

A Wider Range, Travel Writing by Women in Victorian England by Maria H. Frawley. London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1994. 237 pp. ISBN 0-8386-4533-X, \$38.50 (cloth).

Travel writing by women, once regarded as little more than a rather trivial form of entertainment, has finally begun to be taken seriously by cultural scholars. As Virginia Hyde and Bonnie Frederick noted in the Introduction to *Women and the Journey*, "a study of women's journeying is especially timely today when women's lives, past and present, are being reinterpreted and retold with women's voices doing the telling" (xix). In *A Wider Range*, Maria H. Frawley discusses the travel writing of a variety of Victorian women, focussing on how such writing could be used to establish a cultural authority for women travellers.

In her introductory chapter, Frawley notes that her intent is "to describe the major forms of Victorian women's travel writing," "to relate those forms to geographical regions," and "to demonstrate how decisions about the travel accounts form and the traveller's choice of region relate finally to questions of and choices about professional identity" (36). She notes that the forms of travel writing are fairly well-established by the nineteenth century: diaries, collections of letters, ethnographic studies, sociological studies, histories. Some, like art histories or comparative ethnographies, are specialized forms. While many travel writings appeared as books, a great number appeared as essays in the periodical press. In fact, it might be argued that although a combination of the sudden increase of wealth in England and the claustrophobic social condition of women provided the impetus for women to travel, the flowering of the periodical press provided the opportunity to share the record of their travels and thus to contribute powerfully to Victorian culture.

Frawley argues that because Arnoldian "high culture" was accessible in England only through formal study in the classics--and was, therefore, unavailable to women--travel, especially travel to Italy, provided women the opportunity to immerse themselves in the legacy of the past. Some women, such as Anna Jameson and Elizabeth Eastlake, established identities as art historians through travel and study in Italy. Others wrote about Italy in a more general way, commenting on the people, the culture, the cities, and, not so incidentally, the museums, thus bringing the high culture of the great galleries into the context of an actual place. Although Lady Eastlake fretted that cheap travel would "necessarily be shared by many utterly unfitted to profit by it" (45), the truth is that middle-class women, writing in middle-class periodicals, provided an entry into culture that would not otherwise have been available for such women in Britain (and, to a lesser extent, in the United States).

Victorian women travel writers, whether art historians like Jameson and Eastlake or "adventuresses" like Isabella Bird and Mary Kingsley, found it necessary to deflect attention from their sex while, paradoxically, capitalizing on