

may simply be an anticipation of those feelings in a dramatic context now lost to us—another proof that if Heger had not existed Brontë would not have had to invent him (really had already invented him and was continuously reinventing him in a more realistic mode when she met him). “Master and Pupil” may grow out of the apparently more personal “At first I did attention give” yet, written to fit in the drama of a novel, it shares with its prototype the same quality of self-exposure and intimacy.

Unfortunately Charlotte’s own publication of poems with her sisters could focus on neither characteristic aspect of her work: the fascinations of juvenilia from an imaginative world of Angria were covered up or revised

away, leaving poems without much motive; the force of intimate work was kept private. She thus appeared as a poet mainly in poor versions of what other Victorian poets could do much better, historical tales, dramatic monologues, domestic scenes. At best, a strong voice of distinctively female experience could be heard, but the strength of her most striking work was absent. Unfortunately, the textual problems of updating an inadequate and poorly conceived text by (even careful and trustworthy) apparatus, notes, and additions continues to hide from us, the interest and, in those few poems, the development and strength of Charlotte as a poet.

John Maynard

A Pre-Raphaelite Friendship: The Correspondence of William Holman Hunt and John Lucas Tupper, ed. James H. Coombs et al. UMI Research Press. Ann Arbor. 1986. 333 pp. and 18 illustrations. \$39.95

This arresting correspondence, scrupulously edited and annotated by a team of Brown University scholars, is, one regrets, quite lopsided: out of 164 extant letters only 35 are by Tupper, the commanding balance being the product of his voluble, ever-active and ever-concerned painter friend. Hunt’s missives add little to what is known from his autobiography and his previously published correspondence. We witness once more the artist’s fierce loyalty to the men and women he cherished; his headlong plunges into esthetic theory; his perfectionism (with its faithful attendant, self-torment); his gift for aperçus which he found it either impossible or inconvenient to develop; his generosity in matters both large and small. There is also ample evidence of Hunt’s penchant for ponderous sermonizing, his stubbornness and the rich arsenal of his crotchets. His mode of writing here as elsewhere is prolix; impatient of the niceties of grammar and, often, logic; rapidly kindling to occasions

some of which are worthy of taking fire, some not; prone to bursts of anger that, once exploded, fizzle back into the substratum of a vast good-nature.

Tupper’s temperament and outlook are almost the reverse of Hunt’s. The painter’s fervid grandiloquence is met by his friend with restraint, indirection, ellipsis and an assortment of mordant ironies; while Hunt’s basic optimism conflicts, however amicably, with Tupper’s keen sense of evil and his minimal faith—the classic Tory position—in the plasticity of the individual and of social institutions. Tupper is a nervous writer and even when he sounds relatively at ease his abrupt, zigzagging style gives the show away. Whether Tupper was ever truly reconciled to cutting the humble figure he did in a world geared to ostentation and material rewards we shall never know; on the evidence of these letters, at any rate, it would appear that resignation set in rather early in life and that he found a modicum of satisfaction in his daily drudgery as drawing master at Rugby. Given his brooding, ruminative disposition Tupper was not a man likely to succeed in the highly competitive art world