retrospectively. For instance, a conservative young doctor who would probably have shared the values of the *Sydney Morning Herald*'s review (which had denounced the novel as unsavoury and immoral on the basis of Madeline Brown's character), is persuaded to think otherwise when he hears David Stuart's account of

> the notorious Madeline Brown, the Melbourne actress, who was mysteriously murdered not so many months ago. I could not refrain from expressing a certain sense of repulsion which I had to her as a type. I had never met her, but I had heard things about her which, together with what I had read in the newspapers, led me to look upon her as nothing much more than a loose woman. The tale he told was from a totally different point of view. To him she was an incarnation of beauty with a certain element of genius and passion.[6]

David Stuart's worship may be simply another form of objectification, but at least Adams was at pains to explore the related issues of sexuality and gender from several perspectives. While we may argue over the gender politics of the novel (is Madeline Brown a New Woman or a *femme fatale*?), it was written to please a reading public accustomed to "sensation" in fiction, and the controversy over its "unsavoury" subject matter appears not to have done it any harm commercially (7,000 copies of the 1887 edition were sold).

This new edition is likely to sell well, too, being heavily promoted in bookshops and having a clever and seductive cover design that features a 1910 photograph by May Moore of "Lily Brayton as Cleopatra." This is not a scholarly edition, but it is attractively published and reasonably priced, and it does offer a welcome opportunity to read some of Francis Adams's fiction in a coffee shop or at home, rather than in a rare books room or out of a manilla folder. There should be more such pillaging of out-of-copyright novels by enterprising publishers. *Vive le hype!*

Meg Tasker

***Sartor Resartus Resartus: The Life and Opinions of Herr Teufelsdröckh in Three Books*, by Thomas Carlyle. Introduction and notes by Rodger L. Tarr. Text established by Mark Engel and Rodger L. Tarr. The Norman and Charlotte Strouse Edition of the Writings of Thomas Carlyle. Berkeley, University of California Press, 2000.**

Make no mistake. By any criterion, *Sartor Resartus* is a classic. The author is dead. Many important men and women who are also dead pronounced that it is a classic. It is

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[6] Francis Adams, "Dr Fletcher's Love Story," *Australian Life* 1892: 73.

available as a part of the Oxford "World's Classics" series. If that doesn't give the book a kiss of death, this will: it isn't an easy "read." Better to read a quick summary of the book and file it next to those other venerated but unread modern classics. You know the kind, the ones that self-appointed custodians of the western literary canon who every Christmas announce in the dailies that they will re-read (re-read for Godsake) Tolstoy's *War and Peace* or Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*, or James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Few refer to *Sartor Resartus* these days; not even the Victorianists. This "romantic discourse which, ... was once rejected by the London publishers only later to become a cornerstone of Victorian philosophy" (Tarr, introduction xciv) is now again a dead letter to us, to be read only as one would approach an archive or archaeological dig.

The dead weight of the classic is not only the passage of time, of changing literary fashions, and of a host of dead witnesses testifying to a classic's importance and value, it is intrinsic to the act of reading itself. *Sartor Resartus* is an ironic commentary on this state of affairs. The book's subtitle would seem to suggest that it is an intellectual biography of an obscure German Professor. Yet Diogenes Teufelsdröckh ("God-born, Devil's Dung") only exists in the reader's imagination as a text within a text. The mediating figure is the "British Editor" who is dependent on his memory of one meeting with the Professor and a series of fragments in six brown paper bags from two texts that have been sent to him. One text is labelled volume one of "The Philosophy of Clothes," written in German, and the second is purported to be Teufelsdröckh's own autobiographical writings. To help and to retard the Editor in his endeavours to "retailor the tailor" and his clothes philosophy, there is Teufelsdröckh's own amanuensis, Herr Hofrath Heuschrecke ("Councillor Grasshopper"). In *Sartor Resartus*'s economy of literature, each author is the editor of the other. Heuschrecke, therefore, is the mediating figure between Teufelsdröckh and Editor, just as the Editor is the mediating figure between the Germans and the implied "British Reader" who is the intended readership of the Editor's efforts. Each is trying to bring order out of chaos, and each in turn complicates the order for the other: mediation is both gain and loss, for a secondary interpretation brings both simplification and multiplication and every representation (because re-presentation) defers revelation. The reader then turns out to be a major character in the book whose active participation as editor and hermeneut produce the meaning of the whole text of *Sartor Resartus*. It follows then that there will be as many meanings as reader-editors, and this is the central message of *Sartor Resartus*, a modern book for modern times. With *Sartor Resartus* Carlyle sought to create a poetic form to fuse his belief in thaumaturgy to that of science and criticism and the modern sense of complexity, specialisation, pluralisation, and fragmentation.

Readers and editors are the modern heroes of the democratic literary republic. This accounts for the notoriously difficult form of *Sartor Resartus*. The tripartite structure is straightforward enough. In the first place, *Sartor Resartus*'s subject matter is encyclopaedic in scope; it contains texts and commentaries on "Things-in-General," with an aim to present a total view of the cosmos (Book One), of society (Book Three) and the self (Book Two)—a science of sciences as a "philosophy of clothes" which integrates the science of knowledge (*Wissenschaftlehre*) with the science of consciousness (*Lebensphilosophie*). While it approximates the idea of "totality," desired

in the philosophical systems of Fichte and Schelling, it presents both the semiotic science as a poetic because symbolic mode of knowledge and the *Lebensphilosophie* as a philosophy of feeling—a mode of knowledge which must be experienced, believed, willed, enacted. These two aspects of "Natural Supernaturalism"—the opinions of Teufelsdröckh (as the general Science of all things) and the life of Teufelsdröckh (as the archetypal philosophical-poetic biography)—are presented ironically so as to de-construct the book's—and therefore the author's—own pretensions to completion and to verisimilitude. As the reader proceeds through *Sartor Resartus* the optical frames for viewing the text continue to shift, dislocating, scattering and de-constructing the reader's commonsensical and empirical assumptions about the correspondence and coherence modes of Truth, as well as about the common generic modes of representation themselves.

This interpolation of texts, authorities, modes, languages, and discourses, forces the reader to follow the lead of the book's Editor in actively trying to construct meaning out of the apparent chaos. The first Book which purports to present "the clothes philosophy" traces the genetic criticism (*werden*: origins) and encyclopaedic (*wirken*: influences) dimensions of "clothes" and so re-contextualises the British reader's perception of science, philosophy, religion and their respective readings of nature and society. It casts a new light on the Enlightenment's "Torch of Science," tracing humankind's progress from its "artificial illumination" of critique to the transcendental illumination of the lamp of "Pure Reason."

Book Two picks up the question of Being by following the exemplary career of Teufelsdröckh in poetical and philosophical terms *à la* Schiller and Goethe. By offering a bricolage of Hebraic-Biblical narratives of liberation, Puritan narratives of individual conversion and a linear journey to salvation, and Romantic narratives of the circuitous journey to spiritual maturity, it presents Teufelsdröckh as an archetypal figure of modernity: in both its real conditions (as a representative type of the collective *Zeitgeist*) and revolutionary potentiality (as an emblematic figure of hope). Set in this wider revolutionary context of the modern epoch, however, the balance of *Sartor Resartus* shifts from Teufelsdröckh's biography in Book Two to the "critique of civilization" in Book Three (McMaster 1968). Book Three completes the dialectical movement from critical criticism (Book One) through critical affirmation (Book Two) to affirmative/believing criticism or prophecy of society (Book Three). *Sartor Resartus*, then, is a dialectical philosophical treatise, a rhetorical essay, an editorial gloss, a book review, a philosophical-poetic fragment, a didactic novel, a fictionalised autobiography, a psycho-history of modern consciousness, a prophetic-rhapsodical manuscript, a comic-satirical extravaganza. It is all these things and more, but it is not one of these things alone. Such are some the substantive reasons for deeming this book a world classic both of its place and era and for contemporary readers alike.

Sartor Resartus deserves a scholarly and reliable edition for our times. Yet what is essentially equivalent to a standard length contemporary novel is a rather daunting, wrist-breaking hardback of encyclopaedic proportions in this critical edition. *Sartor Resartus* itself constitutes only 236 of 770 pages of text. Upfront there are the usual accoutrements of a scholarly edition, including a preface, chronology of Carlyle's life,

and "note on the text" which relates the various editions of the book as they appeared during and after Carlyle's life. The introduction by Rodger Tarr is worth the price of this edition alone. As one might expect from a scholar who has spent a life of study on Carlyle's texts, Tarr provides a clear historical, literary and critical set of frames for interpreting author and book alike. Placed after *Sartor Resartus* itself, there are 230 pages of notes, a twenty-four-page bibliography and a thirty-seven-page index. The textual apparatus consisting of emendations of the copy-text, discussion of editorial decisions, comparative line-end hyphens in the copy and present texts, and historical collation of differences between various editions (120 pages).

This is truly a labour of love. The whole republishing project when completed will comprise eight volumes of the writings of Thomas Carlyle. A new edition of *On Heroes, Heroism and Hero Worship* has already been published and will be soon followed by *Past and Present* and *The French Revolution*. These volumes should be viewed in context of *The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle,* of which to date twenty-seven volumes have been published by Duke University Press. Together these two projects, representing the work of over forty trans-Atlantic scholars across forty years, provides nineteenth-century studies a wealth of intellectual riches on the Carlyles, their era and their milieux. *Sartor Resartus* is the ideal text for looking at the centrality of romantic discourses in the Victorian era.

One hundred and sixty six years on these scholars seek to put Carlyle back into the hands of a new generation of readers, but this time to ensure that they are reading a "reliable edition, ... an accurate text" (preface, ix). Now *Sartor Resartus* needs its own new generation of readers. Victorian scholars at least have no more excuses for not reading it. Yet one doesn't need to be a specialist to appreciate *Sartor Resartus* and the Carlylean scholars who still labour on this project would all drink to that. *Sartor Resartus*'s Editor bade farewell to his readers with "have we not existed together, though in a state of quarrel?" (218). Such is *Sartor Resartus Resartus*'s economy of world-literature, a disputatious community of readers and editors.

Trevor Hogan