

Briefly Noticed

Brocard Sewell. *Like Black Swans*. Introduction by Colin Wilson. Tabb House. Padstow (Cornwall). 1982. 232 pp. Price not quoted.

Brocard Sewell has earned the respect and gratitude of students concerned with the poetry of the 'Nineties, chiefly by his two books on John Gray (a collection of whose verse still awaits publication). This, his most recent volume, gathers together Sewell's scattered essays and lectures, written between 1960 and 1981 and printed in out of the way places like *The Aylesford Review* and the *Journal* of the Eighteen Nineties Society. His subjects range from Hardy and Chesterton to forgotten or puzzling figures like R.S. Hawker, Olive Custance—the wife of Lord Alfred Douglas—, Baron Corvo and Montague Summers. As always, Sewell writes with clarity and elegance, and with a sure sense of literary values. No matter how bizarre or recondite the figures or themes he addresses, the author invariably shows a level head; his estimates are just, his perspectives unclouded by those common banes of writers who explore curious literary byways: anecdotage and overestimation of their discoveries. We highly recommend this volume to our readers.

Kenneth Bendiner. *An Introduction to Victorian Painting*. Yale University Press. 1985. 180 pp. \$35.00

Mr. Bendiner has concentrated on seven key figures: Landseer, Ward, Whistler, Brett, Holman Hunt, Forbes, Leighton. While his comments are primarily addressed to the novice, they offer rich insights to the specialized scholar as well. The intention was to provide case-studies of particular paintings (which include Landseer's "The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner," Hunt's "The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple" and Brett's "The Glacier of Rosenlauri"); yet Bendiner's discussions go far beyond his stated purpose and result in a remarkable pano-

rama of artistic options and achievements during the Victorian era. The book is closely argued and the author's iconographic observations take full account of both the natural and social sciences. Moreover, this volume is splendidly illustrated—82 figures, some in color and many of difficult access—: this in itself represents a bounty for readers, no matter their measure of instruction in the field of Victorian art.

*Thomas Hardy: *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Michael Millgate. The University of Georgia Press. 1985. 604 pp. and 16 plates. \$35.00

Dr. Millgate's extremely interesting volume represents a *restitutio in integrum* of Florence Hardy's two-volume biography of her husband, which shows it to be, to all intents and purposes, Hardy's autobiography with substantial portions both deleted and added. To the body of the book Millgate has attached an extensive textual apparatus listing Florence's manipulative procedures in the form of suppression, interpolation, expansion or simple rewording.

We wish to draw our readers' attention to Kirk H. Beetz's excellent bibliography of books, articles and other comments on Swinburne published between 1861 and 1980. An indispensable guide to research and critical enquiry, the work is not, we think, as widely known as it deserves. It may be obtained from

Scarecrow Press
52 Liberty Street
P.O. Box 656
Metuchen, N.J. 08840

The price of the volume is \$20.00

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