clear examples are 'In the Mile End Road' and 'Ballade of a Special Edition'. The former makes reference to the East End of London, where large numbers of Jewish immigrants arriving from Eastern Europe settled between 1880 and 1905.[117] The latter, 'Ballade of a Special Edition', is a critique of the morbid voracity of consumer culture in late-Victorian London: a paperboy is selling a newspaper special edition which includes details of shocking train accidents and a 'double murder in Mile End'. Interestingly, in the first proofs of 'Ballade of a Special Edition' Levy wrote: '[t]his was written & published before the recent Whitechapel Murders', noting also the publication details – 'The Star, March 5, 1888'. Though this comment did not appear in *A London Plane-Tree*, one can easily see why Levy might have believed such a disclaimer necessary: not only would have she wanted to distance herself from that very same culture of consumption that her poem so scathingly attacked, but also she must have been aware of the anti-Semitic discourse surrounding the Jack the Ripper murders.[118] Todd M. Endelman has remarked that '[s]ensational crimes in East London became focal points for the articulation of anti-alien sentiment', and indeed the *Church Times* went as far as to claim that 'the murderer was a Russian Jewish anarchist'.[119]

Another poem that examines issues of Jewishness is 'Captivity'. Scheinberg has argued that ' "Captivity" stands out as quite a unique poem', a poem 'whose title alone connects to a tradition of Jewish poetry on the pain of Jewish exile and Diasporic identity'.[120] The poem's final lines, she observes, 'are the most important in their description of the psychological effects of oppression, of creating a condition in which nothing except the "captivity" can be imagined or desired':[121]

> Shall I wander in vain for my country?
> Shall I seek and not find?
> Shall I cry for the bars that encage me,
> The fetters that bind?[122]

This idea of imprisonment links, of course, 'A London Plane-Tree' with 'Captivity', uniting thereby the experience of women poets and Jews in late-Victorian London. But in addition, Levy explores the relationship between women, Jewishness and London through the trope of wandering. Consider for example her poem 'A March Day in London'.[123] Linda Hunt Beckman has observed that '[t]he dominant emotion in "A March Day in London" is [...] anxiety about the difficulty of making sense of things. In the second stanza Levy finds an objective correlative for her obsessional ruminations: "The little wheel that turns in my brain; / The little wheel that turns all day, / That turns all night with might and main." '[124] Levy's description of the speaker's

neurasthenia in terms of urban mass transport requires further thought because, as Anson Rabinbach has explained, during the 1880s 'neurasthenia', or 'pathological fatigue', was 'attributed to the excessive collisions and shocks of modernity'.[125] These lines thus remind us to what extent travelling had become part of the mental construction of the late-Victorian urban dweller. But as its title indicates, this is also a poem about 'marching', about 'flaneuring':

> The east wind blows in the street to-day;
> The sky is blue, yet the town looks grey.
> 'Tis the wind of ice, the wind of fire,
> Of cold despair and of hot desire,
> Which chills the flesh to aches and pains,
> And sends a fever through all the veins.
>
> From end to end, with aimless feet,
> All day long have I paced the street.
> My limbs are weary, but in my breast
> Stirs the goad of a mad unrest.
> I would give anything to stay
> The little wheel that turns in my brain;
> The little wheel that turns all day,
> That turns all night with might and main.
>
> What is the thing I fear, and why ?
> Nay, but the world is all awry –
> The wind's in the east, the sun's in the sky.
>
> The gas-lamps gleam in a golden line;
> The ruby lights of the hansoms shine,
> Glance, and flicker like fire-flies bright;
> The wind has fallen with the night,
> And once again the town seems fair
> Thwart the mist that hangs i' the air.
>
> And o'er, at last, my spirit steals
> A weary peace; peace that conceals
> Within its inner depths the grain
> Of hopes that yet shall flower again.[126]

As in 'Felo de Se', Levy conflates wandering with weariness and anxiety. The speaker's anxiety could be, as Beckman has observed, personal; but the original mansucript of the poem alerts us to the fact that its origins are also social. In the manuscript, the poem's first line reads 'East wind'. By this

means, Levy linked the wanderer with East London. In the 1880s, as Todd M. Endelman has shown, the urban mobility of Jewish immigration, which mostly concentrated in the East End of London, was the cause of great social anxiety, especially for the middle classes. As he puts it: 'the fact that the immigrants were Jewish added another dimension to the debate. Essentialist notions of Jewish behavior, rooted in centuries-old ill-will but expressed often in up-to-date racial language, were evoked to explain the baleful consequences of Jewish immigration'.[127] This increase in anti-Semitism caused great concern among the emancipated Anglo-Jews. He argues that:

> [a]lthough sympathetic to the sufferings of Jews under tsarist rule, English Jews believed that unchecked immigration of East European Jews threatened their own status and well-being. It exacerbated existing social problems, such as housing and employment, in the East End, introducing a Jewish dimension to the condition-of-England debate. At the same time it raised the spectre of Jewish separatism, suggesting that Jews were a distinct national group, incapable of assimilation.[128]

The motive of the wanderer allowed Levy to express those social anxieties and to look for a new set of conventions with which to rearticulate the relations between women, Jewishness and the city. Indeed the evolution of the sequence 'A London Plane-Tree' is most remarkable. Levy starts this sequence with the poem 'A London Plane-Tree', which gives title to this section and to the book. This poem and the following one, 'London in July', are both written in ballad stanza. The next one in the section is the lyrical sequence 'A March Day in London'. Here, the structure of the poem (six, eight, three, six, and four-line stanzas) replicates the wanderer's journey. The progressive lengthening of the first two stanzas allows the reader to feel the wanderer's exhaustion and her need to stop to rest. Indeed in the third stanza the speaker stops to face and question that which she fears. Significantly, the beauty of the city in motion (the gleaming gas lamps, the shining ruby lights of the hansoms, glancing and flickering like fireflies) helps her to reassert her presence in the streets of London. And the poet finally finds peace and hope in the last quatrain: when her 'spirit steals' from the London street 'A weary peace; peace that conceals/ Within its inner depths the grain/ Of hopes that yet shall flower again'. Immediately after 'A March Day in London' comes 'Ballade of an Omnibus'. She used the ballade (three eight-line stanzas with a concluding stanza, the *envoi*, rhyming ababbcbC) to express the break from walking to travelling. Indeed, its melodious verse (the ballade was originally written for music), the easy rhyme, and the fluidity of the verse replicates the fluidity of the city, its easiness and flow, as we shall see. And after this ballade, we find yet another ballade, 'Ballade of a Special Edition', in which Levy talks about the circulation of information in newspapers.

Figure 10 *Votes for Women Cart*, 1909

Levy's efforts to transgress the boundaries of social space were canalised through her poetics of transportation and movement. But before turning our attention to the poem 'Ballade of an Omnibus', it is worth considering here how she used such poetics in her fiction. As has been seen, Levy herself had transgressed those frontiers by travelling at the top of omnibuses (interestingly enough the Suffragettes would do the same in 1909 to sell their newspaper *Votes for Women*, see Figure 10). This kind of transgression appears also in Levy's New Woman fiction. In *The Romance of a Shop*, for example, one of its main characters, Gertrude Lorimer, travels on the omnibus roof, when she is seen by her very strict upper-class aunt:

> One bright morning towards the end of January, Gertrude came careering up the street on the summit of a tall, green omnibus, her hair blowing gaily in the breeze, her ill-gloved hands clasped about a bulky note-book. Frank, passing by in painting-coat and sombrero, plucked the latter from his head and waved it in exaggerated salute, an action which evoked a responsive smile from the person for whom it was intended, but acted with quite a different effect on another person who chanced to witness it, and for whom it was certainly not intended. This was no other than Aunt Caroline

> Pratt, who, to Gertrude's dismay, came dashing past in an open carriage, a look of speechless horror on her handsome, horselike countenance.
>
> Now it is impossible to be dignified on the top of an omnibus, and Gertrude received her aunt's frozen stare of non-recognition with a humiliating consciousness of the disadvantages of her own position.[129]

In Levy's fiction, urban mobility is always at the core of women's presence in public spaces. Consider for instance her short story, 'Eldorado at Islington'. The story's main character, Eleanor Lloyd, is a lower-middle class young woman, who quietly spends her days sitting by the window of her home in Islington:

> Eleanor Lloyd, from her window in the roof, could see not only the wall and the plane-trees, but, by dint of craning her neck, the High Street itself, with its ceaseless stream of trams and omnibuses. There was a public-house at the corner, and, as the door swung backwards and forwards, Eleanor caught glimpses of the lively barmaid behind her tall white tap-handles. A group of flower-girls, with uncurled feathers and straight fringes, stood outside on the pavement, jesting with the 'busmen and passers-by. Eleanor, who was a 'lady', (Heaven help her!) used sometimes to envy the barmaid and the flower-girls their social opportunity.[130]

As in 'A London Plane-Tree', we find in this short story a young woman who spends her days sitting by her garret window contemplating life outside in the city. It is quite painful to see how Eleanor cranes her neck to see the High Street, with its ceaseless stream of trams and omnibuses. The movement and fluidity of life in the modern metropolis is presented in painful contrast with her static and stagnant life. Her garret pane is equally both the transparent border that separates her from the city, and that which allows her to see, to be a spectator. But, unlike 'A London Plane-Tree', Levy introduces here the question of class and argues that both class and gender have jointly created that transparent frontier that keeps her enclosed in her garret. For Levy it is women from the low-middle classes who suffer most because they are caught up in a class to which financially they do not belong, and yet they are supposed to represent. As she once wrote to Vernon Lee, '[s]omehow those girls fr. the streets, with short & merry lives, don't excite my compassion half as much as small bourgeoisie shut up in stucco villas at Brosdesbury or Islington,' adding that '[t]heir enforced "respectability" seems to me really tragic'.[131]

Thus Levy argues that working-class women enjoy far more freedom in the metropolis than women of the small bourgeoisie, who for reasons of class are not allowed to work for their living, and hence are forced to stay at home. The upper bourgeoisie, of course, does not engage with the city in the same way. The heroine of *Reuben Sachs*, Judith Quixano, who belongs to the

lower-middle-class Anglo-Jewry, but who lives with her much wealthier uncle, does not suffer as Eleanor does. For Judith and her cousin Rose are allowed to go out to the city. For example, they travel to Whiteley's to shop. It is after one of their shopping sprees that Judith gets a 'blue omnibus' to go home.[132] I reproduce here in full this most remarkable scene:

> She had, to the full, the gregarious instincts of her race, and Whiteley's was her happy hunting-ground. Here, on this neutral territory, where Bayswater nodded to Maida Vale, and South Kensington took Bayswater by the hand, here could her boundless curiosity be gratified, here could her love of gossip have free play.
>
> 'We are going to get some lunch,' said Rose, moving off; 'Judith has to go and see her people.'
>
> She, too, loved the social aspects of the place no less than its business ones. Her pale, prominent, sleepy eyes, under their heavy white lids, saw quite as much and as quickly as Adelaide's dancing, glittering, hard little organs of vision.
>
> The girls lunched in the refreshment room, having obtained leave of absence from the family meal, then set out together from the shop.
>
> At the corner of Westbourne Grove they parted, Rose going towards home, Judith committing herself to a large blue omnibus.
>
> The Walterton Road is a dreary thoroughfare, which, in respect of unloveliness, if not of length, leaves Harley Street, condemned of the poet, far behind.
>
> It is lined on either side with little sordid gray houses, characterized by tall flights of steps and bow-windows, these latter having for frequent adornment cards proclaiming the practice of various humble occupations, from the letting of lodgings to the tuning of pianos.
>
> About half way up the street Judith stopped the omnibus, and mounted the steps to a house some degrees less dreary-looking than the majority of its neighbours.[133]

Rose (who has a fortune of £50,000) and Judith (whose uncle will settle £5,000 on her when she marries) have gone shopping to Whiteley's.[134] Judith enjoys Whiteley's because it is the place where all Jewish areas of London meet. This is a place where she can be and enjoy. Levy thereby uses Judith's bus journey to reveal the racial and social geography of Jewish London: the lower-middle-class Anglo-Jews live in Westbourne Park and Maida Vale, and the upper classes in Kensington. And tellingly, it is the bus journey that gives Judith a sense of place that neither her parent's home in Maida Vale nor her uncle's (who lives in Kensington Palace Gardens) can give her. It is this journey that offers her a sense of continuum in a world which is made out of sharp class contrasts. Indeed the bus journey represents, metaphorically and spatially, her daily struggles as she travels from

one class to another. But even if her class status is much lower than that of her cousin, her position is in no way near to that of Eleanor Lloyd. Eleanor cannot work because she is a 'lady' but neither can she afford to travel to consume, as Rose or Judith. Eleanor's existence is confined to be a spectator of modern life.

Levy's oeuvre is full of heroines framed in the position of the spectator. In 'Between Two Stools' (1883), for instance, Nora Wycherley writes that she 'had grown to regard [herself] as a mere looker-on at life'.[135] And in 'The Piano-Organ' Levy presents a woman poet sitting in her room writing while she listens to the sounds of the city.[136] Another interesting example is her novel *The Romance of a Shop* (1888), whose heroines, the Lorimer sisters, epitomise the figure of the modern spectator. But here we see that Levy's notion of framed spectatorship is rapidly moving towards new positions, in this case the position of women behind the photographic camera. It is in this novel where Levy most clearly presents her examination of class, gender and transportation:

> … Gertrude was about to set out for the British Museum, where she was going through a course of photographic reading, under the direction of Mr. Russel. [. …]
>
> 'What busybodies you long-sighted people always are, Phyllis!'
>
> At Baker Street Station they parted; Phyllis disappearing to the underground railway; Gertrude mounting boldly to the top of an Atlas omnibus.
>
> 'Because one cannot afford a carriage or even a hansom cab,' she argued to herself, 'is one to be shut up away from the sunlight and the streets?'
>
> Indeed, for Gertrude, the humours of the town had always possessed a curious fascination. She contemplated the familiar London pageant with an interest that had something of passion in it; and, for her part, was never inclined to quarrel with the fate which had transported her from the comparative tameness of Campden Hill to regions where the pulses of the great city could be felt distinctly as they beat and throbbed.[137]

Gertrude, Levy's fictional self, sees in urban transport the possibilities for transcending the incarcerating ideology of the separate spheres. The specific reference to the 'Atlas' omnibus (see Figure 1, Sidney Starr's *The City Atlas*) indicates Levy's knowledge of London's transportation network and her interest in exposing women's engagement with the city via its transport system.[138] It is by 'bus and underground that Gertrude travels to the British Museum to attend a course on photography. However, it is by reason of the economic and social decline of the Lorimers (the result of their father's death and his debts), that they had been 'transported' as Gertrude puts it, to the core of the city, and it is from this new social (albeit lower) status that the Lorimers have began to enjoy the pulses and rhythms of the metropolis. For indeed, '[b]ecause one cannot afford a carriage or even a hansom cab […] is one

to be shut up away from the sunlight and the streets?' Mass transport thus emerges in the work of Amy Levy as the key element in the reconfiguration of race, gender and class in the everyday life of the city.

It is in 'Ballade of an Omnibus' where this reconfiguration appears most clearly:

BALLADE OF AN OMNIBUS

To see my love suffices me.
– *Ballades in Blue China*

Some men to carriages aspire;
On some the costly hansoms wait;
Some seek a fly, on job or hire;
Some mount the trotting steed, elate.
I envy not the rich and great,
A wandering minstrel, poor and free,
I am contented with my fate –
An omnibus suffices me.

In winter days of rain and mire
I find within a corner strait;
The 'busmen know me and my lyre
From Brompton to the Bull-and-Gate.
When summer comes, I mount in state
The topmost summit, whence I see
Crœsus look up, compassionate –
An omnibus suffices me.

I mark, untroubled by desire,
Lucullus' phaeton and its freight.
The scene whereof I cannot tire,
The human tale of love and hate,
The city pageant, early and late
Unfolds itself, rolls by, to be
A pleasure deep and delicate.
An omnibus suffices me.

Princess, your splendour you require,
I, my simplicity; agree
Neither to rate lower nor higher.
An omnibus suffices me.[139]

The woman poet is no longer incarcerated in her garret-pane but riding unencumbered in the metropolis. Apart from this crucial structural difference

between 'A London Plane-Tree' and 'Ballade of an Omnibus', there is another intrinsic difference between these two poems which is worth noting here: for the first time the urban woman appears to write freely. She has become one with the city as she rides across the metropolis. She is finally immersed in the metropolis as she glides across it. One must remember here that at the *fin de siècle* the top of an omnibus had no windows or roof, and hence passengers travelled in the open air. It is in this sense that in the third stanza she remarks that she is 'untroubled by desire'. As a passenger the woman poet has freed herself from the burden of desire, because her desire to be engrossed in the materiality of the metropolis has finally been accomplished. It is not that the poet desires no more, it is that her desire does not trouble her. Desire has been transformed into something more enjoyable. It is not the constraining desire of the woman behind the garret-pane in 'A London Plane-Tree' or the suffocating desire of Eleanor Lloyd in 'Eldorado at Islington' or the speaker in 'A March Day in London'. In 'Ballade of an Omnibus' her desire to see has been set free. In this bus journey she finds the *jouissance* she was searching for. She cannot 'tire' of the scenes that occur in the omnibus'. 'The tales of love and hate', the tale of the 'city peasant', and the circularity of the scenes produce in the poet a 'deep' and 'delicate' 'pleasure'. In short, the omnibus suffices her.

Aesthetics of an omnibus

I argued at the beginning of this chapter that the development in modernity from the spectator incarcerated in her garret-pane, to the passenger in the omnibus worked at various levels. It implied a political change because it transported (Jewish) women to the centre of the urban experience. But as I have also suggested, it also implied an important aesthetic transformation of *fin-de-siècle* culture and poetics. So, what did it mean aesthetically to be a passenger? Levy started her 'Ballade of an Omnibus' by claiming that the poet of modernity only needs an omnibus to write. The passenger is a nomad in the modern metropolis, and in her journeys she records life as it passes by. The passenger associates herself with the lower classes, she is '[a] wandering minstrel, poor and free', who has chosen to travel using mass-transport facilities to observe urban life. The poet wants to be close to the city and its urban dwellers, and it is by becoming a passenger that she can best comprehend the metropolitan space and its unstoppable movement. Unlike carriages, hansoms, and flies (one-horse hackney carriages) – all bourgeois forms of transport – and which Levy described, perhaps not surprisingly, with verbs that do not denote movement but aspirations to economic and social stability ('some men to carriages *aspire*', 'on some the costly hansoms *wait*', 'some *seek* a fly, on job or hire'), omnibuses are described as perfect motion machines with which to record modern life.

In his famous 'Conclusion' to *The Renaissance*, Walter Pater argued that the tendency of modern thought was to regard life as being in perpetual flux. Pater started his conclusion with an epigraph in Greek which translated as 'Heraclitus says: "All things are in motion and nothing at rest." '[140] Pater's conclusion was a reaffirmation of Heraclitus' theory. Pater argued that both physical life (both the physical life outside ourselves, and our own physical bodies) and the 'inward world of thought' were in a perpetual state of flux. 'Our physical life', Pater wrote, 'is a perpetual motion of them [elements of nature] – the passage of the blood, the waste and repairing of the lenses of the eye, the modification of the tissues of the brain under every ray of light and sound –'.[141] Pater saw the body's ephemeral life as a reflection of the influence of the physical world outside. In similar fashion the 'inner world of thought' exists also in the fleeting:

> Or if we begin with the inward world of thought and feeling, the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring. There it is no longer the gradual darkening of the eye, the gradual fading of colour from the wall – movements of the shore-side, where the water flows down indeed, though in apparent rest – but the race of the midstream, a drift of momentary acts of sight and passion and thought.[142]

In this philosophical context of ephemerality and fastness it is no surprise that motion machines such as underground trains and omnibuses were regarded as symbols of the ephemeral character of life at the *fin de siècle*. Amy Levy was captivated by the transient metropolis. She never depicted London as if it was a still painting. Rather the city appears in her work in a state of perpetual flux. In 'A London Plane-Tree', for example, she united human and inhuman notions of motion ('city breezes' and the 'dun fog'). But not just the breeze and the fog are moving. She portrays the London crowd always in the transient: passers-by and passengers travel in the streets by omnibuses, by underground, or on foot. Omnibuses and hansoms circulate in the surface of the metropolis, and under its surface the underground flows across the city. Nothing in the city remains still.

Like Pater, Levy describes the city as always inconstant, always in motion where nothing and no one are at rest. Compare, for example, Pater's famous sentence 'To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life,' with Levy's nightlife description of London as 'The gas-lamps gleam in a golden line; / The ruby lights of the hansoms shine, / Glance, and flicker like fire-flies bright'.[143] Levy's London is always burning with this 'gem-like flame'. She prefers the fleeting metropolitan life to the quiet and restful life of the countryside as her poem 'Out of Town' illustrates:

> Out of town the sky was bright and blue,
> Never fog-cloud, lowering, thick, was seen to frown;

Nature dons a garb of gayer hue,
Out of town.

Spotless lay the snow on field and down,
Pure and keen the air above it blew;
All wore peace and beauty for a crown.

London sky, marred by smoke, veiled from view,
London snow, trodden thin, dingy brown,
Whence that strange unrest at thoughts of you
Out of town?[144]

In the tranquil space of the countryside, Levy cannot keep London out of her mind. Interestingly enough in the original manuscript, line ten reads: 'Whence that strange at unrest thoughts of you', which suggests an ambiguity as to whether it is the metropolis or the poet that is unrestful. It is perhaps because of that unity of being in the fleeting, of not being at rest, that Levy preferred the city to the countryside; both the city and the poet are united in this transiency. This is why the poet prefers the ephemeral urbanscape to the paradisiacal rural life. She confirmed this preference in another poem, 'The Village Garden', in which Levy stated that it was in the rushing, hurrying metropolis where the modern poet found consolation for the pain of living in modernity. In the poem the speaker, who is staying with her friends in a 'village garden', hears the call of the city. She misses the speed of the metropolis and prefers the 'roar and hurry of the town' to the still life of the village:

The city calls me with her old persistence,
The city calls me – I arise and go.

Of gentler souls this fragrant peace is guerdon;
For me, the roar and hurry of the town,
Wherein more lightly seems to press the burden
Of individual life that weighs me down.[145]

Georg Simmel has claimed that '[w]ith each crossing of the street, with the tempo and multiplicity of economic, occupational and social life, the city sets up a deep contrast with small town and rural life with reference to the sensory foundations of psychic life'.[146] In rural life, he argues, 'the rhythm of life and sensory mental imagery flows more slowly, more habitually, and more evenly'.[147] And yet, she preferred the fast metropolitan flow to the slow, even flow of rural life because it was in the metropolis where at least her ephemerality was at one with the space she lived in. It is for this reason that the 'burden of individual life that weighs' her down is much lighter in the city, because both space and being are at least united in this transient

world. It is also for this reason, as we saw in 'Ballade of an Omnibus', that the urban woman poet seems to find the *jouissance* and satisfaction she was looking for in her journeys through the metropolis. Simmel suggested that the urban dweller 'develops an organ protecting him against the threatening currents and discrepancies of his external environment which would uproot him'.[148] For Levy, it is a mechanical organ, the omnibus, if any, which protected her against the external environment. In fact Levy welcomed this 'uprootedness', because it was through mobility that the bourgeoisie's Christian patriarchal notions could be challenged. More than an organ for protection, the omnibus was an organ with which to criticise the fixity and stability of Christian bourgeois forms of life. This is why the poet-passenger only needed an omnibus and rejected other, more bourgeois forms of transport.

This culture of looking is at the core of 'Ballade of an Omnibus'. The poet-passenger uses the omnibus to 'see Crœsus look up, compassionate'. She marks 'Lucullus' phaeton and its freight', 'the human tale of love and hate', the 'city pageant, early and late'. If in the second stanza Levy uses innocuous verbs such as 'see' ('Whence I see Crœsus look up'), in the third stanza she uses a much stronger verb, 'I mark', to emphasise the distinctive visual quality of the experience. Indeed Levy uses the omnibus to characterise the physiognomy of other passengers. But Levy is also most interested in the physiognomy of the city. In *The Romance of a Shop*, for example, Gertrude Lorimer travels in a green omnibus to write about the city in her 'bulky note-book'.[149] Gertrude, who is Levy's *alter ego* in this novel, represents the position of the urban woman poet who uses the omnibus as an optical instrument. Another example is Judith Quixano in *Reuben Sachs*, who travels in a green omnibus to see her parents in Walterton Road. It is very interesting to notice how Levy uses Judith's omnibus journeys to make the reader *look out*. There are no descriptions in the novel of Judith's fellow passengers, instead our attention is focused on the passing street, which is 'lined on either side with little sordid gray houses, characterized by tall flights of steps and bow-windows, these latter having for frequent adornment cards proclaiming the practice of various humble occupations, from the letting of lodgings to the tuning of pianos'.[150] One cannot but notice here the pre-cinematic character of the scene, as Levy directs the reader's eyes to the streets. Her narrative functions as a camera which flashes up the urbanscape and transforms the city into a motion picture. Levy used the same technique in 'Ballade of an Omnibus'. She writes: 'I mark … / The scene whereof I cannot tire, / The human tale of love and hate, / The city pageant, early and late / Unfolds itself, rolls by, to be / A pleasure deep and delicate.' The verbs 'unfold' and 'roll' are here symptomatic and point towards a very specific type of poetry, one which like the omnibus, unfolds and rolls itself in front of the reader, as in Ruskin's phrase, the technique of the Pentonville omnibus. These two verbs suggest the pre-cinematic character of modern poetry,

with its emphasis on the ephemeral and fleeting. What unfolds in the omnibus is the city as a motion picture.

Walter Benjamin has argued that in modernity people have to adapt to the speed of life, to new technologies. Indeed the eyes have to adapt to 'the rapid crowding of changing images, the sharp discontinuity in the grasp of a single glance, and the unexpectedness of onrushing impressions'.[151] These were, Simmel argued, the conditions which the metropolis had created. It is in this sense that Benjamin claims that 'technology has subjected the human sensorium to a complex kind of training'.[152] Certainly, urban mass-transport vehicles were optical instruments that prepared the human eye for the camera. Historically, until the 1880s, the form of the top of the omnibus was the 'knifeboard'; passengers who were at the top did not face the front of the omnibus but its side. The movement was for this reason more like the movement of a film than it is today, because passengers did not look at what was ahead but at what was passing by. By 1900, most omnibuses had adopted the garden seat, and passengers faced what was ahead of them. Early films soon copied this system, as Tom Gunning has noted, and 'presented a simulacrum of travel […] through "phantom rides" films, which were shot from the front of trains or prows of boats and which gave seated, stationary spectators a palpable sensation of motion'.[153]

It is no surprise that the omnibus 'sufficed' Amy Levy. It was as a passenger that she finally found a way to produce an aesthetics of flux and movement which was at one with the ephemerality of urban life. We can now truly appreciate Levy's astonishing accomplishment. Walter Pater remarked that philosophy was the microscope of thought with which to delve into the myriad of sensations that pass by us every moment of our lives. He ended his 'Conclusion' to *The Renaissance* with a final thought: 'art comes to you proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake'.[154] Levy turned Pater's statement inside out. She argued that the omnibus was the camera of thought, and the passenger, the poet of modernity. And certainly her poetry gives us nothing but the highest quality of the ephemeral life as it rolled in front of her eyes.

2
Alice Meynell: An Impressionist in Kensington

> It is the leg that first suggested the phantasy of flight.
>
> Alice Meynell, 'Unstable Equilibrium'[1]

> But as we, unlike those Orientals, are a destructive people, paper with us means short life, quick abolition, transformation, re-appearance, a very circulation of life.
>
> Alice Meynell, 'Symmetry and Incident'[2]

> But for the vague shifting and alteration of the light, London might be a painted city.
>
> Alice Meynell, 'The Roads'[3]

Describing the publication of Alice Meynell's latest work and the 'royal' reception she and her work received from both the masses and the literary establishment, Max Beerbohm wrote:

> A great crowd lines the pavement by the park, in the expectation of a rare sight. A loyal thrill and murmur pervade it, when, at length, a mounted policeman dashes down the road. All eyes dilate to the distance and discern already, through the trees, the moving glitter of cuirasses. The cavalcade comes! Comes a bevy of bright guardsmen, after whom is drawn a homely carriage with a lady in it; behind her, in the rumble, a brace of stalwart Highlanders; lastly another bevy of bright guardsmen. Through cheers and genuflexions, waved hats and handkerchiefs, trots this cavalcade. Then the crowd 'passes along'.
>
> This is not merely a description of a scene occasional in London. It is also a parable. The crowd is the reading public. The mounted policeman is Mr. John Lane. The guardsmen are the literary critics. The lady is Mrs. Meynell. The homely carriage is her new book. The Stalwart Highlanders are Mr. Coventry Patmore and Mr. George Meredith.[4]

Alice Meynell was a veritable 'queen' in the London literary world of the 1880s and 1890s. She was widely acclaimed as the best poet and essayist of

her generation. John Ruskin, for instance, wrote of her that '[t]he last verse of that perfectly heavenly "Letter from a Girl to Her Own Old Age," the whole of "San Lorenzo's Mother," and the end of the sonnet "To a Daisy," are the finest things I have yet seen or felt in modern verse'.[5] Coventry Patmore called her 'a woman of genius, one who' had 'falsified the assertion' he 'made some time ago […] that no female writer of our time had attained to true "distinction." '[6] Meynell wrote prolifically for numerous journals and magazines, among them the *Pall Mall Gazette* and *The National Observer*, the latter of which took anything she sent.[7] She was the editor, together with her husband, of the Catholic journal *Merry England*, and her books were always best-sellers. *The Colour of Life* (1896), one of her best-known collections of essays, which she dedicated to Coventry Patmore, was such a success that it was reprinted nine times; and *The Children* reached its third edition in the year in which it was published, 1897.[8] This royal image defined her position within the aesthetic circles of *fin-de-siècle* London, and Beerbohm's satirical comments rightly analogised Meynell's position with Queen Victoria's (George Meredith, for instance, referred to her as a 'Queen').[9] Meynell's 'royal' status was officially confirmed in 1895 when Coventry Patmore proposed her for the Laureate.[10]

In recent years, Meynell's lyrical poetry has received substantial critical reappraisal in a variety of ways. Isobel Armstrong and Angela Leighton have focused on Meynell's pauses and silences and on her poems about maternity. F. Elizabeth Gray and John S. Anson have explored how her poems engage with Roman Catholicism. Sharon Smulders has closely studied Meynell's critique of the Romantic lyric, most notably her attempt to 'resolve the conflict between inherited structures – both formal and conceptual – and the woman poet'. Kathleen Anderson has delved into Meynell's 'preoccupation with her identity as a poet'. Maria Frawley has highlighted how 'her poems study the dynamics of the mind, both as it processes experience and, more critically, in its consciousness of this act'. Finally, Yopie Prins' essay on Meynell's 'rhythms' has offered an illuminating account of Meynell's metrical rules.[11] But contemporary critics have also begun to pay close attention to Meynell's prose.[12] Talia Schaffer in particular has investigated the links between Meynell's prose and British aestheticism. Noting that 'Meynell was the living proof of the female aesthetes' theory that New Womanism and traditional femininity could merge seamlessly, that a woman could be "a saint and a sibyl smoking a cigarette" ',[13] Schaffer argues that '[a]estheticism allowed Meynell a more complex mode of self-representation, allowing her to infuse her Angelhood with the flavors of avant-garde sophistication.'[14]

Taking its cue from Beerbohm, who posited Meynell not as a queen sitting on her throne but as a passenger travelling across a crowded London street, this chapter seeks to contribute to the revalorisation of Meynell's lyric poetry and prose by examining Meynell's urban aestheticism in the interplay between her use of the lyric and her observations, as a passenger, of the

conditions of modernity in late-Victorian London. In this context, I have found Schaffer's recent examination of Meynell's 'The Woman in Grey', an essay in which Meynell, taking the position of an omnibus rider, observes a New Woman (the woman in grey) riding a bicycle, particularly suggestive. Schaffer sees this essay as a cornerstone in Meynell's position in relation to aestheticism and the figure of the New Woman. She writes that Meynell is reluctant

> to acknowledge that she is too frightened to emulate the New Woman. And so, as the bicyclist triumphantly rides off upon her perfect equilibrium, Meynell shares with her reader a soberer ride upon a train of thought, a top-heavy omnibus, the vehicle of slow, dependent, ladylike conventionality from which she does not dare to disembark. Levy might have described that omnibus as a space within which the woman in grey's revolution continues, but Meynell sees her own vehicle only as a threat to the woman she most envies.[15]

What I will be suggesting here is that Meynell's views on the figure of the passenger derive both from her concerns with the character of modern urban life (concerns often inflected by her Catholicism) and from her search for new lyric ways with which to represent the urban condition. My argument here is that the passenger helped Meynell to develop and articulate a theory of urban aestheticism that was deeply engaged with impressionism and impressionistic techniques.

But Beerbohm's allegory also alerts us to Meynell's 'public status' in late-Victorian London. Critics have often been fascinated by Meynell's 'semi-divine' aura (the phrase is Schaffer's), and the history of the adoration she received from female poets (including Katharine Tynan, Dollie Radford, and the America poet Agnes Tobin) and male poets (Coventry Patmore, George Meredith, and Francis Thompson were in love with her) has been well documented.[16] If Amy Levy aligned the figure of the poet-cum-passenger with the poor minstrel, Meynell's own journeys were more public and spectacular. Indeed, just like the queen, her parade is awaited by the literary establishment and by the crowd, who anxiously expect the arrival of her next book and later join the royal cavalcade. But if Meynell is a queen to be looked at and to be consumed, her work is equally part of this culture of mass consumption. Circulation is therefore a crucial element in this chapter. But the circulation of (literary) goods and the circulation of passengers are, however, at the centre of this chapter for another reason. Alice Meynell resided in Kensington, one of London's most renowned areas for shopping. There is, for one thing, a most interesting convergence between Meynell's urban aestheticism, her position in relation to consumer society as a passenger, and the social space she lived in. Kensington was representative in London of consumer society, and this particular space enabled Meynell to

represent and criticise this new social and economic transformation. We cannot, however, forget that it was in Kensington that Queen Victoria was born. Hence, in addition to this character of circulation, we must also include the kind of stately, authoritative aura that Kensington came to symbolise in the late-Victorian period.

As Beerbohm's perceptive parable so clearly shows, Meynell epitomised this union of authority and circulation for the late Victorians. She understood that the late-Victorian city was based on a new economic model founded on production and consumption, and that such a system was fostered by a newly developed culture of the spectacle. It is obvious that her marketing strategies conformed to this economic scenario. As critics have often noted, she was very astute in the way in which she publicised and sold her work. Her essays, for instance, were first eagerly consumed by the reading public in the mass press and then republished in book form to great critical acclaim by both critics and public. Her poetry was equally successful, even though she produced substantially less poetry than prose. In a letter to Katharine Tynan, Alice Meynell wrote that her 'tiny "Collected" ' was 'in the seven thousand. Why? They are nearly all old poems that no one cared for very much for twenty years. And I was nearly Laureate with them! Mackenna told me so!'[17]

However, although she understood the economics of the late-Victorian city, she was very critical of consumer culture both in her poetic and in her prose work. She was a stately, 'royal' passenger consuming the city and describing the transient character of modernity, but she herself refused to be consumed. She kept a private life (the subject of her essays 'Solitudes', 'The Colour of Life', and of her poem 'To A Poet'),[18] and yet, she created for herself a public persona (which Beerbohm found so exasperating) to be consumed by her reading public. As Talia Schaffer writes, '[i]t is paradoxical but true that Meynell felt both an urgent need to keep her life private and an equally imperative desire to publish and publicize herself'.[19] Consider the following letter Meynell wrote to Coventry Patmore: 'I go about so little that I never know a great many people at these parties. The few I met here [at Lady Jeune's] all had the same little compliment, "We hardly ever see you, but we always read you." '[20] And yet, as June Badeni has remarked, she acquired a taste for these public gatherings, as she was 'sought by those hostesses who liked to have celebrities in their drawing-rooms'.[21] Her popularity in these *soirées* was huge, as this letter from Meynell's sister illustrates: 'I heard from Miss Sweetman that you were the lion at a great literary soirée lately, in London, and that someone who wanted much to approach you could not do so, so surrounded were you. I hope you enjoy these situations.'[22] One can find the same ambivalence in her thoughts on late-Victorian consumer culture. She often travelled by public transport, consuming the metropolis and the masses in her journeys, to look for new ideas for her work, which she of course sold to the mass press, and yet she attacked this culture in poems such as 'Builders of Ruins' and 'A Dead

Harvest' – a social and religious critique of the 'futile crop!' of Kensington Gardens – and in essays such as 'The Childish Town' and 'The Effect of London', where she argued against consumer society and the 'tyranny' of shop-windows.[23] She was both a queen within poetic circles and the very image of the mass press (in 1897 she became the President of the Society of Women Journalists).[24]

At this juncture I need to clarify the way in which this chapter will consider Meynell's use of the lyric in her urban writings, both poetry and prose. While I will be examining Meynell's urban aesthetics in her poetry, much of Meynell's thinking on urban aestheticism was articulated in her prose essays, especially in the collection *London Impressions* (1898). Margaret Stetz has noted that in the 1880s and 1890s a blurring of the properties of prose and poetry became symbolic of late nineteenth-century literature, epitomised by what she calls 'Ballads in Prose'.[25] This blurring of genres is particularly pertinent in any examination of Alice Meynell's lyric prose. In *The Nature and Elements of Poetry*, the American poet and late-Victorian critic Edmund Clarence Stedman wrote that '[t]here is a class of writers, of much account in their day, whose native or purposed confusion between rhythmical and true prose attracts by its glamour, and whom their own generation, at least, can ill spare. Of such was Richter, and such in a measure have been De Quincey, Wilson, Carlyle, and even Ruskin, each after his kind.'[26] To this list one must add Walter Pater, 'the acknowledged Master' (the phrase is Richard Le Gallienne's), and of course Alice Meynell. Meynell was indeed particularly esteemed, as Le Gallienne noted, for her exquisite essays.[27] Critics of the 1890s have observed that during this period the essay became a new art form, which exemplified, in the words of Talia Schaffer, 'the trend of a good deal of aesthetic writing, which belied its own literary ambition by deliberately presenting itself as minor and ephemeral'. For Schaffer, Meynell's 'essays raise crucial questions of genre': her 'texts are not really essays, they are not quite prose poems, and they are certainly not journalistic advice columns, though they share components of these three'. Schaffer, in particular, examines them in 'the boundary between journalism and literature'.[28] This chapter, however, considers the inextricable link between Meynell's urban poetry and prose by paying close attention to the lyrical quality of her aesthetic essays.

Wolfgang Iser's examination of Walter Pater's essays has particular bearings on my views on Meynell's use of the lyric in her aesthetic prose. Noting that the essay is 'typologically related to oracular verse and treatise', Iser argues that 'Pater conceived of the dialectics operative in the essay as a matter of collecting impressions and sharpening observation'. Such a method, he remarks, helped Pater to connect and embrace 'the two vital poles of the essay: the randomness of experience and the subjectivity of perception', adding that '[t]he individual perceiver directs his limited vision towards the limitless potential of the experience, and the essay brings to life the ever

changing area between the two'.[29] In his introduction to *Essays of To-Day*, a collection of turn-of-the-century essays which included pieces by Vernon Lee, Joseph Conrad, and Alice Meynell among others, F. H. Pritchard claimed that this subjective observation was precisely what united the essay and the lyric in the late-Victorian period: 'It is in this personal trait', he writes, 'that the essay corresponds most nearly to the lyric. They are both the most intimate revelations of personality that we have in literature […] And unlike as essay and lyric are superficially, there is in this fundamental respect no difference between them'.[30] This subjective perception of the experiential, social reality is what characterises Meynell's lyric prose. Such an interpretation, of course, reminds us of Theodor W. Adorno's definition of the lyric as 'the subjective expression of a social antagonism'.[31] Consider, for instance, a reviewer's response to Meynell's collection of essays *The Colour of Life*: 'You read them with a passion of delight in swift sweetness of rhythm and reason, their magic of gracious wisdom, their radiant and enduring ironies. … To see what this writer has seen, to hear what she has heard, is a lovely lesson in the art and nature of life.'[32] Meynell's subjective observations ('to see what [she] has seen' and 'hear what she has heard') are expressed through the poetic quality of her prose writing (that 'swift sweetness of rhythm and reason'). This is why, as Schaffer notes, Meynell's essays are so close to the genre of prose poems.

So what kind of passenger was Meynell? Was her privileged position influencing the way in which she saw the city? How did she, as a passenger, engage with London? What is the relationship between travelling and Meynell's urban writing? These are the questions that this chapter seeks to address. But to do so, we must first locate Alice Meynell within the cultural and economic space of Kensington, where she lived, and which was the most fashionable quarter for successful artists in general and for women poets in particular.

Consumer culture and femininity in the Royal Borough of Kensington

In 1883 the poet A. Mary F. Robinson and her family moved from Bloomsbury to Kensington. Despite her success she felt isolated in Bloomsbury. Vernon Lee, who was at the time living with them in Gower Street, wrote to her mother of Robinson's 'utter want of moral and intellectual sympathy': 'Her [Robinson's] own intérieur, I think, is getting more & more insufficient for her. She is growing & it is shrinking. I mean that it is becoming more & more dead alive [sic] & commonplace. All that little literary society which seems, in pre-Raphaelite days, to have met at 84 Gower Street, seems dispersed or melted away, & 84 is getting more & more commonplace & languid. To me it had grown excessively tedious.'[33] A friend of both Lee and Robinson, Helen Zimmern, told Lee that the house was getting 'too boring to come'

to.[34] Lee agreed, '[a]ll life is ebbing out of that house, & Mary would be left high & dry but for us'.[35] As Lee remarked, Robinson needed to leave 84 Gower Street for another space that represented better her position as a successful poet. Robinson's migration to Kensington was in this sense a fashion statement (in its most modernist sense). She chose Kensington as a mask, not to hide behind but rather as an image which would represent her social and poetic success.

The new residence was certainly 'a great improvement', as Vernon Lee wrote to her mother. The Robinsons' new house had 'a fine screen of trees separating it from the High Street (virtually it is on the High St.) and overlooking a large square to the back, it is very clean & fresh'.[36] It was such a contrast with Bloomsbury that when she 'took the train to the Brit. Museum', she 'was quite appalled to think [she] had ever lived in the grime and choking air of Bloomsbury'.[37] Most importantly the house was a huge social success too. Kensington revitalised her *salon*, attracting established writers and poets to the drawing-rooms of her new house, and reactivating her literary career and her fame. Another celebrity poet who moved into Kensington was Robert Browning. In contrast, however, he disliked his new neighbourhood, as he confessed to Michael Field. He found Kensington very socially demanding because he was one of its biggest assets.[38] He lived next to one of Kensington's most sought-after painters, John Millais, who had his studio in 2 Palace Gate.[39] Another famous migrant to Kensington was Henry James, who after the success of his *Portrait of a Lady* (1881) and *Portraits of Places* (1883), took a lease on a flat at 34 De Vere Gardens in 1885, in the same street as Browning.[40] He was to become a familiar face in Robinson's *salon*, as was another Kensington resident, Walter Pater, who, after the publication of *Marius the Epicurean* (1885) moved to 12 Earl's Terrace, very close to Frederic Leighton, Kensington's most famous resident, and in the same street as Robinson. As A. C. Benson notices, Pater's change of address was 'dictated both by a desire for change, and by the feeling that the wider circle and more varied influences of London would lend him a larger and more vivid stimulus'.[41] Kensington suited Pater's expectations very well and during the eight years that he lived there, Pater increased his fame and notoriety and became part of the numerous literary circles that existed in the neighbourhood.

So what kind of social space was Kensington? Why did writers such as Henry James, A. Mary F. Robinson or Alice Meynell choose Kensington as their residence? Kensington, unlike Bloomsbury, was a space that emanated authority and power. It was a social space serving the establishment.[42] If, for instance, the City of London in the nineteenth century reproduced and represented the economic power of the imperial metropolis, or neighbourhoods in the East End of London showed the kind of control that the establishment had over its subjects, controlling the modes of production and the modes of living, then Kensington, I would argue, represents even today the kind of

social space that is easily identified with the establishment. Kensington was what Richard Sennett calls a 'space of authority'.[43] By 'authority' Sennett means that which 'involves the establishment of values and meaning', indicating 'the weight of what matters for those within its orbit'.[44] Sennett in this sense understands authority not just as the exercise of power but that which determines what is important, valuable, and accepted. This definition of 'authority' is quite helpful to understand the kind of 'authority aura' that emanated from Kensington during the *fin de siècle*. Kensington led London in all political and social matters. Here, the establishment of 'values and meaning' was transmitted by an extraordinary, powerful culture of consumption, which dominated the economics and social characteristics of the neighbourhood, and which ruled London. Kensington controlled and dominated by establishing forms of conduct, by setting new trends, by deciding what was fashionable and what was not, and by encouraging the urban dweller to buy, as the following description of Whiteley's (one of Kensington's most fashionable *fin-de-siècle* department stores) shows: 'Depot, emporium, bazaar, warehouse – none of these seem to possess the slightest descriptive power. Whiteley's is an immense symposium of the arts and industries of the nation and of the world; a grand review of everything that goes to make life worth living passing in seemingly endless array before critical but bewildered humanity; an international exhibition of the resources and products of the earth and air, flood and field, established as one of the greatest "lions" of the metropolis.'[45]

Whiteley's was described as if it was the world's exhibition centre, the new Crystal Palace. It exhibited and showed to its incredulous shoppers 'everything that goes to make life worth living'. It was in Whiteley's where one would learn what was fashionable, what was valuable, what was new, and indeed many came to this department store to see the 'seemingly endless array' of new products. Whiteley's was certainly one of the greatest 'lions' of the metropolis. The symbolism of this description is very telling and refers to both the power of commerce in London *and* its obvious dependence on the empire. Whiteley's was the 'Lion King of the urban Jungle' and Kensington was the shopper's treasure island. W. S. Clark noted in his guide to London that

> [t]he real shopping interest, from a lady's point of view, commences about Young-street, and extends (on that side only) to Wright's-lane, where it altogether ends. Within this space, and on that side of the way, the shopkeepers vie with one another in tempting the fair passengers who make it their promenade between four and six P.M. during the London season. But it is from half-past eleven till one that most of the shopping is really done by ladies and carriage-folk generally. Regent-street, Oxford-street, and Bond-street may prove more expensive, but can hardly be found more choice, as may be seen any day between May and August by a visit at the right houses of the High-street of Kensington.[46]

His chapter on Kensington was in effect a 'shopping guide'. He told his readers where, what, and at what time to buy (class-divisions were maintained by the different shopping hours). Moreover, he argued that Kensington was the best shopping district in London because it offered more choice (a crucial point) at the best prices. Whiteley's, together with other department stores such as William Owen's, John Barker's, and, of course, Harrod's, simply transformed the economy of the metropolis. Kensington was a social space driven by consumption, and Whiteley's, Owen's and Harrod's shaped the neighbourhood into an exotic, alluring space that attracted customers from all over London and beyond. With names such as 'The Universal Provider', as Whiteley's was known, department stores presented themselves as paradisiacal spaces where one could find anything.[47] They were, in the words of Elizabeth Wilson, 'temple[s] of dreams based on commerce', 'the floating world of the bourgeoisie'.[48] New retailing strategies such as the use of different spectacles to entice purchasing and to attract new customers, and the rapid expansion of stores into new branches, always selling 'new' products, further incited consumption. A clear instance of this was the opening in Harrod's of the first moving staircase, an event that brought people from all over London to the store.[49] Sales were also a great attraction for everyone, even for poets who distrusted consumer culture, such as Alice Meynell:

> Alice loved to hear what I saw in the shop-windows. […] She was never much at home in shops, though she loved them too. It is only a little while ago that she said plaintively: 'I don't know where you get all those bargains, K. T. [Katharine Tynan's nickname] dear. I tried going to the sales and I only got one pair of stockings at seven shillings. They did not seem very cheap to me.'[50]

Kensington's development as a shopping district was directly related to the growth of London's urban transport. As Donald J. Olsen has remarked, '[t]he extension of the Metropolitan Railway through Notting Hill Gate to Gloucester Road and South Kensington in 1867, and the related building of the Metropolitan District Railway to Westminster and the City – together forming what became the Inner Circle – made the new streets and squares easily accessible from the rest of London'.[51] This accessibility was crucial for the development of the department store, as Alison Adburgham writes, for 'the new underground railway and the more comfortable and frequent omnibuses might persuade shoppers to come to Westbourne Grove from other districts, if they could be attracted by exceptional value and unusual customer services'.[52] Indeed, this link between shopping and mass-transport facilities was exploited by Whiteley's and Owen's, for they proposed to the LGOC to start an omnibus service to the stores.[53]

Mass-transport facilities and department stores transformed Kensington into a space for the circulation of passengers and goods, and it was thus rapidly established as an area of unprecedented wealth and devouring consumption.

We have already seen an example of this phenomenon in Amy Levy's *Reuben Sachs*, where the novel's protagonist, Judith Quixano, goes shopping with her cousin Rose to Whiteley's by omnibus. Levy's description of this department store being full of women is very significant and points to Rita Felski's claim that '[i]n the late nineteenth century, the consumer was frequently represented as a woman'.[54] W. S. Clark's guide to London is a case in point. Clark wrote how '[w]ithin this [Kensington's] space […] the shopkeepers vie with one another in tempting the fair passengers who make it their promenade between four and six P.M. during the London season'.[55] This clearly marks the gender of the consumer. But, more important, what this re-naming implies is that consumption was seen as a product or a consequence of the emergence of mass transport. This is why he uses the word passenger, because the notion of urban mass transport incorporates both the circulation of passengers and of goods.

Edward Verall Lucas saw the neighbourhood as a feminine space. He in fact argued that just as Pall Mall was a masculine space, Kensington was a feminine one. In Lucas' own words, 'I said something in an earlier chapter about St. James' Street and Pall Mall and Savile Row being men's streets. Almost equally is the south pavement of Kensington High Street a preserve of women.'[56] Indeed, the late nineteenth-century association between consumption and women has a long history, as Rachel Bowlby's study of consumer culture, *Just Looking*, has documented. In Kensington, very interestingly, this association between consumption and women became a spatial one. Critics such as Lucas (whose brother was married to Madelaine, one of Alice Meynell's daughters)[57] wrote of the feminine character of the neighbourhood, which was 'almost wholly populated by women'.[58]

Felski has argued that 'the category of consumption situated femininity at the heart of the modern in a way that the discourses of production and rationalization […] did not'.[59] It was precisely for this reason that Kensington started to be described as a feminised space. Lucas in particular saw a direct relationship between urban space and the human body, in that the corporeality of the city suggested and implied a similar relationship with the body of the urban dweller. Lucas describes Kensington following what one could call a Darwinian theory of space. Kensington's social and economic status within London was based on consumption; to survive, and to maintain its status as London's most fashionable neighbourhood, Kensington needed to maintain and expand consumer culture. In the fight for survival, space was altering Kensington's human geography, producing a transformation in its gender patterns; it was for this reason, Lucas argued, that more girls than boys were born in Kensington. 'In fact', he wrote,

> Kensington is almost wholly populated by women. Not until this year, I am told, was a boy baby ever born there – and he, to emphasise the exception and temper his loneliness, brought a twin brother with him. Why girl babies should so curiously outnumber the boy babies of

> Kensington is a problem which I cannot attempt to solve. The borough has plenty of scientific men in it – from Dr. Francis Galton and Professor Ray Lankester downwards – to make any hazardous conjectures of mine unnecessary; but I would suggest with all deference that the supply of girl babies may be influenced (1) by the necessity of maintaining the feminine character of the High Street, and (2) by fashion, the most illustrious and powerful woman of the last hundred years having been born at Kensington Palace. I rather lean to the second theory, for Kensington being so much under the dominion of the Victorian idea – with the Palace on the edge of it, the amazing souvenir of the queen (a kind of granite candle) in the High Street, her statue in the gardens, and a sight of the Albert Hall and Memorial inevitably on one's way into London or out of it – it is only natural that some deep impression should be conveyed.[60]

There could only be two possible explanations for the overpopulation of women in Kensington: that Kensington needed to maintain its feminine character, or that Queen Victoria had been born in the neighbourhood, hence the trend. But both explanations were in fact one and the same: fashion. Lucas' work is most helpful in tracing what kind of social space Kensington was for the late Victorians, and it was surely in the image of Queen Victoria that Kensington recognised itself. The Queen represented authority, femininity, and fashion, and these factors were incorporated into Kensington's urban texture. Kensington was marked, noted, and named as a fashionable, authoritative, and feminine urban space.

It was this combination that attracted a great number of women writers, poets and journalists to Kensington. Michael Field, for example, came to London from Bristol with the purpose of meeting Robert Browning and A. Mary F. Robinson. Edith Cooper's mother was quite opposed to this journey but she would not complain were they to stay in Kensington. As Katharine Bradley wrote, 'Mother wd. [sic] be happy about you if you were at Kensington.'[61] Many eminent women writers lived in this district, including Alice Meynell, Olive Schreiner, Katharine Tynan, Jean Ingelow, Mary Robinson and Vernon Lee.[62] Olive Schreiner's fame was huge, as Michael Field noted with jealousy in their joint diary: 'She tells us of Olive Schreiner, Olive Schreiner home from the Cape, after years of brute, wild life in Africa. The ambassador pays his respects to her, Watts asks to paint her (he is refused), she goes the round of the great. Lovers from Africa come after her – to sink on their knees as soon as they land. […] Meditating on all this I am filled with jealousy; this woman has been worshipped.'[63] Marie Corelli, the best-selling New Woman novelist, also resided in the neighbourhood.[64] Equally renowned for her book sales was the poet Jean Ingelow, of whom, upon her death, Alice Meynell wrote: '[l]ittle seems to have been said in the notices of the death of Jean Ingelow as to the value of her poetry, although its popularity has been everywhere put upon record. It is poetry quite good

enough to be difficult to praise, and has, therefore, perhaps been more read than praised for many years.'[65]

Katharine Tynan's history of residences is particularly interesting and shows how important urban space was for one's literary career. Up to 1896, she had been living in the suburbs, mostly in Ealing. In contrast with Alice Meynell, Katharine Tynan had a less stable economic position.[66] However, in 1896 she decided to move to Kensington. The move was probably due to the fact that she had started to write for the *Pall Mall Gazette* in the 'The Wares of Autolycus',[67] a column dedicated to women's issues, which she shared with Alice Meynell, Elizabeth Robins Pennell, Graham R. Tomson and Violet Hunt – who also lived in the neighbourhood.[68] Tynan says in her autobiography that she 'did it really to be near the Meynells', but Kensington was an authoritative space and Tynan, as John Kelly and Eric Domville have argued, was suffering financial difficulties.[69] Kensington, with its fashionable aura, could function as a mask of success and bring her more work and better deals with the publishing houses and journals. Other women writers, such as A. Mary F. Robinson, had indeed tried just that with W. E. Henley, the editor of *The National Observer*. As Elizabeth Robins Pennell remarks: 'I remember hearing him [Henley] announced once at the Robinsons' in Earl's Terrace, but Miss Mary Robinson, as she was then – Madame Duclaux as she is now – left everybody in the drawing-room while she went to see him downstairs, because of his lameness she said, but partly, I fancied, because she wanted to keep him to herself to discuss a new series of articles.'[70]

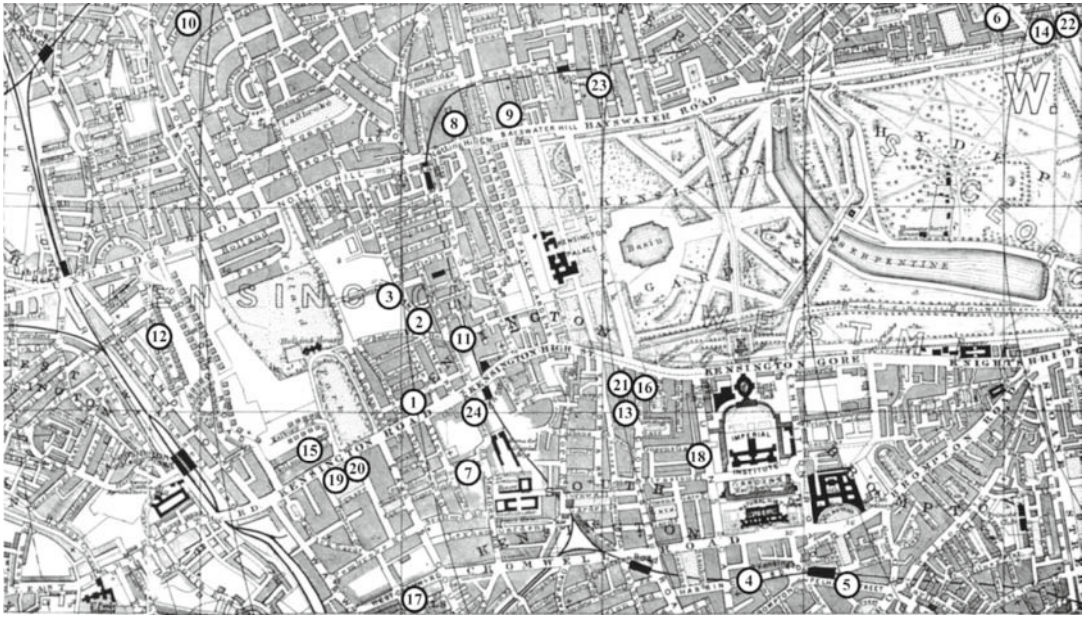
However, the different economic status of Meynell and Tynan can be easily detected. Tynan was living in a rented house in Blenheim Crescent.[71] The Meynells owned a house in Bayswater. Meynell's house was next to the High Street, next to Kensington Gardens and next to Bayswater Station. Tynan's house was in a crescent away from the High Street, near to the Meynells but still at a considerable distance. Meynell had just to walk for a minute to get the underground or the bus; Tynan would have to walk for at least ten minutes to get either. As she wrote in her autobiography *The Middle Years*: '[i]t was so nice and easy to walk round to the Meynells at Palace Court. I remember that Wilfred Meynell objected humorously to the Crescent's postal district being W. It was not our fault. He said it ought to be "Near the Clarendon," which was the nearest "pub". We played a joke on John Lane by telling him that you could not find Palace Court without adding Ossington Street, that being the humble street at the back of Palace Court. John Lane assured us solemnly that Palace Court, W., was a quite sufficient address.'[72] Furthermore, the crescent was close to Notting Dale, one of the worst London slums. As Tynan wrote: '[a]s is the way in London, you walked along a perfectly respectable thoroughfare of good houses, from which branched off alleys that led into the wicked slum. We used to hear the people of the slum going home of nights, on Saturday night especially, after midnight; and one shivered in one's bed for fear of the slum.'[73]

Just a glance at Kensington's literary map (Figure 11) would suffice to show how physically and economically distant was Tynan from the rest of the Kensington poets. They all lived near underground stations, museums, High Streets, and always at a very short distance from Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park. Tynan was outside that economic semi-circle. Near but not near enough: more like a satellite than properly inside it. It is thus not very surprising to find that Tynan lived in Kensington for only two years before moving back to Ealing, arguing that she missed the countryside, but perhaps disguising, once again, her financial hardship. Kensington was a crucial space for women writers because of its connection between consumer culture, the mass press, and authority. Tynan's case in particular is most telling. She wanted to live in Kensington to be in the midst of an authoritative space that marketed and bought her work. After moving back to Ealing things were not easy. As Tynan argued, '[t]he London suburb is not exactly a friendly place. […] Literary people are somewhat unclassed, if not declassed, in the London suburb; unless they be of the fortunate few, such as Miss Corelli or the Baroness Orczy – only, of course, they would not be there'.[74] Indeed, if one belonged to the 'fortunate few' one would not live in the suburb, in Ealing, but in Kensington, as Corelli did. Meynell was also one of those 'fortunate few'.

Alice Meynell in Kensington

Alice Meynell moved into Kensington when she was still Alice Thompson. Her parents decided to live in the district to assist their daughter, Elizabeth Thompson, who had become famous at the Academy in 1874 for her battle painting *Roll Call*. The picture was such a success that the police had to be called to restrain the crowds that were queuing up to see the painting. The Prince of Wales tried to buy it and Queen Victoria, who eventually bought it, even had it taken to Buckingham Palace for a few hours to see the painting undisturbed. Elizabeth's successful career, as Viola Meynell notes, 'necessitated London headquarters for the family; a home was established in South Kensington, and there social intercourse broadened for both girls'.[75] Here Ruskin visited them and was full of praise for Elizabeth's paintings and Alice's poetry (she published in 1875 her first book of poems, *Preludes*, which was illustrated by her sister).[76] Alfred Tennyson also called on them, and Aubrey de Vere became a regular visitor and a personal friend. No doubt Meynell learnt very early on the cardinal role of urban space and the commercial and professional advantages of living physically next to the most successful members of one's profession, and she certainly remained in Kensington during her most successful and productive years.

Alice Thompson became Alice Meynell in 1877 when she married the young journalist and editor, Wilfred Meynell. The couple first lived in Inkerman Terrace (where Robert Browning visited them), and from there they moved to



1. **Alice Meynell (1877–1889):** 21 Phillimore Place.
2. **Violet Hunt (1866–1896):** 1 Tor Villa, Campden Hill W.
3. **Violet Hunt (1896–1942):** South Lodge on Campden Hill.
4. **Olive Schreiner (1883):** 5 Harrington Road.
5. **Olive Schreiner (1884):** 7 Pelham Street.
6. **Olive Schreiner (1885–1886):** 16 Portsea Place.
7. **Alice Meynell (1877):** Inkerman Terrace.
8. **Alice Meynell (1889):** Linden Gardens.
9. **Alice Meynell (1890–1905):** 47 Palace Court.
10. **Katharine Tynan (1896–1898):** 107 Blenheim Crescent.
11. **Jean Ingelow (1855–1876):** 15 Holland Street.
12. **Jean Ingelow (c. 1876–1897):** 6 Holland Villas Road.
13. **Henry James (1885–1900):** 34 De Vere Gardens, Palace Gate.
14. **Max Beerbohm (1892–1896):** 19 Hyde Park Place.
15. **Frederic Leighton (1866–1896):** 2 Holland Park Road.
16. **John Everett Millais (1878–1896):** 2 Palace Gate.
17. **Marie Corelli (1883–1899):** 47 Longridge Road.
18. **Clementina Anstruther-Thomson (1881):** 113 Queen's Gate.
19. **Mabel and A. Mary F. Robinson, Vernon Lee (1883–1888):** 20 Earl's Terrace.
20. **Walter Pater (1885–1893):** 12 Earl's Terrace.
21. **Robert Browning (1887–1889):** 19 De Vere Gardens, Palace Gate.
22. **Leslie Stephen, Virginia Stephen (later Woolf), Vanessa Stephen (later Bell) (1882–1904):** 22 Hyde Park Place.
23. **Elizabeth A. Sharp (1877):** 72 Inverness Terrace.
24. **Andrew Lang (c. 1880– c.1912):** 1 Marloes Road.

Figure 11 Kensington at the *fin de siècle*

21 Phillimore Place, a street located between the busy Kensington Road, the peacefulness and greenness of Holland Park and the quietness of a side street, Phillimore Mews.[77] The new house was just next door to Holland House, Frederic Leighton's residence and quite a fashionable area of Kensington. As Joseph F. Lamb has noted, Leighton's fame attracted a large community of artists and painters who settled around Holland House because they wanted to be associated with the President of the Royal Academy:

> The politically ambitious and astute generation of the 1870s–80s was fully aware that social and professional benefits could be derived by living within ready hailing distance of the most powerful of the Royal Academy's rising stars who were only slightly older than they were. The most famous proof of this conviction was found at Holland Park. By the mid-1870s it was obvious to all that Leighton would be the Royal Academy's next president. Thus from that point we find Fildes, Stone, Colin Hunter, and others setting up shop as close as they could get to the shadow of his home.[78]

It was a power gained by spatial association. The Meynells were clearly attracted to Phillimore Place for those very same reasons (they moved here in 1881). The same could be said of A. Mary F. Robinson, who moved just across Kensington Road two years later. It was a very exclusive area, just next to Holland Park and within five minutes walk from Kensington High Street Station. Kensington Palace, Kensington Gardens, the Royal Albert Hall, the Natural History Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, now in Trafalgar Square, were all nearby. Kensington was a mixture of art, nature, and successful trade, and Phillimore Place participated in this blend. The Meynells resided at number 21 until 1889. It was the dwelling that saw their ascension within the literary world and where they met most of their friends and fellow poets. During their years at Phillimore Place the Meynells edited two magazines, *The Weekly Register* and *Merry England*. Both were Catholic periodicals, and the Meynells worked really hard to promote and make them successful. Wilfred Meynell was the editor, but both Alice and Wilfred ran the magazines from beginning to end. They were in charge of proof-reading, reviewing, answering letters, organising the material and writing a good deal of articles and essays; in short, anything the periodical might need, including translations. As her daughter Viola Meynell writes: '[Alice Meynell] wrote leaders, and reviewed books, and read proofs, and translated Papal encyclicals from the Italian. (In a letter written later to Coventry Patmore in which she happened to be recounting the day's doings, she says: "I have just translated for the *Register* the Pope's letter to the Hungarian Bishops – without pranks. Sometimes I make His Holiness quote our poets!")'.[79]

Merry England was quite a different type of magazine. Its first issue appeared in 1883. It was an aesthetic journal interested in 'the social revolution of the

Young England Movement, the revival of the peasantry, the abolition of the wrongs of the poor, the spread of art and literature'.[80] It was here that Francis Thompson and Alice Meynell's lifelong friend, Katharine Tynan, published their first poems (Tynan had published before in Ireland, but her first poems in England appeared in *Merry England*).[81] Thompson's and Tynan's rise to fame was credited to Wilfred Meynell who, through his connections with the press, made possible the publication of Tynan's and Thompson's first book of poems.[82] In the case of Tynan, he took some of her *Merry England* verses to Kegan Paul, who published them under the title *Louise de la Vallière and Other Poems* (1885).[83] He did the same for Francis Thompson, whose first book of poetry was published under the auspices of John Lane.[84] *Merry England* and *The Weekly Register* eventually became quite successful. The fame of these magazines, however, cannot just be attributed to the verses of these two new poets or even to the work of highly respected poets such as Coventry Patmore. It was predominantly Alice Meynell's essays that attracted the attention of the public and, as a result, she started to write substantially for numerous journals and periodicals, among them *The Spectator* and *The Saturday Review*.[85] During these years at Phillimore Place, Meynell started to consolidate her career but her busiest and most fruitful years, as Viola Meynell remarks, had not yet begun.

It was at Palace Court that 'full work and full life awaited her'.[86] The increasing fame and the increasing family (the Meynells had eight children) pushed them to get a house that would suit their new artistic status and they decided to build their own house at 47 Palace Court, but until its completion they stayed in Linden Gardens during 1889. They finally moved into 47 Palace Court the following year. The house was financed by 'the little fortune' that Alice Meynell had inherited on the death of her father.[87] They were following a fashion started by Frederic Leighton. He moved to the neighbourhood in the late 1860s and the construction of his house in Holland Park became a symbol of financial and artistic success. As Giles Walkley observes, after Leighton's entrance to the Royal Academy he set 'his sights higher, the compleat [sic] painter felt the next step would be hastened by the use of the compleat painters' house' at a cost of £4,500.[88] He also claims that the construction of Leighton's house was directly related to his ascension within the art world, and that every new development in the house was a product and the cause of a personal new development in his career.[89] As Walkley has shown, Leighton's symbol of success was extremely effective and many artists and writers followed his path and started building new homes in the manner of Leighton.

The Meynells followed this trend and their house, which was designed by Leonard Stokes became, like Leighton's, a symbol of their literary (and architectonic) success. As Viola Meynell remarks, '[o]ccasionally there could be seen from the window in after years a party of young men who must have been architectural students standing opposite the house while their lecturer

demonstrated to them its points'.[90] If, for Walter Benjamin, the Makart style became the trademark of the bourgeoisie in the Second Empire, then it was the 'Queen Anne Revival', famous for its use of small windowpanes and red bricks, that marked the style of the Kensington bourgeoisie. The Meynells' house was built along these principles.[91] Indeed, as Walkley has remarked, in this highly commodified urban space, houses were used as fetishes to mark the artist's individuality in the big city and the permanent nature of his/her work against the transience of consumer culture. Houses in Kensington were spatially and symbolically 'spaces of authority'.

Like Phillimore Gardens, Palace Court was extremely well located. It was next to Bayswater Station, but in a quieter street; it was a very short distance away from Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park, but not in the main street (Bayswater Road); it was crucially very close to the Royal Palace Hotel, where Meynell's closest friend, the American poet Agnes Tobin, lived during her period in England; and next to the Carmelite church, where the Meynells went to mass every Sunday. Francis Meynell has described thus their location within Kensington:

> In childhood, 'home' is really a whole locality. My 'home' in this sense was as large as the space bounded by Queen's Road (now Queensway) on the east, Westbourne Grove on the north, Notting Hill Gate Station on the west, the Royal Palace Hotel and the Carmelite church on the South; and Kensington Gardens at the top of our road, our daily playground. They were functional boundaries: the hotel because my mother's closest friend (and our beloved present-giver and treat-procurer) the American Agnes Tobin, for long lived there; the Carmelite church because that was where we heard Mass every Sunday morning; Notting Hill Gate because I was sent there post-haste almost every Sunday evening to buy a packet of cigarettes for offering to guests.[92]

Francis Meynell's description of the neighbourhood is very telling. Alice Meynell lived in quite a fashionable and extremely well located spot in Kensington. She lived next to Westbourne Grove where all the major department stores and trendy shops were situated. It was an upper-class street, where 'the vast majority of the promenaders […] were exceptionally well dressed'; it was 'the centre of the new prosperous and refined district'.[93] She was next to Queen's Road (today Queensway), which was 'as business-like as Edgware-road, one side being an uninterrupted succession of smart shops, and the gardens in front of the houses on the other side being one by one covered over and converted into shops also'.[94] Meynell was also practically next door to Notting Hill Gate station. It was not difficult for her to travel into or out of Kensington using public transport. For instance, Alice Meynell's weekly visits to her mother were very easy from Palace Court. She used to take 'the little horse-omnibus' that 'pas[sed her] windows' to 'Hammersmith;

[and] from there by train to Turnham Green'.[95] By the 1890s underground lines had been linked with train lines, making the Underground Inner Circle Line a more complex and useful structure. Thus, to go to Turnham Green, Meynell would take the omnibus to Hammersmith (the end of the Inner Circle Line), where she would take the South Western Line train (which joined Waterloo and Kensington): Turnham Green was only two stations away from Hammersmith.

Meynell knew Kensington very well and, as Viola Meynell remarks, she used the neighbourhood, pencil and writing-pad in hand, as the panorama of her writings:

> He [Everard, Meynell's son] remembers the exquisite confectioner's near Kensington Church, the home of magnificent wedding-cakes, which was always visited for ices after the dentist. 'She would sit with us while we dealt with our sponge-cakes which broke into yellow crumbs on our suits and tasted warm between mouthfuls of ice. I see her bright eyes smile at first and then become slightly abstracted as she resigns herself to ten minutes at the little table. There are mirrors in the ceiling near the window, so that passing omnibuses are curiously reflected, the legs and hoofs of their horses plodding noiselessly upside-down above our heads. We understand our mother's abstracted look when she has her pencil and writing-pad; we understand it less when there are no implements of work.'[96]

One cannot but notice here Viola Meynell's suggestion of her mother's use of the mirrors in the ceiling to record urban life. It is an interesting remark, because it seems to suggest that Meynell preferred to write about urban life using the images reflected in those mirrors as opposed to using the direct imagery through the shop-window. This image presents the two issues I will discuss in the next section: on the one hand, Meynell's dislike of shop-windows because they are representative of consumer culture, but on the other, Meynell's interest in mass transport.

Settled in her new house, Meynell now started to write for the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 'The Wares of Autolycus' and also became a contributor for *The Scots Observer* (later *The National Observer*). It was her contributions to these two periodicals that made her mark, and which established her as a literary queen:

> My mother used to write for one of the 'pennies' – the *Pall Mall Gazette* – and in those quieter days her articles were thought fit subjects for posters. 'Royal Academy: Mrs Meynell's first notice'. Next day, 'Royal Academy: Mrs Meynell's second notice'. When I was seven I got one of these posters and carried it round the house shouting 'We are well off for famousness now'.[97]

She later reprinted some of these articles in book form in *The Rhythm of Life* (1893), *The Colour of Life* (1896), and *The Children* (1896). In 1897, E. K. Chambers wrote an article on Alice Meynell's prose for *The Academy*. Of her he wrote: '[i]n the realm of the more liberal essay, whose criticism is of life rather than of letters, Mrs. Meynell is admittedly queen'.[98] Just as the image of Queen Victoria with all her splendour and stately aura presided over Kensington, Meynell presided over Kensington's literary and artistic circles.

A London impressionist

> Darling … This morning I took an omnibus drive through London to the farther end of Clapton, thinking to write about the London Sunday, but there was little to note. There was, however, the dreadful incident of a man's cutting his throat on the pavement in Shoreditch. I took notes of London steeples and I went into a City church.[99]

> London is at the mercy of her roads, and it is no wonder the fancy should give them life. And now it is for their coming, not their going, that they seem in haste. The town has covered up the original and all-fruitful earth; her pavements seal up all the springs of earthly life, and her roads are loaded with the fruits of earth unsealed. It is upon her, then, that the roads are turned with boat, train, and cart charged with her bread. What flocks and herds are daily hunted into the unproductive town, the town wherefrom nothing, nothing – for all its factories – takes birth; the town that visibly burns up, with never-ceasing reek of the never-ceasing burning, the substance of the world. The flame of life is fed fully in a thousand forms, and the flame of fire, smouldering in the furnaces at the foot of these chimneys, is the sign of the enormous sacrifice.[100]

In 1897 Alice Meynell wrote a series of articles about London for the *Pall Mall Gazette*.[101] These articles were republished in 1898 in a most lavish and exquisitely illustrated book of essays, *London Impressions*. It was while researching for 'The London Sunday', the introductory essay to this collection, that Meynell wrote the letter above to her husband. To write about London, Meynell turned to urban transport. Indeed, what this letter reveals is that travelling was at the core of Meynell's urban aestheticism. Like the London impressionists Sidney Starr and Mortimer Menpes, who 'developed the habit of travelling around London on the top of omnibuses in order to depict the bustling metropolitan life', Meynell used omnibuses and trains because these vehicles allowed her to capture the city in motion and gave her a new perceptual paradigm with which to record lyrically the visual

experience of London.[102] In her essay 'Charmian' (published in *Hearts of Controversy*, 1917), she argued that as a true impressionist she 'would travel for the sake of a character of early morning, for a quality of noonday, or a tone of afternoon, or an accident of moonrise, or a colour of dusk, at least as far as for a mountain, a cathedral, rivers, or men'.[103] But as the extract taken from the essay 'The Roads' (in *London Impressions*) shows, for Meynell, the road, that essential structure that makes life possible in modernity, is also an expression of the culture of consumption that dominates urban life. She argues that the metropolis, for all its factories, produces nothing. London's economy is founded on the circulation of goods and commodities, and roads are mediatory instances that allow that process.

It is in the context of this duality that I want to discuss Meynell's urban aestheticism. I will begin by examining Meynell's theory of motion and circulation to suggest that Meynell's aesthetic response to the ephemerality of modern life is impressionism. I will then move on to consider how for Meynell the task and the *responsibility* of the impressionist artist is to represent the world pictorially as he or she sees it. In the context of Meynell's Roman Catholicism, I shall argue that for Meynell such responsibility entails a direct questioning of the conditions of modernity in late-Victorian London, most notably late-Victorian consumer culture and the rise of the culture of the spectacle. Unlike Amy Levy, for whom the passenger was a liberating figure, Meynell's position as a passenger is quite problematic because for her the passenger is a spectator, a critic of the 'rhythm of life', and of the society of the spectacle.

I. The passenger as the painter of modern London

One of the most important essays for any study of Meynell's theories of visuality and her use of impressionism is 'The Point of Honour', first published in *The Scots Observer* in 1890, and reprinted in her first collection of essays, *The Rhythm of Life* (1893). In this essay Meynell was concerned with what she considered to be the most important principle, the point of honour, of any impressionist artist. The good impressionist, she argued, is one who tells his/her viewers: '[t]hus things are in my pictorial sight. Trust me, I apprehend them so.'[104] To put it in other words and paraphrasing her 'Sonnet' ('A poet of one mood'): the impressionist artist 'make[s] the whole world answer to [her] art'.[105] 'To those who would not take his word he offers no bond. To those who will, he grants the distinction of a share in his responsibility.'[106] The artist's responsibility is to represent the world as he or she sees it. What the viewer has to do on his/her part is to trust the artist and to let his/her eyes 'do a little of the work'. Impressionism is in this sense a *double entendre*.[107] One in which the artist and the viewer enter into a contract by which the artist must truthfully represent the world and the viewer has the responsibility to explore the painter's vision. The question of 'impressionism' is thus for Meynell one of ethics, because the painter must represent what he/she sees

truthfully. The question we now must answer is why impressionism is the art theory that, according to Meynell, most truthfully seems to represent the modern urban condition.

The first thing that strikes the reader of Meynell's *London Impressions* is her view that motion permeates urban life. London is an ephemeral city. Crowds stroll 'lawlessly', the railway runs 'in resolute motion', men and women join 'the day-long movement on foot and load the tramcars'. London is always represented in her work as synonymous with movement, flow, and transience. Consider, for instance, her lyrical essay 'The Roads'. She begins the essay by remembering William Wordsworth's sonnet 'Upon Westminster Bridge' (1802): 'On Westminster Bridge at early morning Wordsworth thought of the heart of London, but a view of London in the long day and night of movement, when the mystery of sleep is away, suggests not the involuntary heart of men, but their wilful feet.'[108] Wordsworth's London was a quieter, more tranquil and serene city if only for one reason: urban mass transport did not exist. Thus Meynell starts her essay by suggesting that if Wordsworth could represent London in 1802 as a still-life, then by the end of the century, this view is no longer possible. London is a city of 'movement' and any art concerned with London must seek to present this fluidity.

The consequence of such a view can be observed, for example, in her later poem 'West Wind in Winter'. The West Wind is a metaphor for God and also for poetic creativity (the allusion here to P. B. Shelley's 1819 'Ode to the West Wind' is clear). More striking is her suggestion that what is poetically creative about the West Wind is that the wind is pure motion, pure movement:

Another day awakes. And who –
  Changing the world – is this?
He comes at whiles, the Winter through,
  West Wind! I would not miss
His sudden tryst: the long, the new
  Surprises of his kiss.

Vigilant, I make haste to close
  With him who comes my way.
I go to meet him as he goes;
  I know his note, his lay,
His colour and his morning rose;
  And I confess his day.

My window waits; at dawn I hark
  His call; at morn I meet
His haste around the tossing park
  And down the softened street;
The gentler light is his; the dark,
  The grey – he turns it sweet.

So too, so too, do I confess
My poet when he sings.
He rushes on my mortal guess
With his immortal things.
I feel, I know him. On I press –
He finds me 'twixt his wings.[109]

The wind's flight, like a painter's brushstroke, transforms the city into an impressionistic work of art. As I shall present more extensively later on, motion is at the core of Meynell's impressionism. Notice for instance how the wind's haste softens the city, turning the 'dark, / The grey' 'sweet'. To put it differently, if the West Wind is the giver of life, then it is also, more importantly, the painter of modern life. This is in fact the subject of Meynell's 'Sonnet' in which she links her own creativity and identity as a poet to the West Wind:

A poet of one mood in all my lays,
Ranging all life to sing one only love,
Like a west wind across the world I move,
Sweeping my harp of floods mine own wild ways.

The countries change, but not the west-wind days
Which are my songs. My soft skies shine above,
And on all seas the colours of a dove,
And on all fields a flash of silver greys.

I make the whole world answer to my art
And sweet monotonous meanings. In your ears
I change not ever, bearing, for my part,
One thought that is the treasure of my years,
A small cloud full of rain upon my heart
And in mine arms, clasped, like a child in tears.[110]

The poem paints a remarkable portrait of the poet as the West Wind and reveals why motion is the central tenet of Meynell's (impressionistic) art. Indeed 'like a west wind' the poet moves 'across the world' 'sweeping [her] harp of floods [her] own wild ways', and thus makes 'the whole world answer to [her] art'. Motion creates 'songs'; it creates poetry. We can now also understand why the poem 'West Wind at Winter' ends with the 'poet' travelling 'twixt his wings'.

Thus for Meynell motion forces a complex reimagination of the nature of both late-Victorian London and the modern poet, because to think of the heart of *fin-de-siècle* London is to think about movement, about roads, about mass transport; it is to think, in short, about circulation. Indeed, what is interesting about 'The Roads' is Meynell's articulation of the principle of

movement in London. After setting up a clear distinction between Romantic and late-Victorian London, Meynell moves on to offer a depiction of the urban crowd in their daily journeys to the city: '[t]he roads, which are lonely messengers in the far-off country, crowd together here, and hustle one another to give footing to the tramp of the people'.[111] Here the use of the word 'tramp' clearly marks differences in class by pointing out that those who cannot afford any form of transport walk daily to the city to go to work. But then Meynell's emphasis shifts to the railways:

> The railways run; their foreshortened sweeps and reaches look like the swinging and swaying of resolute motion. The town would shoulder them, but they evade and slip through, slender and keen, with a stroke of their flying heels. They crawl, but they crawl with the dominant level and liberty of flight in air.
>
> They begin in the tangle of the town, but smoothly untie themselves and pass away single and swift. No other road looks so resolute in flight as the rail. The others jostle one another as they hurry from town, and must needs relax their eagerness in order to climb the hills – brief and little ones though these are. The roads pause on the mounds, they hesitate at crossways, and they dip into slight and shallow valleys, whence they do not see the riot of walls and roofs from out of which they go.[112]

It is the railway that best describes London's 'resolute motion'. Other forms of transport, such as omnibuses and trams, to which Meynell succinctly refers in this paragraph, also give movement to the metropolis, but because they stop more regularly than trains, their motion is not as rigid and determined. Meynell is fascinated by this resolute movement. She cannot help but be overwhelmed by the perfection of the railway's movement. But the question this essay poses is how can the artist represent the fluidity of London, and its debt to mechanisation?

Consider her essay 'The Smouldering City'.[113] Meynell's aim in this essay was to point out the effect of smoke in London, and to suggest that smoke is a sign of the existence of the urban dweller; in her own words: 'it is the flag signalling the presence of the unseen creature'. (This was in fact one of the reasons why Meynell herself smoked, because as she put it in one of her 'Wares of Autolycus': 'the cigarette is the subtlest and most graceful sign of a woman's mood. The smoke is her breath perceptible, the breath of life made visible'.)[114] In 'The Smouldering City' Meynell moved by direct association from smoke to fire, and from fire to the colour red, to argue that the new metropolitan style of architecture (Queen Anne's Revival), because of its red-coloured bricks, was a fitting colour which enhanced the beauty of London:

> The general fire has no part in the coloured evening; that sunny wind blows the sign of flame away. In the thicket of fire there is no red brick or

> green tree, or rosy cloud, or any light blue sky. Those who find something to complain of in the rebuilding of the west of London in brick, because the architecture is not everywhere what it should be, are hardly thankful enough for the colour. The builder may build amiss, but he builds with a colour that becomes all our skies, whether grey or bright. One day he will, perhaps, begin a fashion of using much more white, in brick and tile, and the fiery town will look relieved from her suggestion of fever. Ruddy roofs abound in the poorer town, where red walls are absent; they are built up with grey and black, needless to say, in such a manner that their old gables are hidden in square frontages and straight cornices, and their colours made invisible except to a view from above. It is from a high railway that you may see the darkened but still soft and charming colour spreading from roof to roof of the cottage-streets of older London, until it looks – fading eastwards – as though it were itself some effect of a London sunset. That flush almost reaches the regions of the red-hot eastern furnaces hidden coldly under black and grey.[115]

E. H. Gombrich has pointed out that 'to appreciate an Impressionist painting one has to step back a few yards, and enjoy the miracle of seeing these puzzling patches suddenly fall into place and come to life before our eyes'.[116] For Meynell, London was that impressionist painting, and 'to enjoy' it she needed to step back and 'look at London from some point of height' from where to trace the 'ways of a passionate escape'.[117] It is from this step-back but crucially transient position, from the 'high railway', that she wrote *London Impressions*, and William Hyde's illustration 'Utilitarian London' (Figure 12), mirrors exactly Meynell's urban aestheticism by depicting a

Figure 12 William Hyde, 'Utilitarian London' in Alice Meynell, *London Impressions*

view of 'Utilitarian London' from a 'high railway'. Indeed, Hyde's illustration pulls together Meynell's impressionistic rendering of late-Victorian London and its debt to urban transport. Crossing the city at great speed and her privileged position as a detached passenger were the determinant factors that affected her impressions of London. If at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a still observer on Westminster Bridge could capture and admire the view of London, then by the end of the nineteenth century Meynell seems to suggest that it is 'from a high railway' that the poet and passenger can capture the fleeting metropolis. And it is from this position that Meynell painted a most vivid, colourful, and immediate picture of London.

Significantly, Meynell was concerned with the depiction of London's reality not through the exact rending of form or by including careful depiction of minor details but by capturing the effects of light and colour. And here we are of course reminded of her poems 'West Wind in Winter' and 'A Poet of One Mood'. As she travels from West to East London, colours and tonalities subtly, but constantly, change, as colours and light tend to blur into one another. Red (the impressionists' favourite colour, together with yellow and blue) seems to be the colour that dominates the urbanscape: the red of the façades in West London (the Queen Anne style, famous for its red bricks, was mostly used in Kensington by the upper-middle classes) blends with the 'ruddy roofs' of East London, which are a mixture of red and black. Meynell's technique is truly visual: her sentences have the fluidity of brushstrokes of colour, all of which achieve a seemingly spontaneous rendering of London, and yet the description could not be more careful, as Meynell uses colours and spaces to symbolise the social division of the urbanscape as she travels from West to East. We can observe the same process in her poem 'November Blue' (an account of a November day in London):

> November Blue
> *The colour of the electric lights has a strange effect in giving a complementary tint to the air in the early evening.* – Essay on London
>
> O, Heavenly colour! London town
> Has blurred it from her skies;
> And hooded in an earthly brown,
> Unheaven'd the city lies.
> No longer standard-like this hue
> Above the broad road flies;
> Nor does the narrow street the blue
> Wear, slender pennon-wise.
>
> But when the gold and silver lamps
> Colour the London dew,
> And, misted by the winter damps,

The shops shine bright anew –
Blue comes to earth, it walks the street,
It dyes the wide air through;
A mimic sky about their feet,
The throng go crowned with blue.[118]

Meynell articulated the thinking behind this poem in her essay 'The Trees' (*London Impressions*), where she noted that '[l]ight grey sky and thrilling lamp together make – or so it seems to me – one of the most beautiful sights that eyes can see – the most refined, most severe, and most exquisite'.[119] 'November Blue' is a painterly lyric that depicts the colouring effect of electric lighting in London. The dominant colour is of course blue and just as in her lyric essay 'The Smouldering City', Meynell uses colour to align herself with the Impressionists (consider, for example, James McNeill Whistler's *Nocturne in Blue and Silver*). But the colour 'blue' also has important religious connotations. Blue symbolises heaven. Thus what Meynell suggests is that London is at its most beautiful when divine (natural) light and human (artificial) lighting are united. She was not of course alone in her use of electric lighting to paint London. In Graham R. Tomson's 'In the Rain', as we shall see, electric lighting has the effect of revealing the halo of the urban crowd. But whereas for Tomson electric lighting is in itself 'divine', for Meynell it is the union of both the human and the godly that 'crowns' the throng in blue.

All of Meynell's urban lyrical writings are grounded in the relations between movement, vision, and the city. For Meynell, perception cannot be discussed in modernity outside the parameters of the ephemeral, of movement, or of speed. Walter Pater had suggested as much when he argued that the modern self was subjected to a myriad of impressions, to a 'flood of external objects'.[120] But this discussion begins to open another problem, how can the eye cope with this myriad of impressions? Michel de Certeau's aesthetic of travelling is very helpful in understanding Meynell's aesthetics. For de Certeau, perception in modernity arises from two distinct but related principles, the principle of seeing via the windowpane of a train, and the principle of movement via the railway line.[121] Seeing is thus, for de Certeau, composed of these two complementary principles. The railway line is the producer of movement and the train's windowpane produces a panoramic view of the urbanscape, which is framed by the borders of the window (which acts as a transparent boundary separating the viewer from the urbanscape). In 'The Roads' Meynell examines this first principle, the principle of movement, using Baudelaire's essay 'The Painter of Modern Life' as a point of departure. Baudelaire devoted the last section of his essay, section twelve, to describe Constantin Guy's drawings of carriages: 'In whatever attitude it may be caught, at whatever speed it may be running, a carriage, like a ship, derives from its movement a mysterious and complex grace which is very

difficult to note down in shorthand. The pleasure which it affords the artist's eye would seem to spring from the series of geometrical shapes which this object, already so intricate, whether it be ship or carriage, cuts swiftly and successively in space.'[122] Baudelaire praised Guy's drawings because he had managed to do something quite new: to paint movement. In the same vein, Baudelaire tried to reproduce this sensation by describing the motion of any vehicle in terms of the 'series of geometrical shapes' that 'cuts swiftly and successively in space', a very visual metaphor. Meynell in 'The Roads' aligned her technique with that of Guy and Baudelaire. But she went a step further and argued that movement was a quality of modern life, and that roads were the material expression of that quality:

> [b]ut the roads are all expressive of this energy of flight from a centre. They are, as it were, signs of a perpetual explosion; they are the fringe of the *mêlée*, the shooting, streaming outbreaks of the photosphere of London. They hunt and are hunted. They fly from the city of confusion. It is only by escaping that they become visible, and out of the uncertainty of the smoke the hasty roads clear themselves as they make for light and the open ground.[123]

Here Meynell quite distinctly associates roads with the sun's photosphere. Just like the photosphere, roads envelop the city. They are the aura of the city, and it is from this aura that its life radiates. Roads are for this reason expressive of the movement of the metropolis. But this association between the sun, London, and its roads is not fortuitous. In an earlier essay, 'The Sun', (first published in *The Scots Observer* in 1890 and reprinted in 1893 in *The Rhythm of Life*), Meynell used the sun as a metaphor to discuss the organic unity of the world. 'To see the system of a sky in fragments is to miss what I learnt to look for in all achieved works of art: the organism that is unity and life.' The quality of any artistic endeavour, especially painting, lies for Meynell in the recreation of this marriage of unity and life: 'The Early Victorian picture – (the school is still in full career, but essentially it belongs to that triumphal period) – is but a dull sum of things put together, in concourse, not in relation; but the true picture is *one*, however multitudinous it may be, for it is composed of relations gathered together in the unity of perception, of intention, and of light.'[124] As can be observed, Meynell is clearly applying the theory of impressionism (notice especially her emphasis on 'perception', 'intention' and 'light') to argue that a painting is not a representation of life, but rather the unity of an artist's perception, his/her intention, and light. But what is important about this essay is that Meynell sees the sun as a metaphor for unity and life.

The same principle applies to London. Roads are in this sense part of that (mechanical) organism and any portrayal of London must show that relationship, that unity. Roads are an intrinsic part of London. This unity,

however, does not signify stability but ephemerality and fleetingness: '[t]he town would shoulder them [the roads], but they evade and slip through, slender and keen, with a stroke of their flying heels'.[125] What characterises *fin-de-siècle* London is motion. And railway 'roads' confer this image of motion to the city: 'they crawl, but they crawl with the dominant level and liberty of flight in air'. Other 'roads', such as those produced by horse-drawn omnibuses, must stop to recover from the energy spent on movement, but not the railway. This is what is so characteristic about underground trains, that they always maintain their speed and hence the movement is uniform. This, of course, does not mean that trains never stop, but rather that the impression one gets from their movement is endless motion. They are the signs of the perpetual but transient movement of the city. 'They fly from the centre, from the city of confusion to escape to cleaner neighbourhoods where they become visible.' Roads have imposed on the metropolis its transient character.

What we should now address is in what ways do the eyes of the passenger perceive movement? How does Meynell, as a passenger, see London's transience? And what is, for Meynell, the relationship between movement and seeing? If Meynell's impressions of London are related to the speed with which she travels, our task must then be to see in what way she records the experience of seeing through the phenomenon of the transport system. This she does using the metaphor of the rain in an essay called 'Rain'. 'Not excepting the falling stars – for they are far less sudden – there is nothing in nature that so outstrips our unready eyes as the familiar rain. The rods that thinly stripe our landscape, long shafts from the clouds, if we had but agility to make the arrowy downward journey with them by the glancing of our eyes, would be infinitely separate, units, an innumerable flight of single things, and the simple movement of intricate points.'[126] Meynell is interested in the rain as a metaphor for movement (and it is crucial to realise here that in her view, 'too much of the surface of London is still the work of that dashing impressionist, the climate').[127] 'Excepting the falling of the stars', rain is for Meynell the only natural element that 'outstrips our unready eyes'. Rain is movement. It is always in the fleeting, always in the process of becoming. It is the natural transient *par excellence*. And, indeed, she describes, not accidentally, the phenomenon of rain in ways which remind us of the movement of mass transport. Those 'rods' evoke both through alliteration and metaphor the movement of 'roads'. Hyde represents Meynell's theory of mass transport and rain in one of his illustrations for *London Impressions*. In his *Rain, Smoke and Traffic* (Figure 13) for Meynell's 'The Smouldering City', Hyde captures the city in movement, and effectively links Meynell's theory of movement and transportation to J. M. W. Turner's painting *Rain, Steam and Speed: the Great Western Railway* (1844), arguably the first impressionist painting. Meynell focuses on the raindrop in 'its innumerable flight' and compares the speed with which rain travels to the slow

Figure 13 William Hyde, 'Rain, Smoke and Traffic' in Alice Meynell, *London Impressions*

movement of our eyes, which naturally cannot follow it. But if our eyes could see the movement of the rain; if our eyes, like a camera, could freeze movement, then we would notice that its motion can be divided into an infinitude of points of rain: '[t]he long stroke of the raindrop, which is the drop and its path at once, being our impression of a shower, shows us how certainly our impression is the effect of the lagging, and not of the haste, of our senses'.[128] Meynell thus perceives the movement of the rain as that of the 'drop and its path'. That is, the rain is the thing in itself and its movement (matter in motion). Moreover, she establishes a distinction between the 'rain' or rather 'raining' and our 'impression' of it. It is interesting to see that she chooses the word 'impression'. An impression is not a full comprehensive vision of a scene but a subjective perception of it, a perception that is tied up with movement: 'What we are apt to call our quick impression is rather our sensibly tardy, unprepared, surprised, outrun, lightly bewildered sense of things that flash and fall, wink, and are overpast and renewed, while the gentle eyes of man hesitate and mingle the beginning with the close.'[129]

The phenomena of rain can only be apprehended through impressions. The fleeting experience of rain, its flashes, falls and velocity, is too much for the 'gentle eye' to comprehend in full. 'These inexpert eyes, delicately baffled, detain for an instant the image that puzzles them, and so dally with the bright progress of a meteor, and part slowly from the slender course of the already fallen raindrop, whose moments are not theirs.'[130] In other words, vision cannot comprehend the phenomenon of rain. When eyes 'detain for an instant' 'the image' that 'baffles them', they simply stop the image but not the movement. The impression is not that of an image, but that of a detained image in movement. One cannot stop the course of the rain. If we detain the 'image' we miss the outcome of the raindrop. A faithful recording of the fleeting world can only be done through impressions: 'One of the most constant causes of all the mystery and beauty of that art is surely not that we see by flashes, but that nature flashes on our meditative eyes. There is not need for the impressionist to make haste, nor would haste avail him, for mobile nature doubles upon him, and plays with his delays the exquisite game of visibility.'[131] Thus Meynell argues that we cannot and should not attempt to comprehend movement as a whole. The job of the human eye is not to record every aspect of a moment, an action in its totality, but to record with fidelity our impressions of it. This was Meynell's aim in her *London Impressions*. The eye of the passenger cannot simply record the movement of the city in its totality. It is impossible. All that she can do is to record her perception of the city as it flows.

We can now go back to the beginning of our discussion on impressionism, movement and the passenger. If the job of the human eye is not to record the totality of a moment, of an experience, because the speed of modern life makes it impossible for our eyes to follow its movement; if the role of the painter and writer is not to discuss every single detail, but a glossed,

detached and impressionistic account of it, then the danger is that the artist may produce a sterilised impression of the world, one which eliminates the particular for the general. For Meynell, this is not just a matter of aesthetics but one of ethics. It is perhaps in 'By the Railway Side' where the issue of ethics appears most clearly. In this essay, a guilt-ridden Meynell describes a personal anecdote. While travelling on a train on her way to Via Reggio in Italy, as the train was approaching the station, Meynell was 'drowned by a voice'. 'Whose ears was it seeking to reach by the violence done to every syllable, and whose feelings would it touch by its insincerity?' Meynell asked herself. But she soon realised that 'the tones were insincere'. She argued that 'Hamlet, being a little mad, feigned madness. It is when I am angry that I pretend to be angry, so as to present the truth in an obvious and intelligible form. Thus even before the words were distinguishable it was manifest that they were spoken by a man in serious trouble who had false ideas as to what is convincing in elocution.' A man wanted to throw himself under the train:

> The man was in *bourgeois* dress, and he stood with his hat off in front of the small station building, shaking his thick fist at the sky. No one was on the platform with him except the railway officials, who seemed in doubt as to their duties in the matter, and two women. Of one of these there was nothing to remark except her distress. She wept as she stood at the door of the waiting-room. Like the second woman, she wore the dress of the shopkeeping class throughout Europe, with the local black lace veil in place of a bonnet over her hair. It is of the second woman – O unfortunate creature! – that this record is made – a record without sequel, without consequence; but there is nothing to be done in her regard except so to remember her. And thus much I think I owe after having looked, from the midst of the negative happiness that is given to so many for a space of years, at some minutes of her despair. She was hanging on the man's arm in her entreaties that he would stop the drama he was enacting. She had wept so hard that her face was disfigured. Across her nose was the dark purple that comes with overpowering fear. Haydon saw it on the face of a woman whose child had just been run over in a London street. I remembered the note in his journal as the woman at Via Reggio, in her intolerable hour, turned her head my way, her sobs lifting it. She was afraid that the man would throw himself under the train. She was afraid that he would be damned for his blasphemies; and as to this her fear was mortal fear. It was horrible, too, that she was humpbacked and a dwarf.[132]

One can see in Meynell's language and tone that this drama is transformed into a truly theatrical act by the window pane. The man's 'insincerity' becomes necessary to recognise the drama. This is one of Meynell's most subjective and self-consciously critical essays because it criticises her own position as a passenger. As a passenger she is completely detached from

anything that happens outside the security of her seat. This is the danger: the passenger's seat transforms her into a member of the audience. How easy it was to forget this sort of events could be seen in Meynell's letter to her husband, which introduced this section. Here she explained that she had taken the omnibus to record London on a Sunday for her forthcoming essay. While travelling on the omnibus she saw 'the dreadful incident of a man's cutting his throat on the pavement in Shoreditch'. But Meynell's essay 'The London Sunday' says nothing about this terrible event. Instead, Meynell gives us her impressions of the London crowd on a Sunday, using at times eugenic language, as we shall shortly discuss. 'By the Railway Side', by contrast, is an attempt to get rid of what one may call the 'passenger's guilt': the transformation of someone else's drama into a spectacle, and the guilt of the passenger as he or she takes the position of the audience, not oblivious to the fact that what is happening is real but unwilling to act on it. 'No one had tried to silence the man or to soothe the woman's horror', Meynell remarks in 'By the Railway Side'. She feels it is her responsibility to record that drama both as a *real* event and as she experienced it, as a *simulacrum*, as an acted drama. It is for this reason that 'this record' was 'made', she writes, 'a record without a sequel, without consequence; but there is nothing to be done in her regard except so to remember her'. It is the price the passenger pays: he or she has to remember the incident. She ends 'By the Railway Side' noting that '[t]hus much I think I owe after having looked […] at some minutes of her despair'. The responsibility of the artist is not to allow the drama to be forgotten. Just as Meynell used her impressionistic techniques very cleverly to describe the class differences of London in 'The Smouldering City', because she felt it was her responsibility, her 'point of honour', it was more so in this case.

II. The passenger as critic

What then is the role of the passenger in this culture of the spectacle? For Meynell the role of the passenger is to be a critic of modern life. It is to be an observer with the power to 'reject' and/or 'review' the 'rhythm' of urban life, a rhythm based on the circulation of goods and commodities. But if her position as a 'royal' London passenger gave her the distance and power she required to exercise that regulation then, at the same time, Meynell's Christian ethos was also a potent source in her critique of the modern condition. Consider once again her essay 'The Roads', which is an expression of both Meynell's theories on impressionism and a critique of circulation. Here, after rendering an impressionistic account of the effect of London and its roads, Meynell argues that roads are at the core of modern consumer culture. Roads are the means by which 'flocks and herds are daily hunted into the unproductive town, the town wherefrom nothing, nothing – for all its factories – takes birth'.[133] Meynell had already explored this idea of the industrial city as barren and unproductive in one of her earliest

poems, 'Builders of Ruin'. Here, linking the modern city with the mythical Babylon, and invoking modern urban construction as ruinous, Meynell advanced a Christian critique of industrial capitalism on the basis of its lack of God's metaphysical presence: 'We build with strength the deep tower-wall / That shall be shattered thus and thus. / And fair and great are court and hall, / But *how* fair – this is not for us, / Who know the lack that lurks in all'.[134] Her poem 'A Dead Harvest. In Kensington Gardens', an impressionistic study of Kensington Gardens during the autumn fall, is another such example:

> Along the graceless grass of town
> They rake the rows of red and brown, –
> Dead leaves, unlike the rows of hay
> Delicate, touched with gold and grey,
> Raked long ago and far away.
>
> A narrow silence in the park,
> Between the lights a narrow dark.
> One street rolls on the north; and one,
> Muffled, upon the south doth run;
> Amid the mist the work is done.
>
> A futile crop! – for it the fire
> Smoulders, and, for a stack, a pyre.
> So go the town's lives on the breeze,
> Even as the sheddings of the trees;
> Bosom nor barn is filled with these.[135]

John S. Anson has described 'A Dead Harvest' as Meynell's 'driest poem', where 'Meynell, contemplating the rows of dead leaves that line the "muffled" corridors of Kensington Gardens, sees them as symbolizing the spiritlessness of modern denatured life.'[136] The colours gold and grey dominate this beautiful scene but such a beauty is, in Meynell's view, sterile and dead, because the crop is destined to be destroyed in the pyre and unlike Christ's body (the food of Christians), this crop will not nourish the city physically or spiritually. The same critique can be found in 'The Roads'. She reflects on the importance of late-Victorian consumer culture and recognises that in an economic system where production has been replaced by reproduction, roads are the indispensable vessels that circulate commodities, commodities produced and consumed by passengers. But she attacks London's late-Victorian consumer culture not only on the basis that it produces nothing, but also on the basis that it buries God's creation, i.e. nature: '[t]he town has covered up the original and all-fruitful earth; her pavements seal up all the springs of earthly life, and her roads are loaded with the fruits of earth unsealed'.[137]

Meynell's critique of consumer culture is always present in her work. It was in *The Rhythm of Life* that her arguments against consumer culture were first

voiced. As the title of the book suggests, in these essays she wanted to discuss the rhythm of modern life, pointing out that circulation and periodicity are the key to the modern world. But Meynell was concerned with the link between circulation and mass production. In 'A Remembrance', for instance, an essay written in memory of her father, Meynell questions the switch in modernity from an economic system based on production to one of overproduction. Meynell used the figure of her father to warn against the danger of literary overproduction, suggesting that in the midst of such abundance, 'silence' expressed an aesthetic and political position.[138] This was also the theme of her intensely profound 'Rejection', an essay that caused a great impact on London's literary circles.[139] Here Meynell argues that

> [s]implicity is not virginal in the modern world. She has a penitential or a vidual singleness. We can conceive an antique world in which life, art, and letters were simple because of the absence of many things; for us now they can be simple only because of our rejection of many things. We are constrained to such a vigilance as will not let even a master's work pass unfanned and unpurged. Even among his phrases one shall be taken and the other left. For he may unawares have allowed the habitualness that besets this multitudinous life to take the pen from his hand and to write for him a page or a word; and habitualness compels our refusals.[140]

She remarked that our only tool against overproduction is 'rejection': the rejection of goods, the rejection of literary works, the rejection of abundance and exaggeration (here we can see how Meynell's religious thought works within her theoretical structures). Only by effectively 'rejecting', will it become possible to control the quality of the product.[141] At several points in this essay, she stresses that rejection constitutes our only device to control the quality of (literary) production. But how would rejection work? Meynell argues that our first impulse would be the destruction of that which is not of a high standard. But it is in the act of reviewing that lies the possibility of transformation. Only by reviewing, by refusing to accept the habitualness of things, and by eliminating all that is superfluous will moderns finally achieve quality and refinement. Reviewing thus becomes for Meynell a crucial tool. The remarkable thing here is surely that Meynell empowers the critic. It is the cultural critic, the reviewer, who has it in his/her power to refine production, to review the modern world. As she writes, '[t]he simplicity of literature, more sensitive, more threatened, and more important than other simplicities, needs a guard of honour, who shall never relax the good will nor lose the good heart of their intolerance'.[142] Meynell certainly took up that position in essays such as 'Oblivion', originally published as 'The Praises of Ouida', and 'Forty-fifth Thousand'. She rejected the work of Ouida (whom she would gladly send to oblivion) because she represents the kind of overflow, of careless mass production she was against, and

Mrs. Henry Wood on account of her 'Forty-fifth Thousand' [sic] grammatical and stylistic errors (despite having sold forty-five thousand volumes). For Meynell, Ouida and Wood are two examples of the excess of modern literature and of the modern.[143]

But Meynell's most powerful attack upon consumer culture appears in her thoughts on shop-windows. In this respect Meynell's thoughts predate some of Baudrillard's views on consumer culture and shop-windows.[144] Despite Tynan's claim that Meynell loved shopping (and certainly the two women went shopping together), she did not feel at ease in shops.[145] Meynell was curious and frequently asked Tynan about what was on display in London's shop-windows, but she complained about their power in essays such as 'The Effect of London', where she claimed that shop-windows had transformed the metropolis into a spectacle.[146] Meynell found the constant presence of the spectacle almost intolerable and preferred for this reason southern (continental) cities, cities where 'walls are here and there blank, and tenderly coloured'.[147] In 'The Effect of London' as in 'The Sea Wall' it is very clear that for Meynell shop-windows are the vigilant eyes of the city. Like George Orwell's Big Brother, they are always watching, but unlike Big Brother they demand to be looked at. Guy Debord's postulate that 'the spectator feels at home nowhere, for the spectacle is everywhere' helps to explain Meynell's discomfort.[148] In her strange 'The Sea Wall', Meynell describes her love for 'walls' precisely in those terms.

> A singular love of walls is mine; perhaps because of long living in London, with its too many windows and too few walls, the city which of all capitals takes least visible hold upon the ground. Walls, blank and strong, reaching outward at the base, are a satisfaction to the eyes teased by the inexpressive peering of windows, by that weak lapse and shuffling which is the London 'area,' and by the weak hollows of shop-fronts.[149]

Even more interesting in this respect is her essay 'The Trees' (also in *London Impressions*). If Amy Levy used the London plane-tree as a symbol of the freedom the London woman poet could find in the city, Meynell sees their freedom constrained by the culture of the spectacle:

> But the single trees that have their roots under grey pavements, and that breathe in the little accidental standing-places of the wayside, the railed-in corners left by the chance-medley of London streets – these have the strange fate to be in perpetual light. They never are washed in darkness; they never withdraw into that state and condition of freedom, into that open hiding-place, that untravelled liberty, that wild seclusion at home, that refuge without flight, that secret unconcealed, that solitude unenclosed, that manumission of captives, that opportunity of Penelope – darkness.[150]

The full complexity with which this issue is handled by Meynell is intimated by her poem 'The Wind is Blind':

The wind is blind.
The earth sees sun and moon; the height
Is watch-tower to the dawn; the plain
Shines to the summer; visible light
Is scattered in the drops of rain.

The wind is blind.
The flashing billows are aware;
With open eyes the cities see;
Light leaves the ether, everywhere
Known to the homing bird and bee,

The wind is blind,
Is blind alone. How has he hurled
His ignorant lash, his aimless dart,
His eyeless rush upon the world,
Unseeing, to break his unknown heart!

The wind is blind,
And the sail traps him, and the mill
Captures him; and he cannot save
His swiftness and his desperate will
From those blind uses of the slave.[151]

Meynell's thinking is saturated with the idea of publicity and the spectacle. She sees modern culture as centrally concerned with the ocular: the earth sees the sun, the watch-tower the town, 'with open eyes the cities see'. But, as John S. Anson has noted, the poem's epigraph 'Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill, with slaves' (taken from Milton) situates the poem within a religious discourse. As he writes: 'the underlying conceit of the poem is a comparison of the wind to Samson. Like the eyeless giant at the mercy of his enemies, the wind is forced to serve man.'[152] Though in the biblical narrative Samson ultimately wins his battle against the Philistines, in this poem Meynell is cautious not to make such a statement. If we take here the wind to symbolise (Meynell's) poetic creativity, then we can see that by making the wind blind, what Meynell is suggesting here is that not even a rejection of the ocular guarantees the modern poet freedom from slavery: 'The wind is blind, / And the sail traps him, and the mill / Captures him; and he cannot save / His swiftness and his desperate will / From those blind uses of the slave.'

Meynell's interest in walls has as much to do with her fear of the 'spectacle' as with her interest in maintaining a 'consequential' private life. This is most

clear in 'Solitudes', an essay in which she argues that to be alone, a right of the individual, is to be lost in the modern metropolis. It is today more of a luxury than a human right: 'the multitudes to whom civilization has given little but its reaction, its rebound, its chips, its refuse, its shavings, sawdust, and waste, its failures; to them solitude is a right forgone or a luxury unattained; a right forgone, we may name it, in the case of the nearly savage, and a luxury unattained in the case of the nearly refined'.[153] Rich or poor, the individual has no existence as such in the modern metropolis. Rather, he or she exists in the crowd. There are some remnants of solitude in the countryman, but in London, 'the familiar look' is 'the signs of perpetual crowds':

> It is the London expression, and, in its way, the Paris expression. It is the quickly caught, though not interested look, the dull but ready glance of those who do not know of their forfeited place apart; who have neither the open secret nor the close, neither liberty nor the right of lock and key; no reserve, no need of refuge, no flight nor impulse of flight; no moods but what they may brave out in the street, no hope of news from solitary counsels. Even in many men and women who have all their rights over all the solitudes – solitudes of closed doors and territorial solitudes of sward and forest – even in these who have enough solitudes to fulfil the wants of a city, even in these is found, not seldom, the look of the street.[154]

Consumer society has, like the vampire, sucked up man's individuality. The masses, now like revenants, circulate around the metropolis. The eyes of the crowd are now the eyes of consumer culture, hence Meynell's postulate that the urban dweller possesses the 'look of the street'. The wall is in this sense a way of maintaining, of keeping that 'consequential private' life. The tyranny of the spectacle has destabilised the division between the sphere of the private and the sphere of the public. As Baudrillard writes, '[t]hat specific space which is the shop-window – neither inside nor outside, neither private nor wholly public, and which is already the street while maintaining, behind the transparency of its glass, the distance, the opaque status of the commodity – is also the site of a specific social relation'.[155] This specific relation, Baudrillard has remarked, is not one between individuals, or between individuals and objects. It is primarily a relation in which individuals recognise that they belong to the same social system of signs, with its own hierarchical code of values. It was this uniformity, this loss of the private in favour of the public that Meynell found so distressing and so worrying. For Meynell shop-windows represent the dominion of the commodity. In the screen of 'shop-windows' is where moderns find their sense of belonging. Meynell in this sense saw shop-windows as the modern re-inscription of Plato's myth of the cave. Moderns know no more how to look out to the world around them. Only on Sundays, she argues, the staging of the spectacle is kept at bay, simply because Sundays '[fill] with iron blinds and shutters the hollows of the

shops whereby London usually looks as though the houses found a king of helpless security in their long, staggering, lateral union, a prop for houses that have lost their feet'.[156] Only the wall could keep the commodification and spectacle of city-life at bay and stop the gaze of consumer culture. As she puts it in 'The Childish Town':

> The great city has too many eyes for any intelligible expression. The light there is a spy darting in at a thousand thousand holes in search of paltry secrets, and the houses are too eager with their publicity of windows. Moreover, what gives light to the inmates makes a darkness for the scenery, so that London looks so dark a town not only because of its smoky colour, but because of its almost continuous windows.[157]

It is the word 'spy' that attracts our attention. Shop-windows, in the name of consumer culture, have colonised social life.[158] They, like the eye of Big Brother, control and dominate urban life because publicity and advertising have become forms for domination.

It is for this reason that Meynell started her *London Impressions* with the essay 'The London Sunday'. The essay exemplifies her position as passenger and critic. She chose 'The London Sunday' to discuss the metropolis and its inhabitants. Urban dwellers are not working on Sunday (even though Meynell is).[159] It is the day for going to church and hence it has a sort of religious aura, a halo, to use Benjamin's word, which everyday life has lost.[160] The essay describes Meynell's journey across London as she travels in an omnibus on a Sunday:

> [w]hen the tops of the steeples fly a blue and white sky as far as the eye may see – a broad flag for the streets, and a narrow, wavering pennon for the alleys; when the reluctant faces of grey houses are compelled by the fires of the day to bandy reflections with the grey houses opposite; when the sun himself is lodged in every window, so that the town multiplies his very face, and sets up suns to the west in the morning and to the east in the evening – suns in rows, and suns that run fluctuating along the windows of a long, unequal street; when the plane-tree is fresh and the leaf of the elm already dry, the London Sunday, from beginning to end, is passed by the London people out of doors.[161]

The London Sunday seems to bring to the city a multifarious face. The sun multiplies itself in the street by reflecting on the windows of the metropolis. But while the crowd, those groups of young girls and boys that Meynell sees, are going somewhere, Meynell is going nowhere. She is using the journey as the narrative of her lyric prose:

> For this reason it is difficult to understand it; you cannot tell whither these streams of people are bound. They all have the gait of making for

> some end; they do not stroll. […] They go in great straggling gangs, and though they do nothing – not even much talking – they give a false air of lawlessness to the streaming street. They are the ugliest of all the populace, their clothing, besides, being the most dull and indescribable, and their bearing indefinitely defiant.[162]

Meynell establishes in this fashion class differences in the city, using what is clearly eugenic language. Her position as a bourgeois intellectual living in Kensington fosters this type of class reading of London's urbanscape. She is a travel writer of the city, describing and analysing the city as it glides across her eyes. In opposition to Levy, Meynell does not enter the space of the city. She describes it from the outside as a detached, desensitised passenger. The vitality of Levy is lost in Meynell's intellectual reverie of the city, in part produced by what Michel de Certeau calls the 'transparent caesura' (the train's window glass) that separates the passenger from the urban space she is travelling across, and which produced the transformation of the world into a spectacle, into a drama.[163] Her writing is the representation of her panoramic impressions of the city. Yet, there is another reason why Meynell decided to write this essay on a Sunday, and this is that shops are closed on Sundays. It is as if she needed to be free from the surveillance of consumer culture to produce a clearer impression of London.

3

The Fastest Neighbourhood in Town: Graham R. Tomson in St John's Wood

> Mrs. Graham Tomson is very much the woman *fin de siècle* – nervously impressionable to the seen world and the unseen, finely touched to the magic of crowds, alert to the magnetism that is in the air of great cities, a maker of poetry whose very beauty tells us the writer is somewhat unstrung.
>
> Katharine Tynan on Graham R. Tomson[1]

> Difficult would be his task who should attempt to compile a list of all the celebrities who have ever dwelt in the Wood. But a mere list of names would mean nothing: the real significance of certain localities lies rather in a peculiar receptivity – their appropriateness for certain people. That is what gives its character to St. John's Wood. It is the district *par excellence* for interesting people. There are certain people we cannot imagine living in the Wood, and there are certain other people we cannot imagine living anywhere else.
>
> Alan Montgomery Eyre, *Saint John's Wood*[2]

Katharine Tynan described Graham R. Tomson (Rosamund Marriott Watson) as the 'woman *fin de siècle*', '*impressionable* to the seen world and the unseen', as an urban poet '*touched* to the magic of crowds' and '*alert* to the magnetism' of cities (my italics). Tynan's remarks brilliantly illuminate the underlying qualities of Graham R. Tomson's poetics and her sensuous engagement with the modern city. It also presents Tomson as an exuberant poet, overtly exposed to city life and to its urbanscape, who willingly allows herself through the world of the senses to experience the 'magic' and 'magnetism' of cities. Tynan's description of Tomson indeed goes beyond words to enter the phenomenological world of experience through sensoria. If Meynell saw herself as an impressionist artist who respected her audience but asked to be trusted, Tomson's attitude is quite different. If Meynell was a detached, dispassionate, sensible

passenger, Tomson on the other hand, was an engaged, passionate, sensuous one. If Meynell offered her impressionistic accounts of urban life, Tomson let herself be impressed by the city. If Meynell was an active passenger, Tomson was a passive one, allowing her body to be touched by the metropolis. But Tynan's praise of Tomson's fine and sensuous nature, which alludes to her intimate affinity with urban life, insinuates, one suspects, something else; namely that Tomson's embodiment of the urban is expressive of her radical and transgressive poetics.

Tomson's voluptuous rendering of metropolitan life incarnates a knowledge of both the seen and the unseen world of the city, which points at Tomson's sensuous intercourse with bohemian urban spaces and experiences. It is for this reason that one is not surprised to find that Tomson lived in St John's Wood. If, as Alan Montgomery Eyre claims, '[t]here are certain people we cannot imagine living in the Wood, and there are certain other people we cannot imagine living anywhere else', Tomson undoubtedly then belonged to the second category. St John's Wood was perhaps London's most transgressive urban space at the *fin de siècle*, and Tomson felt at one with this metropolitan space. Many of the social analysts of the time described this area of London as the 'fastest neighbourhood in London'. Amanda Anderson has written that mechanisation, among other cultural forces, 'lurk[s] behind portrayals of the sexually stigmatised'.[3] And the poet Augusta Webster as early as 1870 had used the word 'traffic' in her influential 'A Castaway' to refer to prostitution.[4] This association between mechanisation, transportation, and the sexually stigmatised is succinctly expressed in the word 'fastness', which clearly refers to a sort of dissipated, immoral life, and also, most tellingly, to the velocity that new technologies for mass transport had incorporated into urban life. 'Fast' thus avails itself of being a trope in the study of Graham R. Tomson and St John's Wood. Fastness alludes to a new way of experiencing and seeing the city, one which relates to the speed of travelling, to the restless movement of the metropolis, and to the sexually stigmatised.

The 'speed' of life in St John's Wood cannot but be understood in relation to the concept of the ephemeral. Philosophers of modernity have used the concept of 'speed', the 'ephemeral', and the 'transient' to describe the condition of modernity. Beatriz Colomina's words are here very useful in understanding this concept of 'fastness'. She argues, following Walter Benjamin, that the world of the senses, and especially the sense of vision, has to adapt to a world which is always on the move.[5] Modernity is the age of acceleration, of fast transport, of fast life, of ever-present speed and movement. In the metropolis, she argues, nothing ever stops and people have to adapt to this transience, to this speed.

This ephemeral quality, this 'fastness', is at the core of Graham R. Tomson's poetics. Tomson's work introduces us to an urban world visually and aurally transformed by acceleration. Her renderings of urban spaces and of urban experiences are always produced through the lens of fastness in its

treble meaning. It was for this reason, because of Tomson's deep understanding of the transient character of modern life, that she was such a charismatic and often feared *fin-de-siècle* poet, with her poetry being recognised as the embodiment of transience *par excellence*. Just as her identity was always on the move, from Rosamund Ball, to Rosamund Armytage, to Graham R. Tomson, to Rosamund Marriott Watson, the city that she was so attached to appears equally on the move, her transient self paralleling the transient city. Departing from St John's Wood Road Station (situated then in front of Lord's Cricket Ground, at the end of St John's Wood Road, where Tomson lived), Tomson flowed through the city via the underground Inner Circle line; and in the transient she found an impressionistic city, one whose borders and frontiers had been blurred. Just as different areas of London were now joined by the underground, Tomson's poetics argued for the disintegration of those frontiers in her poetry. If the Inner Circle line joined the city and transformed it into a continuum, Tomson's poetry then recreated that continuum through her emphasis on the fleeting experience of *fin-de-siècle* London.

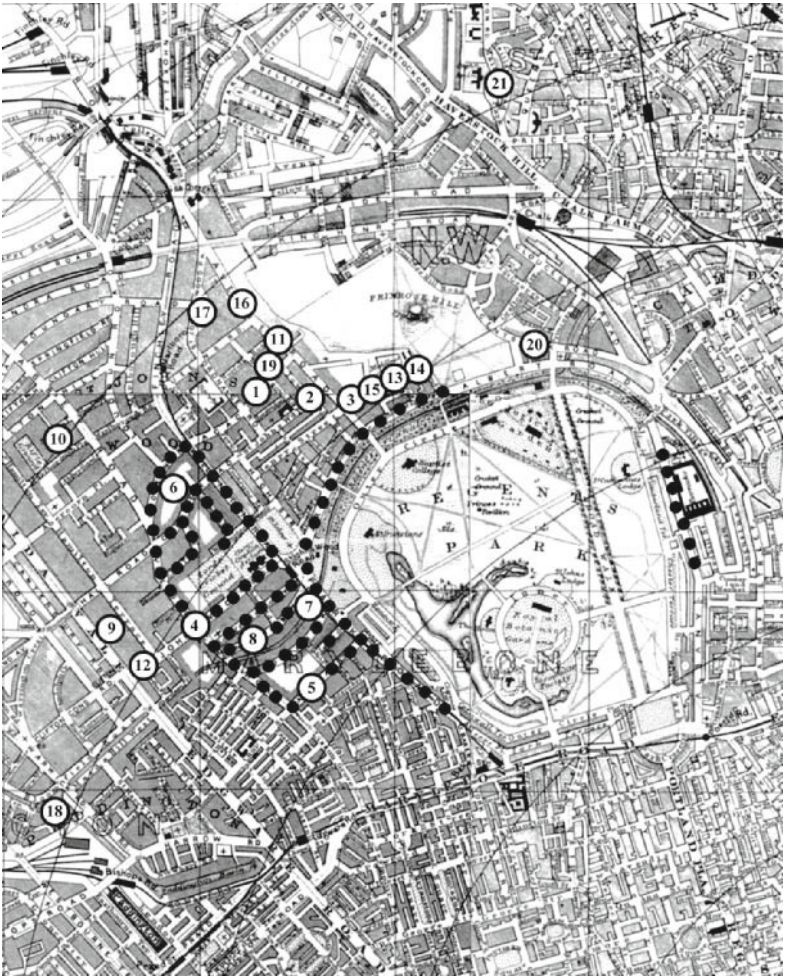
Any scholar working on Graham R. Tomson owes a deep debt of gratitude to Linda K. Hughes, whose scholarship has rescued her work from oblivion, and certainly Hughes' vital research on her life and poetry is at the core of my examination of Tomson's urban aestheticism. In this book I have argued that late-Victorian London was organised and divided into very distinct areas, which were shaped by the different class, economic and social status, profession, ideology, and religion of their inhabitants. I have shown that aspiring artists and poets came to Bloomsbury attracted by its transient character, by its *salons*, and by the British Museum. Bloomsbury, I have contended, was the favoured place for aspiring artists. Once they became financially successful, they tended to move to Kensington, the preferred place for the economically successful artist. Financially successful poetry was expressed through the social space of the metropolis, and thus the prosperous A. Mary F. Robinson moved to Kensington, where art and success dwelt side by side. Similarly, Alice Meynell's residence in Kensington expressed economically and topographically her literary fame and success in the 1880s and 1890s. This chapter will argue that Graham R. Tomson's poetics are intimately associated with the geo-ontology of St John's Wood and the ephemeral quality of modernity in a variety of ways. I thus begin by exploring the Bohemian character of St John's Wood to turn then to examine Tomson's conception of the ephemeral and its relationship to 'fastness' in its triple meaning. In 'Modelling of the Ephemeral', I expand on Tomson's use of the ephemeral by focusing on the transient figure of the model in St John's Wood. My aim here is to explore the way in which Tomson questioned art's representation of women. In the chapter's final section, I examine Tomson's poetry in relation to urban speed and velocity.

Bohemia in St John's Wood

To the late-Victorian Londoner, St John's Wood was a *risqué* neighbourhood, the only district of London where 'true' bohemia really existed. It was, as Hugh McLeod has explained, the 'proverbial home of the "kept women" of those living in Mayfair and Belgravia', and the place where ' "advanced thinkers" such as George Eliot, T. H. Huxley and Herbert Spencer' chose to live.[6] 'Bohemia' is an interesting concept with which to analyse St John's Wood's social space, and one which the late Victorians distinctly associated with the Wood. Karl Marx's home at 41 Maitland Park Road, situated on the fringes of St John's Wood, Hampstead and Kentish Town (see Figure 14), for example, was described by Marian Skinner, a friend of Eleanor Marx, as 'Bohemian in its open-handed hospitality, its gracious welcome to strangers within its gates. And the strangers were numerous and shared the classic charm of great variety. There was one point of resemblance between them – for the most part they were impecunious. Shabby as to clothes, furtive in movement, but interesting, always interesting.'[7] Skinner's subtle reflection on Marx's visitors, especially their characterisation as 'furtive in movement' (clearly pointing out that Maitland Park Road was the centre point for a group of underground political activists) and their shabbiness (indicating their anti-bourgeois attitudes) underlines the kind of meaning the word bohemia had for the late Victorians.

Drawing from Marx, Walter Benjamin used this concept in particular to describe and contextualise the French mid-nineteenth-century avant-garde intellectual, and hence the word intimates a strong critique and oppositional discourse to bourgeois ideology. Benjamin described 'bohemia' as a movement of revolt against bourgeois society.[8] It embodied a particular form of life within a more or less advanced neighbourhood, a rejection of bourgeois forms of life, and a denunciation of bourgeois ideology. Accordingly, the concept of bohemia is particularly pertinent to describe the social space of St John's Wood. This ideological denunciation of the bourgeoisie was manifested *politically* by a fervent support of republicanism, socialism and anarchism; *theologically*, it materialised in a categorical rejection of any form of theist belief; finally, and perhaps more visibly, this revolt was manifested in a violation of the conventions and respectability of the Victorian bourgeoisie and their social norms of conduct. I will first describe the political circles of St John's Wood and then I will deal very briefly with the sexual openness of the neighbourhood, which will be discussed at length after introducing the poets Graham R. Tomson and Mathilde Blind.

Three of the most interesting political circles in St John's Wood, especially for their connections with women poets, were that of the German refugee Karl Blind and his wife Friederike Ettlinger (mother of the poet Mathilde Blind), the Russian Sergei Stepniak, and, to a lesser degree, that of Karl Marx. Karl Blind was an eminent figure within the free-thinking circles of England.[9] He arrived



1. **Mathilde Blind (1873):** Eaton House, Acacia Road.
2. **Karl Blind and Friederike Ettlingler (c.1851–c.1881):** 23 Townshend Road. (Mathilde Blind lived at this address from 1851 to 1871).
3. **Mathilde Blind (1889):** 1 St. Edmund's Terrace.
4. **Graham R. Tomson (1887–1895):** 20 St. John's Wood Road.
5. **Sarah Bernhardt (1892–c.1893):** 14 Alpha Road.
6. **Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1883–1912):** Grove End Road.
7. **Sergei Stepniak (1888–c.1891):** 13 Grove Gardens.
8. **George Eliot (1863–1880):** 21 North Bank.
9. **William Friese-Green (1888–1891):** 136 Maida Vale.
10. **T. H. Huxley (1872–1890):** 4 Malborough Place.
11. **Helena Blavatski (1887–1890):** 17 Avenue Road and 19 Avenue Road.
12. **Arthur W. Pinero (c.1887–c.1892):** 64 St. John's Wood Road.
13. **W. M. Rossetti (1890–1914):** 3 St. Edmund's Terrace.
14. **Richard Garnett (1863–1890):** 4 St. Edmund's Terrace.
15. **Ford Madox Brown (c.1887–1893):** 1 St. Edmund's Terrace.
16. **Herbert Spencer (1889–1898):** 64 Avenue Road.
17. **Mrs. Henry Wood (c.1862–1887):** 16 St. John's Wood Park.
18. **Robert Browning (1862–1887):** 19 Wawrick Crescent.
19. **Mona Caird (c.1892–1895):** 34 Woronzow Road.
20. **Friederick Engels (1870–1894):** 121 Regents Park Road.
21. **Karl Marx (1875–1883)**: 41 Maitland Park Road.

Figure 14 St John's Wood at the *fin de siècle*. Dotted paths indicate areas where prostitution was practised.

in England with Karl Marx in 1849. Indeed, as Rosemary Ashton has noted, Marx stayed in his room in Grosvenor Square until Blind's family came over from Paris.[10] They had been expelled from Germany and France on account of their political involvement in the revolutions of 1848. At the beginning of their revolutionary careers both men were united in their revolt against the authoritarian regimes that were governing Europe in the mid-nineteenth century. But, politically, Blind was an 'international republican', who supported republicanism of every nationality, and according to Marx, more of a statesman than a man of economics. Soon, owing to their political differences, their friendship came to an end.[11] Unlike Marx, Blind found that the English press was very interested in his theories and soon after his arrival in England he started to publish political pamphlets and articles in the main free-thinking periodicals of the time. He rapidly became one of the most important political activists in London and his house, at 23 Townshend Road, became a republican centre. Political activists of all nationalities, among them Louis Blanc, Giuseppe Garibaldi and Joseph Mazzini (to whom Mathilde Blind dedicated her first volume of poetry, *Poems*, published in 1867 under the pseudonym of 'Claude Lake'), and writers such as A. C. Swinburne and W. M. Rossetti attended political meetings at the Blinds' home, where discussions took place about the possibilities of republicanism and campaigns were organised to promote it.[12]

Mathilde Blind, Karl Blind's stepdaughter, was one of its most active members and a most fervent promoter of her father's republican ideas. She was involved in her father's campaigns to promote republicanism both as an active speaker for the cause and as a collector for the campaigns.[13] It is interesting to see how these campaigns were carried out in St John's Wood, for it shows to what point the neighbourhood participated in these political debates demonstrating its intense republican atmosphere:

> [S]he [Mathilde Blind] heroically approached the postman, who actually did give a penny, and by and by another postman came voluntarily with another penny, saying he understood that there was a collection for Garibaldi. […] On one occasion, however, she endeavoured to convert an Irish girl who declared herself on the side of the Pope by telling her that if Garibaldi got the upper hand he would send all the little girls in Rome to school.[14]

Mathilde was openly recognised as a republican within the free-thinking communities of late nineteenth-century London.[15] But her revolt against the bourgeoisie, unlike her stepfather's, was not confined only to the level of politics. Her atheist beliefs were openly discussed in her poetry, resulting in many instances in rejections from publishers who did not want to be associated with Blind's overt atheism, more transgressive because of her Jewish heritage.[16] Furthermore, as James Diedrick has shown, Blind also understood her revolt

against the bourgeoisie in terms of gender. As the above example illustrates, she saw politics inextricably linked to religion and patriarchy. Thus, when she tried to convert the Irish girl, not only did she talk of Garibaldi's policies but she also attacked Christianity in the figure of the Pope and demanded education as a right for women. In this she followed other women activists such as Frances Power Cobbe and Augusta Webster, whom she met regularly at George Sims' house.[17] In her popular essays on Shelley (and to write on or to quote Shelley was the hallmark of free-thinking groups), one delivered in St John's Wood and the other to the Church of Progress in St George's Hall in the 1870s,[18] Blind used Shelley's controversial poetry, for long associated with revolution and freedom,[19] to argue that the establishment of a republican regime would mean a rejection of religion as a form of social control and that republicanism would lead to a new order that would change the position of women in society. Blind read 'Prometheus Unbound' and 'The Revolt of Islam: A Poem in Twelve Cantos' through the lens of John Stuart Mill's *On the Subjection of Women*, quoting Shelley's lines 'Can man be free if woman be a slave?' and comparing patriarchy with the despotic regimes Shelley was fighting against.[20]

The second important political circle in St John's Wood was centred on the figure of the Russian Sergei Stepniak, a personal friend among others of Amy Levy, who occasionally visited him in St John's Wood, Constance (Black) Garnett and Graham R. Tomson.[21] Like Blind, Stepniak maintained a sort of *salon* where he read many of his articles to a highly political audience. He too was a refugee from another autocratic state, Russia. Stepniak, however, was actively involved in terrorist attacks against the Tsarist regime. Contemporary historical analysts now see him more as an agent who came to England to talk of the horrifying political situation in Russia and to convince the international press and the international community that the only solution to the autocratic situation in Russia was the Terror. In England, Stepniak wrote for periodicals and free-thinking magazines and published among others his impressive *Underground Russia* (1883), which so much influenced William Morris. In England, Stepniak's involvement in the Terror was not known, and it was perhaps this ignorance that allowed him to enter the most influential literary circles of his time. However, by the late 1880s, Stepniak had abandoned his ideas on violence as a tool to achieve political demands, probably through his contact with Engels, and although not interested in the situation of the Russian peasantry – as Engels was – Stepniak adopted a more moderate attitude by becoming a Marxian Socialist.[22]

Karl Marx's *salon* also influenced the aura of the neighbourhood, but to a lesser degree. Although Marx's home was the meeting point for a number of political activists, this was not a happy period for the Marxes. Jenny Marx died of cancer in 1881. Karl Marx, who was deeply distraught by his wife's fatal illness, was also very ill with pleurisy and was forced for long periods to be away from London. Eleanor Marx, who bore on her shoulders the weight

of both her mother's and her father's illness, fell ill herself with acute depression. But this did not stop Eleanor Marx, who continued with her literary and political activities. It was Eleanor who was now the centre of a literary group, the Dogberry, a private Shakespeare Reading Club that used to meet often at Maitland Park Road (members included Clementina Black, Dollie Maitland – later Radford – and Ernest Radford). According to Marian Skinner, one of the club's members, the club used to meet in the Women's Reading Room of University College in Gower Street, but because Eleanor Marx was 'the leading spirit', the meetings were frequently held at Maitland Park Road, having among the audience Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.[23]

Thus, politically, St John's Wood was a highly controversial space, and as the century closed other controversial political centres arose in the neighbourhood. Of particular interest is the founding of *The Torch*, the anarchist newspaper which was run by Olive, Arthur and Helen Rossetti, the children of William M. and Lucy Rossetti. They printed the journal in the basement of their house in St John's Wood. Lucy and Michael Rossetti offered editorial help and contributed with some articles. Other contributors were the influential anarchists Peter Kropotkin and Felix Volkhovsky.[24]

But more visible and probably more shocking was the revolt of the residents of St John's Wood against the sexual mores of late-Victorian England. This type of revolt was easily recognised in St John's Wood where sexuality was visually present as part of the economy of the neighbourhood, and as a form of revolt against the social mores of Victorian England. The inhabitants of the Wood were, of course, well aware of the tainted sexual texture of the district as well as of its fame as a sexually transgressive space. This sexual openness was what attracted them there in the first place. It was London's *Quartier Latin* and, as such, it attracted a great number of sexual and political dissidents that were looking for an urban space that would represent their social and political ideas. These two worlds, the commodified world of prostitution, and that of radical intellectuals, as Hugh McLeod has noted, co-existed and cohabited in St John's Wood in harmony. Only here could George Eliot live with G. H. Lewes without defamation or scandal (and live in one of the Wood's most infamous streets). St John's Wood was an open neighbourhood, and its residents enjoyed the privilege of living without the moral constraints of other areas of London, especially Kensington and Belgravia. But before discussing the permissible space of St John's Wood in full detail, it would be a good idea to pause and introduce two poets that lived there.

It was no coincidence that two *fin-de-siècle* poets, Mathilde Blind and Graham R. Tomson, resided in this neighbourhood. Their bohemian lifestyles and their ideologies fitted in with this transgressive quarter of London. Apart from the republican ideas of Mathilde Blind, her nomadic life was in accordance with the 'fast' life of St John's Wood. Up to 1871 Mathilde Blind lived with her parents in St John's Wood. But in 1871 she decided to

establish a home for herself. As Richard Garnett declares, 'from this time it is less easy to trace the continuous story of her life. She rarely remained long in one place.'[25] Her journeys took her to Europe and Egypt. In England she moved continuously from Manchester and London to Cambridge and Scotland. In London she never had a continuously fixed address and, during the 1880s, we can find her living in numerous places: in 1873, she was living in Eaton House, Acacia Road; in 1887, in 27 Manchester Street, Manchester Square (behind Oxford Street);[26] in 1889, she was living again in St John's Wood at 1 St Edmund's Terrace.[27] Finally, sometime in 1892 or 1893, she moved to Putney to a home for invalids, where she died. Her erratic dwellings confirm Richard Garnett's description of the poet. She was a 'traveller, continually on the move from land to land.'[28] In her diary, Blind wrote, 'I have been an exile in this world. Without a God, without a country, without a family.'[29] Indeed she was the 'Pilgrim Soul' of her *Ascent of Man*.

It is, however, Graham R. Tomson who perhaps represents best the transgressive space of St John's Wood. Graham R. Tomson (*née* Rosamund Ball, afterwards 'Graham R. Tomson', afterwards Rosamund Marriott Watson) lived in St John's Wood between 1888 and 1895. After her divorce from George Armytage, she married the painter Arthur Tomson and settled at 20 St John's Wood Road, at the heart of St John's Wood. Tomson, as Linda K. Hughes has argued, was a highly controversial figure. Her divorce from George Armytage (leaving two daughters to the custody of Armytage, to marry the painter Arthur Tomson in 1887, and giving birth to their child a month after the marriage)[30] was the gossip of late-Victorian London *salons* and literary 'at homes'. First the couple lived in Cornwall, but later in 1888, they moved to St John's Wood. Their house was to become a *salon* where important personalities of London literary life (including Oscar Wilde, Amy Levy, Mathilde Blind, Walter Sickert and Mona Caird) gathered on Sundays. Tomson, as Katharine Tynan has suggested, was a transgressive poet. Coventry Patmore, for example, warned Alice Meynell, who was a good friend and regularly attended her Sunday *soirées*, against her.[31] Her ideas on sexual politics and her own life were a direct violation and criticism of bourgeois attitudes towards sexuality and marriage. From Arthur Symons' jocose remarks about her sexual promiscuity to general gossip on her civil status,[32] Graham R. Tomson was for many a subversive poet, and St John's Wood was the perfect urbanspace for her radical urban poetics.

The fastest neighbourhood in town

I would like to start the analysis of this bohemian ethos and its relationship with Graham R. Tomson by discussing St John's Wood as a fast neighbourhood in its first meaning, as a sexually stigmatised borough. In the 1880s St John's Wood was the quarter most favoured by artists. Its bohemian character attracted writers, painters, sculptors and artists of all kinds. It was

perhaps the only area in London deserving that name. The quarter was famous for its libertine life and many of the artists that came to it were looking for a bohemian life-style that reminded them of gay Paris.[33] St John's Wood, as I have noted, was a 'curious' neighbourhood, one with the biggest colony of artists in London, and '[a]t the same time […] the most favoured place of residence of ladies of easy virtue'.[34] Painters and the 'fastest girls in town' resided side by side. From Regent's Park to Swiss Cottage and from the Zoological Gardens to Edgware Road, St John's Wood represented, at its best, paraphrasing Judith Walkowitz, 'the city of dreadful delight'.

The neighbourhood was known as 'The Grove of the Evangelist' (the Grove referring to Grove End Road, where Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema lived) and was supposed to be inhabited principally by theatre people, artists, and prostitutes. Sarah Bernhardt lived in Alpha Road, a focal point for prostitution in St John's Wood. Sergei Stepniak lived in Grove Gardens, which was adjacent to South Bank. Both South Bank and North Bank – where George Eliot lived between 1863 and 1880 – were infamous in London for their brothels and prostitution.[35] As the artist Julius M. Price describes it:

> When I was living in the Wood, there were several streets of particularly ill-fame: Park Road, Lodge Road, Alpha Road, Omega Place, Lorne Gardens, and North and South Bank […] Wellington Road, Elm Tree Road, and many others.
>
> Apart from the streets above named there were two which bore so terrible a character, even for St. John's Wood, that they require special reference – Hanover Gardens, which had been renamed Lorne Gardens, and has now practically ceased to exist, and Wilton Street, which was also re-christened. It was said in those days that there had never been anything in London to equal them for down-right iniquity, and of Wilton Street in particular, that it was 'the limit'.[36]

John Addington Symonds used to visit a male brothel near the Regent's Park Barracks on Albany Street.[37] Swinburne was perhaps one of the neighbourhood's most notorious visitors. He made famous one of Regent's Park brothels which specialised in sado-masochistic practices, as well as the one in 7 Circus Road.[38] George Augustus Sala has described the sexual texture of St John's Wood in his *The Mysteries of Verbena House: Miss Bellasis Birched for Thieving. Mysteries of Flagellation* (1881), which he published anonymously. But the reputation of the borough has been best described by Mrs Henry Wood, who also resided in the district, but a little farther away from these foci. In her story 'North Bank, or, Shadowed in a Fog. A Tale of St John's Wood',[39] Wood tells us the story of her alter-ego, Mrs. Henry Grange, who lives in a 'strictly secluded villa'.[40] The heroine is surrounded by 'signs of opulence' in the form of letters from eminent publishers 'containing princely offers from £10,000 to £100,000 for novels from the elderly lady's pen'.

Mrs. Grange has been summoned by 'the other celebrated authoress', 'The Sybil', who lives in The Priory, North Bank (this is clearly George Eliot). The heroine decides to walk to The Sybil's place – in part to avoid a publisher and a tax collector. In her journey through St John's Wood she crosses Marlborough Road, then Marlborough Hill and continues to the west down Clifton Hill and to the south along Abbey Road. Then, noticing that she is being followed, she manages to get to Hall Road and from there to North Bank. But she does not know where 'The Sybil' lives. A policeman tries to help her, and it is at the end of this story where Mrs Henry Wood most ironically and hilariously highlights the reputation of St John's Wood, of George Eliot, and by analogy, her own:

> 'Sybil?' he cried. 'Ain't it a bit early for sybils?'
> 'Oh no', cried Mrs. Grange; 'I am late. I am to take a dish of tea with The Sybil in North Bank.'
> 'Come', said the peeler politely, 'this is North Bank'.
> 'And does The Sybil live here?'
> 'Not exactly', replied the peeler; 'that there's a siren'.
> 'Then guide me to the next house. Who dwells there?'
> 'A nymph', answered the policeman. 'But if a cup of tea's all you want, mum, I can put you straight. There's a Baptist parson moved in here who's doing a great work among the sybils, sirens, and nymphs in the Wood.'
> A few moments later, foiled, dispirited and exhausted, Mrs. Henry Grange sank into the arms of the Rev. John Plifford.
> 'You!' he said. 'You! At your age!'
> And next door The Sybil, vexation on her brow, waited.
> 'Do you think', she murmured fretfully, gazing at the empty teacups, 'do you think, George, she is like the rest?'
> 'Like the rest', responded a man's voice out of the gloom.[41]

It is not surprising that Mrs Henry Wood was unable to find the house where George Eliot lived, for as I have argued, prostitutes and intellectuals lived side by side in St John's Wood. The map of late-Victorian St John's Wood illustrates the intimacy of this bohemian relationship. If Baudelaire compared his life as an artist with that of the prostitute,[42] in St John's Wood this was *spatially* true. See, for example, how Graham R. Tomson lived within walking distance from streets where prostitution was practised: she lived next to Lodge Road, Wellington Road, North and South Bank, areas renowned for their trade. To go anywhere in London, for example the British Museum, the National Gallery (which she visited with Elizabeth Robins Pennell),[43] or to hear a lecture on Russian politics given by the Russian exile Prince Kropotkin,[44] or to visit Amy Levy in Bloomsbury,[45] Tomson would need to walk through these infamous streets to take either the omnibus or the underground Inner Circle line (from St John's Wood Station, in Park Road).[46]

In fact any of the *saloniers* that visited Graham R. Tomson would have to go by the same route.

A further example of this disintegration of spatial differences is argued by Price. He comments on how the middle-class mask of respectability portrayed by houses in the borough concealed the true identities and professions of their residents:

> Curiously enough, although certain of the streets were inhabited almost entirely by this class of woman, one would hardly have guessed the character of their houses from their prosperous, middle-class appearance outside. Had one not known of the reputation of the neighbourhood, there was little to draw one's attention to it beyond seeing smartly dressed women driving down West at night, alone, and returning, usually accompanied, in the small hours of the morning.[47]

Only those living in the neighbourhood would know who resided in these houses. It would seem that mainly high-class prostitutes, who could sustain a middle-class life style, lived here. But as Price explains, low-class prostitutes were also based in the Wood. They drove to the West End, mainly Regent Street and Piccadilly looking for work, and later came back to the suburb with their clients. If the night had not been successful, many would return to the Wood in the last omnibus:

> Of course, it didn't always happen that we returned *accompagnés* on those Saturday nights, and if we were alone, we would endeavour to catch the last 'bus from Piccadilly Circus. This was facetiously known as 'The Maiden's Prayer,' by reason of the number of ladies who had had no luck during the evening, who usually returned to their homes in the Wood by it, and any one who was on the look-out for a cheap 'adventure' was pretty certain to find it in this particular 'bus. After a time one almost got to know the 'regulars,' with their dyed hair, by sight, and to look on them as neighbours living in the same village. If it had turned out a wet night, it was almost pitiful to see them get in with their tawdry finery all bedraggled and mud-spattered, and the look of despondency on their painted and powdered faces, for Saturday was rent day as a rule, and there wouldn't be much chance of doing anything on a Sunday.[48]

This passage interests us for several reasons. As I suggested earlier, prostitutes were considered as neighbours of the Wood. They practised their trade in the city centre, in Regent Street and Piccadilly Circus, but St John's Wood was their place of residence. Its proximity to the city centre and its connections to it by omnibuses and underground trains were ideal. Despite this, and this

is crucial in understanding St John's Wood and the culture associated with it, not only were the inhabitants of the Wood associated with a bohemian and sexually permissive life, but even the transport system became sexualised. And thus the omnibus to and from St John's Wood turns out to be a *risqué* place itself, where encounters and commerce happen, as if the omnibus was an extension of the borough, or was tainted by its life-style. The 'Maiden's Prayer', as the inhabitants of St John's Wood called the last omnibus, had lost, in Benjamin's terms, its religious 'halo'. It is of course in 'The Maiden's Prayer' that one can see most clearly why St John's Wood was labelled the 'fastest neighourhood in town'.

What, then, was the position of women poets in this neighbourhood? That is, how did they react to this bohemian space? How did Graham R. Tomson approach the fast life of the Wood? In *A Summer Night and Other Poems* (1891) she captures her fascination with the life of the neighbourhood and her own presence within it. 'A Summer Night', the first poem of the collection, represents at its best the geographical poetics of the volume:

A SUMMER NIGHT

'Le vent qui vient à travers la montagne
Me rendra fou.'

The linden leaves are wet,
The gas-lights flare –
Deep yellow jewels set
In dusky air,
In dim air subtly sweet
With vanished rain.

Hush! – from the distant street
Again – again –
Life's music swells and falls,
Despairing – light –
Beyond my garden walls
This summer night.

Where do you call me, where?
O voice that cries!
O murky evening air,
What Paradise,
Unsought, unfound, unknown,
Inviteth me,
With faint night-odours blown?
With murmurous plea?

Future are thou, or Past?
Hope, or Regret?
My heart throbs thick and fast,
Mine eyes are wet,
For well and well I know
Thou hast no share,
Nor hence, nor long ago,
Nor anywhere.[49]

The echoes of John Keats' 'Ode to a Nightingale', of Matthew Arnold's 'A Summer Night', and of Michael Field's *Long Ago* (1889) are particularly striking. But it is when analysed *spatially* that Tomson's poem gives vent suddenly to meaning. We can easily imagine the poet sitting in her garden listening to the noises of the street life of St John's Wood, full of '[l]ife's music' that 'swells and falls'. The yellow gas-lights that illuminate her garden are entangled with the noises that come from the outside. Graham R. Tomson must have been aware of what these noises meant, who these street-walkers were in this city of dreadful delight. Julius M. Price's description of St John's Wood by night is especially illuminating: 'the echoes of the quiet neighbourhood would be awakened by the clatter of hansom cabs bringing these ladies of pleasure from their West End haunts, more often than not shouting and singing'.[50]

In the light of Price's words, the poem bursts into a whole new set of meanings. We are then able to locate the poet spatially in the garden, where she is listening 'again' and 'again' to '[l]ife's music' that 'swells and falls'. These images of the night life in St John's Wood appear constantly in her urban poetry, in poems such as 'In a London Garden' where secret thoughts are brought by 'passing feet,/ The roll of wheels, the murmur of the street'[51] or in 'Chimæra'.[52] If we were to read this poem biographically, it would be very easy to identify Graham R. Tomson's life and her violation of the conventional sexual politics of nineteenth-century England. The voice could be read as the voice of her sexual desires. What Benjamin said of Baudelaire's poem 'To a Passer-by' would be very appropriate here. As Benjamin explained, '[o]ne may say that it deals with the function of the crowd not in the life of the citizen but in the life of the erotic person'.[53] In this sense, we could read the poem as Graham R. Tomson's reflections of her erotic self, reflections that have been caused by the voices of the gay St John's Wood night. But this autobiographical reflection is simply an effect of the lyrical qualities of this poem. The poem, however, goes beyond the purely autobiographical. Instead, what I propose is to read this volume, *A Summer Night*, in relation to the erotic urban identity of St John's Wood, for by doing so we will discover the position of Tomson as a *fin-de-siècle* poet and her relationship with the metropolitan life and the modern space of the city.

Above all, Tomson's poetics do not establish boundaries between the different urban identities of the neighbourhood. *A Summer Night* is not about producing a set of moral codes by which to mythologise or criticise the sexual trade that occurs in the neighbourhood, as Tomson's male counterparts did (see, for example, Arthur Symons' *Silhouettes* or *London Nights*). Tomson's work in fact comes from a tradition of women's writing such as Augusta Webster's 'A Castaway', or Mathilde Blind's 'The Leading of Sorrow', who are interested in visualising (and by this I mean 'to bring into light') the figure of the streetwalker and her position, both social and economically, within the *fin de siècle*. And certainly, Tomson's poem captures the life of streetwalkers within the social space of St John's Wood, but – and this is what makes Tomson's work so strikingly new – she captures the figure of the prostitute as altogether participant and producer of the urban life. The different urban identities of the neighbourhood are thus spatially and poetically assimilated in the poem. Tomson achieves this assimilation by uniting the voices of the streetwalkers with that of the poet. Thus, instead of using prostitution as a theme to discuss how the social and economic position of women in the late-Victorian city was forcing women into the trade, prostitution is the voice by which the poet is forced to locate herself within the spatial (and symbolic) topography of St John's Wood. Crucially the poet asks 'Where do you call me, where? / O voice that cries!' If in the previous stanza the voices that haunted the poem came from the street, in the third stanza they have been interiorised and have become the haunting voice of the self. The division between the outside and the inside, between the street and the garden, between the voices of the prostitutes and the voice of the poet is thus broken and as a result, the frontier between the city and the self has collapsed. This topo-poetical dissolution of frontiers is indeed paralleled with the disintegration of spatial and identity differences in St John's Wood.

The blurring of the boundaries between the gay life of the Wood and the life of the intellectual, the effacement of limits, is crucial to this poem, and to Graham R. Tomson's poetics, since it places her work at the core of what Beatriz Colomina has called modernity's production of a new mode of perception in the city. For Colomina, the founding of this new perception resides in the effacement of boundaries produced by the restless movement in the city. I will discuss the question of movement and modernity in the last section of this chapter, but for now, I want to emphasise that Tomson's poetics are about the dissolution of those boundaries as exemplified in 'A Summer Night', and in most of her urban poems, such as 'Aubade', where likewise the voices of the city mutate into the voice of the self – once again fusing the boundaries between the city and the self – and in 'London in October', where the city is perceived as a continuum, or in 'A Song of London', where the crowd in the street flows through a limitless city.

But what this dissolution of frontiers points to is the ephemeral character of urban life, to its fast and transient nature. This becomes even more visible when the reader tries to establish the spatial-temporal co-ordinates of the poem. The street life appears as a sort of erotic echo that blurs the frontiers that exist between the city and the self. But this 'echo' functions as something other than an incessant repetition of an utterance, or more accurately, as an echo of the life in the St John's Wood night. It refers to the temporal sequence that the echo implies, a sequence that differentiates the utterance from its incessant repetition. However, in the poem, this temporal sequence is lost in the voices of the self/street. For just as the frontiers between the city and the self have finally broken down, so have the spatial-temporal co-ordinates ('Future are thou, or Past?'). In a strange and paradoxical way, the voice, in the present, foretells the future by evoking the past. Hence, we find here an intimate and touching relationship between self and city, but we also find that temporal frontiers, the frontiers of the past, present and future have also vanished. The present is suddenly past and, as in Amy Levy's 'London Poets', it is also future. The voice of the city–self that haunts the poem–poet belongs to the present by way of the past and future. This annihilation of the temporal co-ordinates, the sense that 'all that is solid melts into the air', becomes a reflection of the ephemerality of life, of its transient nature.

Tomson's imagery is full of representations of the fleeting city. The 'dusky air' giving an indefinite and changing impression of the streets, the flaring lights of those yellow jewels, the evanescent rain, the evening air. In this transitory construction of the present, Tomson has seized the essence of *fin-de-siècle* poetry. In 'Summer Night' she has captured the impressionable world of the city in its ephemerality. The beauty of the poem relies on its subtle invocation of the ephemerality of modern life. The music that swells and falls acknowledges the fleeting present, the fleeting self both in terms of time and in terms of space.

We can thus see how the 'fast life' of St John's Wood appears in Tomson's poetry in her discussion of the ephemeral. The gay life is never argued against or for, but it is used to interrogate the position of the poet at the *fin de siècle*. And Tomson's position is that of the urban poet, as her 'Of the Earth, Earthy', clearly shows. In this poem, Tomson embraces the everyday life and presents the contradictory experience of modern life:

> OF THE EARTH, EARTHY
> Never for us those dreams aforetime shown
> Of white-winged angels on a shining stair,
> Or seas of sapphire round a jasper throne:
> Give us the spangled dusk, the turbid street;
> The dun, dim pavement trod by myriad feet,

Stained with the yellow lamplight here and there;
The chill blue skies beyond the spires of stone:

The world's invincible youth is all our own,
Here where we feel life's pulses burn and beat.

Here is the pride of Life, be it foul or fair,
This clash and swirl of streets in the twilight air;
Beauty and Grime, indifferent, side by side;
Surfeit and Thirst, Endeavour and Despair,
Content and Squalor, Lassitude and Care,
All in the golden lamplight glorified:
All quick, all real, hurrying near and wide.

Life and Life's worst and best be ours to share,
Charm of the motley! undefined and rare;
Melodious discord in the heart o' the tune,
Sweet with the hoarse note jarring everywhere!

Let us but live, and every field shall bear
Fruit for our joy; for Life is Life's best boon.[54]

In this magnificent poem the metropolis becomes 'The City of Dream' (another urban poem in which she describes the fruitless search for a paradisiacal city in the rural spaces of England).[55] In 'Of the Earth, Earthy', Tomson reveals a new urban aura. It is tempting to read the pronoun 'us' in the feminine, 'Never for us those dreams aforetime shown/ Of white-winged angels on a shining stair […] /Give us the spangled dusk, the turbid street'. If so, it would not be difficult to read a strong critique of Coventry Patmore's image of the 'angel in the house'. Against the immaterial but constrained image of the 'angel', Tomson would seem to be proposing a more 'earthly', material presence of women in the liberating spaces of the metropolis.[56] Whether in the feminine or not, what is clear is that Tomson rejects the conventional imagery of utopia, of the City as Paradise, and chooses the everyday life of the city, the 'dusk, the turbid street;/ The dun, dim pavement trod by myriad feet'.

The word 'trod' is not used casually here. By following the traces of those myriad feet we can hear the echo of Amy Levy's poem 'London Poets', where Levy situated herself within a tradition of London poets who 'trod the streets and squares where' she trod, '[w]ith weary hearts, a little while ago'.[57] And as I argued in Chapter 1, Tomson defended Levy's *A London Plane-Tree* precisely because she aligned herself with Levy's aesthetics. Tomson placed the poem spatially and poetically within a tradition of urban writing. By choosing 'us', she also placed herself within this tradition of urban poets interested in the

everyday life of the city and its ephemerality. Just as those London poets did, now Tomson and Levy walk and travel across the fluid streets of London in full motion. But it is in 'Of the Earth, Earthy' where we see the halo of the *fin-de-siècle* city, a halo which emanates from understanding the metropolis as a sublime experience (in Burke's sense).[58] For Tomson, and this is perhaps what differentiates her from Amy Levy and Alice Meynell, the metropolis is sublime because in its vastness and immensity (according to Burke, both sources of the sublime), it fuses beauty with grime, surfeit with thirst, endeavour and despair, content with squalor, lassitude with care. All glorified by the golden lamplight. And Graham R. Tomson is moved by this sublimity. But this fusion is made possible by the ephemerality of modern life, by the '[a]ll quick, all real, hurrying' of the modern condition:

> Here is the pride of Life, be it foul or fair,
> This clash and swirl of streets in the twilight air;
> Beauty and Grime, indifferent, side by side;
> Surfeit and Thirst, Endeavour and Despair,
> Content and Squalor, Lassitude and Care,
> All in the golden lamplight glorified:
> All quick, all real, hurrying near and wide.

Modelling the ephemeral

In the late-Victorian period, St John's Wood became one of the most fashionable quarters for artists. Part of the success of this area was its proximity to London's city centre, a closeness granted by the opening of St John's Wood underground station in 1864 and by the numerous omnibus lines that ran in the district. Two other factors contributed to this influx of artists. On the one hand, the neighbourhood was already famous for its colonies of artists and for the close relationship that these colonies maintained among themselves. Naturally these colonies attracted painters and sculptors eager to find other artists with whom to exchange ideas about art and who could help them promote their work. Besides, the area offered not only a community to belong to, but also good studios at good prices. The houses were carefully prepared for studio life, with ample spaces and big windows that guaranteed the type of light that artists needed for their compositions. Most of these studios had adjacent gardens too. Gardens were an added attraction for they could be used as a setting for nature-orientated compositions (Graham R. Tomson's frontispiece of *A Summer Night*, for example, is an illustration by Arthur Tomson of Graham R. Tomson sitting in her garden) and for the 'at homes' that were so typical in this area of London (the Tomsons entertained in their garden, weather permitting).[59] These 'at homes' were a fundamental part of studio life since they involved the presentation of the artists' work to fellow artists, gallery owners, friends and models. On the

other hand, as has already been mentioned, artists came to the neighbourhood attracted by its Bohemian character, highly charged with a sexual and intellectual openness that was lacking in other areas of London. Thus, for Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Arthur Tomson or the illustrator Julius M. Price, the neighbourhood became one of London's main centres for painters. As a direct consequence of this influx of artists, models started to arrive in the neighbourhood. Soon, they had invaded the streets and were circulating freely around the district looking for jobs that the numerous studios in the area could provide them with.

Graham R. Tomson, who was so keen in internalising the character of the neighbourhood in her poetics, wrote a series of poems that had as its central motif art's portrayal of women. Just as she used the 'fast life' of the neighbourhood to produce an aesthetic that questioned the boundaries that divided the self and the city, Tomson also celebrated the 'artistic' life of the district and used the presence of the model to investigate these boundaries further in poems such as 'A Silhouette', 'Dorinda's Mirror' and 'A Portrait'. For in their search for paid sittings, models travelled to St John's Wood using public mass transport. Once there, they would walk the streets of the neighbourhood doing the rounds of studios and thus crossing the public/private divide.

In the 1880s and 1890s, modelling was a desirable profession for women, especially for those who preferred the risk of a highly unstable profession to more conventional types of jobs such as nursing or serving. It was better paid and, if the model was successful, it promised a better and more exciting life than being a governess or a seamstress. Julius M. Price writes thus about how one of his models took up modelling and gave up her prior career as a governess: 'To my surprise she informed me she had only just taken up sitting, and that she had been a nursery governess; but had got tired of the humdrum life of looking after a lot of noisy children and being treated like a servant. So when one day a girl friend of hers, who was a model, told her she could make a good living by sitting, she had thought it over, and decided to try her luck and go round the studios.'[60] The normal earnings of a model were 7s. a day and her lunch. This was indeed not too bad if the model was constantly at work. But due to the nature of the work, this was not always the case, and many, according to Price, only earned 'a starvation amount':

> You paid your model then, the same as you do now, namely, 7s. a day and her lunch, so she didn't do so badly if constantly at work; but this was seldom the case, and probably at the end of the month she would have only earned a starvation amount. All the more credit to her, then, if she kept straight, and a wonder to me always was that so many did. There were, of course, as in every line of life, lots of black sheep amongst them – girls who took to drink and went to the bad, and the wonder was there were not a great many more, considering the 'fast' atmosphere of St John's

> Wood in those days, and the numbers of gay women who lived in every street – the sight of whom must have often given the poor models furiously to think.[61]

The abundance of studios in the neighbourhood facilitated the life of the model. It was not very hard to find studios in the area, and painters and sculptors always needed models. The entry of models to the neighbourhood was more the type of an influx–reflux movement than a proper settlement. Although some models lived in St John's Wood, Price notes that the majority lived in Camden Town.[62] At walking distance from St John's Wood, houses and rents in the Camden area were considerably cheaper than in St John's Wood. Models could thus come walking or they could also travel by omnibus to the neighbourhood. If they lived in Camden but closer to the Euston area, they would walk to Euston and then get the Inner Circle line, travelling by Gower Street Station, Portland Road, Baker Street, and, finally, St John's Wood Road Station, where they would start their rounds from house to house, from studio to studio asking if they needed a model. If the painter liked the model he would ask her in and would start with a preliminary drawing and if all went well, further sessions would be arranged. If the painter was busy but liked the model, he would ask for her address and would fix sittings with her at a later date. If he did not like her, the model would continue her wanderings in the neighbourhood trying to fix a sitting that would provide her with 7s. and lunch. Sometimes the model was on her own in these wanderings, and at other times models travelled in groups. It seems that the influx of models into the neighbourhood was always constant and their presence was visually not only in the streets that they 'trod' but in the houses whose doorbells they rang. At times, models would get artists' addresses from the Royal Academy of Arts, but most of the time models went simply on a round hoping to find in the house a painter that would like them. In summertime the modelling would take place in the garden of the artist's studio and in winter within the studio itself:

> The most persistent of visitors at all times were the models; all day and at any hour they would be calling. As the studio I had taken was a very well-known one, and had been occupied for several years by figure artists, a day never passed without several rings at the bell from would-be sitters – and generally females. […] Many artists would fix notices outside their doors, 'No models required.'[63]

This fascinating account of how models looked for jobs in St John's Wood shows the neighbourhood's fluidity. Price highlights the risk models sometimes faced when entering a house or a studio, because of the risk of sexual assault not only by some of the male artists for whom they were posing, but by men who, posing as artists, would ask the model in. It is difficult to say

how great the risk was, or how often it occurred. Price writes that models were well aware of the dangers but that they never allowed that kind of abuse.[64] The community of models was quite strong and connected, so that any sort of mishap would be exposed and the painter would find it difficult to find reliable models. And certainly painters, according to Price, avoided any possible advance on models for if they went beyond the strictly business transaction, the artist could face never getting another model. However, as Price himself later argues, relationships between models and painters were not infrequent, and many women poets such as May Probyn, wrote dramatic monologues which gave a voice to the silenced but pictorially present model.[65]

> Somehow I always felt a little bit sorry for girls who made their living tramping from studio to studio, and in all weathers: it had always struck me as being a wearisome and thankless task at the best of times, apart from the precarious nature of the work. In the case of an extremely pretty and delicate type of girl, as this one was, it seemed almost a shame that she should go round by herself amongst a lot of strange men thus. Of course it was in the interests of Art (with the usual big 'A'); but I could not help thinking how many men would have gladly welcomed her, even if she hadn't said she was an artist's model.[66]

The model was thus a very interesting element in the neighbourhood. Just as the prostitute and the intellectual, models were part of the fast life of St John's Wood, but their presence in the neighbourhood differed in that the model not only travelled to this area daily and walked through the streets looking for jobs, but she also entered the private space of the painters' studio. The mobile model going around the studios was not simply an ephemeral figure that penetrated the metropolitan space of the Wood, but an ephemeral figure whose body was used to represent Art, with a capital 'A'.

Just as models went around looking for work, painters also found their models in their strollings and journeys. As the following quotation shows, painters used omnibuses and trains to find new models that later would sit for them:

> My experiences in this respect were doubtless but similar to those of many other artists who took the trouble to keep their eyes open when strolling about the neighbourhood. […] In the Wood these chance acquaintances often turned out to be quite respectable girls, with whom one became great pals, and who looked upon it as quite an adventure to sit for a picture. I may have been particularly fortunate, but certainly some of the best friends I had in those days I got to know through the introduction of ladies whom I met casually in an omnibus or a train, and who came and sat for me.[67]

This passage suggests two things: first, that painters effectively transformed the spaces of St John's Wood into what we may call a 'gaze field', which they used to look for possible models. And secondly, that the figure of the model went beyond the archetypal professional model, as painters seemed to have acquired models from omnibuses and trains.

In light of this geo-ontology of St John's Wood, Graham R. Tomson's poem 'A Silhouette' appears to us in a new light:

A SILHOUETTE
There hangs her graceful silhouette
(A cameo, as it were, of jet),
Mine own familiar friend, and yet
By chance I found her
Half hidden in a dusty tray,
'Mid tawdry trinkets of to-day,
While draggled stores of cast array
Hung all around her.

Touched here and there with tarnished gold
Shines the small head, with tresses rolled
High in a knot of classic mould:
Almost pathetic
The girlish profile seems to be –
Instinct with faith and purity
(Yet all surmise at most can be
But theoretic).

I fain would think that, good and wise,
She viewed the world with steadfast eyes,
Stepping through life in modest guise,
Beloved and cherished;
But whether writ in gold or tears,
Or filled with homely hopes and fears,
Her story, with the withered years,
Is past and perished.

Her eyes' soft colour no one knows,
Nor may this dusky slip disclose
If reigned the lily or the rose
In her complexion;
Yet sure unstinted praise should win
The parted lips, nor full, nor thin;
The curved contours of throat and chin
Are just – perfection.

I see her in the distance dim,
A white-gowned figure, straight and slim,
Fulfilling, free from doubt or whim,
Her simple duty:
Who watched her in the square oak pew?
Who praised her cakes and elder-brew?
Who sent her valentines – and who
Decried her beauty?

Maybe in some old secrétaire
A faded ringlet of her hair,
Or sampler stitched with patient care
By her deft fingers,
Or faint pot-pourri in a bowl
Bedecked with gay festoon and scroll
(Fit relic of so sweet a soul!)
Forgotten lingers.

No longer jingles her spinet
To madrigal or minuet,
But, dumb with mildew and regret,
And all asthmatic,
Forgetful now of tune and tone,
With hoary cobwebs overgrown,
And (save for nesting mice) alone,
Stands in an attic.

Our world is full of broken toys;
Some baser leaven oft alloys
The fame that claims with certain voice
A sure remembrance;
But she – we see her at her best,
A maiden wiser than the rest
In leaving, as her sole bequest,
So fair a semblance.[68]

As Linda K. Hughes has astutely observed, Graham R. Tomson's poetry 'often identifies the female body with transient, elusive grace that derives poignancy for the very fleetingness of its beauty – the same transience that generated subjects for poems in the form of impressionistic urbanscapes or the vagaries of time'.[69] Hughes' comment is particularly appropriate for the discussion of this poem. Tomson starts by separating clearly the timeless image of the cameo, a silhouette, and her present aged self. The poem dialectically presents these two selves and investigates how Art, with a capital 'A' represented the 'timeless beauty' of the woman who served as a model for this

silhouette and her present response to that (now almost forgotten) representation.

Crucial for understanding the poem is Tomson's choice of the cameo. It is interesting to note that what appears in the cameo is almost a silhouette, an already fragmented and in-relief linear representation of the sitter. Although the poem is situated, as Hughes argues, in the period of Queen Anne, the cameo was a very popular form of art at the *fin de siècle*. Cameos such as that of Mathilde Blind, which adorns her *Poetical Works* (1900) (Figure 15), or Michael Field, whose cameo was designed by Charles Ricketts in 1901, now in the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge), were popular in this period.[70] Tomson's use of the cameo is thus extremely important to connect what apparently is a Queen Anne poem to the *fin de siècle*. Moreover, the *fin de siècle* saw a revival of the Queen Anne style.[71] But the cameo, in contrast with other types of representation, is especially appropriate in this poem not only as a cultural emblem of the *fin de siècle*, but as a special type of art. Cameos are small and the only portrait they can incorporate is a silhouette, a delineation of a head, or a profile, as was the case in Michael Fields' cameo, and hence a very specific form of representation. Notice, for instance, how Michael Field, as Yopie Prins argues, used another cameo, Sappho's, in the cover of *Long Ago* to represent

Figure 15 Cameo of Mathilde Blind, in Mathilde Blind, *The Poetical Works of Mathilde Blind*

themselves as Sapphic poets and lovers (Rickett's cameo of Michael Field represents only Edith Cooper, although the inscription reads 'MF').[72]

Tomson was well aware of the model's urban mobility and she tried to capture this mobile self by depicting women who are acutely aware of their own ephemerality. In 'A Silhouette' the woman enters into a dialogue with her own past likeness. Here we see once again the influence of Augusta Webster's 'A Castaway', which starts in very similar ways: with the prostitute reading her old diary and wondering how this, her former self, ever evolved into her present self as reflected in the mirror. In 'A Silhouette' the woman looks at her old cameo, and this triggers a questioning about how her former self was represented. But unlike 'A Castaway', Tomson's heroine is aware that this representation is not her own. When the aged woman looks back into the artist's representation of her past beauty, what she sees is a stagnant (and purely theoretic) 'delineation' of female beauty. In trying to read such delineation, the poem discloses how such representation is highly charged with patriarchal notions of femininity. Note for example how 'The girlish profile seems to be – /Instinct with faith and purity'. To be sure, the figure in the cameo prompts her to 'think that, good and wise,/She viewed the world with steadfast eyes,/Stepping through life in modest guise,/Beloved and cherished'. Tomson uses the monologue to give voice to the woman, allowing her to construct her own subjectivity. But what the woman discovers in this old cameo is quite a disturbing fact: that she can construct her own image through that representation. The monologue is thus quite unnerving, simply because it suggests that in the end representation can take over, that one can take one's image for one's self.

If we read this poem intertextually with another poem by Tomson, 'A Portrait', we can also see Tomson's preoccupation with how the male gaze represents and projects conceptions of femininity, emptying the woman of her own identity:

A PORTRAIT
THERE, my ingle-nook above,
See the Lady of my Love,
        Standing there
With her dainty, sandalled feet,
Limp, high-waisted gown, and sweet
        Curling hair.

Deep her eyes, and pale her cheek,
(Oft I wonder – could she speak –
        Were it best?)
Faintly smiling, still she stands,
Yellow roses in her hands –
        On her breast.

And the glory of her prime
Neither tears nor tyrant time
May impair;
All the changing seasons through
I can still believe her true,
Think her fair.

Mute for her are praise and blame,
For my gracious Lady's name
No one knows;
Nor, for treasure-bags untold,
Would I hearken how the old
Story goes.

Though the fallen embers fill
Half the hearth with ashes chill,
Soft and grey,
Never lonely or fornlorn
Will she leave me, nor in scorn
Turn away.

You will never leave my home,
You will never change, nor roam,
O my Dear!
And your roses fill the room
With their freshness and perfume
All the year.

Dame and flowers were dead, I know –
Just a century ago,
To a day!
Yet, dear Lady, I maintain
In my love you live again,
Mine for aye.[73]

In this poem as in 'A Silhouette', Tomson criticises the male gaze and its construction of femininity. In the cameo and in the portrait, women are identified with the private sphere, they are the immortal angels of the house, and objects for pure contemplation. However, both poems go beyond a critique of the male gaze, for as Linda K. Hughes argues, the poems blur the 'boundaries between female beauty and the beauty of art'.[74] But the art that appears in these poems is an art that tries to incarcerate and frame women's experiences. And certainly, the poem reminds us of Christina Rossetti's 1856 sonnet, 'In an Artist's Studio': 'He feeds upon her face by day and night,/And

she with true kind eyes looks back on him/ Fair as the moon and joyful as the light:/Not wan with waiting, not with sorrow dim;/ Not as she is, but was when hope shone bright;/ Not as she is, but as she fills his dreams.'[75] In both, 'A Portrait' and 'A Silhouette', art functions as an incarcerating mode, which eliminates the ephemerality of the speaker by focusing on the immortality of beauty as presented in art, and on the immortality of the angel in the house as projected by the male gaze. Tomson's emphasis on the immortality of art is no coincidence, and the poems question that immortality by focusing on the ephemerality of life and of beauty.

The art that represents the figure of the woman as eternal, and this is Tomson's most damaging critique of art, fails not only because it presents women within the domestic sphere as objects of aesthetic value and for aesthetic contemplation but also because it does not portray the transient. This is especially noticeable in her poem 'Dorinda's Mirror'. It is indeed the mirror that would be the ideal *fin-de-siècle* painting, for the mirror never incarcerates the woman or her experience,

DORINDA'S MIRROR
Through the gleaming shadowed space
Of my mirror, hanging low,
Trip to me in measured pace
Jingling airs of long ago;
O'er my shoulder, sad and slow,
Phantom faces peer and pass;
Tarnished colours come and go
In the faded looking-glass.

Murmuring the shadows rise;
Rustling hoop and flirted fan,
Ghostly laughter, ghostly sighs,
Fill the misty circle's span –
'Well-a-day that beauty flies!'
Maid and mistress – dame and lass,
Lift to mine their wistful eyes
From the faded looking-glass.

Hoary mirror, stained and grey,
Where are all your damsels trim?
Where the folk of yesterday,
Light and modish, staid and prim?
None but Death, the Jester grim,
Knows the way they went, – Alas!
Still we watch our world grow dim
In a faded looking-glass.[76]

The mirror is for two main reasons the only form of representation that adapts and portrays the fastness of the *fin de siècle*. On the one hand, it never fixes experience. Because of its reflecting characteristics, the mirror presents reality as it passes by. It never detains an image or a reality. On the other, it is not the male gaze that controls Dorinda's image. Dorinda looks at herself in the mirror, and her image is not mediated by the male gaze, but is a direct reflection of her body at different stages and time, never stopping the image but reflecting time and space. Thus, the mirror presents phantasmagorically the ephemerality of life (note, for instance, Tomson's use of adjectives such as 'phantom' and 'ghostly'). Only the mirror can represent transience, the transitory, and allow the model some kind of agency. However, because of its ephemerality, the mirror, unlike the cameo, or the portrait, would never leave an image of the model. The price for agency is the lack of representation and of presence. So if in 'A Silhouette' the model would be immortalised, and 'we see her at her best,/ A maiden wiser than the rest/ In leaving, as her sole bequest, /So fair a semblance', in 'Dorinda's Mirror' the price for fair representation is phantasmagoria.

But the close relationship between models, the ephemeral and St John's Wood is best represented in the frontispiece of *A Summer Night* (see Figure 16). Graham R. Tomson was the model for the illustration. How does then this illustration participate in Tomson's portrayal of ephemerality in the figure of the model? Is she, like in 'A Silhouette', a representation of the gaze of Arthur Tomson? This picture is quite unusual in that instead of having some kind of view of the garden in all its glory, what Arthur Tomson has done is to present a view of Graham R. Tomson seemingly looking at her garden wall, rather than enjoying the fresh air and the plants of her garden. This fact further complicates the meaning of the volume, a collection of urban poems. One could suggest that Arthur Tomson is trying to control and restrain Graham R. Tomson's own fluidity, and that the wall is somehow the frontier that divides her from the outside world. But were this the case, Tomson would not have allowed the illustration to identify the volume. So what does this illustration represent? By focusing on the garden wall, Arthur Tomson (and one could suggest that even though Arthur Tomson was the illustrator, it may have been his wife who specifically asked him to paint her in such a way) forces the reader to look at the wall *and* what is above the wall. It then becomes clear that Tomson has painted the houses and roofs of the neighbouring street. Indeed the wall is not that high, and a closer look at the picture reveals that Graham R. Tomson is *looking up* over the wall. Following the direction of her eye, the viewer sees the city. In this sense the illustration is a kind of announcement, one which visually tells the readers to go beyond the garden wall and see the life of the city.

And indeed this is what *A Summer Night* is about, about transcending the garden wall and immersing oneself in the metropolitan body. If instead of an illustration, this were a photograph, one could translate the illustration thus: Arthur Tomson was photographing a precise moment, and one could say

Figure 16 Arthur Tomson, Frontispiece for Graham R. Tomson's *A Summer Night and Other Poems*

that captivated by the metropolitan life that is creeping into the garden, Graham R. Tomson turned her eyes from the camera, and hence the picture shows her looking up. Tomson, *impressionable* to the seen world and to the unseen, was drawn towards the noises of the metropolis which were entering her garden. Tomson broke with the stability of the illustration by looking up, by letting herself be *touched* by the 'passing feet,/The roll of wheels, the murmur of the street'.[77] The haptic experience, as Benjamin has observed, was joined by an optic one,[78] and in both the poem and the painting, the life in the street next to her garden moved her to look at the beautiful golden eyes of the street:

> The yellow light of an opal
> On the white-walled houses dies;
> The roadway beyond my garden
> It glimmers with golden eyes.[79]

The ephemerality of the roadway beyond her garden glimmers with golden eyes, forcing the eyes of the model, forcing Tomson's eyes and, by analogy, the readers, to travel to the road and to the pages of her book of poems.

Phenomena in flux: speed and the annihilation of frontiers

> *Impressions … are in perpetual flight*
> Walter Pater, 'Conclusion'[80]

I started this chapter by describing St John's Wood as the 'fastest neighbourhood in town', and I proposed to read that 'fastness' in relation to three different but related concepts: (i) 'fastness' as related to the sexual dissidence of this quarter of London, and I argued that Graham R. Tomson used this sexual dissidence to question the frontiers of the self and the city at the *fin de siècle*; (ii) in relation to the ephemeral; and (iii) in relation to the way in which 'velocity' had altered the way of living and perceiving the metropolitan space. So far in this chapter we have seen fastness in relation to the sexual dissidence in St John's Wood and in relation to the ephemeral figure of the model. In both sections 'fastness' was a very useful concept to analyse Tomson's geo-ontological poetics, a poetics that emphasised the disintegration of frontiers, of limits within the city, be it self–city, or prostitute–poet, street–garden, street–studio. In what remains, I will discuss Graham R. Tomson and her concept of the ephemeral in relation to velocity, the speed of travelling in the metropolis, and to how the restless movement of London produced a visual annihilation of borders creating a limitless city: the city as a continuum.

Perhaps the most immediate characteristic of the restless metropolis in Tomson's poetics is its hurrying condition. The busy and hurrying life of the city appears constantly in Tomson's urban poetics. For instance, in 'Of the Earth, Earthy', the complexity and diversity of the metropolitan space is described as an '[a]ll quick, all real, hurrying near and wide'; in 'A Song of London', London is glorified in its fluidity.[81] For it is only in the hurrying, ephemeral and transient that the urbanscape can be represented. Notice how Tomson captures these elements in another of her poems, 'Aubade', where the frontiers between night and day have started to blur in St John's Wood as a consequence of the hurrying condition of the urban life,

> The lights are out in the street, and a cool wind swings
> Loose poplar plumes on the sky;
> Deep in the gloom of the garden the first bird sings:
> Curt, hurried steps go by
> Loud in the hush of the dawn past the linden screen,
> Lost in a jar and a rattle of wheels unseen
> Beyond on the wide highway: – [82]

In Tomson's poems, those hurrying steps (which are 'lost' amid the noise of omnibus traffic), and the hurrying crowd are directionless, 'Pointing and beckoning – where?/ Far out of thought, out of view,/ Deep through the dusk and the dew: /What but seems possible there?' ('Nocturn').[83] What is important is the hurrying, the movement, the fleeting, and the velocity with which one travels through the lengthened city. Notice how Tomson uses the lines in the poem to suggest speed: thus the lines that refer to the city are long lines that suggest the spaciousness of the metropolis. However, the shortest line refers to the speed of those footsteps that cross the street, 'Curt, hurried steps', emphasising the shortening of distances that speed produces. Both elements, on the one hand the speed of the steps, and the ample space of the metropolis on the other, are joined in the final line giving us a sense that not only the steps are hurrying but that the metropolis itself is hurrying 'beyond on the wide highway'. The effect is the transformation of the metropolitan space into a 'linden screen'. What is interesting about this image is not so much its obvious reference to the trees of the London street, but the transformation of the highway into a panorama. Movement has transformed the visual image of the city into an endless screen. And Tomson's poem is tremendously panoramic.

In 'Aubade' we see Tomson's modernity in a nutshell. She argues that a new relationship has been established between time, space and vision. James Donald has written that in modernity the challenge is how to 'render the overlapping discontinuity of the metropolitan glance in a single image'. He has argued that modern writers and artists have tried to convey that 'single image' by both creating the illusion of 'spatial homogeneity' – and

consequently blurring and 'overrid[ing] outside/inside boundaries by showing interiors in landscapes' – and by

> incorporat[ing] the element of temporality, a sense not only of newness but also of accelerated rhythm. The multiplication of perspectives was a way of acknowledging the existence of simultaneous realities and also the condensation and intensification of time in the street, the automobile and the train.[84]

Equally for Tomson, the challenge was to render the overlapping of the streets of London into a single image to expose the changes in perception produced by the velocity of modern transport. And indeed she captured that 'single' image by 'overriding outside/inside boundaries', as she did in 'A Summer Night', and by transforming the heterogeneity and fragmentation of the city into a single 'screen'. But what has caused this spatial transformation of the metropolis into a cinematic city is the hurrying condition of the modern metropolis. And this speed has a rhythm, the rhythm that the transportation system has incorporated into the metropolis. In 'In the Rain' the speaker is travelling probably in an omnibus in the rain and she is seeing London in a rhythmical flux:

IN THE RAIN
Rain in the glimmering street –
Murmurous, rhythmical beat;
Shadows that flicker and fly;
Blue of wet road, of wet sky,
(Grey in the depths of the heights);
Orange of numberless lights,
Shapes fleeting on, going by.

Figures, fantastical, grim –
Figures, prosaical, tame,
Each with chameleon-stain,
Dun in the crepuscle dim,
Red in the nimbus of flame –
Glance through the veil of rain.

Rain in the measureless street –
Vistas of orange and blue;
Music of echoing feet,
Pausing, and pausing anew.

Rain, and the clamour of wheels,
Splendour, and shadow, and sound;

Coloured confusion that reels
Lost in the twilight around.[85]
[…]

Tomson uses the rain as a metaphor with which to examine movement and its impact on the city. In her 1881 poem 'London Studies', the poet A. Mary F. Robinson had also drawn on the rain to consider the effects that the aesthetics of movement had on life and art.[86] In Robinson's poem, the rain brings into sight the harshness of the city and it thus allows her to raise the crucial question whether movement could actually occlude the vision of the abject. Tomson's rain metaphor, I would suggest, is much closer to Alice Meynell's, who used the rain to articulate her theory of movement and impressionism in modernity. Tomson draws on the rain to describe the blurring and 'coloured confusion' with which the city is seen as an effect of movement. Notice especially Tomson's impressionistic treatment of colour: the blue of wet road, the orange texture of lights as the shapes of the crowd are fleeting, or the vistas of orange and blue. And yet I would argue that what is truly significant about this poem is not its impressionism.

What distinguishes this poem is that Tomson (unlike Meynell) argues that the coloured impressions one receives are mechanically produced, and yet the eye perceives them as constitutive of the urban landscape. It seems as if mechanisation was somehow prosthetically making up for the deficiencies of nature, by giving to the metropolis colours that the sky itself, in its greyness, seems unable to provide. The eye assimilates them naturally to the landscape and the 'blue of wet road' becomes almost a naturalised image. Consider in particular the word 'chameleon'. This word refers to the variable, mutable, ephemeral character of the urban dweller. Chameleon literally means 'the power of changing colour according to its surroundings' (OED). But Tomson turns this definition inside out. It is not that urban dwellers are agents of their changes. It is mechanisation that is the agent of these changes. Urban machinery projects its colours ('each with chameleon-stain') on to passengers, pedestrians and passers-by. These colours are, for Tomson, the new halo of urban life. It is for this reason that she claims that mechanisation has restored to urban dwellers their lost 'halo', as these 'chameleonic' figures 'red in the nimbus of flame – / Glance through the veil of the rain.' The lights of the city descend on the 'apostles' of the city, as if celebrating a pagan Pentecost ritual.

Through the rain, Tomson sees the flight of the metropolis. The rain, like the city, moves on in a rhythmical beat. Richard Sennett's metaphor of the human body and of the blood circulatory system to describe the traffic within the metropolis is very appropriate here.[87] Just as the human heart pumps blood through the arteries and veins of our body, the metropolis pumps the crowd, via the mass-transport facilities. However, this is no human heart, but an artificial prosthetic pacemaker that regulates the rate of beating

of the metropolis. Everything in the urbanscape – the rhythmical beat of the feet, the flickering lights, the shapes fleeting on and passing by, the raindrops, the music, the pacing, the wheels – everything moves on. But the movement described in the poem is categorised in relation to the swift flow of traffic, to the 'clamour of wheels'. Notice how very aptly Tomson adapts the movement of urban transport to the movement of the crowd. Just as the omnibus and the train stop and start anew, going from one stop to another, always travelling at great speed and then stopping, and just as the heart pumps blood into the veins, in the poem, the city is 'pausing and pacing anew', in a 'rhythmical beat' in harmony with the movement of the transport system. One can hear the beat of the rain in the poem in its regular rhyme and metre, especially with its masculine ending, accentuating the last syllable and stressing that the line has stopped and, equally, starting the line with accentuated feet. Travelling at this rhythmic beat, the city traveller sees the metropolis as a 'coloured confusion that reels' and the streets are lost amid the flow, becoming 'measureless' in that 'veil of the rain'. Rhythm is of course crucial. Rhythm is the controlled, measured flow of movement, either aural or visual produced by an ordered arrangement of elements. In the metropolis, aural and visual rhythm is produced by mechanical devices, and thus this array of colours is beautifully described as 'coloured confusion that reels', and we can hear the 'clamour of wheels', the 'splendour, and shadow, and sound'. Indeed in the poem we can both *see* and *hear* rhythm, and it is this rhythm that governs the human body in the city.

Tomson argues in her poem 'Transformation' that the speed with which the passenger crosses the city has transformed it into a panoramic view.[88] The metropolis is now perceived in the transient, as phenomena in flux, and the squalid street is 'transfigured stretched' 'with all its tawdry shops arow', or as she puts it in 'Nocturn', into a 'long, long street'.[89] Travelling thus transfigures the vision of the city. In this particular instance, in 'Transformation', the transfiguration appears in the formation of an endless street. All streets seem to become one and the same. There are no disruptions. One shop follows another and the row of shops and the streets is measureless. In an elaborate and evocative way, Stephen Kern and Wolfang Schivelbusch have observed that this visual mutation of space is an effect of travelling.[90] Travelling, they argue, embodies an annihilation of space and time. By this, both Kern and Schivelbusch mean not that space and time disappear as categories but rather that speed changes what the average nineteenth-century passenger understood as 'space' and 'time'. Speed had already become part of the everyday life experience of the city, and it was part of that experience to cross the city at the highest speed.

In this sense, speed transformed distance and the spatio-temporal co-ordinates of that distance, and produced visually (and for Tomson, quite interestingly, also aurally) a new city. Tomson's evocation of that change

was thus part of the new way of experiencing the metropolis. Tomson's aesthetics are the product of that adaptation of perception to transience. In her poetics, this adaptation resulted in a visual mutation of the metropolitan space which appears as a continuum, as an endless city where streets flow without demarcation. To view the city as a continuum rather than a grid was the effect of this shift in perception. I use the term 'grid' following Richard Sennett who describes the grid as '[c]rossed lines [that] represent an elemental way of making streets within the boundary'.[91] For Sennett, the perception of the city as a grid invokes a city in which frontiers between the inside and the outside, between squares and houses, between gardens and streets are clearly demarcated. Modernity, however, as Beatriz Colomina argues, emerges precisely at the moment in which these frontiers are disintegrated. In Colomina's own words,

> The way we think about architecture is organised by the way we think about the relationships between inside and outside, private and public. With modernity there is a shift in these relationships, a displacement of the traditional sense of an inside, an enclosed space, established in clear opposition to an outside. All boundaries are now shifting. This shifting becomes manifest everywhere: in the city, of course, but also in all the technologies that define the space of the city: the railroad, newspapers, photography, electricity, advertisements, reinforced concrete, glass, the telephone, film, radio, … war. Each can be understood as a mechanism that disrupts the older boundaries between inside and outside, public and private, night and day, depth and surface, here and there, street and interior, and so on.[92]

This is the kind of city that Tomson describes in her urban poetry. In 'A Summer Night', the voices of the streets become the voice of the interior, of the inner self of the speaker, and the sound of music in the street dissolves the frontiers between the outside (the street) and the inside (the garden). This dissolution of geographical frontiers transforms the spatio-temporal co-ordinates of the city. In 'A Summer Night', for instance, space becomes a continuum: there are no borders that separate the here and there, the now and then and the tomorrow. In 'In the Rain', Tomson describes the street in which she is travelling as 'measureless', as 'vistas of orange and blue'; and in 'London in October', this sense of the dissolution of frontiers that produce a 'coloured confusion that reels' is even stronger. It is perhaps this poem that represents best the kind of city that travelling produced, a city which is always in the fleeting. In the poem, Tomson uses the autumn to produce that sense of fleeting, of continuum. The mist and fog reproduce a city in which everything seems to be blurring. In this blurred image, the city becomes a

faded tapestry,

LONDON IN OCTOBER
Autumn goes wandering – wandering on her way
Down the mild slope that shortens day by day
Under these quiet skies.
Here, as the green leaves fade, the gold leaves fall,
A still enchantment widens over all,
Painting the streets with vague autumnal dyes
Like ancient tapestries;
Touching to fantasy unfelt before
The motley hoarding's many-coloured lore;
With every floating leaf, each sound that sighs,
Seizing the sense with something subtler yet –
The deep exhilaration of regret
For this sweet hour that flies.

The long, barge-laden stream
Bears on the roseate haze, the golden gleam;
The leaves go hurrying at the light wind's call
As to some festival.
While we, half sorrowful, half exultant, too,
Blown by the old year's breath to meet the new,
Stretch forth our hands to greet we know not what,
So fair forever is the unknown lot!
So strong the glamour of the London street,
With dim expectancies
Holding the heart in bondage stormy and sweet.
Here, though the dead leaves flit,
Doubt shall not hold dominion over it,
Nor age nor sorrow, but sensuous sheer delight
In the blue, lamp-hung night.

Thine are our hearts, beloved City of Mist
Wrapped in thy veils of opal and amethyst,
Set in thy shrine of lapis-lazuli,
Dowered with the very language of the sea,
Lit with a million gems of living fire –
London, the goal of many a soul's desire!
Goddess and sphinx, thou hold'st us safe in thrall
Here while the dead leaves fall.[93]

This is indeed the kind of visual city that speed produces. Its impressionistic descriptions dissolve the frontiers of the streets, squares, and gardens.

The 'City of Mist' is experienced as a 'long, barge-laden stream/ Bear[ing] on the roseate haze, the golden gleam'. The adjectives, nouns and verbs in the poem all point towards a city in motion ('wandering', 'fall', 'flies', 'stream', 'haze', 'hurrying', 'stretch', 'stormy', 'flit', 'dowered', 'the very language of the sea'). Squares disappear and streets follow one another. There are no frontiers or borders as the streets flow like a stream. The lights in the city further enhance that image. Whether Oxford Street or St John's Wood Road, the opal light of amethyst colour reproduces the same street. Finally, Tomson reintroduces the question of the self in the city. The stanza starts by drawing a direct comparison between the self and the city, 'Thine are our hearts, beloved City of Mist, /Wrapped in thy veils of opal and amethyst'. Again, as in the poem 'A Summer Night', Tomson fuses the self and the city. There is no difference between them. Both are hurrying in the throng, in the omnibus, in the tube.

Tomson wanted to catch things in flight. In her poems on models, Tomson was captivated by the ephemerality of the model and saw in the mirror the appropriate form of representation of that ephemerality. Tomson's urban poetry mirrors London's ephemerality. Just as Walter Pater emphasised in his Conclusion to *The Renaissance* that impressions were in 'perpetual flight', the metropolitan experience that her poetry records is likewise an impression of the perpetual flight of the everyday life in the city.

4
Modernity in Suburbia: Michael Field's Experimental Poetics

> We have written the queerest little book in the world.
> Our teeth clatter with fear.
>
> Michael Field on *Sight and Song*[1]

'Michael Field' (Katharine Bradley and Edith Cooper) lived in the outskirts of London until 1899. Critics have interpreted this specific spatial characteristic as the poets' wish to retreat from the public world. Angela Leighton, for example, argues that '[p]erhaps because of the essential freedom of their lives – a freedom particularly from the conventions and conclusions of heterosexual love – their poetry seems to belong indeed "out in the open air of nature," and far from all the homes, far countries and graves of their predecessors.'[2] Leighton's comments summarise the view of critics, for whom Field's retreat in 'rural' Reigate, where the poets lived between 1888 and 1899, explains their desire to live outside the parameters of patriarchy. I want to argue, however, that Field's spatial positioning in Reigate (and later in Richmond, one of London's richest suburbs, where they resided between 1899 and 1913), is essential to understanding Field's aesthetics, and that their poetics cannot simply be classified as belonging to 'the open air of nature'. In his important work on the growth of suburbia in London, Alan A. Jackson has demonstrated that as a result of the enormous expansion of London in the nineteenth century new suburbs, adjacent to and economically dependent on the city, were developed.[3] Reigate, a residential village next to the metropolis, and Richmond, a newly developed suburb, were spaces whose complexity was dictated by the historical and economic origins of the phenomenon of suburbia. What made these residential spaces complicated was that they were, to use Jackson's useful phrase, 'rus in urbe'. They were utopian rural spaces predicated on the metropolis, and as such, places with a double spatial identity: both town and country. It was this dual identity that attracted Michael Field to suburbia. Poetically, socially and politically, suburbia represented for them the only modern space where authentic works of art could be produced. In other words, for Michael Field to live in the suburbs was to be modern.

Field's relationship with London was that of a suburban writer. Journeys to London were made, at times daily, to contact publishers, to visit galleries (most notably the National Gallery), to see exhibitions, to attend literary 'at homes', to buy clothes, to purchase books at the Bodley Head, to attend lectures at Barnard's Inn, to visit their Club in Bond Street, or to study at the British Museum. If writing took place in suburbia, London was their cultural archive and the place where publication took place. This kind of triangular system of creation: London (source) – suburbia (writing) – London (publication) is the foundation of Field's poetics. And it is in this context that we will discuss their work. For if they argued against the materialism and commercialism of modern London, they relied heavily upon its culture industry to publish and publicise their work. And if they rejected London's culture of consumption, they were still voracious consumers of art and crafts, and wholeheartedly enjoyed wandering around London's museums, art galleries and studios.

What made this suburban way of life possible was, as Jackson notes, rapid suburban transport. Undoubtedly, the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Line played a monumental role in Field's life (Figure 17). This railway line, which linked Reigate with London, gave Field access to two different types of urbanism. On the one hand, it transported them to the bustling life of metropolitan London and to the world of business and art; and on the other, it carried them back to the rural suburban life of Reigate, where they lived and wrote. But Field's use of suburban trains requires further thought, for the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Line not only connected Reigate with London, it also linked both London and Reigate with Continental Europe via Dover. This was the line by which Michael Field travelled both to London and to Continental Europe. My hypothesis here is that (suburban) trains prepared Michael Field for the experience of the aesthetic and that these journeys were absolutely central to Field's 1892 volume of verse *Sight and Song*: a compendium of 31 poems that 'translated' into poetry the pictures that Michael Field had seen in their strolls around various art galleries and museums both in London and in Continental Europe, most notably the National Gallery, the Louvre, the Accademia of Venice, the Uffizi, the Campo Santo at Pisa, the Accademia of Florence, the Städel'sche Institut at Frankfurt, the Dresden Gallery, Hampton Court, the Accademia at Bologna, the Grand Duke's Palace at Weimar, the Ducal Palace at Venice, and Lord Dudley's Collection.

My aim in this chapter is thus to illuminate the relations between (suburban) transport and Field's poetic theory in *Sight and Song*. Michel de Certeau has noted that the train literally and metaphorically questions the passenger's rapport with vision. For de Certeau, this rapport is a *trompe-l'oeil*, for, as he puts it, travellers 'do not change their place any more than I do; vision alone continually undoes and remakes the relationships between these fixed elements'.[4] The passenger does not move, neither does the landscape. Only

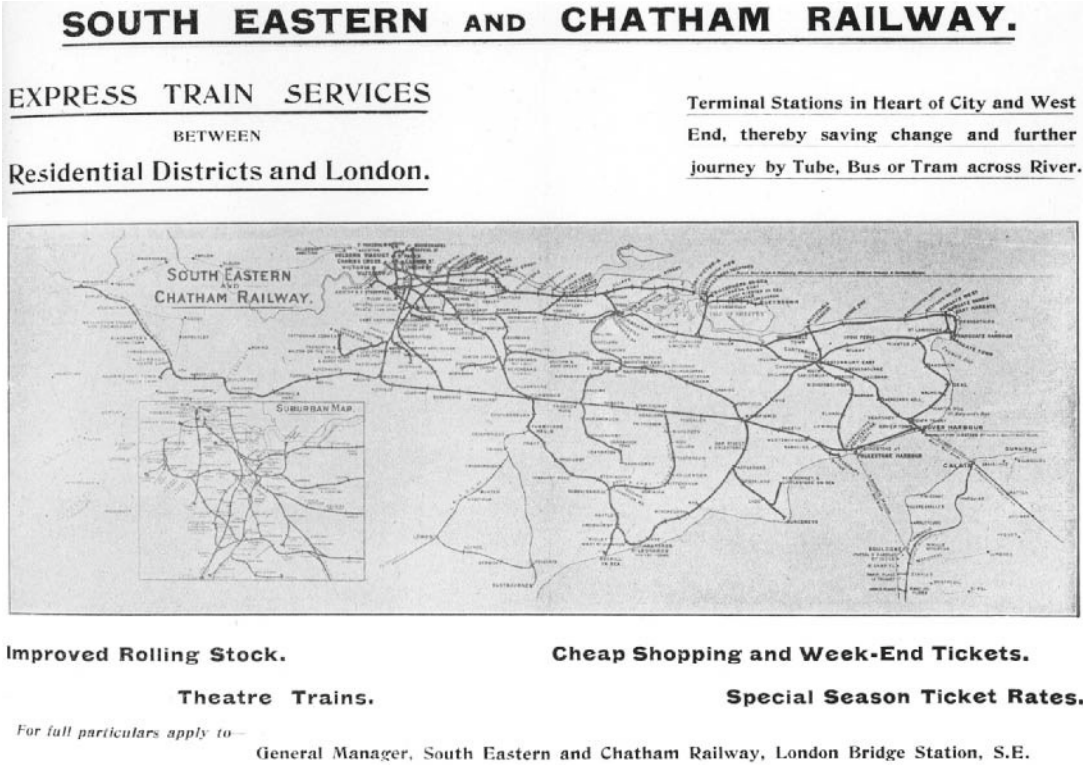


Figure 17 Map of the South Eastern and Chatham Railway from *Country, Suburban & Seaside Homes*

the train moves, creating in the passenger the illusion of motion. But this illusion brings into question the relationship established between the passenger and the landscape. And the relationship is significantly one of detachment, of separation, of distance. Nineteenth-century railways prepared the passenger for the 'field of vision' in another way too. For before the advent of mass reproduction, any knowledge of art, as Michael Field well knew, was directly linked to travel. Bernard Berenson, a very close friend of Michael Field (with whom Edith Cooper fell in love) and Michael Field's guide to all matters of art history and criticism, observed in his important essay on 'Isochromatic Photography and Venetian Pictures', published in 1893, a year after Field's *Sight and Song*, that the advent of art connoisseurship as a science was directly linked to railways and photography.[5] (As a side note it is important to mention that Berenson often met up with Bradley and Cooper at these museums, both in London and in the Continent, and that he also gave them photographs of various paintings.) In the nineteenth century, 'to see' – that is 'to see art' – meant to travel and, as Berenson was quick to point out, trains were aesthetic vehicles that linked spectators with (objects of) art. It was that which brought them together.[6]

It is indeed my argument here that this duality, on the one hand detachment and on the other transport, is what structures Michael Field's 1892 extraordinary experimental book of poems *Sight and Song*. What I am proposing here is that travelling allowed Michael Field to rethink this idea of distance, of separation. It was, of course, speed and the train's windows that made possible the experience of distance. But it was this particular experience of separation that led them to formulate a detached form of aesthetics that could give back to the object its intrinsic value, without the interference of the subject that was looking at it (in contradistinction to the *fin-de-siècle* aesthetics as promulgated by Walter Pater, who believed in the subjective experience of art).

In order to examine Michael Field's complex poetics, I have divided this chapter into three sections. In the first section, 'Spatial History', I will start with an analysis of Michael Field's history of residences up to 1888, when the poets moved to Reigate. My aim here is to produce a context of locations that will explain both their need of the metropolis (in particular its cultural archives and arcades) and, at the same time, their rejection of the commodification of culture which London represented for them. It was for these two reasons that the poets finally settled in Reigate, a modern suburb that was a 'rus in urbe', as well as a utopian social space, as I suggest in the section 'Modernity and Suburbia'. In this second section I show how suburbia became a modern space, where they tried to transcend the world, following Baudelaire's aesthetics, by creating a new aesthetic world, and how this particular creation was heavily dependent on their suburban railway journeys. In the final section, 'Experimental Poetics', I argue that their second volume

of verse, *Sight and Song* (1892), is the product of suburban railway travel. Taking the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Line as my guiding metaphor, I propose that this particular form of mass transport created, as it were, the track of *Sight and Song*.

Spatial history

Michael Field's history of residences starts in Birmingham, where Katharine Bradley, the elder of the two poets, was born in 1846. She was raised in a very wealthy family of tobacco manufacturers but, at the age of two, Bradley's father died of cancer. It was her mother who took care of the education of their two daughters, Katharine and Emma. Edith Cooper was born sixteen years later in 1862. Cooper was the daughter of Katharine Bradley's sister, Emma, who married James Cooper in 1860. The Coopers settled in Kenilworth, near Birmingham, and in 1861, Katharine and her mother moved in with the Coopers. Edith Cooper was the couple's first daughter, and after the birth of a second child, Amy, Emma became an invalid. Katharine Bradley, then aged sixteen, took charge of the education and care of her niece. Bradley became, in the words of Mary Sturgeon, a surrogate mother and educator of her niece.[7]

Bradley's passionate love for art, literature, and the classics took her to study first at the Collège de France in Paris (1868–69) and later at Newnham College, Cambridge (1873). She found herself profoundly affected by Paris. It was her first visit to the city, and even though she felt asphyxiated by the restless and swarming metropolis, she loved it. She wrote in her diary of one of her experiences in a Parisian market thus:

> I felt sick & weary, & almost faint with tire when I was taken to the magazin 'du bon marché' at the end. The bustling, & shouting, & bargaining it is impossible to describe: the place literally swarmed with people; they seemed to cling to one like ants. I could not breathe, & having made my escape resolved never to re enter that evil haunt.[8]

This first notebook for 1868–69 is full, as are later ones, of descriptions of paintings, sculptures, and buildings. Bradley wrote of her experiences in museums and galleries as places of leisure, which she much preferred, as the quotation shows, to the world of mass consumption of the department store, represented in Paris famously by Le Magasin du Bon Marché.[9] There was only one Parisian shop that interested her, Le Louvre's, probably because of its connection with the museum, and there she did her shopping.[10]

Her studies at the Collège de France were crucial in her formation as a poet. Here Bradley received a very liberal and extensive education. Apart from the usual courses on French civilisation, French language and Italian, she attended courses on Latin poetry, modern French poetry and a variety of

lectures with titles such as 'The Emancipation of the Asiatic Races'. The influence of these courses on both poets was tremendous (their plays *The World at Auction, The Race of Leaves* and *Julia Domna*, to name but a few, were based, for example, on the Roman world, and they also translated and re-wrote poetry by Verlaine and Baudelaire). It was, however, the course 'Comparative History of the Intellectual Production from a Literary and Moral Point of View for the Last Six Years' that most appealed to Bradley, because it introduced her to the 'woman question'.[11] The course included a detailed study of the emancipation of women in France, England and Germany, and described the gains of women in these three countries. Bradley took extensive notes from this course. It gave her a good historical introduction to the question of the emancipation of women not just in England, but also on the Continent.

The release of her first volume of poetry, *The New Minnesinger* (1875), which she published under the pseudonym 'Arran Leigh', was the result of these formative years. As she put it, 'I came to Newnham empty-headed, with vague ambition, vague sentiment, the pulpy lyrics of the N.[ew] M.[innesinger] in my brain.'[12] This first attempt at poetry was very much in line with Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetics, most notably her narrative poem about the career of a woman poet, *Aurora Leigh* (hence, perhaps the pseudonym). And, of course, the feminist content of the collection was a clear reflection of her Parisian studies.

It was during these years that Bradley started to correspond with John Ruskin, after joining the Guild of St George. It was Bradley's first contact with any sort of socialism, if the Guild can be called a 'socialist enterprise'. Founded in 1871 on the principle that 'the highest wisdom and the highest treasure need not be costly or exclusive', the Guild was composed of the supreme 'Master', provincial 'Marshals', 'Landlords', 'Labourers', and finally 'Companions' (the last group contributed to it ten per cent of their income but did 'not live according to its laws').[13] Ruskin sought to create a utopian rural commune governed by a pre-industrial life-style and manual labour, which would liberate man from the slavery of industry. He tried to carry out these ideas in the famous St George's Farm, run by Sheffield workingmen, whom Ruskin considered 'The Life-Guards of a New Life'. Bradley became a 'Companion' and contributed financially to the Guild. Ruskin's anti-materialist and communist ideas (at least in principle, although in practice his utopian commune was based on a strong sense of order and hierarchy) attracted the young poet to the Guild. An ardent follower of Ruskin, she firmly believed in the radical need to transform society by simplifying life and by redistributing money and wealth.

In addition to her political commitment, Bradley saw Ruskin as a tutor who could help her in her career as a poet. Accordingly, she sent him her first volume of poetry, *The New Minnesinger*, and some occasional verse. But Ruskin was not interested in her work. As Angela Leighton has argued,

Ruskin's patronising and belittling letters, and his indifference towards her poetry, resulted in Bradley's increasing revolt. For example, when asked about his thoughts on the *New Minnesinger*, Ruskin's answer was that '[y]ou would not laugh at my not having read your book if you knew – as I hope you will soon know – how much too serious my life is to be spent in reading poetry (unless prophetic)',[14] and even encouraged her to stop writing verse, 'I *should* like you to give up dreaming, and writing verses as far as you possibly can.'[15] Her relationship with Ruskin deteriorated, and Ruskin finally expelled her from the Guild in 1877 when she 'ceased to believe in God – and […] found some comfort in a dog'.[16] Although their correspondence continued until 1880, the letters emphasise Ruskin's anger towards Bradley and likewise, Bradley's ever-increasing mistrust of him. Although she broke up with the Guild, Bradley never abandoned her socialist ideas, and in 1899 she joined the Fellowship of the New Life, a radical utopian movement that condemned the capitalist distribution of the land and sought for an inner spiritual transformation of the self.

In 1878, Bradley and Cooper moved from Birmingham to Stoke Green, in Bristol, where they intended to pursue their studies at University College.[17] It is during these years in Bristol that the poets started to write verse together. Bristol became an important location for the poets. It provided them with the education that they were so eager to get and, most important, it allowed them to be together. Cooper's family had started to complain about her personal attachment to Bradley, and Bristol seemed a halfway solution: they lived with their family but they could attend university courses. The outcome in 1881 was the joint publication of their first volume under the name 'Arran and Isla Leigh', *Bellerophôn* (a study of Euripides' *Bacchae*). They became 'Michael Field' three years later with the publication of *Callirrhoë and Fair Rosamund* (1884). The spatial and personal unity was finally recognised when, as Michael Field told Browning, the first reviews identified 'Michael Field' as 'a Bristol man!'[18]

It was at this point that London became for the poets a poetical and economic necessity. The good reviews of their first work, *Callirrhoë and Fair Rosamund* (two of the twenty-seven closet dramas that Michael Field published), increased the poets' needs to travel to London. Having broken all relations with Ruskin, Michael Field ventured to send a copy of *Callirrhoë* to the poets Robert Browning and A. Mary F. Robinson.[19] They both loved it. Browning described the work as that of a 'genius',[20] and Robinson praised their power to produce *pathos*.[21] Their response had the desired effect and they began to make plans for a trip to London. The visit was, however, postponed until the publication of their second volume of drama, *The Father's Tragedy* (1885).[22] As with *Callirrhoë*, they sent a copy to Browning and Robinson. Their responses were so encouraging that they finally decided to go to London and meet their 'dear Browning' and London's most famous and fashionable poet, Robinson.[23]

Bristol was far away from London, and trips to the metropolis meant that the poets had to stay overnight with friends and family. Cooper's mother was most unhappy about these excursions, as the following unpublished letter from Bradley to Cooper shows. It is a letter that discloses their early days as Michael Field and the obstacles that the family was posing to their poetic aspirations. It also describes the moral uneasiness with which Cooper saw their sexual relationship, especially noticeable in its postscript, where Bradley urges Cooper to 'put down its moral paws: & love me'.[24] The first part of the letter is a poetic invitation and invocation from 'Michael' [Katharine Bradley] to 'Field' [Edith Cooper] to be 'Two of Us' (the title of the poem enclosed in the letter). The second part of the letter, which I reproduce here, shows the poets anxiously plotting a visit to Browning, in London, against the wishes of Cooper's parents:

> P.[Puss, Edith Cooper's nickname] it is very beautiful to see you standing up on your hind legs, preaching for the moral law! We will be loyal to that, while we love Browning. Tell Mother [Edith's mother] she is a real scamp – a scoundrel of the blackest dye – to write to me so comfortably of Swanwick & Browning – as Simeon, & seem to regard it a settled thing we were to experience that high joy – & then turn round & turn you: & say, I scarcely think it can be done. Tell her to beware: her hand is on a lion's mane. Now P. this is what we will do. We will just wait, get out vol. II – see in what temper Browning replies to you – (it might be impossible to meet him) & if he is enthusiastic, we will somehow get seven days in London. Blackheath I decline: it would be infradig. [sic] but if I told Scott we wd. [sic] stay with her one week, & go out on the Friday afternoon she always receives, she wd. [sic] do just what I told her; & simply that with us [illegible] art galleries; & leave us to go alone to the British – I should say for study; & not allow her to accompany us. Mother wd. be happy about you if you were at Kensington: & I should not attempt any theatres, or night excitement. But we will wait. Meanwhile prepare for Western May warm clothes: for next week I mean to have you: indeed I shall not come home till they send you to fetch me. That will bring parents to their senses. Of course Michael bears the expense of all Michael's self if he goes to London to see the Flight into Egypt – the Demeter of the British Museum – & the old Gentleman himself! (I shall write to [illegible] week [illegible] out hope of June visits: nothing definitive). I have got the invocation right in my bed this morning.
>
> Re-read.
>
> Now put down its moral paws: & love me. P.P.
>
> Come to me: it is not natural for us to live apart.
>
> Your own.[25]

This letter exposes the problems they were encountering before they finally settled in Reigate in 1888. Bradley and Cooper were angered by their

family's opposition to their poetic aspirations, and Bradley appears especially hurt by her sister's comment that 'she scarcely thought that it could be done'.[26] But after having received Browning's inspiring and hopeful letter, Michael Field was now ready to move on, both personally and poetically, and Bradley was firm in having Cooper with her. As she put it, 'next week I mean to have you: indeed I shall not come home till they send you to fetch me. That will bring parents to their senses.' However, what interests me about this letter is its real purpose: to organise at all costs a trip to London, which Bradley will be financing ('Michael bears the expense of all Michael's self'). The metropolis, as this letter makes absolutely clear, was fast becoming an urgent poetical necessity. They needed to travel to London to acquire recognition as writers. Its urgency reminds us of the angst of Baudelaire's urban poet in his perpetual search for modernity: '[a]nd so away he goes, hurrying, searching. But searching for what? […] He is looking for that quality which you must allow me to call "modernity" '.[27] In similar fashion, Bradley and Cooper realised that they would only find poetic modernity in their visit, as *one poet*, as Michael Field, to the metropolis.

Michael Field's 1885 visit to London (from Bristol) was a success, and naturally other trips followed. London was the centre of the art world, and they used these excursions to ramble in London's art galleries and to establish contacts with the capital's poetic and artistic circles:

> My own mother
>
> […] Yesterday was a very interesting occasion. In the morning we went to the Holman Hunt Collection, intending to study the pictures in the light of Ruskin's notes. These however had to be ordered, & therefore being denied our guide, we turned into other paths, & devoted ourselves to the study of a little collection of drawings of city, town & hamlet by Albert Goodwin, & the Series of Drawings made for St. George's Guild.
>
> […] We went to Byng Place, where we had a plain lunch & some nice talk with the little girl. Then we drove to the Nineteenth Century Gallery to meet Ernest [Radford], & he introduced [sic] by his ticket to the private view. There was very little good work to be seen […]
>
> [T]hen parted & we drove back to the At Home. There was a dreadful crowd … .[28]

These two letters clearly illustrate the centrality of London for Michael Field's poetic project. London was for them what Foucault called the 'archive', not just the accumulation of knowledge in cultural institutions but that which formed and transformed their poetics.[29] It was for this reason that the poets needed London. Their desire to visit the metropolis was not directed at the metropolis itself, but rather at its 'archives'. They loved 'flâneuring' in galleries, studios and museums. In this sense, Michael Field differed clearly from Baudelaire's urban poet. The urban poet looked for

signs of modernity in the metropolis. Like a detective, he or she wandered around the streets of the city looking for modernity. Michael Field, however, looked for that modernity in the city's archives, in libraries, museums, galleries and theatres. If, as Beatriz Colomina has argued, the experience is very similar, for '[t]he archive allows the scholar to wander through the material as the flaneur [sic] wanders through the arcades of Paris',[30] there is nevertheless an intrinsic difference, a difference that marks Michael Field's work. For if the modern poet was interested in the physiognomy, the facade of the city, Michael Field was more curious about the city's interiors. They were interested in the city's cultural genesis, its civic life, in the archival consciousness of its functioning.

Bradley and Cooper visited London on numerous occasions, and though Browning urged them to come and live in London to be closer to him, they finally decided to settle in 1888 in Reigate, a residential district 23 miles away from London and only forty-one minutes away by the South Eastern and Chatham Railway.[31] They lived first at 20 Blackberry Road, and in March 1891 they moved to another house in Reigate called Durdans, where they remained until 1899. As an affluent bourgeois area, Reigate was a very suitable socio-economic space (although as I will be arguing later Reigate was more than a socio-economic space for the poets). It was a small residential and rural neighbourhood *near* the metropolis. It was a utopian space where the poets could live in a rural neighbourhood and still enjoy the benefits of the metropolis. Before 1888, their visits to London were not as regular and frequent. From 1888 onwards, their trips became more and more frequent as the poets commuted to study at the British Museum or the National Gallery; to see their publishers, galleries and studios; to go to the theatre; and, of course, to attend the literary parties of the poets Ernest and Dollie Radford, Arthur Symons, Walter Pater, Louise Chandler Moulton or Herbert Horne, to name but a few.[32] The proximity of Reigate to London made all this possible. It was indeed an ideal location for Michael Field, as for many other writers who chose suburbia over the metropolis, such as William Morris (who, after living for some time in Bloomsbury, moved to Hammersmith) and George Meredith.[33] It was thus that they became suburban passengers.

Modernity and suburbia

> That is freedom – to escape the mechanical in study, & art, to impress one's own individuality on all things – not to wrinkle into anything.
> Michael Field[34]

> For a brief recreation, such as that afforded by the Saturday half-holiday movement, he cannot do better than take a journey by the South-Eastern Railway to Reigate, and enjoy a ramble through this delightful neighbourhood.

> Leaving the busy turmoil and din of London, and making his way to Charing-Cross or Cannon Street, the traveller will find a regular service of trains to this town.
>
> *Round Reigate*[35]

Michael Field preferred Reigate over London because in London, as they put it, '[their] art would be hurt by noise & fret'.[36] Described by the South Eastern and Chatham Railway guide as 'one of the most attractive within the 25-mile radius of the Metropolis', Reigate was less than three-quarters of an hour away by train from London.[37] But the contrast between these two forms of metropolitan life (urban and suburban) made all the difference for those who resided in this historic place. Its greenness and tranquility could not compare to the busy, tumultuous, and dirty metropolis.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw an increasing demand and desire for residential and suburban neighbourhoods. There were two main reasons for such a demand: the perception of the phenomenon of suburbia as a characteristically bourgeois settlement and, integrally related to this, the expansion of the railways, which allowed people to travel to and back from the metropolis easily and quickly. To be sure, as Jackson writes, the appearance of suburbia 'was largely a product of the steam railways which in the last forty years of the century had made it possible for those who could afford the time and cost of daily travel to work in town and live in pleasant rural surroundings'.[38] And certainly during this period, guides to suburban districts, mostly written by railway companies, appeared on the market:

> In introducing to our readers the present issue of the Guide, we may first briefly explain the aims of the Company in placing before the public in a condensed and convenient form information essentially indispensable to that increasing section of the community which, although its daytime activities are mainly confined to the great business world of the central metropolis, is yet desirous of seeking a residential retreat in the purer atmosphere of the more rural areas served by the joint system of the SOUTH EASTERN AND CHATHAM RAILWAY. The essential value of a guide of this nature is convincingly evidenced by the steadily increasing demand for homes in the various districts served by the Company, of which descriptive articles are included in the following pages.[39]

This example gives us a very clear idea of both the bourgeoisie's increasing desire to move to residential neighbourhoods and the vital role of the transport system in facilitating this exodus to suburbia. Naturally, the guides paid particular attention to crucial details that any potential resident would need to know. Thus, besides general information on ticket prices and train

timetables, they included also detailed and yet concise information on the borough: rents, rates, sanitary conditions, and lighting. In the case of Reigate, the South Eastern and Chatham Railway guide drew attention to the charm of the area and included the price of train fares to London for first, second and third class, single, return, joint return and season tickets per annum.

The potential resident that railway companies had in mind was clearly the bourgeois (male) commuter: 'that increasing section of the community which, although its daytime activities are mainly confined to the great business world of the central metropolis, is yet desirous of seeking a residential retreat in the purer atmosphere of the more rural areas served by the joint system of the South Eastern and Chatham Railway'.[40] But the railway companies were also eager to serve other possible customers; people who did not work daily in the metropolis but who nevertheless needed to live nearby:

> Further, while the Company have had prominently in mind the needs of persons occupied throughout the day in London, but who yet desire a country, suburban or seaside home for themselves and their families, they have also considered the requirements of others who merely seek a residence in a healthful and attractive locality which at the same time is within easy communication with the Metropolis.[41]

The existence of these guides punctuates the central role the transport system played both in the development of suburbia and in the promotion of suburbia itself. But they also point out two key issues. First and foremost is the establishment of suburbia, as many social analysts have argued, as representing a gendered division of life whereby men travelled to the city to work and women stayed, in the words of Elizabeth Wilson, in the 'dream prison' of the suburb.[42] Secondly is the construction of suburbia as an 'authentic' place in contrast to the anonymous mass productivity of the metropolis.

In his socio-historical discussion of the phenomenon of suburbia, Robert Fishman argues that the formation of suburbia was at the core of a tremendous transformation in the way in which the relationship between 'home' and 'work' came to be understood in the long nineteenth century. According to Fishman, until the eighteenth century, 'home' was the place where people both lived and worked. Home and work occurred within the same space. By the end of the eighteenth century this union of 'home' and 'workplace' started to disappear, Fishman writes, as a consequence of changes in bourgeois culture itself. First the family, which until then had been an economic unit, became an emotional one. Secondly, women became the spiritual leaders of the family, and as such, it was essential that they were physically segregated from the morally degraded metropolis. And thirdly, social distinction started to mean 'physical segregation'. These changes, together

with a worsening of the conditions of the metropolis, resulted in a slow but systematic (gendered) separation of both spheres, home and work, the private and the public: men went to work daily to the city and women stayed in the suburbs. It is in this sense that Fishman claims that suburbia was founded on the primacy of the family and domestic life, while symbolically representing the ideology of the bourgeoisie. In short, for Fishman what characterises the phenomenon of suburbia is 'exclusion': 'work was excluded from the family residence'; 'middle-class villas were segregated from working-class housing' (the working classes still needed to live in the city, for they could not afford to travel daily to the metropolis) and, finally, exclusion for women, who were segregated from the city and hence from power and productivity.

The position of Michael Field in Reigate was an exceptional and paradoxical one. Being bourgeois, suburbia reflected their class and wealth, but in a curious reversal of the ideology of suburbia, because of their gender and their radical attitudes to sexuality, they used this heavily contested ideological ground to produce poetry. For Michael Field, 'work' and 'home' occurred in the same space, in their study room in Reigate (see Figures 18 and 19). In this sense, Michael Field differed both from the urban poet (those 'London

Figure 18 Michael Field's study room at Reigate

Figure 19 Michael Field's study room at Reigate

littérateurs,' as W. B. Yeats put it) – for, unlike him/her, Michael Field used suburbia as their writing-space – and, from the average commuter, who travelled daily to the city to work.[43] If, as we have seen, suburbia signified exclusion for women, who were segregated from power and productivity, Michael Field used this segregation to create a literary space from which to construct a critique of that power and productivity. In Reigate, they created their own community, their 'Fellowship', as the title of one of their most famous poems suggests, and a significant name in view of Bradley's earlier commitment to Ruskin.

A quick glance to the pictures of their drawing-room shows how they constructed this suburban space as their study room. In Michael Field's 'Botticelli's room', so called because a print of their beloved Botticelli's *Spring* hung on its wall,[44] what we see is an aesthetisation of the domestic (to use Kathy Alexis Psomiades' useful phrase) in which paintings, photographs, drawings and texts create a space for poetry and writing. Their friend Bernard Berenson much admired it and thought it 'a delightful working-room'.[45] To the left of Botticelli's *Spring* was Titian's *Fête Champêtre*, and photographs of the poets. To the right is Eveleen Myers (née Tenant)'s 1889 photograph of their much adored Robert Browning. Over the fireplace, there is a portrait of Edith Cooper's mother, Emma Harris Bradley Cooper,

and a print of Michelangelo Buonarroti's *Il Prigione Morente* (*The Dying Prison*) from the Louvre. Displayed on the table is William Rothenstein's 1897 drawing of Charles Ricketts and C. H. Shannon. The room, as the rest of the house, was decorated with Morris' wallpapers, with whose 'jocund designs', Cooper wrote, 'a poet must be gay'.[46] The carpet is also Morris'.[47] One cannot but pay attention to the 'cream book-shelf'. As they noted in their diary, 'they vowed a vow to exclude all dark wood from [their] honeysuckle-bower'.[48] Complementing this 'visual' library was their Bacchic book library. Bradley and Cooper wanted to compile a small collection of works that dealt with the Dionysian spirit. Among the works and writers they had in mind were Keats, François Villon, Pierre de Ronsard, Angelo Poliziano, Lorenzo di Medici, Francesco Redi's *Bacco in Toscana*, Anacreon and Shakespeare.[49]

But if socio-historically suburbia represented the ideology of the bourgeoisie, at the *fin de siècle* suburbia came to represent another kind of utopian space. The last two decades of the nineteenth century saw the rise of several utopian social movements, such as The Fellowship of the New Life, the Fabian Society, and the Social Democratic Federation, which started to claim the future of suburbia as a socio-political space outside the inhumanity of the industrial and commodified metropolis. These British utopian social movements were in favour of what in 1898 the urban sociologist and member of The Fellowship of the New Life Ebenezer Howard would call 'garden-cities': cities, immediately adjacent to the metropolis but in direct contact with nature, which secured man a more humane relationship with its social and natural space. Howard envisioned a new type of settlement that combined both town and country, eliminating, at least in theory, the disadvantages of both.[50]

In this sense the garden-cities were cities with a new rapport with nature; places with social opportunities, low rents and high wages, fields for enterprise and flow of capital, bright homes, pure air and water, and no smoke. Slums would disappear in this kind of humane space, a space that would guarantee freedom and co-operation. More important, the garden-city would be provided with rapid forms of transport to other garden-cities and the 'Central City'. There would be 'an inter-municipal railway, connecting all the towns of the outer ring – twenty miles in circumference – so that to get from any town to its most distant neighbour requires one to cover a distance of only ten miles, which could be accomplished in, say, twelve minutes'.[51] There would also be 'a system of railways by which each town is placed in direct communication with Central City. The distance from any town to the heart of Central City is only three and a quarter miles, and this could be readily covered in five minutes.'[52] This form of settlement and the reorganisation of the railway system would guarantee, Howard argued, that '[w]e should then be, for all purposes of quick communication, nearer to each other than we are in our crowded cities, while, at the same time,

we should be surrounding ourselves with the most healthy and the most advantageous conditions'.[53]

Socio-politically, Michael Field believed that the suburbs, like Howard's utopian 'garden-cities', were modern spaces, in so far as the suburb represented, not a return to an idealised past, but rather, a future in which the metropolis was not subservient to the will and power of the machine, but organised according to the will and necessities of humanity.[54] Howard's vision of the modern metropolis as a 'garden-city' was influenced by his friendship with Thomas Davidson, leader and founder of the Fellowship of the New Life.[55] Created in 1883, the founding committee of the Fellowship included Henry Havelock Ellis, Percival Chubb, Miss Owen (afterwards Mrs. Laurence Oliphant, the novelist), and Hubert Bland. Later Ernest Rhys, Olive Schreiner, and Edward Carpenter also joined the Fellowship. Edith Lees, who married Havelock Ellis in 1891, became its secretary. Katharine Bradley, deeply preoccupied with the capitalist appropriation of the land, with the search for a more humane space, and with the conditions of women in *fin-de-siècle* England, decided to join the Fellowship on 18 May 1889:

> Yesterday I joined the Fellowship of the New Life at Mersthen. Lord Eltham threw open his grounds to us – & after listening to a paper at the end of wh. allusion to the robberies of the lords of the soil was made, he courteously asked us to come into his hall, & look at his pictures. The scene was significant – the best of the old time benign towards the new. And the moment was apple-flower time in May. Men gave up their doubts & faiths to the women of the company; it was good to feel that every one of that motley group was in his or her fashion, seeking 'a better country'. And the fair land, full of buttercups & deep grass, yielded her beauty. A way to more genuine companionship in verity the fellowship has found. In June Percival Chubb goes to America 'to hear & ask questions,' I surmise.[56]

The object of the Fellowship was 'the cultivation of a perfect character in each and all', and its principle was 'the subordination of all material things to spiritual'. The Fellowship, unlike the Fabian Society (which sprang out of the Fellowship and was more interested in social reforms), emphasised the need for an inner spiritual transformation. It also looked for a simpler form of life, where the distinctions of classes would be abolished, and where household work would be equally divided between the sexes and classes. As Sheila Rowbotham and Jeffrey Weeks have argued, it was a utopian community that believed that social reforms were dependent upon new personal relationships.[57] For instance, one of the society's first speakers was Mona Caird, who gave a paper on John Stuart Mill, liberty, and women. *Seed-time*, the society's journal, is a testament to the highly feminist character of the society. And Edith Lees' editorial and journalistic writings in the periodical

guaranteed a substantial amount of writings on the woman question. Indeed the aims of the Fellowship were:

> to secure the intimate association of Men and Women desirous of living and of commending to others an honest, healthy and completely human life. That is, it proposes to itself the task of working out the ideal of such a life, and determining the conditions of its realisation; of attempting here and now to conform as thoroughly as possible to this ideal; and of rendering its full attainment desirable and possible to all.[58]

The society, a middle-class body, had among its many aims the abolition of private property, racism, sexism ('womanhood and motherhood should be relieved from the curses and servitude imposed by the past religions'),[59] and a preoccupation with the inhumane conditions of the working classes. In fact, one of the most fascinating papers on this issue was given by Clementina Black, Amy Levy's closest friend, on 'The Ethics of Shopping', in which she states that the 'moral principle' for the Fellowship members ought to be 'to pay, for the things we buy in shops, a price that covers the cost of their production and their distribution, allowing to every person engaged in these necessary processes a reasonable living-wage, in the true sense of the word'.[60] Last, but not least, the Fellowship advocated the establishment of a space where humanity could live free from the enslavement of the metropolis. Suburbia was that harmonious and humane space outside the technological and capitalist metropolis. As Bradley wrote, 'it was good to feel that every one [within the Fellowship] […] was in his or her fashion, seeking "a better country". And the fair land, full of buttercups & deep grass, yielded her beauty'.

It was this understanding of suburbia as a humane space that appealed to them since they considered the city as the epitome of consumption. Consider Michael Field's 'A Miracle'. Here, the speaker – in London – thinks about her love, and to satisfy her feelings, she buys her lover an 'utter trifle' (what Walter Benjamin would have called a 'fossil') that symbolises the link established by the bourgeoisie between love and consumption. Commodities have replaced human sentiments, and it is in the city where this substitution takes place:

A MIRACLE

How gladly I would give
My life to her who would not care to live
If I should die!
Death, when thou passest by,
Take us together, so I sigh,
Praying and sighing through the London streets
While my heart beats

To do some miracle, when suddenly
At curve of Regent Circus I espy,
Set 'mid a jeweller's trays of spangle-glitter,
A tiny metal insect-pin, a fly.
This utter trifle for my love I buy,
And, thinking of it on her breast,
My heart has rest.[61]

The city is consumption. It represents publicity and the capitalist accumulation of culture. For Michael Field, if production (i.e. writing) takes place in suburbia, London is where both mass production and consumption happen. This can be glimpsed, for instance, in another extract from their diary, where they describe the socio-spatial fragmentation of London in terms of how its districts relate to consumer culture: the East End represents mass production; the City, commerce; and the West End consumption: 'In Curtain Road, Shoreditch we ordered our canopied "cisy-corner" [sic] – then drove past the sad, mis-shaped, mis-featured work-people of the East, through the crowds of the mid-city where the fervour of business & professions gives something of the stir of happiness – on to the self-sufficient, yet dependent, West End with its clearer light, and streams of those who gaze & buy.'[62]

It is thus not surprising that they preferred Reigate to London. They wanted their writings and their life to be *authentic* and outside the commodified metropolitan experience. For Michael Field writing was associated with suburbia. Writing, as an authentic, unique and private act, took place outside the mass productivity and publicity of the metropolis. The emphasis, for example, that they placed in decorating their Botticelli room with William Morris' wallpaper and carpet, indicates that for Michael Field, as for Morris (who, in 1881, moved his factory from Bloomsbury to Merton Abbey, seven miles south of London, to what he would describe as an ideal workplace), suburbia symbolised not just a socio-politicial principle but also an aesthetic one. It was an aesthetic principle in so far as Michael Field, like Morris, believed in the importance of 'craft' over the mechanisation and commodification of art. '[F]reedom', Michael Field wrote, is to 'escape the mechanical in study, & art, to impress one's own individuality on all things – not to wrinkle into anything'.[63] Indeed Michael Field would have agreed with Walter Benjamin that 'that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art,' hence their commitment to finding an authentic space in which to create 'authentic' works of art, and not commodities. However, it is worth remembering here that this authenticity did entail a comfortable income and was based on bourgeois economic means. For Michael Field, as for Benjamin, '[t]he whole sphere of authenticity is outside technical [...] reproducibility'.[64] But, unlike Benjamin, they feared the loss of aura in the work of art. This explains their interest in producing beautiful, unique books, which were works of art in themselves, and

which would stand out against mass-produced books. As Mary Sturgeon points out:

> we may find, in her correspondence with Mr Elkin Mathews about *Sight and Song* in 1892, one proof out of many which the poets' career affords of their concern for the physical beauty of their books. They desired their children to be lovely in body as well as in spirit; and great was their care for format, decoration, binding, paper, and type: for colour, texture, quality, arrangement of letterpress, appearance of title-page, design of cover.[65]

Ironically, their books, like William Morris's work, today have become part of the very commodity culture they wished to avoid and are highly valuable.

However, and despite Michael Field's critique of the commodified metropolis, both in their poetry and in their socio-political commitment to the Fellowship, they also recognised their dependence on the metropolitan experience. If they rejected the commodification of culture, they were certainly in need of advertising campaigns to publicise their work. Indeed it was for not having successfully marketed *Sight and Song* (1892) and *Stephania* (1892) that they broke their contract with Elkin Mathews and John Lane.[66] They complained that their marketing strategies had been so bad that, 'there ha[d] not been a notice of *Stephania* in one of the leading journals, that used to give us articles directly after publication'.[67] Even more urgent was their need for London's cultural arcades, where they carried out research and which they adored. Museums, galleries, studios, and libraries were places 'to flâneur', as the following passage illustrates: 'Sim [Bradley's nickname] and I stroll into MacLean's Gallery. We are fixing our eyes on the Madonna & Child, painted by Millet for the Church of Notre Dame de Lorette, Paris.'[68] The origin of their poetry is precisely in these ramblings, as their diary *Works and Days* makes absolutely clear. The following fragments are but two examples of many that show how they used these strolls to conceive, in this particular case, their poem 'Botticelli's *Venus and Mars*' for *Sight and Song*. 'In the Nat. Gal. we sat long within sight of Botticelli's Venus and Mars. It is a masterpiece.'[69] A few months later Michael Field took the train to visit once again the National Gallery. They wanted to know if the poem had captured the poetry of the painting: 'a good time alone in the Nat. Gal., while my Love [Bradley] is consulting Sir Andrew Clarke. I go straight to Venus & Mars to judge of the effect of the Poem – yes, it has caught the broader poetry of the picture.'[70]

If their writings depended on their 'flaneuring' around London's cultural arcades, their writings took place in the authentic and aesthetic space of suburbia, and finally, publishing occurred in the city. In other words, modernity was not just to be found in the city (as Baudelaire believed), or in the suburb, but in the dialectic city-suburb. Mass-transport facilities, in Michael Field's case the South Eastern and Chatham Railway, functioned as a 'bridge'

between these two spaces. Their poem 'Second Thoughts' expresses clearly this dialectic:

SECOND THOUGHTS
I thought of leaving her for a day
In town, it was such iron winter
At Durdans, the garden frosty clay,
The woods as dry as any splinter,
The sky congested. I would break
From the deep, lethargic, country air
To the shining lamps, to the clash of the play,
And, to-morrow, wake
Beside her, a thousand things to say.
I planned – O more – I had almost started; –
I lifted her face in my hands to kiss, –
A face in a border of fox's fur,
For the bitter black wind had stricken her,
And she wore it – her soft hair straying out
Where it buttoned against the grey, leather snout:
In an instant we should have parted;
But at sight of the delicate world within
That fox-fur collar, from brow to chin,
At sight of those wonderful eyes from the mine,
Coal pupils, an iris of glittering spa,
And the wild, ironic, defiant shine
As of a creature behind a bar
One has captured, and, when three lives are past,
May hope to reach the heart of at last,
All that, and the love at her lips, combined
To shew me what folly it were to miss
A face with such thousand things to say,
And beside these, such thousand more to spare,
For the shining lamps, for the clash of the play –
O madness; not for a single day
Could I leave her! I stayed behind.[71]

Should the poet travel to the metropolis and gaze at the spectacle of the city or should she stay in the frosty, lethargic suburb? The city, with its spectacles of light and its theatres naturally attracts the poet, but it is in the suburbs where the poet decides to stay. For, if, as Walter Benjamin claimed of Baudelaire, the 'delight of the urban poet is love – not at first sight, but at last sight', it was then in suburbia where Michael Field found love at last sight.[72] Moreover, and perhaps because of the dual spatial identity of the suburb, Michael Field identifies their suburban love with the city and thus

'the shining lamps' of the metropolis become the eyes of the poet/lover, the 'Coal pupils, an iris of glittering spa'. But in this metaphorical transformation, Michael Field has turned this urban image into an image that partakes of both industrial productivity ('At sight of those wonderful eyes from the mine, / Coal pupils') and rural suburbia ('an iris of glittering spa'). It is interesting to compare this identification of the city lights/eyes of the poet/lover with Benjamin's discussion of Baudelaire:

> 'Dullness,' says Baudelaire in one of his earliest publications, 'is frequently an ornament of beauty. It is to this that we owe it if eyes are sad and translucent like blackish swamps or if their gaze has the oily inertness of tropical seas.' When such eyes come alive, it is with the self-protective wariness of a wild animal hunting for prey. (Thus the eye of the prostitute scrutinizing the passers-by is at the same time on its guard against the police. Baudelaire found the physiognomic type bred by this kind of life delineated in Constantin Guys's numerous drawings of prostitutes. 'Her eyes, like those of a wild animal, are fixed on the distant horizon; they have the restlessness of a wild animal …, but sometimes also the animal's sudden tense vigilance'.)[73]

The uncanny similarities between the poem and this extract are extraordinary and point towards the enormous influence of Baudelaire on Michael Field's work. In the 'deep, lethargic' suburban space of Reigate, the eyes of the 'face with such thousand things to say' have 'come alive […] with the self-protective wariness of a wild animal hunting for prey' (notice that in the poem the lover is wearing a fox's fur). But, in contrast with Baudelaire, the poem is located in suburbia. Interestingly, instead of the gaze of the prostitute, we find in the poem the gaze of the woman poet/lover. These changes not only challenge the Baudelaireian masculinist vision of modernity; they also point towards Michael Field's identification of suburbia with both sexual and poetic freedom, for it is in suburbia that Michael Field will unleash their Dionysiac spirit, especially noticeable in their volumes *Underneath the Bough* (1893) and *Dedicated* (1914).[74] It was in Reigate, of course, where they started their Bacchic Library.[75] Dionysiac moments are frequently described in their diaries. Thus, for example, after receiving a parcel sent to them by George Meredith in which he had enclosed a copy of his *Modern Love*, with an inscription to Sim (Katharine Bradley), they expressed their happiness by dancing 'a Dionysic [sic] dance, we sit with our chins in our hands and our vision away in the misty possible'.[76]

It was the railway line and the train station that joined these two worlds. Notice how it is at the station where the speaker becomes conscious of two different kinds of 'traffic': on the one hand the lethargic space of Reigate and on the other, the 'clash' and shocking experience of the overpopulated metropolis. Michel de Certeau has argued that the train is 'the solitary

god from which all the action proceeds. It not only divides spectators and beings, but also connects them; it is a mobile sym-bol between them'.[77] Michael Field was well aware of this. They realised that railways connected both people and places when one day they found themselves in the same train compartment with George Meredith. Meredith, like Michael Field, used the South Eastern and Chatham Line to commute to London: Michael Field caught the train a station earlier, in Reigate, and Meredith in Redhill. They were bemused. They were travelling to London at the same time and in the same train and compartment as Meredith. And on their way back home from London, that very same day, they travelled again with him![78] If modernity is to be understood in the dialectic city-suburb, this dialectic can only be achieved through the railway line. Railway lines and stations guarantee communication. But, paradoxically, because of their very nature, trains also signal the difference between two different spatial aesthetics, creating a clear and conscious barrier of separation, of distance. If trains traverse the distance between two different worlds (suburban and urban), the train's window-panes transform this distance into a screen. Seeing and moving are the two main elements of the suburban world, and the train is that which makes it visible. Without the train the experience of both urban and suburban life would not be possible. In the words of Dürer, whose work on perspective announced the arrival of modernity, 'the first is the eye that sees, the second is the object seen, the third is the distance between them'.[79]

In what follows, I will discuss *Sight and Song* as a suburban experiment. Here I will explore how the railway line created a poetic bridge which resulted in a study of the relationship between poetry/art and the subject who sees/enjoys it, and how the distance created by the railway line gave rise to a revolutionary theory of vision and of poetics.

Experimental poetics: *Sight and Song* (1892)

> August 2nd [1891] It is Sunday. Heaven speeding us we shall perhaps be looking at the great Madonna [Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus*] this time next week. Our eyes are preparing for a great pilgrimage. What washing from advertisements, vile outlines, & all the parodies that life presents they need before they can enter into the muses' joy.
>
> August 6th [1891] We leave Redhill at a quarter to six a.m. My first impression is of a great bed of evening primroses amid the black débris of the station. […] The passage is a bitter vibration.[80]

On 6 August 1891, Michael Field left Reigate, and in Redhill they caught the quarter-to-six South Eastern and Chatham Railway train that took them to Dover, and from there they went to Germany. The purpose of the journey

was to see specifically two paintings, Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus* and Antonello da Messina's *Saint Sebastian*, both in the Dresden Art Gallery. This journey was part of their research for their new book of poems *Sight and Song*. Much of the research for the book, especially for the poems 'Correggio's *Venus, Mercury and Cupid*', 'Sandro Botticelli's *Venus and Mars*', 'Piero di Cosimo's *The Death of Procris*' and 'Cosimo Tura's *Saint Jerome in the Desert*', had actually been done in London and in Paris, in the Louvre (chiefly for the poems 'Watteau's *L'Indifférent*' and 'Watteau's *L'Embarquement Pour Cythère*'). But some of the most crucial contributions to the collection were paintings from the Dresden Art Gallery. They started their journey by signalling and marking the suburban train station as their point of departure (both literally and metaphorically).

As the epigraph to this section shows, Michael Field prepared themselves for their journey to Dresden, where they were going to see their beloved Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus*. As they wrote, 'Our eyes are preparing for a great pilgrimage. What washing from advertisements, vile outlines, & all the parodies that life presents they need before they can enter into the muses' joy.'[81] Indeed they wanted to wash their eyes from what they considered the debris and impurities of the commodification of culture. They wanted to see Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus*, for reasons that will become clear in the following sections, with immaculate eyes. The train journey was in this sense truly a pilgrimage: a preparation for their encounter with art. Separated from both the commodified world of the metropolis and the work of art, Michael Field learned in this pilgrimage of the *distance* that is required to be able to observe works of art with 'pure' eyes. This is the reason why this train journey was so important to Michael Field because here, literally in the train, they started to think about vision and transport and the way in which the passenger experiences the visual. For Michael Field, the train insulates vision; it *detaches* it in quite interesting ways from both the subject and the object. What the train does is to dissociate the act of seeing from the subject who is seeing. In other words, the passenger detaches his/her subjectivity from the act of seeing.

But this emergence of distance, of separation, as one of the main characteristics of the visual experience requires further thought. As de Certeau has argued, the passenger becomes aware of the distance that exists between the subject who sees and the object that is seen (and, in the nineteenth century, by what is going to be seen) through the separation established by the windowpane. An interesting example of this theory of detached vision comes in their poem 'A Train'.

A TRAIN
That traverses Europe's central plain! –
    Thousands of miles through the moulded furrows
Twinkling in sunset; as night grows brown
    A Power comes down,
Stretches its wings on the infinite plain,

Strains to the earth: one bows to its reign,
And prays and prays through the thousand furrows
For a heart subdued
To the heart of that infinite solitude.[82]

In the train, day and night, the furrows and the central plain follow one another without any real frontier because acceleration compresses the co-ordinates of both space and time into a single unit. In this sense, the poem reminds us of Graham R. Tomson, whose poetry was precisely based on the compression of space-time as a result of speed. But if for Tomson speed guarantees the immersion of the passenger in the landscape he or she is travelling across, as we saw in Chapter 3, for Michael Field the train produces an overwhelming sense of detachment. And this isolation is transported to the landscape itself, which is felt beyond the sensorial sphere of the subject. This was indeed the first rule of their transportational aesthetics: that the visual experience is one of detachment. This appears very clearly in their diary entries about their train journey to Dresden, which Edith Cooper described as '[o]nward in loneliness'.[83] The train's windowpane marked the frontier that separated her, a passenger, from the landscape. Indeed at one point she wrote thus of the journey: 'I watch the painful appearance of things visible – Light is a mere background to a lumpish hill or some hard inamiable tree; it does not mingle with anything'.[84] It was in this separation that they comprehended *intellectually* (as Alice Meynell did) the aesthetic experience.

This transportational detachment, to which I will return, is at the very core of Michael Field's aesthetics, and more important, it was at the heart of their authorship. On 23 April 1892, Cooper saw Bradley off to Dover. As Emma Donoghue writes, 'there in the noisy, steamy station, they made one of their solemn promises – which Katherine [sic] gave permanence to in a poem called "Prologue" as soon as she could sit down in the carriage and get her pen and ink out'.[85] Indeed, as their diary shows, 'Prologue', a poem which has been described by critics as Cooper's and Bradley's vows to poetry and to each other, was written in a train:

Saturday April 23. [1892]
A lovely morning – the leaves more like dewdrops than leaves in their lucid joyousness, the sky pale & happy. My love & I go to the Station that I may see her off to Dover. We swear, with the bright world round us, that we will remain Poets & Lovers whatever may happen to hinder or deflect our lives.

Sim wrote in the train:

It was deep April & the morn
Shakespeare was born;

The world was on us, pressing sore:
My love & I took hands & swore
Against the world to be
Poets & lovers evermore;

To laugh & dream on Lethe's shore,
To sing to Charon in his boat,
Heartening the timid souls afloat;
Of Judgment never to take heed,
But to those fast-locked souls to speed
Who never from Apollo fled,
Who spent no hour among the dead:

Continually
With them to dwell,
Indifferent to heaven or hell.[86]

'Prologue' exemplifies how Michael Field transferred their transportational aesthetics to their authorship. The whole poem is full of references to travelling, which remind us (especially with the reference to Charon's boat) of the Heiddeggerian notion of human existence as 'being towards death', or, in other words, human existence as 'being *travelling* towards death'. This is exactly what the poem suggests, that Michael Field's existence as a lyric poet has to be understood as a journey. But more importantly, especially when discussing the issue of detachment and their transportational aesthetics, what this striking passage points out very distinctly is that for Michael Field the aesthetic experience is produced by separation. They both swear, with the world around them, to be poets and lovers evermore, but it is in the train, while detached from the world and from her love, that Bradley actually writes the poem. And certainly this was not the only poem Michael Field wrote while travelling in the train: 'To fields where now the forests fail', published in *Underneath the Bough* (1893), is another example.[87]

It is no coincidence that 'Prologue' was written in April 1892, a month before the publication of *Sight and Song*. As I have been suggesting, the key to understanding this volume of verse is transportation. This point will be examined in the first part of this section, where I propose that Michael Field used the form of translation as part of their transportational aesthetics. In the second part, I read *Sight and Song* as a manifesto for a sexualised passenger, contextualising Michael Field's aesthetics within the late nineteenth-century cultural discourse on visuality. In the last part, as a form of conclusion, I discuss how Michael Field's theory of visuality announces the revolution of the object, as a consequence of the distance that travelling imposes on both the object that is seen and the subject/passenger who sees.

I. Transporting poetics: translating the visual

> The aim of this little volume is, as far as may be, to translate into verse what the lines and colours of certain chosen pictures sing in themselves.
>
> Michael Field, 'Preface' to *Sight and Song*

> We realise objects when we perfectly translate them into terms of our own states, our own feelings.
>
> Bernard Berenson, *The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance*[88]

> [T]ranslation, with its rudiments of such a language, is midway between poetry and theory.
>
> Walter Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator'[89]

'[T]o translate into verse what the lines and colours of certain chosen pictures sing in themselves' was the aim of this volume. Michael Field aimed to produce a book that was a combination of two art forms, the visual arts and poetry. However the relationship they established was not, as one might have expected, that of an illustrated book in which the visual serves the poetical but rather, a volume of poetry which poeticised paintings. The 'original' art form was painting, and the poems were 'translations' of what these paintings 'incarnate[d]'.[90] At first sight, to think of this volume of poetry as a translation and not as a collection of verse may be controversial. *Sight and Song* was produced in a rather exquisite and expensive Bodley Head edition, and, to use the word translation to describe this volume could downgrade its value as an 'original' piece. This was the view of many readers, among them W. B. Yeats, who, in reviewing it, argued that, instead of offering 'translations', the poets should have written what these paintings suggested to them:

> That is to say, the two ladies who hide themselves behind the pen-name of Michael Field have set to work to observe and interpret a number of pictures, instead of singing out of their own hearts and setting to music their own souls. They have poetic feeling and imagination in abundance, and yet they have preferred to work with the studious and interpretative side of the mind and write a guide-book to the picture galleries of Europe, instead of giving us a book full of the emotions and fancies which must be crowding in upon their minds perpetually.[91]

For Yeats, originality and poetic creativity meant subjective recreation, and he did not understand Michael Field's 'objective translations'. Poetry was in his mind associated with emotions and fancies and not with the 'studious and interpretative side of the mind', hence his rejection of *Sight and Song*. Michael Field had, according to Yeats, disassociated poetry from sensoria, creating instead an intellectual poetry. But this was not quite true. As Edith Cooper's definition of both beauty and the work of art shows, art, or rather

the work of art, was for Michael Field a product of *both* objectivity and emotion: 'My definition of beauty was – that in the objective world that attracts emotion. And my definition of the Work of Art was the reissue of an emotion of beauty into the objective world as an object.'[92] In addition, and most importantly, Yeats strongly disagreed with the form of translation as a way to convey poetry. However, it was precisely this form, translation, that allowed Michael Field to theorise the visual and to bring into question the sensorial epistemology advocated by Pater. For Michael Field, translation worked as a form of transport, which crossed between one form of art and another, allowing the reader to participate in an aesthetic journey through poetics. Yeats indicated in his review that the book was like a 'guide-book', suggesting in fact that these poems were a sort of itinerary that the reader must follow from poem to painting, but he refused to see this 'guide-book' as a guide to a new theory of aesthetics. In this sense, the reader was more a passenger than a spectator, as he or she would have to use these poem-translations to travel to the paintings.

In 'The Task of the Translator', Walter Benjamin provides a theoretical model for understanding the value of translation as an art form. Benjamin astutely observes that a translation, 'instead of imitating the sense of the original, must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's way of meaning, thus making both the original and the translation recognizable as fragments of a greater language, just as fragments are part of a vessel'.[93] This Benjaminian definition of translation implies a revalorisation of translation as something belonging to an *a priori*, 'pure', language to which the original also belongs, this greater language being the source out of which all languages develop. But, more important than this revalorisation is Benjamin's definition of translation as a 'transparent' form. In fact, just as the key to *Sight and Song* is the word 'translation', the key to 'The Task of the Translator' is the word 'transparent'. Benjamin is using the word 'transparent' here in its generic and primary sense, meaning 'capable of transmitting rays of light without diffusion so that bodies behind can be distinctly seen' (OED).

> A real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully. This may be achieved, above all, by a literal rendering of the syntax which proves words rather than sentences to be the primary element of the translator. For if the sentence is the wall before the language of the original, literalness is the arcade.[94]

Translation thus emerges as the arcade that joins two languages. It is the passage from one language to another. I will discuss the connection between translation and transportation later on, but for now it is worth noting here that in the case of *Sight and Song*, Michael Field used translation as an arcade through which to travel from poetics to the visual arts. But what this 'passage', to use

Edith Cooper's own words, also discloses is that for Benjamin translations are transparent entities that transmit light so that the poetics of a piece of writing or picture can be clearly seen. It is through translations that works of art are shown in their 'pure language', and the translation 'shine[s] upon the original', bringing it forth. By describing translations as transparent forms, Benjamin is clearly associating the photographic process and its recreation of images with the reproductive quality of translations (in particular the transparent cellulose of photographic film, which, when exposed to light, produces the image on film). This association between transparencies and photography was at the very origin of photography.[95] For Benjamin, translations are to originals what the photographic film is to the picture. It is that which allows the film, the photograph, or the painting to be seen. I should also note that by 'reproductive quality of translations', I do not mean that translations are reproductions, but that they have a reproductive quality in the sense that they allow the original to be disseminated. But this dissemination takes the form of refraction, literally, the turning or bending of light when it passes from one medium into another of different density.[96]

Benjamin thus argues that, on the one hand, translation is an art form whose identity is similar to the original in so far as both partake of an *a priori*, 'pure', language, but on the other, translations, unlike originals, function as transparent forms that enlighten the original work of art. This was, in both senses, what Michael Field tried to do in *Sight and Song*. In their own words, they attempted 'to express not so much what these pictures are to the poet, but rather what poetry they objectively incarnate'.[97] However, by emphasising that these poems are translations, what Michael Field was in fact suggesting was that there is an intimate relationship between poetry and the visual arts, in so far as poetry can actually, just like a translation, function as a transparent form that enhances the poetics of the visual. Benjamin has furthermore observed that translation is a form midway between 'poetry and theory', for only a translation can both uncover and reproduce that which is poetic in an original piece of work. A good translation is that which both reveals the poetry of the original text *and* re-creates it. Moreover, if there is a 'pure language' out of which the original text and the translation have been created, 'this very language […] is concealed in concentrated fashion in translations'.[98] In other words, if there is such an *a priori* true language, this language reveals itself *in the translation*. Hence, by using poetry as translation, Michael Field was in fact suggesting that there is an intrinsic relationship between the visual arts and poetry, a relationship which is manifested in what we may call their 'theoretical poetics'. Just as 'translation' brings forth the original work of art, 'poetry' brings forth the visual arts.

Moreover, the form of translation functions as a veritable 'metaphor', in de Certeau's sense, as a form of transportation between the poetical and the visual, between the passenger and the object. Indeed, in the preface to the collection, they wrote, quoting Flaubert, 'Il faut, par un effort d'esprit,

se transporter dans les personnages et non les attirer à soi' (italics mine). If, as de Certeau has so famously argued, in a train, the rail is what allows us to move through space and the windowpane is what allows us to see, translation (as an art form) also works in similar ways. It is that form of (aesthetic) transport which allows us to move from one art form to another. The spectator, truly a passenger, travels to the painting in the translation. Translation, therefore, works as a train, as that which takes the passenger to the work of art. Indeed it is worth remembering here that *Sight and Song* did not include the pictures poeticised in the collection, and thus the reader travelled to the painting by way of the poem. Furthermore, because translation is a transparent form, it guarantees *visibility*. It is through the transparency of translation, and the transparency of the train's window pane, that we 'see' the painting. But, conversely, because translation works as the link between painting and poetry, it is also that which marks the difference and distance that exists between these two forms of art, just as it signals the distance that separates the subject from the object.

There is, however, another reason for using translations: the tremendous impact that the culture of looking had at the *fin de siècle*. This is perhaps best highlighted by Isobel Armstrong's study of glass and the culture of mass transparency in the nineteenth century, and by Adorno's inspiring essay 'Transparencies on Film', an essay that marked Adorno's turn to Benjamin's theory of mass culture.[99] In the nineteenth century, as Isobel Armstrong has remarked, the culture of mass-production transparency, of mass-produced glass, marked '[t]he beginnings of an avidly scopic culture – a culture of *looking*'.[100] But this culture of looking was regulated by the appearance of new technologies, as Adorno observed. Adorno's use of the word 'transparency' in this article was a clear and direct debt to Benjamin's 'The Task of the Translator', but Adorno went a step further and argued that society *projects* itself on to the transparency of film. For Adorno – and this is what separates him from Benjamin – transparency works as a screen upon which society, as a collective, recognises and mimics itself. Adorno united in this word, *transparencies*, in the plural, the visual imagery of the nineteenth-century magic lantern and both the screen of film and that of the overhead projector (which, of course, works with transparencies). Miriam B. Hansen has described this essay as a 'series of unconnected – though not unrelated – *aperçus*'. She does not link Adorno's use of the word with Benjamin's, but, as she very astutely points out, what is interesting about this essay is that it reads as a series of *aperçus*, as a series of translucent images. In other words, in this essay Adorno tested out the extent to which '[a]s a projectionist of this arrangement, the author himself becomes a viewer, rather than someone more actively involved in the making and criticizing of film'.[101] As Hansen further argues, Adorno 'literally positions himself on the side of the audience' because his 'observations do not presume the status of great insights – they are presented as something "shining through" '.[102] Indeed,

Adorno used this trope to emphasise his position as that of a spectator seeing a series of 'transparencies on film' of which he is the author. Here we come to the core of the aesthetics of visuality in modernity and the role of translation in the work of Michael Field. By using the form of translation, Michael Field was emphasising this culture of *looking* in modernity. And, if translation was the train which transported passengers from poetics to the visual arts, these 'poems as translations' were then a series of *aperçus* of which Michael Field was both audience and author.

II. A Manifesto for the passenger

This is the preface to *Sight and Song*, written in 1892:

> PREFACE
>
> The aim of this little volume is, as far as may be, to translate into verse what the lines and colours of certain chosen pictures sing in themselves; to express not so much what these pictures are to the poet, but rather what poetry they objectively incarnate. Such an attempt demands patient, continuous sight as pure as the gazer can refine it of theory, fancies, or his mere subjective enjoyment.
>
> 'Il faut, par un effort d'esprit, se transporter dans les personnages et non les attirer à soi.' For *personnages* substitute *peintures*, and this sentence from Gustave Flaubert's 'Correspondence' resumes the method of art-study from which these poems arose.
>
> Not even 'le grand Gustave' could ultimately illude himself as a formative power in his work – not after the pain of a lifetime directed to no other end. Yet the effort to see things from their own centre, by suppressing the habitual centralisation of the visible in ourselves, is a process by which we eliminate our idiosyncrasies and obtain an impression clearer, less passive, more intimate.
>
> When such effort has been made, honestly and with persistence, even then the inevitable force of individuality must still have play and a temperament mould the purified impression: –
>
> 'When your eyes have done their part,
> Thought must length it in the heart.'
>
> M.F.
> February 15, 1892.[103]

It was indeed a revolutionary manifesto. It was no wonder that Yeats could not understand it, as it questioned the subjective and sensorial epistemology of the *fin de siècle*. The preface sets out the parameters under which the volume should be discussed. It is first a 'translation into verse', and thus, it should be read as a poeticised translation of pictures. But what is really striking here is Michael Field's argument that these translations were the product of

a pure gaze, for indeed their aim was to express not what 'these pictures are to the poet, but rather what poetry they objectively incarnate'. In this attempt at bringing to the forefront the 'poetry' of these particular paintings using another art form, poetry, Michael Field proposed that there was an intrinsic relationship between the visual arts and poetry. More important, Michael Field was testing out the relationship established between a work of art and the subject that gazes at and takes pleasure in it. What they suggest in this preface is that there is an intrinsic 'beauty' or 'poetry' in any art form that transcends the subject that gazes. To be able to translate objectively that poetry, the viewer, gazer and translator must, according to Michael Field, eliminate his/her subjectivity and his/her aesthetic positioning, for these may influence the perception of the art object. This was, at any rate, the 'method of art-study' in the production of *Sight and Song*. Michael Field was following a Ruskinian model of visuality,[104] one which (i) believed that painting and poetry were 'sister arts',[105] and (ii) valued what Ruskin called 'the innocence of the eye', a sort of unadulterated perception of painting, one which saw without a consciousness of what an object of art may signify.[106]

According to Jonathan Crary, what Ruskin meant by this expression, 'innocence of the eye', was the possibility and the need for a model of vision which would be 'uncluttered by the weight of historical codes and conventions of seeing, a position from which vision can function without the imperative of composing its contents into a reified "real" world'.[107] That is, to be able to see any art object, the gazer must be free of all historical and cultural constructions of the visual. Indeed, before leaving for Dresden, Michael Field clearly prepared themselves to cleanse their eyes of all the impurities that the commodification of culture had imprinted on them, and the train journey functioned as a pilgrimage during which the poets learned to insulate vision from subjectivity. Their starting point in describing the method of art-study for *Sight and Song* is actually much the same as that of Ruskin. Compare the above quotation with Michael Field's: 'to express not so much what these pictures are to the poet, but rather what poetry they objectively incarnate. Such an attempt demands patient, continuous sight as pure as the gazer can refine it of theory, fancies, or his mere subjective enjoyment.' To achieve such a pure gaze, the observer must suppress 'the habitual centralisation of the visible in ourselves,' and, with it, his/her own 'idiosyncrasies'. What is achieved by freeing the eye is: first, a clearer impression – in so far as the subject's own consciousness and idiosyncrasies do not occlude the object of the gaze; secondly, a less passive attitude towards the object – for instead of letting the object impress us, the subject has to travel to it (one has to transport oneself to it to observe and analyse it); and thirdly, a more intimate contact – for the spectator is entirely freed from all cultural constraints and hence the subject's appreciation of the object is particular and personal. Only after the spectator has tried to see the object on its own terms (and thanks to the distance established by the windowpane of translation),

can the subject enter and 'mould the purified impression'. It now becomes clear why the train journey was so important for Michael Field: because it enabled them to revolutionise vision from within, by using it to explore the way in which vision can be disembodied.

This approach to the acquisition of art questioned the *fin-de-siècle* aesthetics promulgated by Walter Pater, who envisioned the aesthetic experience in quite different terms:

> 'To see the object as in itself it really is,' has been justly said to be the aim of all true criticism whatever; and in aesthetic criticism the first step towards seeing one's object as it really is, is to know one's own impression as it really is, to discriminate it, to realise it distinctly. The objects with which aesthetic criticism deals – music, poetry, artistic and accomplished forms of human life – are indeed receptacles of so many powers or forces: they possess, like the products of nature, so many virtues or qualities. What is this song or picture, this engaging personality presented in life or in a book, to *me*? What effect does it really produce on me? Does it give me pleasure? and if so, what sort or degree of pleasure? How is my nature modified by its presence, and under its influence?[108]

For Pater, the aesthetic experience resides in the body, in what those pictures are '*to me*'. What the aesthetic critic has to do is to analyse those impressions, the pleasure that an object produces, the degree of pleasure, and the way in which the critic is changed by that pleasurable impression. In short, for Pater the aim of the art critic is to investigate not the art object, but the impressions that the art object produces on the subject.

This subjective vision is described further in his famous essay, 'The School of Giorgione', where he argues that 'art […] is […] always striving to be independent of the mere intelligence, to become a matter of pure perception', and that it presents itself as 'one single effect to the "imaginative reason," that complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol'.[109] This sentence resumes Pater's aesthetic theory. He started by rejecting the possibilities of translating one art into another: 'It is the mistake of much popular criticism to regard poetry, music, and painting – all the various products of art – as but translations into different languages of one and the same fixed quantity of imaginative thought, supplemented by certain technical qualities of colour, in painting; of sound, in music; of rhythmical words, in poetry.'[110]

For Michael Field, translation functioned as a form which allowed light to be shone into another form of art, but Pater clearly rejects such a view. There are two reasons for this rejection. On the one hand, Pater claims that the beautiful is not an abstract entity, since it is found in very concrete art objects: 'What is important, then, is not that the critic should possess a correct abstract definition of beauty for the intellect, but a certain kind of

temperament, the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects. He will remember always that beauty exists in many forms.' And on the other, he notes that every form of art has its own special mode of reaching the senses, and hence the body's response to a picture is different from its response to a piece of music: 'Each art, therefore, having its own peculiar and untranslatable sensuous charm, has its own special mode of reaching the imagination, its own special responsibilities to its material.'[111]

Pater and Michael Field start from the same position in their analysis of the aesthetic experience 'what is this song or this picture'. Pater, however, sees 'art' through his own 'impressions' of it. In other words, subject and object are joined in the interpretation of an art work. Unlike Pater, Michael Field dissociates both subject and object: to them an object of art is contained in itself, and thus the poet is a 'translator' of the object's own artistic achievement. However, at the end of their preface, Michael Field clearly and unambiguously notes that it is impossible to analyse art without any subjective interference on the part of the critic-poet, but this can only be claimed *after* the individual has had a 'purified impression', that is, an objective analysis, of the art object in question. Experiencing the aesthetic is for Michael Field a very complex phenomenon, one which includes both the beautiful object and the (sexual) subject that experiences it, but both as autonomous entities. In contrast with Pater, Michael Field offers a two-phased aesthetic, one in which objective enjoyment is followed by subjective *jouissance*. The question that immediately arises is, in what way does this two-phase aesthetic as practised in *Sight and Song* differ from the subjective epistemology of Pater? The difference is made particularly clear by Michael Field:

> Pater's style is a memorial to Impressions not the drama of impressions acting on true nature. When you re-issue the emotion a sight or sound or action has executed in you the chances are that, unless you are endowed with great dramatic gift if you transfer the initial shock to an imaginary character the re-issue will have the dimness of a memory, not the instantaneousness of an event, & the work of art will be lacking in life, or what is the same thing as life inevitableness.
>
> Of course the things that strike emotionally on a peculiarly susceptible nature cannot be transferred to other less or differently susceptible natures without death. Pater often issues his own emotions, that are very peculiar to himself, as if they were the result of other individualities – to whom however he has not been able to give the value of an I. There's the point of the whole matter. The corner-stone of Art is I, because its material is emotion.[112]

For Michael Field the implications (and the danger) of a complete subjective visual epistemology is the erasure and displacement of other subjectivities

(including the author's) in favour of the unified and mastered subjectivity of the art-critic. Pater's epistemology denies the subjectivity of others by placing *his* impressions at the centre of the aesthetic experience. His art studies do not reproduce the 'original' encounter with 'Art' but *his* own encounter. By contrast, Michael Field argues that the I/eye that gazes must allow other 'Is' (including the painter's 'I') to experience the aesthetic. Michael Field's description of Pater's subjective vision recalls Luce Irigaray's claim that 'more than any other sense, the eye objectifies and masters', imposing a phallocentric economy of vision.[113] It was this phallocentric economy that Michael Field wanted to repudiate. *Sight and Song* was precisely that: an attempt to create an autonomous and sexualised observer. This is why Michael Field proposed a two-phased aesthetics (one in which objective enjoyment is followed by subjective *jouissance*): to allow the autonomy of both the art object and of its gazer.

III. Visual aesthetics

The visual aesthetics that Michael Field delineates in their Preface for *Sight and Song* was put into practice in the poems that make up this astonishing collection. Just as Walter Pater starts his *Imaginary Portraits* with a discussion of Watteau, Michael Field's *Sight and Song* starts with Watteau's *L' Indifférent*. This was no coincidence. It demonstrated their debt to Pater, but it also marked their departure from Pater's sensorial epistemology by arguing that the observer, in order to enjoy the 'poetry' that these paintings/poems incarnated, had to adopt an 'indifferent' attitude towards experiencing the aesthetic.

L' INDIFFÉRENT
WATTEAU
The Louvre

He dances on a toe
As light as Mercury's:
Sweet herald, give thy message! No,
He dances on; the world is his,
The sunshine and his wingy hat;
His eyes are round
Beneath the brim:
To merely dance where he is found
Is fate to him
And he was born for that.

He dances in a cloak
Of vermeil and of blue:
Gay youngster, underneath the oak,
Come, laugh and love! In vain we woo;

He is a human butterfly;-
No soul, no kiss,
No glance nor joy!
Though old enough for manhood's bliss,
He is a boy,
Who dances and must die.[114]

If Watteau's pre-impressionistic *L' Indifférent* reflected the fleeting and joyful nature of dancing, Michael Field's 'Watteau's *L' Indifférent*' translated that dance into poetry through a melodious and regular composition (notice the regularity of both rhyme and metre throughout the poem). Indeed the poem *is* a dance (in the words of Paul Valéry).[115] The poem starts by describing Watteau's magic dancer and his intriguing gaze. The spectator enigmatically urges the dancer '*Sweet herald, give thy message!*' There is, however, no answer from the 'herald' and the dancer (as if pictorially representing the autonomy of the object) continues immersed in his dance. At this point, Michael Field's subjectivity travels to the painting by describing the dancer as 'old enough for manhood's bliss'. The entrance of sexuality challenges the 'purified impression' that we had previously obtained from the painting, for now we wonder about the erotic relationship that the dancer establishes with the viewer and gazer. This 'indifferent' dancer looks at the viewers, with those round eyes and we see not only the dancing figure, but also his moment of 'bliss' in the dance. Entering the painting subjectively implies the entering of the sexual subject, and the poem becomes an erotic recreation of that view, a teasing dancer flirting with the viewer and the viewer entering this sexual game.

Michael Field's poem, however, reveals another condition of the visual, and this is the gaze that the object directs towards the viewer. By allowing the object its own autonomy, and by looking at the art object in *jouissance*, Michael Field recognises that the subject also becomes the object of the gaze. In *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis*, Lacan argues that, 'I am not simply that punctiform being located at the geometral point from which the perspective is grasped. No doubt, in the depths of my eye, the picture is painted. The picture, certainly, is in my eye. But I, I am in the picture.'[116] As Hal Foster argues in his reading of the Lacanian gaze, 'the subject is also under the regard of the object, photographed by its light, pictured by its gaze'.[117] In Michael Field's translations, the poem functions as a screen in which both subject and object are part of the gaze, a gaze that is constructed through desire and sexuality. In Foster's words, 'the screen allows the subject, at the point of the picture, to behold the object, at the point of light'.[118]

The transportation of the sexualised observer to the object is further explored in several poems in this collection, but it is without doubt in 'Leonardo da Vinci's *La Gioconda*', where Michael Field's visual aesthetics most notably question Pater's. In this translation, Michael Field is both the

observer and the observed, the onlooker and the object of the gaze:

LA GIOCONDA
LEONARDO DA VINCI
The Louvre

Historic, side-long, implicating eyes;
A smile of velvet's lustre on the cheek;
Calm lips the smile leads upward; hand that lies
Glowing and soft, the patience in its rest
Of cruelty that waits and doth not seek
For prey; a dusky forehead and a breast
Where twilight touches ripeness amorously:
Behind her, crystal rocks, a sea and skies
Of evanescent blue on cloud and creek;
Landscape that shines suppressive of its zest
For those vicissitudes by which men die.[119]

Pater had most famously discussed *La Gioconda* in his essay on 'Leonardo da Vinci'. In it, Pater, as Richard Dellamora claims, 'focuses on Leonardo's position as a subject of desire. Regarding this desire as directed toward males.'[120] As he further argues, Pater's account of Leonardo can only be understood from Pater's claim of their shared subject position as lovers of men, because both Pater 'and his subject share the same sexual point of view', veiled under Pater's famous statement, 'a lover of strange souls may still analyse for himself the impression made on him by those works'. For Dellamora, 'Pater's critical persona, identifying with the painter's love of "strange souls," describes the erotic character of the critical act.'[121] The sexual inversion is produced by Pater's account of *La Gioconda* as a 'transvestite self-portrait'.[122] It is in this sense that Pater and his object (Leonardo-as-La Gioconda) emerge as one, and the object is a product of Pater's own subjectivity.

In Michael Field's 'Leonardo da Vinci's *La Gioconda*' the sexual inversion is rather an inversion of the gaze. Michael Field's poem as 'a transparency on a poem' starts with a visual representation of the painting. Yet in the third line we can see that the semi-colon in the middle of the line disrupts the previous flow. The passenger's gaze has arrived at its destination. The word 'historic' and the description of *La Gioconda*'s famous smile are presented in the poem as part of the objective translation of the painting. But in the third line this objectivity is broken, such is the power of *La Gioconda*'s gaze. The abruptness of the verse parallels *La Gioconda*'s cruelty and *La Gioconda* becomes a predator that 'waits' for her prey, the spectator. The adjective 'cruel' shows how Michael Field has been transported into the poem and 'La Gioconda' is not only the painting but Michael Field's impressions of it. If Pater described *La Gioconda* as a vampire because 'she has been dead many times, and learned

the secrets of the grave', for Michael Field this vampiric quality relates to consumption: *La Gioconda* consumes 'her prey'. And *who* is the prey but the passenger who is daring to enter *La Gioconda*'s own gaze? We have then a strange parallel, a 'male mask' – Michael Field, in their dual authorship as Katharine Bradley and Edith Cooper – observing a 'female mask' – *La Gioconda*. If Pater's subjectivity emerges with the object of his study, in Michael Field's case, the subject *disappears* in the object, it is *consumed* by the object (an issue also explored in the poem 'Botticelli's *Venus and Mars*', which ends thus: 'Without regret, the work her kiss has done/ And lives a cold enchantress doomed to please/ Her victims one by one').[123] If in 'Watteau's *L' Indifférent*', the gaze of the dancer flirts with the observer, in 'Botticelli's *Venus and Mars*' and 'Leonardo da Vinci's *La Gioconda*' the object's gaze consumes the observer. The poem emerges as a reconsideration of the visual in terms of both the spectator as passenger and the object.

Is Michael Field using this transportational poetics as a screen on to which the dynamics of vision and visuality are played? And if so, what is achieved by using these poems as translations? The answer to these questions comes in two fascinating poems, 'Antonello da Messina's *Saint Sebastian*' and 'Giorgione's *The Sleeping Venus*'. In 'Antonello da Messina's *Saint Sebastian*', Michael Field considers the inversion of the gaze by discussing the erotics of sadomasochism. As in previous poems, Michael Field starts by describing the painting in detail, avoiding any interference with its object:

> YOUNG Sebastian stands beside a lofty tree,
> Rigid by the rigid trunk that branchlessly
> Lifts its column on the blue
> Of a heaven that takes
> Hyacinthine hue
> From a storm that wellnigh breaks.[124]

In fact, more than half of the poem is a faithful and colourful description of da Messina's painting. We have to wait until the thirteenth stanza for the arrival of Michael Field's subjectivity. Notice how Field is transported to the character,

> At his feet a mighty pillar lies reversed;
> So the virtue of his sex is shattered, cursed:
> Here is martyrdom and not
> In the arrows' sting;
> This the bitter lot
> His soul is questioning.
>
> He, with body fresh for use, for pleasure fit,
> With its energies and needs together knit

In an able exigence,
Must endure the strife,
  Final and intense,
Of necessity with life.[125]

Both the description of the pillar as a metaphor of St Sebastian's masculinity and the idea of sadomasochistic desire are present in the painting itself. Yet while the painting presents a view of St Sebastian in a moment of calm bliss, Michael Field describes this moment as a questioning of the soul on the 'virtue of his sex'. It is interesting to notice how the structure of the poem plays with Michael Field's subjectivity and da Messina's is replaced by theirs.

To show how Michael Field's sexual point of view alters da Messina's subjectivity, it is very helpful to read their account of the painting in their diaries. The following fragment was written in Dresden, in 1891. After the journey, while they were still in Dresden, Edith Cooper caught scarlet fever, and both Bradley and Cooper spent the rest of their visit in hospital. This is Katharine Bradley's re-creation of da Messina's *Saint Sebastian* in *Work and Days*:

> At last this morning even the Herr Geheimrath says there is no danger from the fever. She [Edith Cooper] looks very pretty in her short boy's hair and fresh cotton jacket … .
>
> Yes, every day on which portions of the *Ring* were performed all the force left in me seemed to gather in my throat and the tears burnt worse than fever – This was the 'Wagner-weh,' a vast, imperishable regret that I was losing my chance for many a year, perhaps for ever, of hearing the *Operas* in their own land. During all my life till then I never knew what a passion of passions disappointment can be. I only got relief when I thought of Antonello da Messina's *St. Sebastian* in the Gallery – his virile, reproachful face reared against the blue heavens – his eyes asking, 'Why am I denied what I was made for?' That picture was constantly with me.[126]

Bradley wrote this passage while she was in hospital taking care of Cooper. These notes on both Wagner's operas and da Messina's painting are used to discuss Bradley's own feelings towards Cooper. The description of the painting is most interesting because Bradley, instead of observing the blissful and erotic martyrdom of St Sebastian, as depicted in the painting, claims that the painting is about the unfulfilment of St Sebastian's own homosexual desire. What comes across very distinctly in this passage is how St Sebastian's own unfulfilment is analogous to her own because of Edith's sexual unavailability (the result of her fever and her infatuation with Bernard Berenson).

For Bradley, St Sebastian represents Cooper. In this passage, Bradley uses art (Wagner's operas and da Messina's painting) as a screen which projects her own desires. Notice how in the diary, Katharine gazes at her 'desired

object', Edith Cooper, and her comments on how 'pretty' Edith 'looks' with her 'short boy's hair' and 'fresh cotton jacket' are certainly encoded visually. The gaze of St Sebastian is used to re-establish a link between the desiring subject and the desired object: 'Why am I denied what I was made for?' which is rewritten in the poem as 'He, with body fresh for use, for pleasure fit, /[…] Must endure the strife,/ Final and intense,/ Of necessity with life.' After a first moment of objective analysis of the painting, Michael Field has transported their own feelings towards the painting to the poem. And it is the gaze of St Sebastian, the gaze of the object of representation, which has produced this transformation. The aesthetic enjoyment of the painting has resulted in a break in Michael Field's own subjectivity, and in the transparency of the poem – on to this screen – Michael Field has *projected* their own desires, as Adorno would have put it.

What we find in the poem is the division of the subject 'Michael Field' into a desiring subject (Katharine Bradley) desiring another subject (Edith Cooper). The poem, as a screen, illuminates and re-presents this negotiation between the object that sees and the subject that is observed. One might argue here that Michael Field is truly displacing St Sebastian with their own reading, disregarding his erotic martyrdom. This would have been the case had they produced a poem which was *solely* about their impressions of the painting (as Pater would most certainly have done). But this was precisely the reason why they were arguing for a two-phased aesthetic. To begin with, the work of art must be allowed to be represented unmediated by the subject that is looking. In this detached, almost disembodied vision, the object presents itself. But once the object has been allowed its own representation, the subject enters into this act of vision. It is in the transparency of the translation, on this screen, that the gaze of both subject and object are displayed. And it is on this screen, where Michael Field projected their own desires. Indeed, as they claimed in their preface, they had transported themselves into the characters without seizing them.

But if in 'Antonello da Messina's *Saint Sebastian*' Michael Field used the poem to show how the gaze of the object is reflected on to the subject that gazes, in 'Giorgione's *The Sleeping Venus*', the gaze of the object is directed towards itself. In fact, what is extraordinary about this poem is that the object seems to have overtaken completely the traditional phallogocentric economy of vision. Venus, as 'object of the gaze', is completely oblivious to the gaze of the observer: she is only conscious of herself. And the passenger is rather an observer of Venus' own consciousness. Michael Field describes Venus in her full 'womanhood' in an act of masturbation. However, instead of being a voyeur, the passenger seems to see in Venus, because of the analogy of gender, the perfect desiring and desired subject.

> Her left arm remains beside
> The plastic body's lower heaves,

Controlled by them, as when a river-side
With its sandy margin weaves
Deflections in a lenient tide;
Her hand the thigh's tense surface leaves,
Falling inward. Not even sleep
Dare invalidate the deep,
Universal pleasure sex
Must unto itself annex –
Even the stillest sleep; at peace,
More profound with rest's increase,
She enjoys the good
Of delicious womanhood.[127]

Venus becomes a powerful subject in control of her gaze and of the gaze of others. And the poem functions as a platform where the spectator is suddenly aware not only of the power that poems, as translations, have in restoring to the object and to the subject an autonomy of vision, but also an autonomy of vision that embraces women's sexuality.

By the end of *Sight and Song*, it is clear that Michael Field has completely transformed the visual aesthetics advocated by Pater, and his account of subjectivity is rejected in favour of a more autonomous aesthetic of the visual. It is in the figure of Venus that Michael Field finally and openly discusses the autonomy of the object. It is no coincidence that the last poem of the collection is 'Watteau's *L' Embarquement Pour Cythère*'. The myth of the island of Cythera is the myth of the quest for love. Watteau's Cythère represents an invitation to delights amid the enchantments of nature. Michael Field's poem, however, presents Venus as the originator of these delights and the force that moves these couples to travel to Cythera. While the painting depicts groups of lovers embarking and preparing themselves for the journey, the poem focuses on Venus, for it is Venus who drives the wandering figures to her island. Venus is the overpowering object and subject of the poem. The poem starts by placing Venus at the centre of this quest for love,

Why starts this company so fair arrayed
In pomegranate brocade,
Blue shoulder-cloak and barley-coloured dress
Of flaunting shepherdess,
From shelter of the full-leaved, summer trees?
What vague unease
Draws them in couples to a burnished boat?
And wherefore from its prow,
Borne upward on a spiral, amber swirl
Of incense-light, themselves half-rose, half-pearl,
So languorously doth float

This flock of Loves that in degree
Fling their own hues as raiment on the sea;
… .
I see it now!
'Tis Venus' rose-veiled barque
And that great company ere dark
Must to Cythera, so the Loves prevail,
Adventurously sail.[128]

Moreover, unlike the rest of the poems of *Sight and Song*, Michael Field enters the poem as an author using for the first time 'I': 'I see it now!' and 'Methinks'.[129] They also recreate and reconfigure Watteau's painting, giving agency and voice to the couples who are lovingly embarking for Cythera,

What, sweet, so slow!' – 'But ere I leave the land
Give me more vows; oh, bind thee to me fast;
Speak, speak! I do not crave thy kiss.
To-morrow … ' – 'Love, the tide is rising swift;
Shall we not talk aboard?[130]

But, even more interesting than Michael Field's increasing presence as authors is the poem's conclusion. The statue of Venus is present through desire in those couples who travel to Cythera, but she is literally invisible to them as presented in the picture, and only visible to the viewer of the painting: 'Methinks none sees/The statue of a Venus set/Mid some fair trellis, in a lovely fret/ Of rose.' From now onwards Venus becomes the real subject of the poem and of the collection. In this postscript, written in italics, Michael Field goes beyond the painting and, as an anti-climax, re-writes an afterthought to the painting:

Now are they gone: a change is in the light,
The iridescent ranges wane,
The waters spread: ere fall of night
The red-prowed shallop will have passed from sight
And the stone Venus by herself remain
Ironical above that wide, embrowning plain.[131]

In this last stanza, they have rewritten the painting and the collection. Venus is the ironical gazer. The crowd has left; the sculpture of Venus remains and looks ironically at us. Thus she reminds the passenger, that he or she is not in control of the economy of gaze, and that any epistemology that averts the gaze of the object of representation is misrepresenting the field of the visual and the economy of the gaze. Paraphrasing Jacqueline Rose, the passenger 'is not, therefore, in a position of pure manipulation of an object, albeit distant,

but is always threatened by the potential exteriorisation of his own function', because it is on the screen, in the translation, where the economy of the gaze takes place.[132] Just as Michael Field starts this collection with the refusal of *L' Indifférent* to the call of the subject, they finish it with an 'afterthought', where Venus remains once again critical of the subject that perceives her.

Sight and Song is indeed a very complex inquiry of vision and visuality. Using translations, Michael Field creates a poetics of visuality based on distance and transportation. In these 'transparencies on poetry' Michael Field re-presents the economy of the gaze. The achievement of this collection is not only that the subject, the passenger, is given sexual agency, but that the object is given agency too, and thus, powerful images of women such as Venus, refuse the gaze of the avid and always consuming subject. *Sight and Song* emerges thus as a series of translations where Michael Field projects a theory of visuality that values the autonomy of the object, foreseeing the avant-garde revolution of the object.

Postscript: The End of the Line?

Amy Levy's aesthetic of the omnibus was both an instrument of modernity with which to rethink the position of the *fin-de-siècle* woman poet in an urban milieu, and a tool with which to create a new aesthetic theory based upon the cinematic character of urban transport. Alice Meynell found in the passenger's seat the kind of intellectual and aesthetic detachment she believed the critic needed to produce a critical study of urban life. She transformed her journeys into a visual study of the conditions of life and produced an innovative social and political analysis of the ethics and aesthetics of living in modernity. In addition, Meynell not only theorised an aesthetics of flux and movement, which she expressed in terms of impressionism, but also used her own position as a passenger to argue that in a train, omnibus, or tram the world becomes a spectacle. In this sense Meynell used her own privileged position as a passenger-critic to problematise and question the figure of the passenger and his or her voyeuristic disengagement with the outside world. Graham R. Tomson used the aesthetics of the passenger to investigate and examine the relationship established at the *fin de siècle* between cities and bodies. For Tomson, like Levy, mass transport instigated an examination of urban life by reclaiming the space of the city for women, but unlike Levy, Tomson argued that the advancement of mass transport transformed London into a sublime experience. Michael Field, like Alice Meynell, was also very aware of the kind of aesthetics of detachment mass-transport vehicles had introduced at the *fin de siècle*. For Michael Field, it was in this detachment that they saw the beginnings of a new and revolutionary aesthetic theory based on a two-phased principle: objective vision followed by subjective enjoyment. So what happened to this group of London poets and to the aesthetics of the passenger?

Amy Levy committed suicide in 1889, nine days after having corrected the proofs of *A London Plane-Tree*. Charles Whibley's controversial review of this collection of poems initiated a defence of Levy's aesthetics led by the poet Graham R. Tomson. However, this review marked, I believe, something else. It signalled the beginning of a rejection of Levy's work, a rejection that

was carried on well into the twentieth century, and this despite Levy's revolutionary ideas on aesthetics and modernity, many of which anticipated Virginia Woolf's modernist manifestos in novels such as *Mrs. Dalloway*, and essays such as 'A Room of One's Own' and *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown*. By 1929, the centenary of the London omnibus, Levy's work had almost disappeared out of the nineteenth-century canon. In July of that year, 1929, as we have seen, Levy's sister, Katie Solomon sent a letter to *The Observer* in which she stated that her sister was one of the first women to travel on the top of omnibuses. The letter, printed in the section 'Letters to the Editor', shows both the disappearance of Levy's work in the twentieth century, and her sister's refusal to let Levy's work be effaced.

Alice Meynell remained in Palace Court, in Kensington, until 1905, when she moved to a flat in Granville Place, off Oxford Street. Her husband, who had become the literary adviser for Burns and Oates (which later published Meynell's work) insisted on moving out to a flat above the publisher's premises, because it would save him the time of travelling to his place of work everyday. Palace Court was rented and the family moved to Granville Place. Some years later, in 1911, they bought a cottage house in Greatham, Surrey. Alice Meynell was not totally convinced by the new house. As she wrote to her husband: '[i]f I complain of anything it is of isolation and inhumanity.'[1] After having lived all her life in the busy and frantic world of Kensington and for a few years in the busy Oxford area, Meynell feared living in isolation in the countryside. She later learned to love the new house, and from 1911 to her death in 1922, she lived in between London and Greatham. Meynell became a commuter.

In December 1911, Rosamund Marriott Watson (as she was then) died of cancer. The following year, her partner H. B. Marriott Watson (they never married) published her last volume of verse, which was a collected edition of her poetical work.[2] After this date, her work disappeared from the poetical landscape of the twentieth century, even though some of her poetry was to be reprinted in collections of poems such as J. B. Priestley's *The Book of Bodley Head Verse*.[3]

Michael Field left Reigate in 1900 to move to fashionable Richmond in London. They had met in 1894 the artists Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon, who had moved to Richmond in 1898. Michael Field, feeling socially and literally isolated, and rejected by critics, decided to sell Durdans to be closer to their friends. This is how they described their move to the Rothensteins:

> [T]here was once a transportation that was a triumph. It was suggested we should be drawn by pards to Richmond in a golden chariot. The pards was a detail not carried out; but of Thee, O Bacchus, and of Thy ritual, the open landau piled high with Chow [their dog] and Field and Michael,

> doves and manuscripts and sacred plants! – all that is US was there; and we drove consciously to Paradise.[4]

In Richmond, they continue to write poetry and verse and finished the Roman Trilogy they had begun in 1898 with *The World at Auction* (*The Race of Leaves* in 1901, and *Julia Domna* in 1903). But London had turned its back on the poets, and although they continued publishing both verse and drama until their deaths (Cooper died in 1913, and Bradley in 1914), they received very little critical attention.

What happened then to the passenger? Did it disappear with the twentieth century? Or did it develop into new forms? Three main changes occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century, which produced another revolution in urban transport. First, omnibuses were substituted by motorbuses. Secondly, underground trains and trams were electrified. This meant that it was now much cleaner, faster, and crucially cheaper, to travel across London than ever before. In addition new underground lines appeared in the metropolis further developing the already complex mass-transport network. This trend was continued well into the twentieth century, and Londoners used buses and underground trains more than ever before.

Thirdly, the emergence of the automobile produced another form of transport which competed later in the twentieth century with buses and underground trains for urban passengers. It is significant that in 1919 Alice Meynell received the gift of a car from Celia Tobin, sister of the American poet Agnes Tobin. According to Viola Meynell:

> The gift of a car from Celia Tobin, who was now Mrs. Charles Clark, was the means of giving her vision after vision of the country she adored. That car, indeed, brought ploughed lands and wheat fields and trees and skies and seas flowing to her eyes, who could never see enough.[5]

This anecdote is perhaps a fitting example to bring my discussion on the figure of the passenger and *fin-de-siècle* urban women poets to a close: we see here how Meynell embraced the new transport revolution. If trains and omnibuses had been crucial in the production of a new spatial reality in London, and in the liberation of the urban dweller in terms of urban space and time, cars further increased the individual's mobility. Because as Stephen Kern has argued in his analysis of Gabriel Hanotaux's *L' Energie française* (1902), cars 'liberate[d] travelers from the constraints of railroad timetables'. By this Kern (and Hanotaux) mean both a liberation in terms of time (car owners can travel whenever they want) but also a liberation in terms of space (as car owners can travel wherever they want using the navigation route they prefer). The car in this sense opened up new spatial and temporal categories. It is for this reason that Marcel Proust thought that travelling by car, as

Kern argues, 'was "more genuine" because it allowed one to remain in closer intimacy with the earth and traverse space as a continuum'.[6] This was exactly what Alice Meynell felt while travelling in her car. As the quotation above shows, the car seemed to have allowed her to be 'in a closer intimacy with the earth', giving her eyes, 'who could never see enough', 'vision after vision' of the country she adored. But the car and its influence on urban life and culture belong to another history.

Notes

Introduction: Passengers of Modernity

1. Quoted in Robert Secor, 'Robert Browning and the Hunts of South Kensington', *Browning Institute Studies. An Annual of Victorian Literary and Cultural History*, ed. by William S. Peterson, Vol. 7 (1979), 130.
2. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46780 f.139. When quoting from manuscript material, I have retained the original manuscript format of underlining text, implying italics.
3. Isobel Armstrong, *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics and Politics* (London: Routledge, 1993), 479.
4. Amy Levy, *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1889).
5. Mass transport, also called public transport or transportation, mass transportation, or mass transit in America, refers to a system designed to convey large numbers of paying people in various types of vehicles (in the nineteenth century omnibuses, trams, underground and suburban trains) from place to place along fixed routes in cities, suburbs, and larger metropolitan areas. I will use here the term mass transport as opposed to mass transportation to avoid any confusion with the British English use of the term 'transportation', which historically means 'removal to penal colony' (OED).
6. I will be referring throughout this book to Michael Field, not 'Field'. The reason for this is that 'Field' was the name in this co-authorial partnership that referred to Edith Cooper, just as 'Michael' referred to Katharine Bradley.
7. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46780 f.89. Michael Field, *Sight and Song* (London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane at the Sign of the Bodley Head, 1892).
8. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46780 f.30.
9. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46780 f.47.
10. Theodor W. Adorno, 'On Lyric Poetry and Society' in *Notes to Literature, Volume One*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 46.
11. Margot Finn, 'Sex and the City: Metropolitan Modernities in English History', *Victorian Studies* 44:1 (2001): 25.
12. Rosamund Ball, afterwards Rosamund Armytage, afterwards 'Graham R. Tomson', afterwards Rosamund Marriott Watson. For a discussion of her use of names see Chapter 3. In this book I shall be referring to either Graham R. Tomson or

Rosamund Marriott Watson depending upon the name she used as a publishing author. In other words, her publications from 1887 onwards will be referenced under Graham R. Tomson, and those from 1895 under Rosamund Marriott Watson.

13. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 117.
14. Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean. His Sensations and Ideas*. Vol. II (London: Macmillan, 1885), 19.
15. Arthur Symons, 'Mr. Henley's Poetry', *The Fortnightly Review* 52 (1892): 184. The essay was later reprinted as 'Modernity in Verse' in his *Studies in Two Literatures* (London: Leonard Smithers, 1897), 186–203.
16. Richard Le Gallienne, *The Romantic '90s*. Introduction by H. Montgomery Hyde (London: Putman, 1951), 122.
17. William Ernest Henley, *London Voluntaries. The Song of the Sword, and Other Verses* (London: David Nutt, 1893), Second edn revised; and his *London Types*. Quatorzains by W. E. Henley, Illustrations by W. Nicholson (London: Heinemann, 1898); Ernest Rhys, *A London Rose and Other Rhymes* (London: Elkin Mathews & John Lane, 1894); Arthur Symons, *London Nights* (London: Leonard Smithers, 1895); Laurence Binyon, *First Book of London Visions* (London: Elkin Mathews' Shilling Garland, 1896) and his *Second Book of London Visions* (London: Elkin Mathews' Shilling Garland, 1899); and Alice Meynell, *London Impressions*. Etchings and Pictures in Photogravure by William Hyde and essays by Alice Meynell (London: Constable, 1898).
18. Alice Meynell, 'November Blue' in Alice Meynell, *Later Poems* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1902), 26–7; Lord Alfred Douglas, 'Impression de Nuit: London' in *The City of the Soul* (London: Grant Richards, 1899), 65; A. Mary F. Robinson, 'The Ideal' in *An Italian Garden. A Book of Songs* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1886), 11–12; Rosamund Marriott Watson, 'London in October' and 'A Song of London' in *Vespertilia and Other Verses* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1895), 44–6 and 41–2; Amy Levy, 'London in July', 'The Village Garden' and 'Ballade of an Omnibus' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 18, 30–1, and 21–2; John Davidson, *Fleet Street Eclogues* (London: Elkin Mathews & John Lane, 1893) and *A Second Series of Fleet Street Eclogues* (London: John Lane, 1896); Oscar Wilde, 'Symphony in Yellow' in *Oscar Wilde Complete Poetry*, ed. Isobel Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 141–2; and Arthur Symons, 'In an Omnibus' in *Silhouettes* (London: Elkin Mathews & John Lane, 1892), 26–7. A second version of this poem appeared in *Silhouettes*. Second Edition. Revised and Enlarged (London: Leonard Smithers, 1896), 21. In this version the poem is shorter and more critical in its treatment of women passengers.
19. Jonathan Freedman, *Professions of Taste: Henry James, British Aestheticism, and Commodity Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 10.
20. R. K. R. Thornton (ed.), *Poetry of the 'Nineties* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970) and G. Robert Stange, 'The Frightened Poets' in *The Victorian City: Images and Realities*, eds H. J. Dyos and Michael Wolff, Vol. 2 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), 475–94.
21. Thornton, *Poetry of the 'Nineties*, 57.
22. Stange, 'Frightened', 489 and 493.
23. William B. Thesing, *The London Muse: Victorian Poetic Responses to the City* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1982), 148.
24. Ibid., 147.

25. W. E. Henley (ed.), *A London Garland. Selected from Five Centuries of English Verse by W.E. Henley with Pictures by Members of the Society of Illustrators* (London: Macmillan, 1895) and Wilfred Whitten (ed.), *London in Song* (London: Grant Richards, 1898).
26. Henley, *A London Garland*, vii.
27. Frederick Locker-Lampson, 'Piccadilly' in *London Lyrics* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1857), 17–20. Graham R. Tomson, 'In the Rain' in *A Summer Night and Other Poems*. With a Frontispiece by A. Tomson (London: Methuen, 1891), 10–12.
28. Charles Whibley, 'Poetry in Petticoats' *The Scots Observer* (8 March 1890): 488–9. Henley dedicated his *London Voluntaries* to Whibley.
29. 'Recent Verse', *The Athenaeum* (4 April 1896): 442.
30. See Anna Adams (ed.), *Thames: An Anthology of River Poems*. Compiled by Anna Adams with a Preface by Ian Sinclair and Etchings by James McNeill Whistler (London: Enitharmon Press, 1999) and her *London in Poetry and Prose*. Drawings by Neil Pittaway (London: Enitharmon Press, 2003). It must be noted, however, that women poets' responses to the urban experience during the twentieth century are well represented in the 2003 collection.
31. Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis Psomiades (eds), *Women and British Aestheticism* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), 13.
32. Talia Schaffer, *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes: Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 6.
33. Ibid., 7.
34. Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen Nineties: A Review of Art and Ideas at the Close of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Grant Richards, 1913), 127, 128.
35. Ibid., 135.
36. Ibid., 139.
37. See Bruce Gardiner, *The Rhymers' Club: A Social and Intellectual History* (New York: Garland, 1988) and Norman Alford, *The Rhymers' Club: Poets of the Tragic Generation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).
38. For a study of literary *salons* see my 'New Woman Poets and the Culture of the *salon* at the *fin de siècle*', *Women: A Cultural Review* 10:1 (1999): 22–34. For a description of Paul Verlaine's lecture at Barnard's Inn see his 'My Visit to London', *Savoy*, ed. by Arthur Symons (2 April 1896): 119–35 and Henri Locard, 'Michael Field et la "lecture de Verlaine" à Barnard's Inn', *Confluents* 1 (1975): 91–101; for Walter Pater's lecture on Mérimée see Michael Field, *Works and Days: From the Journal of Michael Field*, ed. by T. & D. C. Sturge Moore (London: John Murray, 1933), 119–21. For (literary) clubs see Amy Levy 'Women and Club Life', *The Woman's World* (1888): 364–7; and Sheila E. Braine, 'London's Clubs for Women' in George R. Sims (ed.), *Living London*, Vol. I. (London: Cassell, 1902), 114–18. For discussions about women writers and the British Museum Reading Room see Christine Pullen, ' "Under the Great Dome": Amy Levy, the New Journalism and the Poetic of "New Grub Street" ', paper delivered at the Conference *Women's Poetry and the* Fin de Siècle. Institute of English Studies (14 June 2002) and Susan Bernstein, '*Salon*, Club, and Library Spaces as Heterotopias of Levy's London' paper delivered at INCS, *Nineteenth-Century Worlds: Local/Global* (10–12 July 2003).
39. Schaffer, *Forgotten*, 1.
40. Schaffer, *Forgotten*, 159–96. See also her 'A Tethered Angel: The Martyrology of Alice Meynell', *Victorian Poetry*, Special Issue Women Writers 1890–1918, 38:1 (Spring 2000): 49–61; and 'Writing a Public Self: Alice Meynell's "Unstable Equilibrium" ' in Ann Ardis and Leslie W. Lewis (eds), *Women's Experience of Modernity*, 1875–1945 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 13–30.

41. Linda K. Hughes, 'Feminizing Decadence: Poems by Graham R. Tomson' in Schaffer and Psomiades, *Women and British Aestheticism*, 119–38.
42. See, for example, Isobel Armstrong and Virginia Blain (eds), *Women's Poetry, Late Romantic to Late Victorian: Gender and Genre 1830–1900* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press – now Palgrave Macmillan, 1999). Linda Hunt Beckman, *Amy Levy: Her Life and Letters* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000). Joseph Bristow, ' "All out of tune in this world's instrument": The "minor" poetry of Amy Levy', *Journal of Victorian Culture* 4:1 (1999): 76–103. Linda K. Hughes' work on Graham R. Tomson (Rosamund Marriott Watson) includes 'My Sister, My Self: Networking and Self-Promotion among *Fin-de-Siècle* Women Poets', Paper delivered at the conference *Rethinking Women's Poetry 1730–1930* (Birkbeck College, University of London, 1995); 'A Female Aesthete at the Helm: *Sylvia's Journal* and "Graham R. Tomson", 1893–1894', *Victorian Periodicals Review* 29:2 (1996): 173–92; 'A *Fin-de-Siècle* Beauty and the Beast: Configuring the Body in Works by "Graham R. Tomson" (Rosamund Marriott Watson)', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 14:1 (1995): 95–121; and ' "Fair Hymen holdeth hid a world of woes": Myth and Marriage in Poems by "Graham R. Tomson" (Rosamund Marriott Watson)', *Victorian Poetry* 32 (1994): 97–120. Angela Leighton, *Victorian Women Poets: Writing Against the Heart* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992); see also her (ed.), *Victorian Women Poets: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996). Yopie Prins, *Victorian Sappho* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); see also her 'A Metaphorical Field: Katherine Bradley and Edith Cooper', *Victorian Poetry* 33:1 (1995): 129–48; and 'Sappho Doubled: Michael Field', *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 8 (1995): 165–86.
43. See Marion Thain, *Michael Field and Poetic Identity: With a Biography* (London: The Eighteen Nineties Society, 2000). A biography of Mathilde Blind by James Diedrick is currently in preparation. See also the soon to be published biography of Graham R. Tomson: Linda K. Hughes, *Graham R. Rosamund Marriott Watson, Woman of Letters* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2005).
44. See Angela Leighton and Margaret Reynolds (eds), *Victorian Women Poets: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995); Isobel Armstrong and Joseph Bristow, with Cath Sharrock (eds), *Nineteenth-Century Women Poets* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Linda K. Hughes (ed.), *New Woman Poets: An Anthology* (London: The Eighteen Nineties Society, 2001).
45. R. K. R. Thornton and Marion Thain (eds), *Poetry of the 1890s*. Second Edition (London: Harmondsworth, 1997).
46. Adorno, 'Lyric Poetry', 37.
47. Ibid., 37–8.
48. Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism* (London: New Left Books, 1973; rpt. Verso, 1997). H. J. Dyos and Michael Wolff (eds), *The Victorian City: Images and Realities*, 2 vols (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973); Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1973).
49. Dyos and Wolff (eds), *The Victorian City*, I: xxv.
50. Victor E. Neuburg, 'The Literature of the Streets' in Dyos and Wolff (eds) *The Victorian City* I: 191–209; Lynn Lees, 'Metropolitan Types: London and Paris Compared' in Dyos and Wolff (eds) I: 413–28; Jack Simmons, 'The Power of the Railway' in Dyos and Wolff (eds) I: 277–310; H. J. Dyos and D. A. Reeder, 'Slums and Suburbs' in Dyos and Wolff (eds) I: 359–86; John Summerson, 'London, the Artifact' in Dyos and Wolff (eds) I: 311–32.
51. Williams, *The Country and the City*, 233.

52. There is a vast literature on this subject, but essential to any study of the *flâneur* is Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999); Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989) and her 'The Flaneur, the Sandwichman, and the Whore: The Politics of Loitering', *New German Critique* 39 (1986): 99–140. See also Keith Tester (ed.), *The Flâneur* (London: Routledge, 1994).
53. Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London: Verso, 1982), 15.
54. See Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and Avant-Garde* (London: Verso, 1995), 8.
55. Wendy Parkins, 'Moving Dangerously: Mobility and the Modern Woman', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 20:1 (2001): 77. I would like to thank the anonymous reader for bringing this essay to my attention.
56. See Osborne, *Politics of Time*, 5–9.
57. Miles Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780* (New York: The Guildford Press, 1998), 5. See also Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993) and Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).
58. Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 6.
59. Ibid., 6.
60. Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 16.
61. See Nead, *Victorian Babylon*, 70; Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825–1880* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 75–6; Elizabeth Wilson, 'The Invisible Flâneur', *New Left Review* 191 (1992): 90–110.
62. Griselda Pollock, 'Modernity and the spaces of femininity' in *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and Histories of Art* (London: Routledge, 1988), 67.
63. See for example Janet Wolff, 'The Culture of the Separate Spheres: The Role of Culture in Nineteenth-Century Public and Private Life' in *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class*, eds Janet Wolff and John Seed (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 117–34. For an examination of the subject from an architectural point of view, see Sharon Marcus, *Apartment Stories: City and Home in Nineteenth-Century Paris and London* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).
64. See among others Janet Wolff, 'The Invisible *Flâneuse*: Women and the Literature of Modernity', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 2:3 (1985), 37–46; and her 'The Artist and The *Flâneur*: Rodin, Rilke and Gwen John in Paris' in Tester, *The Flâneur*, 111–37; Jenny Ryan, 'Women, Modernity and the City', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 11:4 (1994) 35–63; Lynne Walker, 'Vistas of pleasure: Women consumers of urban space in the West End of London, 1850–1900' in *Women in the Victorian Art World*, ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 70–85; Deborah L. Parsons, *Streetwalking the Metropolis: Women, the City, and Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
65. Elizabeth Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women* (London: Virago, 1991), 46. Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (London: Virago, 1992).
66. Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City*, 46.
67. Finn, 'Sex and the City', 25.

68. Erika Diane Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 7. A classic study of the subject is Alison Adburgham's *Shops and Shopping 1800–1914: Where, and in What Manner the Well-dressed Englishwoman Bought Her Clothes* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1964). For more recent discussions, see Rachel Bowlby, *Just Looking: Consumer Culture in Dreiser, Gissing, and Zola* (London: Methuen, 1985); Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity* (London: Virago, 1985); Lori Anne Loeb, *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
69. Deborah Epstein Nord, *Walking the Victorian Streets: Women, Representation, and the City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).
70. Ibid., 3.
71. Rappaport does recognise, however, the panoramic possibilities that public transport could offer to women. See Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure*, 122–6.
72. Though historians have recognized the crucial role of public transport in the formation of the nineteenth-century metropolis, there are no equivalent studies in cultural criticism to date, especially in terms of gender. For an examination of the influence of the underground in late-Victorian theatre see David L. Pike, 'Underground Theater: Subterranean Spaces on the London Stage', *Nineteenth Century Studies* 13 (1999): 102–38. For an excellent study of the underground and inter-war England see Michael T. Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England: Medieval Modernism and the London Underground* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). For a general introduction to travel and modernity see Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880–1918* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983). For twentieth-century discussions of women, modernity and travel, see Gillian Beer, 'The Island and the Aeroplane: The Case of Virginia Woolf' in her *Virginia Woolf: The Common Ground* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), 149–78; Rachel Bowlby, ' "We're Getting There": Woolf, Trains and the Destinations of Feminist Criticism' in her *Feminist Destinations and Further Essays on Virginia Woolf* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 3–15; and Parkins, 'Moving Dangerously', 77–92. There are, however, some excellent studies of railways in the nineteenth century. A classic work is Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Leamington Spa: Berg, 1986 new edn). Two more recent studies of railways in nineteenth- and twentieth-century fiction and cinema that I have found especially useful have been Lynne Kirby, *Parallel Tracks: The Railroad and Silent Cinema* (Exeter: The University of Exeter Press, 1997) and Ian Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain: The Epitome of Modernity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).
73. Christoph Asendorf, *Batteries of Life: On the History of Things and Their Perception in Modernity*, trans. Don Reneau (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 57.
74. Nead, *Victorian Babylon*, 13. George Augustus Sala suggested that all London's improvements in circulation should be put in place to allow London to become a modern capital. See his 'Locomotion in London', *The Gentleman's Magazine* 236 (1874): 453–65.
75. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46781f.22v. Michael Field's remarks were provoked by the theatre performance of Henrik Ibsen's *The Master Builder* in London in (February 1893).
76. Ibid., Add. MS. 46788 ff.96v-97. Michael Field, *Long Ago* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1889). The 'lovely guide' was Arthur Symons.

77. Adorno, 'Lyric Poetry', 39.
78. T.C. Barker and Michael Robbins, *A History of London Transport: Passenger Travel and the Development of the Metropolis*. Volume 1: *The Nineteenth Century* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1963), 1. My historical analysis of London transport in the nineteenth century is deeply indebted to Barker and Robbins's magnificent and well-researched volume. This is by far the most comprehensive study of London's transport system and more recent analyses of the matter are all based on this work. General histories of London's transport include Alan A. Jackson, *Semi-Detached London: Suburban Development, Life and Transport, 1900–1939* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1973); Charles F. Klapper, *Roads and Rails of London, 1900–1933* (London: Ian Allan, 1976); and Gavin Weightman and Steve Humphries, *The Making of Modern London, 1815–1914* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1983). For more recent examinations see Theo Barker, *Moving Millions: A Pictorial History of London Transport* (London: London Transport Museum, 1990); Sheila Taylor (ed.), *The Moving Metropolis: A History of London's Transport since 1800*, Introductions by Oliver Green (London: Laurence King Publishing in association with London's Transport Museum, 2001); and Stephen Halliday, *Underground to Everywhere: London's Underground Railway in the Life of the Capital* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing and London's Transport Museum, 2001).
79. John R. Day, *The Story of the London Bus: London and Its Buses from the Horse Bus to the Present Day* (London: London Transport, 1973), 5. Another good study of the London omnibus is London General, *The Story of the London Bus 1856–1956* (London: London Transport, 1956).
80. Barker and Robbins, *History of London Transport*, I: 19–20.
81. Although later the service started to operate at 8 a.m., it made no difference because the working classes were long into work by that time. Roy Porter, *London: A Social History* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1994), 225.
82. L. C. B. Seaman, *Life in Victorian London* (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd, 1973), 58.
83. Porter, *London*, 225.
84. Porter, *London*, 323; Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City*, 45; Wolff, 'The Invisible *Flâneuse*', 43–4.
85. Barker and Robbins, *History of London Transport*, I: 202.
86. Ibid., I: 40–3.
87. Seaman, *Life in Victorian London*, 59.
88. Barker and Robbins, *History of London Transport*, I: 41.
89. Ibid., I: 45.
90. Ibid., I: 45–6.
91. Ibid., I: 56–7.
92. Yvonne Ffrench, *The Great Exhibition: 1851* (London: The Harvill Press, 1950), 185. Barker and Robbins, *History of London Transport*, I: 61.
93. Seaman, *Life in Victorian London*, 58. The company was financed by the French company Compagnie Générale des Omnibus de Londres.
94. John R. Kellett, *Railways and Victorian Cities* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), 316–17. See also John Hollingshead, *Underground London* (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1862), 203–12; and Henry Mayhew, *The Shops and Companies of London and the Trades and Manufactories of Great Britain*, Vol. I (London: Strand, 1865), especially his section on 'The Metropolitan Railway', 142–53.
95. Christopher Hibbert, *London: The Biography of a City* (1969; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980), 184; Donald J. Olsen, *The Growth of Victorian London* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), 299–308.

96. Hibbert, *London*, 184, 190.
97. See for example Edwin Chadwick, *Report to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, from the Poor Law Commissioner, On an Inquiry into the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain*, House of Lords Sessional Papers, Session 1842, vols 26–8.
98. 'Opening of the Metropolitan Railway', *The Illustrated London News* (17 January 1863): 74.
99. Both the drainage system and the underground railway had been built during the same period. The drainage system was constructed between 1859 and 1865, and the underground between 1860 and 1863. See Richard Trench and Ellis Hillman, *London under London: A Subterranean Guide* (London: John Murray, 1984).
100. *Daily Telegraph*, 12 January 1863. Quoted in Trench and Hillman, *London under London*, 138.
101. 'Opening of the Metropolitan Railway', 74. Barker and Robbins, *A History of London Transport*, I: 117.
102. *Daily Telegraph*, 12 January 1863. Quoted in Trench and Hillman, *London under London*, 138.
103. Ibid., 138.
104. Barker and Robbins, *A History of London Transport*, I: 57.
105. Ibid., I: 58.
106. Ibid., I: 166. The introduction of cheap rates allowed the working classes for the first time the possibility of moving out of the slums. The Metropolitan Board's contract with the government, however, created a system based on class divisions: the working classes travelled in the early hours of the day in what was called the workingmen train, and the middle classes travelled later in the day at greater cost in trains that were divided into first (sixpence single), second (fourpence single) and third-class carriages (threepence single). Ibid., I: 122.
107. Charles Klapper, *The Golden Age of Tramways* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), 7–15.
108. Barker and Robbins, *A History of London Transport*, I: 196. Despite its successful beginning, tram transport declined at the beginning of the twentieth century. For more information see Olsen, *Growth of Victorian London*, 321 and Barker and Robbins, *A History of London Transport*, I: 178–97.
109. Seaman, *Life in Victorian London*, 73. Barker and Robbins, *A History of London Transport*, I: 261 and 263. The Metropolitan Railway carried 91 million passengers in 1896, and the Metropolitan District 40 million.
110. Arthur Symons, *London: A Book of Aspects* (London: Privately Printed for Edmund D. Brooks, 1909). Rpt. in his *Cities and Sea-Coasts and Islands*, Collins' Kings' Way Classics (London: W. Collins Sons & Co., 1918), 145. Subsequent citations refer to the Collins' Kings' Way Classics 1918 edition.
111. Charles Baudelaire, 'Loss of a Halo' in *Paris Spleen 1869*, trans. Louise Varèse (London: Peter Owen, 1951), 94.
112. Berman, *All That Is Solid*, 159–60.
113. Buck-Morss, 'The Flaneur', 102.
114. Symons, *London*, 147.
115. Another interesting example is H. G. Wells' dystopia *The Time Machine* (London: William Heinemann, 1895), 82. Here Wells presents the underworld people (or Morlocks) directly descending from passengers of the Metropolitan Railway in London.

116. See George Egerton, 'A Lost Masterpiece: A City Mood, Aug. '93', *The Yellow Book* vol. I (April 1894): 189–96; Evelyn Sharp, 'In Dull Brown', *The Yellow Book* vol. VIII (January 1896): 181–200. I would like to thank the anonymous reader for drawing my attention to these two stories.
117. Egerton, 'A Lost Masterpiece', 195–6.
118. See James Harding, *Artistes Pompiers: French Academic Art in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Academic Editions, 1979). For a historical description of the term, see Alain Rey (ed.), *Le Robert. Dictionnaire Historique de la Langue Française* (Paris: Le Robert, 1993), 1575.
119. Egerton, 'A Lost Masterpiece', 196.
120. Chris Jenks, 'Watching your Step: The History and Practice of the *Flâneur*' in *Visual Culture*, ed. Chris Jenks (London: Routledge, 1995), 146.
121. Levy, *A London Plane-Tree*, 19.
122. Symons, *London*, 144.
123. Henry Charles Moore, *Omnibuses and Cabs: Their Origin and History* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1902), 36–45.
124. Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994), 338.
125. Symons, *London*, 146.
126. J. Milner Fothergill, *The Town Dweller: His Needs and his Wants* (London: H.K. Lewis, 1889), 43.
127. Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 129. See also William Leiss, 'Technology and Degeneration: The Sublime Machine' in *Degeneration: The Dark Side of Progress*, eds J. Edward Chamberlin and Sander L. Gilman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 145–64; and Anson Rabinbach, *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
128. James Cantlie, *Degeneration amongst Londoners* (London: Field & Tuer, 1885), 24.
129. Ibid., 30–1.
130. '[T]he little old streets, so narrow and exclusive […] we lose our way in them, do we? – we whose time is money. Our omnibuses can't trundle through them, can't they? Very well, then. Down with them! We have no use for them'. Max Beerbohm, 'The Naming of Streets', *The Pall Mall Magazine* 26 (1902): 139.
131. Symons, *London*, 145.
132. Rosalind H. Williams, *Notes on the Underground: An Essay on Technology, Society, and the Imagination* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990), 23.
133. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46779f.33v.
134. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (London: Routledge, 1995), 150.
135. Michel Serres, *Atlas* (Paris: Éditions Julliard, 1994) and his *Les Cinq Sens. Philosophie des Corps Mêlés I* (Paris: Grasset, 1985).
136. Michel Serres, *Hermès IV: La Distribution* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1977), 200.
137. De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 115.
138. Schivelbusch, *Railway Journey*, 192. Schivelbusch examines the passenger's journey in economic terms in relation to railway journeys, not to mass transport.
139. Moore, *Omnibuses*, 73.
140. Ibid., 73.
141. Ibid., 73.
142. See Alan A. Jackson, *London's Local Railways* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1978) especially his chapter 'Lines for Leisure', 95–155.

143. Adburgham, *Shops and Shopping*, 149–50; Barker and Robbins, *A History of London Transport*, I: 201–3.
144. Henry Charles Moore, 'Tram, 'Bus, and Cab London' in *Living London*, ed. George R. Sims, vol. II (London: Cassell and Co., 1902), 97.
145. Seaman, *Life in Victorian London*, 95.
146. Barker and Robbins, *A History of London Transport*, I: 202.
147. Seaman, *Life in Victorian London*, 97.
148. Ibid., 96.
149. See Jonathan Riddell, *Pleasure Trips by Underground* (Harrow Weald: London Transport Museum and Capital Transport Publishing, 1998), 6–15.
150. Schivelbusch, *Railway Journey*, 52–69.
151. John Ruskin, *The Works of John Ruskin*, eds E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, vol. XXXVI (London: George Allen, 1903–12), 62.
152. Symons, *London*, 146–7.
153. Moore, *Omnibuses*, 113–14.
154. Swan and Edgar's was one of the most fashionable shops of Regent Street, which was situated at the corner of Piccadilly Circus. See Seaman, *Life in Victorian London*, 94.
155. Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observe*r: *On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 14.
156. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 132.
157. For Nietzsche, in ways which remind us of Ruskin, vision in modernity is problematic because transport and speed were creating what he considered a 'partial' and hence 'inaccurate' vision. Nietzsche was very distrustful of the sense of sight, and was terribly preoccupied with what he called 'the immaculate perception'. For a study of Nietszche as an anti-ocularcentric philosopher see Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 188–92.
158. Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 12; Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. and intro. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (London: Fontana, 1973), 252.
159. Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 20–1.
160. Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, 12.
161. Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 112–13.
162. Lynne Kirby, *Parallel Tracks*, 46.
163. George Augustus Sala, *Twice Round the Clock; or the Hours of the Day and Night in London* (London: Houlston & Wright, 1859), 220.
164. Ibid., 221.
165. Gianni Vattimo, *The Transparent Society*, trans. D. Webb (Oxford: Polity, 1992).

1 Amy Levy in Bloomsbury: The Poet as Passenger

1. Letter from Amy Levy to Vernon Lee in Beckman, *Amy Levy*, 264.
2. Amy Levy, 'Jewish Humour' in *The Complete Novels and Selected Writings of Amy Levy, 1861–1889*, ed. Melvyn New (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993), 523.
3. Emma Francis, 'Amy Levy: Contradictions? Feminism and Semitic Discourse' in Armstrong and Blain, *Women's Poetry*, 183–204. Cynthia Scheinberg, *Women's*

Poetry and Religion in Victorian England: Jewish Identity and Christian Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 190.

4. Levy, 'Straw in the Street' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 25.
5. Katie Solomon, 'Letters to the Editor', *The Observer* (7 July 1929): 10. Levy's friend could be Dorothy Frances Blomfield (b.1858), who became in the late 1880s one of Levy's closest friends. She was the eldest daughter of the Reverend F. G. Blomfield, who was himself the eldest son of the first Bishop Blomfield, a Rector of St Andrews. She wrote a hymn for her sister's wedding in 1885 which became so successful that it was subsequently set up as an anthem for the marriage of the Duke of Fife with Princess Louise of Wales. British Library, MS. Add. 57507 ff.188–190v. She was, like Levy, a contributor to *The Woman's World*, edited by Oscar Wilde (see for example her poem 'A Roman Love-Song' [*The Woman's World* (1888): 363] or 'Disillusioned' [*The Woman's World* (1889): 352]), though she is perhaps best known for her transgressive short story 'The Reputation of Mademoiselle Claude', *Temple Bar* 74 (July 1885): 358–70. Blomfield also befriended Vernon Lee, who invited her to become her brother's [the poet Eugene Lee-Hamilton] secretary in 1893. See Vernon Lee, *Vernon Lee's Letters*, ed. with a Preface by her Executor I. Cooper Willis (privately printed, 1937), 345–6. Christine Pullen, however, suggests this was the novelist Bertha Thomas. See Christine Pullen, *Amy Levy: Her Life, Her Poetry and the Era of the New Woman* (PhD, University of Kingston-upon-Thames, 2000), 106.
6. Bowlby, *Feminist Destinations*, 9.
7. Levy finished correcting the proofs on Friday 30 August 1889. She wrote across her diary between Friday 16 and Friday 30 August 1889: 'Ill at Endsleigh Gardens. Corrected proofs of A London Plane-Tree et.c'. Levy's social diary for 1889 is in the care of Camellia Plc. I would like to thank Mr. M. C. Perkins for allowing me access to and permission to quote from the Amy Levy Archive.
8. Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire*, 37–8.
9. Grant Allen ('G.A.'), 'For the Same Urn: Another Inscription', *Pall Mall Gazette* (26 September 1889): 2.
10. William Sharp, '*A London Plane Tree: and Other Verse*. By Amy Levy. (Fisher Unwin.)', *The Academy* (1 February, 1890): 76.
11. Thesing, *The London Muse*, 149. For an examination of late-Victorian women poets and the sonnet see Natalie M. Houston, 'Towards a New History: *Fin-de-Siècle* Women Poets and the Sonnet' in *Victorian Women Poets* edited by Alison Chapman (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, The English Association, 2003), 145–64.
12. Amy Levy, *Xantippe and Other Verse* (Cambridge: E. Johnson, 1881), 19–21.
13. When correcting the final proofs of *A London Plane-Tree*, Levy wrote after the quotation of Omar Khayyám which introduced the section 'Moods and Thoughts': 'To this section let Felo de Se be added when reprinted.' She also wrote at the end of the poem 'The Last Judgement': ' "Felo de Se" to be inserted next.' The manuscript and the proofs of *A London Plane-Tree* are in the care of Camellia Plc.
14. Omar Khayyám, *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*. Rendered into English Verse by Edward Fitzgerald. The Four Editions with the Original Prefaces and Notes (London: Macmillan, 1899) 183 and 255. Levy quotes from the 1872 or the 1879 edition (stanza LXVI) with some very minor changes in punctuation.
15. Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*. Vol. I. Translated from the German by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp (London: Trübner & Co., 1883), 403 and 514.

16. Levy, *Complete*, 527. Helen Zimmern, *Arthur Schopenhauer: His Life and His Philosophy* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1876).
17. Levy, 'To E.' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 92. Though this poem appears last in the volume, it was first published in the *London Society* in May 1886. According to her 1889 diary, 'The End of the Day', written on 1 August 1889, was the last poem she was ever to write, and appears in *A London Plane-Tree*, 80–1.
18. Levy, 'The Two Terrors' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 64. Arthur Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena: Short Philosophical Essays*. Trans. By E. F. J. Payne. Vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 310.
19. Schopenhauer, *World as Will*, I: 404.
20. James Richardson, *Vanishing Lives: Style and Self in Tennyson, D.G. Rossetti, Swinburne and Yeats* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1988), 121.
21. For Levy's views on religion consider her poem 'A Ballade of Religion and Marriage', where she radically argues for the removal of the bonds of marriage and religion. The poem's final *envoi* reads:

    > Grant, in a million years, at most,
    > Folk shall be neither pairs nor odd.–
    > Alas, we shan't be here to boast:
    > Marriage has gone the way of God!

    Privately printed for Clement K. Shorter in 1915, the original manuscript of 'A Ballade of Religion and Marriage' is in the Grant Allen Literary Manuscripts and Correspondence 1872–1937 Archive (Box 1: Folder 26) at Pennsylvania State University (Special Collections Library). In literary convention, the ballade's *envoi* is addressed to a 'Prince' or 'Princess'. Christine Pullen's speculation that Levy substituted 'Prince' for 'Grant' [Allen] is therefore correct. See Christine Pullen, *Amy Levy*, 204. Levy began writing ballades in 1888, most of which were compiled in her last volume of verse, *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse*, published in 1889, the last year of her life. We know from Levy's social diary for 1889 that she saw a lot of the 'Grant Allens' in that year. She even stayed with them at their house in Dorking on the weekend of 15–16 June 1889. The poem therefore must have been written in 1889. I would like to thank Sandra Stelts, Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts at The Pennsylvania State University Library for all her help. For more on Levy's views on theism in relation to sexuality and sexual politics see Emma Francis, 'Socialist Feminism and Sexual Instinct: Eleanor Marx and Amy Levy' in *Eleanor Marx (1855–1898): Life, Work, Contacts*, ed. John Stokes (Burlington: Ashgate, 2000), 113–27.
22. Michael Field, 'Men, looking on the Wandering Jew' in *Underneath the Bough: A Book of Verses* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1893), 14.
23. Timothy P. Martin, 'Joyce, Wagner, and the Wandering Jew' in *Comparative Literature* 42 (1990): 53–4.
24. Ibid., 54.
25. Jonathan Freedman, *The Temple of Culture: Assimilation and Anti-Semitism in Literary Anglo-America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 25.
26. Porter, *London*, 103–4.
27. See Richard Sennett, *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 92.
28. Hermione Hobhouse, *Lost London: A Century of Demolition and Decay* (London: Macmillan, 1971), 83, 86.
29. Ibid., 84.

30. Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992) 207.
31. Ibid., 210.
32. Alan A. Jackson, *London's Termini* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1969), 37.
33. Edward Verall Lucas, *A Wanderer in London* (1906; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910), 222. Unfortunately, the station was demolished and then rebuilt in the 1960s because of the mainline electrification. See Olsen, *Growth of Victorian London*, 97.
34. See New, 'Introduction' to *Complete*, 4.
35. Lucas, *A Wanderer in London*, 221–2; New, 'Introduction' to *Complete*, 4.
36. Levy, *Reuben Sachs: A Sketch* (London: Macmillan, 1888) reprinted in *Complete*, 197–293.
37. Lucas, *A Wanderer in London*, 221–3.
38. Jackson, *London's Termini*, 37.
39. John Wolfe Barry, *Address on the Streets and Traffic of London*, Delivered at the Opening Meeting of the Session (1898–1899) of the Society of Arts, on Wednesday, November 16, 1898 (London: William Trounce, 1899), 22–3.
40. Lucas, *A Wanderer in London*, 221.
41. Barry, *Address on the Streets*, 7. The other three areas were Cheapside (992 vehicles and 6,358 pedestrians), The Strand (1,228 vehicles and 5,660 pedestrians) and Piccadilly (1,497 vehicles and 3,910 pedestrians). Barry, however, used the word 'pedestrian' in his graphic tables on urban traffic.
42. The British Museum Station was opened in 1900 and closed in 1933. For further information on the opening of these stations see Laurence Menear, *London's Underground Stations: A Social and Architectural Study* (Kent: Midas Books, 1983), 135–42.
43. Olive Schreiner's library ticket no. was A.15808.3136; Beatrice Potter Webb's ticket no. was A.25724.1876; Levy's ticket no. was A.13348.5381. Other regular visitors to the British Museum's Reading Room were: the poet Mathilde Blind, who joined on 9 June 1873 (Ticket no. 3997); the poet A. Mary F. Robinson, who joined the library on 27 February 1878 (Ticket no. A. 1447), and her sister, the novelist Frances Mabel Robinson, who joined the library on 9 November 1882 (Ticket no. A.13264.5276); the literary critic Elizabeth Amelia Sharp, who joined on 16 December 1878 (Ticket no. A.9378); Alice Mona Caird, who became a member on 4 November 1879 (Ticket no. A.1984.4969); the poet Louisa Sarah Bevington, who joined the library on 28 May 1881 (Ticket no. A.7686.2419); Vernon Lee (Violet Paget), who joined the library 2 July 1881 (Ticket no. A.8003.2699); the writer (and would be lover of Lee) Clementina Anstruther-Thomson, who joined the library on 11 July 1881 (Ticket no. A.8091.3020); Constance Black, who joined the Reading Room on 14 December 1883 (Ticket no. A.17697.6236); the poet Katherine Tynan, who became a member on 12 April 1884 (Ticket no. A.19050.2042); the art critic Elizabeth Robins Pennell, who joined the library on 5 July 1884 (Ticket no. A.19720.3164); the poet Augusta Webster, who became a member on 13 June 1885 (Ticket no. A.22872.2433); the poet May Kendall, who joined the library on 15 June 1885 (Ticket no. A.22875.2342); Graham R. Tomson, who joined the library on 27 November 1888 (Ticket no. A.35529.4902); Katharine Harris Bradley, who joined on 13 November 1888 (Ticket no. A.35368.5077); Edith Cooper, who joined on 4 January 1889 (Ticket no. A.35887.5278); the writer Violet Hunt, who joined the library on 7 September 1889 (Ticket no. A.44211.3770); the poet Charlotte Mary Mew, who became a member on 5 December 1891

(Ticket no. A.44920.5711); Bertha Thomas, who became a reader on 16 October 1895 (Ticket no. A.55187.9648); Bella Duffy, who joined the library on 13 November 1893 (Ticket no. A.49921.6693); and the poet Margaret Louisa Woods, who joined the library on 15 December 1898 (Ticket no. A.63585.10936). Christina Rossetti became a reader on 17 October 1869. British Museum Library Records are held at the British Museum Central Archive, London.

44. See Yvonne Kapp, *Eleanor Marx: Family Life, 1855–1883*, Vol. I. (London: Virago, 1979), 283. Her reader ticket no. was 266.
45. See Amy Levy, 'Readers at the British Museum', *Atalanta* 2:7 (April 1889): 449. She kept what she called her British Museum notebook, which is in the possession of Camellia plc.
46. W. G. Morris, *The Squares of Bloomsbury: Lunch-time Rambles in Old London* (London: The Homeland Association, [1926]), No. 20: 1.
47. 'There are boarding-houses in Bloomsbury, round and about Russell Square, where are to be found medical and other students of both sexes and several nationalities, American folk passing through London, literary parsons "up" for a week or two's reading at the British Museum, brides and bridegrooms from the provinces, Bohemians pure and simple, and the restless gentleman who is "something in the city", but no one knows what'. See Charles Eyre Pascoe, *London of To-day: An Illustrated Handbook for the Season* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1885), 36.
48. British Library. MS. Ashley A4140 f.133. I would like to thank James Diedrick for sharing this information with me.
49. James Thomson wrote in 1875 to Bertram Dobell after he had moved to 7 Huntley Street that 'I shall settle in this neighbourhood for a time, as I want to be near Foote for the *Secularist* business, and also near the British Museum for the Reading-Room'. See H. S. Salt, *The Life of James Thomson ('B. V.') With a Selection from his Letters and a Study of his Writings* (London: Reeves & Turner, 1889), 131.
50. Bristow, 'All out of tune', 93.
51. *Catalogue of Books from The Library of Leonard and Virginia Woolf, taken from Monks House, Rodmell, Sussex and 24 Victoria Square, London and now in the possession of Washington State University, Pullman, USA*. (Brighton: Holleyman & Treacher Ltd, 1975), 13.
52. Lucas, *A Wanderer in London*, 224.
53. Max Beerbohm, *Rossetti and His Circle* (London: Heinemann, 1922), plate 12.
54. Olsen, *Growth of Victorian London*, 134.
55. Lucas, *A Wanderer in London*, 224.
56. Ibid., 224.
57. '[N]ow Gertrude was about to set out for the British Museum, where she was going through a course of photographic reading, under the direction of Mr. Russel'. See Levy, *The Romance of a Shop* in *Complete*, 86.
58. Vernon Lee, 'A Worldly Woman' in *Vanitas* (London: Heinemann, 1892), 128.
59. Ibid., 128–9.
60. Ibid., 129.
61. *Architect* VIII (1872): 143; quoted in Olsen, *Growth of Victorian London*, 133.
62. Lee, 'A Worldly Woman' in *Vanitas*, 131.
63. *Builder* LII (1887): 143; quoted in Olsen, *Growth of Victorian London*, 136.
64. *Building News* XXXII (1877): 609; quoted in Olsen, *Growth of Victorian London*, 136.
65. See Joseph F. Lamb, 'Symbols of Success in Suburbia: The Establishment of Artists' Communities in Late Victorian London' in *Victorian Urban Settings: Essays on*

the Nineteenth-Century City and its Contexts, eds Debra N. Mancoff and D. J. Trela (New York: Garland, 1996), 60–1. Lamb is concerned here only with painters and artists, not with writers.

66. Lee, 'A Worldly Woman' in *Vanitas*, 131–2.
67. 'I have been told that in the Percy Street and Cleveland Street neighbourhood many of the great anarchist plots have been hatched.' Lucas, *A Wanderer in London*, 230. For more on Stepniak see Chapter 3.
68. For more on socialism and Bloomsbury see Carolyn Steedman, 'Fictions of Engagement: Eleanor Marx, Biographical Space' in Stokes (ed.) *Eleanor Marx*, 23–39.
69. Letter from Amy Levy to Vernon Lee (November 1886) in Beckman, *Amy Levy*, 255.
70. Liselotte Glage, *Clementina Black: A Study in Social History and Literature* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, Universitätsverlag, 1981), 25. According to Glage, Constance Black, like Amy Levy, studied in Newham College, and after taking her examinations moved to London to live with her sisters (Clementina and Grace). She then started to work in Charles Booth's house as a governess (this was the period when he was writing his *Labour and Life of the People of London*), and from here she went to work as a librarian at Besant's People's Palace.
71. Olive Garnett, *Tea and Anarchy! The Bloomsbury Diary of Olive Garnett, 1890–1893*, ed. Barry C. Johnson (London: Bartletts Press, 1989), 156–7, 220.
72. Glage, *Clementina Black*, 25.
73. For a study of Amy Levy and her relationship with Eleanor Marx and Beatrice Webb, see Nord, *Walking the Victorian Streets*, 181–206. See also Yvonne Kapp, *Eleanor Marx: The Crowded Years 1884–1898*. Vol. II (London: Virago, 1979), 258–60.
74. See Glage, *Clementina Black*, 23. According to Glage, Levy's sister Katie Solomon gave Levy's personal collection of books to the Women's Protective and Provident League.
75. Letter from Amy Levy to Vernon Lee (November 1886) in Beckman, *Amy Levy*, 255.
76. Peter Gibson, *The Capital Companion: A Street-by-Street Guide to London and Its Inhabitants* (Exeter: Webb & Bower, 1985), 143.
77. See Amy Levy's letter to Vernon Lee (1887), 'Is it true that you are going to live en garçon instead of staying with the Robinsons?' See Beckman, *Amy Levy*, 264.
78. Levy, *Diary*. See entry for 15 June 1889.
79. See my 'New Women Poets', 27–9.
80. Arthur Symons, *Selected Letters, 1880–1935*, eds Karl Beckson and John M. Munro (London: Macmillan, 1989), 49.
81. See Amy Levy, 'The Poetry of Christina Rossetti', *The Woman's World* ed. Oscar Wilde, Vol. I (1888): 178–80. Levy needed leave to print D. G. Rossetti's portrait of his sister. Rossetti replied that she had no objection to what Levy proposed but that the copyright of the picture was in the hands of her brother, William Michael Rossetti. W. M. Rossetti must have granted her the right as the article indeed includes D. G. Rossetti's portrait of the poet. Christina Rossetti's letter is at the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, Los Angeles. It is dated 17 October 1887. MS Wilde W 6721LL668.
82. Levy, 'The Village Garden' in *A London Plane-Tree,* 31.
83. Levy, 'The Ghetto at Florence' in *Complete,* 520.
84. 'A London Plane-Tree', *Literary World,* 21–2 (12 April 1890): 122.
85. Sharp, *A London Plane-Tree*, 76.
86. Levy, 'James Thomson: A Minor Poet' in *Complete*, 502.
87. See, for example, James Darmesteter review of *A Minor Poet and Other Verse* in 'Chronique Anglaise', *La Revue Politique et Littéraire. Revue de Cours Littéraires*

(3e Série). 2e Semestre 1884. Numéro 15 (11 Octobre 1884): 474–5. For a more in-depth examination of Levy and Pessimism see E. K. Chambers, 'Poetry and Pessimism', *The Westminster Review* 138 (1892): 366–76.

88. John Dennis, 'The Poetry of the Century: A Retrospect and Anticipation' in *Leisure Hour*; rpt. *Littell's Living Age* (3 May 1890): 311.
89. Levy, 'London Poets (In Memoriam)' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 29.
90. 'A London Plane-Tree', *Literary World* 21–2 (12 April 1890): 122.
91. Ada Wallas, 'The Poetry of Amy Levy', *The Academy* 57 (12 August 1899): 162.
92. 'Books of the Month', *The Atlantic Monthly* 65:392 (June 1890): 859.
93. Sharp, '*A London Plane Tree*', 76.
94. Charles Whibley, 'Poetry in Petticoats', *The Scots Observer* (8 March 1890): 438–9.
95. Georg Simmel, 'Sociological Aesthetics' first published as 'Soziologische Aesthetik' *Die Zukunft* 17 (1896): 204–16, and reprinted in Georg Simmel, *The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays* trans. K. Peter Etzkorn (New York: Teachers College Press, 1968), 74.
96. See John Connell, *W. E. Henley* (London: Constable, 1949), 181. See also Linda K. Hughes, 'My Sister, My Self'. I wish to thank Linda K. Hughes for sharing a longer version of this paper with me. See also her forthcoming 'A Club of Their Own: The "Literary Ladies", New Woman Writers, and *Fin-de-siècle* Authorship', *Victorian Literature and Culture*.
97. For a discussion of Levy and Graham R. Tomson's anti-theist thought and their critique of patriarchy see my 'New Women Poets', 29–30.
98. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46778 f.135v.
99. The manuscript of *A London Plane-Tree* is in the care of Camellia Plc. The sonnet was written on 5 April 1889 (See Levy, *Diary*, entry for 5 April 1889).
100. The final proofs of *A London Plane-Tree* are in the care of Camellia Plc.
101. Beckman, *Amy Levy*, 190.
102. See Levy, *Diary*. Entry for 15 July 1889.
103. Bristow, 'All out of tune', 97.
104. For a wonderful history of London's Temple Church see David Lewer and Robert Dark, *The Temple Church in London* (London: Historical Publications, 1997). See especially illustration 99 (page 126) for a photograph of the church in 1862.
105. Levy, *Diary*. Entry for 8 April 1889. Macmillan rejected the poems on 24 April 1889, and she took them to T. Fisher Unwin the following day, 25 April 1889. On 3 May 1889 she noted in her diary that Unwin took the poems.
106. Macmillan Archive, British Library. Add MS. 55942 f.84.
107. Nord, *Walking the Victorian Streets*, 197. Nord also suggests that J. Bernard Partridge 'appears […] as the artist Frank Jermyn' in *The Romance of a Shop* (ibid., n. 46). This assertion is not however documented.
108. Levy, 'The New School of American Fiction' in *Complete*, 510–17.
109. Ibid., 511.
110. John Ruskin, 'George Eliot' in *The Literary Criticism of John Ruskin*, ed. by Harold Bloom (New York: Da Capo Press, 1965), 384–5.
111. Ibid., 385.
112. Ibid., 385.
113. Levy, 'The New School of American Fiction' in *Complete*, 515–16.
114. The essay was first published in *The Nation and The Athenaeum* (1 December 1923): 342–3, and it was afterwards revised and reprinted in various forms. It is however important to notice that, as Rachel Bowlby puts it, '[m]aking up a story about a stranger in a train was a favourite amusement for Woolf'. See Virginia

Woolf, *A Woman's Essays*. *Selected Essays: Volume I*, ed. and intro. by Rachel Bowlby (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992), 187.

115. Levy, 'A London Plane-Tree', *A London Plane-Tree*, 17.
116. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991) 27.
117. Whitechapel, for instance, was known as 'Jew-town'. See Todd M. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 129. David Feldman, 'The importance of being English: Jewish immigration and the decay of liberal England' in *Metropolis London: Histories and Representations since 1800*, eds David Feldman and Gareth Stedman Jones (London: Routledge, 1989), 56.
118. The comment referring to the Whitechapel murder and its publication details was deleted in the final stages of proof-reading. Similarly, all references to previously published poems were omitted in the final version of *A London Plane-Tree*.
119. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain*, 158.
120. Scheinberg, *Women's Poetry and Religion in Victorian England*, 230.
121. Ibid., 232.
122. Levy, 'Captivity' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 63.
123. Levy, 'A March Day in London' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 19–20.
124. Beckman, *Amy Levy*, 191–2.
125. Rabinbach, *The Human Motor*, 154.
126. Levy, 'A March Day in London', in *A London Plane-Tree*, 19–20. In the original manuscript the last verse of the third stanza (line 17) ends with an exclamation mark. There is an unfortunate print omission in the very same line in the final print run of *A London Plane-Tree*: a full stop is missing at the end of the line. This could create the ambiguity of a continuing stanza over pages 19 and 20, which was not originally intended by either Levy or the publishers. See the manuscript and final proof of the poem at Camellia Plc.
127. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain*, 157.
128. Ibid., 171.
129. Levy, *The Romance of a Shop* in *Complete*, 105.
130. Levy, 'Eldorado at Islington', *The Woman's World*, ed. Oscar Wilde, II (1889): 488.
131. This letter was written by Levy to Lee at her University Club for Ladies (31 New Bond Street, off Oxford Street). See Beckman, *Amy Levy*, 267.
132. This was most probably the Kilburn 'Red Lion' (via Cambridge Road, Walterton Road, Pembridge Villas, Silver Street, High Street, Earl's Court Road to Fulham), which was a blue omnibus. It is interesting to notice that London had become a city of signs, omnibuses' colours representing different journeys. See *Gerrard's Omnibus Guide of London Traffic* (London: G. Pulman & Sons, 1890), 97–9.
133. Levy, *Reuben Sachs* in *Complete*, 222.
134. Ibid., 209.
135. Levy, 'Between Two Stools' in *Complete*, 416.
136. Levy, 'The Piano-Organ' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 28.
137. Levy, *The Romance of a Shop*, in *Complete*, 86–7.
138. This must be the 'City Atlas', a green omnibus that ran from St John's Wood to London Bridge passing by Marlborough Road, Park Road, Baker Street, Oxford Street, Holborn, Cheapside, and King William Street. See *ABC Omnibus Guide from Anywhere to Everywhere* by the Authority of the London General Omnibus Company (London: H. Vickers, 1888), 27.
139. Levy, 'Ballade of an Omnibus' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 21–2.
140. Walter Pater, 'Conclusion' in *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, ed. Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 186, 451.

141. Ibid.,186.
142. Ibid., 187.
143. Ibid., 189; Levy, 'A March Day in London' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 20.
144. Levy, 'Out of Town' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 27.
145. Levy, 'The Village Garden' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 31.
146. Georg Simmel, 'The Metropolis and Mental Life' in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, trans., ed. and with an introduction by Kurt H. Wolff (New York: The Free Press, 1950), 410.
147. Ibid., 410.
148. Ibid., 410.
149. Levy, *The Romance of a Shop* in *Complete*, 105.
150. Levy, *Reuben Sachs* in *Complete*, 222.
151. Simmel, 'Metropolis', 410.
152. Benjamin, 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' in *Illuminations*, 177.
153. Tom Gunning, 'Tracing the Individual Body: Photography, Detectives, and Early Cinema' in *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*, eds Leo Charney and Vanessa R. Schwartz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 16.
154. Pater, *The Renaissance*, 190.

2 Alice Meynell: An Impressionist in Kensington

1. Alice Meynell, 'Unstable Equilibrium' in *Essays by Alice Meynell* (London: Burns & Oates, 1914), 159.
2. Meynell, 'Symmetry and Incident' in *Essays*, 146.
3. Meynell, 'The Roads' in *London Impressions*, 28.
4. Quoted in June Badeni, *The Slender Tree: A Life of Alice Meynell* (Cornwall: Tabb House, 1981), 140–1.
5. This rather well-known quote was frequently used by Meynell's publishers as a selling point. See for example Alice Meynell, *Collected Poems of Alice Meynell* (London: Burns & Oates, 1913).
6. Coventry Patmore, 'Mrs. Meynell, Poet and Essayist' in *The Fortnightly Review* 52 (1892): 762.
7. 'I write regularly for several of the papers and magazines, chiefly reviews; but sometimes *causerie*, sometimes serious articles, the latter of which appear mostly in *The National Observer*, which for a long time has taken anything I like to send.' Mrs. Roscoe Mullines, 'A Chat with Mrs. Meynell' in *Sylvia's Journal*, ed. Graham R. Tomson (October 1893): 549. Quoted in Hughes, 'My Sister, My Self', 15.
8. See Alice Meynell, *The Colour of Life and Other Essays on Things Seen and Heard* (London: John Lane, 1896) and *The Children* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1897). In the first edition of *The Children*, facing the title page (which was designed by Charles Robinson), the Bodley Head advertised the fourth edition of her *Poems* (1893), *The Rhythm of Life* (1893), and *The Colour of Life* (1896). By the third edition of *The Children*, the Bodley Head was advertising the fifth edition of all of these volumes.
9. 'Your mother will read this to you, and so I write for her, that more of the *Alicia Coerulea* are on the way to her because they fear the rains will ruin them by to-morrow; and she is their Queen, for whom henceforth they grow.' Meredith named irises Alicia Coerulea in honour of Alice Meynell. See Meredith, *Letters from George Meredith to Alice Meynell with Annotations Thereto 1896–1907* (London: Nonesuch Press, 1923), 20.

10. See Karl Beckson, *London in the 1890s: A Cultural History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 105. She was again proposed for Poet Laureate in 1913. See Francis Meynell, *My Lives* (London: Bodley Head, 1971), 50.
11. Armstrong, *Victorian Poetry*, 482–3. Angela Leighton, 'Alice Meynell' in *Victorian Women Poets: Writing Against the Heart*, 244–65. F. Elizabeth Gray, 'Making Christ: Alice Meynell, Poetry, and the Eucharist' in *Christianity and Literature* 52:2 (Winter 2003): 159–79. John S. Anson, ' "The Wind is Blind": Power and Constraint in the Poetry of Alice Meynell' in *Studia Mystica* 9:1 (Spring 1986): 37–50. Sharon Smulders, 'Looking "Past Wordsworth and the Rest": Pretexts for Revision in Alice Meynell's "The Shepherdess" ' in *Victorian Poetry* 38:1 (Spring 2000): 35. Kathleen Anderson, ' "I make the whole world answer to my art": Alice Meynell's Poetic Identity' in *Victorian Poetry* 41:2 (Summer 2003): 259–75. Maria Frawley, ' "The Tides of the Mind": Alice Meynell's Poetry of Perception' in *Victorian Poetry* 38:1 (Spring 2000): 64. Yopie Prins, 'Patmore's Laws, Meynell's Rhythm' in *The Fin-de-Siècle Poem* ed. by Joseph Bristow (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2005).
12. See, for example, Tracy Seeley, 'Alice Meynell, Essayist: Taking Life "Greatly to Heart" ' in *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 27:2 (1998): 105–30.
13. Schaffer, *Forgotten*, 161.
14. Ibid., 170. For an examination of Meynell's 'Angelhood' see Schaffer, 'A Tethered Angel'.
15. Schaffer, 'Writing a Public Self' in Ardis and Lewis, *Women's Experiences of Modernity*, 22.
16. See, for example, Jude Badeni's biography of Alice Meynell *The Slender Tree,* or Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell: A Memoir* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1929). See also George Meredith, *Letters from George Meredith to Alice Meynell*, and Agnes Tobin, *Agnes Tobin: Letters, Translations, Poems, With Some Account of Her Life* (San Francisco: Grabhorn Press, 1958).
17. The letter is dated 1 November 1913. Katharine Tynan's collection is at the John Rylands University Library, Manchester.
18. Alice Meynell, 'Solitude' in *The Spirit of Place and Other Essays* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1899), 16–22. She later revised it and changed its title to 'Solitudes' for *Wayfaring* (1928; London: The Travellers Library, Jonathan Cape, 1929), 163–8, and reprinted in *Prose and Poetry: Centenary Volume*, intro. Vita Sackville-West (London: Jonathan Cape, 1947), 272–6. Here I will be using the revised version as it appears in *Prose and Poetry*. 'To A Poet' in Alice C. Thompson (afterwards Meynell), *Preludes* (London: Henry S. King, 1875) 5–7.
19. Schaffer, *Forgotten*, 162.
20. Quoted in Badeni, *The Slender Tree*, 103.
21. Ibid., 103.
22. Ibid., 104.
23. 'Builders of Ruins' in *Preludes*, 27–30; 'A Dead Harvest' in Alice Meynell, *Later Poems* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1902), 31–2; 'The Effect of London' in Meynell, *London Impressions*, 6–8; 'The Childish Town' in Meynell, *Wayfaring*, 123–8. I will be using here the revised edition as it appears in *Prose and Poetry*, 283–6.
24. Badeni, *The Slender Tree*, 141.
25. See Margaret Stetz, ' "Ballads in Prose": Genre Crossings in Late-Victorian Women's Writing', paper delivered at the *Fin de Siècle Women Poets Conference*. London, June 2002.
26. Edmund Clarence Stedman, *The Nature and Elements of Poetry* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1892), 58.

27. Le Gallienne, *Romantic '90s*, 59, 74.
28. Schaffer, *Forgotten*, 161.
29. Wolfgang Iser, *Walter Pater: The Aesthetic Movement*. Trans. by David Henry Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 18, 19.
30. F. H. Pritchard (ed.), *Essays of To-Day* (London: George G. Harrap, 1923), 12.
31. Adorno, 'Lyric Poetry', 45.
32. Meynell's publishers used this review in the *Daily Chronicle* as a selling point. See, for example, Alice Meynell, *Later Poems* (1902).
33. The letter is dated July 1882. See Vernon Lee, *Vernon Lee's Letters*, 104.
34. See Chapter 1, note 16.
35. See Lee, *Letters*, 104.
36. Ibid., 119.
37. Ibid., 119.
38. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 19.
39. See Giles Walkley, *Artists' Houses in London, 1764–1914* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1994), 72.
40. See Rayburn S. Moore (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry James and the House of Macmillan, 1877–1914* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), 120, n.1 (letter 147); and 122, n.1 (letter 151). See also Philip Horne (ed.), *Henry James: A Life in Letters* (Harmondsworth: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1999), 182.
41. A. C. Benson, *Walter Pater* (London: Macmillan, 1906), 117.
42. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 11.
43. Sennett, *The Conscience of the Eye*, 31.
44. Ibid., 36.
45. Quoted in Adburgham, *Shops and Shopping*, 156.
46. [W. S. Clark], *The Suburban Homes of London: A Residential Guide* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1881), 282.
47. See Richard Stanton Lambert, *The Universal Provider: A Study of William Whiteley and the Rise of the London Department Store* (London: George G. Harrap & Co., 1938).
48. Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City*, 58.
49. See Adburgham, *Shops and Shopping*, 234–5. This was one of Harrod's most impressive advertising devices. It gave the store, as Adburgham puts it, 'a magnificent burst of publicity'. The opening was advertised in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and on the day of the opening an attendant waited at the top of the moving staircase to revive customers with a free glass of sal volatile or cognac.
50. Katharine Tynan, *Memories* (London: Eveleigh Nash and Grayson, 1924), 34.
51. Olsen, *Growth of Victorian London*, 179.
52. Adburgham, *Shops and Shopping*, 150.
53. Lambert, *Universal Provider*, 220.
54. Felski, *Gender of Modernity*, 61.
55. [Clark], *Suburban Homes*, 282.
56. Lucas, *A Wanderer in London*, 248.
57. Badeni, *The Slender Tree*, 187.
58. Lucas, *A Wanderer in London*, 248.
59. Felski, *Gender of Modernity*, 61.
60. Lucas, *A Wanderer in London*, 248–9.
61. Bodleian Library. MS.Eng.lett.c.418. f.92 v.
62. In 1883 Schreiner lived at 5 Harrington Road. This was the address she gave to obtain her British Library Pass. For Olive Schreiner's other residences, see Olive

Schreiner, *The Letters of Olive Schreiner, 1876–1920,* edited by S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1924); Katharine Tynan, *The Middle Years* (London: Constable, 1916), 156; for Jean Ingelow, see Maureen Peters, *Jean Ingelow: Victorian Poetess* (Ipswich: The Boydell Press, 1972), 52, 90, 100, and facing 63 Figure 6.

63. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 193.
64. Sally Ledger, *The New Woman: Fiction, Feminism at the* Fin de Siècle (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 178–9. See also Eileen Bigland, *Marie Corelli: The Woman and the Legend. A Biography* (London: Jarrolds, 1953), 58–185.
65. Alice Meynell, *The Wares of Autolycus: Selected Literary Essays of Alice Meynell*, Chosen and Introduced by P. M. Fraser (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 51–2.
66. Tynan scholars have commented on Tynan's financial difficulties and her position as the real breadwinner of the family. See W. B. Yeats, *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats*, ed. John Kelly and Eric Domville, Vol. 1, 1865–1895 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 517. These difficulties would eventually force her to leave poetry for a better-paid career as a prolific journalist and a sensationalist novelist. Her financial difficulties, however, did not end and she was forced to sell many of the letters and manuscripts of poets and writers that she owned. Perhaps the most notorious was the sale of W. B. Yeats' letters in 1920. See Carolyn Holdsworth, ' "Shelley Plain": Yeats and Katharine Tynan' *Yeats Annual* 2, ed. Richard J. Finneran (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1983), 59–92.
67. Tynan, *The Middle Years*, 149, 156.
68. See Barbara Belford, *Violet: The Story of the Irrepressible Violet Hunt and Her Circle of Lovers and Friends – Ford Madox Ford, H.G. Wells, Somerset Maugham, and Henry James* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 31, 113. One Tor Villas (later 10 Tor Gardens), where Violet Hunt resided between 1866 and 1896, had been previously occupied by the painter Holman Hunt.
69. See Yeats, *The Collected Letters of W.B. Yeats*, I: 517.
70. Elizabeth Robins Pennell, *Nights: Rome, Venice, London, Paris* (London: Heinemann, 1916), 129.
71. Tynan, *The Middle Years*, 149–86.
72. Ibid., 156.
73. Ibid., 180.
74. Ibid., 239.
75. Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 49.
76. See Cora Kaplan, 'Alice Meynell' in Cora Kaplan (ed.), *Salt and Bitter and Good: Three Centuries of English and American Women Poets* (London: Paddington Press, 1975), 182.
77. See Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 61–2.
78. Lamb, 'Symbols of Success in Suburbia' in Mancoff and Trela (eds), *Victorian Urban Settings*, 66–7.
79. Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 66.
80. Ibid., 68.
81. Both women met in 1884. Tynan, also a Catholic, went to see the Meynells with an introduction from Father Matthew Russell, who was the editor of *Irish Monthly* in which Tynan had published some of her poems. Tynan, *Memories*, 145.
82. For further information on Francis Thompson and the Meynells, see Everard Meynell, *The Life of Francis Thompson* (London: Burns & Oates, 1913).
83. Tynan, *Memories,* 25.
84. Francis Thompson, *Poems* (London: Elkin Mathews & John Lane, 1893).
85. Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 66.

86. Ibid., 71.
87. Her father left her £10,000 pounds. See Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 71; and Francis Meynell, *My Lives*, 17–18.
88. Walkley, *Artists' Houses in London*, 54.
89. Ibid., 56.
90. Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 72.
91. Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire*, 46. For a full study of Kensington's craze for houses and studios see Walkley, *Artists' Houses in London*, 58–77.
92. Francis Meynell, *My Lives*, 20.
93. Lambert, *Universal Provider*, 106.
94. *Builder* 21 (1863): 766–7; quoted in Olsen, *Growth of Victorian London*, 173.
95. See Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 68.
96. Ibid., 67.
97. Francis Meynell, *My Lives*, 23.
98. *The Academy*, 12 January 1897; quoted in Anne Kimball Tuell, *Mrs. Meynell and Her Literary Generation* (New York: Dutton, 1925), 40.
99. Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 138.
100. Alice Meynell, 'The Roads' in *London Impressions*, 28.
101. 'London Trees', *Pall Mall Gazette* (9 June 1897): 3; 'London Climate', *Pall Mall Gazette* (16 June 1897): 3; 'The Effect of London', *Pall Mall Gazette* (21 June 1897): 3; 'The Roads of London', *Pall Mall Gazette* (30 June 1897): 3; 'The Smouldering City', *Pall Mall Gazette* (7 July 1897): 4; 'The London Sunday', *Pall Mall Gazette* (18 August 1897): 3; 'Below Bridge', *Pall Mall Gazette* (1 September 1897): 3. They were all published in 'The Wares of Autolycus' column.
102. Kenneth McConkey, *Impressionism in Britain* (London: Yale University Press in association with Barbican Art Gallery, 1995), 193.
103. Meynell, 'Charmian' in *Prose and Poetry*, 229.
104. Meynell, 'The Point of Honour' in *The Rhythm of Life and Other Essays* (London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1893), 50.
105. Meynell, 'Sonnet' in *Poems* (London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1893), 55.
106. Meynell, 'The Point of Honour' in *The Rhythm of Life*, 49–50.
107. Ibid., 51.
108. Meynell, 'The Roads' in *London Impressions*, 26.
109. Meynell, 'West Wind in Winter' in *Later Poems*, 24–5.
110. First published under the title 'Sonnet' in *Preludes* (1875), 63. The poem was revised for her 1893 volume *Poems*, 55. The most striking and crucial difference is that while in the first version the subject of the poem is an impersonal 'thou' ('Thou poet of one mood in all thy lays'), in its revised form Meynell assumes the position of the lyric self: 'A poet of one mood in all my lays'. I am using here the second version.
111. Meynell, 'The Roads' in *London Impressions*, 26.
112. Ibid., 26–7.
113. Meynell, 'The Smouldering City' in *London Impressions*, 29–31.
114. Meynell, 'The Wares of Autolycus' in *Pall Mall Gazette* (15 September 1893): 5.
115. Meynell, The Smouldering City' in *London Impressions*, 30.
116. E. H. Gombrich, *The Story of Art* (London: Phaidon, 1966, new edn), 395.
117. Meynell, 'The Roads' in *London Impressions*, 26.
118. Meynell, 'November Blue' in *Later Poems*, 26–7.
119. Meynell, 'The Trees' in *London Impressions*, 14.
120. Pater, *The Renaissance*, 187.

121. De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 112.
122. Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon Press, 1995), 40.
123. Meynell, 'The Roads' in *London Impressions*, 26.
124. Meynell, 'The Sun' in *Rhythm of Life*, 18.
125. Meynell, 'The Roads' in *London Impressions*, 26–7.
126. Meynell, 'Rain' in *Spirit*, 77.
127. Meynell, 'The Climate of Smoke' in *London Impressions*, 11.
128. Meynell, 'Rain' in *Spirit*, 77.
129. Ibid., 77.
130. Ibid., 77–8.
131. Ibid., 78–9.
132. Meynell, 'By the Railway Side' in *Rhythm of Life*, 37–9.
133. Meynell, 'The Roads' in *London Impressions*, 28.
134. 'Builders of Ruin' was first published in *Preludes* (1875) and was subsequently revised in 1893 for her second book of poems *Poems*, 23. I am using here the revised, final form as it appeared in *Poems* (1893).
135. 'A Dead Harvest' in Meynell, *Later Poems*, 31–2. The poem was revised by Meynell for her *Collected Poems*, 17. I am using here the revised, final form as it appeared in this 1913 edition.
136. Anson, ' "The Wind is Blind": Power and Constraint', 46.
137. Meynell, 'The Roads' in *London Impressions*, 28.
138. Meynell, 'A Remembrance' in *Rhythm of Life*, 12–16.
139. Max Beerbohm writes that '[o]ne hears a great deal about her essay "Rejection" nowadays'. Quoted in Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 128. Tuell also notes that one journalist remembered very clearly this particular essay. He wrote: 'How we shouted and wrote each other notes over Mrs. Meynell's "Rejection!" ' See Tuell, *Mrs. Meynell and Her Literary Generation*, 78–9.
140. Meynell, 'Rejection' in *Rhythm of Life*, 79.
141. Ibid., 82.
142. Ibid., 82.
143. Both essays are reproduced in Meynell, *The Wares of Autolycus*, 5–8, 12–16.
144. See Jean Baudrillard, 'The Shop-Window' in *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures* (London: Sage, 1998), 166.
145. Tynan, *Memories*, 34.
146. Meynell, 'The Effect of London' in *London Impressions*, 6–8.
147. Ibid., 7.
148. Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1995), 23.
149. Meynell, 'The Sea Wall' in *Essays*, 126.
150. Meynell, 'The Trees' in *London Impressions*, 12.
151. 'The Wind is Blind' in Alice Meynell, *The Last Poems of Alice Meynell* (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1923), 10–11.
152. Anson, ' "The Wind is Blind": Power and Constraint', 45.
153. Meynell, 'Solitudes' in *Prose and Poetry*, 272.
154. Ibid., 275–6.
155. Baudrillard, 'The Shop-Window', 166.
156. Meynell, 'The London Sunday' in *London Impressions*, 3.
157. Meynell, 'The Childish Town' in *Prose and Poetry*, 284–5.
158. Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, 29.

159. I wish to thank Linda K. Hughes for this suggestion.
160. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 195.
161. Meynell, 'The London Sunday' in *London Impressions*, 1.
162. Ibid., 1.
163. De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 112.

3 The Fastest Neighbourhood in Town: Graham R. Tomson in St John's Wood

1. See Katharine Tynan, 'A Literary Causerie', *Speaker* 29 (October 1892): 535. Quoted in Hughes, 'My Sister, My Self', 12.
2. Alan Montgomery Eyre, *Saint John's Wood: Its History, Its Houses, Its Haunts and Its Celebrities* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1913), 296. This is by far one of the best studies of St John's Wood and it offers a detailed account of the celebrity inhabitants of the neighbourhood.
3. Amanda Anderson, *Tainted Souls and Painted Faces: The Rhetoric of Fallenness in Victorian Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 2.
4. Augusta Webster, 'A Castaway' in *Portraits* (London: Macmillan, 1870), 38.
5. Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, 12.
6. See Hugh McLeod, *Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City* (London: Croom Helm, 1974), 200.
7. Kapp, *Eleanor Marx*, I: 194.
8. Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire*, 11–34.
9. Kaplan, *Salt and Bitter and Good*, 159.
10. See Rosemary Ashton, *Little Germany: German Refugees in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 169.
11. For more information on the relationship between Karl Blind and Karl Marx, see Ashton, *Little Germany*, 167–73.
12. Eyre, *Saint John's Wood*, 297. Donald Thomas writes that Mathilde Blind was 'looked to as the means of saving Swinburne from the grotesque routines of Circus Road […]. She was infatuated by Swinburne, who expressed admiration for her poetry and her family's revolutionary faith. But he ignored her devotion and the opportunities created for him to propose marriage to her.' See Donald Thomas, *Swinburne: The Poet in his World* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979), 150. For an excellent examination of Blind's poetics in relation to Swinburne's, see James Diedrick ' "My love is a force that will force you to care": Subversive Sexuality in Mathilde Blind's Dramatic Monologues' in *Victorian Poetry* 40:4 (2002): 359–86.
13. Mathilde Blind, *The Poetical Works of Mathilde Blind*. Edited by Arthur Symons with a memoir by Richard Garnett (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1900), 17. Garnett argues that Mathilde Blind was a poor collector and that she was finally discharged from her duties.
14. Richard Garnett, 'Memoir' in Blind, *Poetical Works of Mathilde Blind*, 17.
15. William Michael Rossetti, *Selected Letters of William Michael Rossetti*, ed. Roger W. Peattie (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 275. See letter 203.
16. For more on Mathilde Blind see Simon Avery, ' "Tantalising Glimpses": The Intersecting Lives of Eleanor Marx and Mathilde Blind' in *Eleanor Marx (1855–1898): Life, Work, Contacts*, ed. John Stokes (Burlington: Ashgate, 2000),

173–87; and Susan Brown, ' "A still and mute-born vision": Locating Mathilde Blind's Reproductive Poetics' in Chapman (ed.) *Victorian Women Poets*, 123–44.

17. Sims' mother was a feminist activist. At her house a number of women (and men) activists, who worked for the welfare of women and who advocated female suffrage, met regularly and held private meetings: 'But nothing delighted her [Sims' mother] more than to gather her "working friends," as she called them, around her at our house in Hamilton Terrace [also in St John's Wood]. Among our frequent guests were Augusta Webster, the poetess, Karl and Mathilde Blind, Dr. Anna Kingsford, Mrs. Fenwick-Miller – she was Miss Fenwick-Miller then – Emily Faithfull, Ella Dietz, Dr. Zerffi, Professor Plumtree, Samuel Butler, the author of "Erewhon," Frances Power Cobbe, and occasionally Lydia Becker.' See George R. Sims, *My Life: Sixty Years' Recollections of Bohemian London* (London: Eveleigh Nash, 1917), 53.
18. The lectures were later published under the title 'Shelley's View of Nature Contrasted with Darwin's', Printed for Private Distribution (London: Richard Clay & Sons, 1886) and 'Shelley: A Lecture Delivered to the Church of Progress' (London: Taylor & Co., 1870).
19. Armstrong, *Victorian Poetry*, 460.
20. Blind, 'Shelley: A Lecture', 6–7.
21. Levy, *Diary*. Entry for Sunday 14 April 1889. The diary and letters of Olive Garnett give an excellent account of Sergei Stepniak's presence in late-Victorian literary circles, most notably the Garnetts. See Olive Garnett, *Tea and Anarchy! The Bloomsbury Diary of Olive Garnett, 1890–1893* ed. by Barry C. Johnson (Birmingham: Bartletts Press, 1989) and Olive Garnett, *Olive and Stepniak: The Bloomsbury Diary of Olive Garnett, 1893–1895*, ed. Barry C. Johnson (Birmingham: Bartletts Press, 1993). During the late 1880s Stepniak lived in St John's Wood. To see a photograph of his house see Eyre, *Saint John's Wood*, facing page 290. He moved to 31 Blandford Road, Bedford Park (W4) in 1892 and to 45 Woodstock Road, also in Bedford Park, in 1894. The British Library owns a letter written by Stepniak to Mrs Tomson (Add. MS. 42584f.151) in which he sends her press notices of one of his lectures. The letter is undated.
22. For a more detailed account of Sergei Stepniak's political ideas see James W. Hulse, *Revolutionists in London: A Study of Five Unorthodox Socialists* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970). See especially Chapter II, 'Stepniak: From Terrorism to Liberalism', 29–52.
23. See Kapp, *Eleanor Marx* I: 193–4.
24. See Garnett, *Olive and Stepniak*, especially Appendix A: 'The Rossettis and *The Torch*. A History: 1891–1896', 245–71.
25. Garnett, 'Memoir' in Blind, *Poetical Works of Mathilde Blind*, 25.
26. Mathilde Blind's letters to Karl Pearson during 1887 are in the University College London's Pearson Archive, and they offer a good insight into Blind's various London residences.
27. See, for example, Mathilde Blind's letter to William Sharp in Elizabeth A. Sharp, *William Sharp (Fiona MacLeod): A Memoir*, vol. 1 (London: Heinemann, 1912), 235.
28. See Richard Garnett's introduction to 'Mathilde Blind, 1847–1896' in Alfred H. Miles (ed.), *The Poets and the Poetry of the Century*, vol. VII (London: Hutchinson, 1898), 609.
29. Bodleian Library, MS. Walpole e1. f.22 v.
30. For more details on the sexual politics of Graham R. Tomson see Linda K. Hughes, ' "Fair Hymen holdeth hid a world of woes": Myth and Marriage in Poems by

"Graham R. Tomson" (Rosamund Marriott Watson)' in *Victorian Poetry* 32 (1994): 97–120.

31. See, for example, a letter from Alice Meynell to Katharine Tynan (dated May 1893) in Tynan's collection at the John Rylands University Library, Manchester, in which she wrote: 'Graham R. whom I went to see today was, on the other hand, much pleased at getting a letter from you.' Patmore's disregard for Graham R. Tomson is evident in a letter that Alice Meynell wrote to her husband: 'I want to ask you this […] never to be hurt by anything that C[oventry] P[atmore] may say or suggest until you have asked me. I hate to say it but he has real illusions and some of them seem ineradicable. On the point of Graham R. he seems satisfied, but even there he does not seem fully to understand the plain things I said so I feared he might write to you. If he does, let me see the letter.' Quoted in Badeni, *The Slender Tree*, 115. Badeni is not able to identify Graham R. and she suggests this may be Graham Robertson. This is Graham R. Tomson or Graham R., as she was known to her friends. Why exactly Patmore was worried about Meynell's relationship with Tomson is not explicit in the letter. We know, however, that it was written in 1895, when Tomson divorced her second husband. Perhaps this was what Patmore feared: that Tomson's reputation might taint Meynell's.
32. 'Graham Tomson was there [at William Sharp's] too, in an antique peplum of red, looking very handsome, but I was only introduced to her husband (he is No. 2 and they both look about three and twenty) – *not* a fascinating person, which makes Bunand anticipate the chance of some day offering himself as "le troisième"!' Symons, *Selected Letters*, 50.
33. Julius M. Price, *My Bohemian Days in London* (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1914), 3.
34. Ibid., 32.
35. See Cecil Smith, *A Short History of St. John's Wood and Some of Its Former Inhabitants* (Shrewsbury: Wilding & Son, 1942), 12, 13, 14.
36. Price, *My Bohemian Days*, 174.
37. See Matt Cook, *London and the Culture of Homosexuality, 1885–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 131.
38. See Donald Thomas, *Swinburne*, 145, 148.
39. The story is included in Eyre, *Saint John's Wood*, 220–4.
40. Ibid., 220.
41. Ibid., 223–4.
42. Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire*, 34.
43. I wish to thank Linda K. Hughes for sharing this information with me.
44. John Lawrence Waltman, *The Early London Journals of Elizabeth Robins Pennell* (PhD thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1976), 444–5. Entry for Wednesday 9 July 1891. The entry says, 'In the rain to Mrs. Tomson's and with her to hear Prince Kropotkine [sic] lecture on Siberia and its exiles to a fairly large audience.' Kropotkin was a Russian refugee, friend of Stepniak, who lived first in Harrow and later in Acton. See George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic, *The Anarchist Prince: A Biographical Study of Peter Kropotkin* (London: Boardman & Co, 1949).
45. Levy, *Diary* (12 June 1889). She notes in her entry for that day: 'G.T. told me her history'.
46. Two of the most traditional omnibus' routes in St John's Wood were the 'City Atlas' and 'Atlas', both green omnibuses. In Amy Levy's *The Romance of a Shop*, Gertrude boarded a 'City Atlas' to travel to the British Museum. The 'Atlas' route ran from Camberwell to St John's Wood [Eyre Arms] passing by Walworth Road,

London Road, Westminster Bridge, Whitehall, Trafalgar Square, Waterloo Place, Regent Street, Oxford Street, Baker Street and Wellington Road. See *ABC Omnibus Guide from Anywhere to Everywhere* (1888), 14.

47. Price, *My Bohemian Days*, 173.
48. Ibid., 222.
49. Graham R. Tomson, 'A Summer Night' in *A Summer Night and Other Poems* (London: Methuen, 1891), 1–2.
50. Price, *My Bohemian Days*, 173.
51. Tomson, 'In a London Garden' in *A Summer Night*, 3.
52. Tomson, 'Chimæra' in ibid., 4–5.
53. Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire*, 45.
54. Tomson, 'Of the Earth, Earthy' in *A Summer Night*, 8–9.
55. Rosamund Marriott Watson (Graham R. Tomson), *Vespertilia and Other Verses* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1895), 7–9. This was her first collection of poems under the name 'Rosamund Marriott Watson'. She dedicated it to Alice Meynell 'in sincere admiration and friendship'. Some of these poems were written while she was still living in St John's Wood, as the poem 'At Kensal Green Cemetery', which was written 21 January 1892, illustrates.
56. Linda K. Hughes also sees this critique in the figure of the female revenant. See Hughes, 'Feminizing Decadence' in Schaffer and Psomiades, *Women and British Aestheticism*, 121–6.
57. See Amy Levy, 'London Poets' in *A London Plane-Tree*, 29. For more on Levy and Tomson see Hughes, 'Feminizing Decadence' in Schaffer and Psomiades, *Women and British Aestheticism*, 121–2.
58. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful and Other Pre-Revolutionary Writings* (1757, 1759; London: Penguin, 1998), 86.
59. Louise Chandler Moulton, who reviewed Tomson's *A Summer Night* in *The Independent*, wrote thus about the frontispiece of *A Summer Night*: '[I]t is the picture of Fair Rosamond herself, sitting in the mystic, moonlighted dusk of a summer night, in the garden of her home in St. John's Wood, London. I have seen her in this garden when she was surrounded by some of the brightest men and women in all London; and again, when she and I and the roses were its sole tenants. It is a demesne which should, of right, belong to artist or poet – and, therefore, it is the fitting realm of Arthur Tomson and his wife, Rosamond.' Quoted in Hughes, 'My Sister, My Self', 8.
60. Price, *My Bohemian Days*, 17–18.
61. Ibid., 47.
62. Ibid., 40.
63. Ibid., 40–1.
64. Ibid., 45–6.
65. See, for example, May Probyn's 'The Model' in *A Ballad of the Road and Other Poems* (London: W. Satchell, 1883), 37–40.
66. Price, *My Bohemian Days*, 17.
67. Ibid., 49–50.
68. Graham R. Tomson, 'A Silhouette' in *The Bird-Bride: A Volume of Ballads and Sonnets* (London: Longmans, Green, 1889), 67–70.
69. Linda K. Hughes, 'A *Fin-de-Siècle* Beauty and the Beast: Configuring the Body in Works by "Graham R. Tomson" (Rosamund Marriott Watson)' in *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 14:1 (1995): 104.
70. See Blind, *Poetical Works of Mathilde Blind*, facing title page.

71. See Deborah E. B. Weiner, *Architecture and Social Reform in Late-Victorian London* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 65–80.
72. Prins, 'Sappho Doubled', 174.
73. Tomson, 'A Portrait' in *The Bird-Bride*, 64–6.
74. Hughes, 'A *Fin-de-Siècle* Beauty', 104.
75. Christina Rossetti, *The Complete Poems*. Text by R. W. Crump. Notes and Introduction By Betty S. Flowers (London: Penguin, 2001), 796.
76. Tomson, 'Dorinda's Mirror' in *A Summer Night*, 53–4.
77. Tomson, 'In a London Garden' in *A Summer Night*, 3.
78. Benjamin, 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' in *Illuminations*, 177.
79. Tomson, 'Chimæra' in *A Summer Night*, 4.
80. Pater, *The Renaissance*, 188.
81. Marriott Watson, 'A Song of London' in *Vespertilia*, 41–2.
82. Tomson, 'Aubade' in *A Summer Night*, 15.
83. Marriott Watson, 'Nocturn' in *Vespertilia*, 43.
84. James Donald, 'The City, the Cinema: Modern Spaces' in Jenks (ed.), *Visual Culture*, 84.
85. Tomson, 'In the Rain' in *A Summer Night*, 10–11.
86. A. Mary F. Robinson, *The Crowned Hippolytus, Translated from Euripides with New Poems* (London: C. Kegan Paul, 1881), 157–9.
87. Sennett, *Flesh and Stone*, 334.
88. Tomson, 'Transformation' in *Summer Night*, 13–14.
89. Marriott Watson, 'Nocturn' in *Vespertilia*, 43.
90. See Kern, *Culture of Time and Space*, 109–30; and Schivelbusch, *Railway Journey*, 33– 44.
91. Sennett, *The Conscience of the Eye*, 46–7.
92. Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, 12.
93. Marriott Watson, 'London in October' in *Vespertilia*, 44–6.

4 Modernity in Suburbia: Michael Field's Experimental Poetics

1. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46780 f.89v.
2. Leighton, *Writing against the Heart*, 204.
3. Alan A. Jackson, *Semi-Detached London: Suburban Development, Life and Transport, 1900–1939* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1973).
4. De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 112.
5. Bernard Berenson, 'Isochromatic Photography and Venetian Pictures' in *The Nation* 57:1480 (1893): 346–7.
6. For an examination of tourism and transport, see for example Lynne Withey, *Grand Tours and Cook's Tours: A History of Leisure Travel, 1750 to 1915* (London: Aurum Press, 1997) and James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). Today, a powerful reminder of the links between art and railways during the second half of the nineteenth century is the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. Originally a mainline railway station, designed by Victor Laloux for the Universal Exhibition in 1900, the station was re-opened in 1986 as a new museum and holds works of art from 1848 to 1914.

7. For further bibliographical details see Mary Sturgeon, *Michael Field* (London: George G. Harrap, 1922), 14–17. See also Emma Donoghue, *We are Michael Field* (Bath: The Absolute Press, 1998) and Marion Thain, *Michael Field and Poetic Identity*, 1–17.
8. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46776 ff. 6v–7.
9. Le Magasin du Bon Marché was the earliest development of the department store, owned by Aristide and Marguerite Boucicaut, who in 1852 took over the direction of a small Paris drapery, the Bon Marché, and by 1863 began to branch out into other lines. See Rosalind H. Williams, *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).
10. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46776 f.9.
11. Ibid., 46776 ff. 44v–47v. Extensive notes in French of all the courses she took appear at the back of this notebook, see ff. 59–82. Especially interesting are her notes on Germaine de Staël and on Darwin and his theories of evolution.
12. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 127.
13. W. H. G. Armytage, *Heavens Below: Utopian Experiments in England 1560–1960* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), 290, 291.
14. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 147.
15. Ibid., 154.
16. Ibid., 157.
17. Sturgeon, *Michael Field*, 18.
18. See Katharine Bradley's letter to Robert Browning (23 November 1884) in Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 6.
19. After reading their first co-authored book of poems *Bellerophôn* (1881), the poet John Addington Symonds encouraged them to read Robinson's *The Crowned Hippolytus* for a better use of the Greek myth. See John Addington Symonds, *The Letters of John Addington Symonds*, eds Herbert M. Schueller and Robert L. Peters, Vol. II (1869–1884) (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1968), 675–7. I would like to thank Yopie Prins for bringing this information to my attention. The first letter from Robinson to Michael Field is dated 16 May 1884. Robinson thanks Field for sending their play *Callirrhoë* and offers them advice on how to improve the play. See Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. letts. e. 32. ff. 7–8.
20. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 2.
21. See Bodleian Library. MS. Eng. letts. e. 32, f.7.
22. Michael Field, *The Father's Tragedy, William Rufus and Loyalty or Love?* (London: George Bell, 1885).
23. See Robert Browning's letter to Edith Cooper (8 June 1885) in Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 9.
24. For a discussion of Michael Field as a lesbian poet see Prins' 'A Metaphorical Field' and 'Sappho Double'. See also Christine White, ' "Poets and Lovers Evermore": Interpreting Female Love in the Poetry and Journals of Michael Field', *Textual Practice*, 4 (1990): 197–212; and Leighton, *Writing Against the Heart*, 202–37.
25. Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 418. f.92v. There is a draft of this poetic invocation on folio 91.
26. After the death of her mother, Edith Cooper wrote of her: 'I would give up Italy, travel, pictures to have her back … & yet there is one thing that makes me pause in my passionate desire – She did not understand my need of freedom. She bound & overawed me where I wanted to be free & personal. Such an influence is a crime against me … I suffered torments, struggles.' Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46780 ff. 12v–13.
27. Baudelaire, *Painter of Modern Life*, 12.

28. Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. e. 142 ff. 12–17. Letter from Edith Cooper to her mother (16 May 1886).
29. Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 128–9.
30. Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, 11–12.
31. *Country, Suburban & Seaside Homes: An Illustrated Descriptive Guide to the Residential Districts Served by the South Eastern & Chatham Railways, 1910–11*, published for the South Eastern & Chatham Railway Co. (London: Killby, Bligh, 1911), 116.
32. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library Add. MS. 46777 f.86 (on Pater).
33. Morris moved to The Upper Hall at Hammersmith. The house was known as 'The Retreat', but Morris changed it to Kelmscott House after his other house. See J. W. Mackail, *The Life of William Morris*, Vol. 1, 1899; rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1995), 371–2. George Meredith lived in Redhill, only three miles away from Reigate. In one of her letters to Meredith, Katharine Bradley wrote 'we are not far away. We can almost hear the bleating of the same lamb' (Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 73).
34. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46782 f.3v.
35. *Round Reigate: A Handy Guide to Walks in the District*, by a Resident (London: Marshall Japp, 1881), 5.
36. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library Add. MS. 46781 f.21.
37. *Country, Suburban & Seaside Homes*, 116.
38. Jackson, *Semi-Detached London*, 21.
39. *Country, Suburban & Seaside Homes*, 37.
40. Ibid., 37.
41. Ibid., 39.
42. Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 18–38; and Elizabeth Wilson, *Hallucinations: Life in the Post-Modern City* (London: Radius, 1988), 193. Wilson refers specifically to the 1930s, but it is clear that for her, as for most urban sociologists, the phenomenon of suburbia was founded on this idea of 'dream prison' for women.
43. See W. B. Yeats' letter to Katharine Tynan in Katharine Tynan, *Twenty-Five Years: Reminiscences* (London: Smith, Elder, 1913), 267. 'There is a society at whose meetings Michael Field (Miss Bradley) is to be seen. It is called the Society of the New Life, and seeks to carry out some ideas of Thoreau and Whitman. They live together in a Surrey village. Ernest Rhys is to bring me to a meeting. Michael Field is a bird of another feather from those London *littérateurs* whom I cannot but rather despise'.
44. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46779 f.23v.
45. Ibid., f.47.
46. Ibid., f.7.
47. 'At Morris' we order our Brussels Carpet to be woven – yellows mix on clouded cream & are bordered with blue in love with lavender, seen through green stems with a fleck of rare pink for a bloom.' Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46779 f.26.
48. Ibid., f.21v.
49. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46783 f.8v.
50. See Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-morrow*, ed. and preface F. J. Osborn, intro. Lewis Mumford (London: Faber and Faber, 1946), originally published as *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1898). Subsequent citations refer to the 1946 edition.
51. Ibid., 144.
52. Ibid., 144.

53. Ibid., 145.
54. Another influential suburbian utopia was Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backwards: 2000–1887* (Boston: Ticknor and Company, 1888), which William Morris recreated in his *News from Nowhere or an Epoch of Rest* (London: Reeves & Turner, 1891).
55. Armytage, *Heavens Below*, 341.
56. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46777 f.67.
57. Sheila Rowbotham and Jeffrey Weeks, *Socialism and the New Life: The Personal and Sexual Politics of Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis* (London: Pluto Press, 1977), 43. See especially Rowbotham's essay, 'Edward Carpenter: Prophet of the New Life', 27–138.
58. See William Frey, 'On Religion'. A paper read before the Fellowship of the New Life (London: William Frey, 1888), 2.
59. Ibid., 13.
60. Clementina Black, 'The Ethics of Shopping' in *Seed-time: The Organ of the New Fellowship*, no. 6 (October 1890): 10.
61. Michael Field, *A Selection from the Poems of Michael Field* (London: The Poetry Bookshop, 1923), 45.
62. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46779 f.25.
63. Ibid., Add. MS. 46782 f.3v. See also Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. misc.d.977. f.5. *Poets and Painters*. The Friendship between Michael Field, Miss Bradley and Miss Cooper (The Poets) and Ricketts and Shannon (The Painters), eds. T. & D. C. Sturge Moore. This is a typed manuscript of the correspondence between Poets and Painters. It was never published.
64. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 222.
65. Sturgeon, *Michael Field*, 45–6.
66. Michael Field, *Stephania: A Trialogue* (London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane at the Sign of the Bodley Head, 1892).
67. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46781 f.6v.
68. Ibid., Add. MS. 46780 f.45.
69. Ibid., Add. MS. 46779 f.56v.
70. Ibid., f.137v.
71. Field, *A Selection*, 47. This poem was written on 29 November 1894. See Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46782 f.135. It was republished in *The Atlantic Monthly* 76:456 (October 1895): 545.
72. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 171.
73. Ibid., 192–3.
74. Michael Field, *Underneath the Bough: A Book of Verses* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1893) and *Dedicated: An Early Work of Michael Field* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1914).
75. 'We told B. that we were founding in the study [the Botticelli room] a small Bacchic library'. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46783 f.8v.
76. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 72. George Meredith, *Modern Love and Poems of the English Roadside, with Poems and Ballads* (London, 1862).
77. De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 113.
78. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 67–9.
79. Quoted in Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form* (1927; New York: Zone Books, 1991), 67.
80. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46779 ff. 61v and 62v.
81. Ibid., f.61v.
82. Michael Field, *Underneath the Bough: A Book of Verses* (Portland, Maine: Thomas B. Mosher, 1898), 83.

83. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46779 f.66v.
84. Ibid., f.65v.
85. Donoghue, *We Are Michael Field*, 67.
86. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46780 f.77v. The poem was later published in Michael Field, *Underneath the Bough* (1893), 79.
87. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46779 f.61 (Entry for 1 August 1891). See Michael Field, *Underneath the Bough* (1893), 116.
88. Bernard Berenson, *The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1896), 84.
89. Walter Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator' in *Selected Writings*, Vol. 1, 1913–26 (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), 259.
90. Michael Field, *Sight and Song*, v.
91. W. B. Yeats, 'Sight and Song' in W. B. Yeats, *Uncollected Prose. Volume 1: First Reviews and Articles, 1886–1896*, ed., John P. Frayne (London: Macmillan, 1970), 225–6.
92. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46783 f.62v.
93. Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator' in *Selected Writings*, I: 260.
94. Ibid., I: 260.
95. See, for example, *Lantern Readings: Original and Selected, to Accompany Sets of Photographic Transparencies. To be had of all Booksellers and Opticians* (Birmingham, 1875).
96. For a study of refraction in relation to transparency see Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Theory of Colours*. Translated from the German by C. L. Eastlake (London: John Murray, 1840), 76 (# 183).
97. Michael Field, *Sight and Song*, v.
98. Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator' in *Selected Writings*, I: 259.
99. See Isobel Armstrong's 'Transparency: Towards a Poetics of Glass in the Nineteenth Century' in *Cultural Babbage: Technology, Time and Invention*, eds. Francis Spufford and Jenny Uglow (London: Faber and Faber, 1996), 123–48. See also Theodor Adorno, 'Transparencies on Film', trans. Thomas Y. Levin, *New German Critique* 24–5 (1981–82): 199–205.
100. Armstrong, 'Transparency', 125.
101. Miriam B. Hansen, 'Introduction to Adorno, "Transparencies on Film" (1966)' in *New German Critique*, 24–5 (1981–82): 193.
102. Ibid., 193.
103. Michael Field considered writing a second series of *Sight and Song*. The pictures selected for this second series were, according to their diary, Lorenzo Lotto's *Triumph of Chastity*, Mantegna's *Ecce Homo* and *Parnasse* (both in the Louvre), Giorgione's *The Concert* (Louvre), Correggio's *Danae* (Borghese) and *The Painting of Christ and his Mother*, Dai Libri's *The Virgin and St Anne* (National Gallery), Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne* (National Gallery), Bellini's *The Pietà* (Brera) and *The Agony in the Garden* (National Gallery), Dosso Dossi's *St Sebastian* (Brera), Sodoma's *Caritas* (Berlin) and Giorgione's *The Three Astrologers* (Vienna). Michael Field, *Works and Days*, British Library, Add. MS. 46780 f.47v.
104. As has been mentioned, Bradley was a fervent admirer of Ruskin's work and corresponded with him for five years (1875–80). See Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 143–72.
105. For a more detailed analysis see George P. Landow, *The Aesthetic and Critical Theories of John Ruskin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), see especially his 'Ruskin and the Tradition of *ut pictura poesis*', 43–53; another interesting study is Elizabeth K. Helsinger, *Ruskin and the Art of the Beholder* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

106. John Ruskin, *The Works of John Ruskin*, XV: 27.
107. Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 96.
108. Pater, *The Renaissance*, xix–xx.
109. Ibid., 108–9.
110. Ibid., 102.
111. Ibid., xxi and 102.
112. See Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. misc.d. 333. ff. 68–70. This was in the handwriting of Edith Cooper. The double and triple underlining of I is in the original source.
113. 'L'œil, plus que les autres sens, objective et maîtrise.' My translation. Luce Irigaray, interview in *Les femmes, la pornographie et l'erotism*, eds Marie-Françoise Hans and Gilles Lapouge (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1978), 50.
114. Field, *Sight and Song*, 1–2. All poems in this collection are named after the painting, followed by the name of the painter and where the painting is located, always in this order, in decreasing size, and with the name of the museum italicised.
115. Paul Valéry, 'Remarks on Poetry' in *Literature in the Modern World*, ed. Dennis Walder (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 140.
116. See Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 96. My account of the Lacanian gaze is deeply indebted to the discussion in Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 138–41 and 265 (footnotes 32, 33). Sheridan, as Foster notes, mistranslated the last sentence and added a 'not': 'I am not in the picture'.
117. Foster, *Return of the Real*, 139.
118. Ibid., 140.
119. Michael Field, *Sight and Song*, 8.
120. Richard Dellamora, *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 130.
121. Ibid., 131.
122. Ibid., 136.
123. Michael Field, *Sight and Song*, 46.
124. Ibid., 69.
125. Ibid., 73–4.
126. Michael Field, *Works and Days*, 59.
127. Michael Field, *Sight and Song*, 101–2.
128. Ibid., 117–18.
129. Ibid., 119.
130. Ibid., 123.
131. Ibid., 125.
132. Jacqueline Rose, *Sexuality in the Field of Vision* (London: Verso, 1986), 194.

Postscript: The End of the Line?

1. Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 271.
2. Rosamund Marriott Watson, *The Poems of Rosamund Marriott Watson* (London: John Lane, 1912).
3. J. B. Priestley, ed., *The Book of Bodley Head Verse* (London: John Lane, 1926).
4. Sturgeon, *Michael Field*, 49.
5. Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell*, 318.
6. Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space*, 216 and 217.

Bibliography

Manuscripts

British Museum Library Records held at the British Museum Central Archive.

Mathilde Blind
University College London:
Karl Pearson Archive.
Bodleian Library, Oxford:
Commonplace Book of Mathilde Blind 1892–1895 at Wendower Bath.
Bodleian Library. MS. Walpole e1.

Michael Field
British Library, London:
Michael Field Papers.
Correspondence:
Add. MSS. 45851–45856.
Katharine Bradley's Paris diary, October 1868–February 1869:
Add. MS. 46776.
Diaries entitled 'Works and Days': Add. MSS. 46777–46804.
Michael Field's Letters:
Add. MSS. 46866–46867.
Bodleian Library, Oxford:
Michael Field Papers.
Correspondence:
MS. Eng. lett. c. 418; MS. Eng. lett. d. 120; MS. Eng. lett. e. 32;
MS. Eng. lett. e. 33; MS. Eng. lett. e. 142.

Poets and Painters. The Friendship between Michael Field, Miss Bradley and Miss Cooper (The Poets) and Ricketts and Shannon (The Painters), Eds T. & D.C. Sturge Moore. Typed manuscript of the correspondence between Poets and Painters. Unpublished. MS. Eng. misc.d. 977.

Miscellaneous papers, exercise book:
MS. Eng. misc.d. 333.

Amy Levy
Camellia Plc., London:
Amy Levy Archive:
Manuscript, first proofs and final proofs of *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse*.
Social Diary for 1889.
British Museum Notebook.

Dollie Radford
The William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, Los Angeles.
The Dollie Radford papers: A Collection of Papers Relating to Dollie Radford, her Family and Circle of Friends, 1880–1920.

Christina Rossetti
The William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, Los Angeles.
Oscar Wilde and His Literary Circle Collection of Papers, 1819–1953.

Katharine Tynan
John Rylands University Library, Manchester:
Katharine Tynan's Collection.

Printed sources

Abrahams, Rachel Beth Zion Cohen Lask. 'Amy Levy.' *Jewish Historical Society of England Transactions* 11 (1924–27): 168–89.

—— 'Amy Levy: Poet and Writer.' *Anglo-Jewish Association Quarterly* 6:3 (1960): 11–17.

Adams, Anna. Ed. *Thames: An Anthology of River Poems*. Compiled by Anna Adams with a Preface by Ian Sinclair and Etchings by James McNeill Whistler. London: Enitharmion Press, 1999.

—— Ed. *London in Poetry and Prose*. Compiled by Anna Adams with Drawings by Neil Pittaway. London: Enitharmion Press, 2003.

Adburgham, Alison. *Shops and Shopping, 1800–1914: Where, and in What Manner the Well-dressed Englishwoman Bought her Clothes*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964.

Adorno, Theodor W. 'Transparencies on Film.' Trans. Thomas Y. Levin. *New German Critique* 24–5 (1981–82): 199–205.

—— 'On Lyric Poetry and Society'. *Notes to Literature. Volume One*. Ed. Rolf Tiedemann. Trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991, 37–54.

Alford, Norman. *The Rhymers' Club: Poets of the Tragic Generation*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994.

Allen, Grant ('G.A.'). 'For the Same Urn: Another Inscription.' *Pall Mall Gazette* (26 September 1889): 2.

All Stations: A Journey Through 150 Years of Railway History. London: Thames and Hudson, 1981.

'A London Plane-Tree'. *Literary World* 21–2 (12 April 1890): 122–3.

Altick, Richard. *The Shows of London*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

Anderson, Amanda. *Tainted Souls and Painted Faces: The Rhetoric of Fallenness in Victorian Culture*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993.

Anson, John S. ' "The Wind is Blind": Power and Constraint in the Poetry of Alice Meynell.' *Studia Mystica* 9:1 (Spring 1986): 37–50.

Apollonio, Umbro. Ed. *Futurist Manifestos*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1973.

Ardis, Ann L. and Leslie W. Lewis. Eds. *Women's Experience of Modernity, 1875–1945*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.

Armstrong, Isobel. *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics and Politics*. London: Routledge, 1993.

—— 'Transparency: Towards a Poetics of Glass in the Nineteenth Century.' Spufford and Uglow, 123–48.

——, and Joseph Bristow, with Cath Sharrock. Eds. *Nineteenth-Century Women Poets*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

——, and Virginia Blain. Eds. *Women's Poetry, Late Romantic to Late Victorian: Gender and Genre, 1830–1900*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press – now Palgrave Macmillan, 1999.

Armytage, W. H. G. *Heavens Below: Utopian Experiments in England 1560–1960*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961.

Arnold, Matthew. *The Essential Matthew Arnold*. Ed. Lionel Trilling. London: Chatto & Windus, 1969.

Asendorf, Christoph. *Batteries of Life: On the History of Things and Their Perception in Modernity*. Trans. Don Reneau. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
Ashton, Rosemary. *Little Germany: German Refugees in Victorian Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.
'*Attila, my Attila! A Play*. By Michael Field.' Rev. of Michael Field, *Attila, my Attila! The Athenaeum* (11 April 1896): 487.
Authority of the London General Omnibus Company. *ABC Omnibus Guide from Anywhere to Everywhere*. London: H. Vickers, 1886.
—— *ABC Omnibus Guide from Anywhere to Everywhere*. Revised by the General Omnibus Road Car and various Railway Companies. London: H. Vickers, 1888.
Avery, Simon. ' "Tantalising Glimpses": The Intersecting Lives of Eleanor Marx and Mathilde Blind'. Stokes, 173–87.
Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. Trans. Maria Jolas. Foreword John R. Stilgoe. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994 edn.
Badeni, June. *The Slender Tree: A Life of Alice Meynell*. Cornwall: Tabb House, 1981.
Bailey, Harold G. *Around Reigate and Redhill*. London: The Saint Catherine Press, 1948.
Baker, Christopher, and Tom Henry. *The National Gallery. Complete Illustrated Catalogue*. London: National Gallery Publications, 1995.
Banton, Eric. 'Underground Travelling London.' Sims. Ed. III: 147–51.
Barker, T. C., and Michael Robbins. *A History of London Transport: Passenger Travel and the Development of the Metropolis*. 2 vols. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1963.
Barker, Theo. *Moving Millions: A Pictorial History of London Transport*. London: London Transport Museum, 1990.
Barolsky, Paul. 'Walter Pater and Bernard Berenson.' *The New Criterion* 2:8 (April 1984): 47–57.
Barry, John Wolfe. *Address on the Streets and Traffic of London*. Delivered at the Opening of the Session (1898–99) of the Society of Arts, on Wednesday, 16 November 1898. London: William Trounce, 1899.
Baudelaire, Charles. *Paris Spleen*. 1869. Trans. Louise Varèse. London: Peter Owen Limited, 1951.
—— *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*. Trans. and Ed. Jonathan Mayne. London: Phaidon Press, 1995.
Baudrillard, Jean. *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*. London: Sage, 1998.
Beckman, Linda Hunt. 'Amy Levy and the "Jewish Novel": Representing Jewish Life in the Victorian Period.' *Studies in the Novel* 26:3 (1994): 235–53.
—— 'Leaving "The Tribal Duckpond": Amy Levy, Jewish Self-Hatred, and Jewish Identity.' *Victorian Literature and Culture* 27:1 (1999): 185–201.
—— *Amy Levy: Her Life and Letters*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000.
Beckson, Karl. *Arthur Symons: A Life*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.
—— *London in the 1890s: A Cultural History*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1992.
Beer, Gillian. ' "Authentic Tidings of Invisible Things": Vision and the Invisible in the Later Nineteenth Century.' *Vision in Context: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Sight*. Eds. Teresa Brennan and Martin Jay. London: Routledge, 1996: 85–98.
—— *Virginia Woolf: The Common Ground*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996.
—— ' "Wireless": Popular Physics, Radio and Modernism.' Spufford and Uglow, 149–66.
Beerbohm, Max. 'The Naming of Streets'. *The Pall Mall Magazine* 26 (1902): 139–44.
—— *Rossetti and His Circle*. London: Heinemann, 1922.
Belford, Barbara. *Violet: The Story of the Irrepressible Violet Hunt and Her Circle of Lovers and Friends – Ford Madox Ford, H.G. Wells, Somerset Maugham, and Henry James*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990.
Bellamy, Edward. *Looking Backwards: 2000–1887*. Boston: Ticknor and Company, 1888.

Benjamin, Walter. *Illuminations*. Ed. and intro. Hannah Arendt. Trans. Harry Zohn. London: Fontana, 1973.
—— *One-Way Street and Other Writings*. Trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter. London: NLB, 1979.
—— *Selected Writings*. Volume 1: 1913–26. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996.
—— *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*. 1973. Trans. Harry Zohn. London: Verso, 1997.
—— *The Arcades Project*. Trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999.
Benson, A. C. *Walter Pater*. London: Macmillan, 1906.
Berenson, Bernard. 'Isochromatic Photography and Venetian Pictures.' *The Nation* 57:1480 (1893): 346–7.
—— *The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1896.
—— *The Bernard Berenson Treasury: A Selection from the Works, Unpublished Writings, Letters, Diaries, and Journals, 1887–1958*. Selected and Edited by Hanna Kiel. Introduction by Harold Acton. Preface by Nicky Mariano. London: Methuen, 1964.
Bergson, Henri. *Matter and Memory*. 1896. Trans. N. M. Paul and W. S. Palmer. New York: Zone Books, 1988.
Berman, Marshall. *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. London: Verso, 1982.
Bernstein, Susan. '*Salon*, Club, and Library Spaces as Heterotopias of Levy's London'. Paper delivered at INCS, *Nineteenth-Century Worlds: Local/Global* 10–12 July 2003.
Bertolini, Luca and Tejo Spit. *Cities on Rails: The Redevelopment of Railway Station Areas*. London: Routledge, 1998.
Besant, Walter, and Geraldine Edith Mitton. *The Fascination of London: Holborn & Bloomsbury*. London: Adam & Charles Black, 1903.
Betts, Ernest. *The Film Business: A History of British Cinema 1896–1972*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1973.
Bigland, Eileen. *Marie Corelli: The Woman and the Legend. A Biography*. London: Jarrolds, 1953.
Binney, Marcus, and David Pearce. Eds. *Railway Architecture*. London: Orbis, 1979.
Binyon, Laurence. *First Book of London Visions*. London: Elkin Mathews' Shilling Garland, 1896.
—— *Second Book of London Visions*. London: Elkin Mathews' Shilling Garland, 1899.
Black, Clementina. 'The Ethics of Shopping.' *Seed-time: The Organ of the New Fellowship* 6 (October 1890): 10–11.
Blackburn, Vernon. 'For the Same Urn'. *Pall Mall Gazette* (27 September 1889): 2.
Blain, Virginia. ' "Michael Field, The Two-Headed Nightingale": The Lesbian Text as a Palimpsest'. *Women's History Review* 5:2 (1996): 239–57.
Bland, Lucy. *Banishing the Beast: English Feminism and Sexual Morality, 1885–1914*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995.
Blind, Mathilde. 'Shelley: A Lecture Delivered to the Church of Progress.' London: Taylor & Co., 1870.
—— 'Shelley's View of Nature Contrasted with Darwin's.' Printed for Private Distribution. London: Richard Clay & Sons, 1886.
—— *The Poetical Works of Mathilde Blind*. Ed. Arthur Symons, With a Memoir by Richard Garnett. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1900.
Blomfield, Dorothy. 'The Reputation of Mademoiselle Claude.' *Temple Bar* 74 (July 1885): 358–70.

—— 'A Roman Love-Song.' *The Woman's World*. Ed. Oscar Wilde I (1888): 363.
—— 'Disillusioned.' *The Woman's World*. Ed. Oscar Wilde II (1889): 352.
'Books of the Month'. *The Atlantic Monthly* 65:392 (June 1890): 858–60.
Boos, Florence S. '*News from Nowhere* and "Garden Cities": Morris's Utopia and Nineteenth-Century Town Design.' *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 7 (1998): 5–27.
Booth, Charles. *Charles Booth's London: A Portrait of the Poor at the Turn of the Century Drawn from his* Life and Labour of the People in London. Eds Albert Fried and Richard M. Elman. Foreword Raymond Williams. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971.
Bowlby, Rachel. *Just Looking: Consumer Culture in Dreiser, Gissing, and Zola*. London: Methuen, 1985.
—— *Feminist Destinations and Further Essays on Virginia Woolf*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997.
Braidotti, Rosi. *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
Braine, Sheila E. 'London's Clubs for Women.' Sims. Ed. I: 114–18.
Brake, Laurel. *Subjugated Knowledges: Journalism, Gender and Literature in the Nineteenth Century*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994.
—— *Walter Pater*. Plymouth: Northcote House, 1994.
Briggs, Asa. *Victorian Cities*. London: Odhams, 1963.
Bristow, Joseph. *Effeminate England: Homoerotic Writing after 1885*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1995.
—— ' "All out of tune in this world's instrument": The "minor" poetry of Amy Levy.' *Journal of Victorian Culture* 4:1 (1999): 76–103.
—— Ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Poetry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
Brown, Susan. ' "A still and mute-born vision": Locating Mathilde Blind's Reproductive Poetics'. Chapman, 123–44.
Brown, W. A., and P. C. Kamperdyk, *The London Omnibus Guide with a Map*. Swaffham: Brown and Gardner, 1877.
Buck-Morss, Susan. 'The Flaneur, the Sandwichman, and the Whore: The Politics of Loitering.' *New German Critique* 39 (1986): 99–140.
—— *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989.
Burgin, Victor. 'The City in Pieces.' *The Actuality of Walter Benjamin*. Eds Laura Marcus and Lynda Nead. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1998, 55–71.
Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful and Other Pre-Revolutionary Writings*. 1757, 1759. London: Penguin, 1998.
Buzard, James. *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800–1918*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.
Cantlie, James. *Degeneration amongst Londoners*. London: Field & Tuer, 1885.
Calo, Mary Ann. *Bernard Berenson and the Twentieth Century*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994.
Carter, Ian. *Railways and Culture in Britain: The Epitome of Modernity*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001.
Castells, Manuel. *The Urban Question: A Marxist Approach*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. London: Edward Arnold, 1977.
—— *The Informational City: Information Technology, Economic Restructuring, and the Urban-Regional Process*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
Catalogue of Books from The Library of Leonard and Virginia Woolf, taken from Monks House, Rodmell, Sussex and 24 Victoria Square, London and now in the possession of

Washington State University, Pullman, USA. Brighton: Holleyman & Treacher Ltd., 1975.
Chadwick, Edwin. *Report to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State For the Home Department, From the Poor Law Commissioner, On An Inquiry Into The Sanitary Condition Of The Labouring Population Of Great Britain*, House of Lords Sessional Papers, Session 1842, vol. 26–8.
Chamberlin, J. Edward, and Sander L. Gilman. Eds. *Degeneration: The Dark Side of Progress*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.
Chambers, E. K. 'Poetry and Pessimism.' *The Westminster Review* 138 (1892): 366–76.
Chapman, Alison. Ed. *Victorian Women Poets*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, The English Association, 2003.
Charney, Leo, and Vanessa R. Schwartz. Eds. *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
Cheyette, Bryan. 'From Apology to Revolt: Benjamin Farjeon, Amy Levy, and the Post-Emancipation Anglo-Jewish Novel, 1800–1900.' *Jewish Historical Society of England Transactions* (1985): 253–65.
—— *Constructions of "the Jew" in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations, 1875–1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
[Clark, W. S.] *The Suburban Homes of London: A Residential Guide*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1881.
Code, Lorraine. *Rhetorical Spaces: Essays on Gendered Locations*. London: Routledge, 1995.
Colomina, Beatriz. *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994.
Connell, John. *W.E. Henley*. London: Constable, 1949.
Cook, Matt. *London and the Culture of Homosexuality, 1885–1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
Corbett, Mary Jean. *Representing Femininity: Middle-Class Subjectivity in Victorian and Edwardian Women's Autobiographies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
Country, Suburban & Seaside Homes: An Illustrated Descriptive Guide to the Residential Districts Served by the South Eastern & Chatham Railways, 1910–11. London: Killby, Bligh & Co., Ltd., 1911.
Crary, Jonathan. *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992.
Dakers, Caroline. *The Holland Park Circle: Artists and Victorian Society*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
Darmesteter, James. 'Chronique Anglaise', *La Revue Politique et Littéraire. Revue de Cours Littéraires* (3e Série). 2e Semestre 1884. Numéro 15 (11 October 1884): 474–5.
Davidson, John. *Fleet Street Eclogues*. London: Elkin Mathews & John Lane, 1893.
—— *A Second Series of Fleet Street Eclogues*. London: John Lane, 1896.
Davis, Mike. *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. London: Verso, 1990.
Day, John R. *The Story of the London Bus. London and Its Buses from the Horse Bus to the Present Day*. London: London Transport, 1973.
De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.
Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. New York: Zone Books, 1995.
Delaney, J. G. Paul. *Charles Ricketts: A Biography*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
Diedrick, James. ' "My love is a force that will force you to care": Subversive Sexuality in Mathilde Blind's Dramatic Monologues.' *Victorian Poetry* 40:2 (2002): 359–86.

Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. London: Athlone Press, 1986.
—— *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta. London: Athlone Press, 1989.
Dellamora, Richard. *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990.
—— Ed. *Victorian Sexual Dissidence*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
Denisoff, Dennis. *Aestheticism and Sexual Parody, 1840–1940*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
Dennis, John. 'The Poetry of the Century: A Retrospect and Anticipation', *Leisure Hours*. Rpt. *Littell's Living Age* (3 May 1890): 307–12.
Donald, James. 'The City, the Cinema: Modern Spaces.' Jenks 77–95.
Donoghue, Emma. *We Are Michael Field*. Bath: The Absolute Press, 1998.
Douglas, Hugh. *The Underground Story*. London: Robert Hale, 1963.
Douglas, Lord Alfred. *The City of the Soul*. London: Grant Richards, 1899.
Duncan, Nancy. Ed. *BodySpace: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*. London: Routledge, 1996.
Dyos, H. J. and Michael Wolff. Eds. *The Victorian City: Images and Realities*. 2 vols. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973.
Edwards, Dennis, and Ron Pigram. *The Romance of Metro-Land*. Tunbridge Wells: Midas Books, 1979.
—— *The Golden Years of the Metropolitan Railway and the Metro-Land Dream*. Tunbridge Wells: Midas Books, 1983.
Egerton, George. 'A Lost Masterpiece: A City Mood, Aug. '93'. *The Yellow Book. An Illustrated Quarterly*. Vol. I (April 1894): 189–96.
Emmerson, Andrew. *The Underground Pioneers: Victorian London and its First Underground Railways*. Harrow Weald: Capital Transport Publishing, 2000.
Endelman, Todd M. *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
Ernst, Max. *Rêve d'une petite fille qui voulout entrer au carmel*. Paris: Editions du Carrefour, 1930.
Evans, Geoffrey. *Kensington*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1975.
Eyre, Alan Montgomery. *Saint John's Wood: Its History, Its Houses, Its Haunts and Its Celebrities*. London: Chapman and Hall, 1913.
Faderman, Lillian. *Surpassing the Love of Men. Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present*. New York: William Morrow, 1981.
Feldman, David. 'The importance of being English: Jewish immigration and the decay of liberal England.' Feldman and Jones, 56–84.
——, and Gareth Stedman Jones. Eds. *Metropolis London: Histories and Representations since 1800*. London: Routledge, 1989.
Felski, Rita. *The Gender of Modernity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.
Fer, Briony. 'Treading Blindly, or the Excessive Presence of the Object.' *Art History* 20:2 (1997): 268–88.
Ffrench, Yvonne. *The Great Exhibition: 1851*. London: The Harvill Press, 1950.
Field, Michael. (as 'Arran Leigh') *The New Minnesinger and Other Poems*. London: Longman, Green & Co., 1875.
—— (as 'Arran and Isla Leigh') *Bellerophôn and Other Poems*. London: C. Kegan Paul, 1881.
—— *Callirrhoë. Fair Rosamund*. London: George Bell & Sons, 1884.
—— *The Father's Tragedy; William Rufus; and Loyalty or Love?* London: George Bell & Sons, 1885.

Field, Michael. *Canute the Great. The Cup of Water*. London: George Bell & Sons, 1887.
—— *Long Ago*. London: George Bell & Sons, 1889.
—— *The Tragic Mary*. London: George Bell & Sons, 1890.
—— *Sight and Song*. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane at the Sign of the Bodley Head, 1892.
—— *Stephania: A Trialogue*. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane at the Sign of the Bodley Head, 1892.
—— *Underneath the Bough: A Book of Verses*. London: George Bell and Sons, 1893.
—— *Underneath the Bough: A Book of Verses*. Portland, Maine: Thomas B. Mosher, 1898.
—— *Attila, My Attila!* London: Elkin Mathews, 1896.
—— *The World at Auction*. London: Ballantyne Press, 1898.
—— *The Race of Leaves*. London: Ballantyne Press, 1901.
—— *Julia Domna*. London: Ballantyne Press, 1903.
—— *Wild Honey from Various Thyme*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1908.
—— *Poems of Adoration*. London: Sands & Co., 1912.
—— *Dedicated: An Early Work of Michael Field*. London: George Bell & Sons, 1914.
—— *A Selection from the Poems of Michael Field*. Compiled by T. Sturge Moore. London: The Poetry Bookshop, 1923.
—— *The Wattlefold: Unpublished Poems*. Collected by Emily C. Fortey, preface by V. McNabb. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1930.
—— *Works and Days: From the Journal of Michael Field*. Eds T. and D. C. Sturge Moore. London: John Murray, 1933.
—— *A Shorter Shīrazād. 101 Poems of Michael Field*. Chosen, annotated, but not edited by Ivor C. Treby. Bury St Edmunds: De Blackland Press, 1999.
—— *Music and Silence: The Gamut of Michael Field*. Introduced, annotated, but not edited by Ivor C. Treby. Bury St Edmunds: De Blackland Press, 2000.
—— *Uncertain Rain: Sundry Spells of Michael Field*. Chosen, annotated, but not edited by Ivor C. Treby. Bury St Edmunds: De Blackland Press, 2002.
Finn, Margot. 'Sex and the City: Metropolitan Modernities in English History'. *Victorian Studies* 44:1 (2001): 24–32.
First, Ruth, and Ann Scott. *Olive Schreiner*. Foreword by Nadine Gordimer. London: The Women's Press, 1989.
Fishman, Robert. *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia*. New York: Basic Books, 1987.
Fletcher, Robert P. ' "I leave a page half-writ": Narrative Discoherence in Michael Field's *Underneath the Bough*'. Armstrong and Blain, 164–82.
Foster, Hal. *Compulsive Beauty*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993.
—— *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996.
Fothergill, J. Milner. *The Town Dweller: His Needs and his Wants*. London: H. K. Lewis, 1889.
Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith. London: Routledge, 1995.
Francis, Emma. 'Amy Levy: Contradictions? – Feminism and Semitic Discourse'. Armstrong and Blain, 183–204.
—— 'Socialist Feminism and Sexual Instinct: Eleanor Marx and Amy Levy'. Stokes, 113–27.
Fraser, Hilary. 'The Religious Poetry of Michael Field' in *Athena's Shuttle: Myth, Religion and Ideology from Romanticism to Modernism*. Eds Franco Marucci and Emma Sdegno. Milan: Cisalpino, 2000, 127–42.
Fraser, Nancy. 'Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy'. *Social Text* 25–6 (1990): 56–80.

Frawley, Maria. ' "The Tides of the Mind": Alice Meynell's Poetry of Perception.' *Victorian Poetry* 38:1 (Spring 2000): 62–76.
Freedman, Jonathan. *Professions of Taste: Henry James, British Aestheticism, and Commodity Culture*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990.
—— *The Temple of Culture: Assimilation and Anti-Semitism in Literary Anglo-America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
Frey, William. 'On Religion.' Paper read before the Fellowship of the New Life. London: William Frey, 1888.
Gagnier, Regenia. 'Is Market Society the *Fin* of History?' Ledger and McCracken, 290–310.
Gardiner, Bruce. *The Rhymers' Club: A Social and Intellectual History*. New York: Garland, 1988.
Garnett, Olive. *Tea and Anarchy! The Bloomsbury Diary of Olive Garnett, 1890–1893*. Ed. Barry C. Johnson. London: Bartletts Press, 1989.
—— *Olive and Stepniak: The Bloomsbury Diary of Olive Garnett, 1893–1895*. Ed. Barry C. Johnson. Birmingham: Bartletts Press, 1993.
Gerrard's Omnibus Guide of London Traffic. London: G. Pulman & Sons, 1890.
Gibson, Peter. *The Capital Companion. A Street-by-Street Guide to London and Its Inhabitants*. Exeter: Webb & Bower, 1985.
Giedion, Sigfried. *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1948.
Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. London: Verso, 1993.
Glage, Liselotte. *Clementina Black: A Study in Social History and Literature*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, Universitätsverlag, 1981.
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *Theory of Colours*. Trans. C. L. Eastlake. London: John Murray, 1840.
Gombrich, E. H. *The Story of Art*. London: Phaidon, 1966.
Gottdiener, M., and Alexandros Lagopoulos. Eds. *The City and the Sign: An Introduction to Urban Semiotics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
Gottmann, Jean. *Megalopolis*. New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1961.
Gray, F. Elizabeth. 'Making Christ: Alice Meynell, Poetry, and the Eucharist.' *Christianity and Literature* 52:2 (Winter 2003): 159–79.
Greed, Clara H. *Women and Planning: Creating Gendered Realities*. London: Routledge, 1994.
Green, Oliver, and Jeremy Rewse-Davis, *Designed for London: 150 Years of Transport Design*. London: Laurence King, 1995.
Gregory, Derek. *Geographical Imaginations*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1994.
Grosz, Elizabeth. *Space, Time, and Perversion: Essays on the Politics of Bodies*. London: Routledge, 1995.
Gunn, Peter. *Vernon Lee: Violet Paget, 1856–1935*. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.
Gunning, Tom. 'Tracing the Individual Body: Photography, Detectives, and Early Cinema.' Charney and Schwartz, 15–45.
Habermas, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Trans. T. Burger. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989.
Hall, Peter. *Cities of Tomorrow. An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*, 1988. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.
Halliday, Stephen. *Underground to Everywhere: London's Underground Railway in the Life of the Capital*. Stroud: Sutton Publishing and London's Transport Museum, 2001.
Hans, Marie-Françoise, and Gilles Lapouge. Eds. *Les femmes, la pornographie et l'erotism*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1978.
Hansen, Miriam B. 'Introduction to Adorno, "Transparencies on Film" (1966).' *New German Critique* 24–5 (1981–82): 186–98.

Haraway, Donna. 'Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s.' *Socialist Review* 80 (1985): 65–108.
Harding, James. *Artistes Pompiers: French Academic Art in the Nineteenth Century*. London: Academic Editions, 1979.
Harvey, David. *Consciousness and the Urban Experience*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985.
—— *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
Hawes, Elizabeth. *New York, New York: How the Apartment House Transformed the Life of the City, 1869–1930*. New York: Knopf, 1993.
Hayden, Dolores. *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighbourhoods and Cities*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981.
Heidegger, Martin. 'Art and Space' in Neil Leach ed. *Rethinking Architecture. A Reader in Cultural Theory*. London: Routledge, 1997: 121–4.
—— *Being and Time*. Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967.
Helsinger, Elizabeth K. *Ruskin and the Art of the Beholder*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.
Henley, William Ernest. *London Voluntaries. The Song of the Sword, and Other Verses*. London: David Nutt, 1893. Second Edition Revised.
—— Ed. *A London Garland. Selected from Five Centuries of English Verse by W. E. Henley with Pictures by Members of the Society of Illustrators*. London: Macmillan, 1895.
—— *London Types. Quatorzains by W. E. Henley, Illustrations by W. Nicholson*. London: Heinemann, 1898.
Hibbert, Christopher. *London: The Biography of a City*. 1969. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980.
Hobhouse, Hermione. *Lost London: A Century of Demolition and Decay*. London: Macmillan, 1971.
Holdsworth, Carolyn. ' "Shelley Plain": Yeats and Katharine Tynan.' *Yeats Annual* 2. Ed. Richard J. Finneran. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1983: 59–92.
Hollingshead, John. *Underground London*. London: Groombridge and Sons, 1862.
Horne, Philip. Ed. *Henry James: A Life in Letters*. Harmondsworth: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1999.
Houston, Natalie M. 'Towards a New History: *Fin-de-Siècle* Women Poets and the Sonnet'. Chapman, 145–64.
Howard, Ebenezer. *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*. London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1898. Rpt. *Garden Cities of To-morrow*. Ed. and Preface F. J. Osborn. Intro. Lewis Mumford. London: Faber and Faber, 1946.
Hughes, Molly V. *A London Girl of the 1880s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.
Hughes, Linda K. ' "Fair Hymen holdeth hid a world of woes": Myth and Marriage in Poems by "Graham R. Tomson" (Rosamund Marriott Watson).' *Victorian Poetry* 32 (1994): 97–120.
—— 'My Sister, My Self: Networking and Self-Promotion Among *Fin-de-Siècle* Women Poets.' Paper delivered at the conference *Rethinking Women's Poetry 1730–1930*. Birkbeck College, University of London, 1995.
—— 'A *Fin-de-Siècle* Beauty and the Beast: Configuring the Body in Works by "Graham R. Tomson" (Rosamund Marriott Watson).' *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 14:1 (1995): 95–121.
—— 'A Female Aesthete at the Helm: *Sylvia's Journal* and "Graham R. Tomson," 1893–1894.' *Victorian Periodicals Review* 29:2 (1996): 173–92.
—— 'Feminizing Decadence: Poems by Graham R. Tomson.' Schaffer and Psomiades, 119–38.
—— Ed. *New Woman Poets: An Anthology*. London: The Eighteen Nineties Society, 2001.

—— 'Rosamund Marriott Watson' *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Volume 240: Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century British Women Poets*. Ed. William B. Thesing A Bruccoli Clark Layman Book: The Gale Group, 2001: 308–20.
—— 'A Club of their Own: The "Literary Ladies", New Woman Writer, and *Fin-de-Siècle* Authorship', *Victorian Literature and Culture* (forthcoming).
Hulse, James W. *Revolutionists in London: A Study of Five Unorthodox Socialists*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.
Ireland, Kenneth R. '*Sight and Song*: A Study of the Interrelations between Painting and Poetry.' *Victorian Poetry* 15:1 (1977): 9–20.
Iser, Wolfgang. *Walter Pater: The Aesthetic Movement*. Trans. David Henry Wilson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
Jackson, Alan A. *London's Termini*. Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1969.
—— *Semi-Detached London: Suburban Development, Life and Transport, 1900–1939*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1973.
—— *London's Local Railways*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1978.
Jackson, Holbrook. *The Eighteen Nineties: A Review of Art and Ideas at the Close of the Nineteenth Century*. London: Grant Richards, 1913.
Jacobs, Jane. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961.
Jardine, Alice. *Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.
Janowitz, Anne. '*The Pilgrims of Hope:* William Morris and the Dialectic of Romanticism.' Ledger and McCracken, 160–83.
Jay, Martin. *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
Jenks, Chris. Ed. *Visual Culture*. London: Routledge, 1995.
—— 'Watching your Step: The History and Practice of the *Flâneur*.' Jenks, 142–60.
Jordanova, Ludmilla. *Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989.
Kaplan, Cora. *Salt and Bitter and Good: Three Centuries of English and American Women Poets*. London: Paddington Press, 1975.
—— *Sea-Changes: Essays on Culture and Feminism*. London: Verso, 1986.
Kaplan, E. Ann. 'Is the Gaze Male?' in *Powers of Desire*. Eds. Anne Snitow et al., New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983.
Kapp, Yvonne. *Eleanor Marx*. 2 vols. London: Virago, 1979.
Khayyám, Omar. *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*. Rendered into English Verse by Edward Fitzgerald. The Four Editions with the Original Prefaces and Notes. London: Macmillan, 1899.
Kellett, John R. *Railways and Victorian Cities*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979.
Kelly, Barbara M. Ed. *Suburbia Re-examined*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1989.
Kern, Stephen. *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880–1918*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983.
Kirby, Lynne. *Parallel Tracks: The Railroad and Silent Cinema*. Exeter: The University of Exeter Press, 1997.
Kittler, Friedrich A. *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*. Trans. Michael Metteer with Chris Cullens. Foreword by David E. Wellbery. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990.
Klapper, Charles. *The Golden Age of Tramways*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961.
—— *Roads and Rails of London, 1900–1933*. London: Ian Allan, 1976.
Kostof, Spiro. *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings Through History*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1991.

Koestenbaum, Wayne. *Double Talk: The Erotics of Male Literary Collaboration*. New York: Routledge, 1989.
Krauss, Rosalind. 'The Im/pulse to See.' *Vision and Visuality*. Ed. Hal Foster. New York: The New Press, 1988: 51–75.
Kristeva, Julia. *La Révolution du Langage Poétique*. Paris: Seuil, 1974.
Lacan, Jacques. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977.
Laird, Holly. 'Contradictory Legacies: Michael Field and Feminist Restoration.' *Victorian Poetry* 33:1 (1995): 111–28.
Lamb, Joseph F. 'Symbols of Success in Suburbia: The Establishment of Artists' Communities in Late Victorian London.' *Victorian Urban Settings: Essays on the Nineteenth-Century City and Its Contexts*. Eds. Debra N. Mancoff and D. J. Trela. New York: Garland, 1966: 57–73.
Lambert, Richard Stanton. *The Universal Provider: A Study of William Whiteley and the Rise of the London Department Store*. London: George G. Harrap & Co., 1938.
La Mettrie, Julien Offray de. *Man a Machine* and *Man a Plant*. Trans. Richard A. Watson and Maya Rybalka. Introduction and Notes Justin Leiber. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1994.
Landow, George P. *The Aesthetic and Critical Theories of John Ruskin*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971.
Lantern Readings: Original and Selected, To Accompany Sets of Photographic Transparencies. To Be Had of All Booksellers and Opticians. Birmingham, 1875.
Leach, Henry. 'Railway London.' Sims. Ed. III: 3–9.
Leboff, David, and Tim Demuth. *No Need to Ask! Early Maps of London's Underground Railways*. Harrow Weald: Capital Transport Publishing, 1999.
Ledger, Sally. *The New Woman: Fiction, Feminism at the* Fin de Siècle. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997.
——, and Scott McCracken. Eds. *Cultural Politics at the* Fin de Siècle. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
Lee, Vernon. 'A Worldly Woman.' *Vanitas*. London: Heinemann, 1892: 123–222.
—— *Vernon Lee's Letters*. Ed. and with a Preface by her Executor I. Cooper Willis. Privately Printed, 1937.
Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Blackwell, 1991.
—— *Introduction to Modernity*. Trans. John Moore. London: Verso, 1995.
Le Gallienne, Richard. *The Romantic '90s*. Introduction by H. Montgomery Hyde. London: Putman & Company, 1951.
Leighton, Angela. ' "Because Men Made the Laws": The Fallen Woman and the Woman Poet.' *Victorian Poetry* 27 (1989): 109–27.
—— *Victorian Women Poets: Writing against the Heart*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992.
—— Ed. *Victorian Women Poets: A Critical Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.
—— 'Women Poets and the Fin de Siècle: Towards a New Aestheticism.' *Victorian Review: the Journal of Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada and the Victorian Studies Association of Ontario* 23:1 (1997): 1–14.
——, and Margaret Reynolds. Eds. *Victorian Women Poets: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.
Leiss, William. 'Technology and Degeneration: The Sublime Machine.' Chamberlin and Gilman, 145–64.
Levy, Amy. *Xantippe and Other Verse*. Cambridge: E. Johnson, 1881.

—— 'The Diary of a Plain Girl.' *London Society* 44 (1883): 295–304.
—— 'Between Two Stools.' *Temple Bar* 69 (1883): 337–50. Rpt. Levy 1993, 409–23.
—— 'James Thomson: A Minor Poet.' 1883. Rpt. Levy 1993, 501–9.
—— 'In Holiday Humour.' *London Society* 46 (1884): 177–84.
—— 'In Retreat: A Long Vacation Experience.' *London Society* 46 (1884): 332–5.
—— 'In the Black Forest.' *London Society* 46 (1884): 392–4.
—— *A Minor Poet and Other Verses*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1884.
—— 'The New School of American Fiction.' 1884. Rpt. Levy 1993, 510–17.
—— 'Olga's Valentine.' *London Society* 45 (1884): 152–7.
—— 'Easter-Tide at Tunbridge Wells.' *London Society* 47 (1885): 481–3.
—— 'Philosophy in the Ball-Room.' *London Society* 48 (1885): 175.
—— 'Revenge.' *London Society* 47 (1885): 389–99.
—— 'The Ghetto at Florence.' 1886. Rpt. Levy 1993, 518–20.
—— 'The Poetry of Christina Rossetti.' *The Woman's World*. Ed. Oscar Wilde I (1888): 178–80.
—— *Reuben Sachs: A Sketch*. London: Macmillan, 1888. Rpt. Levy 1993, 197–293.
—— *The Romance of a Shop*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1888. Rpt. Levy 1993, 59–196.
——'Women and Club Life.' *The Woman's World*. Ed. Oscar Wilde I (1888): 364–7.
——'Addenbrooke.' *Belgravia: A London Magazine* LXVIII (March to June 1889): 24–34.
——'Eldorado at Islington.' *The Woman's World*. Ed. Oscar Wilde II (1889): 488–9.
—— *Miss Meredith*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1889.
—— *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1889.
—— 'Readers at the British Museum.' *Atalanta* 2:7 (April 1889): 449–54.
—— *The Unhappy Princess: An Extravaganza for Little People*. Fairy and Home Plays for Home Performance. London: Samuel French, 1898.
—— *The Complete Novels and Selected Writings of Amy Levy, 1861–1889*. Ed. Melvyn New. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993.
—— *A Ballade of Religion and Marriage*. 12 Copies Privately Printed for Clement K. Shorter, 1915.
Levy, Sharona Anne. 'Amy Levy: The Woman and Her Writings.' PhD thesis: University of Oxford, 1989.
Lewer, David, and Robert Dark. *The Temple Church in London*. London: Historical Publications, 1997.
Little, Jo, Linda Peake, and Pat Richardson. Eds. *Women in Cities: Gender and the Urban Environment*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.
Locard, Henri. 'Michael Field et la "lecture de Verlaine" à Barnard's Inn.' *Confluents* (1975): 91–101.
—— 'Le Journal d'Edmond et Jules de Goncourt et *Works and Days* de "Michael Field".' *Confluents* (1976): 53–77.
Locker-Lampson, Frederick. *London Lyrics*. With an Illustration by George Cruikshank. London: Chapman and Hall, 1857.
Loeb, Lori Anne. *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
London General. *The Story of the London Bus 1856–1956*. London: London Transport, 1956.
London. Dir. Patrick Keiller. Narrated by Paul Scofield. London: The British Film Institute. 1993.
Lucas, Edward Verall. *A Wanderer in London*. 1906. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910.

Mackail, J. W. *The Life of William Morris*. 2 vols. London: Longmans, Green, 1899. Rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1995.
Madden, Norman Edward. *Lyric Transvestism: Gender and Voice in Modernist Literature*. PhD thesis. University of Texas at Austin, 1994.
Malraux, André. *Essais de psychologie de l'art*. Vol. 1. *Le musée imaginaire*. Genève: Albert Skira, 1947.
Marcus, Sharon. *Apartment Stories: City and Home in Nineteenth-Century Paris and London*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
Marks, Henry Stacy. *Pen and Pencil Sketches*. 2 vols. London: Chatto & Windus, 1894.
Marsh, Jan. *Christina Rossetti. A Literary Biography*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1994.
Martin, Timothy P. 'Joyce, Wagner, and the Wandering Jew'. *Comparative Literature* 42 (1990): 49–72.
Massey, Doreen. *Space, Place and Gender*. Cambridge: Polity, 1994.
McConkey, Kenneth. *British Impressionism*. Oxford: Phaidon, 1989.
—— *Impressionism in Britain*. London: Yale University Press in association with Barbican Art Gallery, 1995.
McDonald, Jan. ' "Disillusioned Bards and Despised Bohemians": Michael Field's *A Question of Memory* at the Independent Theatre Society.' *Theatre Notebook* 31:2 (1977): 18–29.
McLeod, Hugh. *Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City*. London: Croom Helm, 1974.
Menear, Laurence. *London's Underground Stations: A Social and Architectural Study*. Kent: Midas Books, 1983.
Meredith, George. *Modern Love and Poems of the English Roadside, with Poems and Ballads*. London, 1862.
—— *Letters from George Meredith to Alice Meynell with Annotations Thereto 1896–1907*. London: Nonesuch Press, 1923.
Mayhew, Henry. Ed. *The Shops and Companies of London and the Trades and Manufactories of Great Britain*. Vol. I. London: Strand, 1865.
Meynell, Alice. (as Thompson, Alice C.) *Preludes*. London: Henry S. King, 1875.
—— 'The Wares of Autolycus.' *Pall Mall Gazette* (15 September 1893): 5.
—— *Poems*. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1893.
—— *The Rhythm of Life and Other Essays*. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1893.
—— *The Colour of Life and Other Essays on Things Seen and Heard*. London: John Lane, 1896.
—— *Other Poems*. Printed Privately at the New Year, 1896.
—— *The Children*. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1897.
—— *London Impressions*. Etchings and Pictures in Photogravure by William Hyde and essays by Alice Meynell. London: Archibald Constable, 1898.
—— *The Spirit of Place and Other Essays*. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1899
—— *Later Poems*. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1902.
—— *Ceres' Runaway and Other Essays*. London: Constable & Co., 1909.
—— *Collected Poems of Alice Meynell*. London: Burns & Oates, 1913.
—— *Essays by Alice Meynell*. London: Burns & Oates, 1914.
—— *Ten Poems by Alice Meynell, 1913–1915*. Westminster: The Romney Street Press, 1915.
—— *Poems on the War*. Printed by Clement K. Shorter for Private Circulation, 1916.
—— *A Father of Women and Other Poems*. London: Burns & Oates, 1917.
—— *Hearts of Controversy*. London: Burns & Oates, 1917.

—— *The Last Poems of Alice Meynell*. London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1923.
—— *The Second Person Singular and Other Essays*. London: Humphrey Milford, 1923.
—— *Wayfaring*. 1928. London: The Travellers Library, Jonathan Cape, 1929.
—— *Prose and Poetry: Centenary Volume*. Intro. V. Sackville-West. London: Jonathan Cape, 1947.
—— *The Wares of Autolycus: Selected Literary Essays of Alice Meynell*. Chosen and Introduced by P. M. Fraser. London: Oxford University Press, 1965.
Meynell, Everard. *The Life of Francis Thompson*. London: Burns & Oates, 1913.
Meynell, Francis. *My Lives*. London: Bodley Head, 1971.
Meynell, Viola. *Alice Meynell: A Memoir*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1929.
'Michael Field's New Play.' Rev. of Michael Field, *The World at Auction*. *The Saturday Review* (30 July 1898): 149.
Miles, Alfred H. Ed. *The Poets and the Poetry of the Century*. 10 vols. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1898.
Miles, Malcolm. *Art, Space and the City. Public Art and Urban Features*. London: Routledge, 1997.
Millar, Jeremy and Michiel Schwarz. Eds. *Speed – Visions of an Accelerated Age*. London: The Photographers' Gallery and the Trustees of the Whitechapel Art Gallery, in association with the Macdonald Stewart Art Centre, Guelph and the Netherlands Design Institute, 1998.
Millgate, Michael. 'Thomas Hardy and Rosamund Tomson.' *Notes and Queries* (July 1973): 253–5.
Moore, Henry Charles. *Omnibuses and Cabs: Their Origin and History*. London: Chapman & Hall, 1902.
—— 'Tram, 'Bus, and Cab London.' Sims. Ed. II: 94–9.
Moore, Rayburn S. Ed. *The Correspondence of Henry James and the House of Macmillan, 1877–1914*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993.
Moretti, Franco. *Atlas of the European Novel 1800–1900*. London: Verso, 1998.
Moriarty, David. ' "Michael Field" and their Male Critics.' *Nineteenth-Century Women Writers of the English-Speaking World*. Ed. Rhoda B. Nathan. Westwood: Greenwood Press, 1986, 121–42.
Morris, William. *News from Nowhere or an Epoch of Rest*. London: Reeves & Turner, 1891.
Morris, William George. *The Squares of Bloomsbury: Lunch-time Rambles in Old London*. No. 20. London: the Homeland Association, [1926].
Mumford, Lewis. *The City in History*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1961.
Naidu, Sarojini. *Selected Letters 1890s to 1940s*. Selected, ed. and intro. Makarand Paranjape. New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1996.
Nead, Lynda. *Myths of Sexuality: Representation of Women in Victorian Britain*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1988.
—— *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
Newbolt, Henry. *Studies Green and Grey*. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1926.
Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Birth of Tragedy & The Genealogy of Morals*. Trans. Francis Golffing. New York: Anchor Books, 1956.
—— *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*. Trans. R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
Nord, Deborah Epstein. ' "Neither Pairs Nor Odd": Female Community in Late Nineteenth-Century London.' *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 15:4 (1990): 733–54.

Nord, Deborah Epstein. *Walking the Victorian Streets: Women, Representation, and the City*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995.
Ogborn, Miles. *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780*. New York: Guilford Press, 1998.
O'Gorman, Francis. 'Browning's Manuscript Revisions to Michael Field's *Long Ago* (1889).' *Browning Society Notes* 25 (1998): 38–44.
Osborne, Peter. *The Politics of Time: Modernity and the Avant-Garde*. London: Verso, 1995.
Olsen, Donald J. *The Growth of Victorian London*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976.
'Opening of the Metropolitan Railway.' *The Illustrated London News* 17 January 1863: 74.
Panofsky, Erwin. *Perspective as Symbolic Form*. 1927. New York: Zone Books, 1991.
Parejo Vadillo, Ana. 'New Woman Poets and the Culture of the *Salon* at the *Fin de Siècle*'. *Women: A Cultural Review* 10:1 (1999): 22–34.
—— '*Sight and Song:* Transparent Translations and a Manifesto for the Observer'. *Victorian Poetry* 38:1 (Spring 2000): 15–34.
—— 'Phenomena in Flux: The Aesthetics and Politics of Traveling in Modernity.' Ardis and Lewis, 205–20.
—— 'Poetics on the Line: The Effect of Mass-Transport in Urban Culture'. *Nineteenth-Century Geographies: Anglo-American Tactics of Space*. Eds Helena Michie and Ronald Thomas. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003, 237–50.
—— 'My Heroine'. *Women: A Cultural Review* 12:3 (2001): 340–6.
Parkins, Wendy. 'Moving Dangerously: Mobility and the Modern Woman'. *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 20:1 (2001): 77–92.
Parsons, Deborah L. *Streetwalking the Metropolis: Women, the City, and Modernity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
Pascoe, Charles Eyre. *London of To-Day: An Illustrated Handbook for the Season*. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1885.
Pater, Walter. *Marius the Epicurean. His Sensations and Ideas*. 2 vols. London: Macmillan, 1885.
—— *The Letters of Walter Pater*. Ed. Lawrence Evans. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.
—— *The Renaissance, Studies in Art and Poetry*. Ed. Donald L. Hill. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.
Patmore, Coventry. 'Mrs. Meynell, Poet and Essayist.' *The Fortnightly Review* 52 (1892): 761–6.
Pennell, Elizabeth Robins. *Nights: Rome, Venice, London, Paris*. London: Heinemann, 1916.
—— *The Life and Letters of Joseph Pennell*. 2 vols. Boston: Little, Brown, 1929.
Peters, Maureen. *Jean Ingelow: Victorian Poetess*. Ipswich: The Boydell Press, 1972.
Pike, Burton. *The Image of the City in Modern Literature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.
Pike, David L. 'Underground Theater: Subterranean Spaces on the London Stage.' *Nineteenth Century Studies* 13 (1999): 102–38.
Pile, Steve. *The Body and the City: Psychoanalysis, Space and Subjectivity*. London: Routledge, 1996.
Pollock, Griselda. *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and Histories of Art*. London: Routledge, 1988.
Porter, Roy. *London: A Social History*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1994.
Price, Julius M. *My Bohemian Days in London*. London: T. Werner Laurie, 1914.
Priestley, J. B. Ed. *The Book of Bodley Head Verse*. London: John Lane, 1926.
Prins, Yopie. 'A Metaphorical Field: Katherine Bradley and Edith Cooper.' *Victorian Poetry* 33:1 (1995): 129–48.

—— 'Sappho Doubled: Michael Field.' *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 8 (1995): 165–86.
—— 'Greek Maenads, Victorian Spinsters.' Dellamora, 43–81.
—— *Victorian Sappho*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
Pritchard, F. H. Ed. *Essays of To-Day*. London: George G. Harrap, 1923.
Probyn, May. *A Ballad of the Road and Other Poems*. London: W. Satchell, 1883.
Psomiades, Kathy Alexis. *Subtly of Herself Contemplative: Women, Poets, and British Aestheticism*. PhD thesis. Yale University, 1990.
—— *Beauty's Body: Femininity and Representation in British Aestheticism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997.
Pullen, Christine. *Amy Levy: Her Life, Her Poetry and the Era of the New Woman*. PhD thesis. University of Kingston-upon-Thames, 2000.
—— ' "Under the Great Dome": Amy Levy, the New Journalism and the Poetic of "New Grub Street" '. Paper delivered at the Conference *Women's Poetry and the* Fin de Siècle. Institute of English Studies (14 June 2002).
Rabinbach, Anson. *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue and the Origins of Modernity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
Radford, Dollie. *Songs and Other Verses*. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1895.
Radford, Ernest. 'An Inscription for an Urn.' *Pall Mall Gazette* (24 September 1889): 2.
Rappaport, Erika Diane. *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
'Recent Verse.' *Athenaeum* (4 April 1896): 442–3.
Reeder, David A. *Suburbanity and the Victorian City. The Second D. J. Dyos Memorial Lecture*. Victorian Studies Centre: University of Leicester, 1980.
Rey, Alain. Ed. *Le Robert: Dictionnaire Historique de la Langue Française*. Paris: Le Robert, 1993.
Rhys, Ernest. *A London Rose and Other Rhymes*. London: Elkin Mathews & John Lane, 1894.
Richardson, James. *Vanishing Lives: Style and Self in Tennyson, D. G. Rossetti, Swinburne and Yeats*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1988.
Ricketts, Charles. *Michael Field*. Ed. Paul Delaney. Edinburgh: Tragara Press, 1976.
Ricketts, Charles and Charles Shannon. *Some Letters from Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon to 'Michael Field' (1894–1902)*. Ed. J. G. Paul Delaney. Edinburgh: The Tragara Press, 1979.
—— *Letters from Charles Ricketts to 'Michael Field' (1903–1913)*. Ed. J. G. Paul Delaney. Edinburgh: The Tragara Press, 1981.
Riddell, Jonathan. *Pleasure Trips by Underground*. Harrow Weald: London Transport Museum and Capital Transport, 1998.
Robinson, A. Mary F. *A Handful of Honeysuckle*. London: C. Kegan Paul, 1878.
—— *The Crowned Hippolytus, Translated from Euripides with New Poems*. London: C. Kegan Paul, 1881.
—— *An Italian Garden. A Book of Songs*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1886.
—— *The Collected Poems: Lyrical and Narrative*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1902.
Roden, Frederick S. *Same-Sex Desire in Victorian Religious Culture*. Basingstoke: Palgrave – now Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.
Rose, Gillian. *Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993.
Rose, Jacqueline. *Sexuality in the Field of Vision*. London: Verso, 1986.
Rossetti, Christina. *The Complete Poems*. Text by R. W. Crump. Notes and Introduction by Betty S. Flowers. London: Penguin, 2001.
Rossetti, William Michael. *Selected Letters of William Michael Rossetti*. Ed. Roger W. Peattie. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990.

Round Reigate: A Handy Guide to Walks in the District. By a Resident. London: Marshall Japp, 1881.
Rowbotham, Sheila, and Jeffrey Weeks. *Socialism and the New Life: The Personal and Sexual Politics of Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis*. London: Pluto Press, 1977.
Ruskin, John. *The Works of John Ruskin*. Eds E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn. London: George Allen, 1903–12.
—— *The Literary Criticism of John Ruskin*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Da Capo Press, 1965.
Ryan, Jenny. 'Women, Modernity and the City'. *Theory, Culture and Society* 11 (1994): 35–63.
Ryan, Mary P. *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825–1880*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.
Sala, George Augustus. *Twice Round the Clock; or the Hours of the Day and Night in London*. London: Houlston & Wright, 1859.
—— 'Locomotion in London.' *The Gentleman's Magazine* 236 (1874): 453–65.
Saler, Michael. 'The "Medieval Modern" Underground: Terminus of the Avant Garde.' *Modernism/Modernity* 2:1 (1995): 113–44.
—— *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England: Medieval Modernism and the London Underground*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
Salt, H. S. *The Life of James Thomson ('B.V.') With a Selection from his Letters and a Study of his Writings*. London: Reeves & Turner, 1889.
Schaffer, Talia. *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes: Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.
—— 'A Tethered Angel: The Martyrology of Alice Meynell.' *Victorian Poetry* 38:1 (Spring 2000): 49–61.
—— 'Writing a Public Self: Alice Meynell's "Unstable Equilibrium".' Ardis and Lewis, 13–30.
—— and Kathy Alexis Psomiades. Eds. *Women and British Aestheticism*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999.
Scheinberg, Cynthia. 'Canonizing the Jew: Amy Levy's Challenge to Victorian Poetic Identity.' *Victorian Studies* 39:2 (1996): 173–200.
—— 'Recasting "Sympathy and Judgement": Amy Levy, Women Poets, and the Victorian Dramatic Monologue.' *Victorian Poetry* 35:2 (Summer 1997): 173–92.
—— *Women's Poetry and Religion in Victorian England: Jewish Identity and Christian Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
Schivelbusch, Wolfang. *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century*. Leamington Spa: Berg, 1986 new edn.
Schopenhauer, Arthur. *The World as Will and Idea*. Translated from the German by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp. 3 vols. London: Trübner & Co., 1883–86.
—— *Parerga and Paralipomena: Short Philosophical Essays*. Trans. E. F. J. Payne. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974.
Schreiner, Olive. *The Letters of Olive Schreiner, 1876–1920*. Ed. S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1924.
—— *Olive Schreiner Letters. Vol. 1: 1871–1899*. Ed. Richard Rive. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
—— *'My Other Self': The Letters of Olive Schreiner and Havelock Ellis, 1884–1920*. Ed. Yaffa Claire Draznin. New York: Peter Lang, 1992.
Seaman, L. C. B. *Life in Victorian London*. London: B. T. Batsford, 1973.
Secor, Robert. 'Robert Browning and the Hunts of South Kensington'. *Browning Institute Studies. An Annual of Victorian Literary and Cultural History*. Ed. William S. Peterson. Vol. 7 (1979): 115–36.

Seeley, Tracy. 'Alice Meynell, Essayist: Taking Life "Greatly to Heart" '. *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 27:2 (1998): 105–30.
Seltzer, Mark. *Bodies and Machines*. London: Routledge, 1992.
Sennett, Richard. *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1992.
—— *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1994.
Serres, Michel. *Hermès IV: La Distribution*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1977.
—— *Les Cinq Sens. Philosophie des Corps Mêlés 1*. Paris: Grasset, 1985.
—— *Atlas*. Paris: Éditions Julliard, 1994.
Sharp, Elizabeth Amelia. *William Sharp* (Fiona MacLeod): *A Memoir*. 2 vols. London: Heinemann, 1912.
Sharp, Evelyn. 'In Dull Brown', *The Yellow Book. An Illustrated Quarterly*. Vol. VIII (January 1896): 181–200.
Sharp, William. '*A London Plane Tree: and Other Verse*. By Amy Levy. (Fisher Unwin)', *The Academy* (1 February 1890): 76.
Showalter, Elaine. *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing*. 1977. London: Virago, 1993.
—— *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the* Fin de Siècle. London: Bloomsbury, 1991.
—— Ed. *Daughters of Decadence: Women Writers of the* Fin de Siècle. London: Virago, 1993.
Simmel, Georg. *The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays*. Trans. K. Peter Etzkorn. New York: Teachers College Press, 1968.
—— *Soziologie: Untersuchungen über die Formen der Vergesellschaftung*. Leipzig: Verlag von Duncker & Humblot, 1908.
—— *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*. Trans., ed. and intro. Kurt H. Wolff. New York: The Free Press, 1950.
—— 'The Metropolis and Mental Life.' Simmel, 1950: 409–24.
Sims, George R. Ed. *Living London*. 3 vols. London: Cassell, 1902–3.
—— *My Life: Sixty Years' Recollections of Bohemian London*. London: Eveleigh Nash, 1917.
Smith, Cecil. *A Short Story of St. John's Wood and Some of Its Former Inhabitants*. Shrewsbury: Wilding, 1942.
Smulders, Sharon. 'Looking "Past Wordsworth and the Rest": Pretexts for Revision in Alice Meynell's "The Shepherdess" '. *Victorian Poetry* 38:1 (Spring 2000): 35–48.
Soja, Edward W. *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso, 1989.
Solomon, Katie. 'Letters to the Editor.' *The Observer* (7 July 1929): 10.
Spears, Monroe K. *Dionysus and the City: Modernism and Twentieth-Century Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970.
Spufford, Francis, and Jenny Uglow. Eds. *Cultural Babbage: Technology, Time and Invention*. London: Faber and Faber, 1996.
Squier, Susan Merrill. Ed. *Women Writers and the City: Essays in Feminist Literary Criticism*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984.
—— *Virginia Woolf and London: The Sexual Politics of the City*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.
Stedman, Edmund Clarence. *The Nature and Elements of Poetry*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1892.
Steedman, Carolyn. 'Fictions of Engagement: Eleanor Marx, Biographical Space.' Stokes, 23–39.
Stokes, John. Ed. *Eleanor Marx (1855–1898): Life, Work, Contacts*. Burlington: Ashgate, 2000.

Strachey, Barbara, and Jayne Samuels. Eds. *Mary Berenson: A Self-Portrait from Her Diaries and Letters*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1983.
Sturgeon, Mary. *Studies of Contemporary Poets: New and Enlarged Edition*. London: George G. Harrap, 1920.
—— *Michael Field*. London: George G. Harrap, 1922.
Sussman, Herbert L. *Victorians and the Machine: The Literary Response to Technology*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968.
Sutcliffe, Anthony. Ed. *Metropolis 1890–1940*. London: Mansell, 1984.
Symonds, John Addington. *The Letters of John Addington Symonds*. 3 vols. Eds. Herbert Schueller and Robert L. Peters. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1968.
Symons, Arthur. 'Mr. Henley's Poetry.' *The Fortnightly Review* 52 (1892): 182–92.
—— *Silhouettes*. London: Elkin Mathews & John Lane, 1892.
—— *London Nights*. London: Leonard Smithers, 1895.
—— *Silhouettes*. Second Edition. Revised and Enlarged. London: Leonard Smithers, 1896.
—— *Studies in Two Literatures*. London: Leonard Smithers, 1897.
—— *London: A Book of Aspects*. London: Privately Printed for Edmund D. Brooks, 1909.
—— *Cities and Sea-Coasts and Island*. Collins' Kings' Way Classics. London: W. Collins Sons & Co., 1918.
—— *Arthur Symons: Selected Letters, 1880–1935*. Eds Karl Beckson and John M. Munro. London: Macmillan, 1989.
Symons, A. J. Arthur. Ed. *An Anthology of 'Nineties' Verse*. London: Elkin Mathews, 1928.
Tames, Richard. *St John's Wood and Maida Vale Past*. London: Historical Publications, 1998.
Tarr, Joel A., and Gabriel Dupuy. Eds. *Technology and the Rise of the Networked City in Europe and America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988.
Taylor, Sheila. Ed. *The Moving Metropolis: A History of London's Transport since 1800*, Introductions by Oliver Green. London: Laurence King Publishing in association with London's Transport Museum, 2001.
Tester, Keith. Ed. *The Flâneur*. London: Routledge, 1994.
Thain, Marion. *Michael Field and Poetic Identity: With a Biography*. London: The Eighteen Nineties Society, 2000.
The A to Z of Victorian London. London: Topographical Society. Publication no. 136, 1987.
Thesing, William B. *The London Muse: Victorian Poetic Responses to the City*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1982.
'The Suffragette' Bus.' *Votes for Women* (8 October 1909): 29.
'The World at Auction. By Michael Field.' Rev. of Michael Field, *The World at Auction*. *The Athenaeum* (20 August 1898): 267.
Thomas, Donald. *Swinburne: The Poet and His World*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1979.
Thompson, Francis. *Poems*. London: Elkin Mathews & John Lane, 1893.
Thomson, James. ('B.V.') *The City of Dreadful Night and Other Poems*. London: Reeves and Turner, 1880.
—— *Poems and Some Letters of James Thomson*. Ed. and intro. Anne Ridler. London: Centaur Press, 1963.
Thornton, R. K. R. Ed. *Poetry of the 'Nineties*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970.
——, and Marion Thain. Eds. *Poetry of the 1890s*. Second Edition. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1997.

Tobin, Agnes. *Agnes Tobin: Letters, Translations, Poems, with Some Account of her Life*. San Francisco: Grabhorn Press, 1958.
Tomson, Graham R. Ed. *Ballads of the North Countrie*. London: Walter Scott, 1888.
—— Ed. *Border Ballads*. London: Walter Scott, 1888.
—— *The Bird-Bride: A Volume of Ballads and Sonnets*. London: Longmans, Green, 1889.
—— Ed. *Selections from the Greek Anthology*. London: Walter Scott, 1889.
—— *A Summer Night and Other Poems*. With a Frontispiece by A. Tomson. London: Methuen, 1891.
—— *The Patch-Work Quilt*. London: Ernest Nister, 1891.
—— Ed. *Concerning Cats. A Book of Poems by Many Authors*. Illustrated by Arthur Tomson. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1892.
—— (as Rosamund Marriott Watson) *Vespertilia and Other Verses*. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1895.
—— (as Rosamund Marriott Watson). *The Poems of Rosamund Marriott Watson*. Intro. H. B. Marriott Watson. London: John Lane, 1912.
Treby, Ivor C. *The Michael Field Catalogue: a Book of Lists*. Bury St Edmunds: De Blackland Press, 1998.
Trench, Richard, and Ellis Hillman. *London under London: A Subterranean Guide*. London: John Murray, 1984.
Tucker, Herbert F. Ed. *A Companion to Victorian Literature and Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.
Tuell, Anne Kimball. *Mrs. Meynell and Her Literary Generation*. New York: Dutton, 1925.
Tynan, Katharine. *Twenty-Five Years: Reminiscences*. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1913.
—— *The Middle Years*. London: Constable, 1916.
—— *Memories*. London: Eveleigh Nash and Grayson, 1924.
Valéry, Paul. 'Remarks on Poetry.' *Literature in the Modern World*. Ed. Dennis Walder. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
Vattimo, Gianni. *The Transparent Society*. Trans. D. Webb. Oxford: Polity, 1992.
Verlaine, Paul. 'My Visit to London.' *Savoy*. Ed. Arthur Symons. Vol. 2 (April 1896): 119–35.
Vicinus, Martha. *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850–1920*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1985.
—— 'The Adolescent Boy: Fin-de-Siècle Femme Fatale?' Dellamora, 83–106.
Vidler, Anthony. *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992.
Virilio, Paul. *The Vision Machine*. Trans. Julie Rose. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.
Wagenknecht, Edward. *Daughters of the Covenant: Portraits of Six Jewish Women*. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1983.
Walker, Lynne. 'Vistas of pleasure: Women consumers of urban space in the West End of London, 1850–1900.' Orr, 70–85.
Walkley, Giles. *Artists' Houses in London, 1764–1914*. Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1994.
Walkowitz, Judith R. *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London*. London: Virago, 1992.
—— *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class, and the State*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980.
Wallas, Ada. 'The Poetry of Amy Levy.' *The Academy* 57 (12 August 1899): 162–3.
Waltman, John Lawrence. *The Early London Journals of Elizabeth Robins Pennell*. PhD thesis. University of Texas at Austin, 1976.

Webster, Augusta. *Portraits*. London: Macmillan, 1870.
Weightman, Gavin, and Steve Humphries. *The Making of Modern London, 1815–1914*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1983.
Weiner, Deborah E. B. *Architecture and Social Reform in Late-Victorian London*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994.
Weisman, Karen. 'Playing with Figures: Amy Levy and the Forms of Cancellation.' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 43:1 (2001): 59–79.
Wells, H. G. *The Time Machine*. London: William Heinemann, 1895.
Whibley, Charles. 'Poetry in Petticoats.' *The Scots Observer* (8 March 1890): 488–9.
White, Christine. ' "Poets and Lovers Evermore": Interpreting Female Love in the Poetry and Journals of Michael Field.' *Textual Practice* 4 (1990): 197–212.
Whiting, Lilian, *Louise Chandler Moulton: Poet and Friend*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1910.
Whitten, Wilfred. Ed. *London in Song*. London: Grant Richards, 1898.
Wilde, Oscar. 'Amy Levy.' *The Woman's World*. Ed. Oscar Wilde III (1890): 51–2.
—— *Oscar Wilde Complete Poetry*. Ed. Isobel Murray. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
Williams, George G. *Guide to Literary London*. London: B.T. Batsford, 1973.
Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1973.
Williams, Rosalind H. *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth-Century France*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.
—— *Notes on the Underground: An Essay on Technology, Society, and the Imagination*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990.
Willson, Beckles. 'Midnight London.' Sims. Ed. I: 125–31.
Wilson, Elizabeth. *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*. London: Virago, 1985.
—— *Hallucinations: Life in the PostModern City*. London: Radius, 1988.
—— *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women*. London: Virago, 1991.
—— 'The Invisible Flâneur.' *New Left Review* 191 (1992): 90–110.
Winter, James. *London's Teeming Streets 1830–1914*. London: Routledge, 1993.
Withey, Lynne. *Grand Tours and Cook's Tours: A History of Leisure Travel, 1750–1915*. London: Aurum Press, 1997.
Wolff, Janet. 'The Invisible *Flâneuse:* Women and the Literature of Modernity.' *Theory, Culture and Society* 2:3 (1985): 37–46.
—— 'The Culture of Separate Spheres: The Role of Culture in Nineteenth-Century Public and Private Life.' *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class*. Eds Janet Wolff and John Seed. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988, 117–34.
—— 'The Artist and the *Flâneur*: Rodin, Rilke and Gwen John in Paris.' Tester, 111–37.
Woodcock, George, and Ivan Avakumovic, *The Anarchist Prince: A Biographical Study of Peter Kropotkin*. London: Boardman & Co., 1949.
Woolf, Virginia. 'Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown.' *The Nation and the Athenaeum* (1 December 1923): 342–3.
—— *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown*. London: Hogarth Press, 1924.
—— *A Woman's Essays. Selected Essays: Volume I*. Ed. and intro. by Rachel Bowlby. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992.
Yeats, William B. *Uncollected Prose. Volume 1: First Reviews and Articles, 1886–1896*. Vol. 1. Ed. John P. Frayne. London: Macmillan, 1970.

—— *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats*. Vol. I. Eds John Kelly and Eric Domville. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986.
Zimmern, Helen. *Arthur Schopenhauer: His Life and his Philosophy*. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1876.
Zucker, Paul. *Town and Square: From Agora to the Village Green*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.

Index

Page numbers in **bold** indicate illustrations.