

Mary Augusta Ward on “The Peasant in Literature”

Beth Sutton-Ramspeck

Mary Augusta (“Mrs. Humphry”) Ward is best known – among those who know her at all – as the author of best-selling novels like *Robert Elsmere* and *Marcella*. But Mary Ward began her career in the early 1870s as a literary critic, first writing essays on *El Cid* and other early Spanish literature, the fruits of independent research she completed in Oxford’s Bodleian Library in her late teens and early twenties. By the time *Robert Elsmere* appeared in 1888, Ward had produced some four dozen critical articles for journals – including *Macmillan’s Magazine*, *Fortnightly Review*, the *Guardian*, the *Times*, the *Athenaeum*, and the *Quarterly Review*. In addition to European works, she reviewed Trollope’s autobiography, Meredith’s *Diana of the Crossways*, Pater’s *Marius the Epicurean*, and editions of Austen’s letters and Keats’s poetry. She also wrote headnotes to several poets in her husband Thomas Humphry Ward’s influential anthology, *The English Poets*.¹

Once she turned her primary attention to writing fiction, however, Ward published considerably less criticism, the most prominent exceptions being her introductions to the 1900 Haworth edition of *The Life and Works of the Sisters Brontë* and other occasional pieces about the Brontës, as well as an essay on Nathaniel Hawthorne.² Mary Ward’s critical work during the final years of the nineteenth century and the opening decade of the twentieth focused on literary renderings of rural scenes and people, an interest also expressed in the rural settings of her novels. She presented a lecture called “The Peasant in Literature” on several occasions, including in 1897 in Glasgow; in 1904 at Bedford College for Women in London; and eight times

during her 1908 visit to the United States. Ward's interest in the literature of rural life is reflected not only in her lecture notes but in her preface to *Wuthering Heights*, in reviews of works by Emily Lawless, and in unpublished articles about Thomas Hardy. Ward's approach is founded on Matthew Arnold's criticism but departs from his ideas in her greater emphasis on what he called the historical estimate and the personal estimate of literature.

Although Ward's public lectures (both about literature and about religious and political issues, and about her work in the Settlement movement) were "carefully and even elaborately prepared beforehand, for she would never trust herself to speak extempore," and "The Peasant in Literature" represented "one of her most finished literary performances" (Trevelyan 155). The lecture remained unpublished, though Ward jotted down a two-page "Plan of Article." Aside from the writings about Emily Lawless and Emily Brontë, most of Ward's writings about rural life in literature exist only as unpublished manuscripts in the archives of the Honnold Library at the Claremont Colleges in California. The present article thus draws heavily on her notes and incomplete handwritten drafts of the lecture in two versions, as well as on corrected page proofs of a never-published article about Thomas Hardy, and on summaries of the lectures from contemporary periodicals.³

The niece of Matthew Arnold, whose essay "The Study of Poetry" introduced Humphry Ward's *English Poets*, Mary Ward was influenced by "Uncle Matt's" views of literature, and frequently cited them. Take, for example, her Arnoldian description of J.M. Barrie's *A Window in Thrums*, which she considered a foremost example of peasant literature. In the manuscript of her Glasgow lecture on the peasant, Ward explains that in Barrie's book,

We have been with sorrow, yet sorrow told with such reserve, such delicate measure that it has turned to beauty in the telling; and the mind is not harrowed, true & touching as the details are, for round the fate of the old weaver & his wife the writer has thrown a dignity that somehow makes

it all bearable, all worthwhile [...]. Such a book then is what Matthew Arnold declared all poetry to be, "a criticism of life." (12, 13)

And because Barrie's book is a "criticism of life," "It has permanent value" (qtd. in Stewart 9). Here, Ward adapts her uncle's statement in "The Study of Poetry," that increasingly, poetry will serve as a better interpreter of life than science and will replace religion and philosophy, with the result that "In poetry, as a criticism of life [...], the spirit of our race will find, [...] as other helps fail, its consolation and stay" (xix). Echoing this prediction, Ward writes, "is it not after all the true note of greatness in literature, this healing and *consoling* power? Almost all the books, it seems to me, in our short highest list, possess it, and possess it abundantly" (Glasgow 10, emphasis added). Like her uncle, Ward returns repeatedly to the pleasure to be derived from literary tragedy. Thus, when discussing Pierre Loti's *The Iceland Fisherman* (*Pêcheur d'Islande*), Ward says, "you may protest that there is no humor in it, that it is heart rending. But this very tearing of our heart strings by the eternal paradox of nature moves us to keenest delight" (qtd. Stewart 9). For Arnold, the best poetry is distinguished by what he calls "high seriousness," a quality he infamously said Chaucer lacked, and "high seriousness" is apparently what Ward also sees in the tragic and consoling elements of the best peasant novels.

When discussing Thomas Hardy, Ward again uses Arnold's phrase, but also departs from him in some ways that exemplify her approach: "One may perhaps say that [Hardy's] appearance on the scene in 1870 coincides with that moment of full maturity in the history of the English novel, when the first surprises and discoveries, the rich, untrammelled, experimental time of a great art was over in England, and when its first optimisms and simplicities had given way to a more searching, ironical, and scientific criticism of life. For, compared to Hardy, George Eliot was an optimist, and Thackeray was simple" (21-22). First, here as elsewhere, Ward identifies "criticism of life" with realist fiction rather than poetry, using the word "poetry" to indicate value rather than genre. One subject heading of her "Plan of Lecture" is "The Peasant novel as art & poetry," and she

writes in her Introduction to Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*, "As a rule, so far, women have been poets in and through the novel" (*Life* 3: xxv). A second departure from Arnold – an issue to which I will return – is Ward's more historical and biographical approach. Third, Ward describes Hardy's work as a "scientific criticism of life" that is the opposite of "optimistic." That phrase, "scientific criticism of life," conflates rather than distinguishes poetry from science, as her uncle had; and few people would turn to Hardy for "consolation." Granted, Ward considered *Jude the Obscure* a "sordid" and "ugly novel," that reflects "a certain darkening and embitterment of his talent" ("Thomas Hardy" 20, 19), but she blamed its weakness primarily on Hardy's being, in *Jude*, "the crude and vehement assailant of modes of life which are not his, which he does not understand" (12). Ward repeatedly laments "the comparative weakness which always attacks Mr. Hardy when he deserts his Wessex and his rustics" (19), but the problem is not his scientific naturalism; it is his supposed ignorance of his material.

Ward sets out to identify a more artistic "class" of peasant fiction, just as Arnold's aim in "The Study of Poetry" is "discovering what poetry belongs to the class of the truly excellent, and can therefore do us most good" (xxv). Ward's method resembles her uncle's identifying "touchstone" passages "for detecting," by comparison, "the presence or absence of highest poetic quality, and also the degree of this quality, in all other poetry which we may place beside them" (xxvi). Her lectures, like "The Study of Poetry," feature long passages from touchstone works, with discussions of what makes them effective. In different versions, Ward identifies a number of touchstones, including *Wuthering Heights*, *Silas Marner*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *The Return of the Native*, and *A Window in Thrums*: "these are all instances of that close union between the real and the imagined, where the heightening and translating process of art has brought us nearer to truth than any other, more apparently scientific, would have been able to do" ("Thomas Hardy" 10).

Touchstone works, for both Ward and Arnold, reflect "inspiration which has no date" (Notes [16-17]), but Ward's evaluative comments show a tension over what her uncle referred to as the "historical estimate." Arnold had written that

a sense for the best, the really excellent, and of the strength and joy to be drawn from it, should be present in our minds and should govern our estimate of what we read. But this real estimate, the only true one, is liable to be superseded, if we are not watchful, by two other kinds of estimate, the historical estimate and the personal estimate, both of which are fallacious [...]. The course of development of a nation's language, thought, and poetry, is profoundly interesting; and by regarding a poet's work as a stage in this course of development we may easily bring ourselves to make it of more importance as poetry than in itself it really is, we may come to use a language of quite exaggerated praise in criticizing it; in short, to over-rate it. (xx)

Despite her Arnoldian praise of "inspiration that has no date," much of Ward's project of studying "the peasant in literature" is historical, beginning as she does with examples from classical pastoral in Theocritus, Virgil, and Milton, then considering more realistic portraits of rural life in Chaucer and Langland before focusing on "the literature of the country" since the "return to nature" of the eighteenth century, and especially the novel of peasant life, as it has sprung up throughout Europe since just before the Revolution" ("Peasant" 1-2). Ward's placing of Hardy in relation to Eliot and Thackeray is also patently historical. Yet she seems torn. In "Peasant Life in the Novel," she praises pastoral, the ostensible ancestor of peasant literature, as "of all ages," and says the Idylls and Eclogues "belong to poetry; they lay down a web, a many-coloured web, at which all the poets have woven, from Theocritus to our own day, and amid the enchantment of that weaving" (4, 11). Yet even as Ward celebrates this timelessness, she also depreciates pastoral's lack of realism. She contrasts pastoral's "countryman of fancy" with the peasant novels' "countryman of reality" (3-4); in her notes, in fact, she refers to "the older pastoral with its falsities" [2]. She says we will look in vain for "the actual peasant, – the bread-server, and bread-getter of the world – in the Idylls, or the Eclogues" ("Peasant" 11). Even Shakespeare's and Milton's rustics come in for criticism. Ward notes that during the English Renaissance half the

population of England and Wales, some two million people, lived on weekly wages, yet “there are no annals of these people, of their work and their sufferings [...]. Shakespeare knew the countryman, of course, as he knew the townsman & the noble, but he makes little use of him [...]. Milton, again has exquisite words for the English country, but his countryman when he comes to handle him is a Virgilian creature fresh from the Eclogues” (22, 23). Missing from Theocritus or Milton is “the true peasant as he was and is, in his eternal wrestle with nature, and with hunger pains that drive and keep him to his task” (11-12).

In fact then, the literary ancestors of “the peasant who took the stage with Balzac or Wordsworth” turn out to be not those in classical pastoral but the old man seeking Death in the Pardoner’s Tale, the “worn out English peasant of the fourteenth century, as Chaucer had often seen him perhaps in some Kentish field walk, noting him with the eye and the pity of the poet” (“Peasant” 16), and Langland’s Piers Plowman, “playing full seldom” and “working full hard” “in setting and in sowing” (17). Ward tells her audience, “Nothing so penetrating or so true as Langland’s vision of the English peasant will meet us again, in English literature, for centuries” (21). Until then, “the tiller of the soil labours on without a poet” (22). Not only is Ward’s approach historical, but texts stand as her touchstones to the degree she sees them as “realistic” and historically accurate.

This tension between the particular, concrete, and historical, on the one hand, and the “universal” on the other, is crystalized in her article about Hardy, where she writes,

This local bond, – this close connection between his art and the hills and villages of a particular district – has been the strength of Thomas Hardy. The greatest gifts in literature are independent of the land that bore them. Shakspeare [*sic*] and Goethe are of no generation and tied to no local scene. And in the case perhaps of the majority of the men and women of letters in a generation, what uplifts and preserves them is not, as a rule, the local but rather the degree of strength they are able to give to the universal note. But of

that Antaeon band of writers which draws its life from a particular soil, and must constantly renew it there, Thomas Hardy among English writers is the chief and leader. ("Thomas Hardy" 14-15)

The fact that Ward's topic is not the "universal" but literature that "draws its life from a particular soil" reflects a distinction she makes between novels as social "documents" and novels as art. Ward places rural literature in two classes: "One class belongs, we may almost say, to sociology – to use an ugly word – and in a less degree to geography" (Notes [14]), and the second class "rises out of the first class, as cream rises on the milk" [16]. This dairy metaphor illustrates, however, that the superior class is fundamentally the same as the first, just more effective at portraying its "particular soil."

Though Ward finds "sociology" an ugly word, she values such "documents": "It is certain that no social historian of the future, enquiring into the life of any nation whatever of the nineteenth century, will be able to neglect the novel of peasant manners. And it is equally certain that for us today, there is no such guide-book to a district" (Notes [14-15]). She praises American writers "who make us see the feverish swamps and sluggish rivers of Louisiana, or the peaks and ravines of the Great Smoky Mountains, or the quiet hills and streams which frame the 'humble romances' of New England Life" (Rev. of *Grania* 399); and she commends Emily Lawless's 1892 novel *Grania* because in it "you feel at once the breath and fibre of nationality. The picture is not general; it is individualized and true" (Rev. of *Grania* 402). Ward links the sociological impulse to "that Wordsworthian impulse toward a simple & intimate truth, which started originally from a solitary poet's determination to discard the so-called poetic diction of his day, & see & feel for himself" (27). If poetry is "a criticism of life," criticism, as Arnold said, is "the endeavor [...] to see the object as in itself it really is." Ward definitely values the novelist-poet who can "see."

Ward suggests that the best "novels of rural life" feature a conflation of place and people and a shaping of the human by the natural. The novel of rural life is "both realistic and romantic," in that it is "always on the watch for the characteristic, the local, the individual, whether it be in human habits or in the

landscape and physical setting which is so largely responsible for human habits and gives them particular colour and emphasis” (Rev. of *Grania* 399). This “fusion” of the people and their landscape is the source of the “mysterious and primitive effect” of Brontë’s and Hardy’s novels: “The landscape is no mere setting; the moors actually live and move in Heathcliff or in Catherine, so that their solitude, their wildness, their splendour or brutality have, in the Wordsworthian phrase, passed into their fierce or piteous faces, their human temperaments and souls. You cannot separate the human beings from the Nature which has produced them” (“Thomas Hardy” 15-16). Similarly, in *The Return of the Native*, “the wild ‘Ishmaelitish’ Heath is one of the *dramatis personæ*, and enters into the action as the moors do in ‘Wuthering Heights’” (26-27). This focus on the socio-geographic explains, in part, why Ward organizes some of her lectures by country: the rural literature of France, the rural literature of Scotland, etc.

Ward’s historical approach and emphasis on realism is also political. In Hardy’s Wessex, she says, “one is reminded of that tragedy of English agriculture – the loss of a million people from the soil – which since the middle of the nineteenth century has been the dominant fact of our economic history” (4-5). Ward’s summaries and touchstones of effective rural literature focus on the poverty and suffering of peasants; awareness of and appreciation for the difficulties of rural life differentiate the pastoral “peasant of fancy” from “the true peasant as he was and is, in his eternal wrestle with nature, and with hunger pains that drive and keep him to his task” (“Peasant” 11-12). For example, in discussing *Piers Plowman* she praises its rendering of “Piers Plowman when Hunger, personified and made visible, asks him for a meal, has no money to buy pullets ‘and neither geese nor sucking pigs,’ but only two green cheeses, a few curds and cream and an oaten cake, and two loaves of beans and bran, baked for my children” (18). Such details powerfully evoke poverty and hunger, and anchor Ward’s celebration of Langland’s “boundless pity for the weak & the feeble & the weary” (19). The greatest rural literature, in Ward’s view, addresses real social and economic problems.

Ward’s most political commentaries appear in the headnote about Irish writer Emily Lawless in *The English Poets*, in which Ward conflates the

biographical, the political, and the literary. She says that in Lawless's "two historical novels or quasi-novels [...] she brought imagination, and a passionate sympathy, to bear on the historical wrongs and miseries of the land she loved" ("Hon. Emily Lawless" 558). By "land" Ward means Ireland as people, physical place, and political entity. Noting that Lawless was Anglo-Irish, Ward says of her poetry, "There is passion in it – passion, one might almost think, of vicarious pain – working in one who felt in herself the blood of both peoples, of the oppressor and the oppressed" (559). Ward asks, "What is it that has hung this veil of tears over Ireland? Is it English oppression – is it Irish character – or simply the league that ocean and sky have made from the beginning of years against the sun, against Helios, the healer and life-bringer?" (Notes [26]). Analysis of Lawless's portrayals of rural life becomes commentary about the Irish "troubles." Perhaps the most pointed example of the conflation of people and landscape concerns Lawless's "Dirge of the Munster Forest," "the noblest poem of them all," which describes how "The forests of Ireland had sheltered the Irish forces of the Desmonds in the ghastly war of 1581; and in the devastation that followed on their defeat, the forests were not forgotten by the victors. They had given shelter to the rebels, and like them they were ruthlessly slain" ("Hon. Emily Lawless" 559). Here, Ward channels Lawless's "passionate sympathy" for a forest that symbolizes the suffering Irish people. Of course this sympathy represents yet another departure from Matthew Arnold, in that he argued that the best literature is a criticism of life and the best criticism is a *disinterested* endeavor "to see the thing as in itself it really is." Criticism shows disinterestedness, Arnold contends, by "steadily refusing to lend itself to any [...] ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas" ("Function" 18). Ward, however, prefers to consider those political implications.

Another influence on Ward, beside Matthew Arnold, was Walter Pater. In the first years of marriage in Oxford (1872-81), the Wards had lived across from and enjoyed a "happy friendship" and frequent intellectual discussion with Pater and his sisters (Ward, *Writer's* 165). Mary Ward praised "the strange and poignant sense of beauty expressed" in *Studies in the*

Renaissance, which was published in 1873 (*Writer's* 161). In the Preface to *Studies in the Renaissance*, Pater revises Arnold by saying that "in aesthetic criticism the first step toward seeing one's object as it really is, is to know one's own impression as it really is" – a direct challenge to Arnold's depreciation of the "personal estimate" of literature, which he dismisses, along with the "historical estimate," as fallacious. Arnold's "personal estimate" derives from "our personal affinities, likings, and circumstances," which may "sway our estimate" of a work and cause us to "over-rate it" (xx). As I have pointed out elsewhere, Ward contends that the personal response defines the Brontës' distinctive talents: "their vigorous effect upon the reader's sympathies and judgment has been always part of their ascendancy, and one great secret of their enduring fame" (*Life* 5: xi). To Ward, it is not fallacious but fundamental that "The modern mind craves for knowledge, and the modern novel reflects the craving [...]. But the craving for feeling is at least as strong, and above all for that feeling which expresses the heart's defiance of the facts which crush it" (*Life* 3: xxvii). Responding naturally to that craving, women writers "have thrown themselves on feeling, on Poetry [...]. It is as poets then, in the larger sense, and as poets of passion, properly so-called – that is, of exalted and transfiguring feeling – that writers like [...] Charlotte Brontë affect the world" (*Life* 3: xxviii). The appeal to "feeling" – to which readers inevitably respond – is precisely what Ward values in the Brontës and in novels of rural life.

Ward uses the language of Walter Pater's Preface – what our impression really is – in reviewing *Grania*, set on Inishmaan Island. Ward declares that "every detail of that remote island life has been so easily and yet so sharply brought home to us that the mind clings to an *impression* so vivid, and cannot let it go" (401, emphasis added). Speaking more generally of the peasant novel as a genre, Ward says, "It is difficult to say how much we all owe to this type of writing, which is both realistic and romantic; which looks to the *whole* impression, and strikes for it" (Rev. of *Grania* 400). And in discussing Loti's *The Iceland Fisherman*, Ward praises the "perfection of style that makes every fresh sentence as it were an incident, that holds the mind captive to one sharp or delicate impression after another" (Glasgow 20).

A Paterian approach risks aestheticizing poverty, which Ward at least attempts to avoid, for the "impressions" she discusses are linked to a political anger and pity. The report in the *New York Times* of Ward's lecture quotes her discussion of the pre-Romantic era as follows: "Moliere gives but one page to the peasant, 'who bears on his back the weight of Versailles. There are certain wild animals scattered over the face of the country, bound to the earth. When they raise themselves one sees they have a human face and articulate speech; they live on black bread and roots, and at night they retire to their dens.' As yet, however, there is no voice of pity" ("Throng"). Clearly, Ward faults Molière's absence of pity, while the "voice of pity" marks the works of Chaucer, Langland, Loti, and Lawless, all touchstone texts of "that literature of labour and the country, which has so greatly enlarged the horizons and quickened the sympathies of us moderns" ("Peasant" 25). Indeed, rural literature, which Ward sees as a distinct genre of realism that emerged in the Romantic era, is typified by "studies which neither attack nor glorify the peasant, but simply approach him with the sympathetic curiosity which is the modern temper *par excellence*" (28). The key words in these comments are "pity" and "sympathy," describing both authors and readers. It is not irrelevant that the proceeds of Ward's American lectures helped finance her settlement work for the poor.

Despite Ward's sympathetic comments about the poor and her enthusiastic praise of American authors of rural literature such as Sarah Orne Jewett, Mary Wilkins, George Washington Cable, Owen Wister, and Charles Egbert Craddock, the American press issued a flurry of complaints about her using the word "peasant" to describe Americans. Ward included a fairly nuanced definition of "peasant" in her lecture, recognizing differences between British and Continental circumstances among "the people who are in direct contact with nature" (Notes [12]). Such distinctions did not mollify her American audiences. A writer for the Glens Falls, New York, *Morning Star* insists,

There are no peasants in America except the few who come here from Europe to escape the intolerable class bondage of their fatherland. In truth, the American plain folks who get

into novels were never in the peasant class. They come from ancestors of the middle and even upper classes in Europe, who emigrated to enjoy the blessing of free thought and free worship [...]. It requires vast landed estates to breed a race of peasants, and these fortunately American has never been cursed with. ("American Peasants")

This comment rather conveniently overlooks southern plantation life, but reflects the American myth of a classless society, about which, as an outsider, Ward was clearly oblivious.

In invoking "the voice of pity" in rural literature, Ward also overlooked that "pity" implies a privileged vantage point and shades rapidly into condescension. Critics of Ward's own novels disagreed widely about the success of her portrayals of rural characters and scenes, praising her sympathy and accuracy in some reviews and calling her a snob in others. Despite her lectures' focus on common people, she was more inclined in her fiction to select educated and aristocratic protagonists. Moreover, in attempting in both her criticism and her fiction to know her impression of rural life as in itself it really is, Ward finds a bit more beauty for beauty's sake than she might have wished to admit. Still, despite Matthew Arnold's influence, she did challenge his view of what is the "best that is known and thought in the world" and how one may come to know it. Her criticism and lectures about the peasant in literature represent an interesting moment in the history of realism and its critical reception in the late Victorian period.

Ohio State University, Lima

Notes

¹ Mary Ward wrote the headnotes for Philip Sidney, Fulke Greville, Edward Dyer, and for the later fifth volume (1918), Emily Lawless. *The English Poets* (1880) is best known as the anthology for which Ward's uncle, Matthew Arnold, wrote his general introduction, "The Study of Poetry." It was the first poetry anthology to find widespread use as a textbook.

² On Ward's discussion of Hawthorne, see Bensick; on Ward's Brontë criticism, see my "The Personal is Poetical."

³ For permission to quote from Ward's unpublished writings on Thomas Hardy and on "The Peasant in Literature" from the Mrs. Humphry Ward Papers, I gratefully acknowledge the Department of Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont, California. In the Mary Ward Papers at the Honnold Library, the materials on "The Peasant in Literature" exist in several files, in Ward's handwriting. Of the most relevant of these, four have titles: "Plan of Lecture," "Plan of Article" (both are two-page outlines), "Balzac's *Les Paysans*," and "Peasant Life in the Novel," which is thirty-five numbered manuscript pages that are clearly a draft of the lecture, with crossed-out passages and inserted revisions. Judging from the appearance of these pages and from discrepancies between their contents and news accounts of the lectures, this version is probably not a copy from which Ward read when she lectured. There are two other files: one, with a letter A at the top of the first page, contains thirty-three pages, not all consecutive, from a draft of the version intended to be delivered in Glasgow; when citing this file, I will call it "Glasgow." The other untitled file consists of twenty-eight unnumbered, handwritten sheets, some containing a series of paragraphs covering several pages, other sheets containing a single paragraph or jotted notes. Parts of these notes are unique to this file, and others duplicate other files. When citing this file, I will call it "Notes," providing numbers in brackets to identify the pages in the order the pages appear in the folder.

Works Cited

- "American Peasants?" *Morning Star* [Glens Falls, NY] 17 April 1908. Print.
- Arnold, Matthew. "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time." *Essays in Criticism*. London: Macmillan, 1907 [1865]. 1-41. Print.
- . Introduction. "The Study of Poetry." *The English Poets: Selections with Critical Introductions*. Ed. Thomas Humphry Ward. London: Macmillan, 1891. Vol. 1. xvii-xlvi. Print.
- Bensick, Carol M. "'Partly Sympathy and Partly Rebellion': Mary Ward, *The Scarlet Letter*, and Hawthorne." *Hawthorne and Women: Engendering and Expanding the Hawthorne Tradition*. Amherst, MA: U of Massachusetts P, 1999. 159-67. Print.

- Stewart, Jane A. "Authors Who Are a Present Delight. Mrs. Humphry Ward." *Journal of Education*, Vols. 67-68 (25 June 1908): 8-10. Print.
- Sutherland, John. *Mrs. Humphry Ward: Eminent Victorian, Pre-eminent Edwardian*. New York: Oxford UP, 1990. Print.
- Sutton-Ramspeck, Beth. "The Personal Is Poetical: Feminist Criticism and Mary Ward's Readings of the Brontës." *Victorian Studies: A Journal of The Humanities, Arts And Sciences*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (1990), 55-75. Print.
- "Throng to Hear Mrs. Ward Lecture." *New York Times* 4 April 1908.
- Trevelyan, Janet Penrose. *The Life of Mrs. Humphry Ward*. London: Constable, 1923.
- Ward, Mary A. Introductions. *The Life and Work of the Sisters Brontë*. 7 Vols. New York: Harper, 1899-1900. Print.
- . "Nathaniel Hawthorne." *Cornhill* n.s. 17 (1904): 167-71. Print.
- . Rev. of *Grania* by Emily Lawless. *New Review* 6 (April 1892): 399-407. Print.
- . "Thomas Hardy." Mrs. Humphry Ward Papers (H.Mss.0927). Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium.
- . *A Writer's Recollections*. New York: Harper, 1918. Print.

