

commenting, according to Spence, on her “singleness of purpose towards effective voting” (*Autobiography* 165). This volume moves far beyond that “one idea”; it celebrates the whole range of Catherine Helen Spence’s philanthropic, social and political achievements.

Shirley Walker

***Bombay to Bloomsbury: A Biography of the Strachey Family*, by Barbara Caine. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005. xvii + 488, 37 illustrations. ISBN 0-19-9250340. \$80 (hardcover).**

In 1899, Leonard Woolf went up to Cambridge, where he became friends with Lytton Strachey and Thoby Stephen. All three were members of the Shakespeare Society and the Apostles, and all shared George Moore’s passion for friendship. The “menace of money” had hung over the Woolf family since their father’s death, but Leonard was a welcome visitor in the Stephen and Strachey households. He spent three successive summers with the Stracheys in large country houses. “They stand out in my memory as the most remarkable family I have ever known, an extinct social phenomenon which has passed away and will never be known again” (Woolf 187). This was a large, lively family, whose distinctive voice (Woolf calls it the Strachey “cadence”) was often raised in “deafening” argument. Woolf recalls Sir Richard, sitting reading in the midst of a “verbal hurricane” and Lady Jane, who “had a passion for literature, argument and billiards” (Woolf 189). As he observes:

The Strachey and Stephen families both belonged to a social class or caste of a remarkable and peculiar kind which established itself as a powerful section of the ruling class in Britain in the nineteenth century. It was an intellectual aristocracy of the middle class. (Woolf 186)

Barbara Caine’s biography analyses this Anglo-Indian family’s place in the ruling class, and the power that accrued to them through Richard Strachey’s role in imperial administration. Her account of the family history focuses on generational change, the shift from the parents’ Victorian values and involvement in social reform to their children’s embrace of modernity.

Her study began as an inquiry into the history of feminism. Jane Grant, later Lady Strachey, found in women’s suffrage a cause that she could be passionate about. She wrote to her husband after J.S. Mill’s speech in support of suffrage in the Commons: “If I were stopping in England for good, I should go in hot and strong for this cause” (Caine 61). First, however, she educated her children. Later, she carved

out a public career in the London Society for Women's Suffrage, the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, the Lyceum Club and the Conservative Party. Her daughter Pippa followed her mother's example, taking on organisational roles in the LSWS and the NUWSS. Ray Strachey, whose book *The Cause* documents the campaign, was Pippa's devoted friend as well as the wife of Jane's son Oliver. Another single daughter, Pernel, became principal of Newnham College. Caine sets the family's support for the cause against feminism's evolving agendas: while Ray Strachey shared Jane's commitment to the gradual change advocated by nineteenth-century leaders, *The Cause* also notes the 1920s resurgence of interest in the radicalism of Mary Wollstonecraft.

Caine's interest in the Strachey women expanded to embrace the Strachey men. This gives her work a sweeping scope, reined in by her interest in the family as a social and political institution. She characterises the Stracheys as an "imperial" family. Their engagements with India and the imperial project underpin her account of their power and of their demise. Richard Strachey spent four decades of his life on this project, and after his retirement some of his sons followed, with notably less success. Richard's contribution to public life did not end there: he was active in the advancement of science, in particular in the international compact that established Greenwich as the site of the prime meridian.

Caine's biography shows how the parents' intellectual interests and contributions to public affairs generated a force for achievement in the family. Only Ralph and Marjorie seemed not to be able to use family networks and influence to define a sphere of success. Richard and Jane existed in a political and governmental domain of real power and influence. Their children made their mark in more circumscribed worlds. Their reformism found its expression in the domains of private life and sexuality and their lasting impact was felt in cultural institutions. Lytton and Dorothy were active in the world of the arts and literature. While Dorothy did not achieve the fame of her brother, her marriage to the painter Simon Bussy saw her move to France. She was a translator of Gide and published an autobiographical novel, *Olivia*, with the Hogarth Press in 1949. James and Alix Strachey were key figures in the ascendancy of psychoanalysis as the translators of Freud and as members of the British Psychoanalytic Society.

Caine represents Jane and Richard as exponents of companionate marriage. Their extended separations resulted in a rich archive of personal correspondence, which Caine reads with compassion and insight. Their children lived in much less regular ways. Dorothy, and the eldest daughter Elinor Rendel, had in many ways the most orthodox marriages (save for Dorothy's intense attachment to André Gide). Lytton's life stands in the background of Caine's book both as a measure of unorthodoxy and as a case study in the value Bloomsbury placed on friendship. Reading her book, the reader has the strong sense of her emerging new interest in friendship. It is a kind of undertow, which for now she resists.

While it is the “public” family that holds our attention through the book’s organisation around themes of politics and sexuality, Caine draws on Frank Sulloway’s concept of the “sibling niche” to describe both the individuality of family members and to explore their particular affiliations. This leads to a fascinating discussion of personal and affective relationships. It also allows for a quite dispassionate analysis of closeness and distance, loyalty and heartlessness, among family members. Perhaps the most affecting and illuminating instances of love and pain in this narrative relate to the treatment of children. Jane deeply felt the loss of the infant Olivia. Yet her expression of feeling was constrained, by convention and by her husband’s absence. Olivia was the name chosen by her daughter Dorothy as a pseudonym, a choice which reveals something of the generational differences that separated them.

“Olivia” describes her narrative, published by Hogarth Press in 1949, as “a little raft, constructed with the salvage of my memory,” steered into “that calm haven of art in which I still believe.” The story is a confession of a “crush.” Olivia begins by describing the family ecology:

We were a Victorian household, and, in spite of an almost militant agnosticism, attached without the smallest tinge of hypocrisy to the ideals of the time: duty, work, abnegation, a stern repression of what was called self-indulgence, a horror and terror of lapsing from the current code. My father, who was a man of science and passed his time in investigating with heroic patience and the strictest independence of judgment one or two of the laws of nature, would not have dreamt for a moment of submitting the laws of ethics to the same scrutiny. My mother, from whom all her children inherited an ardent love of letters [. . .] had the most singular faculty of keeping experience at bay. It was her abounding vitality, I think, that made her enjoy the blood and savagery of those outrageous authors. But she admired them from behind a wall of principle and morality which kept her absolutely safe from coming into any dangerous contact with their violence [. . .] For a person who was so plunged in literature she was strangely devoid of psychology and strangely unconscious of persons. (Bussy 13)

Feeling both propels and is the subject of the narrative: Dorothy’s interest is in psychology and the interior landscape of the mind. Caine’s perspective, properly, is external and institutional. Ultimately, her biography is a study of continuity and change, in the family (which does not survive) and in the wider society and culture. It is an impressive achievement, which draws on a vast scholarship on Bloomsbury, feminism, imperialism, psychoanalysis and politics, but is never overwhelmed by it.

Works Cited

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Kay Ferres

***Wormwood: A Drama of Paris*, by Marie Corelli, edited by Kirsten MacLeod. Broadview Press, 2004. 407. ISBN 1-55111-419-4. AUD26.95 (paperback).**

***The Woman Who Did*, by Grant Allen, edited by Nicholas Ruddick. Broadview Press, 2004. 238. ISBN 1-55111-510-7. AUD24.95 (paperback).**

***The Story of a Modern Woman*, by Ella Hepworth Dixon, edited by Steve Farmer. Broadview Press, 2004. 295. ISBN 1-55111-380-5. AUD24.95 (paperback).**

These beautifully produced editions of Victorian novels are part of a series of sixty-nine, published by Broadview Press at a rate of about five a year since 1993. Broadview's description of itself on the website has an appropriate ring for the Victorian specialist: it is an independent academic publisher (Canadian) open to a broad range of political and philosophical viewpoints and "committed to providing affordable, high quality texts." The air of the Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge is both unmistakable and seductive. And who wouldn't be happy with these good looking, contextually rich, scholarly editions?

Broadview editions range from the sensational (like *Wormwood*) to the best seller (*King Solomon's Mines*) to the relatively obscure (*The Story of a Modern Woman*); they display the range of Victorian interests as well as genre conventions and social preoccupations. Ella Hepworth Dixon was the daughter of the editor of the *Athenaeum* and in her childhood met the intelligentsia of the mid nineteenth century – Geraldine Jewsbury, Bulwer Lytton, Sir Richard Burton, Huxley and Millais. After her father died when she was in her early twenties she turned to journalism as a career. Steve Farmer's excellent chronology and introduction point out the connections between Hepworth Dixon's New Woman novel and her own experience; Mary Erle's efforts to make a living working in Grub street is the hack version of what Hepworth Dixon herself achieved. But the real New Woman of the novel is Mary's friend, Alison Ives, whose beauty and social position are equalled by her outspokenness and fearless social conscience. Alison's premature death, brought on from good works, demonstrates that women who go against the grain, no