

imagination is less problematic than the will or decision to use it. And this is also true of the relation between self and outer world; the problem is to re-affirm this relation rather than to define it." As a result, Bernstein recognizes that "to view Meredith from the Romantic or the modern perspective is to do less than justice to his art."

Jerome Bump

John Ruskin and Rose La Touche: Her Unpublished Diaries of 1861 and 1867. Introduced and edited by Van Akin Burd. 192 pp., 14 black-and-white plates. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1979. £8.50.

The outline of the story of John Ruskin and Rose La Touche is now well known, although attempts were made to suppress it by Ruskin's first literary executors, editors, and biographers. Rose was ten in 1858 when Mrs. La Touche sought Ruskin out for drawing lessons for her children, and Ruskin seems to have been infatuated with the child by the time she was thirteen. According to Ruskin, by the time Rose was sixteen -- and he forty-five -- her mother, jealous of her, was working to keep Rose from him. When Ruskin proposed marriage in 1864, Rose, under pressure from her parents and disturbed by his religious unbelief, asked him to wait three years for an answer. The La Touches gradually made their opposition known, their lawyer agreeing with Effie Millais that either Ruskin was impotent when her marriage to him was annulled or the annulment could be reversed. Moreover, Effie told the La Touches, Ruskin's mind "is most inhuman." The La Touches' resistance hardened and Rose eventually told Ruskin that she could not marry him because he did not love God more than her. The strain of it all led to her increasing madness and early death.

Van Burd tells this story fully and with scholarly precision in the 142 page introduction which precedes two fragments from Rose's diaries. Actually, Burd had to work with Helen Viljoen's transcriptions of these diaries, since the originals have been lost. The first fragment, only several pages long, is a record of a tour the La Touches took in southern France and northern Italy in the spring of 1861. The longer, more interesting fragment is essentially Rose's spiritual autobiography, "the history of my Child-life." The diaries are, as Burd says, "disappointing in detail" and "lack polish." Nevertheless, along with his introduction, they round somewhat the previously flat characters from the La Touche family. Rose in particular has been seen by biographers as "a strange, unworldly, almost unearthly creature." She appears in Ruskin's letters as "a little white statue," or his "mouse-