

the collieries," at length Morris found himself at one of those meeting-places between the sordid and the sublime which his later romances depict so feelingly: "A band and a banner and a lot of men...were streaming up into the field...the bright blue sea forming a strange border to the misery of the land....The front ranks sat down to let the others hear and see" (April 27). It is a scene familiar to readers of Dream of John Ball and The Sundering Flood alike. On the whole, though, what Professor Boos describes as the "pragmatic aspect" of the dialectic that was Morris's life ruled these first months of 1887.

The special contribution that Boos has made in her edition of the diary has been her ability, through notes and biographical data, to bring that era into present life. She has mined not only his letters and published statements, but also contemporary newspapers, letters and journals, and even photographs; one photo in particular, a group portrait of all thirty-seven members of the Socialist League's Hammersmith Branch (a mere thirty-four if one excludes Morris and his daughters), sets the tone for the entire enterprise of which this diary is so eloquent a record: a sprinkling of gentleman intellectuals to one side, a group of workingmen uneasy in their suits ranged along the back, several women in poses that face them away from the lens -- and William Morris, tieless and with untrimmed beard, boldly daring the cameraman not to center the picture on him. More pointed still is Prof. Boos's commentary on G. B. Shaw in her biographical appendix to the diary; Shaw's 1936 memoir, Morris As I Knew Him, may be "a moving tribute to Morris's character," Boos admits, but "a more measured and concrete respect for the intelligence and consistency of Morris's ideas and acts would serve his memory at least as well as such an apotheosis of him as a heroically misguided eccentric." Using Morris's diary of his 1887 work for the Socialist League as a foundation, Boos has attempted to redress that balance; and though her insistence on Morris's "commitment to revolutionary determinism" may once or twice tip the scales a bit in the other direction, at least for one who approaches Morris along the aesthetic road, she has succeeded. The reader of "William Morris's Socialist Diary" and its apparatus comes away with a fuller vision of a man for whom the word "fellowship" could have been invented.

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Elizabeth K. Helsinger. Ruskin and the Art of the Beholder. Cambridge, Mass. and London. Harvard University Press, 1982. 342 pp. 26 black and white plates. \$25.00

In her essay "Ulysses to Penelope: Victorian Experiments in Autobiography," which appeared in George Landow's collection Approaches to Victorian Autobiography (1979), Professor Helsinger observed of Ruskin